

Business charter for sustainable development

For any business it has to be given highest priority to be given for environmental protection for sustainable development.

The Business charter for sustainable development was prepared in 1990 by International chamber of commerce working party for Sustainable development.

Then formally launched in April 1991 during second world conference on environmental management. later promoted to a broader audience in UN conference on environment & development in Rio, Brazil.

Charter is a set of environmental management principles.

↳ does not address the social aspects of sustainable development.

The charter is still a very important business effort towards sustainable development practices.

It was first business environment voluntary initiatives that was addressed for business from every country and economic sector.

Moreover, environmental protection in turn provides a variety of social benefits directly or indirectly.

Charter states "economic growth provides the conditions in which protection of environment can best be achieved, and environmental protection in balance with other human goals, is necessary to achieve growth that is sustainable".

from that it can be understood that it does not differentiate economic growth & economic development.

Charter consists of mainly - 16 principles of environmental management.

However, it does not provide any principle on social responsibility other than environmental protection and worker safety & health - thus it looks being a charter for sustainable development.

~~Highest priority~~ ^{first principle} of charter being for a business to carry Environmental management as one of the "highest ^{corporate} priority" then another principle for a supporters to consider "legal requirements as a starting point, and to apply the same environmental criteria internationally".

16 Principles of Environmental management.

1. Corporate Priority
2. Integrated management
3. Process of improvement
4. Employee education
5. Prior assessment
6. Products & services.
7. Customer advice.
8. Facilities & operations
9. Research.
10. Precautionary approach.
11. Contractors & suppliers
12. Emergency Preparedness
13. Transfer of technology.
14. Contributing to the common effort.
15. Openness to concerns.
16. Compliance & reporting.

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The charter asks the supporting companies to provide appropriate information to the Board of directors, shareholders, employees, the authorities and also to the public.

The charter was actually created as a tool to help companies tackle the challenges & opportunities of the environmental issues that emerged in late 1990s.

It is an initiative (voluntary) that calls for continuous improvement.

An expectation to provide guidance for companies to implement the environmental policies.

The charter on the other hand does not provide the principles of implementing, but it is in the hands of companies to implement according to their own discretion.

Moreover, the supporters can find the guidance in the work of organizations such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO) - ISO 14000.

for environmental management, the global reporting initiatives (GRI) - for sustainability reporting & the world business council for sustainable development (WBCSD)

Formally, in 1994 ICC started publishing a bulletin of business charter for sustainable development with a title "Charter". until 1997. ~~two~~ (three editions)

Last edition was a Earth summit 5th anniversary special edition including 19 case histories.

Now sustainable development involves meeting the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs.

For that A balance has to be brought up.

Principles:

1. **Corporate priority:-** To recognize environmental management as among the highest corporate priorities and as a key determinant to sustainable development; for conducting operations in an environmentally sound manner.
2. **Integrated management:-** to integrate these policies, programmes and practices fully into business as an essential element of management in all its functions.
3. **Process of improvement:-** To continue to improve corporate policies, programmes & environmental performance, taking into account technical developments, scientific understanding, consumer needs, and community expectations with legal regulations as a starting point and to apply the environmental criteria internationally.
4. **Employee education:-** To educate, train, and motivate employees to conduct their activities in an environmentally responsible manner.
5. **Prior assessment:-** To assess environmental impacts before starting a new project and before decommissioning a facility or leaving a site.

Products & Services :- To develop and provide products or services that have no undue environmental impact and are safe in intended use, that are efficient in their consumption of energy and natural resources and can be recycled, reused and (or) disposed off safely.

7. **Customer advice :-** To advise, and where (if) relevant educate customers, distributors and the public in the safe use, transportation and storage then disposal of products provided and to apply similar considerations to the provision of services.

8. **Facilities & operations :-** To develop, design and operate, facilities & conduct activities taking into consideration the efficient use of energy and materials, then sustainable use of renewable ~~any~~ resources, minimization of adverse environmental impact and waste generation and the safe & responsible disposal of residual wastes.

9. **Research :-** To conduct or support research on the environmental impacts of raw materials, products, processes, emissions & wastes associated with the enterprise and on the other means of minimizing any adverse impacts.

10. **Precautionary approach :-** To modify the manufacture, marketing or use of products or services or the conduct of activities, consistent with scientific and technical understanding to prevent serious or irreversible environmental degradation.

11. Contractors or suppliers :- To promote the adoption of these principles by contractors acting on behalf of enterprise, encouraging and where appropriate requiring improvement in their practices to make them consistent with those of the enterprise; and to encourage the widest possible adoption of these principles by suppliers.
12. Emergency preparedness :- To develop and maintain, where significant hazards exist, emergency preparedness plans in conjunction with the emergency services, relevant authorities and the local community recognizing potential transboundary impacts.
13. Transfer of technology :- To contribute to the transfer of environmentally sound technology and management methods throughout the industrial & public sectors.
14. Contributing to common effort :- To contribute to the development of public policy & to business, government & intergovernmental programmes & educational initiatives that will enhance environmental awareness & protection.
15. Openness to concerns :- To foster openness & dialogue with employees and the public, anticipating & responding to their concerns about potentials of hazards & impacts of operation products, wastes or services including those of transboundary or global significance.
16. Compliance & reporting :- To measure ~~and~~ environmental performance; to conduct regular environmental audits and assessments of compliance with company requirements, legal requirements and these principles; and periodically to provide appropriate information to board of directors, shareholders, employees, the authorities & the public.