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A Maturity Model for Sustainability in New Product Development

A new assessment tool allows companies to benchmark progress toward sustainability goals and drive NPD growth.

E. Jefferson Hynds, Virginia Brandt, Susan Burek, Walter Jager, Peter Knox, Jamie Pero Parker, Lawrence Schwartz, John Taylor, and Miriam Zietlow

OVERVIEW: This article describes the development of a maturity model for assessing and guiding R&D organizations in creating innovative sustainable products and services that drive growth. While sustainability in the broadest sense includes people, planet, and profit, the opportunities for R&D and new product development (NPD) organizations to influence sustainability are typically focused on the environmental aspects of sustainability. Therefore, the maturity model developed in this work focuses primarily on environmental sustainability. The assessment tool allows a company to benchmark itself as it progresses along the maturity continuum from beginning through improving, succeeding, and leading. The sustainability maturity model and assessment tool can be used by teams or individuals to benchmark progress on the journey to integrate sustainability into NPD for competitive advantage. The model was validated using data gathered from 20 companies and by comparing this model with other sustainability ranking systems.

KEYWORDS: Sustainability, Maturity model, Research-on-research

Sustainability, first defined in terms of the "triple bottom line" of people, planet, and profit by John Elkington (1997), is no longer a fleeting consumer trend (Nidumolu, Prahalad, and Rangaswami 2009); it has now become an important consideration for business. This has led an increasing number of companies to integrate sustainability into their business, operational, and developmental activities (Haaneas et al. 2011; Dyllick and Hockerts 2002). Various motivators drive companies to adopt sustainability practices, including a need for regulatory compliance or anticipation of regulatory change, an understanding of limited natural resources, consumer interest and demand, or a desire to limit expenses associated with consuming resources and disposing of waste. Many of these drivers are so inherent to business that a recent MIT Sloan Management Report found that companies believe that sustainability will eventually become a core function that is central to a business's success (Haaneas et al. 2011).

Although achieving true sustainability means integrating triple-bottom-line concerns into all aspects of the business, companies often adopt environmental strategies as a first step to incorporate sustainability into their business practices. However, limited work has been done to look at the relationship between environmental strategies and green product development (Albino et al. 2012; Knox 1999; Fussler and James 1997). The Sustainability Maturity Model Research-on-Research (ROR) working group focused on sustainability in new product development (NPD), picking up where the previous Sustainability in R&D ROR group left off (Chapas et al. 2010).

Although many sustainability frameworks exist, they do not meet the needs of IRI companies because they focus more broadly than NPD and do not provide detailed enough guidance for NPD professionals. The existing models that are closest to the model presented here are either hard to use or not generally available. There is therefore a need for a new model, one appropriate to NPD. The model developed by the group fills this need, providing an easy-toadminister, freely available tool with a deeper focus on NPD. The IRI model has been implemented as a maturity assessment tool that allows companies to measure their sustainability efforts with regard to various aspects of NPD. The assessment tool presented here correlates reasonably well with the more general models, but provides finer distinctions in areas where NPD professionals need to focus.

Maturity Model and Sustainability Frameworks

A maturity model describes the development of specific capabilities within an organization over time. Maturity models for

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ROR Profile

Sustainability Maturity Model

Building a best-in-class maturity model to benchmark sustainability innovation programs

Goal: To develop a model, with associated metrics and design tools, to demonstrate the layers of maturity for the sustainability process

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a particular capability build on empirical data derived by studying companies that display varying levels of the capability of interest. Most frameworks for maturity models include four or five levels of maturity, with each level representing a greater degree of competency in the capability than the previous one. For the purposes of this work, the four levels were labeled beginning, improving, succeeding, and leading. At each level, the model references a set of behaviors, processes, tools, and outcomes that a company at that particular level of competency should demonstrate. This is the framework the IRI sustainability maturity model ROR group drew on to create its sustainability maturity model for NPD.

A plethora of different frameworks is available to describe the various elements of sustainability. Most of these frameworks provide for consistent measurement and reporting of the sustainability-related attributes of companies and the offerings they provide in the form of products and services (Table 1).

Perhaps the best known is the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI). The index, which encompasses a broad-based assessment across 20 economic, environmental, and social dimensions, is useful as a benchmarking tool at the company level. However, it assesses activities in many functional areas beyond R&D or NPD functions and, therefore, does not have the same focus as the IRI Sustainability Model. Furthermore, participation in DJSI is an expensive and time-consuming effort; it is costly to submit an application, and benchmarking and best practice information is available only at additional cost.

