

A wide-angle photograph of a vineyard at sunset. The rows of grapevines stretch across rolling hills, with a dirt path leading through them. The sky is filled with vibrant colors of orange, yellow, and purple, reflecting off the clouds. The foreground shows the detailed structure of the grapevines and their support posts.

# Sustainable Success: Adapting and Thriving as a Central Okanagan Business

**Facilitator:** Angela Nagy - CEO, GreenStep Solutions

---

# Agenda

- 01 | Sustainable Business 101 - Key Definitions & Terms
- 02 | Imagining a Sustainable Future
- 03 | Measuring Sustainability
- 04 | Taking Action
- 05 | Sharing your Sustainability Story

---

## About GreenStep

- Founded in 2008 to help businesses and organizations measure and improve sustainability performance
- We've worked with thousands of businesses and organizations across Canada since this time
- GreenStep provides assessments, certifications, tools, and consulting support to help organizations measure and improve their sustainability performance and take climate action.



## Some of Our Clients

Consumer Products /  
Manufacturing



ATHLETIC GREENS®



Financial  
Institutions



Scotiabank®



Hotel and Resort  
Properties



Tourism  
Industry



Utilities and  
Energy



---

## Quick Poll

**How familiar are you with the concept of sustainability in business, and how to integrate sustainability into your business or organization?**

**A** | I'm a sustainability expert

**B** | I've been working at it for a while but still have a lot to learn

**C** | I'm fairly new to the concepts of sustainability in business

**D** | I'll admit it, I know nothing



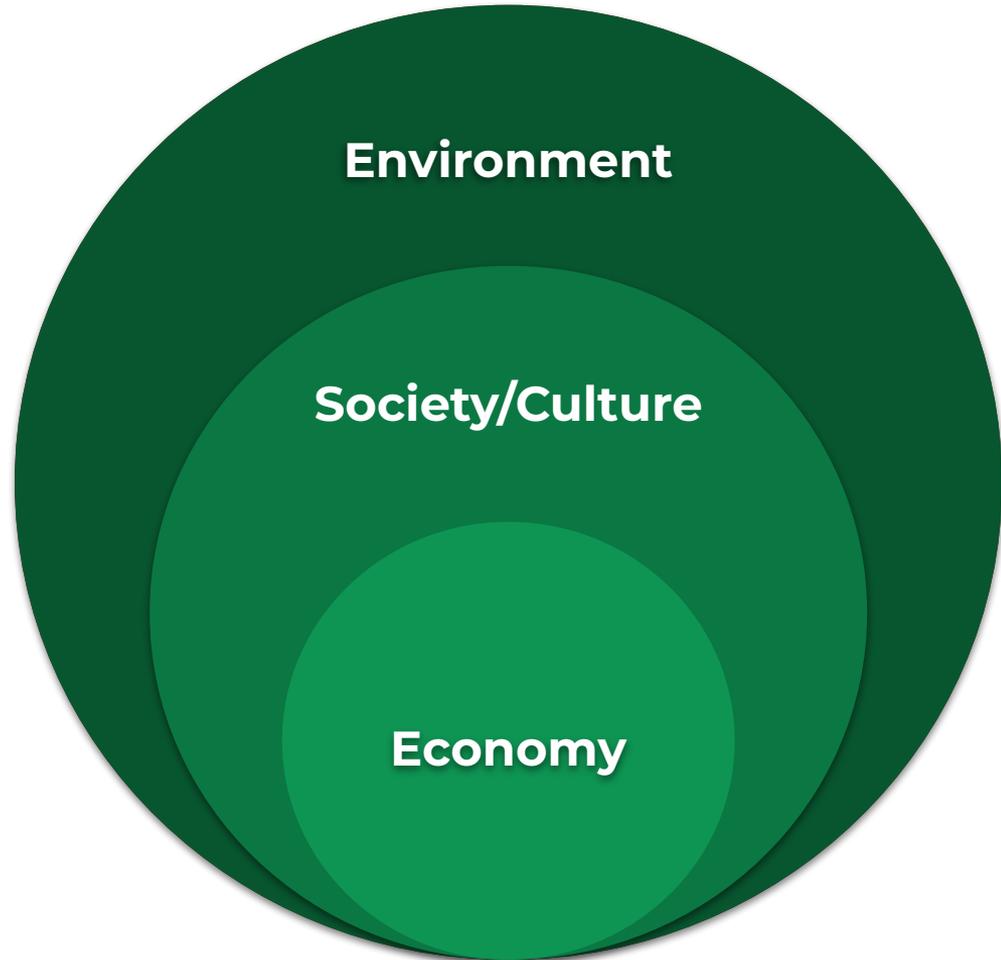
---

# Introduction to Sustainable Business





**Nested  
interdependencies model  
of sustainability**



# 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals





*"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

**- Bruntland Report, 1987**

---

# Regenerative

[*Re-gen-er-a-tive*] /adjective

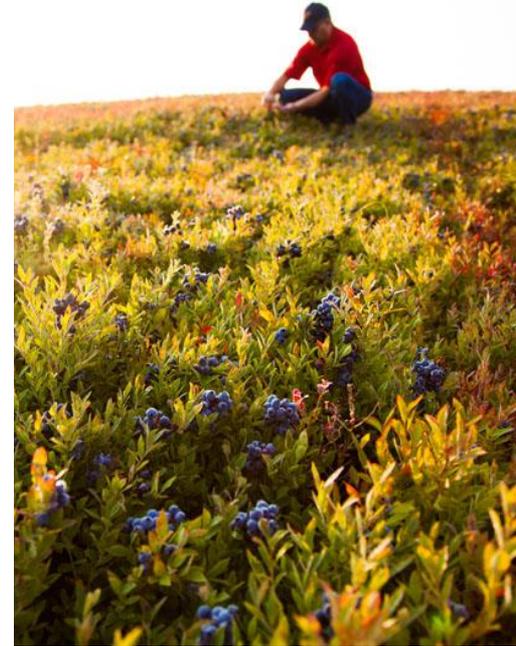
The process of actively restoring, renewing, or improving systems (natural, social, or economic) to create better conditions than before.



