

# The Value of Collaboration for Corporate Sustainability Outcomes

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By the IEMA Fellows Working Group on  
Collaboration for Corporate Sustainability



# Foreword

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Collaboration (**/kəlabə'reɪʃn/**) noun: the action of working with someone to produce something.

I once heard Prof. Brian Cox explain how we had survived as a species. Paraphrasing his expertise, Homo Erectus was bigger and stronger, Neanderthals were faster. So how did Homo Sapiens differentiate and succeed them as the dominant species? Simply put – we collaborated more than they did!

This is still the case, even today. Over the last 20 years I have had the privilege of working with a diverse range of stakeholders, sharing objectives, developing solutions, and applying them to develop and share best practice. This IEMA publication clearly shows that I am not the only one to recognise this. The diverse expertise, dedication and passion of this IEMA Fellows Working Group highlights the benefits of organisational collaboration, with a range of case studies from singular engagements to networking on common objectives to enable transformational change. Perspectives on collaboration may differ depending on the type of organisation, culture or the sector you operate in. However, the examples in this publication show that collaboration for sustainability can change the way you think and work, whilst meeting both your organisation's objectives and contributing towards global goals. Sharing best practice and working collaboratively towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals is far more efficient and effective than just tackling them as a 'lone champion' organisation. These examples clearly show that the path to sustainability is one that is pointless taking alone, proving that collaboration is the way forward.

**Andy Whyte (FIEMA), Environment & Sustainability Specialist, Ricoh UK Products Ltd**

**Chair of the IEMA Fellows Working Group on Collaboration for Corporate Sustainability**

# Executive Summary

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This working group document is a collation of perspectives and case study experiences from a wide range of sectors and industries on how positive collaboration can help to achieve systemic transformation for sustainability. It aims to support sustainability professionals in driving positive change regardless of the organisation they work for, be it an SME, a multinational or a local authority.

Collaboration for sustainability will vary depending on the type of organisations involved, be they corporate or non-corporate, and the issue in question. It can stretch from mere knowledge exchange to the delivery of a long-term mainstream service. However, as is evidenced in the narrative and case studies below, being a sustainability leader requires you to lead and inspire collaboration and cooperation to deliver sustainable innovation, in line with the core requirements of the IEMA Skills Map.

At their heart, collaborations for sustainability should look to drive positive and systemic change. They should raise ambition and build from an ethical (or at least a shared values) under-pinning. If prospective partners do not approach collaborations with such a foundation, then there will be a risk of failure or potentially even a negative impact. Similarly, organisations embarking on their journey of transformative change may have limited resources and wish to avoid reinventing the wheel. In such instances, spending time and research prior to launching into an initiative will help to unveil any existing networks and collaborations that organisations can use and join.

There are four common drivers of collaboration identified in the thought piece. They include:

1. Changing societal expectations and the need for ethics and purpose driven organisations,
2. Technological developments,
3. Regulatory environment and the growth of sustainable finance,
4. Network organisations and the response to government efficacy.

These drivers should be born in mind when formulating a collaboration, as they will help participants to mitigate the three most common collaboration challenges: competitive self-interest, a lack of a fully shared purpose, and a shortage of trust.

To overcome these challenges, the IEMA Fellows have put together an overview diagram that illustrates the thought process that sustainability professionals should embark upon when they begin to think about collaboration, including:

- Who is driving the collaboration;
- What are the desired outcomes;
- Why is collaboration being considered;
- Where are the knowledge gaps and where does the impact need to be targeted;
- How should the collaboration be approached, and finally;
- When should it be completed by.

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The diagram supports and illustrates the key recommendations of this working group, which include:

- Check what initiatives are already in place before scoping out a plan to establish a more formal group – there may already be initiatives available to support your objectives;
- Prior to entering the collaboration, identify key stakeholders within your value chain who are not competitors – building a critical mass before reaching out externally will help to alleviate issues of shared trust from the outset;
- When scoping the objectives of the collaboration, alignment to specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can help as a clear (internal and external) communication tool and touch point for the issues under consideration - this can help to simplify the long term objectives of the collaboration and be an effective starting point for purpose driven SMEs with minimal resources. The SDGs have been used in some instances as a sustainability 'long-list' which can be used to determine materiality and focus;
- To make an effective business and moral case for sustainability collaboration make sure you have clarity on what you want to achieve from the collaboration and what each stakeholder will bring– conducting an internal review during the planning phase will help to identify what the skills or delivery gaps are within your organisation and which stakeholders can complement your own;
- Carefully plan the collaboration making sure you have an agreed minimum governance process in place that sets out who the convenor will be for the project, the goals, the key performance indicators, partners roles and the time frame;
- Use the governance processes (e.g. Memorandum of Agreement) and transparent targets to collaborate actively with peers on non-competitive issues, building on their strengths and networks to ensure the collaboration is scalable.



# Acknowledgements

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The IEMA Fellows Working Group on Collaboration for Corporate Sustainability is a cross industry working group of IEMA Fellows with specific expertise and insight on corporate sustainability.

The group was convened by Marc Jourdan, IEMA Policy & Engagement who led the development of this thought piece on the value of collaboration for corporate sustainability outcomes. He developed the draft based on the input of IEMA Fellows received during working group meetings and through case study submissions.

The working group and its meetings were chaired by Andy Whyte (FIEMA) of Ricoh UK Products, Chair of the IEMA Circular Economy Network.

We would like to thank all the members of the working group, and the active participation of the following members:

**Andy Whyte** (Ricoh UK Products)

**Emma Knight Strong** (Green Arch Consulting)

**Gillian Gibson** (Gibson Consulting and Training)

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**Neal Barker** (WSP)

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**Robert Spencer** (AECOM)

**Greg Chant-Hall** (Square Gain)

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**Louise Stevens** (Innocent Drinks)

**Nick Blyth** (IEMA)

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# Introduction

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The perfect storm of issues that affect organisations has continued to evolve, requiring continued cooperation by all stakeholders concerned (e.g. climate change, population growth, resource concerns, etc...)<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic, has been viewed as the defining global health crisis of our time<sup>2</sup>, which has brought about collaborations between organisations at a pace that would have been considered unachievable only a few months ago<sup>3</sup>.

These accomplishments emphasise the imperative need for environment and sustainability professionals to work together to resolve the sustainability challenges that climate change, resource concerns and other global issues may present to organisations<sup>4</sup>.

To help create positive change, IEMA has released guidance identifying the steps for individuals to follow on the journey to transformation within an organisation, including understanding the value of collaboration between organisations to attain outcomes which could only be achieved through collaboration<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, the IEMA Skills Map makes it clear that relationship management and the need to lead and inspire collaboration and cooperation to deliver sustainable innovation is a core requirement to deliver transformative change<sup>6</sup>.

Some forward-thinking organisations have embraced sustainability as a business imperative and implemented initiatives in areas they can address on their own, be it integrating a more circular approach to their manufacturing processes or reducing their fleet emissions, or tackling challenges around the social agenda. But when it comes to developing collaborative solutions to systemic problems, only a little progress has been made.

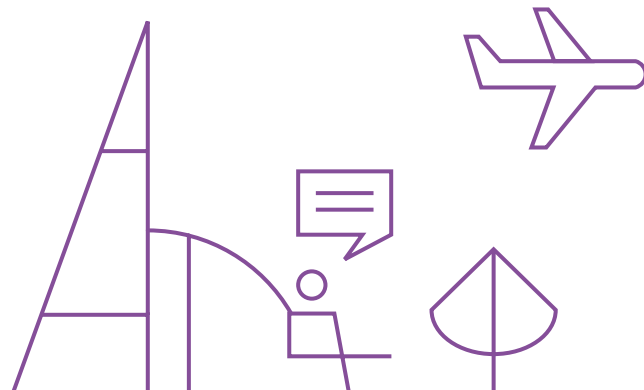
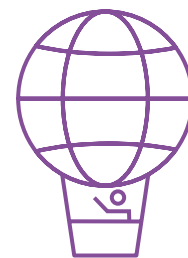
IEMA has therefore focused several editions of the IEMA Sustainability Leaders Forum to consider the key elements of sustainability leadership. Live polls conducted during one session confirmed that attendees found that one of the three most important attributes for sustainability leadership was developing meaningful partnerships, alongside authenticity and personal resilience. An important overlap is noted here between partnerships and resilience, whereby collaboration has the scope to increase organisational resilience. A Fellows roundtable revealed how some believed that 'best in class' in corporate sustainability could only be achieved based on meaningful outcomes or outputs showcasing actual transformations to sustainability.

This document outlines member perspectives and recommendations on how collaborative solutions at the organisational level can help to achieve systemic change for corporate sustainability. These success stories of organisational collaboration should be read in parallel with the IEMA Sustainability in Practice Guide on Change Management for Sustainable Development (the IEMA Change Management Guide). In doing, these perspectives as mapped against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), should help to provide a road map for others to use to achieve their own collaborations, and help resolve sustainability dilemmas faced by organisations in different sectors. SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals) clearly states the importance of partnership, and the fact that cooperation among stakeholders is a key factor in the achievement of the other 16 SDGs.

*"The Global Goals can only be met if we work together... To build a better world, we need to be supportive, empathetic, inventive, passionate, and above all, cooperative."*

(The Global Goals for Sustainable Development Webpage)<sup>7</sup>.

At a conceptual level, collaboration is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as “the situation of two or more people/organisations working together to create or achieve the same thing”<sup>8</sup>. Each perspective on collaboration in this document may differ depending on the type of organisation, or the sector it operates in. As we review the various IEMA collaboration models presented it should be noted that the perspective on collaboration will vary from corporate collaborations that stretch across the business value chain to ‘extended’ collaborations where both business and noncorporate partners (be they local government or other key local stakeholders) are integral to the success of the partnership. Whilst acknowledging these differences, IEMA hopes that this collection of expertise and member recommendations, as they are set out below and in the case studies, can provide a valuable list of transferrable lessons for the wider IEMA membership to apply as they pursue collaborations in their own sector.





# The Corporate Sustainability Collaboration Challenge

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Sustainability problems are complex and interlinked. This has never been more accurate than in the unprecedented times we live in, as the big sustainability challenges we face simply cannot be answered by one organisation acting alone. The IEMA Build Back Better mission statement made it clear that a central action point to enable a green recovery is to promote sector and cross-sector leadership and collaboration<sup>9</sup>. As highlighted in the IEMA Change Management Guide, a big part of getting key organisations on board comes down not only to how organisations need increasingly to understand their role in shaping a sustainable future, but also how changes that are now underway will eventually affect them, in many cases quite profoundly<sup>10</sup>. This speaks to the drivers of collaboration on sustainability.

The drivers of collaboration for sustainability leadership are external factors, that trigger organisations to join forces in the support of systemic change. They stem from the organisations' external environment and prompt them into action on sustainability<sup>11</sup>. The drivers include:

- Changing societal expectations and the need for ethics and purpose driven organisations;
- Technological developments;
- Regulatory environment and the growth of sustainable finance;
- Network organisations and the response to government efficacy.

