

Global

challenges,

Dutch solutions

International edition

2030 Agenda



How enterprises are advancing the Sustainable Development Goals



Contents

Foreword and recommendations	4
1 Where do we stand?	8
2 What contribution is the business community making to achieving the SDGs	12
I Ending poverty and hunger, accessible healthcare for everyone and clean water [SDGs 1, 2, 3, 6]	13
II Growth, work and opportunities for everyone [SDGs 8, 10, 4, 5]	14
III Sustainability, innovation and investment [SDGs 12, 11, 9]	16
IV Climate and energy [SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14, 15]	18
V Peace, security and justice and the international perspective [SDG 16]	20
3 How are the SDGs being incorporated in business operations?	22
1 Start at the beginning	23
2 Align the SDGs with the company's own operations	23
3 Tips for SMEs	24
4 Interviews	25
• Gerard Backx, CEO of HZPC, potato breeder	25
• Peter Bakker, Chairman of the World Business Council of Sustainable Development	27
• Else Bos, CEO of PGGM	29
• Mathijs de Meijer, Co-founder of Nerdalize	31
• Lara Muller, Director of Public Affairs, Boskalis	33
• Atzo Nicolaï, President of DSM Nederland	35
• Meiny Prins, CEO of Priva	37
5 Examples from enterprises and sectors	39
Background	57

Foreword and recommendations



▶ **A** number of important steps were made to advance progress towards sustainable development in New York, Rome and Paris in 2015. In New York, the leaders of 193 countries signed up to the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September, and in December they signed the Climate Agreement in Paris.

The Netherlands has warmly embraced the SDGs and the Climate Agreement. For the employers' organisations, the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW) and the employers' organisation for small and medium-sized enterprises MKB-Nederland, and the Global Compact Network Netherlands, the Sustainable Development Goals are the guiding principles of the global agenda for the period up to 2030. The SDGs raise issues that must be addressed if economies, business and societies are to function properly. And we have fewer than 5,000 days to achieve the goals. *It is time for action!*

Good progress has been made in accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals, the predecessors of the SDGs, but

the objectives of the SDGs are extremely ambitious. The goals themselves, but also because they can only be achieved through intensive global cooperation. The challenges are enormous: you only have to think of food shortages, the demand for clean drinking water, the quality of life in cities, jobs for everyone, the energy question, the climate challenge and the drive to create a circular economy. The problems are so great that no one can solve them alone. Governments, civil-society organisations, research institutes and companies have to work together and strengthen the impact of their efforts by forming partnerships. International cooperation is an area in which the Netherlands has demonstrated its strength. What we need to do is deploy and build on that strength in this country and elsewhere in the world. What is needed is the ultimate form of the 'polder model'. Many of the objectives call for a fundamental change of approach, a systemic change. That is the philosophy behind NL Next Level, the vision of the Netherlands' future written by the employers' organisations, with its focus on creating long-term value and jobs.

The SDGs have an impact on enterprises and enterprises have the impact to

achieve the goals. The business community in the Netherlands has the capacity to do a lot to help in achieving the SDGs, and are in fact already doing a great deal. The employers' organisations conducted a survey among their members about their experiences with and initiatives for the SDGs and received a flood of reactions. We are happy to share that positive energy and the fantastic practical examples in order to provide inspiration for other enterprises and parties and encourage them to make the SDGs an integral part of their operations and a part of their world.

The broad recognition of the importance of the SDGs comes as no surprise. The SDGs appeal to an attitude that is part of the DNA of Dutch entrepreneurs and of the country itself: don't wait, act now. This is illustrated by our deep expertise in water-related issues, a specialisation born of necessity. The structure of the Dutch economy, the orientation of companies to sustainability and their international chains lay the basis for an effective response to the SDGs.

The search by enterprises for answers to societal challenges and to create value for all of their stakeholders is

value-driven. There is no blueprint for inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurship or for achieving the SDGs. The enormous diversity of enterprises and product chains means that companies have different emphases and own priorities in terms of making their production processes and the entire value chain of their products and services more sustainable. What all companies have in common is their desire to create added value while consuming fewer raw materials, using less energy, reducing the burden on the environment and improving social conditions. They are outward-looking and forward-looking. That is what drives them to work together to achieve the SDGs and create a more sustainable world with opportunities for everyone.

Although the focus of the SDGs is on 2030, there are a number of steps that can already be taken to further enhance the efforts of companies in pursuit of the SDGs:

1. Increase awareness of the SDGs with suggestions for action

Although there is a lot of corporate support for the SDGs, many companies are still not aware of them. Publicity campaigns, targeting SMEs in particular, could increase awareness of the opportunities created by the SDGs. Adoption of the principles of corporate social responsibility was previously accelerated in a similar manner. The government can play an active role in this process, in partnership with organisations that have already launched various initiatives.

2. Focus on the international context and importance of the SDGs

The SDGs are binding on every country. That includes the Netherlands, which also faces serious challenges in areas such as the climate transition and diversity. The biggest potential gains lie in the vulnerable parts of the world. The Netherlands is a relatively small country with an open, internationally-oriented economy. The national and international perspectives are inseparable if the SDGs are to be achieved. That calls for a level playing field and, for example, a broad focus that strengthens the application of the 'global challenges, Dutch Solution' strategy in the Dutch Top Sectors policy.

3. Pursue consistent policies

If enterprises are to be able to make strategic decisions, they have to know where they stand. Consistent policy over a longer period will help to provide that certainty and promote a stable business climate that will help to achieve the SDGs.

4. Invest in forerunner positions

There should be more scope for experiments and breakthrough projects and greater resources for research and innovation. Joint efforts and investment in research and innovation by companies, researchers and the government can bring about transitions in which the Netherlands can make a real difference (in terms of economic, scientific and social impact). Food, water, health and the circular economy are obvious candi-

dates, but it is also crucial to acquire a leading position in key technologies. Innovation and growth can then go hand in hand.

5. Produce a Delta plan for energy and climate

A Delta plan for a CO₂-neutral economy by 2050 with long-term international and European targets for climate and energy would create a stable investment climate and a level playing field (by laying the basis for global carbon pricing). The Delta plan should encourage breakthrough projects in areas such as the built-up environment, mobility/transport, the circular economy, industry, energy production and a cleaner and more efficient agro sector. With the implementation of the recent agreement on raw materials between the government, VNO-NCW and MKB-Nederland and civil-society organisations, scarcer natural resources will increasingly be recycled into high-value products instead of being used and then thrown away as waste.

6. Press ahead

Some of the problems in this country will not resolve themselves at the desired pace. We must continue recently launched programmes designed to increase labour participation among people at some distance from the labour market, to promote permanent employability and to increase the number of women in senior positions. A major impulse is also needed for programmes to promote digitisation and lifelong learning.

7. The government as launching customer

Public authorities can use the strength of their purchasing volumes to stimulate green innovations and sustainable/circular procurement. At present their focus is too often on the lowest price or on bureaucratic procedures. They should, whenever it would have genuine added value, assign greater weight to quality in the criteria for awarding a contract, for example by giving credit for a longer useful life, the use of secondary raw materials or lower energy consumption throughout the useful life of a product.

8. Adopt an integral approach to aid, trade and investment

Powerful cooperation in the EU and at global level calls for a level playing field and a strong and open business climate. That confirms the need for an integrated approach to aid, trade and investment, also through public-private partnerships, in combating the major challenges relating to security, the climate and international stability. This calls for a perspective that extends beyond the least developed countries and also includes sufficient attention for export financing so that companies are also better able to do their bit elsewhere in the world. That includes promoting the financial institution, Invest NL, in the Netherlands.

9. Prepare an (investment) agenda for Africa

A greater effort is needed to create stability in the countries around the Mediterranean and to provide

shelter and development opportunities for refugees. Fundamentally – and this is more closely attuned to the SDGs – the problems should be addressed with a broad agenda that includes facilitating and encouraging private investment in and for Africa. Permanent efforts should be made to find innovative solutions to increase the impact of emergency aid according to the model already employed by the Dutch Coalition for Humanitarian Innovation.

10. Make trade treaties a race to the top

There is a heated public debate underway on the subject of trade and investment treaties. The challenge is to ensure that promoting international trade and protecting public interests are mutually reinforcing. The Economic and Social Council of the Netherlands (SER) made a valuable contribution to the debate with its advisory report on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) in April 2016. The report described the concerns and the safeguards for public interests that a trade treaty must contain.

There are fewer than 5,000 days left!

*Hans de Boer, president of VNO-NCW,
Michaël van Straalen, president of MKB-Nederland,*

*André van Heemstra, president of the
Global Compact Network Netherlands (GCNL)*

1 Where do we stand?



United Nations (UN)

The official title of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. The SDGs comprise seventeen 'Global Goals' encompassing 169 targets in all. The agenda is part of a process launched by the United Nations involving 193 member states, as well as companies and civil-society organisations. The goals were endorsed by all of the member states on 25 September 2015 in a resolution based on a broad intergovernmental agreement. The worldwide implementation of the SDGs has already commenced. The governments of every country are required to translate the goals into a national action plan. Seriously disadvantaged countries will receive support and the process is being coordinated at international level.

The Netherlands

Early in 2017 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the business community and other stakeholders for their initial impressions of the level of commitment to the SDGs in the Netherlands and what is already being done in relation to them. The reactions were incorporated in a letter from the ministry to the House of Representatives of the States-General in May (www.rijksoverheid.nl, 24 May 2017, letter to the House of Representatives on the 'first report of the Netherlands on the sustainable development goals'). The letter was discussed at a roundtable meeting in the House of Representatives in June, which revealed a widespread realisa-

tion in the Netherlands of the urgency of achieving the SDGs.

What is the current status of the SDGs in the Netherlands?

The Netherlands is performing well in terms of its preparations for achieving the SDGs. The country ranks fourth in the list of the world's most competitive and innovative economies compiled by the World Economic Forum. We have a strong economy, there is respect for the rule of law and confidence in institutions, the education system and healthcare systems are good. A growing number of people are engaged in lifelong learning. These findings were presented in a study published by Statistics Netherlands (CBS) in 2016 with an initial impression of the implementation of the SDGs in this country. In other areas, including the climate, protecting the country against the effects of climate change, renewable energy and diversity, there is still work to be done.

One area that the report identified as demanding attention was the environmental burden that the Netherlands causes in other countries.

The biggest challenges in achieving the SDGs lie elsewhere in the world, particularly in developing countries. The global population is growing. It is estimated that 60% of the world's population will be living in urban regions, frequently delta regions, by 2030. It is precisely in those regions that Dutch companies can make an important contribution to achieving the SDGs. The 17 SDGs in the global agenda

provide a framework for a common understanding among the people of the world.

Is the business community committed to the SDGs?

There is enormous enthusiasm for the SDGs in the Dutch business community, which was from the outset intensively involved in drafting them. Paul Polman, the CEO of Unilever, for example, has been a member of the UN's High Level Political Forum since 2012, in which he worked closely with former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Even before the SDGs were formally adopted, numerous Dutch companies, including AkzoNobel, DSM, KPMG, Philips and Unilever, signed up to the Business Manifesto, a global partnership that underlines the international business community's commitment to making the transition to a more sustainable and inclusive economy.

The SDGs go further than the Millennium Development Goals that applied until the end of 2015. The SDGs represent a task for every country and with them the UN acknowledges for the first time the crucial role the business community has to play in helping to achieve the goals.

The SDGs are not solely a concern of large companies; they are also relevant for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Many trade associations play an important role in promoting and facilitating measures relating to the SDGs among SMEs,

both at national and international level. There are examples to be found in every sector, from cosmetics and tourism to architecture. Events devoted to the SDGs are organised throughout the country, such as the Transform Your World conference organised by the Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition (DSGC), Erasmus University and the SDG Charter at the end of 2016 and the Young Professional Program, a project set up by the Global Compact Network Netherlands. Entrepreneur Annemarie Rakhorst has launched a campaign entitled '17 shared goals' targeted at children as tomorrow's leaders. The Royal Netherlands Institute of Chartered Accountants (NBA) has organised a dialogue on the subject of a good reporting structure on the attainment of the SDGs. Numerous meetings have been organised by business and sector organisations. The Employers' Organisation for Brabant and Zeeland (BZW), for example, is consulting its members to identify the SDGs to which the region can make the biggest contribution and how it can do so.

What is needed to achieve the SDGs?

Transitions are needed to achieve the SDGs. From fossil to renewable, from analogue to digital, from regional to global, from a 'throwaway' economy to a circular economy. These transitions represent a challenge to business to act on an entirely new level and to invest with the government in bringing about those transformations. Coherent sustainable solutions are needed, at international level and in

this country, driven by the realisation that we do not own the earth but hold it in trust for its current and future inhabitants. It must be conserved and that is only possible if everyone accepts their share of responsibility for the 'greater whole' and for creating comprehensive solutions.

Searching for coherent sustainable solutions is the driving force behind NL Next Level, a programme launched by the employers' organisations, VNO-NCW and MKB-Nederland, and the Dutch Federation of Agricultural and Horticultural Organisations, LTO Nederland, in 2016. The essence of the initiative is to promote collaboration in pursuing prosperity, sustainability and inclusivity in the Netherlands, an objective that dovetails perfectly with the challenges involved in achieving the SDGs.

The focus therefore has to be on making the transitions and the investment needed to achieve them. The government has set up a National Financing Institution for Development and Investment (Invest-NL). The purpose of this national agency is to strengthen the economic structure by raising investment for strategic projects that cannot attract sufficient funding in the market, for example because of uncertainty about pay-back periods, which is a factor in renewable energy projects for example. Additional investment is also needed for the climate and energy transitions, security, maintaining the vitality of cities in

combination with a pleasant countryside, digitisation and innovation.

A promising venture in that context is the attempt by a number of parties united in the Major Alliance (Maatschappelijke Alliantie) to create an SDG Impact Fund. The purpose of the fund is to promote the implementation of innovations that are promising from the perspective of the SDGs by providing grants and/or innovative forms of financing. Similar initiatives are underway in Canada (www.grand-challenges.ca) and Africa.

The engine of the transitions is cooperation between enterprises that form national and global partnerships in pursuit of the SDGs. A good example is the agreements on International Corporate Social Responsibility (ICSR) concluded by companies (small and large), civil-society organisations and the government in the Netherlands. These agreements were driven by the realisation that trade is a powerful driver of sustainable and inclusive growth. The textile and banking sectors have taken the lead in concluding such agreements and considerable progress has been made by LTO-Nederland towards reaching similar agreements in the agriculture and horticulture sector.

According to the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen, *"The Netherlands leads the way in International Corporate Social Responsibility"* (SER magazine, March 2017). The minister reported



PHOTO: BERLINDA VAN DAM/HH

that there was a lot of interest around the world in the system of ICSR agreements in the Netherlands, but added that there was still a lot to be done to get everyone facing in the same direction.

As business organisations we encourage these forms of partnership,

which we regard as voluntary, but not without obligation. Because commitment comes from the motivation of the companies themselves. The same applies for partnerships like the Energy Agreement and the Green Deals, which also make an important contribution to achieving the SDGs.

2 What contribution is the business community making to achieving the SDGs?



- **B**roadly speaking, corporate efforts in support of the SDGs are concentrated on five domains:
- I. Ending poverty and hunger, providing accessible healthcare and water [SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 6].
 - II. Growth, work and opportunities for all [SDGs 8, 10, 4 and 5].
 - III. Sustainability, innovation and investment [SDGs 12, 11 and 9].
 - IV. Climate and energy [SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15].
 - V. Peace, security and justice and the international perspective [SDG 16].