---

# Regenerative Business

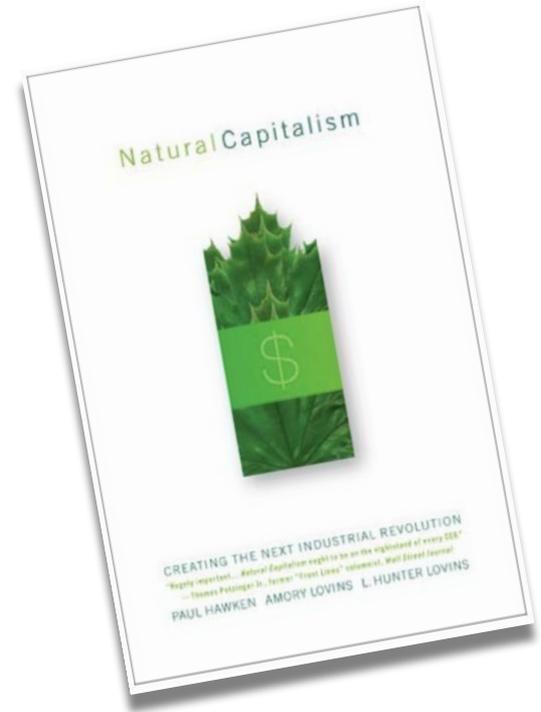
- Leaves things better than we found them - *healing*
- Often requires a place-based approach
  - Create conditions where people can thrive
  - Build back soils and ecosystems
  - Support climate change adaptation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity
  - Create net positive, living buildings
  - Creates cross-cultural understanding and reconciliation
- Creates a **net positive** impact



---

# From Footprint to Handprint

1. **Reduce Negative Impacts** - Buy time with efficiencies and operational improvements
2. **Create Positive Impacts** - Redesign how we make and deliver all goods and services - systems change
3. **Achieve Net Positive** - Manage all institutions to be regenerative of natural, human, and all forms of capital