As noted by Inder Poonaji in his paper on Ethical Resilience<sup>12</sup>, recent corporate scandals ethics and behaviours vary within organisations, sometimes with significant impacts on the level of public and shareholder trust in private sector organisations.

As a result of this, an increase in collaborations between businesses and the non-corporate sector is helping to rectify the balance. The creation of organisations like ShareAction<sup>13</sup> exemplify the push for activism by society and shareholders seeking to hold organisations to account in the desire to create a positive movement for change on issues like the fight against climate change.

Technological developments such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things and associated communication technologies enable stakeholders to engage more readily to share information and knowledge, but also support greater transparency about their operations. Internally, the transition to a digital economy also requires greater technical expertise. Such expertise will often be found outside the organisation and will drive new collaborations if they can be a key requirement to obtaining management sign off on a project.

The absence of regulations also drives collaboration, as organisations partner to influence new regulations or to reform to them. They can include new codes of conduct, management standards or even reporting guidelines. Once they are developed, risk management frameworks such as the Equator Principles<sup>14</sup> or the new EU Taxonomy Regulations<sup>15</sup> which look to establish a common language on sustainable finance will force organisations to partner with other organisations in order to comply with them. In a globalised world, organisations with supply chains that stretch to developing countries, have a key role to play in supplementing gaps in legislation to address sustainability.

Networks of collaborating organisations on key sustainability issues, have appeared to fill a legislative and institutional gap but also to help support the transition of a specific market to sustainability. Network organisations like RE100 which brings together the world's most influential businesses committed to 100% renewable electricity in an effort to accelerate change towards zero carbon grids at scale is just one example of collaboration in support of the transformation to sustainability<sup>16</sup>.

Responding to these drivers, successful stakeholder collaborations can include a wide spectrum of collaboration from simple knowledge exchange initiatives to long term delivery of a mainstream service<sup>17</sup>.

These collaborations can also stretch across the entire value chain and may even span regional or global governance systems. They look to identify the systemic issues that may affect the long-term future of those organisations and then identify common ways forward to address or adapt to those issues. Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) stress that unsuccessful collaborations often tend to be those which underestimate the importance of necessary structures and planning through each phase of the collaboration. As identified in the IEMA Change Management Guide, proper planning and effort needs to go into convening, hosting and facilitating a collaboration.

At the start-up phase, this includes building in enough time to engage critical participants and even securing third party funding from government to avoid disagreements and claims of "free riding" between competing organisations where one could end up investing more than the other in the project, at times when budgetary concerns are often a deciding factor for engagement<sup>18</sup>.

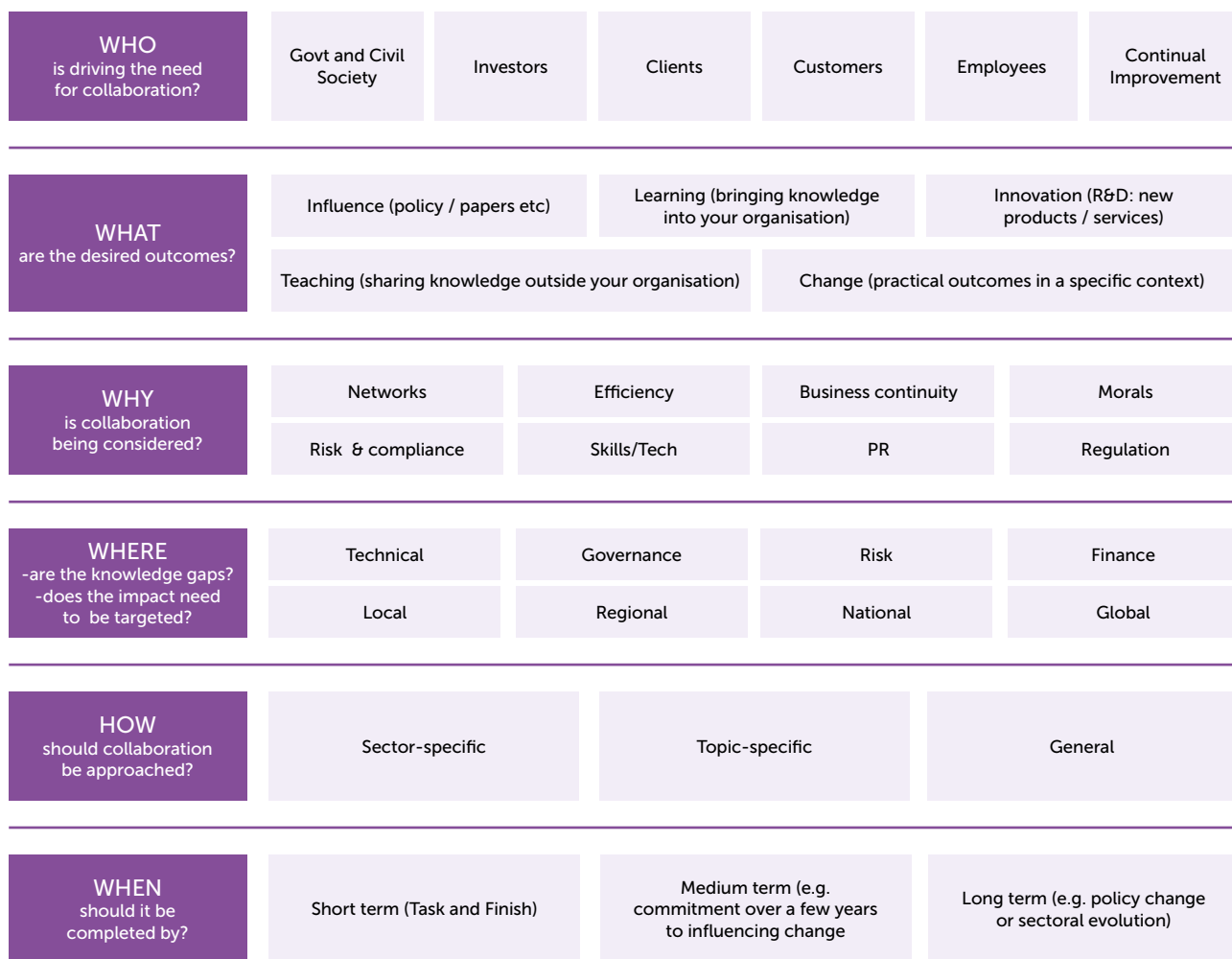
The IEMA case studies featured in this document are non-contentious. They have helped to draw out some of the common member recommendations on ensuring effective collaborations as they move from start-up phase, to implementation and finally scale up phase (the latter being a key element to ensuring systemic transformation to sustainability).

Drawing on the learning points from our case studies, the biggest stumbling blocks to achieving systems transformations through collaboration, appear to be competitive self-interest, a lack of a fully shared purpose, and most importantly a shortage of trust<sup>19</sup>. The sections below will now draw on case study input and previous guidance to highlight some of the key steps to ensure these challenges are overcome and the collaboration is successful.



# The key elements of a productive collaboration

Figure 1: Collaboration Decision Diagram



The above diagram is the result of collective insight from the members of this working group. It seeks to illustrate the thought process that sustainability professionals should embark upon when they begin to think about collaboration (be it sectoral/cross sectoral and with business or non-business partners). It should serve as initial guidance from the moment an organisation considers the possibility of a collaboration, all the way through each phase of the collaboration as detailed below.

## Pre-collaboration: Exploring synergies and finding strength in numbers

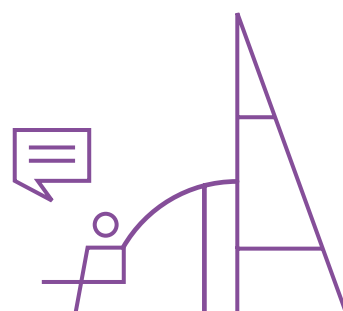
Before venturing into the collaboration, an organisation may wish to informally sound out organisations within their network, or connected to their network, that have the appetite to collaborate and build relationships. By building this critical mass before implementing a more formal process of collectively inviting others to the group, this gives the opportunity to create an informal “holding group” to test ideas and which can dissolve itself once the ‘formal’ collaboration is underway.

The group will also wish to check what initiatives are already in place before scoping out a plan to establish a more formal group. A way forward would be to join existing collaborations. This would avoid having to reinvent the wheel and spend unnecessary resources (particularly for SME level organisations). As referenced in the IEMA Change Management Guide<sup>20</sup> organisations like the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, Forum for the Future and the Aldersgate Group convene focused collaborations around particular areas of interest that their member or partner organisations most want to work on. There are also organisations which keep strictly to the process focus, enabling collaborators to do their thing without having a view on what that ‘thing’ should be. Sometimes alliances or campaigns give rise to stand-alone networks or collaborations that become institutions, such as We Mean Business. Longer term collaborations such as Resource Efficiency Clusters<sup>21</sup> and professional networks such as the IEMA Circular Economy Network<sup>22</sup> can also provide a way of working together collectively on a specific sustainability based business need, such as circular economy, or carbon reduction.

If no alliances or current networks exist for the issue at hand then setting up a new collaboration could also be the natural next step. This was the case for the Sheffield Sustainability Network (SSN) which was started by three small business owners in Sheffield looking to share knowledge about sustainability in a way that chimed with the SME and small business community. The network itself is run by small businesses. This is considered a huge strength as the leadership speaks directly to the member base from a peer to peer level (*See SSN case study here*).

“The beauty of a locally built network is that it understands local nuances and culture in a way that national and international networks cannot. This is a long term project that is fundamentally built on the foundation that the most effective way to drive sustainability in SMEs is to speak the right language, which is why the group governance includes a significant proportion of small business owners.”

*(Emma Knight-Strong, Green Arch Consulting, Sheffield Sustainability Network Steering Committee Member, Case Study Provider)*



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## Scoping: SMEs and Anchoring the collaboration's objectives to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals

The findings of a 2019 study by the UN Global Compact of over 1,000 CEOs confirmed that the majority of companies across the world are currently failing to deliver on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals<sup>23</sup> (SDGs), with only 48% integrating sustainability into their operations<sup>24</sup>. Reflecting on the findings, the UN Global Compact stressed the need for greater collaboration to achieve the goals noting that it "requires all stakeholders, including governments, policymakers, business leaders, investors, shareholders, civil society and academia, to work together to accelerate change" to achieve the global sustainability goals.

SMEs often hold the key to sustainable local development and can prove essential in attaining the SDGs. Representing around 90 per cent of businesses globally they are widely recognised as a source of innovation<sup>25</sup> (to achieve sustainable outcome). A considerable amount of mapping, using available tools like the SDG Selector<sup>26</sup>, can make the SDGs a useful communication tool for all organisations. Indeed by ensuring that an organisation is reporting on the most material SDGs for their operations, this can provide a useful reference point to specific parts of their sustainability strategy. This alignment can also support the organisation in better communicating the type of transformative change they are enabling, given that not all 17 goals will be relevant to the operations of a single organisation.