This section gives an impression of the efforts being made by the business community to achieve the SDGs in the above domains. In each case, two questions are asked:

- What can the business community contribute to achieving the specific goals?
- What contribution is actually being made by Dutch companies?

The examples encompass all 17 SDGs, although the principal opportunities for entrepreneurs lie in the areas of food, water, access to good healthcare and the energy and climate agenda. This perspective is based mainly on

the international context because our efforts to achieve the SDGs are inextricably linked to the international operations of this country and its enterprises.

I. Ending poverty and hunger, accessible healthcare for everyone and clean water [SDGs 1, 2, 3, 6]

What can the business community contribute to achieving these goals?

The Netherlands has one of the highest standards of living in the world, partly thanks to its social security system, its social services and the pension system, although there are always people who fall through the cracks and demand our attention due to their particular circumstances. Healthcare in the Netherlands is generally accessible and of a high standard.

The situation in relation to this cluster of goals is very different elsewhere in the world. Extreme poverty, hunger, inadequate access to care and a shortage of clean drinking water are still commonplace in many countries. These are global issues crying out for solutions, but at the same time they

create opportunities. Enterprises can use their knowledge and expertise and come up with innovative solutions, often through partnerships.

The national and international contexts are therefore linked. The Netherlands owes a third of its income and jobs to international trade. Employment in the Netherlands is directly connected with our earning capacity abroad. The challenge facing businesses is to increase that earning capacity in a sustainable manner (international trade streams often cause an environmental burden) and to continue combining it with the agenda for aid, trade and investment. This calls for an approach that focuses on more than just the least developed countries.

What contribution is being made by Dutch companies?

An important contribution that companies can make in relation to this cluster of SDGs is to provide work. One example of the contribution being made by the Dutch business sector in this cluster is the Global Challenges, Dutch Solutions approach, in which the connection between research and innovation in the Netherlands

and major international problems in domains such as food and water is addressed in the context of the top sectors policy. The cooperation between research institutes, government and business is referred to as the 'golden triangle'. The knowledge and expertise jointly developed by the parties will help to achieve the SDGs, as well as creating opportunities for Dutch companies to penetrate new markets, including emerging markets in developing countries, as the following examples illustrate.

Seed sector fights hunger

The Netherlands is the world's largest exporter of seed and plant material for arable and horticultural crops. Good seed lays the basis for increasing the sustainable production of crops and hence increasing the supply of food worldwide. Potatoes are one of the most water-efficient crops (the volume of water used per kilo of dry material produced is low). To a large extent plant breeding is aimed at breeding crops with resistance to diseases and plagues, drought and salt. These efforts help poor countries that are directly affected by climate change to continue producing food. In this way Dutch companies help to sustain local food production, also by small farmers, and so reduce hunger.

Source: Plantum, the Dutch association of companies engaged in the breeding, propagation, production and trade of seeds and young plants; www.plantum.nl

Preventing water-related disasters and helping with reconstruction

The Dutch Risk Reduction Team (DRR team) brings together the best in Dutch expertise in relation to water management, water safety and water supply to help countries prepare disaster prevention programmes and deal with reconstruction if a disaster has occurred. Members of the team can be deployed rapidly in response to request from foreign governments. The team was formed by the Dutch water sector and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Infrastructure and the Environment.

Source: www.nwp.nl

Joint development of a portable artificial kidney

Health insurance companies Achmea (Zilveren Kruis), Menzis and CZ have jointly invested in Neokidney, a project by the Kidney Foundation to develop a portable artificial kidney that offers patients greater freedom of choice, improves their quality of life and gives them more energy and freedom. The prototype of the portable artificial kidney is expected to be tested by a first group of patients in a clinical setting at the end of 2017.

Source: www.verzekeraars.nl

From debt to opportunities

On the initiative of the Delta Lloyd Foundation, in association with CZ, a national coalition of creditors is looking for solutions

to help the growing number of clients with payment arrears and debts. The coalition's objective is to prevent clients from incurring problematic levels of debt and to help resolve arrears of payment by working together and sharing expertise in programmes to facilitate and promote good personal financial management by their clients.

Source: <http://www.deltalloydfoundation.nl/highlights/schuldeiserscoalitie/>

II. Growth, work and opportunities for everyone [SDGs 8, 10, 4, 5]

What can the business community contribute to achieving these goals?

The economy is growing again and with it employment and the supply of labour. More jobs are being created, there are more vacancies – and in some sectors even staff shortages – and unemployment is falling. Nevertheless, there are still many people without a job. For example, the over-50s, people with a handicap and people at a distance from the labour market still have difficulty finding work. Prejudice is sometimes a factor in this and it will take time to address that. There is also still a gap between men and women, for example in terms of the numbers in senior positions in companies.

The Netherlands performs well in international comparisons of the level of education and skills of the working population, according to the Social

and Economic Council (SER) (SER advisory report 'Learning and development during career', March 2017). Excellent education at every level is important not only for the individuals concerned, but also for companies, since the education system is an important supplier of well-educated talent. The rapid pace of technological development and its consequences for the labour market call for permanent collaboration between educational institutions and the business community at national and regional level and across sectors.

It should also become automatic for people to continue learning and developing their skills throughout their career. This is essential in light of technological developments, the rapidly changing dynamic on the labour market, the later retirement age and internationalisation and applies not only for working persons with a permanent contract, but also for flex workers and the self-employed. The shortcomings in labour legislation, which is based on working patterns and labour relations from the last century, have a negative effect on today's labour market. The consequent costs and risks form a major obstacle to hiring people, particularly for SMEs.

Sustainable growth and a labour market in which working persons can earn a fair wage are needed worldwide. The large migration streams also need to be integrated, and above all offered perspective.

What contribution is being made by Dutch companies?

An example of the active efforts being made by companies in this domain is the Technology Pact, which contains agreements with the education sector and the government to improve the match between education and the labour market and so reduce the shortage of technical personnel. Companies are also taking steps to help people at a distance from the labour market to find work. The regional approach is becoming increasingly relevant for matching employees with work. Efforts are also being made to increase the proportion of women in senior positions. The aim of the business community is that 30% of the members of boards of management and supervisory boards will be women by 2023 at the latest. The following examples illustrate the measures that are being taken.

Plan for 100,000 jobs

Helping people with an occupational disability to find work with a regular company – that is the objective of Towards 100,000 jobs [*Op naar 100.000 banen*], an initiative of VNO-NCW, MKB-Nederland and LTO-Nederland. The employers' organisations have established a digital portal to inform companies and enterprises – including SMEs – about how they can help people at a distance from the labour market to find work. The employers in the private sector have agreed to create 100,000 jobs by 2026 at the latest, with 9,000 new jobs being delivered every year from 2017.

Source: www.opnaarde100000.nl

Employers Service Point for Central Zuid-Holland matches workers with companies

The Employers Service Point (*Werkgevers Servicepunt*) was set up by six municipalities (Lansingerland, Leidschendam-Voorburg, Pijnacker-Nootdorp, Voorschoten, Wasseenaar and Zoetermeer) in the labour market region of Central Zuid-Holland and the Employment Insurance Implementing Agency (UWV) and health insurance company DSW. Its purpose is to serve as a contact point for employers that have questions about personnel or are seeking information about the labour market.

Source: <https://zhcwerkt.nl/wie-zijn-wij/sociaal-ondernemen/>

Topvrouwen.nl promotes promotion of women

Topvrouwen.nl promotes highly-qualified women in the Netherlands for top jobs. It is building a database of women with relevant experience at management or executive level in the private sector or with (semi-) public organisations and with the talent and ambition to climb to board positions. Companies, institutions and executive search and recruitment agencies looking for candidates for a board of management or supervisory board can consult the database. Topvrouwen.nl was launched by Minister of Education, Culture and Science Jet Bussemaker and the president of VNO-NCW, Hans de Boer, in 2014.

Source: www.topvrouwen.nl

III. Sustainability, innovation and investment [SDGs 12, 11, 9]

What can the business community contribute to achieving these goals?

The Netherlands is the very model of a delta country. There is worldwide interest in deltas because of their geographic vulnerabilities and their high population densities, but also their economic potential. How can overcrowded delta regions remain liveable and sustainable? The Netherlands has made a specialisation of this subject and by sharing its knowledge and expertise the Netherlands can help to find solutions for the problems facing delta regions.

In the country itself there is an urgent need to continue investing in the accessibility of the cities and main-ports and in the public transport network. But also in managing and expanding areas of natural beauty and in a new and sustainable energy supply system because the downside of urbanisation is the greater pressure it imposes on the living and natural environment. Further spatial development calls for unconventional solutions to transform the Netherlands into a Sustainable Urban Delta.

The business community contributes innovative solutions to meet the challenges of making production and consumption sustainable and cities safe, resilient and sustainable, for example with energy-neutral housing. Enterprises are also exploring ways of optimising accessibility by developing

safe, smart and sustainable methods of mobility and a good infrastructure including sustainable industrialisation and development.

What contribution is being made by Dutch companies?

Investors have a crucial role to play in achieving the SDGs because they have to provide the necessary financial resources. And financial institutions are willing to play their part. The Dutch Banking Association's sustainability platform is organising a dialogue about the SDGs. At the end of 2016 Dutch financial institutions published a report entitled 'Building Highways to SDG investing' which contains specific proposals for accelerating and scaling up investment in the SDGs.

The Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition (DSGC), a consortium of eight multinational corporations, is also helping to achieve the SDGs. The business community also sees major opportunities in developing a circular economy and preventing food wastage. The following examples illustrate these developments.

Kromkommer combats food waste

At least 30% of all food is wasted worldwide. That represents 1.3 billion tons of food. In the Netherlands, food worth €4.4 billion is wasted every year in the chain from harvest to supermarket. Five to ten percent of fruit and vegetables grown are rejected because of the strict requirements for the appearance of the product. Kromkommer (literally 'curved cucumber') is a social enterprise that is endeavouring to return these vegetables to consumers' plates under the motto 'curved is the new straight'.

See: www.kromkommer.com or www.social-enterprise.nl/wie-doen-het/kromkommer/

Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition wants effective action

The Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition (DSGC) was launched at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2012. It is an initiative of the chief executives of AkzoNobel, DSM, FrieslandCampina, Heineken, KLM, Philips, Shell and Unilever. The DSGC regards the 17 SDGs as a global blueprint for ending poverty, inequality and climate change within 15 years. In March 2017, the DSGC [wrote](#) to the political parties negotiating the formation of a new government and called on them to place the SDGs and sustainability at the heart of their coalition agreement. At the end of 2016, the DSGC, together with Erasmus University Rotterdam and the SDG Charter, organised a conference entitled Transform Your World.

Students were invited to submit practical ideas for making specific companies more sustainable. The winning idea was submitted by a team that proposed publishing data about local air pollution in order to foster competition between communities in efforts to improve air quality.

More examples: www.dsgc.nl/nl/sdgs

VHG: Green School Playgrounds to enable better learning

Scientific research shows that children that are able to play in an eco-friendly playground are better able to absorb what they are being taught. An eco-friendly, or green playground also enhances their social development, reduces bullying at school and leads to less obesity among children. The VHG, the trade association of landscape contractors, has translated the results of that research into the Green School Playground concept and published a handy manual with tips and inspiring ideas for designing, constructing and maintaining green school playgrounds and for publicising the concept. The handbook, which was written in collaboration with the Institute for Nature Education and Sustainability (IVN), devotes a lot of attention to the safety of equipment for outdoor games, fund-raising (e.g., through private funds) and education. There are already initiatives to expand the green playground concept to child-care centres in association with Stichting Groen Cement, a voluntary organisation dedicated to bringing children into contact with nature as young as possible which has developed a special quality label for green child-care facilities.

Human Cities Coalition

In 2016, AkzoNobel founded the Human Cities Coalition, building on the company's worldwide Human Cities Initiative, which is devoted to SDG 11. In this public-private partnership, local companies, public authorities, research institutes and civil-society organisations work together to improve the quality of life and prosperity of the populations of mega-cities. Each of the partners contributes its own specific expertise in exploring ways of improving the economic, ecological and social development of cities.

Source: www.humancities.co

The partnership is also an important driver of the SDG agenda as a member of SDG Charter – which is specially designed to promote the formation of partnerships (SDG 17) – together with a partnership in the field of health.

Source: <http://sdgcharter.nl/about-us/>

Auping and the circular economy

Every year 1.2 million mattresses are thrown away as waste in the Netherlands. The majority of them disappear into incinerators. Koninklijke Auping BV has responded to this by introducing the Auping Take Back System (ATBS), with the aim of recycling 90% of the discarded mattresses. The springs are melted into steel that can be re-used and the latex and polyether are used to produce underlay for carpets and judo mats. Consequently, most of an old mattress can now be used as raw material for a new product.

Dutch Green Carbon recycles car tyres

Vaco, the tyre and wheel trade association, is endeavouring to make the product chain circular. In February 2017, one of its members, Dutch Green Carbon, won the Automotive Innovation Award for a process to recover carbon black from discarded tyres (see: <https://vimeo.com/200035515/53e035a094>).

Source: www.vaco.nl/nieuws (februari 2017)

Commitment by financial institutions to SDGs

Annual investment of between 5,000 and 7,000 billion dollars is needed to realise the SDGs by 2030. That sum is impossible to raise without capital from institutional and private investors. In December 2016, a group of Dutch financial institutions invited the government and the central bank, De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB), to join them in supporting the SDGs in their report entitled 'Building Highways to SDG Investing'. It is the first time ever that a country's pension funds, insurance companies and banks have joined forces to formulate a joint SDG Investment Agenda (SDGI). The basic principle behind the consortium's agenda is that it is not only their social responsibility, but also in the interests of their shareholders and business relations, to address the major social challenges of our time in their business operations and their investments.

Source: www.sdgi-nl.org

IV. Climate and energy [SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14, 15]

What can the business community contribute to achieving these goals?

The SDGs and the Paris climate agreement have drawn a lot of attention to the climate and energy issues. The energy transition is an enormous challenge that affects everyone. It is vitally important to involve society, citizens and companies alike, by demonstrating that progress is being made with the transition, for example through lower energy bills, healthier and more comfortable homes, healthier schools or a transparent energy contract that makes life easier for consumers. Tangible results create positive energy and enthusiasm and remove the feeling that the transition is being imposed from above.

The climate transition calls for a switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy, local generation, more efficient use of energy and recycling of raw materials. This is a challenge, but also an opportunity. The Dutch business community is fully committed to the transition to a carbon-free economy, but the transition can only be accomplished through cooperation between and with all stakeholders. The NL Next Level programme 'Energy for the future: from policy to implementation' sets out a concrete plan to accelerate the transition of the Dutch economy and making it totally carbon-neutral by 2050.

With strong companies (including SMEs), research institutions, industrial clusters and expertise in aspects such as underground energy sources and offshore wind farms, the Netherlands possesses the know-how to achieve this. The aim is to carry out specific breakthrough projects, in which public-private partnerships of businesses and NGOs pursue tangible results, such as the renovation of 100,000 homes a year to make them carbon-neutral and the construction of an energy island off the coast to distribute the renewable electricity produced in the North Sea to 80 million people in the surrounding countries. The first priority is to meet the targets for 2020 as set out in the Energy Agreement. Energy conservation and renewable energy will play an important role in that. However, we must also look head to the post-2020 period, when reducing CO₂ emissions will be the principal objective. Meanwhile, the international playing field is also relevant for efforts to meet the challenges relating to these SDGs. An international level playing field is and will remain essential, while the Dutch business community can and wishes to share its knowledge and expertise for the benefit of the world.