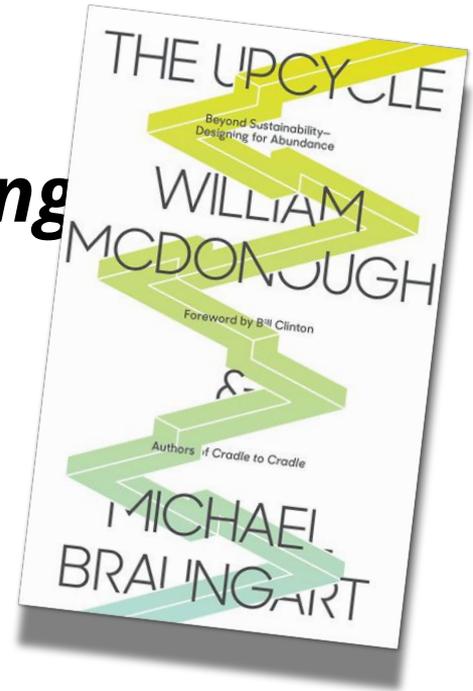


---

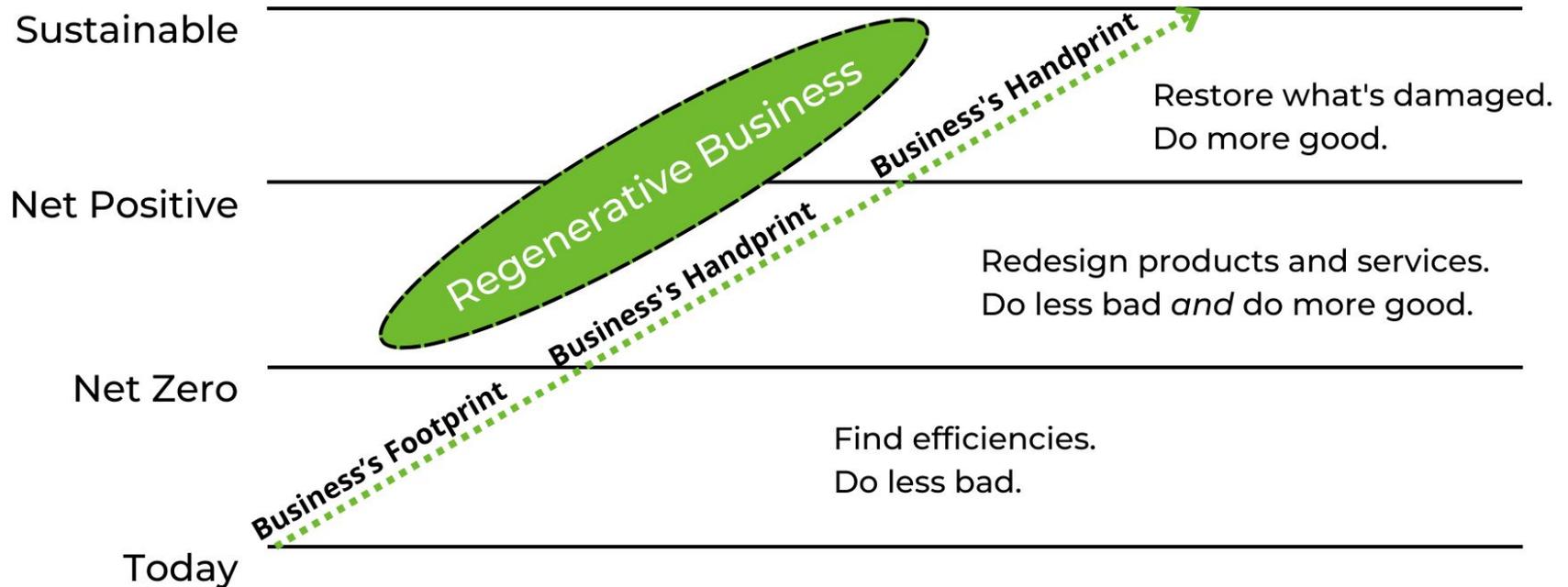
## Getting to Net Positive

***“Zero becomes not a culminating point, but a crossing point.”***

*- William McDonough and Michael Braungart,  
The Upcycle*



# Getting to Sustainability (and Net Positive)



---

## Carbon Neutral

- All GHG emissions are balanced with the removal of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere
- Achieved through the purchase carbon offsets, which are emissions reductions that occur elsewhere (reforestation, renewable energy, landfill methane capture, etc.)



---

## Net Zero

1. Focus on rapid, deep emission cuts
2. Set near- and long-term, science-based targets:
  - a. *Reduce emissions by 50% by 2030*
  - b. *Reduce emissions by 90% to 95% by 2050*
3. Use verified offsets, emphasizing carbon removal projects, to balance emissions that cannot be eliminated
4. No net zero claims until long term targets are met



SCIENCE  
BASED  
TARGETS

DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION



# Mitigation Hierarchy



---

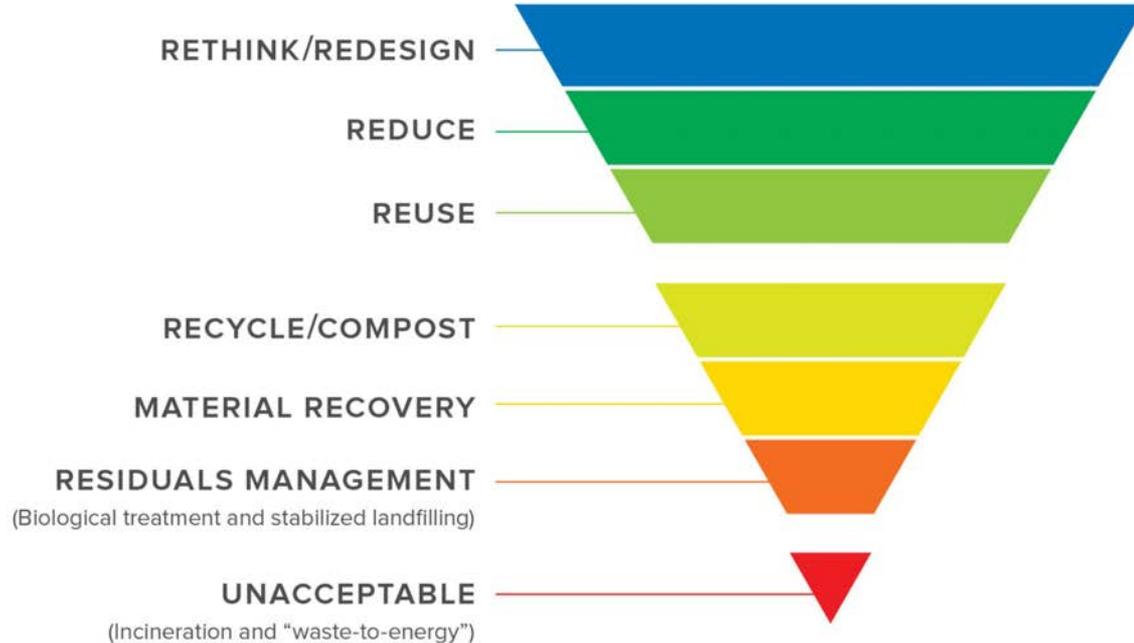
## Zero Waste

*“The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.”*

**Zero Waste = 90% or greater diversion from landfill  
or incineration**



## Building a Common Language: Zero Waste Hierarchy



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





# Global Trends



---

## The movement is growing.



Consumers are willing to spend an average of 9.7% more on sustainably produced or sourced goods.



78% of U.S. consumers consider a sustainable lifestyle important.



Products making ESG-related claims averaged 28 percent cumulative growth over the past five-year period, versus 20 percent for products that made no such claims.