SMEs are purpose driven and business driven organisations. Often facing resource constraints, they will require a supporting platform to communicate and scale up their efforts. Sustainability networks like SSN, Business Environmental Support Scheme Telford (BESST) or issue focused networks such as those provided by the Ellen Mac Arthur Foundation will help to provide a standardised approach to a given issue. They will take the shape of a sectoral, national or even global touch point, which through that network, will help to provide guidance during their engagement on a given topic.

Supply chain collaborations constitute another route for SMEs to engage on particular sustainability issues. These can focus on topics such as social value and modern slavery which lie at the heart of the SDGs. Within the UK, the implementation of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012<sup>27</sup> and the Modern Slavery Act 2015<sup>28</sup> have led to a greater drive to engage with stakeholders on these issues in both the public and the private sector. Indeed, IEMA responses to government consultations have sought to inform how social value should be enhanced through public procurement<sup>29</sup>, and how public sector organisations should also be caught by modern slavery legislation<sup>30</sup>. With UK government confirming the launch of a social value in procurement model to assess a supplier's social impact<sup>31</sup>, network organisations such as the Supply Chain Sustainability School<sup>32</sup> can help to fill a capacity gap for SMEs as the market evolves, providing them with access to free online training and online social value resources so that they may continue to tender for government contracts going forward.

Since the introduction of the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015, other countries have followed suite with their own legislation seeking to raise accountability and the transparency of supply chains in the fight against modern slavery. However, where legislation and standards fall short, strategic alliances can also help to fill the gap. SMEs, such as The Sourcing

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Team Ltd, a certified B Corporation<sup>33</sup>, have worked as a lead partner with organisations like Oxfam to address the challenges and risks associated with their promotional merchandise along the supply chain, with the specific objective of addressing the challenge of eliminating Modern Slavery and moving to an ethical and transparent approach. Working with manufacturers across the supply chain, The Sourcing Team together with Oxfam created the Ethical Promotional Product Strategic Alliance, a multi-stakeholder alliance that designed specific audits and due diligence processes for this supply chain (where other standards and labels fell short), highlighting the staff training needed on social and environmental sustainability to ensure better integration of sustainability along the supply chain (see [The Sourcing Team Ltd case study](#))

*“Focused ethical collaboration requires effort, consistency and commitment to achieve results. SME’s can also lead the way if they are purposeful, tactical and have willing partners.*

*(Inder Poonaji, Sixbutterflies - Case Study Provider)*

This document therefore aims to use reference to SDGs as a communication tool and touch point for the topics that are under consideration, rather than a means of validating a particular collaboration project as “SDG compliant”.

It should be noted that to meet a specific SDG, organisations would need to implement a strategic, tactical and operational level plan (sometimes with assistance from a sustainability network) and accompany this with clear accountability and monitoring processes<sup>34</sup>.



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## Making the business & moral case for sustainability collaboration

Making the business and moral case for sustainability has developed over time. Today, it is connected to improved reputation and brand value, proving to stakeholders that the operations of that organisation are driven by strong commitments towards sustainability (the moral case). It will differ depending on the topic at hand, but it will require the buy in of senior management.

Taking the logistics sector as an example, a business and moral reason for switching an organisation's fleet of company vehicles to electric vehicles could be on grounds of environmental protection (e.g. to limit air pollution and the emission of fossil fuels) but also operational efficiency (e.g. phase out a reliance on diesel powered vehicles, particularly as cities move to ban diesel vehicles over the coming years). With management buy in obtained, further internal research will then make the case for a tactical need to collaborate with external organisation in order to set up the relevant charging infrastructure to support this ambition of a fully electrical fleet of vehicles.

Developing and then achieving the business case is therefore a key challenge, requiring creative work across the organisation and often with external stakeholders to ensure there is clarity on what you want to achieve.

But with sustainability practitioners receiving a growing positive response to their work, there is opportunity to show the strategic advantage of effective collaborations.

Peel L&P is a large landowner in the North West of England that created a landscape-scale natural capital baseline in the North West of England. They found that while the collaboration enhanced their credibility as an organisation, building these relationships also provided opportunities for dialogue on further topics in the future (see [Peel L&P case study](#)).

*“Working with a range of organisations on natural capital from Merseyside to South Yorkshire is a significant time commitment but highly rewarding in terms of the relationships and trust that has been built. Active collaboration gives stakeholders an opportunity to understand more about our business and provides them with a friendly point of contact if they have other matters to discuss.”*

*(Joanne Holden, Sustainability Director, Peel L&P, Case Study Provider)*

Reviewing member input on the business & moral case four key areas appear to emerge:

- **Efficiency** - By being a good follower and engaging in a collaboration, we are able to save time and use this additional resource to enhance an existing proposition (e.g. be it achieving a set of targets under a specific sustainable development goal);
- **Strategic advancement** - Knowledge exchange forums towards a mutual target can enable partners to find common points to support mutual objectives in a cost-effective way (e.g. carbon neutrality, circular economy pathways);
- **Reputation** - High value, long lasting relationships and enhanced credibility for one's organisation;
- **Relationship building** – Going beyond the call of duty creates trust, a lasting relationship and provides opportunities for dialogue on other topics in the future.

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A key approach to driving systemic change will be to bring sustainability into Board discussions, whether these are business boards or other decision-making boards (e.g. Local Enterprise Networks<sup>35</sup>). The leading members of such networks may be faced with a common sustainability issue on which they would work together, then share solutions with the wider membership. Within the West Midlands, this successful initial approach went on to become the Business Environmental Support Scheme Telford (BESST) led by Andy Whyte (FIEMA), Chair of the IEMA Fellows Working Group on Collaboration for Corporate Sustainability and the IEMA Circular Economy Network. Since its creation in 2002, BESST has been a sustainability solutions hub and the model has since been transferred to several other areas<sup>36</sup> (see [BESST case study here](#)).

*“As a sustainability professional with over 20 years’ experience I have been privileged to collaboratively develop sustainability best practice at a local level through the creation of Resource Efficiency Clusters and then share that learning nationally and internationally. This business facing ‘common environmental solutions’ driven approach has proven to be far more efficient and effective than tackling issues as a ‘lone champion’ organisation”*

*(Andy Whyte, Ricoh UK Products- BESST, Case Study Provider)*

By collaborating outside the comfort zone and obtaining the buy-in of new stakeholders this will change the discussion at that level, and help to promote the concept further afield. This also provides a better chance of including sustainability topics in wider discussions, including industry conferences, to avoid talking to the converted. As an example of this, IEMA often partners with other professional organisations, making sure that sustainability remains on the Boardroom agenda.



## Stakeholder relations and systems change: planning the collaboration

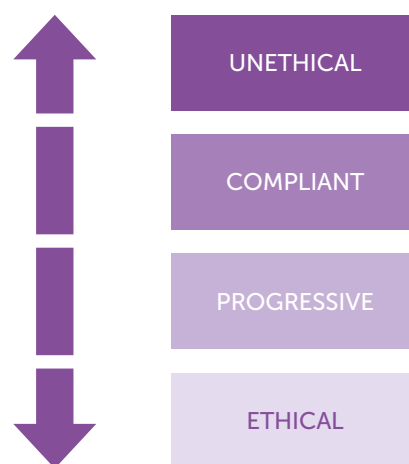
To enable transformational change an organisation cannot work in isolation. It will need to involve the wider system – market, sector, place – of which an organisation is part<sup>37</sup>. Speaking to IEMA members about the needs of a post 2020 sustainable future during the July 2020 edition of the Sustainability Leaders Forum, sustainability thought leader John Elkington<sup>38</sup> confirmed the importance of extensive stakeholder engagement for systemic change towards sustainability. In his latest book, *Green Swans* he noted that “truly sustainable and inclusive value and wealth can only be produced for the overwhelming majority of people if the private, public and citizen sectors are all actively and creatively, and productively involved, and from the very outset”<sup>39</sup>.

Building on this need, the developing conceptual approach laid out by Inder Poonaji in his paper on ethical resilience explains that as we consider the topic of collaboration, the extent to which ethics is integrated within a collaboration plan will determine the level of positive or negative impact that the project will have in creating transformative change for sustainability. In the Continuum of Ethical Approach he defines four approaches based on Ethics. The model applies to understanding collaboration both internally and externally, working as a continuum so that an organisation can be on many paths at the same time. Based on this model, Inder views stakeholder collaboration as falling into four areas:

1. **Unethical** - An approach without morals, where anything is acceptable, and you can do whatever it takes to win, including breaking or curtailing the law (e.g. corruption, cheating, etc).
2. **Compliant** – An approach that works within the parameters of the law and the code of practice of the organisation.

3. **Progressive** – An approach that works beyond compliance that puts into place propositions such as sustainability, CSR, and an ethical approach.
4. **Ethical** - An approach where ethics is at the core of every aspect of the organisation from purpose, culture, consciousness, stakeholders, and operations – to do right and cause no harm or wrong.

Figure 2: Continuum of Ethical Approach (Poonaji, 2020)



This perspective suggests that collaboration is not only positive but can also be negative. For example, corruption and bribery are aspects of unethical collaboration. Decision-makers (governments or organisations) therefore will choose the approach based on their decision-making process and moral compass<sup>40</sup>.

Ignoring these issues or engaging with only a limited number of stakeholders with limited ethical considerations has the potential to have a negative impact<sup>41</sup>. For this it is important to be very clear at the outset about the reasons for wanting to collaborate, identifying the key stakeholder and the purpose of collaboration.

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The geo-political changes we are experiencing globally, emphasise the need for greater collaboration. As the UK leaves the EU, policy developments like the Environment Bill could give business and local actors the long-term policy framework they need to collaborate on the systemic changes required to meet future environmental challenges<sup>42</sup>. Although such national frameworks are important, they also need to be accompanied by active engagement at the local and sectoral level if we are to scale up capacity and ensure that by 2030 we can meet the broader sustainability targets set forward in the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the local level, replicable knowledge exchange forums such as the Leeds Climate Commission highlight the value of bringing local stakeholders together to find common points to support mutual targets. In this case, the focus was progress towards city level climate reduction targets and climate resilience (see [Leeds Climate Commission case study](#)).

### Decision-making and governance systems

In *Beyond the Perfect Storm*<sup>43</sup>, IEMA notes that change-focused organisations are those which are actively planning to address their material impact, as well as the megatrends and dependencies that affect them. The guide also stresses how, as the approach of an organisation to sustainability matures, the focus in relationship building will move to long-term thinking and establishing a shared destiny so that organisations are collaborating rather than competing on corporate sustainability.