What contribution is being made by Dutch companies?

The Climate Coalition is a consortium dedicated to creating a climate-neutral society. The efforts of the numerous

business partners are coordinated by CSR Netherlands, the centre of excellence for business in relation to corporate social responsibility. VNO-NCW and MKB-Nederland are also members of the consortium, whose aim is to make business operations climate-neutral by 2050. Some examples of the initiatives that have been taken are given below.

Zuidplaspolder heat cooperative helps to reduce CO₂ emissions

Greenhouse horticulture businesses (representing 250 hectares of greenhouses) in Zuid-Holland province have established the Zuidplaspolder heat cooperative. They are developing a local heat network based on heat generated by Rotterdam port. The heat for the local network will come from and return to the heat transfer pipeline that is being constructed between Rotterdam and Leiden. Using this network to heat greenhouses will save 22 million m³ of natural gas in the region every year (the equivalent of the gas consumption of 15,000 households) and so eliminate 40,000 tons of CO₂ emissions. Similar initiatives are planned in other regions and will contribute to meeting the climate targets. Initiatives of this type can easily be scaled up to create a national infrastructure of heat transfer pipelines.

Source: LTO Glaskracht
(www.ltoglaskracht nederland.nl)



FOTO: ANDREAS GUICHARD/UNSPLOSH

Green Networks Platform

Green Networks is a coalition of eight infrastructure management companies that have been collaborating intensively to make their operations more sustainable since 2016. The companies together supply around 4% of the electricity consumed nationally and invest € 5 billion annually in assets. The objective of the participants in Green Networks is to make their operations entirely climate-neutral and compliant with the principles of the circular economy.

The platform is engaged in projects which are intended to serve as a signal to the market of the need for a transformation to sustainable alternatives in seven different areas. The projects include the development of a fully circular process for the cables and rail and viaduct networks, issuing joint raw material passports, inter-sectoral projects to promote energy conservation and the large-scale generation of their own renewable energy. The members of the coalition are Alliander, Enexis, Stedin, Tennet, Gasunie, Prorail, Rijkswaterstaat and KPN.

www.groenenetten.org

REDstack develops blue energy

REDstack BV has developed an innovative membrane that generates 'blue energy' at the point where salt water meets fresh water. The technology can be used wherever rivers flow into the sea and is already being tested at a pilot plant on the Afsluitdijk. The method known as Reverse ElectroDialysis (RED) is ideal for the transition to a system of sustainable electricity production without CO₂ emissions. The certainty of energy supply is high, since water always flows, even when the wind is not blowing and the sun is not shining.

Source: www.redstack.nl



PHOTO: KY CHUNGJUN PHOTO

V. Peace, security and justice and the international perspective [e.g., SDG 16]

What can the business community contribute to achieving these goals?

The Netherlands is one of the freest societies in the world in political terms and in terms of civil rights and press freedom, the CBS concluded in a report published at the end of 2016 entitled 'Measuring SDGs: initial impressions for the Netherlands' [Meten van SDGs: een eerste beeld voor Nederland]. These freedoms cannot be taken for granted, however. Our democratic rule of law must remain resilient and that means it has to be maintained. The common values on

which our society is built must be shared, expanded and defended.

The situation is totally different elsewhere in the world. The world is a turbulent place, with numerous conflict zones and fragile states that lack legal systems, where corruption prevails, where private initiatives struggle to emerge and/or governments are not a stabilising factor. There are also large, unstoppable migration streams of people searching for safety and a good future for themselves and their children. They have prompted protectionist and nationalist tendencies. Support for free trade is also diminishing. Meanwhile, the global population is growing. The population of

Africa, for example, will grow by one billion within 15 years. The number of mega-cities on that continent, and in Asian countries, is growing. All of these factors are combining to create growing worldwide challenges.

Achieving the SDGs in this cluster calls for worldwide sustainable development in which everyone can share. And for continuous efforts to promote justice and security and prevent exclusion. In many countries major steps are being taken to promote closer public-private cooperation. The Netherlands has a lot to offer the world in that respect under the motto 'Dutch solutions to global challenges'. But the knife cuts both ways. Activities

in other countries promote economic growth and employment in this country, generating jobs and income and helping to maintain the country's prosperity and preserve the social system in the Netherlands. At the same time, Dutch companies produce innovations and solutions that help to address societal challenges, and hence contribute to achieving the SDGs.

The 'Dutch solutions to global challenges' approach could be exploited to a far greater extent, as is evident from *'Team Nederland: Stronger together in the world'* [Team Nederland: Samen sterker in de wereld], an advisory report published by the Dutch Banking Association's Steering Group on International Trade, Innovation and Investment Promotion chaired by Chris Buijink. The report recommended that the country should consolidate its strengths and adopt a more integrated approach focused on public-private partnerships and a stronger strategy of internationalisation with the aim of stimulating international innovation and strengthening the country's performance in international trade, investment and innovation. According to the steering group, for decades the Netherlands' earning capacity in international markets has kept pace with the growth of the Dutch and European economies. The close-knit relationship with neighbouring and established markets is a strength, but also a weakness. The challenges posed by the necessary transitions and opportunities are to be found mainly in regions with growing markets in which the Netherlands has still not gained a strong foothold. Challenges such as climate change, population growth and urbanisation offer opportunities for innovation and trade particularly in these emerging economies. However, inclusive growth

and development for all calls for a focus that extends beyond just the least developed countries.

The business community advocates an integrated approach that combines aid, trade and investment. And for strong embassies and diplomatic missions with considerable knowledge and expertise to promote public-private cooperation.

To arrive at this more integrated public-private approach to promoting trade, innovation and investment, VNO-NCW and MKB-Nederland have established NL International Business, a foundation devoted to consolidating the steps already taken by the private sector in these areas. As well as commercial partners, the foundation will expressly seek alliances with organisations engaged with the SDGs and international corporate social responsibility.

What contribution is being made by Dutch companies?

Closer cooperation between companies and government in new 'Workplace'

The government and companies have plans to increase the professionalism of the country's trade promotion. During the ambassadors' conference at the beginning of 2017, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen, Hans de Boer (VNO-NCW) and Michaël van Straalen (MKB-Nederland) signed a cooperation agreement for a public-private 'Workplace' in which the government and the business community will jointly conduct marketing and endeavour to identify opportunities for Dutch business consortia, including SMEs (and possibly

research institutes). For example, if India faces problems with water the Workplace will try to facilitate consortia and come up with specific business cases with support from the missions.

Minister Ploumen: 'Our embassies and missions around the world have an enormous network and the knowledge required to help start-up businesses. With the Workplace we will ensure that smaller companies in particular make better use of that expertise. This is good for the Netherlands, but also for other countries, because Dutch companies have a reputation for producing practical and innovative products in a responsible manner.'

Reconstruction of the judiciary in Rwanda

Robert Croll, who had taken early retirement as president of the Zwolle District Court, spent a year in Rwanda helping the country to rebuild its judiciary. He was deployed by PUM, the organisation of senior Dutch experts who voluntarily provide advice for enterprises in developing countries. Rwanda is struggling to come to terms with the terrible trauma of the civil war between the Hutus and the Tutsis. Croll had set himself the goal of creating a robust IT infrastructure that would enable the country to build a proper archive of case law. With the help of VNO-NCW, Siemens, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft and KLM he built a small Internet network that provides the courts in Rwanda with direct access to jurisprudence worldwide.

Source: www.vno-ncw.nl

3 How are the SDGs being incorporated in business operations?



1. Start at the beginning

The basis is corporate social responsibility (CSR). The SDGs are not a substitute for it. Dutch companies are working hard to make improvements in areas such as the environment, energy, innovation, spatial planning and creating an inclusive labour market. Their contribution to social cohesion is also significant. Dutch SMEs, for example, contribute more than a billion euro every year to local groups ranging from sports clubs to cultural organisations (study by MKB-Nederland, 2016)

International Corporate Social Responsibility (ICSR) embraces a variety of international standards including:

- the revised OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises from 2011;
- the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of the International Labour Organisation (ILO);
- the ten principles on labour, human rights, environment and anti-corruption in the UN Global Compact;
- the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Adherence to the principles of ICSR calls for a continuous process of due diligence: identifying risks to human rights and the rights of workers within

the company itself and throughout its production chain and then taking action to prevent, mitigate, rectify or compensate for them. In other words, increasing positive impact and reducing negative impact. The ICSR agreements touch on this process.

Want to know more?

- For the *OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*; see the website of the National Contact Point in the Netherlands (NCP).
- Doing Business with respect for human rights (available at www.businessrespecthumanrights), a practical guide written by the Global Compact Network Netherlands, Oxfam Novib and Shift. The main question addressed is how the UN Guiding Principles can be implemented in practice, with examples from a multi-stakeholder perspective and in an international context.
- An overview of all ICSR agreements together with news and background information can be found at www.imvoconvenanten.nl

2. Align the SDGs with the company's own operations

At the end of 2016, the CEOs of 40 companies in the Business & Sustainable Development Commission published a report entitled *'Better Business, Better World'*. The report makes a strong busi-

ness case for the SDGs and sets out a three-step plan on how to translate the SDGs to a company's own operations.

Step 1. Align the company's own vision, mission and strategy with the SDGs

Stay close to yourself and your core operations because then you will have the biggest impact. That is your real area of expertise. The stakeholders understand that.

Step 2. Increase the impact by scaling up

There are numerous ways of scaling up an initiative with a view to increasing the positive impact and reducing the negative impact. Examples are forming partnerships, through public-private cooperation, expanding activities to more countries, focusing on an investment agenda for innovative breakthroughs and lobbying with others to overcome patterns that form obstacles to upscaling, such as corrupt governments or trade barriers in a particular country. Due diligence is also always required here so that you know where you are having an impact.

Step 3. Make the impact transparent

The impact of what is happening and what your contribution to it is must be transparent. Companies in the UN Global Compact network, for example,

publish an annual Communication on Progress describing the advances that are being made with respect to the ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. Companies can do the same thing in their regular annual reports. They can also take inspiration from the Reporting on the SDGs Action Platform, an initiative being developed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the UN Global Compact to produce practical guidelines to help with corporate reporting on the SDGs (see under Reporting on the SDGs on the website www.unglobalcompact.org).

Sources to consult for more information

- SDG Matrix, developed by UNGC and KPMG;
- SDG Compass, developed by GRI, UNGC and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD): www.sdgcompass.org;
- *'Respect for Human Rights: Creating a Holistic Framework for Business Contributions to the SDGs'*, a framework for enterprises to analyse the minimum they can do to contribute to the SDGs and what further action might be taken to seize additional opportunities (May 2017, Shift).

3. Tips for SMEs

SMEs are often constrained in the possibilities they have to perform extensive analyses and study thick policy documents. Nevertheless, SMEs can also make a contribution to achieving the seventeen SDGs, which also offer them genuine market opportunities. Four tips on how SMEs can own the SDGs.

1. Join the trade association

The aim is to gather and analyse information about SDGs and to seek partners for collaboration and joint action. Perhaps your sector is engaged in drafting an ICSR agreement? If so, that is good pretext for making a commitment.

2. Collaboration in the chain

Explore the possibilities for collaborating with larger companies in the chain, which often have people on their staff who have already explored which SDGs they can contribute to and how. Take advantage of that existing information.

3. Align your own vision, mission and strategy with the SDGs

Review the options you have for aligning your vision, mission and strategy with one or more SDGs. Explain what you intend to do with regard to them and what form your action will take.

4. Highlight what you are doing

Publicise the company's contribution to the SDGs, for example in the annual report or a newsletter or at meetings with customers and other stakeholders.

For more information

Do CSR Netherlands' [MVO-risico-checker](#), a tool for assessing the risks of doing business abroad.

4 Interviews

Gerard Backx,

CEO of HZPC, potato breeder:

'Potatoes will help to solve the food problem'

"Everyone must be able to eat. Not just today, but in thirty years' time. That is the idea that drives us. HZPC is continually developing new breeds of potato tailored to the climate and the growing conditions in a particular region. Our objective is to improve yields per hectare, not only in terms of quantity, but also quality. Within a few years our earth will have to be able to feed nine billion people. It should be easily possible. The real reason for hunger is not that the earth cannot supply the food, it is wars and power games. So we are not under the illusion that we can solve the world's food problem, but we can help to alleviate it."

Less hunger, less poverty

"Potatoes are eaten everywhere in the world, in some countries as a staple diet, in others as a vegetable. Potatoes can be grown quickly and need less water than rice, wheat or corn, which is an enormous advantage in light of the growing problem of water shortages. Potatoes also contain more vitamins, fibres and minerals. If you were to eat only potatoes for a month, you would still ingest the necessary amount of nutrients."

Our sector, the basic materials sector,

contributes to the SDGs Zero hunger and No poverty. HZPC does it with seed potatoes, other companies with seed for grass, vegetables and other crops. Our biggest markets are the Middle East and North Africa, but we also export to North, Central and South America. In China, more than five million hectares of land are now planted with potatoes and the Chinese government has said that a further one million hectares are needed to feed the growing population."

Earning money and improving the world

"We are a company, not a philanthropic organisation. Our shareholders want to see a return on their investment. In our view, it is possible to help make the world a better place and earn money at the same time. Those two objectives go hand in hand at our company and that is why I am proud to lead it."

Our focus is not on the short term. We look ten or twenty years ahead. If necessary, we will accept losses for a number of years. For example, we have been operating in China for years but have still not reached break-even point. However, we are convinced that in time we will eventually generate revenues there. The same applies for Egypt, where we have lost millions of euros in the last few years because the

The more difficult it is made for us to bring our materials somewhere, the greater the effort we will make to do so

country has undergone two successive revolutions. But we are confident that we will start earning money there again in the future.”

A better return through improvement

“We invest a relatively large amount in research, as indeed does the entire basic materials sector.

We are constantly searching for ways to produce better breeds that generate higher yields, which taste better and are healthier and meet the specific requirements of the processing industry. By improving breeds the sector is able to increase crop yields by 1% to 2% a year. On a global scale, that is an enormous volume.

We do not use genetic modification; there is too much public opposition to it. Furthermore, there are still possibilities for improving breeds without genetic modification. It is regrettable, however, that politicians will not allow us to use modern improvement techniques to alter the genetic make-up

of a breed. For example, although it is technically possible to switch certain genes ‘on’ or ‘off’, which would help to increase the resistance of breeds to disease or climatic conditions, it is prohibited by law. That is unfortunate, since otherwise we would be able to do far more to eradicate hunger. I can get really worked up about that. It sometimes seems as though many politicians don’t care.”

“The people at the United Nations who came up with the SDGs will also know that it is impossible to achieve all of the goals by 2030. But we have to try. There is no regulation required for that, many companies are doing it by choice. We have adapted our objectives to the SDGs. We were a potato breeding company, but now we bluntly state that our ambition is to contribute to solving the global food problem.

If we were purely concerned with increasing our market share in countries where we can sell a lot of potatoes, we would not make any effort in Africa or the Middle East or in difficult countries like Syria, Iraq, Ethiopia, Sudan and North Korea.

But we feel that everyone must have food to eat. We provide basic material for anyone who wants to grow potatoes, even in a war zone and regardless

of political persuasion. For example, we operate in countries that banks prefer not to do business with. In that case, we look for alternative methods of arranging payment. And in countries where we are not allowed to import tubers, often for local political reasons. We then send test tubes with tiny plants and grow the seeds into tubers that we then propagate in association with local growers.