Another fairly well-known model is the one developed by CSRHub. Like DJSI, the CSRHub model is broad based, with elements divided into four categories: Community, Employees, Environment, and Governance. In each of the four categories, three additional subcategories give additional definition. CSRHub provides corporate social responsibility and sustainability ratings for almost 6,000 companies representing 135 industries in 70 countries (CSRHub 2013). Its patent-pending system aggregates and normalizes 15 million data elements from more than 175 data sources. The CS-RHub website allows users to obtain the basic scores for any company within its database and provides a consistent method for comparing companies along sustainability and social responsibility dimensions. While high-level data is available at no cost, a paid subscription provides an additional level of detail for benchmarking. However, the large number of data elements in the CSRHub model, many of which are not available to the general public, and the broad nature of this model make the CSRHub more difficult to use than the IRI Sustainability Model for developing a strategy to improve a company's level of maturity within the R&D and NPD functions.

The Corporate Executive Board (CEB) has also developed a model, which is less well known than the DJSI or the CSRHub survey, but also very useful. The CEB's Anatomy of a World-Class Sustainability Organization includes 39 different dimensions organized into seven areas of focus. This tool facilitates assessment by scoring each dimension according to its importance to the organization and the effectiveness of the organization relative to the dimension. Although the CEB model provides more detail directly related to the R&D and NPD functions than do the other tools, it is proprietary; best-practice tools and processes for the various elements are available only to members of a CEB Council, which limits its availability as a tool to drive improvement.

Other empirical models are described in the literature. Albino and colleagues (2012) created a framework as part of their study to understand the relationship between the adoption of environmental strategies and green product development for DJSI companies. The authors analyzed company behaviors by researching publicly available documents and websites to understand their behavior with regard to four environmental strategies:

- Improvement of material eco-efficiency,
- Improvement of energy efficiency,
- Implementation of green management (the development of a systematic and comprehensive process to improve a company's environmental and business performance), and
- Implementation of green supply-chain management practices.

The companies were then categorized as having either a low or a high sustainability maturity level.

Carlson and Rafinejad (2008) developed a model that enables companies to consider the impact of their product development decisions on future resources and environmental conditions, taking into account, for instance, how a product can be designed for reuse or recycling. This model uses a system analysis methodology to ascertain the sensitivity of a product's financial performance to those design and process characteristics that affect the conditions of resources and environment in the future. The focus of this model is on the product definition. Relative to the IRI maturity model, the Carlson and Rafinejad model is a design tool utilized by

TABLE 1. Summary of sustainability frameworks

Framework Type Examples		
Rating/Ranking	Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI)	
	Based on assessments by Sustainable Asset Management (SAM)	
	FTSE4Good	
	Based on assessments by Ethical Investment Research Services (EIRiS)	
	Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability Ratings and Information Database (CSRHub)	
	Corporate Executive Board (CEB)	
Models	American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) Sustainability Index	
	IRI Sustainability Maturity Model	
Reporting	Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)	
	Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)	
Metrics	Life Cycle Assessment	
	Eco Points	
	Eco Indicator	

companies already exhibiting a high level of sustainability maturity; it is predictive, rather than evaluative.

Quantitative and qualitative measurements of a company's performance related to sustainability provide key success measures for industry, as evidenced by this proliferation of indexes and frameworks. Acceptance of life cycle analysis, cradle-to-cradle certifications, and external sustainability audits demonstrate the value of sustainability-related metrics. However, there exists no evaluative assessment tool specific to NPD.

To fill this gap, the ROR group took the additional step of converting its sustainability model into an assessment tool. This tool should aid companies as they seek to understand their core strengths and key needs and how they compare to others within their industry. This tool can enable productdevelopment teams to keep their goals in sight as they navigate the sometimes tenuous path to sustainability.

The IRI Sustainability Maturity Model

The IRI Sustainability Model focuses primarily on the activities performed by R&D and NPD functions or activities performed by other functions that support technology research and NPD. The model contains 14 dimensions organized into two areas of focus: Strategy and Design Tools. These two focus areas allow differentiation between the infrastructure and planning activities of the strategy section and the tactical activities of the design tools section. Technical functions design engineering, R&D, or manufacturing engineering are captured in the design tools section, while strategy activities may involve multiple functions, including the ex-

Without some attention to all the dimensions, the company will be restricted in the maturity level it can achieve. ecutive team, product management, sourcing, and legal, among others.

Both sets of activities are important to successfully developing new technologies and products in a sustainable manner. It is possible to create value by focusing efforts on any of the 14 different dimensions, but without some attention to all the dimensions, the company will be severely restricted in the maturity level it can achieve. A piecemeal approach to integrating sustainability design tools, for instance, may occasionally yield some significant value to the company, but capturing that value will be complicated by a lack of accountability and collaboration when sustainability goals and policies are absent from the company's strategy. For each of the 14 dimensions, the behaviors, processes, tools, and outcomes that a company may demonstrate map to the four maturity levels defined by the BISL structure, Beginning, Improving, Succeeding, and Leading. For example, an organization at the Beginning level may have started experimenting with lifecycle assessment tools while an organization at the Leading level may be an industry-leading contributor to lifecycle inventory databases.