To ensure this level playing field, organisations therefore need to approach such partnerships with open eyes. Each participant and organisation representative will need to compromise and support collective decisions. This reinforces the argument for strategic planning, so as to ascertain key areas of interest for the group, while at the same time understanding the need to compromise

as the collaboration evolves. This approach, while solidifying the feelings of trust among participants, will also help ensure stronger relations and a successful long-term collaboration in support of transformational change.

Innocent Drinks, the multinational juice and smoothie producer, highlighted the need for strong governance processes (e.g. such as a Memorandum of Agreement) when setting out on its own collaboration project in Huelva province, Spain. The organisation, which looked to promote sustainable water use for berry crops grown in the region, emphasised the need for strategic planning to achieve the project objectives. As part of the learning points, it highlighted the need to implement clear governance mechanisms that would ensure oversight of: who is doing what as part of the collaboration, how decisions are taken and documented, as well as upfront agreement on the goals, KPIs and timelines of the project (who is doing what and by when). The organisation noted that by combining these governance mechanisms with an exit strategy following the first phase of the project, could help to ensure that any new ideas not connected to the immediate objectives of the project could be earmarked and scoped as part of the second phase of the collaboration. This would in turn ensure that the project is not side tracked while enabling the collaboration to further grow as part of a second collaboration phase (see [Innocent Drinks case study here](#)).

*“At innocent we have a commitment to leaving things better than we find them. In this case one of our important ingredients posed a real social and environmental challenge, which we could only tackle through collaboration.”*

*(Louise Stevens, Head of Sustainability Strategy & Communications, innocent drinks Ltd, Case Study Provider)*

### Internal review – identifying the skills gap

One of the key aspects of collaboration is that organisations can use it to help address the ‘wicked’ issues that are out of reach for them (or seen as out of reach). As highlighted above a key part of the planning process requires an initial internal review to assess the capability of the organisation in meeting the sustainability objectives that it has set itself.

When Auckland City Council decided to progress a range of initiatives focussed on delivering more sustainable outcomes through its funding and financing activities, a key learning point from the start up-phase was recognising early on the broad skills and expertise that would be required to complete the project. The internal review process in turn enabled the organisation to identify the gaps in expertise within the organisation and how these could be met through external input (see [Auckland City Council case study here](#)).

An effective way to find external expertise is to engage beyond traditional stakeholders, including actors from different sectors such as academia, as these can plug the knowledge gap while triggering new ways of resolving common problems. AECOM founded the Major Infrastructure – Resource Optimisation Group (MI-ROG) in 2013 to provide an opportunity for the infrastructure sector to share best practice and facilitate collaboration and innovation on the circular economy. The project involved different parts of the infrastructure sector, beyond just infrastructure owners and operators, to include third sector organisations (such as the Carbon Trust) and academic partners like the University of Sheffield. In expanding the scope of the collaboration, AECOM was able to tackle difficult concepts at an intellectual level before putting things into everyday practice. The outcome of this process resulted in the publication of White Papers, referenced in the case study, that issued a call to action for infrastructure owners and operators on a number of circular economy issues (see [MI-ROG case study here](#)).

*“Many of the organisations we work with through MI-ROG are committed to highly ambitious net zero goals. Implementing their circular economy strategies in collaboration with other major infrastructure owners and operators is a fantastic approach to net zero, effectively designing out waste and optimising resources through the life cycle and into next life applications. MI-ROG’s white papers provide an effective body of guidance on driving circular economy thinking into procurement, performance and strategic programmes and projects, built up over seven years of pragmatic cooperation.”*

*(Robert Spencer, Director, Sustainable Development, AECOM, Case Study Provider)*

At the SME level, start-up companies like Bridge Biotechnology Ltd face the same challenge that many micro SME’s encounter: a small staff team with limited resources. The organisation was working to support the reduction of food waste and the promotion of the circular economy through making things last. However for this SME, although the staff teams’ specialist knowledge had driven the product and process development, there were often additional skills gaps in areas which would really make a difference, such as compliance obligations and legal drivers and engineering principles, or market assessment and entry points to access markets to sell the product. Recognising that they would need help to accelerate the product to market, they accessed the Zero Waste Scotland Circular Economy business support programme<sup>44</sup>, which agreed to 30 days’ fully funded business support. This Circular Economy programme is delivered by a number of experienced framework consultants who in turn deliver circular economy projects using multi-skilled project teams (see [Bridge Biotechnology Ltd for more information](#)).

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## Convening and facilitating

As identified at the [Pre-Collaboration stage](#), convening, hosting and facilitating a collaboration is an extensive process which can sometimes detract organisers from the substantive issues they wish to tackle as part of the project or series of projects they are considering. Chapter 8 of the IEMA Change Management Guide by Penny Walker<sup>45</sup>, breaks down the core competencies required of facilitators into two categories of skills which are unlikely to be found in the same organisation: 1. neutral, independent focus on the process of collaborating, and 2. a charismatic credible track record in the field, world, issues that the collaborators are working on. In the event that those wishing to collaborate do not feel they meet these core competencies then they may wish to join an existing network organisation related to the topic, or create one with the support of facilitators, be they a professional body, a sector based alliance or other broader membership organisation.



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## Active participation

Once the collaboration begins, it is important for participants to remain actively engaged in the project, by displaying a positive commitment to work with the other partner organisations rolling their sleeves up and getting stuck into delivery of the project objectives (be it developing guidance, new market commitments, etc..)<sup>46</sup>. Ensuring that the organisations involved have the same (or at least complementary) ambitions which they know they can't achieve alone will help to ensure continued engagement. To support this, each participant should also have the desire and the capacity to build good working relationships, both at individual and organisational levels.

This active positive engagement by the participating organisations will collectively enthuse the group with the ability to face complexity and collaborate to create transformational and systemic change<sup>47</sup>.

Active engagement by Marshalls in the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), the foremost investigative agency for labour exploitation in the UK, in the fight against modern slavery is evidence of this. Helping to launch the GLAA Construction Protocol Platform<sup>48</sup>, share the collateral and invite 200 partner organisations to do the same, raised visibility of the modern slavery helpline number in construction settings, providing training material and empowering staff to spot the signs of modern slavery early on and report them safely without making the situation any worse for the potential victim(s). From an organisational perspective, the collaboration helped to highlight how by leveraging its operations Marshalls was able to make significant contributions to the fight against modern slavery, by going beyond internal structures and actively sharing with organisations across the sector (see [Marshalls case study here](#)).

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## Scalability

### Support

As highlighted at the outset with the example from the Leeds Climate Commission, it is essential for the collaboration to be replicable across a given sector (or beyond) if the organisations wish to support transformative change towards sustainability. This applies regardless of the type of collaboration, which could stretch from information sharing to a one-off project or the long term delivery of a mainstream service<sup>49</sup>. Both the Leeds Climate Commission and the MI-ROG case studies point to a need for ongoing support to help guide and inform how participants can implement the project commitments within their own organisations. For this reason, making the objectives of the collaboration simple and ensuring update communications are clearly and regularly disseminated to all participants will help to keep the project on track.

### Partners with global reach

The Pledge to Net Zero, which was founded by WSP, AECOM, IEMA and other leading organisations in the environmental services sector confirms the above principles. As the first industry commitment in the UK to require science-based targets from its signatories to tackle greenhouse gas emissions within their organisations, the importance of having global consultancies and professional memberships bodies to form the founding members would ensure that the Pledge could reach a wide audience.

Emphasising the importance of knowledge sharing, the expertise of the leading consultancies could be disseminated to other signatories to overcome uncertainties in understanding how to implement a science-based target in line with the UK Government's commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Founding professional bodies like IEMA and Society for the Environment (SocEnv) further provided guidance and advice for signatories or prospective signatories, including training and additional resources such as guidance and webinars. This sector-based approach to net zero can be easily replicated in other sectors through the collaboration of similarly influential organisations (See [Pledge to Net Zero case study here](#)).

***"The environmental sector has to be a leader for its own environmental performance. Pledge to Net Zero provides a simple way for organisations to take action."***

*(David Symons, UK Director of Sustainability, WSP, Case Study Provider)*

BASF, the multinational chemical company, took a similar initiative on the topic of sustainable packaging by engaging in a consortium of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) looking to support the development of sustainable packaging. Emphasising the fact that waste management borders should not present a barrier to the transition to a circular economy, the initiative successfully established trust between stakeholders. In doing so, the eco-packaging and knowledge sharing initiative highlighted the benefit of collaboration on technology, allowing participants to show commitment to change and sustainability beyond the direct project scope. To help scale up the initiative, a further 12 brands across multiple FMCG categories are anticipated to be signed up by January 2021, when the capacity is estimated to be 1.2 million bottles per year (See [BASF case study](#)).

Within the UK Built Environment, the Better Buildings Partnership has provided a similar engagement forum sector for the UK's leading property owners which look to improve the sustainability of existing buildings across the UK. Under the initiative all participants have signed up to the Climate Change Commitment which states that all companies will have published a net zero carbon pathway by the end of 2020 for new and existing buildings, providing the opportunity for an industry wide collaborative approach to a key sustainability topic (see [Better Buildings Partnership case study](#)).

*"In an effort to tackle the growing risks of climate change and the part played by the built environment, the UK's leading property owners have come together to make a commitment to support the UK real estate markets transition to a low carbon economy."*

*(Stacey Ann Medar, Sustainability and Energy Manager, Workspace Group, Case Study Provider)*

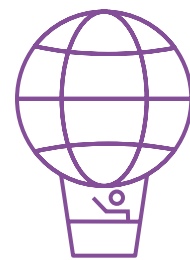
The uptake of the local collaboration model set out by the Leeds Climate Commission also showcases the importance of scalability in collaboration. Since the implementation of the commission, new climate commissions have been established as part of the Place-Based Climate Action Network (PCAN), which commenced in January 2019. PCAN aims to produce a replicable model for other places to establish their own climate commissions, and more commissions have been observed now coming onstream, independent from but supported by PCAN.



# Conclusion


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The insights provided, both in the text above and in the tables below, demonstrate the degree of positive and transformative change that can come from strategic collaboration with peers and other stakeholders across the value chain. Given the complexity and interconnected nature of sustainability, collaboration remains vital both now and in the future. The transferrable lessons noted in the case studies highlight that collaboration in one sphere does not preclude collaboration in another: the greater the number of collaborations an organisation has the greater its networks and its resilience to future unforeseen shocks. We hope professionals find this document a useful supporting tool for their work.





