UN Global Compact Leaders Week

Bringing the Voice of Business to UN General Assembly Week

Recognizing the key role that companies play in driving progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Global Compact will bring the world’s leading Chief Executives and corporate sustainability experts to UN Headquarters in New York for UN Global Compact Leaders Week, a series of participant events convened alongside the 74th session of the UN General Assembly in September.

This year’s General Assembly week is comprised of a series of summits and high-level meetings which will focus on scaling up climate ambition, accelerating action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), mobilizing financing for development and securing universal health coverage. Each meeting of General Assembly week is unique yet interconnected, and each embodies the central principles of the 2030 Agenda: universality, leave no one behind and strengthen global partnerships.

Among the high-level convenings, the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit will aim to create renewed ambition and momentum in response to an existential threat to people and planet alike. The well-being of the world’s most vulnerable is also at the core of the High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage that will launch new efforts to provide access to affordable, inclusive and resilient health systems for all. With the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the General Assembly (also known as the SDG Summit), Governments will take stock of where we stand vis-à-vis achieving the 2030 Agenda. A High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development can help unlock the resources and partnerships needed for this transformation. Overall, these events this September will provide leaders with a unique opportunity to take stock of progress, increase ambition and commitment, and highlight scalable, just and tailored solutions to some of the world’s biggest challenges.

To bring the voice of business to the UN, the UN Global Compact will convene a series of high-level dialogues that will align with the agendas of the inter-governmental meetings of General Assembly week. These events will provide business leaders an opportunity to meet with Government, civil society and youth leaders to identify clear actions that will accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. In this context, UN Global Compact Leaders Week will not only offer executives a chance to directly engage with Heads of State, youth and other global decision-makers at the UN, but will also highlight the progress made by the UN Global Compact and its participants towards the 2030 Agenda. The Leaders Week programme will feature: robust panel debates with Chief Executive Officers of top global companies, key takeaways from the latest UN Global Compact Progress Report and CEO Study, the inauguration of a new class of young SDG Pioneers at the SDG Media Zone, the announcement of new Global Impact Initiatives and the launch of new policy standards covering various industries and SDGs.
Outlined below are the events of UN Global Compact Leaders Week along with the corresponding high-level UN events of General Assembly week:

- The Private Sector Forum — organized by the UN Global Compact and partners as the high-level luncheon of the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit — is where CEOs will join the UN Secretary-General and Heads of State to recognize ambitious climate action, including the announcement of those leaders who have joined the newly launched Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign. The event will be a platform for driving progress towards a tipping point where 1.5°C-aligned corporate strategies are the new normal for businesses and their supply chains around the world. A Climate Action Reception will conclude the day, giving attendees a chance to network and reflect on the lasting impact of the day while also providing a bridge to the SDG Summit.

- A workshop on Health is Everyone’s Business — held on the sidelines of the High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage — will showcase the UN Global Compact Framework for Business Action on Goal 3 which supports a principled approach for how business can take action to improve their positive health and well-being imprint in the workplace, market place and community.

- The annual SDG Business Forum — alongside the first ever SDG Summit — will highlight how businesses and their leaders are contributing to the 17 SDGs and will feature insights from the annual UN Global Compact Progress Report. Sessions will cover case-studies and real-life solutions for SDG acceleration, while also measuring progress in business models globally. The close of the SDG Summit will coincide with the Trailblazing Women’s Reception which will serve as the launch of the new Global Impact Initiative for Gender Equality in the Workplace.

- The High-level CEO Roundtable on Corporate SDG Finance and Investment will be an intimate discussion with CEOs who are championing efforts to drive investment aligned with SDG impact. In addition, participants will take a deep dive into the Financial Innovation for the SDGs Action Platform which develops innovative private financial instruments that have the potential to direct private finance towards critical sustainability solutions.

Through these events, UN Global Compact Leaders Week will showcase the ambitious business leadership and action turning corporate sustainability into a practical, mainstream reality.

It is time to move into a decade of delivery, from commitments to action and onwards to results, with a greater sense of solidarity, ambition and urgency — with business leading the way.