



Message from ERS Principal

Sustainability has gone mainstream. Just pick up TIME, BusinessWeek, or any home, sports, or fashion magazine and see for yourself. The good news is now, more so than any other time in ERS's decade of service, the question of what a company should do about sustainability is being asked by CEO's and other C suite executives with the power to set new direction for long term growth.

These business leaders are asking what a sustainable product looks like. The answer is more than a point solution from the environmental department. While reductions in packaging or buying foods that bear the organic label are a start, they are not the end all. Consider the food industry crisis last year where a "sustainable" food - organic leafy greens - caused major disease outbreak. This same "sustainable" food likely required more than 50 calories of fossil fuel energy to get 1 calorie on your plate. Not exactly environmentally friendly. We need to find better production systems, and a better way to assure customers and consumers understand a company's sustainability values at the point of sale.

We are seeing evidence that companies who commit to and innovate sustainable solutions first are prospering in this new marketplace, and also benefiting by attracting and retaining top talent. This year, ERS is moving into the final phase of launching a universal benchmark that provides verification and recognition of a company's commitment to sustainability. This benchmark - The Sustainability Scorecard™ - is a culmination of 8 years of research and collaboration with stakeholders in this field. [\(More...\)](#)

When leaders view their business through this new lens, the opportunities come sharply into focus [\(See More...\)](#). Business pioneered the first industrial revolution to bring more goods to more communities. That pioneering spirit will stage the next revolution - sustainable products and services. Products that meet customer needs today without compromising the needs of tomorrow's children.

All the best,
Susan Graff
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In the Marketplace

Diverse groups of corporations and non-governmental organizations are working together for government action on Climate Change. Further developments in the biofuels market. Organic agriculture and food sales continue to grow. [More...](#)

Around ERS

The Sustainability Scorecard™ enters final launch phase and we welcome a new team member. [More...](#)

World Resources Update

Significant Developments in 2006

NOAA expects the global annual temperature to be the sixth warmest on record. In 2006 the United States saw widespread heat waves, severe drought, and flood causing precipitation events afflicted different regions of the country. [More...](#)

Ozone hole depletion caused by ozone depleting substances (ODS), such as CFCs, has slowed but is still a concern of atmospheric science especially with the combination of illegal production of ODS and lack of regulation in developing countries. [More...](#)

Upcoming Events

[Sustainable Advantage Conference](#), Innovation: Gaining an Edge in a Shrinking World, April 19-20, Eugene, OR

[Ceres Conference](#): Advancing Sustainable Prosperity, April 25-26, Boston, MA

[Conference Board Business and Sustainability Conference](#): May 31- June 1, Washington, D.C.

[Business Alliance for Local Living Economies Conference](#), May 31-June 2, Berkeley, CA

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In the Marketplace

Two groups of recognized stakeholders push for action on climate change

The [United States Climate Action Partnership \(USCAP\)](#) and the [Global Roundtable on Climate Change \(GROCC\)](#) have distinct missions and principles, but both alliances recently served notice that climate change is not just a concern of the scientific community and that action to mitigate the risks is needed from both the public and private sector.

In January 2007, USCAP a group of 10 market leading companies (i.e. Alcoa, Caterpillar, Duke Energy, DuPont, FPL Group, General Electric, and PNM Resources) and 4 non-governmental organizations released a statement calling on the federal government to quickly enact strong national legislation to achieve significant reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. The group said any delay in action to control emissions increases the risk of unavoidable consequences that could necessitate even steeper reductions in the future. The statement coincided with the release of the collaborative report, *A Call for Action*, which outlines market-driven solutions toward reversing the growth of greenhouse gases.

On an international level, GROCC issued *The Path to Climate Sustainability: A Joint Statement* by the Global Roundtable on Climate Change that called on policy and industry leaders to work toward emission reductions of greenhouse gases, while also encouraging economic growth and sustainable development in meeting the world's energy needs.

Groundwork laid for an "OPEC" of biofuels

The [governments of Brazil and the United States](#) have agreed to a partnership that will enhance the research and production of ethanol and other biofuels. Currently the United States and Brazil account for 72% of global ethanol production. The agreement seeks to establish industry standards and a potential global biofuels market. Cooperation between the two nations will have far-reaching impacts in the region with future investments in biofuel technology and production in some of the developing economies of Central America and the Caribbean.

NC coalition predicts economic boost and pollution reduction in clean energy

A [coalition of environmental, faith, and health groups](#) issued recommendations that 20% of energy demands could be met with improved efficiencies and the use of renewable energy. The coalition's report, *The Power to Choose: North Carolina's Clean-Energy Future*, predicts reductions in harmful emissions and effluents, job creation, and less energy purchased from outside of the state. This effort is in line with a growing trend by other states to develop progressive energy plans based around efficiencies and renewable energy production.

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New facts and figures about the organic sector

In February, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FiBL), and the Foundation for Ecology and Farming (SÖL) reported on their study, *The World of Organic Agriculture: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2007*. Nearly 31 million hectares are currently certified under organic standards, and the international market for organic products has reached a value of 25.5 billion euros (\$33.7 billion). These numbers are sure to have continued growth in the future as multi-national food producers and retailers continue their efforts at providing organic products to a wider consumer base. For full details and statistics, please visit the [IFOAM release](#).

Around ERS

Sustainability Scorecard moves into final launch

The Sustainability Scorecard™ is our process that is independently verifiable and indicates a company's commitment and progress on sustainability. This year it will carry a seal of approval that is unique in that it is not associated with one product category or one stakeholder group (e.g., the socially screened investment funds DJSI or Innovest) but is compatible with these groups. We've analyzed 15 years of research on corporate social performance and consulted with 'gold standard' benchmark companies and other stakeholders to construct a process that verifies commitment to sustainable business practices. Dozens of Fortune 200 companies are already in our data base. To learn more [click here...](#)

ERS Welcomes Trey Gibbs to our Project Management Team

Trey Gibbs is an ERS project manager with 11 years of environmental industry and issues management experience in the private, governmental and non-profit sectors. Prior to joining ERS he served for 6 years as Director of the Georgia Environmental Organization [GEO], an action-oriented advocacy group for restoration of regional watersheds in partnership with the City of Atlanta and US EPA. Trey has expertise in creating tailored sustainability education for adults and children; water quality management best practice, legislation, litigation, and sampling. Trey has a BS in Environmental Health Science from the University of Georgia, where he was mentored by Dr. Eugene P. Odum, the father of ecosystem ecology and member of the National Academy of Sciences, who was on the Board of Directors at GEO. "The one-on-one conversations were truly priceless. Dr. Odum revealed numerous insights to the interactions of organisms in a mature ecosystem, and how they rely less on competition, and increasingly more on partnerships and non-competitive relationships. As societal and economic systems mature and diversify, Dr. Odum presented similar efficiencies and benefits can be realized that are exemplified in natural ecosystems." Trey is an active member of Atlanta's Trinity Presbyterian Church Sustainability Committee and enjoys playing bluegrass music and Ultimate Frisbee.

[Click here for more information on the rest of the ERS team.](#)

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