# List of case studies

Organisations	Auckland Council	
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Improving the positive impact of its funding and finance.</b></p>	<p>Auckland Council has been progressing a range of initiatives focussed on delivering more sustainable outcomes through its funding and financing activities. This has included refining its responsible investment policy to exclude fossil fuel production, the manufacture of tobacco and controversial weapons and generating revenue from gambling<sup>50</sup>, progressing the use of integrated reporting (IR) principles and climate risk disclosures within its annual reports<sup>51</sup> and developing a green bond borrowing programme<sup>52</sup>. Each of these initiatives have required co-ordination and collaboration between council’s finance and sustainability teams to ensure that the solutions developed adhered to both fiscal regulations and sustainability principles. In several instances, input from external parties with technical expertise in sustainable finance was also sought given the relative novelty of sustainable finance instruments in New Zealand</p>
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: The collaborators are different teams within the same organisation.</b></p>	<p>For the development of Council’s green bond programme – which culminated in the first green bond issuance by a domestic New Zealand issuer<sup>53</sup> – collaboration between the Council’s Treasury department and the Chief Sustainability Office was critical. The Treasury department provided direction on the mechanisms and requirements surrounding bond issuances in New Zealand, including liaison with financial regulators, banks and ratings agencies. The Chief Sustainability Office led on the development of the green bond framework which sets out aspects such as the eligibility criteria for assets, reporting requirements and alignment with global standards such as the Climate Bonds Initiative and Green Bond Principles. In addition, the legal, risk and financial control teams provided insights into specific aspects of programme structure, such as oversight of the use of bond proceeds and assurance of bond disclosures, whilst council asset owners helped to ensure the green bond asset pool would be compliant with the sustainability criteria developed for the programme.</p> <p>External technical insight was also sought to ensure that the framework developed for the green bond programme, as well as the initial green bond issuance itself, was compliant with local and international requirements.</p>
<p><b>What’s driving success?</b></p>	<p>A key driver of the success of the green bond programme development lay in the early recognition of the broad skills and expertise that would be required to complete the project. This allowed for internal and external partners to be identified as well as the clear definition and assignment of roles and responsibilities for the project.</p>	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>13 Climate Action 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure</p>	

Organisations	Auckland Council
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>Embedding sustainability considerations within council's funding and financing programmes has been an important part of the organisation's corporate sustainability journey. However it is also a key part of managing the organisation's corporate risk exposure and helping to direct capital into delivering broader sustainability and wellbeing outcomes for the Auckland region. Sustainable finance mechanisms also enable more stable and diverse capital flows, particularly considering the growing investor demands for greater disclosure and investments with more sustainable and resilient outcomes.</p>
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>The learning point: Recognising that some expertise didn't lie within the organisation and would require external input was an important lesson for this project – one that can be replicated in other projects.</p>

## Organisations

## BASF

### Description of the core challenge being addressed

#### Headline: Sustainable resource management and drinks packaging.

Globally, packaging is ubiquitous in daily lives and positively enables minimization of food waste and overall product breakage with advanced convenience features at very low cost. Over the past decade, the global packaging industry has enjoyed strong growth, driven by shifts in choice of substrates and expansion of new end-markets. Headline changes include the increased use of plastics to replace other substrates and accommodate consumers' demand for convenience, but also the economic boom in China and other emerging regions. However, widespread usage of single-use packaging containers has resulted in a heavy burden on the environment, and the management of packaging waste is facing a crisis due to two unresolved challenges. In the ongoing search for more sustainable drinks packaging, Diageo have been working on the production of a lightweight paper-based bottle. Through an ongoing relationship, Diageo contacted BASF in the UK during November 2019 to explore what might be possible in terms of barrier coating technologies.

### Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role

#### Headline: Fast Moving Consumer Goods industry initiative. Cross sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing

Diageo have set up a separate business, Pulpex Ltd, to scale up manufacture and have established a consortium of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies also searching for sustainable packaging of liquids. Pepsico and Unilever have been announced as partners, amongst others. Diageo expect process optimisation to be complete this Autumn and will carry out limited production by December. They anticipate that 12 brands across multiple FMCG categories will be signed up by January 2021, when the capacity should be 1.2 million bottles per year. GSK have been announced as a project partner with BASF as a technology partner.

### What's driving success?

#### This is a project which comes from long term understanding and relationships, which are ongoing. Key elements are as follows:

- Borders should not be barriers.
- Collaboration on technology and outcomes within such a project helps to show commitment to change and sustainability beyond the direct project scope. This allows increased brand value and some of the corporate ethos and strategy to be shared and understood in a 'noisy' environment.
- Knowing who to talk to...and what they can bring to the table is key...
- Committing time and openly sharing knowledge and best practice has been a cocreation ideology which BASF is committed to as part of its developmental ethos.
- Having the project move quickly in an area where innovation was seen as key has helped 'move mountains, ensuring delivery of the original aims.
- Building relationships wider and deeper provides opportunities for trust and conversation on future projects.

Organisations	BASF				
<p>SDGs aligned to</p>	<p>9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure            12. Responsible Consumption and Production            13. Climate Action            17. Partnerships for the Goals</p>				
<p>Business rationale and moral case</p>	<p>In a crowded, jostling consumer market and the ongoing, particularly regulatory and public concerns around single-use packaging waste, major changes in consumer packaging are needed. Regulators are moving on the issue, and FMCG businesses need to fundamentally rethink their packaging systems. This shows clearly there will be significant impact on the packaging industry but for those with the right focus and innovation capabilities, the opportunities will present themselves. Sustainability issues will be a leading issue...not a bolt on afterthought.</p>				
<p>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</p>	<p><b>In any innovation project:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be prepared to invest resources, time, technology in search of a shared goal.</li> <li>• In corporate and multi-national organisations there will always be more than one path...</li> <li>• The box like the packaging in this project has walls that will flex more than we think!</li> <li>• Trust the shared goal and use that to building the relationships.</li> </ul>				

## Organisations

## AECOM (MI-ROG)

### Description of the core challenge being addressed

#### Headline: Reducing waste and promoting circularity in construction.

AECOM founded the Major Infrastructure – Resource Optimisation Group (MI-ROG) in 2013 to provide an opportunity for the infrastructure sector to share best practice and facilitate collaboration and innovation on the circular economy.

For the UK, despite the strides being made in reducing the amount of waste generated by construction, the industry is still responsible for 60% of waste .

This work provides essential support in the transition to a circular infrastructure sector where waste is no longer an option.

#### The principles of the circular economy closely align with MI-ROG's purpose, to:

- Keeping resources in use for as long as possible;
- Extracting the maximum value from resources while in use;
- Recovering and regenerating products and materials at the end of life; and
- Keeping products, components and materials at their highest utility and value at all times.

Over the last seven years, MI-ROG has inspired and facilitated workflows on asset life cycle, carbon performance, circular economy strategy, critical materials availability, materials exchange and sustainable procurement.

### Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role

#### Headline: Knowledge sharing

Given the level of investment in infrastructure in the UK with the national Infrastructure and Construction Procurement Pipeline 2020/21<sup>54</sup> (published in June 2020) highlighting investment of £37 billion across 260 project across the next year, MI-ROG is an opportunity for key organisations in the sector to work together to drive the circular economy into infrastructure delivery.

#### The primary focus of MI-ROG is to:

- Facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practice amongst members, enabling discussion of key themes and drivers in relation to driving the circular economy in England.
- Promote an understanding of the aims of the circular economy and assist with the implementation of circular economy thinking and policies in member organisations and infrastructure project delivery, including optimising resource use and preventing resource scarcity.

## Organisations

## AECOM (MI-ROG)

Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role

**AECOM provides the secretariat of the forum and current members of the forum include:**

- Crossrail 2
- EDF Energy
- Environment Agency
- Gatwick Airport
- Heathrow Airport
- Highways England
- High Speed 2
- London Waste & Recycling Board (LWARB)
- Lower Thames Crossing
- National Grid
- Network Rail (System Operator)
- SP Energy Networks
- Tideway
- Transport for London
- The University of Sheffield.

**Since its inception in 2013, MI-ROG has published three White Papers, presenting a call to action for infrastructure owners and operators on several circular economy issues:**


- White paper No. 3 (2019): The case for a resource exchange mechanism<sup>55</sup>
- White paper No. 2 (2018): Measuring circular economy performance – suggestions for infrastructure organisations<sup>56</sup>
- White paper No. 1 (2016): Embedding circular economy principles into infrastructure operator procurement activities

At time of writing, MI-ROG's fourth White Paper is in production, focussing on circular economy approaches to reaching net zero carbon infrastructure.

What's driving success?

**Key learning points for success include:**

- Collaboration MI-ROG is achieved by involving different parts of the infrastructure sector, beyond just infrastructure owners and operators, for example third sector organisations, including the Carbon Trust and Business in the Community (BITC), and most recently with academic partners including the University of Sheffield (MI-ROG's first academic member).
- Engaging contractors and suppliers to participate in focused member hosted meetings, for example carbon and infrastructure with presentations from Skanska (low carbon leadership) and Volvo (electric site innovations).
- Engaging on an intellectual level and then putting things into everyday practice.- Helping align with current and emerging policy and regulatory drivers in England, for example, MI-ROG's engagement with the Defra waste prevention strategy.

Organisations	AECOM (MI-ROG)	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure            11. Sustainable Cities and Communities            12. Responsible Consumption and Production            13. Climate Action            17. Partnerships for the Goals</p>	
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>MI-ROG is a facility for fully circular infrastructure delivery by 2030.</p> <p>The circular economy (through minimising the use of natural resources, viewing ‘waste’ as a resource and keeping materials in circulation for as long as possible) provides a compelling model for reducing emissions and stewarding critical resources, contributing to the UK achieving legally binding target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.</p> <p>As major infrastructure organisations seek pathways to embed circular economy thinking and low carbon solutions into the design and delivery of their projects and programmes in this, the Climate Decade, collaboration across sectors and markets is increasingly vital.</p> <p>Applying the concept of the circular economy to the delivery of infrastructure presents particular challenges owing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The scale and spatial impact of the infrastructure footprint on society and the landscape and the associated resource demands to build it out.</li> <li>- The longevity of key infrastructure assets and the fact that they are comprised of a myriad of products and components with highly variable life cycles.</li> <li>- The very real demands around continuity of essential service, which demands an exacting posture with respect to risk and innovation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>One of the key transferrable lessons learned from MI-ROG is taking the approach of the forum and replicating it to create forums on other key environmental topics. For example, AECOM founded the Scottish Infrastructure Circular Economy Forum in 2017, and is currently exploring setting up an equivalent forum focused on environmental net gain and land stewardship.</p>	