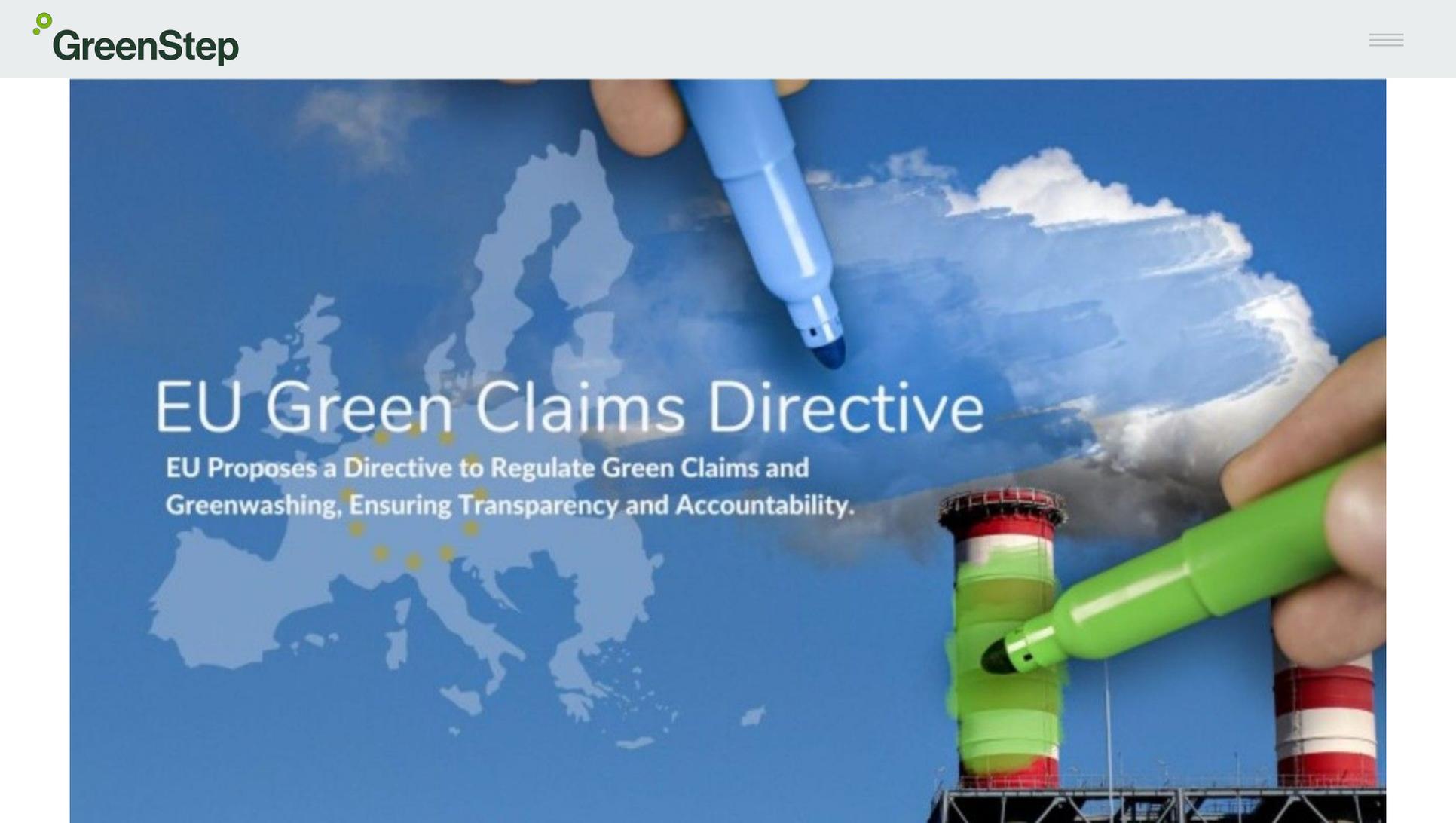
---

# Greenwashing

[*Green-wash-ing*] /verb

Providing untrue, unsupported, or misleading information that claims an organization's products and/or services are more environmentally sound than they truly are.





# EU Green Claims Directive

EU Proposes a Directive to Regulate Green Claims and Greenwashing, Ensuring Transparency and Accountability.

INTRODUCES COMMON

CRITERIA

*to check these*

CLAIMS



# Bill C-59 Receives Royal Assent



---

## Exercise: Imagining a Sustainable Future

Picture a future where the Okanagan Valley is celebrated as a leader in business sustainability in **2035**. As a result of your ongoing initiatives, your team has set a new standard for sustainability excellence and is actively driving meaningful change.

What do you envision the social media posts and news articles will say about your business? What are people saying about business in the Okanagan?

**Break  
(15 min)**





---

# Measuring Sustainability



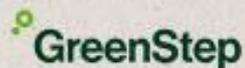
---

## Other Ways to Measure Baseline Performance

- Energy assessment
- Waste audit
- Water audit
- Carbon footprint measurement
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) assessment
- Accessibility assessment
- Employee, guest, or community survey



**Certify your  
commitment to  
going green.**



---

## What is GreenStep Certified?

1. An environmentally-focused certification for all types of businesses and organizations
2. Drives awareness and understanding of actions that lead to:
  - a. Energy efficiency
  - b. Water conservation
  - c. Waste reduction and diversion
  - d. Biodiversity and ecosystem restoration
  - e. Carbon reduction and climate action
3. Provides an assessment of current performance along with coaching and recommendations around environmentally sustainable practices
4. Encourages climate action through tangible actions
5. Supports Community Climate Action Plan delivery



*"The business sector is a critical component of achieving the City of Kelowna's climate action goals. Through GreenStep Certified, the City and GreenStep have done the heavy lifting, and we are excited to bring a low barrier program to support local businesses in Kelowna."*

– Chris Ray, Climate Action & Environment Manager, City of Kelowna

---

# Criteria Categories

## Sustainability Impact Assessment of:

- Management Practices
- Low Impact and Low Carbon Transportation
- Buildings and Energy Conservation
- Waste Reduction and Pollution Prevention
- Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention
- Local Purchasing and Community Environmental Support
- Carbon Offsets, RECs, and Regeneration





# Example Baseline - Sustainability Assessment

 <span style="margin-left: 20px;"><b>Sustainable Tourism</b></span>			
Platinum: 90 - 100 % Gold: 75 - 89 % Silver: 55 - 74 % Bronze: 35 - 54 %			
Categories	Points Earned	Points Available	%
MANAGEMENT	39	75	53%
SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACTS	31	65	48%
NATURAL & CULTURAL INTERACTIONS	11	31	35%
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	50	81	62%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>52%</b>

---

## Measuring Sustainability Exercise

- Ensure you have the worksheet handout ready to fill out
- We will review each of these question together
- Best practice examples for each category will be shared
- Answer each question and write down what, if any, evidence or documentation you have around these items (or what you'd like to put in place).

---

## Management Practices

- ❑ We have a vision, mission or commitment statement related to sustainability or climate action and it is on our website.
- ❑ Staff are trained on our sustainability practices and policies, as it relates to their job responsibilities as part of their onboarding and/or ongoing training.
- ❑ We have a Green Team or something similar.



