

The bottom line on sustainability

25 September 2014

Climate change, pollution, dwindling natural resources, diminishing fresh water supplies... the list of problems we face as a species in the twenty-first century continues to grow. Many of the environmental problems are sadly our own doing and yet therein lies the solution. We must halt the devastation, reverse the problems. Now, sustainability associate Kaushik Sridhar of the Net Balance Management Group in Sydney, Australia, suggests that enough is enough. Writing in the *International Journal of Business Excellence*, he suggests that we must turn to sustainability so that we can have enough for all, forever.

Sridhar points out that we must overcome our tendency to waste resources and to expend time and energy on futile attempts to resolve problems associated with whatever is the crisis du jour, [natural resource](#) depletion, habitat degradation, [climate change](#), over-population. Instead, his research suggests that these problems can only be resolved by society as a whole transitioning quickly and immediately to a sustainable lifestyle paradigm, one in which we live entirely within our means ecologically and economically from now on out. He asserts that given the scale and potential harm of global changes that will arise inevitably if we do not change our wasteful ways to a sustainable stance, any alternative course of action will, at best, only briefly postpone societal collapse.

Despite superficial efforts to make commerce "greener" to adopt so-called [alternative energy sources](#) and to recycle household and other waste, we are currently in an essentially business-as-usual paradigm one that has perhaps existed since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, but that may stretch back to the prehistoric era when we first napped chunks of flint and started burning trees.

"In recent years, the topic of sustainability has become a high material issue across the globe, and is seen as a way of not only enhancing the overall business practice (from an ethical perspective) but also as a practical method of

having a positive impact on the community and the overall environment," explains Sridhar. However, paying lip service to [sustainability](#) is surely not enough however well intentioned and how well it improves corporate relations with the public. There are three perspectives we must recognize urgently:

We must see the implications of our current environmental and social trends

We must make the intellectual effort to think through systemically how our whole system needs to change for things to come right

We must initiate actions to contribute to the needed change.

Extrapolating current trends leads us to ecological collapse and the unraveling of society, suggests Sridhar, no amount of denial will postpone the inevitable. "Changing the direction of our whole society is the overarching need of our time. If we succeed, future generations will thank us – profoundly," he says.

More information: Sridhar, K. (2014) 'Sustainability – 'enough for all forever'', *Int. J. Business Excellence*, Vol. 7, No. 4, pp.454–472. [DOI: 10.1504/IJBEX.2014.063561](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBEX.2014.063561)

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