Organisations	Business Environment Support Scheme Telford (BESST)
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Sustainable Resource Management and carbon reduction for regional businesses</b></p> <p>Business Environmental Target Achievement. Discussing common objectives then collaborating with other members and solution providers to develop solutions (e.g. Zero waste / Circular Economy, Carbon Reduction, Pollution prevention, natural capital support, Employee engagement).</p>
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Knowledge sharing and collaborative solutions</b></p> <p>Sustainability solutions hub, for the development and deployment of best practice on the basis that sustainability is not a competitive issue.</p> <p>Involving sustainability practitioners/environmental professionals, and the IEMA CE Network.</p>
<p><b>What the learning points were for success?</b></p>	<p>You're not alone! There are other environmental professionals with the same issues you face, so collaborate to create better solutions. BESST<sup>57</sup> is a business led network, and so focusses on business environmental issues whilst supporting regional inward investment</p> <p>BESST provides a 'one to many' approach for national environment support programs to improve engagement efficiency. Govt environmental strategies are vital, but should be deployed effectively to businesses through this type of collaborative network<sup>58</sup>.</p> <p>Members from larger organisations share knowledge with SME's to improve performance and compliance. BESST's approach is to have members present their issues and solutions alongside the business/consultant that has helped to deliver them. This increases the integrity of the best practice to become a validated local case study.</p> <p>The Love Your Rivers program involved Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Severn Trent and Telford &amp; Wrekin Council working with members and community volunteers to carry out water quality testing to detect source pollution. This resulted in six out of eight water bodies having increased quality, biodiversity habitat and members' decreased compliance risks<sup>59</sup>. BESST's circular economy innovation was used to show the effectiveness of Industrial Symbiosis (Bebka – Turkey, G7 Resource Efficiency Alliance) and used in a UK Government Office of Science report<sup>60</sup>, as a major contributor to England's Resources and Waste Strategy<sup>61</sup>.</p>



Organisations	Business Environment Support Scheme Telford (BESST)			
<p>SDGs aligned to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Sustainable Cities and Communities</li> <li>12: Responsible Consumption and Production</li> <li>13: Climate Action</li> <li>14: Life Below Water</li> <li>15: Life on Land</li> <li>16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions</li> <li>17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal</li> </ul>			      
<p>What's driving success?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business benefits (financial, carbon reduction, resource saving)</li> <li>- BESST member's customer demands to evidence environmental improvement (without 'greenwash')</li> </ul>			
<p>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</p>	<p>BESST started in 2002 with 5 interested members. Simple collaboration leads to shared issues and developed solutions. This success then attracts other potential members and shows that this 'start small' approach is scalable. The success of BESST's open and collaborative approach led to it becoming a model for others to follow (e.g. Shropshire and Hereford). These then joined the Sustainability West Midlands – Green Business Networks to share approaches and knowledge<sup>62</sup>.</p>			

## Organisations

## Bridge Biotechnology Ltd

### Description of the core challenge being addressed

#### Headline: Capacity building for SMEs and elimination of food waste

Bridge Biotechnology are a Scottish company who have developed technology which is a sustainable alternative to chlorine used for disinfection; ESOL™ electrolysed water. Current applications are for food and fresh produce use – using ESOL mist to keep products fresher for longer, therefore contributing to reduction of food waste and enabling the circular economy through making things last.

As a start-up company, challenges are similar to many micro SME's – a small staff team with limited resources. Although the staff teams' specialist knowledge has driven the product and process development, there are often additional skills gaps in areas which will really make a difference, for example in specific barriers such as compliance obligations and legal drivers, engineering principles, or market assessment and entry points to access markets to sell the product.

In the case of Bridge Biotechnology, technical support with awareness of standards & funding for the European Biocidal Approval & Soil Association Organic Approvals was required, as well as identification and targeting of the product into the market via market assessment and introductions.

### Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role

#### Headline: Knowledge transfer and network organisations for capacity building




Bridge Biotechnology recognised that to accelerate the product to market, they needed help. This help was identified in the form of partners who were able to provide the right level of technical and marketing support to boost their own teams' capability, overcoming barriers to market access. This happened by the company accessing the Zero Waste Scotland Circular Economy business support programme, which agreed to 30 days' fully funded business support. This Circular Economy programme is delivered by a number of experienced framework consultants who in turn deliver circular economy projects using multi-skilled project teams.

The collaboration with Zero Waste Scotland helped Bridge Biotechnology be connected with the Mabbett bid group, in itself a collaboration of team members including Pale Blue Dot Energy and the Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN). The solution team built to support Bridge Biotechnology included experts on circular economy, engineering design, carbon impact, marketing, and a Biocidal Directive legal compliance technical support consultant. The teams worked together with a specific project plan, delivering on each different aspect, whilst also keeping regular meetings to maintain overall focus on the delivery, and providing input to the Innovate UK Innovation Canvas tool which was used to fine-tune the service offering.

Having multiple parties assisting on the collaboration meant that elements could progress simultaneously, which helped overcome timeline barriers and accelerated the project towards market readiness.

Organisations	Bridge Biotechnology Ltd	
<p><b>What's driving success?</b></p>	<p>Without the support of partners with technical and market knowledge the barriers to market entry would have remained challenging. Barriers also can cause delays, which bring a financial cost and an increased risk of challenge from competitors in the marketplace – which can kill a business.</p> <p>As Bridge Biotechnology said “we are absolutely delighted with the project, the process and the outcomes. This type of partnership support can literally be the difference between companies like ours succeeding or failing”.</p>	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>12. Responsible Consumption and Production</p> <p>13. Climate Action</p> <p>17. Partnerships for the Goals</p>	 <p>ESOL treatment of fruit and vegetables is already bringing real environmental, economic and social benefits so the company believes that a project designed around increasing its market share to prevent waste is very much in line with sustainable development goals.</p>
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>Research has shown that over one third of food is wasted. Food uses resources for food to be produced, farmed, processed, stored, packaged and transported.</p> <p>Food waste contributes to global warming and climate change through loss of an already significant carbon footprint and as emissions as it degrades or is composted. On a planet where many people still go hungry food waste is also a moral issue.</p> <p>Extending shelf-life means cost savings as well as environmental savings, which supports the business case for clients to invest in this technology and processes.</p>	
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>Partnerships come in many forms. Never underestimate the power of the network of people and knowledge you have access to. As Bridge Biotechnology learned, these links were vital to unlocking funded business support, effectively expanding the teams' capabilities and expertise through the partnership approach to enabling the expertise required to get the product to market. Bridge Biotechnology had a clear business proposition in the ESOL technology and application – but the company acknowledged that there were a number of areas which could become 'business blockers'. Recognition then paved the way to the partnership working - developing solutions and assistance targeted at the weak areas to enable business success.</p> <p>The company had to have the ability to self-critique, listen to others and take action as advised, working collaboratively towards success. Support mechanisms are sometimes not obvious and may take some research, but once accessed there are often additional beneficial networks which open up – so it is worth persisting to find the right partners and funding opportunities.</p>	

Organisations	Innocent drinks Ltd
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Sustainable water use in a catchment.</b></p> <p>In 2009, innocent conducted a water footprint of its biggest selling innocent smoothie and found its Spanish Strawberries grown in Huelva province (SW Spain) were a risk. The region had high water scarcity and multiple water catchment users were at risk economically, whilst the ecologically significant Donana national park wetlands were receding dangerously. Instead of changing its sourcing innocent decided to try and help the strawberry growing region achieve water sustainability. This was a huge undertaking and innocent needed to collaborate to get the project off the ground.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Joint research, joint innovation, joint goal-setting and multiple projects to meet the goals.</b></p> <p>To start innocent partnered with the university of Cordoba and a small number of other brands and retailers purchasing from the region. Innocent then joined the SAI Platform and through them formed a water working group which continues to lead the project. They work locally with two consultancy groups for the implementation with the farming community.</p> <p><b>Project goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve and promote sustainable water use for berry crops grown throughout Huelva, through policy engagement, industry alignment and training for growers.</li> <li>- For participating growers, to deliver a 20% improvement in water use efficiency, saving a collective 1 billion litres of water.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What's driving success?</b></p>	<p><b>Need really strong governance –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is doing what?</li> <li>• Document all decisions taken.</li> <li>• Agree up front goals, KPIs, timelines and keep referring to them.</li> <li>• In doing so, acknowledge everyone has different priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Need clear communications –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Version control and storage of critical project documents.</li> <li>• Appropriate communication structure (e.g. don't send emails to everyone every time, need to work out who is involved in each aspect).</li> </ul> <p><b>Think about project scope –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate resource to planning your exit – how far do you want to go with this?</li> <li>• As new topics arise, can these be incorporated into future phases of the project, rather than distracting from immediate delivery?</li> </ul>

Organisations	Innocent drinks Ltd	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>12. Responsible Consumption and Production (is the lead SDG for most of innocent’s sustainability work).</p> <p>14. Life Below Water (Connected to the Donana ecosystem)</p> <p>15: Life on Land (Connected to the Donana ecosystem)</p>	  
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>Innocent could have stopped sourcing from this region but it chose to stay and address the issues, with help from a wider network..</p>	
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>The three key aspects for success of this collaboration around the need for strong governance, clear communications and thinking about project scope can be applied to other projects in any sector.</p>	

## Organisations

## Leeds Climate Commission

### Description of the core challenge being addressed

#### **Headline: Accelerate and monitor progress on climate mitigation and adaptation in Leeds.**

Informed by the work of the UK Committee on Climate Change, the Leeds Climate Commission seeks to be an independent voice in the city, providing authoritative advice on steps towards a low carbon, climate resilient future so as to inform policies and shape the actions of local stakeholders and decision makers. It will monitor progress towards meeting the city's carbon reduction targets and recommend actions to keep the city on track and advise on the assessment of the climate-related risks and adaptation opportunities in the city and on progress towards climate resilience.

The Commission aims to foster collaboration on projects that result in measurable contributions towards meeting the city's climate reduction targets and the delivery of enhanced climate resilience, particularly in flood risk. It will promote best practice in public engagement on climate change and its impacts to support robust decision-making.

The Commission will also act as a forum where organisations can exchange ideas, research findings, information and best practice on carbon reduction and climate resilience.

### Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role

#### **Headline: Formally constituted multi-stakeholder forum with clear governance and multiple work streams.**

The Leeds Climate Commission was established in 2017 to help Leeds to make a positive choice on issues relating to energy, carbon, weather and climate. It brings together key organisations and actors from across the city and from the public, private and third sectors.

The Leeds Climate Commission's members are drawn from 31 businesses and organisations across the City of Leeds.

The Leeds Climate Commission is chaired by Professor Andy Gouldson (University of Leeds), with the vice chair from Leeds City Council (Councillor Lisa Mulherin), with members being drawn from key organisations and groups from across the city. The Commission is guided by a Strategy Group and supported by working groups on low carbon development, climate resilience and public engagement and communications. Each of these groups meet 4 times a year, with agendas and notes from the Strategy Group being published through Leeds City Council website and summarized in its newsletters. The Commission has also have an ad hoc project development and finance group, formed since a networking initiative on 1st May 2018, which has developed a programme of workshops and hosted a national conference on green finance with Dept for BEIS and UK100 in January 2019.

## Organisations

## Leeds Climate Commission

### What's driving success?

The experience of operating the Leeds Climate Commission has resulted in the following learning points about what the Commission is and is not.