---

# GreenStep

- Signatory of Canada's Net Zero Challenge & The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism
- Regular training and lunch and learns
- Green Team that meets monthly
- Reached more than 15,000 businesses across Canada
- Performed over 7,000 audits
- Cumulative reductions of over 10,000 GJ
- Cumulative reduction of over 3500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e
- As of 2023 we have reduced 18 times more carbon emissions than we have produced



---

## Low Impact & Low Carbon Transportation

- ❑ Some of the vehicles we use for business purposes are low or zero carbon (i.e. electric, hydrogen, biodiesel, hybrid).
- ❑ We offer, promote, or incentivize low carbon transportation for staff and customers.
- ❑ Some of our staff commute to work by bike, transit, carpooling, EV, walking or work remotely.



---

## Current Taxi

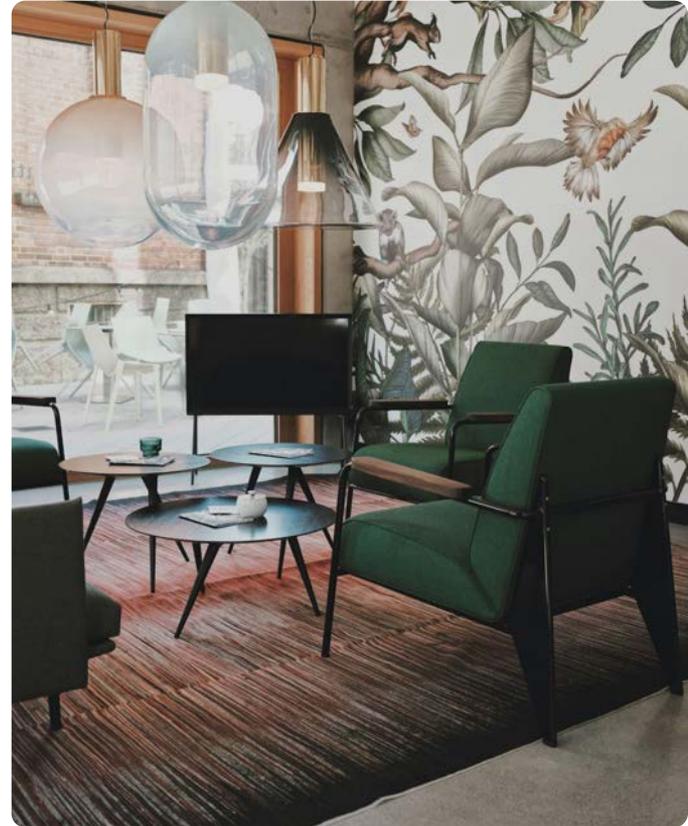
- Produced 196.81% less emissions, preventing the release of 706.93 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (as of 2019)
- Website shows real time kgs of CO<sub>2</sub>e saved
- 2.2 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> saved for every 10 km driven
- Enhanced customer engagement + credibility
- Impact integrated into marketing and educational presentations
- Differentiates from competition and strengthen partnerships



---

## Buildings & Energy Conservation

- ❑ Most or all of our lighting is LED.
- ❑ Heating and cooling is controlled by sensors or controls such as programmable thermostats, timers, or occupancy sensors, which have been properly programmed.
- ❑ We provide training to staff to encourage energy conservation behaviour.



---

## Watermark Beach Resort

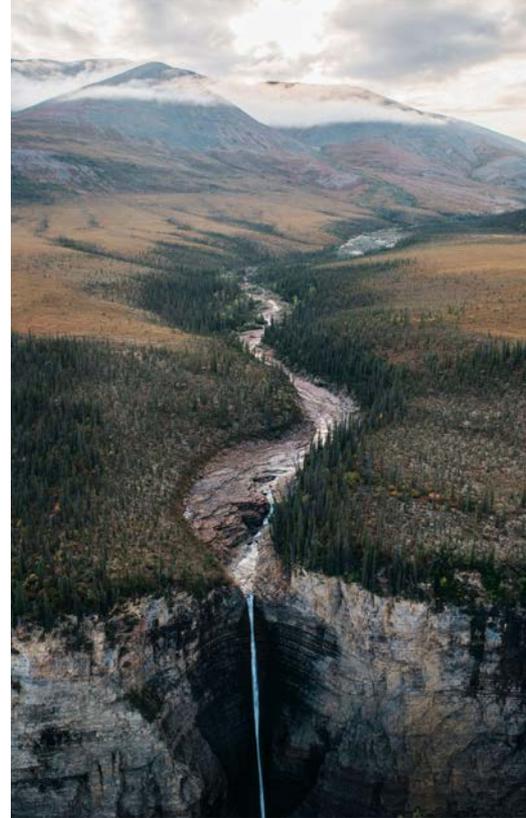
- Lighting retrofit
- Received utility rebates to support project
- Total Project Cost: \$19,500
- Annual Cost Savings: \$27,500
- Annual Energy Savings: ~200,000 kWh
- Payback period: 3.5 Months



---

## Waste & Water

- ❑ We reuse or recycle at least four waste types (e.g., cardboard, paper, plastic, organic, glass, metal, etc.)
- ❑ We have replaced or eliminated single-use plastic items, amenities, or supplies.
- ❑ More than 50% of our water-consuming equipment (e.g. showerheads, faucets, toilets, laundry facilities, irrigation, etc. is EPA WaterSense or low-flow



---

## Chickpeace Zero Waste Refillery

- Refilled 52,600 lbs of bulk goods
- Diverted 1,459,996 single use plastics from landfill
- Packed 1,668 online orders in repurposed packaging
- Avoided 57,110 paper towel rolls through the sale of reusable paper cloths
- Composting program has diverted 181,990 lbs of organic waste from the landfill
- Supported 245 Canadian suppliers
- Support 21 food producers in their community kitchen
- Contributed to many local non-profit organizations



