

Engaging the Food and Drink Sector in the United Nations Global Compact – Roundtable Highlights



United Nations
Global Compact

M&S
EST. 1884



EVENT SUMMARY

DNV GL was delighted to host a Food and Drink Roundtable with the UN Global Compact (UNGC) Network UK and the Food and Drink Federation on the 16th June 2016, under the theme ***Engaging the Food and Drink Sector in the United Nations Global Compact.***

With a multiplication of sustainability schemes and initiatives, this event was an opportunity for businesses to learn more about the UN Global Compact and its UK Network, and its potential relevance. Challenging questions were asked throughout the event, fulfilling its original aim: *to be an opportunity for an open and honest discussion and peer based learning.*

The afternoon stemmed debates such as:

- *Why the Global Compact?*
- *Why would it be relevant to my business?*
- *How does it fit within the SDGs?*
- *How should we approach managing human rights in large supply chains?*
- *What should we do about the Modern Slavery Act in the UK?*

These questions were answered by the Global Compact itself and other attendees – all on different stages of their sustainability journey. Our speakers from **M&S** and **The One Brand** also detailed their experiences leveraging UNGC membership to support their wider corporate responsibility and sustainability strategies.

Transforming Business, Changing the World... A Global Movement

'The work of the Global Compact has played a pivotal role in teaching the business community that infinite growth is not possible on a finite planet...'

M&S and Human Rights...

'The Modern Slavery Act is a game changer...'

Louise Nicholls, Head of Responsible Sourcing - Plan A, M&S, focused on Human Rights issues, coinciding with the publication of the company's first ever [Human Rights Report](#) on the day of the event, alongside the release the [M&S Modern Slavery Statement 2015/16](#). M&S is a pioneer in this area being one of the first companies to report and is looking for feedback on its approach.

M&S signed-up to the UNGC in May 2016, after several years working on the company's human rights strategy, and developing and embedding the 'M&S Foods Sustainability Scorecard', which is used to both engage and reward suppliers based on their sustainability performance across a range of issues, including human rights. The [M&S Supplier map](#), is an interesting example of efforts to improve supply chain transparency and supplier accountability by providing a global view of over a thousand factories in the M&S first tier supply chain, across 53 countries.

This work builds on M&S Plan A Strategy, which is reaching its 10 year anniversary. The [2016 Plan A Report](#), assured by DNV GL, has just been published.

Integrating UNGC into your Brand...

'4 insights into the UNGC as an ethical brand:

- *Do what is morally right*
- *Do what you say you're going to do*
- *Be prepared to adapt when things change*
- *Think big (or little)'*

Duncan Goose, CEO, of The One Brand, a bottled water brand that donates all of its profits to fund sustainable water projects, focused on insights related to the UNGC and what it means to be an ethical brand with some great examples of reputational challenges for companies such as Innocent. The One Brand, a certified [B Corp](#), signed-up to the UNGC in 2015, to make the most of **the opportunity to work with other like-minded businesses and institutions to create global impact**. Duncan cited the [Global Fund for Water](#), as an example of how this kind of collaboration can work and gain traction internationally through the UNGC network.

Steve Kenzie, Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network UK

The idea of 'a global compact of shared values and principles which will give a human face to the global market' was first introduced in a speech to business leaders in 1999 by the UN Secretary-General. With universal principals in areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, the UNGC now has over 8,500 members.

It brings various benefits:

- The requirements, which include a public CEO commitment and the publication of an annual Communication on Progress (CoP) have helped to drive the sustainability agenda;
- The opportunity to engage the UNGC network to share best practice through working groups, such as; Global Compact LEAD; the CEO Water Mandate; Caring for Climate; and Responsible Investment are all important areas for the Food and Drinks Industry;
- The increase in extra-territorial laws (e.g. the UK Modern Slavery Act) that require initiatives to manage supply chain risks, are areas which the UNGC network can assist in terms of access to local actors and insights.

Linkages between the UNGC and other initiatives such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as the Food and Agriculture Business Principles and the Global Fund for Water, were also discussed sparking companies to begin to consider how they can integrate the SDGs into their sustainability strategies.

 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



Tracy Oates, Director, DNV GL – Sustainability Advisory

The UNGC and associated UN Sustainability Goals (SDGs) provide an opportunity for a holistic approach. For leadership in sustainability, we'll need to think how current practices promote behavioural change of consumers, protect natural resources in areas such as human rights, value chain and stewardship. Food and Drink companies know the issues and that they need to address the problems beyond incremental initiatives to scalable solutions that can be applied across large, complex, supply chains. Leadership needs to go beyond issue management to demonstrate that sustainability is integrated into the core business strategy and acknowledge the systemic global challenges, such as those represented by the SDGs. Companies need to know that they are not alone and collaborate to identify transformative solutions that create new markets and new value. We need to understand how new technologies might bring new insights and opportunities. These discussions should include governments and policy makers. There are already great examples of companies, such as M&S and The One Brand, being at the forefront on responding, and the Food and Drink Sector, with its strong culture of innovation and efficiency, means it is well placed to continue this sustainability journey.

ABOUT DNV GL

We are a global classification, certification, technical assurance and advisory company, serving customers in all industry sectors, with a strategic focus on the Food and Drink sector. Driven by our purpose of safeguarding life, property and the environment, we enable organisations to advance the safety and sustainability of their business.

Last year on the 15th anniversary of the UN Global Compact, DNV GL conducted an assessment of the corporate sustainability movement and the role of the Global Compact in enabling this change. Our [report](#), entitled **Identifying the path forward for the UN Global Compact**, was launched by our CEO in an address to the UN plenary.

For further details about DNV GL and our services visit our website:
<https://www.dnvgl.co.uk/assurance/>.

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Join us for our upcoming events:

July 5th	Assurance Roundtable - Getting value from your sustainability assurance Click here for further information.
July 18th	Reporting Roundtable - Material world - using materiality to drive your strategy and reporting. Click here for further information.