#### The Commission is there...

1. To connect and mobilise local actors, promote partnership working and the co-production of climate action, and to extend the reach and capacity of local government;
2. To promote inclusive processes that involve and empower local actors, support meaningful representation of different groups and work towards fair/legitimate outcomes;
3. To build a sense of common ownership and shared responsibility, helping to turn an over-whelming challenge into practicable, deliverable activities;
4. To serve as an independent and trusted voice in the area, building climate/carbon literacy, acting as a critical friend and a focal point/clearing house for information;
5. To be a positive voice, emphasising how climate action can be an opportunity to deliver on other social, economic and environmental objectives;
6. To strengthen the evidence base and commission, prepare, support and/or promote the adoption and delivery of local climate action plans;
7. To inform, guide, support and track progress towards appropriate local climate targets and promote transparency;
8. To review current activities, celebrate successes and promote the replication/scaling up of different forms of best practice;
9. To provide neutral spaces for the review of different issues, and publish position papers on contentious issues to support informed, balanced debate;
10. To provide on-going, longer-term support for climate action that spans electoral cycles and variations in public awareness, business support etc.

#### The Commission is NOT

- A place for marketing or lobbying
- An attempt to take over council responsibilities
- A substitute for direct public representation
- A body that directly designs or delivers programmes or projects


### SDGs aligned to

7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
13. Climate Action



Organisations	Leeds Climate Commission
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>One of the most important activities of the Commission has been to update the 2012 mini-Stern report on cost-effective carbon reduction measures. Analysis has shown that by 2030 Leeds can save over £277 million annually or £348 a year for everyone in the city if it exploited all of the profitable measures for energy efficiency and low carbon development. This would also create 4,200 extra years of employment whilst also cutting carbon emissions for 22.7% on top of what is happening anyway. Leeds Climate Commission will help to ensure these opportunities become a reality by carrying out further detailed analysis of the measures needed to fill the gap between the impact of national schemes and local carbon reduction targets and to understand the scale of new investments by local partners in all sectors required to meet these targets.</p>
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>Inspired by the Leeds model, new climate commissions have been established as part of the Place-Based Climate Action Network (PCAN), which commenced in January 2019. The ESRC-funded network aims to help the UK meet the requirements of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change and the UK Climate Change Act by building local capacities and stimulating the flow of green finance into cities across the UK. Central to PCAN, new climate commissions were launched in Belfast in January 2020 and Edinburgh in February 2020. PCAN aims to produce a replicable model for other places to establish their own climate commissions, and more are now coming onstream independent from but supported by PCAN. The most recent additions are Doncaster Climate and Biodiversity Commission, Surrey Climate Commission, Croydon Climate Crisis Commission and Lincoln Climate Commission. More commissions are also planned to start in 2020.</p>



Organisations	Marshalls plc	
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Delivering against our Modern Slavery Statement commitments and KPIs.</b></p> <p>Utilising Marshalls’ business operations – namely its Transport and Logistics operations the length and breadth of the country - to raise awareness of modern slavery, raise visibility of the modern slavery helpline number in construction settings – not readily available to law enforcement – training and empowering its team to spot the signs and report safely; keeping themselves safe and also not making the situation any worse for the potential victim/s, sending a clear message that Marshalls is working to end modern slavery<sup>63</sup>.</p>	
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Sector knowledge sharing and learning, promoting good practice with the GLAA and Crimestoppers</b></p> <p>#slaveryonyourdoorstep</p> <p>Marshalls are working closely with the Gangmasters &amp; Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) as one of the participants in the GLAA Construction Protocol Platform<sup>64</sup>. Marshalls worked with GLAA to develop the training film, launch the initiative with over 200 construction sector organisations, and to share the collateral and invite them to do the same. This has now extended into a program combining Marshalls the GLAA and Crimestoppers<sup>65</sup>. The Crimestoppers campaign is designed to demonstrate that everyone has a role to play in helping to spot and report signs of modern slavery. Due to its industry leading work to tackle modern slavery Marshalls have been asked to encourage the wider private sector to play their part harnessing the Power Logistics<sup>66</sup>.</p> <p>There are now 2 podcasts and blogs<sup>67</sup> on the Crimestoppers website, which have been shared widely on social media featuring Marshalls Business &amp; Human Rights Lead, Elaine Mitchel-Hill, with Marshalls Transport Director, Nigel Basey and driver, James Eastwood, Mick Duthy, Crimstoppers’ Operations Director and Paul Coffey, Head of Engagement, from the GLAA.</p>	
<p><b>What’s driving success?</b></p>	<p>By leveraging its business operations Marshalls can make a significant contribution to raising awareness of modern slavery, providing intelligence to law enforcement and thereby making its organisation as toxic as possible to organised crime (i.e. those who seek to exploit both vulnerable people and corporations).</p> <p>This is not a Marshalls only issue, it is sector and industry wide and the GLAA and Crimestoppers are working with stakeholders across the industry to combat modern slavery.</p>	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>8. Decent Work and Economic Growth (Specifically goal 8.7)</p> 	

## Organisations

## Marshalls plc

### Business rationale and moral case

Business has a stark choice to make. It can act with immediacy to disrupt and dismantle the criminal organisations exploiting and abusing vulnerable individuals – men, women and children, whether in forced labour, domestic servitude, being sexual exploited or a combination of these and more besides – or it can stand by and see its own operations and existing commercial landscape disrupted and dismantled before its eyes by criminals whose ingenuity, adaptability, disregard and cruelty knows no bounds; they do not have to get ‘sign off’ from boards, develop complex strategies or sit in endless meeting before making the most of opportunities. They simply take them, and in the process disrupt and dismantle your operations.

The Marshalls message to those who would seek to exploit vulnerable individuals is that Marshalls is aware, active and essentially a toxic environment for modern slavery. Its message to suppliers and competitors in construction is to join Marshalls in this approach; Marshalls will share its Power of Logistics collateral, insights and any learnings it has that might be useful to help it implement quickly; its drivers will willingly share their experiences with yours.

This space is about collaboration, not competition. It’s in all of our interests to do all that we can to identify, report and prevent modern slavery. The way forward now, more than ever, must be towards information sharing, intelligence-led analysis, focused activity and to collaborating with all of the actors who must be at the table for us to begin to make any meaningful progress in this space.

### What aspects make it a scalable case study?

Marshalls have shared all the materials and Crimestoppers are actively campaigning in all sectors.

Marshalls encourage others in the transport and logistics sector to join the ‘Power of Logistics’ movement. Simply take our campaign collateral, use it as it is or amend it as you wish – you can download it using the buttons below.

- View the ‘End Modern Slavery’ Logo – You are invited to put your own company name on it
- Download the ‘End Modern Slavery’ credit card;
- Download the ‘Signs of Modern Slavery’ A6 postcard;
- Download the ‘How to spot the signs of modern slavery’ information sheet.

If you wish to use the ‘End Modern Slavery’ logo on your vehicles, just get in touch and Marshalls will provide it: [poweroflogistics@marshalls.co.uk](mailto:poweroflogistics@marshalls.co.uk). The Marshalls transport and logistics team, including their drivers, will share their experiences with you and give you any assistance that we can.

## Organisations

## Peel L&P

### Description of the core challenge being addressed

#### **Headline: Creating a landscape-scale natural capital baseline from Merseyside to South Yorkshire.**

Peel L&P is a large landowner in the North West of England that has been working on natural capital assessments since 2017.

A few years ago, Peel L&P started to build our internal knowledge on the emerging subject of quantitative natural capital assessment and commissioned a report called Understanding Natural Capital in Practice to educate ourselves on how this could be applied to our business activities. It found that the terminology used was foreign to people within our business and identified a need to raise awareness of the value of natural capital assessment so that it could be implemented to its full potential.

Through understanding more about natural capital, Peel recognised the importance of working collaboratively with stakeholders to understand the flow of ecosystem services from natural capital assets across the region, in order to aid decisions concerning future land use, in the light of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and forthcoming Environment Bill.

By promoting a consistent approach to natural capital over a large geographical area, Peel L&P could see the wider benefits for all stakeholders involved as well as for the landscape-scale environment.

### Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role



#### **Headline: Knowledge sharing and development of good practice, series of discrete co-funded projects**


Peel L&P is working with stakeholders such as Nature Connected (Liverpool City Region's Local Nature Partnership (LNP)), Liverpool John Moores University, Cheshire & Warrington LNP and LEP, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and LNP, Doncaster's Commission on the Climate & Biodiversity Emergency and Sheffield City Region.

Each group of stakeholders has declared a climate and biodiversity emergency and is at a different stage of implementing a natural capital approach to its geographical area.


Natural Capital commissioning or working groups have brought together a number of local experts and interested parties to determine the scope of a natural capital assessment, in some areas including a natural capital investment plan.

As a landowner with interests across the North, Peel L&P is taking a collaborative approach to help transfer knowledge on the emerging field of natural capital assessment between geographical areas. This includes providing financial support to natural capital assessments alongside other partners, ensuring efficiencies through the adoption of demonstrated best practice and offering support from the Sustainability Director.

Organisations	Peel L&P	
<p><b>What's driving success?</b></p>	<p><b>This is a long-term collaboration which is ongoing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committing time and openly sharing knowledge and best practice has been welcomed by partners and helps to build a strong partnership founded on trust.</li> <li>• Offering to part-fund assessments has helped to mobilise assessments swiftly and encouraged the participation of other funders.</li> <li>• Active participation in working groups through consistent attendance at meetings and offline discussions has been appreciated by partners.</li> <li>• Collaboration helps to show Peel L&amp;P's commitments to sustainability matters beyond the direct scope of natural capital.</li> <li>• Building relationships provides opportunities for dialogue on other topics in the future.</li> <li>• Participation in collaborative work at a landscape-scale represents a significant time commitment but is rewarded with high value, long lasting relationships and enhanced credibility for one's organisation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>15. Life on Land and 17: Partnerships for the Goals</p>	 
<p>It should be noted that Peel L&amp;P's Sustainability 5 Year Business Plan is led by the UN SDGs</p>		
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consistent approach to natural capital across the landscape.</li> <li>• Building stronger relationships with local stakeholders.</li> <li>• Using our business skills to help other partners.</li> <li>• Collaboration helps to show Peel L&amp;P's commitments to sustainability matters beyond the direct scope of natural capital.</li> <li>• Building relationships provides opportunities for dialogue on other topics in the future.</li> <li>• Collaboration helps to enhance our credibility.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p><b>In order to genuinely collaborate, be prepared for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time commitment.</li> <li>• Sharing knowledge &amp; best practice.</li> <li>• Active participation.</li> <li>• Going beyond the call of duty to build trust &amp; credibility.</li> </ul>	