The more difficult it is made for us to bring our materials somewhere, the greater the effort we will make to so. We will only stop if the government or the United Nations bans the trade. We will not take unnecessary risks, but we will stretch the rules to the very limits.”

By improving breeds we are able to increase crop yields by 1% to 2% a year

HZPC

HZPC has 340 employees, works with 55 breeders and 800 growers, has branches in 19 countries and exports to 90 countries.



Peter Bakker, **Chairman of the World Business Council** **of Sustainable Development:**

‘The SDGs make every country a developing country’

“The Millennium Development Goals were mainly concerned with what the wealthy North could do for the poor South. The Sustainable Development Goals are not just about eradicating poverty, but also about sustainability. That makes every country a developing country, because there is not a single country or company in the world that complies with all of the SDGs.

Another important difference is that the Millennium Goals were primarily drafted for governments, while the SDGs are addressed to everyone: governments, research institutes, civil-society organisations, cities and certainly companies. The business community has an important role to play in achieving the SDGs. The World Business Council of Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is therefore very committed to them.”

New business opportunities

“The WBCSD is an alliance of the world’s 200 largest companies. That may not seem a great many, but if you look at the number of employees they have and their supply chains around the world, their impact is enormous. We have tried to make the SDGs as immediately relevant as possible for individual enterprises because most entrepreneurs immedi-

ately switch off if you start talking about seventeen SDGs and 169 underlying targets. Entrepreneurs have to be able to focus on a small number of targets.

One of the things we have done is to draw up a list of the opportunities for growth that ensue from the SDGs in consultation with the chief executives of forty companies. Our report ‘Better business, better world’ shows that there is millions of euros of potential growth in the market and presents 60 examples of where those opportunities are to be found.

Because most entrepreneurs have neither the time nor the interest to read such a report in its entirety, we wrote a summary entitled ‘CEO Guide to the SDGs’, in which we briefly explain the SDGs and outline the potential for growth and then pose two questions to entrepreneurs: (1) what risks could your company face in areas such as climate, security, food, political uncertainty and changes in the market if you do nothing? And that leads, if the entrepreneur recognises that his or her company faces number of risks, to question (2): what are you doing about them? What ideas do you already have and how do you intend to pursue those opportunities for growth?

Naturally, large companies have more people and resources to take action in

Things are not going well because of the perverse incentives in our economic system

relation to the SDGs, but their footprint is larger so they should do more. But small companies can also do something, although it will be focused more on their own country and their own business environment.

For example, one of the targets is to prevent the loss and destruction of food – 33% of the food produced in the world is thrown away. Half of that wasted food is left to rot because farmers in poor countries cannot get their produce to the market in time. The other half is thrown away because its sell-by date has expired, the food does not entirely meet the aesthetic demands of consumers or because it has not been sold at the end of the day. There are now numerous companies dedicated to using products that are beyond their sell-by date or that have been rejected in an effort to reduce the volume of food that is thrown away.”

The system needs to change

“Things are not going well because of the perverse incentives in our economic system. For example, without carbon pricing a company has no

incentive to reduce CO₂ emissions. If robots and self-driving cars are cheaper than manpower, a company has no incentive to preserve or create jobs. These issues are contributory factors to serious problems like climate change and unemployment.

People who do not have a job feel less engaged. This can ultimately lead to serious political problems and instability. What will we do as a society if millions of jobs disappear? How will we keep people engaged and who should take responsibility for that? We will have to change the system. When the SDGs were presented, eight companies in the Netherlands formed the Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition, a unique initiative by Dutch business leaders who want to make a real difference in terms of sustainability. Those leaders are gaining a growing number of followers. But there are also companies that wait until the government says that something must be done. A systemic change always comes from a combination of leaders, followers and legislation.”

The coming years are crucial

“Will we achieve the SDGs by 2030? I believe we will have made significant progress by then. That is how it went with the Millennium Goals.

An enormous amount is going to change in the next ten years. The climate change we are mainly talking about now is something that we actually have to learn to live with by then. We will then be experiencing the change in the weather, the rising sea level, the roads crowded with self-driving cars. We then won't have any choice but to find solutions for the problems that are actually occurring.

We then won't have any choice but to find solutions for the problems that are actually occurring

The framework of the SDGs can help us to find those solutions because it shows that all of the SDGs are inter-related: the climate problem, the water problem and poverty. We will only achieve the SDGs with a joint and coherent approach.”

WBCSD

The WBCSD is an organisation of 200 companies in more than 35 countries dedicated to sustainable development and corporate sustainability. The organisation was founded in 1992 and is based in Geneva.

The SDGs create business opportunities worth millions of euros

The background of the entire page is a photograph of several large wind turbines standing in the ocean. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, and the water in the foreground is dark and slightly choppy. The turbines are white with long, thin blades. One turbine is in the immediate foreground on the left, partially cut off by the edge of the frame. Another is further back in the center, and a third is on the right side. The overall mood is serene and industrial.

Else Bos, CEO of PGGM:

'The SDGs are crucial for global stability'

"As a pension fund manager it is our task to deliver good returns to ensure that our clients, the pension funds, can provide good pensions. It is, by definition, a long-term assignment. And that automatically means that we have a long-term horizon and invest sustainably.

The seventeen SDGs are very important because they are crucial for global stability. By universally embracing these goals we will create the basis for stability, productivity, economic growth and return on investment in the future. The SDGs also provide an international frame of reference and a uniform language.

PGGM cannot focus on all seventeen goals at the same time. We have chosen a number of themes that touch on five or six of the SDGs. Our choices are guided by the priorities indicated by our pension funds. For our largest pension fund, Pensioenfond Zorg en Welzijn (the pension fund for the care and welfare sector), the priority themes are water, health, climate and food security, for example.

We look for enterprises that operate in these fields and make targeted

investments in them. We sometimes insist or suggest that companies make sustainable choices. One of our aims is to halve the carbon footprint of our portfolio and in that context we discuss the issue with the companies in our portfolio that have the largest carbon footprint. If they are willing to improve their performance in that respect we will continue to invest in those companies. Otherwise we will reduce our investment."

Money talks

"In this way we show in a transparent and verifiable manner how we manage our portfolio on the themes that are important to us. Money talks. We have a certain influence as an investor and we exert it. But it is the companies themselves that have to make the difference in the chain in which they operate. There is a certain tension between the desire for good long-term returns and good short-term results. You do not want the pursuit of short-term profit to threaten long-term results. It is our task to clearly explain to our pension funds and their members why we select particular themes and why they are the best option in the long term."

Risks and opportunities

"The SDGs are important for everyone.

Companies that are motivated will achieve more than the legislator can compel

Failing to achieve them will create risks for companies. Their survival could even be threatened if climate change is not halted, for example. At the same time, the SDGs also create opportunities. Dutch companies can contribute to solutions for the climate problems and profit from doing so.

The government can legislate to force companies to make a particular effort or achieve certain results in relation to the SDGs, but the intrinsic motivation of companies seems far more important to me. Companies that are motivated will achieve more than the legislator can compel.

My hope is that a broad movement will emerge among companies and the public to embrace the SDGs and help solve the underlying problems. The more attention citizens/consumers devote to the SDGs, the more demanding they will become and so force companies to take action.

You do not want the pursuit of short-term profit to threaten long-term results

The government can play a role by increasing awareness of the SDGs. As the bottom-up movement becomes stronger, legislation will become unnecessary.”

Momentum for action

“It seems somewhat optimistic to believe that we will have achieved all seventeen SDGs by 2030, but I am confident that we will have made considerable progress by then in relation to climate, water and protecting the living environment. There is already momentum and a shared sense of urgency in those areas.

We can achieve a lot if everyone plays their own role. We use the influence we have as a pension fund manager, but it is the companies themselves that have to make the difference. The government and regulators can also play a role.

At the end of 2016, eighteen Dutch financial institutions invited the government and De Nederlandsche Bank to work with us on a joint SDG Investment Agenda. Annual investment of 5,000 to 7,000 billion dollars will be needed to achieve the SDGs before 2030. That is impossible to raise without capital from institutional and private investors. The financial institu-

tions have therefore taken the initiative and have asked the government and the central bank for their help. No one can achieve the SDGs on their own; we have to do it together.”

We exert our influence, but it is the companies themselves that have to make the difference

PGGM

PGGM manages the pension assets for a number of pension funds. PGGM has around 205 billion euro in pension capital under management for more than 2.8 million members. PGGM employs 1,408 employees (1,352 FTEs).



Mathijs de Meijer, Co-founder of Nerdalize:

'Start-ups can come up with innovative solutions'

"Our idea is to install our cloud servers in people's homes and use the heat from the servers to provide warm water and heating in the home. In this way we save energy and reduce CO₂ emissions. We hire out the cloud to companies and institutions that need heavy-duty computing power. The price of our cloud services is 50% lower than that of regular data centres because we do not have to build a large centre to house our servers.

With our strategic partner Eneco, we carried out our first pilot project with five households in 2015. For that project we installed the servers in the radiators in the living room. We have now gone a step further and use the servers to deliver hot water from the tap. It is more efficient because every household needs hot water every day, but only needs heating in the winter. But we connect the server to the central heating system so that the heat from it can also be used to heat the home if necessary. The system saves around 300 euro a year on a household's annual energy costs."

Mutual commitment

"When Boaz Leupe, Florian Schneider and I started this company in 2015 we wanted to do something we were good at, that was economically feasible and with which we could make a contribution to combating climate change. That is one of the seventeen SDGs, although we didn't know that at the time.

Fortunately the business is doing well. We have nearly 20 employees and good clients who hire the computing power of our data servers. One of our clients is Leiden University Medical Centre, which uses our servers to make calculations for medical research. Another of our clients is a company that uses aerial photos to identify solar panels with the aim of accelerating the roll-out of solar panels. In other words, our clients are also involved in achieving the SDGs in their own way. There is a huge mutual commitment. The same applies for the people in whose homes we have installed a server, who also want to know what the heat from their tap water is used for.

We are now engaged in a crowdfunding effort to organise a pilot project with 42 homes. In each household we will install eight processors. You can gen-

Innovations can quickly have a major impact through partnerships between large companies and smart start-ups

erate a great deal of computing power with that number. If it is successful we will expand the pilot to 50 homes and then scale it up even further, starting in the Netherlands and, who knows, maybe also in other countries. To participate, a home must have a central-heating boiler and be connected to a fiber optic network.

To achieve the SDGs in 2030, a lot more start-ups will be needed

There are currently 850,000 homes that meet those criteria. There is therefore enormous potential for growth and we will need it. Data centres currently account for 4% of the total energy consumption in the world and that figure is doubling every five years.”

Strategic partnership

“We have formed a strategic partnership with Eneco, also a green company with its involvement in wind and solar energy. Eneco is helping us to scale up our concept. If the new pilot project succeeds, the company will be able to bring us into contact with other

households that are interested in the servers. Eneco’s interest in collaborating with us is that as a start-up we are a lean and agile company. We are a speedboat, they are an oil tanker. We can change course and strategy very quickly if necessary, as we did before in switching from server-radiators to server-boilers.

To achieve the SDGs in 2030, a lot more start-ups will be needed that are able to find innovative solutions for various problems. Really substantial transitions are going to be needed.

Innovations can quickly have a major impact through partnerships between large companies and smart start-ups.”

Our customers are also engaged with the SDGs in their own way

Nerdalize

Nerdalize’s mission is to provide everyone in the Netherlands with free heating. The company builds servers and installs them in homes where they supply hot water from the tap, and heating if necessary. Nerdalize has two goals: lower energy bills for households and sustainable data centres. Nerdalize was launched in 2015 and has 20 employees. The company has already won various prizes for innovation. Details of its crowdfunding action can be found at www.nerdalize.com/join



Lara Muller,

Director of Public Affairs, Boskalis:

‘Sustainability is our license to operate and license to grow’

“Boskalis is intensively engaged with sustainability. We consider it to be part of who we are as a maritime company. For example, we operate in regions of the world that are habitats for coral reefs, humpback whales and turtles and we take care to protect them. And there is always a local population that we have to respect.

We set the bar high in terms of sustainability. We just don’t shout about it. It is not in our nature. Nevertheless, we are increasingly aware that we have a story to tell.

We often go further than strictly required because we feel a great sense of responsibility towards people and the planet. Sustainability is our license to operate and license to grow.”

Building with nature

“Just over ten years ago we founded the Ecoshape consortium with other companies in the sector, the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) and the universities of technology. Together we are developing alternative methods for strengthening coastal defences and land reclamation. ‘We call the programme ‘building with nature’ and it is a strategy we employ in

countries like Indonesia, a country that is threatening to sink due to erosion of the coastline and groundwater extraction. Some villages have already disappeared. We strengthen the coastline by using natural methods to reclaim land and by restoring the mangrove forests. We work with the local population to develop ways of using the land in a sustainable manner so that we also address the causes of coastal erosion, for example by creating opportunities for shrimp fishers.”

Publicising the positive impact

“There is a lot of publicity about the negative impact that companies are said to have in other countries. Social and environmental risks naturally have to be managed as effectively as possible, but there is another side to the story. I know a lot of companies that are doing everything they can to have a positive impact, including ourselves. We are miles ahead of our international competitors when it comes to sustainability and stand out in that regard.

In Oman we are currently developing a new port on the edge of a desert. The plan we have produced encompasses not only the technical issues, but also ecological, social and economic aspects. We dedicate ourselves to working with the government to create

We are miles ahead of our international competitors when it comes to sustainability

opportunities for the local population by creating jobs and setting up training programmes. We hire as many local people as possible and offer them fair pay and good working conditions. Wherever possible, we use local suppliers. Naturally, it is also in our own interest for a project to have the support of the local population and to transform problems into opportunities. But it is also a part of who we are and how we wish to operate.

We take responsibility for the condition of the location of a project when we leave. We want our approach to have an economic, ecological and social impact.”

Challenges

In every project we comply with and enforce our Code of Conduct, which is in line with the international rules on corporate social responsibility. Our point of departure is the OECD Guidelines for Multinationals. We use our influence to ensure our suppliers comply with them.

We often go further than strictly required

We usually have only limited influence over our clients. Things generally go well in projects where we have the opportunity to build relationships with the community and stakeholders, but sometimes a client or a local authority wants to retain control, in which case we quite simply have only limited influence. However, more and more clients ask us to handle every detail of a project, including the social and economic aspects. We have developed a specific approach in those areas and have gained a lot of experience in dealing with them.”

Opportunities for companies

“The SDGs create opportunities for the Dutch business community as a whole. Together we can make progress with every SDG if every company devotes its core competences to them. In our view, no legislation is required to accomplish that. Dutch companies are the most progressive in our sector in terms of sustainability. Legislation quickly leads to restrictions and an uneven playing field. The SDGs should be regarded above all as an opportunity – for business, research institutes and the government, and for society as a whole. The government should earmark money to enable projects that help to achieve the SDGs to be carried out on favourable terms. Give the busi-

ness community an incentive to make an effort. If companies see opportunities, they will automatically move quickly. In that way we will magnify our positive impact in the world and create ‘shared value’: value for society and value for the competitive position of Dutch business”.

Together we can make progress with every SDG if every company devotes its core competences to them

Boskalis

Boskalis has been engaged in hydraulic engineering, coastal protection and land reclamation for more than 100 years. The company’s head office is in Papendrecht. It has a fleet of more than 900 units (vessels and floating material), operations in 90 countries and more than 11,000 employees.