---

## Local Economy & Community

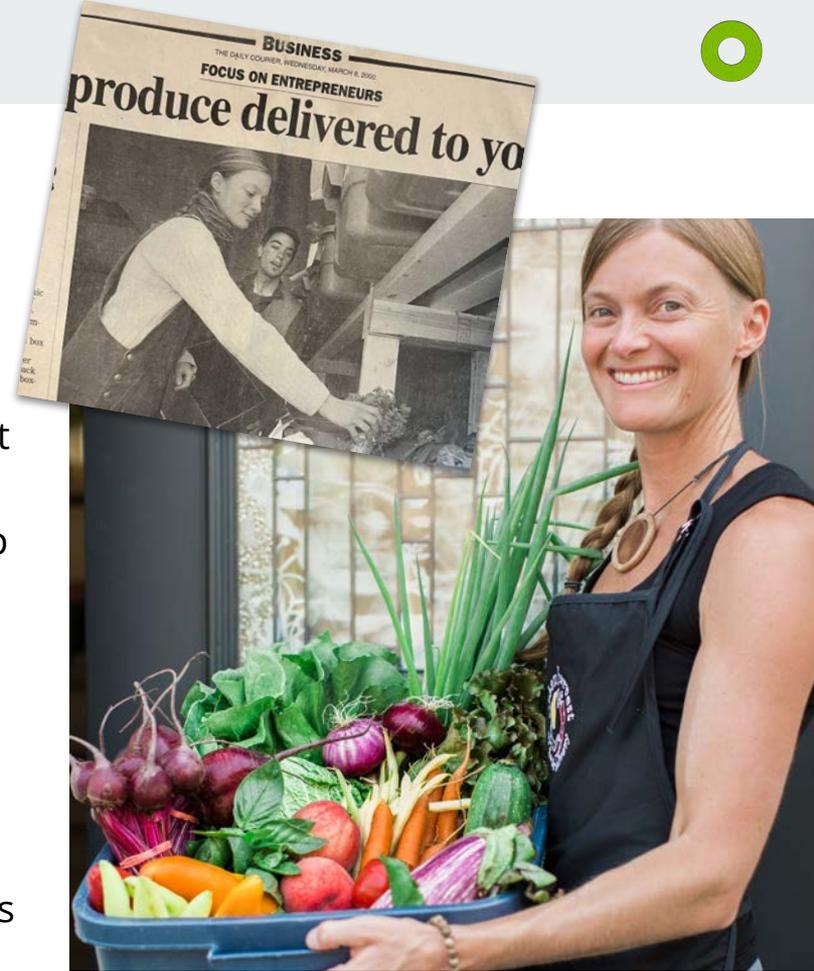
- ❑ We have a documented purchasing policy that prioritizes local suppliers and products (i.e. those from within 300 km).
- ❑ We have a documented purchasing policy that prioritizes suppliers with environmental certifications or credentials.
- ❑ We volunteer for community environmental projects or activities each year.



---

## Urban Harvest

- Employed 65 awesome people (17+ years longest serving employee)
- Paid \$8.2M+ to Okanagan/Similkameen/Shuswap farmers
- Spent \$11.6M on local BC produce and products
- Bank with a local credit union
- Donate, sponsor and contribute to numerous community organizations and individuals
- Annual seasonal planning with key suppliers
- Collaborated to streamline local shipping logistics
- Mapped delivery routes for maximum efficiency
- Prioritize local goods and services for management





**Tabulate Your Results!**



## What is the most unique or innovative practice or action you have taken?

1. Sustainable Management
2. Low Impact & Low Carbon Transportation
3. Buildings & Energy Conservation
4. Waste & Water
5. Local Economy & Community



---

# Action Planning





**What are 3 - 5 actions that you are going to take within the next year?**



---

# Sharing Your Sustainability Story



---

## Quick Poll

Do you share or talk about your sustainability efforts with staff or guests?

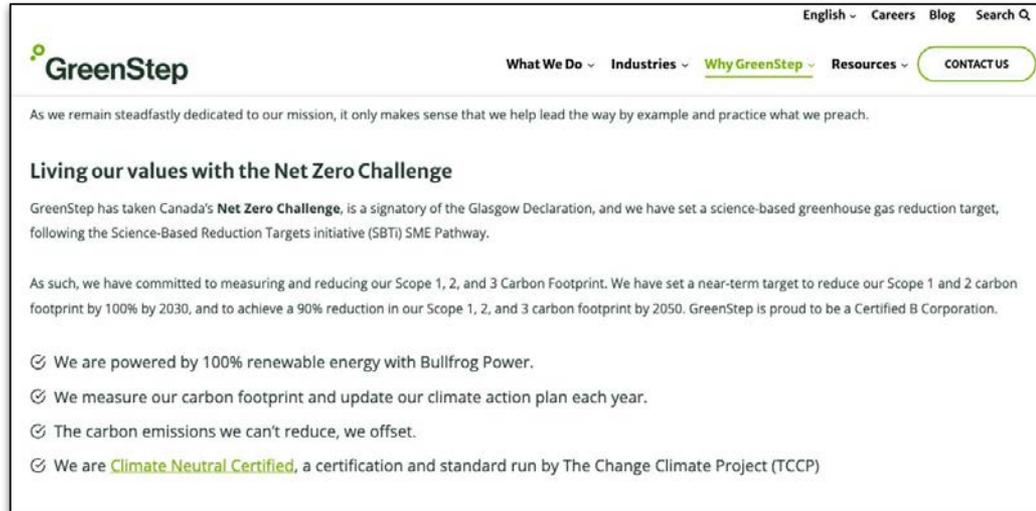
**A** | Yes, all the time.