Organisations	Sheffield Sustainability Network (SSN)	
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Local sustainability network focused on skills, training and knowledge sharing</b></p>	<p>The Sheffield Sustainability Network exists to support and enable local businesses and organisations to develop and drive a sustainable economy in the Sheffield City Region.</p> <p>SSN has several methods by which it promotes knowledge sharing including social media pages and a regular newsletter, as well as virtual networking. Over the course of 2021 SSN will be developing a series of training sessions, delivered by a range of members, to help other members learn through others' experiences. To inform this, the network has developed its 'skills jigsaw' - identifying the range of skillsets a business might need to wholly integrate sustainability into their business format. Each 'jigsaw' piece covers a series of 'soft' skillsets required by businesses including communication, collaboration, and community in addition to the technical knowledge of operational carbon reduction and supply chain management. It is a reminder to business to consider sustainability in the round and each training session will be aligned with one or more of the jigsaw pieces to help members identify areas where they most need support.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Knowledge sharing among SMEs</b></p>	<p>SSN is an independent, member-led community of businesses, charities and other organisations that are committed to building a sustainable Sheffield.</p> <p>The network is designed to facilitate knowledge sharing between members with a specific goal of B2B knowledge exchange. The network is principally populated by SMEs, with some input from larger organisations based in the City Region. It was started by 3 small business owners in Sheffield looking to share knowledge about sustainability in way that chimed with the SME and small business community.</p>
<p><b>What's driving success?</b></p>		<p>SSN is focused on B2B engagement which tends to be much better received by the small and medium business community as it comes from businesses of a similar size or sector or experience-level, meaning that the business pressures faced by members are understood and solutions take this into account.</p> <p>SSN's format integrates well with the existing initiatives in the City Region and the network has already been asked to participate in several City-driven consultations and collaborations to drive a low carbon transition.</p>
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>11. sustainable cities and communities 17. Partnerships for the goals</p>	 

Organisations	Sheffield Sustainability Network (SSN)
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>“The business case for sustaining the planet is stronger than the business case for trashing it” Bob Willard, Future Fit Business</p> <p>Businesses in Sheffield (and around the world) are increasingly seeing the need to consider sustainability in their day to day activities, but the small and small-to-medium business community finds it incredibly difficult to engage as the topic can quickly become overwhelming. The purpose of SSN is to share knowledge of other local businesses that have made changes, how they did it and what the outcomes were, to demonstrate the achievability of sustainability measures.</p>
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>SMEs, and the smaller business community in particular, have far fewer resources in order to make a shift to a sustainable business model. The network itself is run by small businesses. This is a huge strength as it speaks directly to the member base.</p> <p>It also presents challenges, as resource constraints mean that progress can be hampered by market challenges, seasonality and even family illness. All of this needs to be taken into account when collaborating with small businesses.</p> <p>Embedding the collaboration with other local government initiatives ensures that it continues to play a vital and long-lasting role in the transition, which cements the collaboration as a long-term influencer.</p>

Organisations		The Sourcing Team Ltd <a href="https://sourcing.co.uk/certified">https://sourcing.co.uk/certified</a> B Corp	
<b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b>	<b>Headline: Supply chain management and the fight against modern slavery</b>	The Client (Oxfam) wanted to address the challenges and risks associated with their promotional merchandise along the supply chain. Their sustainability risk assessment ranked it as a high risk. They wanted to address the challenge of eliminating modern slavery and move to an ethical and transparent approach.	
<b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b>	<b>Headline: Multi-stakeholder industry collaboration on promotional merchandising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Sourcing Team: as lead partner, managed the sourcing and purchasing of Promotional merchandise. The provision of training and setting procurement standards.</li> <li>- Oxfam: as customers and consumers of the products.</li> <li>- Offshore and Inshore Suppliers and Factories: as manufacturers of the new sustainable merchandise.</li> <li>- Collaboration: Creation of the Ethical Promotional Product Strategic Alliance (EPPSA).</li> </ul>	
<b>What's driving success?</b>		<p>The creation of the Ethical Promotional Product Strategic Alliance (EPPSA) enabled a common understanding for all the actors along the supply chain.</p> <p>This enabled the design and delivery of specific Audits and Due Diligence for this supply chain (as other standards and labels fell short).</p> <p>The gap identified that Social and Environmental Sustainability Training was required to overcome the assumption that everyone understood sustainability.</p> <p>Long term investment and commitment are required in finding the right partners to work with</p>	
<b>SDGs aligned to</b>	12. Responsible Consumption and Production		
<b>Business rationale and moral case</b>		The moral case was to negate the negative impacts of social and environmental impacts along the supply chain for promotional merchandise. Such impacts would include having merchandise that is free from any form of social deprivation (e.g. modern slavery), and environmental harm (e.g. deforestation).	
<b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b>		One of the key transferrable lessons learned from this approach is that partnerships require a common set of standards and language. The common standards allow all actors along the value chain to adhere to the same set of ethical rules. This collaborative approach produced - The Ethical Promotional Product Strategic Alliance (EPPSA) standard.	

Organisations	Pledge To Net Zero
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Net Zero</b></p> <p>In June 2019, the UK Government committed to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. This was a significant commitment and now the true challenge is to ensure that this ambition is realised. This will require change, leadership and transition in every aspect of the economy, and organisations also have an important role to play should the UK successfully meet this target. The environmental services sector is uniquely positioned to tackle this challenge due to the nature of its work being environmentally-focused.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Multi-stakeholder pledge in a specific sector, sharing learning and producing joint guidance.</b></p> <p>Pledge To Net Zero is the first industry commitment in the UK requiring science-based targets from its signatories to tackle greenhouse gas emissions within their organisations. The initiative was developed by the environmental services sector with the aim of making the sector a leader for taking action on climate change. It was co-founded by the Society for the Environment (SocEnv), the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE), the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and the Environmental Industries Commission (EIC), together with leading environmental consultancies WSP and AECOM. These founding bodies are responsible for driving the initiative, including raising awareness through their own networks, and offering support to organisations looking to become signatories.</p> <p><b>The Pledge requires three commitments from its signatories:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To set and commit to delivering a greenhouse gas target in line with either a 1.5°C or well below 2°C climate change scenario – covering buildings and travel as a minimum.</li> <li>2. To publicly report greenhouse gas emissions and progress against this target each year.</li> <li>3. To publish one piece of research or thought leadership each year on practical steps to delivering an economy in line with climate science and in support of net zero carbon.</li> </ol> <p>Launching in November 2019, there are currently 50 signatories to the Pledge, representing multiple sectors, including private sector consultancies, public sector organisations, professional bodies and non-consultancy companies.</p> <p>By collaborating to share resources and knowledge, the environmental services sector seeks to make a meaningful contribution to the government's efforts to transition to a net zero economy.</p>



Organisations	Pledge To Net Zero	
<p><b>What's driving success?</b></p>	<p>There are some key learnings attributed to the success of Pledge To Net Zero. Firstly, effective communication is important, not only between the collaborative partners but also when communicating the initiative to others. It was important for us to ensure that interested and relevant organisations saw the initiative as simple and not overwhelmingly technical. Additionally, the importance of flexibility was realised throughout the process in terms of balancing organisations which are experiencing challenges whilst also being thorough with the commitments required by the Pledge. Lastly, and related to the prior point, guidance and advice was available at every step of the way for signatories or prospective signatories, including webinars organised by IEMA which were attended by 1,000 people. The informative webinars include 'A guide to pledging' and 'A guide to setting a science-based target'.</p>	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure</li> <li>11. Sustainable Cities and Communities</li> <li>13. Climate Action</li> <li>17. Partnerships for the goals</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>The Pledge was designed to galvanise support from environmental services organisations for collaborative action towards achieving the UK's 2050 net zero target. Climate change has the potential to drastically change the way we all live, and though awareness of this is not new (nor one's carbon footprint), the UK's net zero legislation was only mandated in July 2019, meaning there will be some uncertainties in understanding what needs to be done to achieve it. By sharing learnings, resources and collaborating with the myriad expert organisations across the environmental services sector, the Pledge presents an opportunity for our sector to drive the UK's transition to a low carbon future.</p>	
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>By collaborating with both global consultancies and professional memberships bodies to form the founding members, the Pledge can reach a wide audience. Leading consultancies WSP and AECOM are able to offer their expert knowledge in the area of carbon reduction and climate resilience, and professional membership bodies such as SocEnv, IEMA, ACE and EIC are able to encourage their individual and corporate members to support the initiative and provide industry-leading training and resources. This sector-based approach to net zero can be easily replicated in other sectors through the collaboration of similarly influential organisations.</p>	

Organisations	Workspace PLC Commercial Real Estate (Better Buildings Partnership)	
<p><b>Description of the core challenge being addressed</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: Improving the sustainability of existing UK buildings</b></p> <p>Providing a consistent framework or guide for the sustainability challenges facing the industry to ensure all contributors are working towards the same targets..</p>	
<p><b>Nature of the collaboration and who the key partners are and their contribution / role</b></p>	<p><b>Headline: UK property sector partnership and supporting the fight against climate change</b></p> <p>Sector partnership enabling partners to meet a long-term goal through producing joint guidance and a common methodology The Better Buildings Partnership (BBP) is a collaborative partnership of the UK's leading property owners with the aim to improve the sustainability of existing buildings across the UK. All participants have now signed up to the Climate Change Commitment which states that all companies will have published a net zero carbon pathway by the end of 2020 for new and existing buildings covering both operational and embodied carbon.</p> <p>Following the UK's commitment to become net zero by 2050, the BBP have outlined it Climate Commitments<sup>68</sup> which all members have agreed and signed up to which states that all companies will have published a net zero carbon pathway by the end of 2020 for new and existing buildings covering both operational and embodied carbon.</p>	
<p><b>What's driving success?</b></p>	<p>The BBP mapped out the criteria for calculating the net zero by 2020 following various consultations. This process was helpful to get wider industry support and set clear expectations on the calculations and methodologies. For example, outlining what needed to be included and excluded from the various scope emissions as well as gaining consensus from all participant.</p>	
<p><b>SDGs aligned to</b></p>	<p>7. Affordable and Clean Energy</p> <p>11. Sustainable Cities and Communities</p> <p>12. Responsible Consumption and Production</p> <p>13. Climate Action annual reports.</p>	
<p><b>Business rationale and moral case</b></p>	<p>Provide overarching guidance and understanding for individual businesses to develop a robust net zero target the address the environmental impacts within the built environment.</p>	
<p><b>What aspects make it a scalable case study?</b></p>	<p>One of the key transferrable lessons from outlining the Climate Change Commitment is the benefit an industry wide collaborative approach to a key sustainability topic.</p> <p>The Commitment provided a common guidance and methodology to provide a consistency in how a net zero approach was calculated and adopted across the industry. This approach will potentially be used in conversation around calculating embedded carbon in commercial property and aligning to existing frameworks such as the UKGBC's definition of Net Zero<sup>69</sup></p>	

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## About IEMA

IEMA is the professional body for everyone working in environment and sustainability. We're committed to supporting, encouraging and improving the confidence and performance, profile and recognition of all these professionals. We do this by providing resources and tools, research and knowledge sharing along with high quality formal training and qualifications to meet the real world needs of members from their first steps on the career ladder, right to the very top. We believe that together we can change perceptions and attitudes about the relevance and vital importance of sustainability as a progressive force for good. Together we're transforming the world to sustainability.

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