Atzo Nicolai,

President of DSM Nederland:

'Companies are increasingly taking responsibility'

"We evaluated all of DSM's activities in light of the SDGs and assessed which of the goals we contribute to. The answer was all of them, but primarily Zero Hunger, Good health and well-being, Affordable and clean energy, Responsible consumption and production and Climate action. Sustainability is the core value and an important driver of growth in all our activities. We assess what the most important global challenges and trends are and then review what knowledge and experience we possess to respond to them."

From healthy food to sustainable consumption

"One of our goals is to make food healthier, for example by enriching rice with vitamins and minerals and so providing healthier nutrition for people who subsist on rice. Malnutrition due to lack of healthy ingredients in food is known as 'the hidden hunger' and it affects roughly a third of the entire global population. Together with the UN's World Food Program, we endeavour to give people access to healthier food enriched with micronutrients, as well as making other foodstuffs healthier, for example by developing and producing salt and sugar substitutes.

We also contribute to the SDGs relating to the climate and energy. In the United States, for example, we are working on a second generation of biofuels. At a plant in Iowa we employ a biotechnological process to convert the inedible parts of corn plants, such as the stalks and leaves, into cellulose ethanol, a biofuel. We will shortly start buying the energy we need for our activities in the Netherlands from the Krammer wind farm, a project organised by two public cooperatives. We have also concluded an agreement with the Bouwdokken wind farm, so that half of our total electricity requirements in the Netherlands will soon be met with wind energy.

Another good example is a project to develop an ingredient for animal feed that will curb emissions of methane from cows. The growth of the global population is increasing demand for dairy products and that means more cattle and thus more emissions of methane. If we can find a smart way of curbing those emissions, it will have a significant impact on the greenhouse effect.

Our products, knowledge, innovative capacity and technologies also help to improve sustainable consumption and production worldwide. I can give a few examples. We have developed a

Half of all our electricity needs in the Netherlands will soon be met with wind energy

technology that can produce totally recyclable carpet from a single material. Tons of carpet are landfilled every year. Our technology will put an end to carpet waste worldwide. We also make the world's strongest fibre for cargo nets for freight aircraft. The nets are longer-lasting, thus saving on the consumption of kerosene and reducing CO₂ emissions."

The business community was even a forerunner in the Paris climate talks

Multi-year strategy

"There is no contradiction between our earnings model and our vision of social responsibility. Some activities ensue from our sense of responsibility. Sustainability often is our earnings model. However, there is sometimes a tension between the short term and the long term. We pursue a long-term strategy: we want to add value for our stakeholders now and in the longer term. To implement that strategy we have to persuade our shareholders that we are moving in the right direction, and to do that we have to keep producing good results in the short term."

Government as partner

"We regard the government as an important partner. What we advocate is not so much fewer rules, but smarter rules. It would help us enormously if the government clearly formulated the standards that apply in relation to sustainability, security, health, carbon emissions and the circular economy. That could also provide a stimulus for innovation. A new standard puts pressure on companies that are doing little in the way of innovation and improves the prospects of companies that are already engaged with sustainable innovation.

But the government has actually been retreating for years. The business community is assuming more and more responsibility and was even a forerunner in the Paris climate talks. The business community in the Netherlands has also assumed a far more prominent role in the last ten years. DSM is a member of the Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition, an alliance of eight large companies that want to make a real difference in terms of sustainability and are taking responsibility for it themselves.

If you look at the country's competitive position and its innovation climate, the Netherlands is performing very

well. The level of knowledge and technology is high and we have a strong collaborative culture. Public-private cooperation will only grow in importance. Companies and the government have to do it together.

I do not have the illusion that we will have achieved all seventeen SDGs by 2030. They will never be fully achieved. But there is a realisation worldwide that things have to change. In my view, a president of the United States who disagrees with that is a throwback to an earlier time. There is a broad international movement with a great sense of responsibility that wants to make the earth a better place for this and future generations. That movement is not going to be stopped."

DSM

DSM operates globally in the domains of health, nutrition and materials. DSM combines Life Sciences and Materials Sciences in pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental improvement and social progress to create sustainable value for all its stakeholders. DSM has roughly 25,000 employees worldwide.



Meiny Prins, CEO of Priva:

'The future will be better'

"Priva's consistent objective is to generate better returns for our customers with less use of natural resources. We supply smart control technology that greatly reduces the volume of energy needed to heat and cool buildings as well as technology to regulate the correct amount of water and nutrients for plants in greenhouses and so increase yields with less use of natural resources. Ninety percent of the water used in the greenhouse horticulture sector is already recycled. We are also developing new, integrated solutions for a climate-neutral society, such as the implementation of smart grids and the recycling of wastewater for food production.

I am convinced that the Netherlands can play an important role in solving the major problems in the domains of climate, water, food and mobility. In 2014, I launched a website devoted to the Sustainable Urban Delta, with examples of integrated solutions.

There are many innovative forces at work in the Netherlands and there are huge opportunities for Dutch companies around the world, but we need a joint vision of the future if we are going to seize them.

Priva wants to help bring about these new developments and so help to achieve the SDGs. We do business in more than 100 countries and have sixteen branches in Western Europe, China, California, North America and Canada. We bring food production, working and living together in a smart environment."

The change is continuing

"The technical possibilities that already exist and will be further developed in the coming years could save the world. A future without fossil fuels is entirely feasible. With smart use of data analysis and automation we can certainly halve energy consumption. And for the half that remains we can use renewable, locally generated energy.

But this means that we have to connect worlds in a circular economy. Many problems could be resolved by breaking cities and regions up into smaller self-sufficient units.

The problem is that a movement in that direction is being delayed by persistently keeping old systems and interests intact. The fossil-fuel industry is still receiving billions in subsidies, for example. And with EU farm subsidies we are keeping alive a system that allows land in Europe to lie fallow

The Netherlands can play an important role in solving the major problems in the domains of climate, water, food and mobility

while rainforests in Brazil are being felled to grow soya beans to feed pigs and cows in Europe.

But changes are occurring faster than we think. Old systems will inevitably be dismantled. That also explains the turmoil we are seeing in many countries at the moment. Some people are clinging desperately to the old ways, but the movements that have started cannot be halted.”

Trump will not stop the cities

“Looking around, I see three trends. The first is that anything that stops adding value ceases to exist. Banks, oil companies and family doctors, for example. The technology is making a lot of jobs redundant.

The second trend is that large cities are becoming the drivers of sustainability. President Trump will not stop cities like San Francisco and New York by withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement. They will draw up their own plans. And the same applies for all of the world’s metropolises. Take a city

Business and politics badly need each other to accelerate the positive momentum

like Shanghai with 27 million residents, situated in the Yangtze River delta with a population of 65 million. A megacity like this has to find ways of guaranteeing an adequate supply of food, water and energy, as well as mobility and a green living environment.

Cities like San Francisco and New York will not be stopped by President Trump

The third trend is that technological breakthroughs will turn the world on its head over the next ten years. Think of the advances in digitisation, robotics, nanotechnology, Big Data and the Internet of Things. Everything is linked to everything else, knowledge is at our fingertips, everything is far easier to control.

The next decade will be a difficult and uncertain period, but it is as clear as day that the future will be better. It makes me jealous of today’s younger generation. Jobs will disappear because of the new technology, but they will certainly be replaced by new jobs.

The government has the final say on policies on energy, water and food supply, but is unfortunately often behind the times. Look at the procurement procedures in the public sector. They are still too often based solely on price rather than on the total cost of ownership. It will take time and money to create room for change, but the returns will be greater than the investment.”

Priva

Priva develops and supplies products and services for sustainable and innovative climate control and process management in the horticulture, utilities and industrial sectors worldwide. The family-owned company in the Westland region endeavours to use scarce natural resources, such as water and energy, as efficiently as possible. In 2009, the Dutch branch of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) awarded the CleanTechStar Award to Priva. Priva has 450 employees.

5 Examples from enterprises and sectors



▶ **T**he employers' organisations received a huge volume of responses to a survey they conducted among their members about their experiences and efforts in relation to the SDGs. This chapter presents a summary of the reactions.

ABN Amro

The most important SDGs to which ABN Amro contributes are fair and social economic growth, sustainable production and consumption and action to halt climate change. One example of the bank's efforts was the launch in June 2016, with the Dutch Entrepreneurial Development Bank (FMO), of the FMO Privium Impact Fund, which provides loans for companies in emerging markets. ABN Amro also finances Jumpstart, a fertiliser cooperative founded by FrieslandCampina, whose aim is to build 200 plants to produce biogas from biomass by 2017, and eventually 1,000 plants by 2020. The bank has also played a crucial role in financing offshore wind farms, including Gemini (2014), Nordsee One (2015) Galloper (2015) and Merkur Offshore (2016).

Achmea

Health insurance company Achmea has taken various initiatives to promote the SDGs. For example, the Achmea Foundation invests in projects designed to improve the socio-economic conditions of people living in disadvantaged circumstances in the Netherlands and in

developing countries. Achmea invests in funds dedicated to clean technologies, renewable energy and micro-finance. The company has ended its investment in the tobacco industry. The company also fosters and facilitates initiatives and innovations in the healthcare sector via Achmea Zorgparticipaties.

The insurance company is also active in markets other than healthcare. For example, it facilitates the sharing economy by including the option of sharing in the coverage provided by insurance policies or with special insurance policies for sharing platforms. Achmea also works closely with Amsterdam Rainproof in investigating where in the city measures should be taken to prevent damage from flooding and excessive rainfall.

Agriplace

Agriplace is a global platform for farmers, auditors, standard-setting organisations such as Global G.A.P. (Good Agricultural Practice) and companies in the agrifood sector. The platform makes it easier for stakeholders to comply with the requirements for certification through efficient data management for the entire process from field to fork, by re-using data and so reducing the time it takes to secure a variety of certificates. By sharing information and knowledge and by making it more accessible for agricultural businesses, the platform helps increase the transparency of the food chain and encourages sustainability in the chain.

Ahold Delhaize

Food retail group Ahold Delhaize has a long history of commitment to sustainable enterprise. Its 'Better Together' strategy makes a concrete contribution to SDGs such as 'good health and well-being', 'responsible consumption and production', 'climate action' and 'sustainable procurement of raw materials'. Ahold Delhaize has formulated specific targets for 2020 (<https://www.ahold-delhaize.com/en/investors/financial-information/annual-reports>). The company has launched initiatives with partners in the supply chain in eleven countries, ranging from partnerships with food banks to projects by the Albert Heijn Foundation with local food and vegetable suppliers in Africa in the fields of education and health. The company endeavours to reduce waste and increase recycling in its own operations, for example by converting waste into energy. In its determination to prevent food waste, it maximises the value of products that can no longer be sold in accordance with the principles of the so-called Ladder of Moerman. In the process, it encourages other companies in the chain, the stores and suppliers but also consumers, to accept their responsibility. The use of solar energy and sustainable cooling plants in the stores helps to curb CO₂ emissions. The company's supermarket in Purmerend in the Netherlands is the most sustainable in Europe: it is 100% carbon-neutral and supplies energy that it generates to neighbour-

ing shops. An important aspect of the company's policy is to work with local partners in order to have an enduring impact. One example of this is the Business platform for a healthy Amsterdam [*Platform ondernemers voor een gezond Amsterdam*], a project in which the local Albert Heijn stores help customers to make healthier choices.

Alliander

Alliander is a member of the Green Networks Platform, a coalition of eight companies in the infrastructure sector that collaborate intensively to make their own operations more sustainable. In 2017 Alliander chose to focus on four SDGs (SDGs 7, 8, 11 and 12) that closely reflect its social function and its strategy. Its efforts focus on developing sustainable intelligent networks and energy-neutral head offices, as well as a smart meter, cables, transformers and safety clothing that meet the criteria of the circular economy, as well as cooperation in relation to Sustainable Cities and public services relating to electric mobility and heating networks. The public grid company will report on its progress with the most important indicators in each of these areas.

ANVR

The members of the ANVR, the trade association of Dutch tour operators, organise 90% of the country's package holidays. The ANVR uses Travelife, a training, management and reporting system that helps travel companies to improve their performance in terms of sustainability. The Travelife system is based on around 200 criteria covering social and environmental issues, as well as human rights, working conditions and nature and the environment. The system is certified by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and the UN-WTO, and embraces all

of the international guidelines for the tourism industry. By complying with the Travelife criteria, travel companies help to achieve the SDGs. For example, by hiring local guides and tour managers they contribute to the SDGs Decent work and economic growth and Sustainable production and consumption. Together with the Breda University of Applied Sciences (NHTV), the ANVR has developed a carbon calculator, which helps companies to manage their carbon footprint by reducing CO₂ emissions and organise CO₂-compensation programmes for their travel products.

Arcadis

Design and consultancy firm Arcadis aims to make a contribution to all of the SDGs with its strategy entitled 'Improving the quality of life', but particularly Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). A good example is to be found in Wuhan (a city with a population of 12 million), where Arcadis is helping the city's water authority to implement China's national climate programme known as Sponge City. The pillars of the programme are flood prevention, encouraging the recycling of water, improving water quality and solving the drought problem. Wuhan lies at the junction of the Yangtze and Han rivers and has been in the news regularly in recent years because of the pollution of the rivers with chemicals, which has threatened the supply of drinking water. Wuhan is the first of sixteen planned Sponge Cities in China. Arcadis is also making a concrete contribution through its cooperation with UN-Habitat in missions in areas where its expertise could prove useful in creating a socially and environmentally sustainable living environment for everyone.

Association of the Dutch Chemical Industry (VNCI), Meststoffen Nederland, with Yara as an example

The fertiliser industry has made the largest contribution, in absolute terms, to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. The trade association for the chemical industry gives the example of Yara, a producer of mineral fertiliser. The company in Sluiskil supplies 26 million tons of mineral nutrients to more than 150 countries. It makes a conscious contribution to achieving the SDGs in various projects. For example, in WarmCo, a project designed to prevent emissions of carbon dioxide as a by-product in the production of ammonia by transporting the carbon dioxide, as well as the residual heat from other production processes, to a neighbouring area of greenhouse horticulture (150 hectares) where it is used for growing tomatoes, peppers and aubergines. This system generates significant energy savings and opportunities for growth for the greenhouse horticulture businesses and benefits the environment. The use of the residual heat also helps to lower the temperature of the water that is discharged, which contributes to the health of oceans, seas and rivers. Yara has also taken action internationally, for example by establishing the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania, the aim of which is to support inclusive, commercially successful agribusinesses that strengthen small farmers in the region and so enhance food security, reduce poverty and make the natural environment more sustainable.

Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU)

The Association of Universities and the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences jointly published a report entitled 'Knowledge for all' in November 2015. Knowledge and capac-

ity building are essential for achieving the SDGs. The institutions of higher education want to contribute to that through cooperation in research, education and valorisation of knowledge. The VSNU also conducted a minor survey of the initiatives taken by the universities. Wageningen University & Research, for example, has launched a programme entitled 'Transforming our world' with activities to support the SDG 2030 Agenda (www.wur.eu/sdg). Delft University of Technology has commenced a number of projects as part of the Delft Global Initiative and contributes to various SDGs. Examples of those projects can be found at globalstories.tudelft.nl. The University of Amsterdam, the Erasmus University Rotterdam, the University of Twente, the University of Groningen and Eindhoven University of Technology all also have programmes devoted to supporting one or more of the SDGs.