**B** | Sometimes.

**C** | Not yet.

# Make a Commitment

- Formal, public statement
- On your website and cascade to other areas of your operations
- Internally to your teams



English - Careers Blog Search Q

GreenStep

What We Do - Industries - **Why GreenStep** - Resources - CONTACT US

As we remain steadfastly dedicated to our mission, it only makes sense that we help lead the way by example and practice what we preach.

### Living our values with the Net Zero Challenge

GreenStep has taken Canada's **Net Zero Challenge**, is a signatory of the Glasgow Declaration, and we have set a science-based greenhouse gas reduction target, following the Science-Based Reduction Targets initiative (SBTi) SME Pathway.

As such, we have committed to measuring and reducing our Scope 1, 2, and 3 Carbon Footprint. We have set a near-term target to reduce our Scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint by 100% by 2030, and to achieve a 90% reduction in our Scope 1, 2, and 3 carbon footprint by 2050. GreenStep is proud to be a Certified B Corporation.

- ☑ We are powered by 100% renewable energy with Bullfrog Power.
- ☑ We measure our carbon footprint and update our climate action plan each year.
- ☑ The carbon emissions we can't reduce, we offset.
- ☑ We are **Climate Neutral Certified**, a certification and standard run by The Change Climate Project (TCCP)

---

## Green Hushing

*“The conscious act of underreporting sustainability practices to avoid scrutiny.”*





# How to Avoid Greenwashing & Green Hushing

**Best Practice:** Leverage your baseline measurement and action plan to tell a credible story

- Your sustainability commitment - goals and targets
- Current performance - the data that shows your baseline and changes over time
- Achievements and challenges - a summary of what you've accomplished to date and if you've encountered bumps along the way
- Future Plans - things your working on

---

# Your Sphere of Influence

**Best Practice:** Share along your value chain

- Guests
- Staff
- Suppliers
- Partners



---

# Sharing Your Sustainability Story

- Prominently on website
- Social media channels
- Briefing upon guest arrival
- Pledge for guests to sign
- Information posted in common area
- Voluntary or mandatory fee/donation for guests to support environmental initiatives





# Dedicated Webpage

- About Us
- Our Sustainability Commitment
- How you can help us achieve our sustainability goals



Bringing The Farm To Your Doorstep

...Since 2000!

[Home](#) [New Customers](#) [Place an Order](#) [What's New](#) [Contact](#)

## About Us

Urban Harvest was started in January of 2000 by Lisa McIntosh and David Nelson, with the goal of connecting local growers and local eaters! Lisa and her team continue to work hard to make the choice to eat organic both convenient and affordable for our customers in the Central Okanagan area, while contributing to a local food culture that celebrates healthy, joyful eating.

We are also deeply committed to being part of a more sustainable food system, and as such, we work closely with Okanagan farmers to ensure that we are able to buy as much of our produce as possible locally, reducing the distance from field to table. We support a number of local organizations with weekly food donations, and also pass on lots of culls + scraps to local bunnies, chickens and compost piles!



## Our Vision

Imagine a world where plastic free living was the norm? Accessibility, price and quality were never an issue. What if there was no trash at all?

At Chickpeace we're on a mission to manifest this dream into a reality. This is the path we are headed on. Join us?



## OVER 11,500,000 KM TRAVELLED

11 million kms means Current Taxi's guests have saved 2.5 million kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e over conventional taxis. Let's travel cleaner, together.

## Example Social Media Posts



A social media post from Eagle Wing Tours. The main image shows a white and yellow boat on the water with several people on deck. In the foreground, the dark dorsal fins of several whales are visible above the water's surface. The background shows a hazy coastline under an overcast sky. In the bottom left corner, there is a circular logo with a blue whale silhouette and the text 'EAGLE WING WHALE WATCHING TOURS'. In the bottom right corner, there is a black 'Follow' button.

**Eagle Wing Tours**  
@eaglewingtours

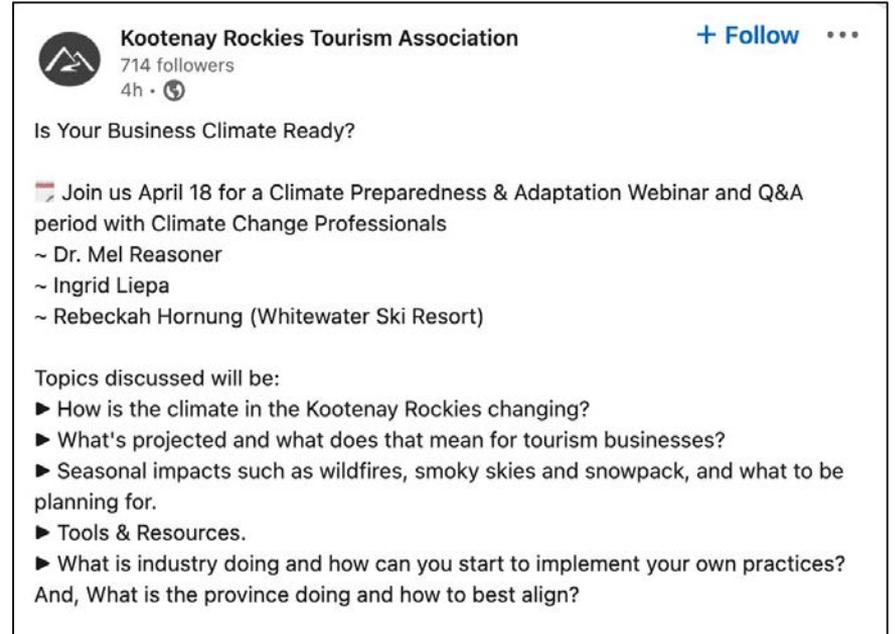
Guaranteed Whales & Adventure! 1st Carbon Neutral & 1% for the Planet eco adventure whale watching tour company in Canada. We are [#Wild4Whales](#)

📍 Victoria, B.C. Canada 🌐 [eaglewingtours.com](https://eaglewingtours.com) 📅 Joined July 2009

Sources:

<https://twitter.com/eaglewingtours?lang=en>

<https://ca.linkedin.com/company/kootenay-rockies-tourism>



A social media post from the Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association. The profile picture shows a mountain range. The text of the post is about a webinar on climate preparedness and adaptation. It lists speakers and topics to be discussed.

**Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association** + Follow ...  
714 followers  
4h · 🌐

Is Your Business Climate Ready?

📅 Join us April 18 for a Climate Preparedness & Adaptation Webinar and Q&A period with Climate Change Professionals

~ Dr. Mel Reasoner  
~ Ingrid Liepa  
~ Rebeckah Hornung (Whitewater Ski Resort)

Topics discussed will be:

- ▶ How is the climate in the Kootenay Rockies changing?
- ▶ What's projected and what does that mean for tourism businesses?
- ▶ Seasonal impacts such as wildfires, smoky skies and snowpack, and what to be planning for.
- ▶ Tools & Resources.
- ▶ What is industry doing and how can you start to implement your own practices?

And, What is the province doing and how to best align?

---

# Create a Mini-Annual Sustainability Report

1. Sustainability commitment
2. Organizational profile
3. Sustainability summary
  - a. Current performance
  - b. Achievements and challenges
4. Future Plans
5. Publish annually

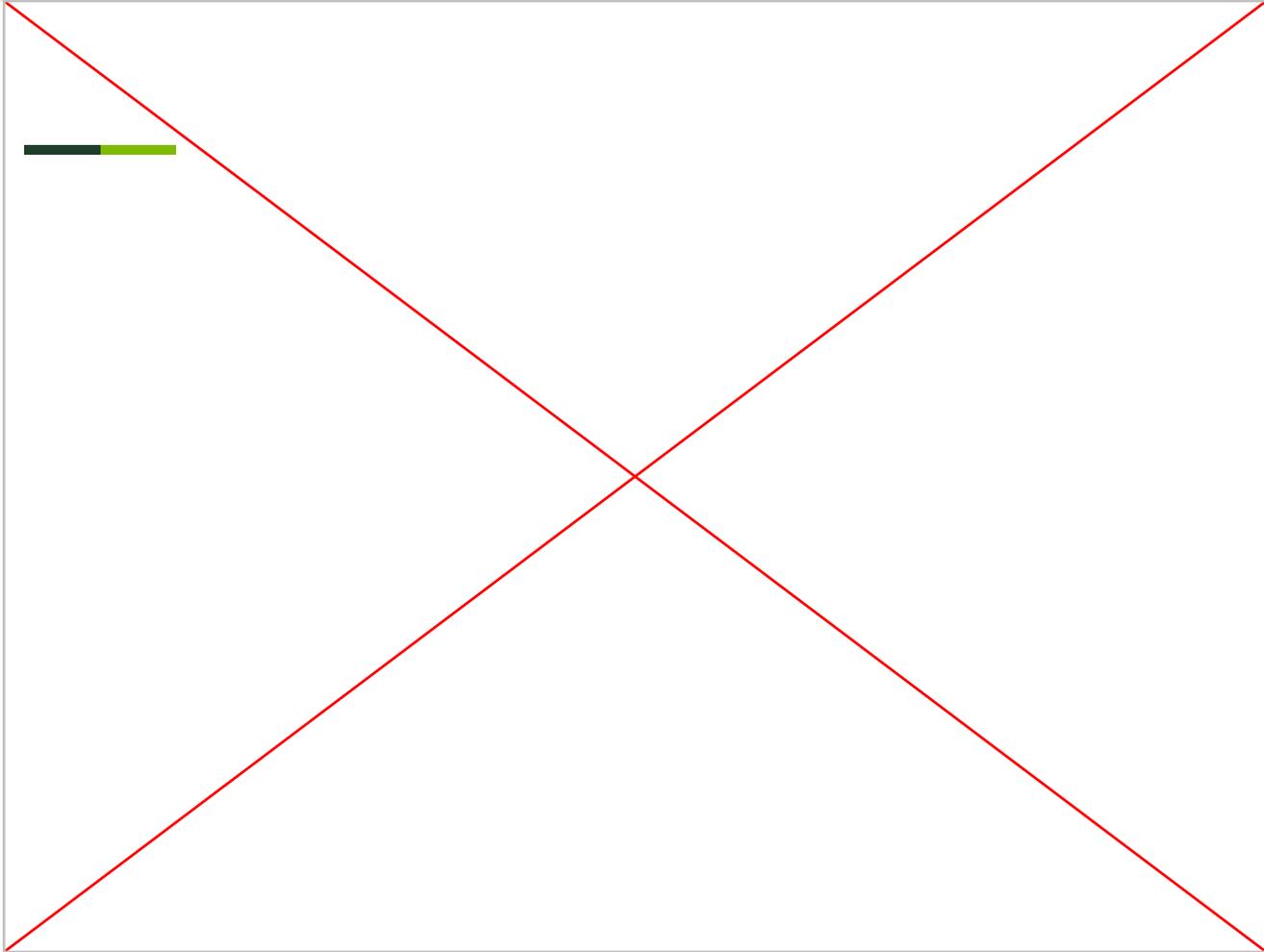




**How are you going to share your sustainability story? Write down 3 - 5 ways that you would like to start sharing within the next year.**

---

# Vision for a Sustainable Okanagan



---

# Questions?

## **Contact Information:**

Angela Nagy: [angela@greenstep.ca](mailto:angela@greenstep.ca)