BlueCity

BlueCity is an incubator in Rotterdam for innovative companies, usually start-ups, engaged with the principles of the circular economy, for example by linking their residual streams. The incubator is located in what used to be the Tropicana swimming pool. Ninety percent of the materials used in the redevelopment of the building were recycled, reflecting the dream of a waste-free economy. The project is part of the city's objective of creating an affordable, reliable and sustainable heating system for Rotterdam by 2050, in collaboration with residents and local organisations and companies.

BNA

The Royal Institute of Dutch Architects (BNA) can point to numerous projects that exemplify its contribution to realising the SDGs in the Netherlands and abroad. One is the Dutch contribution to the Resilient Cities programme

to rebuild cities along the east coast of America that were devastated by hurricane Sandy in 2012. Other projects relate to energy (Zero on the Meter), cradle2cradle, energy conservation (The Edge, Amsterdam) and recycling (Kleiburgflats in Amsterdam).

BNGU

Some members of the trade association of certified Dutch funeral directors (BNGU) have set up GreenLeave, a foundation devoted to improving the sustainability of the undertaking business. The funeral director plays an important role in steering this process and the members of GreenLeave do so in three practical ways: by offering customers the most sustainable option available on the basis of clear criteria approved by the environmental organisation Natuur & Milieu; by encouraging the sector and suppliers to develop even more sustainable options; and by following five key principles of sustainable enterprise, for example in relation to good employment practices and sustainable procurement. The foundation has also investigated the social and environmental aspects of ten elements of the undertaking business and formulated criteria for sustainable alternatives. (See also www.greenleave.nu.)

Bouwend Nederland

The building sector in the Netherlands concentrates mainly on the SDGs Innovation and sustainable infrastructure, Inclusive quality education for everyone and Sustainable cities and communities. For example, the intention is to make the operation of all new bridges and locks energy-neutral. After the Ramspol bridge near Kampen (as far as is known the first bridge in the world to generate all the energy it needs as it is raised and dropped), the Beatrix lock near Nieuwegein and the lock at Terneuzen

will also be energy-neutral. The same applies for the section of the A6 motorway near Almere which is to be widened between 2017 and 2020. Solar panels will be installed close to that section of road to generate all the energy needed to operate the lighting and traffic management system on the road. The new A4 between Delft and Schiedam ('the world's 1st Honey Highway') is an example of nature-inclusive construction. At the end of 2015 the verges along six kilometres of the road were planted with organic seed to grow flowers that can provide bees with sufficient food to survive the winter. And the first energy-neutral residential tower is being built in the Amstelkwartier district of Amsterdam. The 73-metre-high tower containing 160 rental apartments, will be completed and handed over to the client, Amvest Investment Management, in the spring of 2018. The building will be energy-neutral thanks to a combination of optimal insulation, energy-saving installations and 2,500m² of solar panels.

Central Organisation for the Meat Sector

The Central Organisation for the Meat Sector (COV) is dedicated to finding the optimal balance between public expectations and a healthy economic outlook for the sector. In its vision document published at the end of 2016, the COV highlighted the sector's economic importance, but also focused on aspects that are crucial for preserving the good reputation of Dutch meat and the sector's success in markets in Europe and elsewhere: the importance of socially responsible production; the sector's innovative strength; the need to constantly guarantee the quality of the product; and the requirement of sustainable production throughout the chain. In the coming years the sector will



concentrate on safeguarding the sector's integrity, increasing its transparency and strengthening quality systems throughout the chain, as well as addressing problems such as the growing resistance to antibiotics and permanently applying the principles of the circular economy to production, with priority for optimising the processing of manure.

Croda

Croda produces semi-manufactures for industry and consumers worldwide. The company uses fatty acids that it produces itself using a process

of hydrolysis of natural oils and fats. That process produces a glycerine-water solution as a by-product. The company has built a fermentation plant to convert that glycerine-water solution into biogas, a source of renewable energy. The biogas is used instead of natural gas to produce energy and electricity for the company's production site in Gouda. The sludge that remains after fermentation is composted and the water fraction is treated in the plant's waste water treatment plant. In this way, the glycerine-water is converted into three renewable raw materials: biogas, clean

water and compost for agriculture. Accordingly, the company contributes to various SDGs, including Climate action and a Circular economy.

Dairy processing industry

The dairy processing companies and their stakeholders took an important step with the signing of the Dairy Declaration during the World Dairy Summit in 2016, when the annual conference of the global dairy industry was held in Rotterdam. The key question was how the dairy sector could make a sustainable contribution to feeding nine billion people in the future. The sector is convinced that the sustainable development of livestock farming worldwide can help to achieve the UN's sustainable development goals, for example by empowering of women, by creating employment, by improving public health and by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

De Volksbank

De Volksbank states in its strategy and vision that it wants to make a contribution to the SDGs No poverty, Decent work and economic growth and Climate action. De Volksbank wants to increase the number of customers that are financially self-reliant, for example with a Preventive Arrears Management programme to help customers avoid getting into financial difficulties. The bank also offers programmes and courses to teach adults and children how to manage their personal finances. De Volksbank also pursues good employment practices, invests responsibly and contributes to general social well-being and growth. Examples of its initiatives are the efforts of its Regiobank brand to enhance the quality of life in villages and small towns and of its ASN brand to help ensure that employees of garment companies and their suppliers in developing countries earn a

living wage. De Volksbank also wants to become a climate-neutral bank by 2030, not only in its own operations but also through the activities it finances. Accordingly, it offers extra credit and financing to private individuals for the purpose of improving the sustainability of their homes.

Dutch Association of Insurers (Verbond van Verzekeraars)

Insurance companies are engaged with the SDGs through various activities. With a combined balance sheet of around 540 billion euro, some of which is invested, the sector has a huge impact. Sustainable and socially responsible investment is very important to the sector. In 2012, the association drafted a code of sustainable investment, which is binding on the sector and is based in part on the UN Principles for Responsible Investment. Individual insurers are committed to corporate social responsibility and report on their activities in relation to it. In 2017, the association began talks with the government, trade unions and NGOs about a voluntary agreement on ICSR containing rules about responsible investment in relation to issues such as human rights, the environment and animal welfare. The agreement would represent a further tightening of the sector's binding code and hence the investment policy of insurers. Since 2011, the Sustainable (Micro-) Pensions in Developing Countries Foundation (SDMO) – an initiative of the Association of Insurers and the Pension Federation with the support of the ministry of foreign affairs – has been providing information about and access to collective pension schemes for residents of developing countries in partnership with local organisations. Most people in these countries have no provision for old age at all. In the south of India, SDMO and the local DHAN Foundation have launched a

micro-pension project which already has more than 34,000 participants. A similar project is starting in Ghana with the international organisation Enviu. Professionals from the association's members are preparing an impact fund and a crowdfunding project with a view to expanding these schemes. Five large insurance companies have signed up to the agreements in the Multi-Annual Agreement on Energy Efficiency (MJA3) to reduce energy consumption by 2% a year. Since the agreement was signed, the participants have together reduced energy consumption by more than 22%.

Dutch Banking Association (NVB)

In December 2016 the Dutch Banking Association's Sustainable Finance Platform published a discussion document with ideas about how the banking sector can contribute to the SDGs in the Netherlands. The banks hope to involve the general public in the banking sector's agenda for sustainability and have drawn extra attention to the SDGs by organising a public consultation process on that report. The discussion document addresses five themes that together encompass seven SDGs: innovation as a source of sustainable development and employment, accelerating progress with the energy transition, a more effective contribution to making homes and other buildings more sustainable, matching the financial wishes and possibilities of the elderly and financing hospitals and care institutions. The document sets out ambitions and makes proposals for joint action on these themes. The platform will incorporate the reactions it receives during the consultation process in determining the banking sector's efforts in the coming years.

Dutch Federation of the Rubber and Plastics Industry (NRK)

The Dutch rubber and plastics indus-

try makes a contribution to numerous SDGs in the course of producing rubber and plastic packaging and cable systems. For example, plastic packaging provides good and hygienic protection and extends the shelf-life of food, as well as medicines, prostheses, blood bags and disposables (single-use items). Plastic packaging and cabling keep food and water clean, prevent waste of valuable water and ensure the hygienic drainage of wastewater and storage of rainwater. The chemicals, rubber and plastics industry is one of the three most innovative sectors and largest investors in R&D. Plastics are light, industrial-strength and flexible material, can be dismantled and help to save energy. There is a recycling system in place for almost every product stream - 50% of all plastic used for packaging and 30% of plastic used in all applications is already recycled. The plastics industry develops products that have added value after they have been used. The sector tackles the leakage of plastics through design, public information and campaigns such as Waste Free Oceans, Nederland Schoon and Operation Clean Sweep.

Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition (DSGC)

The Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition is led by the CEOs of eight Dutch multinationals – AkzoNobel, DSM, FrieslandCampina, KLM, Unilever, Shell, Philips and Heineken. These business leaders are convinced that the changes and innovations occurring in areas such as the energy supply, the use of raw materials and food systems can create new prospects for the Netherlands in the future. The coalition's aim is to accelerate these transitions in the Netherlands and promote them in other countries by developing business models for sustainable growth based on a strategy of shape, share and stimulate:

Shape

The companies develop their own business models for sustainable growth and undertake action to shape the transitions, for example to renewable energy sources and a circular economy, in their own sectors, production chains and companies.

Share

The coalition promotes sustainable leadership and stimulates the dialogue about the transitions that are needed, both nationally and internationally, through publications and by organising meetings to share knowledge and good practices.

Stimulate

The coalition drives the debate by making specific recommendations 'that will move the boundaries' and so accelerate the transition to a sustainable, circular and inclusive society in this country

Elsevier

Elsevier is a publisher of information and analysis that enable institutions and professionals to advance science and improve healthcare. Elsevier is constantly striving to expand the boundaries of knowledge for the benefit of humanity. In September 2015 Elsevier published a report entitled 'Sustainability Science in a Global Landscape', which analysed the state of science in relation to sustainability and the extent to which companies and research institutes are contributing to the United Nations' global agenda. The aim of the report was to promote the dialogue about the SDGs between society and the science community.

Energie-Nederland

In January 2017 Energie-Nederland produced an overview of 35 energy-related innovations that contribute to

a sustainable and affordable energy supply and therefore combat climate change. The sector's aim is to eliminate CO₂ emissions in the electricity supply system through a combination of smart solutions, energy conservation and increased generation and supply of clean, renewable energy. Examples of projects by the energy sector are Greenchoice's *Warmetruiendag* [Warm Sweater Day] (turning the temperature down by one degree), Eneco's intelligent thermostat Toon, Essent's *Proeftuin Energiekoplopers* [Energy Leaders Test Lab] and the Powerhouse, NLE's rapid charging station for electric cars and Nuon's Powerpeers project.

See also www.energie-nederland.nl

EnvelopeBook

EnvelopeBook specialises in recycling envelopes and stationery – that remain when a company changes its logo or moves to a new address – into notebooks. EnvelopeBook contributes to the SDGs Clean water and sanitation, Decent work and economic growth and Sustainable consumption and production. The paper is re-used directly, which saves a great deal of water that would be needed to recycle the paper. The notebooks are produced by local companies, wherever possible in association with sheltered workplaces. At least 90% of every product consists of recycled material.

Hemels van der Hart

'A better world in 2030' is the title the consultancy firm Hemels van der Hart gave to its annual communication on progress for UN Global Compact, of which the firm is a member, at the beginning of 2017. The consultancy encourages companies to internalise the SDGs in their operations and advises them on how to do so. It also contributes to the development of the Index Initiative, a project to

develop indices of indicators that will encourage companies to make positive changes and have an impact in relation to the SDGs. Every new index advances the dialogue. One example is the Access to medicine index, with which the pharmaceutical industry provides insight into public access to medicines worldwide, which contributes to the SDG Good health and well-being. More than two million people around the world have no access to medicines, so there is a lot of room for improvement on this point.

InRetail

InRetail is the largest trade association in the non-food retail trade. Its members operate in the home furnishing, shoe and fashion industries and include multinationals and SMEs. The sector is slowly recovering from the economic crisis and is currently in the midst of a major transition in response to the rise of online shopping and an ageing cohort of entrepreneurs. InRetail pursues sustainable solutions for the problems of vacant properties and job losses. InRetail focuses on the SDGs Decent work and economic growth, Sustainable cities and communities and Responsible consumption and production. One of the ways it does this is through the Sustainable Garments and Textile Sector Agreement (2016), but also with projects to restructure shopping areas, by developing business models based on the principles of the circular economy and by trading exclusively in timber that has been felled sustainably.

- **Textile sector agreement and SDGs:** almost every item of clothing sold in the Netherlands comes at the end of a lengthy production chain. The Sustainable Garments and Textiles Sector Agreement last year marked a significant step towards permanently improving the conditions of workers in these chains,

at sector and at company level, in accordance with OECD guidelines. InRetail, MODINT and VGT, the three trade associations in the textile industry, joined forces with trade unions, the government and NGOs in signing the agreement.

Source: www.inretail.nl

Intend – Better Business

Intend helps SMEs to draft a strategy and action plan for corporate social responsibility under the title Better Business. A CSR strategy strengthens a company's business case and helps it to build a good reputation, customer satisfaction and staff commitment. The CSR activities of SMEs range from reducing the consumption of water, energy, commodities and materials to drawing up health and safety standards for employees and promoting CSR among their suppliers (chain responsibility). In this way SMEs contribute to various SDGs. A CSR strategy also enhances the social engagement of companies. Better Business offers companies the opportunity to work with Dutch charities such as War Child, The Hunger Project, Wilde Ganzen and the Prins Bernard Culture Fund.

KNB

The Royal Dutch Association for Building Ceramics (KNB) is the national association of manufacturers of ceramic products such as clay bricks and ceramic tiles. The sector contributes to the SDG Restoring ecosystems and preserving biodiversity. The sector has formed an alliance between river widening, nature development and raw material extraction (clay). Ceramic building products, particularly bricks and roof tiles, are made from clay from Dutch rivers. The clay particles are carried down from the mountains to the Netherlands by the rivers. There the

particles sink in the catchment area of the river. Extracting the clay not only provides the raw material for sustainable ceramic building materials, but also prevents flooding of the rivers. Through close cooperation between the ceramics industry, clay producers and nature conservation agencies, and using innovative extraction techniques, clay extraction now also helps to create new nature reserves and enhance biodiversity. In 2017 the sector drafted a new agenda for sustainability, including a timetable for reducing energy consumption during production by a quarter. The sector is also investigating how ceramic materials can contribute to improving the energy-efficiency of buildings.

KPMG

Auditing firm KPMG has been a member of UN Global Compact since 2002 and supports efforts to achieve the global goals in various ways.

KPMG Global Citizenship, for example, has developed six 'Industry Matrixes' in association with UN Global Compact. These documents contain numerous practical examples of how organisations can make a contribution, apply 'principles of good practice', set up worldwide coalitions and launch initiatives relating to the SDGs. KPMG devoted the celebrations of its 100th anniversary to the theme of 'True value'. KPMG searches for solutions in three domains: a healthy labour market, the digital economy and permanent value creation, all of which touch on the SDGs Affordable and clean energy, Decent work and economic growth, Safe infrastructure, Inclusive education for everyone and Sustainable cities and communities.

KPN

Telecommunications provider KPN endeavours to adapt its operations

as closely as possible to the major societal challenges of our time. The company focuses on five SDGs that are anchored in the heart of the business:

- **Health and safety:** KPN supplies IT solutions for the healthcare sector. Care providers such as hospitals and family doctors use KPN's Care Cloud, which KPN also wants to make available to patients and medical staff so that information can be shared more easily, but also safely.
- **Fair work and economic growth:** KPN is working on a new Way of Living and Working (NWLW), characterised by a result-driven approach, a focus on responsibility, entrepreneurship and discipline. This calls for change in how companies deal with human capital, for example judging performance not on presence but on the results achieved.
- **Innovation and infrastructure:** KPN invests in an IT infrastructure that meets the growing demand for data traffic and online services. Information technology can help improve the efficiency of logistics and transport and in making buildings more energy-efficient, for example.
- **Sustainable cities and communities:** KPN collaborates with various partners in searching for IT solutions that will make cities greener, smarter, safer and more efficient, for example with motion-sensitive street lighting, rubbish bins that indicate when they need to be emptied and parking systems that display which spaces are available.
- **Climate action:** KPN's operations are themselves climate-neutral. All KPN's services have low CO₂ emissions. KPN helps customers reduce their energy consumption and carbon emissions, for example by using cloud services and video and audio conferencing.

KVGO

The graphic sector has been engaged with sustainability for decades. For example, the sector promotes the permanent employability of employees. In that context, in 2009 it established a sector-wide mobility centre known as C3. In 2001, the sector set up the Grafimedia Absenteeism Support Centre, which provides employers and employees with advice and assistance in relation to sick leave, absenteeism management and reintegration. In 1998, the KVGO and other trade associations in the paper chain formed Papier Recycling Nederland (PRN) to guarantee the permanent collection and recycling of old paper even if it would not be cost-effective. The KVGO and some European sister organisations have developed the ClimateCalc, an ISO-certified method of calculating

the carbon footprint of graphic companies and their products. The Stichting Energie Inkoop, which was founded in 2001, has been buying only green energy for its members since 2009. Furthermore, energy management and environmental management systems have been developed specifically for the graphic industry.

Lendahand

Lendahand is a crowdfunding platform – which has also been launched in the UK, Belgium and Finland – through which socially-minded individuals and companies can invest in SMEs and sustainable initiatives in emerging countries. The companies can use the growth capital to expand and hire more people. In return, the investors earn interest. This represents a way of effectively combining

social impact with a financial return. More than 16 million euro has been invested in approximately 2,000 companies in ten countries. The impact of investments arranged via the platform contribute to a number of SDGs, including:

- **SDG Decent Work and Economic Growth;** providing SMEs in emerging countries with growth capital via the network of local partners enables those companies to grow and create more jobs;
- **SDG Quality Education;** Lendahand's partner in India supports financial institutions whose goals include improving education and making education and sanitation more accessible;
- **SDG Affordable and Clean Energy and SDG Climate Action;** investments can also be made via the



platform in companies that provide people with access to clean energy solutions, such as solar panels and biogas fermentation plants. This also has a positive impact on the SDG Good Health and well-being, since many households depend on kerosene lamps and cook on open fires which is unhealthy (and expensive). It also has an impact on education, since it gives children the possibility to study at night.

LTO and Agriterra

LTO joined forces with the Dutch young farmers' platform (NAJK) in April 2017 to form the Agripool Network, a body made up of experts and employees of the Dutch Federation of Agriculture and Horticulture (LTO) and the NAJK who had made a working visit to organisations and cooperatives of farmers to provide advice via Agriterra. Agriterra is a consultancy dedicated to increasing the professionalism of farmers in developing countries by providing training and advice to cooperatives and farming organisations. Agriterra's target is to reach at least one million farmers and mobilise 55 million euro in loans for 50 'farm-related' businesses, including 25 factories, in the period 2016-2020. Dutch farmers and horticulturalists can make a contribution to the development of farmers and cooperatives in less developed countries by sharing their knowledge and experience with them. Every year the Agripool Network organises two meetings to discuss a specific subject and to share experiences.

LTO Glaskracht Nederland

Greenhouse horticulture businesses have formed LTO Glaskracht Nederland to promote the energy transition in their sector. They have built local heat networks at various locations in the Netherlands.

Horticultural companies can join the scheme and receive sustainable heat at competitive rates, making them less dependent on fossil energy. Alternatives to the use of natural gas are geothermal energy, residual heat from industry and biomass, in combination with the use of clean CO₂, supplied externally, for the growing of plants in the greenhouse. An example is the Zuidplaspolder heat cooperative (250 hectares of greenhouses), which has developed a local heating network using heat from Rotterdam port. Heating greenhouses with this network will reduce CO₂ emissions by 40,000 tons because no combustion of gas is needed to heat the greenhouses. In time, the local business-driven initiatives could be linked to form a regional or national heating network as an alternative to natural gas.

NCV and NVZ

In 2015, the Dutch Cosmetics Association (NCV) and the Dutch Association for Detergents, Maintenance Products and Disinfectants (NVZ) drafted a joint plan to improve the sustainability of their packaging entitled the Sector Plan for Sustainable Packaging: Cosmetics, Washing Powder and Cleaning Agents. One of the sector's great successes in recent years has been the concentration of products, which has led to a substantial reduction in the use of packaging, energy and transport. This is exemplary of the sector's efforts to become more sustainable and adopt the concept of the circular economy. The trade association promotes and facilitates these efforts by disseminating information, by organising the activities of its members on the issue of packaging and by intensifying the contacts between the members and the cooperation with external parties. The sector's aim is that within ten

years sustainable packaging will be the norm and will be automatically considered in the decision-making processes of multinational corporations and SMEs.

In 2016, the NVZ published a brochure entitled 'Duurzaam hier en nu', in which it discussed each of the SDGs individually. To the NVZ, sustainability goes beyond a discussion of the composition of cleaning agents. Sustainability concerns the entire life cycle of products and objects. Effective cleaning and effective maintenance are conditions for sustainability, as is good hygiene, which enhances a person's well-being. The detergents, maintenance products and disinfectants sector contributes to a great many SDGs. The consumer/user, manufacturer and trade association all have their own roles and responsibilities in that regard. Demands are also imposed on the sustainability and safety of cleaning agents.

Nederlands Aardappelorganisatie

The Netherlands exports seed potatoes to more than 100 countries worldwide and accounts for approximately 60% of the global trade in the product. The sector also exports know-how and advice to help farmers in other countries to grow better potatoes to feed the local population, for example by increasing the yields per hectare. The breeds are tailored to the specific growing conditions in a region (such as temperature and rainfall). The close-knit Dutch network of cultivation, know-how, logistics, innovation and international entrepreneurship in combination with the strong breeding sector is a unique selling point and represents an enormous capacity to deliver major projects to promote trade and development cooperation. The recently established Potato Centre of Expertise in Tanzania (supported

by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the sector and Wageningen University and Research Centre) is just one example of this. There are numerous other countries that would welcome the combination of knowledge, trade, support in improving production and the position of local farmers.

NLEngineers

The members of NLEngineers, the association of Dutch consulting engineers, are engaged in numerous projects that contribute to achieving the SDGs. Here are a few examples.

- **Engineering firm DWA** takes environmental stewardship as its guiding principle: preserving the earth's long-term ecological bearing capacity by making energy more sustainable. The firm is involved in numerous projects to increase the sustainability of the supply of heat by developing 'smart' energy networks known as Smart ThermalGrids (STGs). DWA is developing an energy model that will reduce carbon emissions and also allows energy to be exchanged between buildings. The STGs also allow for heat storage in combination with additional heat or cold production from natural local sources, such as energy from surface water, asphalt and sewage plants. Its model projects include the Bronnet [Source network] in Hengelo, a smart energy network in Zaanstad and Hart van Zuid in Rotterdam.

- **Consultant engineers Sweegers en de Bruijn** is engaged with renewable energy and developing a sustainable living environment. The company endeavours to reduce its own carbon footprint by using hybrid vehicles and using teleconferencing for meetings. It makes its greatest impact by carrying out projects that stretch the limits of what can be achieved in terms of sustainability. The Kindercampus in

Den Bosch is an example. It started as a low-budget project that met the minimum statutory requirements in terms of sustainability, but was a zero-energy building (EPC=0) by the time it was completed.

- **Witteveen+Bos** has drawn up seven principles for sustainable design and embedded them in its quality handbook. The principles are: Move with nature, Design for now and later, Get the maximum from the source, Waste is a raw material, Work with the environment, Get more out of the design and Combine technical and social measures. Projects that contribute to various SDGs include the Oosterweel Link in Antwerp, the Room for the River project in the IJsseldelta near Kampen, the NCOC water treatment plant, a quay wall renovation project in Amsterdam and the restoration of mangrove forests in Java.

NN Group

NN Group is an insurance and asset management company with operations in eighteen countries. NN wants to make a real difference by creating long-term value for all of its stakeholders. The cornerstones of its corporate citizenship strategy are improving people's financial well-being and responsible investment. The company determined, partly in response to a dialogue with external stakeholders, that the SDGs most closely related to the NN Group's core activities are Decent work and economic growth and Sustainable production and consumption.

Examples:

1. The social responsibility programme, NN Future Matters, is aimed at promoting financial self-reliance and creating economic opportunities. NN provides training courses, scholarships and men-

toring programmes to help young people increase their potential in the labour market.

2. NN Investment Partners gives investors the option of investing in the NN Global Sustainable Opportunities Fund, which provides significant exposure to the SDGs – including Good health and well-being, Affordable and clean energy, and Industry innovation and infrastructure – as well as enabling them to engage with companies about their contributions to the SDGs. NN Group also helped to write the report 'Building Highways to SDG Investing', which was published in November 2016 by eighteen Dutch financial institutions, whose aim is to facilitate and provide financial support for the realisation of the SDGs together with the Dutch government and De Nederlandsche Bank.

NRTO

The NRTO, the trade association of training and education institutes, has taken many initiatives to contribute to the SDGs. For example, one of its members, TinQwise, has launched a project called E-learningforkids.org, the aim of which is to enable children around the world to learn via Internet. Stock, a company that provides training and advice for the healthcare sector, has developed an accelerated training programme for asylum seekers who have been granted residence status (so-called status holders) designed to give them the skills they need to secure employment as a carer or a nurse. The programme includes a course in the Dutch language and assimilation, as well as an internship and on-the-job training. VCANederland organises courses in Arabic that help status holders to find work. The course leads to a VCA certificate. VCA stands for 'Safety, Health and Environment Checklist

for Contractors' in English, and a VCA diploma is required to work in many professions. The NRTO and the MBO Raad (the association of colleges of secondary vocational education and training) have together launched a 'perspective year' for 138,000 unemployed young adults who threatened to fall by the wayside. The aim is to guide them towards (permanent) work and income through intensive supervision and a tailored approach. Examples of their experiences can be found on the website mboraad.site/perspectiefpact.

NS

Netherlands Railways (NS) promotes sustainable mobility, trying in the process to maximise the positive impact and minimise the negative impact of its operations on society. NS contributes to six SDGs.

- NS contributes to SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure by providing sustainable mobility with trains that run on wind energy, and to SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities by providing accessible, sustainable transport and keeping the air clean in cities.
- The company makes efficient use of energy and materials by making trains run more efficiently and through smart procurement. Waste is separated and recycled as far as possible. The wind energy that propels the trains is generated by newly installed wind turbines and NS is looking to further increase the generation of renewable energy, thus contributing to SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy, SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production and SDG 13 Climate action.
- As a large employer dedicated to inclusivity, diversity and good working conditions, NS contributes to SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth.

Philips

Philips' ambition for 2025 is to improve the lives of three billion people every year. As a sustainable enterprise manufacturing equipment for the health sector, Philips believes that with its technology and through responsible leadership it can make a contribution to SDG 3 and SDG 12. Philips' products give more people access to high-quality healthcare and improve health for everyone, within the ecological limits of our planet. In relation to SDG 3, for example, Philips and its partners have developed the concept of the Community Life Center (CLC), an integrated solution for communities with very little access to healthcare. Philips supports the CLCs with renewable energy, solar energy-powered lighting, medical equipment and staff training. A new CLC was recently opened in Mandera County in Kenya, the place with the highest mother and child mortality rates in the world. In relation to SDG 12, the focus is on providing solutions and access to Philips' machines rather than on selling equipment. Philips has more than 40 long-term strategic partnerships with hospitals, for example. With some solutions hospitals can choose not to buy a medical system but instead pay for each scan and receive a new scanner every five years.

Plantum

Netherlands is the world's largest exporter of seed and plant material for arable and horticultural crops. Plantum is the trade association of producers of plant reproduction material. A growing share of the exports are destined for countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Good seeds form the basis of sustainable cultivation and for increasing the yield and quality of food products, and hence the supply of food. Potatoes, for example, are one of the most water-efficient

crops and are increasingly resistant to drought and salt in the subsoil. Growing potatoes allows regions that are feeling the effects of climate change to continue producing food. Dutch seed companies promote local food production, help local farmers to produce high-quality produce and create local employment. Potatoes and other vegetables also contribute to healthy dietary patterns. The sector invests 15% of its turnover in R&D, with some companies investing as much as 30%. Accordingly, in relative terms the sector invests more in innovation than any other sector. That investment is made not only in the Netherlands, but also in countries such as Tanzania, Morocco, Guatemala and Thailand. Through crop improvement, good seeds and young plants, the sector makes a major contribution to various SDGs.

Private employment agencies

The temporary employment sector is engaged in numerous national and international projects that support the SDGs (including Decent work and economic growth) and supports many social initiatives.

- **Randstad Groep Nederland** supports initiatives such as Alliance4Youth, Jeugd op Zoek/ Worden Wie Je Bent, Pilot Statushouder (together with the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA), Pluspower, Stichting Lezen and Schrijven, Voluntary Services Overseas, Enactus, Oranjefonds kansen voor jongeren and Champs on Stage.
- **Manpower Group** is a partner of JA Europe and JINC and also supports Alliance4Youth, WEF, Social Development Team, Charter Diversity Ambition 2020, Fairwork and the World Economic Forum initiative for gender equality.
- **Accedo Group** supports projects

such as the Way to Work initiative, CEO for a month, Alliance4Youth and the Ajilon Young Professionals Programme.

Public-private partnership: Healthcare for everyone Successful campaign for health insurance in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania

The Health Insurance Fund ensures that even people with a low income are insured for basic healthcare and that sufficient good care is available. Its programme enables hundreds of thousands of people in Africa to take out affordable health insurance, as well as improving the healthcare infrastructure and bringing good insurance within reach for countless Africans. Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen: “With this programme we are building a public-private infrastructure from the bottom up. People without savings cannot afford the care when it is needed. They then often have to sell their possessions. With insurance that is no longer necessary. When the system has become established, it could grow automatically. The more people who take out insurance, the more robust the insurance system will become.” Dutch companies – Achmea, AEGON, Heineken, Shell, SNS-REAAL, Unilever – were among the founders of the programme, which has now raised almost 180 million euro in international investment capital.

In addition to their financial contribution, the companies also provide professional know-how. In Nigeria, for example, there are now properly functioning health centres in rural areas where people previously had to walk for hours to receive primary care.

Source: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2015/10/09/succesvolle-aanpak-ziektekostenverzekering-in-nigeria-kenia-ghana-en-tanzania>

Rabobank

Rabobank is a cooperative bank with deep roots in society. Rabobank regards the seventeen SDGs as a benchmark for the challenges we are all facing. Rabobank contributes to achieving the SDGs with financial support, by sharing knowledge and by forming coalitions. Rabobank has embedded its contribution to the SDGs in its strategic objectives in order to reflect the responsibility it feels for making a significant contribution to realising them. The bank's direct impact in relation to the SDGs is embodied in its international vision for global food security, Banking for Food, and its national vision, Bankieren voor Nederland, and the programme Sustainably Successful Together. Indirectly, the Rabobank has an influence through projects organised by the Rabobank Foundation and Rabo Development. Rabobank publishes a special report devoted to specific projects it supports in relation to each SDG. For example, the bank has issued its first Green Bond, introduced a Green Mortgage and organised two Circular Economy Challenges. The activities that the Rabobank Foundation has organised to combat poverty have had an impact on 4.7 million small farmers in developing countries and on 450,000 vulnerable people in the Netherlands. For more information, see Rabobank's Annual Report 2016 and its SDG Annual Report 2016.

RAI Vereniging

The Dutch Association of the Bicycle and Automobile Industry (RAI Vereniging) is also working to achieve the SDGs. In 2017, for example, it joined with a coalition of partners to form the New Mobility Foundation, with the aim of improving road safety and creating a safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport

system for everyone by 2030, principally by expanding public transport with special attention for the needs of vulnerable citizens. Auto Recycling Nederland (ARN), an organisation founded in 1995, has grown into a centre of expertise for the recycling of end-of-life vehicles and chain management. An important aspect of the ARN's work is sharing knowledge by advising and assisting companies and public authorities on issues relating to sustainability. ARN has recycled more than three million cars since 1995, finding a new use for 96% of the weight of a vehicle in the process.

RECRON

RECRON, the organisation that represents the interests of the recreation sector, concentrates on energy and sustainability. One example is the GreenKey programme in the hospitality industry, with which RECRON is closely associated. The programme is designed to promote sustainable operations and prescribes strict standards for energy and water consumption, the use of pesticides, cleaning agents and waste separation. In consultation with the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, lists of energy-saving measures in ‘sport and recreation’ have been drawn up to help companies in the recreation sector to comply with the energy-conservation obligations in the Activities (Environmental Management) Decree. A growing number of recreation companies generate their own electricity with solar panels, solar fields and small wind turbines, often with the help of a grant under the Sustainable Energy Production Subsidy Scheme (SDE+ incentive scheme). Together with a number of leading recreation companies, RECRON has launched the Green Deal for Pesticides. RECRON is also involved with a large number of com-



PHOTO: WILLIAM-HOOGVEY/ING/HH

panies in the sector in programmes to remove asbestos and it has also concluded the Coast Pact, an agreement with nature conservation and environmental organisations and coastal municipalities and provinces designed to protect the coastal zone and prevent undesirable developments (including building) along the coast. On 27 September 2017, RECRON marked 'the year of sustainable tourism' together with national and international partners in the hospitality industry.

RijkZwaan

RijkZwaan's motto is 'Sharing a healthy future'. The plant breeding company helps to achieve a number of interrelated SDGs by developing improved urban green terraces. With its partners, the company wants to ensure that the growing global population can continue to be supplied with healthy products, taking account of and responding to climate change and the limited availability of natural resources.

Improving breeds can allow farmland to be used more efficiently and reduce the spreading of pesticides. To develop those breeds the company must have constant access to the genetic variety that nature has to offer and therefore forms partnerships with gene banks around the world. RijkZwaan finances missions to gather specimens and enable the gene banks to expand their collections and safeguard genetic sources for the future. RijkZwaan also strives to create added value in developing countries in the fight against hunger and poverty. Vegetables of a high quality stimulate the development of local sales structures and encourage local consumption of vegetables. Good breeds are important in this regard, but are not enough alone. Knowledge is essential to fully exploit the potential of these breeds and RijkZwaan works intensively with governments, NGOs and other local partners in transferring that knowledge. A good example is

SEVIA, a public-private partnership which disseminates knowledge about horticultural techniques throughout Tanzania according to the 'train the trainer' principle.

Royal HaskoningDHV

Royal HaskoningDHV pursues all the SDGs. One of its projects to promote Sustainable cities and communities is the implementation of an integrated water safety programme in Jakarta, in combination with a programme for urban and coastal development. Phase 2 of the project is currently underway. Jakarta, a city with a population of ten million, suffers greatly from flooding. The project is designed to create permanent solutions that improve safety, quality of life and economic prospects for future generations. Royal HaskoningDHV is also involved in the Urban Sanitation Development Program (Phase II) in ten provinces in Indonesia, which contributes to the Indonesian's government aim of pro-

viding the country's entire population with access to basic sanitary facilities by 2019.

Shell

Shell reported on the contribution it makes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in its Sustainability Report 2016. For example to SDG 7 (affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy) with more and cleaner energy solutions by investing in the production and distribution of oil and gas, low-carbon technologies and energy sources. Shell also invests in local projects designed to give communities access to energy, for example with hydroelectric power and solar energy in the Philippines. SDG 8 is fostered by creating jobs, working with local suppliers and companies and paying taxes and royalties to local authorities. Shell evaluates its partner companies for their compliance with the principles of eradicating forced labour and modern slavery and protecting workers' rights. The LiveWIRE programme, which helps young people in fifteen countries to start their own company is illustrative of the company's social investment programmes. In relation to SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), Shell has formed a partnership with three growing Asian cities to explore new methods of urban development. SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production) is supported by formulating codes, policies and processes designed to protect people and the environment and by reporting on their implementation. Energy efficiency is the guiding principle in the life cycle of fuels and lubricants: from managing energy consumption in their production to providing customers with advice about fuel efficiency. Shell's aim is to curb greenhouse-gas emissions from its operations and it has signed up to the World Bank's

'Zero Routine Flaring by 2030' initiative. Shell is an active member of coalitions of governments, companies and international organisations dedicated to making the transition to a carbon-free future.

Social Enterprise NL

Social Enterprise NL is a driving force behind the movement of entrepreneurs whose primary objective is to create social impact. The website social-enterprise.nl presents more than 300 examples of social enterprises in sixteen sectors.

Tata Steel Netherlands

Sustainability is an important component of Tata Steel's strategy in the Netherlands. The company publishes an annual sustainability report that covers its activities in relation to the following SDGs:

- **Zero hunger.** Tata Steel has invested heavily in expanding the production capacity of Protact®, a BPA-free steel product that provides a solution for the packaging sector in terms of food safety.
- **Health and welfare.** Health and safety are priorities for Tata Steel, which invests in health (GCC) and the permanent employability of its employees.
- **Good education.** Tata has had its own business school for more than 90 years.
- **Equality.** The company promotes technology among girls to encourage them to follow technical courses.
- **Sustainable and affordable energy.** Tata Steel has installed 80,000 solar panels on the roofs of its plants, thus creating the largest non-ground-mounted solar farm in the Netherlands.
- **Jobs and economic growth.** The company has a policy of encouraging permanent employability and lifelong learning.

- **Innovation and sustainable infrastructure.** The company develops innovations and promotes building with steel according to the principles of the circular economy.
- **Sustainable production.** The volume of energy consumed to produce the same quantity of steel has been reduced by more than 30% since 1990.
- **Climate change.** Tata Steel Nederland is one of the top three companies in the world in terms of causing the smallest CO₂ emissions per ton of steel. The company is engaged in a pilot project to reduce CO₂ emissions and energy consumption in steel production by 20% (Hisarna breakthrough technology).
- **Partnerships.** Tata Steel has drawn up a regional steel agenda to foster cooperation with other parties in the region.

TLN

The Dutch Association for Transport and Logistics (TLN) adopts various measures to help achieve the SDGs. For example, it is seeking to accelerate the availability of renewable transport fuels in larger volumes by forming coalitions of energy suppliers, vehicle builders and transport companies and by launching pilot projects. TLN has also signed up to the national Energy Agreement and is helping to set up living labs in various cities. Transport companies are experimenting with new logistics concepts and with vehicles that run on alternative fuels/energy to help reduce emissions. An example is the use of electric and LNG-driven vehicles by De Rooij Logistiek in 't Goy, Simon Loos in Wognum, Peter Appel in Middenmeer and Breytner in Rotterdam. Logistics service providers, such as Ned-Cargo in Waddinxveen and Gebroeders Versteijnen in Tilburg, use multi-

modal transport and renewable energy in order to enhance the energy-efficiency of their operations.

VACO

One of the ways VACO, the trade association for the tyre and wheel trade, has promoted the SDGs is by adopting a system for high-quality processing of car tyres (www.recybem.nl) that has been declared generally binding on the sector. VACO also actively encourages recycling (tyre renewal) in the transport sector. The sector also has a publicity campaign to encourage motorists to ensure they use the correct tyre pressure and choose tyres with low rolling resistance, and VACO encourages its members

to save energy in their own business. At the beginning of 2017, VACO member Dutch Green Carbon won the Automotive Innovation Award with its system for recovering carbon black from old car tyres. More than a billion worn car tyres are incinerated worldwide every year and Dutch Green Carbon's ambition is to recover a quarter of the carbon black (a substance that gives rubber a structure) in tyres in the Netherlands by transforming the traditional life cycle of tyres into a circular process. Every kilo of carbon black saves five kilos of CO₂.

Vakcentrum

Vakcentrum, the trade association of independent retailers of food

and fast-moving consumer goods, has devised the Super Supermarket Quality Mark (SSK) in association with research organisation TNO. The quality mark is awarded on the basis of seven criteria relating to aspects such as local engagement, a stimulating personnel policy, a distinctive product range, sustainable use of energy, safety and prevention. The SSK encourages entrepreneurs to devote attention to sustainability, for example by employing good employer practices and promoting sustainable consumption, energy conservation, innovation and security. Local engagement is reflected in sponsorship of local activities and providing assistance for customers with physical



disabilities, including the elderly. A distinctive product range consists of socially responsible products, such as Fair Trade, organic and locally-produced products. Supermarket chains with the SSK quality mark provide jobs for people with disabilities and promote lifelong learning. Sustainable use of energy means that the supermarket uses energy consciously, improves its energy management and buys renewable energy. Innovation is also encouraged.

VHG – Landscaping and Gardening Contractors Association

An example of the efforts of the landscaping and gardening sector in support of the SDGs is De Levende Tuin [The Living Garden], an initiative of the sector's trade association, the VHG, to enhance the quality and sustainability of public gardens and open space. The concept of De Levende Tuin embraces five important elements of green space: soil, water, food, animals and energy.

The concept constitutes part of the training programme for prospective landscape gardeners. The VHG, NL Greenlabel and the ministries of Infrastructure and the Environment and Economic Affairs have concluded a Green Deal to extend the application of the concept to public space. The parties have also published a manifesto with the aim of spreading the philosophy of *De Levende Tuin* to a wider audience. The manifesto has the backing of organisations such as Butterfly Conservation, the Society for the Protection of Birds, Stadswerk (a network of professionals dedicated to improving the physical environment), the Netherlands Association for Garden and Landscape Architecture, the Tree Foundation and the Dutch Association of Beekeepers. These organisations work together to pro-

mote awareness of the value of nature in gardens and in public spaces.

VNHI

The Association of Dutch Trade Agents and Importers (VNHI) provides advice and assistance for commercial brokers, trade agents, importers and distributors. The VNHI is a member of MKB-Nederland and provides its members with access to an extensive network of manufacturers, chambers of commerce, embassies and other organisations of trade agents and importers in a variety of sectors. It brings parties into contact with a view to possibly partnerships, which is relevant to SDG 17 relating to partnerships, under the motto of 'together we are stronger'. A specific example is VKG Solutions, which is a member of Regreen the World, a project set up to counter the effects of deforestation by planting trees, an initiative that contributes to combating climate change.

VVVF

The Association of Paint and Printing Ink Manufacturers (VVVF) has taken a number of initiatives to help achieve the SDGs.

- Coatings Care, an international initiative by paint and printing ink manufacturers with measures to improve safety, health and the environment and publicising them.
- Veiligmetverf.nl, a smart IT tool with which paint manufacturers can distribute the legally prescribed information about product safety to every link in the chain, including the end user.
- Recycling of paint residues: a pilot project with a system of selecting paint residues from municipal depots so that they can be recycled into raw material for new paint. The pilot was a success and the system has been rolled out to the members.
- Sustainable maintenance: regular

maintenance is very important for sustainable property management. OnderhoudNL and the VVVF together want to help make painting and maintenance more sustainable by devising a reliable and uniform method of calculating and showing the environmental impact of maintenance. A prototype of the system is being tested and will be refined into a tool for painting and maintenance companies.

Individual companies in the sector also actively promote the SDGs.

Two examples:


- **Baril Coatings** is endeavouring to introduce the concept of the circular economy in the chain by promoting the use of bio-based raw materials and materials produced from recycled and upcycled waste. Baril Coatings is one of the companies behind the Sustainability Hotspot Scan that is currently under development by TNO. The scan provides information about the impact on the environment, safety and society and is intended as a stepping stone to a complete multi-lifecycle assessment, that includes social aspects, in order to determine the fair price of a product.
- **KEIM** produces silicate paints with photocatalytic properties which help to reduce air pollution.

World Forum

World Forum is a full-service conference centre in The Hague where social responsibility and engaged enterprise play an important role. Various initiatives by the World Forum contribute to the SDGs Good Education and Sustainable and affordable energy. One of the World Forum's priorities is to be an Educational Institute, with the constant transfer of knowledge and investment in educational projects. For example, it is associated with the

IMC Weekend School in The Hague, supporting the project by introducing children to culture and so helping to ensure a good future for the children in society. World Forum has also formed a partnership with the Haeghe Group, an organisation that connects people with poor prospects on the labour market with businesses in The Hague, including World Forum. World Forum facilitates the generation of sustainable energy by allowing solar panels to be installed on the roof of the building in consultation with the municipality of The Hague. In this way, it helped an initiative by the local community organisation *Buurtenenergie Statenkwartier* designed to meet the growing demand for solar energy.

Background



At the beginning of 2017 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked various parties to give their impression of what was being done in relation to the SDGs in the Netherlands. NGOs, knowledge institutes, young people and local authorities were also asked for their reactions, as well as the business community. The minister had promised to send a letter on the subject to the House of Representatives and wished to make it a participatory process. The letter giving an impression of the views of the business community and financial institutions was sent to the House of Representatives at the end of May. In response to the letter, the House of Representatives organised a roundtable meeting in June 2017.

VNO-NCW, MKB-Nederland and the Global Compact Network Netherlands warmly welcomed the minister's request and sent out an inquiry on the subject to their members.

In no time we received a great many reactions from enterprises, start-ups and trade associations and their responses are summarised in this brochure. We wish to stress that many other companies probably never even saw our request but are engaged just as intensively with the issue.

We would like to thank all of the entrepreneurs and representatives of companies, sectors and organisations for their input, and particularly the seven individuals who agreed to be interviewed and share their views, experience and knowledge with a wider audience.

We wish to stress that this publication is not based on a representative study of the implementation of the SDGs. The report is based on all of the reactions we received and clearly shows the great enthusiasm that exists for the SDGs. We intend to nurture this positive energy in the hope that it will generate further momentum.

Colophon

This brochure was published
under the auspices of VNO-NCW,
MKB-Nederland and Global Compact
Network Netherlands

Malietoren, Bezuidenhoutseweg 12
P.O. Box 93002, NL-2509 AA The Hague

www.vno-ncw.nl and www.mkb.nl and
www.gcnetherlands.nl

Author: Eppy Boschma, secretary
VNO-NCW & MKB-Nederland and
Global Compact Network Netherlands

Editing and interviews: Corien
Lambregtse (Voor alles is een woord)
Translation: Balance Translations,
Amsterdam/Maastricht
Design: Link Design
Cover photo: Cia Pak/UN Photo

August 2017

**‘There is a worldwide
realisation that things
now have to change’**