Each of the focus areas may be defined by a set of key questions that outline the core issues (Table 2). Considering the key questions in both focus areas provides the company with a more holistic way to view NPD sustainability, reducing the risk of a piecemeal approach and increasing the likelihood of realizing maximum benefit from sustainability efforts.

The IRI Sustainability Assessment Tool

The IRI Sustainability Assessment Tool transforms the IRI Sustainability Maturity Model from a matrix of dimensions to a tool enabling organizations to benchmark their sustainability performance in NPD. The tool assists organizations in identifying activities and opportunities on the path to meeting their sustainability goals.

To develop the assessment tool, the team took the various activities and outcomes identified for each level of maturity in each of the 14 dimensions and restated them as 171 yes/ no questions. The yes/no format eliminates any ambiguity in assessing the level of compliance for the specific behaviors: a

TABLE 2. Key questions in each dimension of the Sustainability Maturity Model

Dimension	Key Questions
Strategy Dimensions	
Corporate Sustainability Policy	How does sustainability fit into the overall company vision and mission? How important is the triple bottom line? How are sustainability goals and metrics reported?
Overall Sustainability Strategy	What are the goals for sustainability for the company, e.g., compliance, best in class, or leadership? How are EH&S and sustainability connected?
Government Policy & Regulation	How engaged is the company with regulatory and policy issues? Is the company trying to influence policy? How do development teams engage with regulatory and policy issues?
Impact of Trends	How does the company stay on top of trends impacting its business? How does trend information impact product strategy? Is the company proactive or reactive with respect to trend identification?
Supply Chain (CSR)	What does the company do to promote sustainability within its supply chain?
Green labeling	What standards and processes does the company apply relative to green marketing claims?
Sustainability Design for Environment (DfE)	What processes, tools, education, and metrics govern how sustainability is embedded into development processes for new products and services?
Design Tools Dimensions	
Specifications/Customer Insights	How are customer needs related to sustainability treated by the design team—as a compliance issue or as a growth opportunity?
Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) Process	Do design teams incorporate LCA data into decision making? Is the LCA process well established, efficient, and inexpensive?
DfE-Material and Part Selection	How do design teams reduce the environmental impact of products through informed material selection?
DfE–Supply Chain	To what degree are suppliers leveraged to improve the sustainability of new products and services?
DfE-Manufacturing Impact	To what degree are manufacturing processes considered during design? How do design teams reduce the impact of products by choosing more sustainable manufacturing processes?
DfE–Use Phase Impact	To what degree do design teams seek to minimize the impact of the product or service while it is in use by the customer?
DfE–End of Life Impact	To what degree do design teams consider what will happen to the product at the end of its service life? Are products designed to facilitate disassembly, recycling, and reuse at end of life?

company is performing an activity or it is not. Each of the 14 dimensions is captured in a series of questions; the number of questions varies by dimension, ranging from 8 to 17. Each question has an assigned point value for a "yes" answer; "no" responses always receive 0 points. The number of points assigned to any particular question was determined by the ROR team's assessment of the relative importance of the activity referenced by the question. The score for each dimension is equal to the sum of the points received for each "yes" answer; the maximum score for a dimension is 40 points. Point scores are correlated to the four maturity levels (Table 3).

Because the overall score is the aggregate sum of each of the 14 dimension scores, with no weighting of the dimensions, it is possible to achieve a reasonably high overall score without scoring high in every category. A more fine-grained approach is necessary to help companies identify specific areas in need of improvement. To provide this, the tool assigns a maturity level to each of the 14 dimensions based on the responses to the questions related to that dimension; a chart presents the dimension scores graphically and identifies both areas where the organization is a leader and areas in which the organization needs to develop further. As the organization works to implement practices to improve its maturity level, the charts from successive assessments will help managers to see how those efforts are improving the organization's ability to develop innovative and sustainable products and services.

TABLE 3. Assessment scores	and maturity levels
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IADLE 3. Assessmen	it scores and maturity levels	
Maturity Level	Dimension Score	Primary Focus
Beginning	0–10	Regulatory compliance
Improving	11–20	Sustainability considered in NPD, for suppliers, and in reporting metrics
Succeeding	21–30	Sustainability included throughout much of the enterprise, including NPD, marketing, public metrics, reporting, and used as a competitive advantage in some markets
Leading	31–40	Sustainability fully integrated throughout enterprise, viewed not as an initiative, but rather as the way the company does business

TABLE 4. GRI, CDP, CSRHub, and IRI tool scores for participating	3
companies	

companies				
Participant	GRI	CDP	IRI	CSRHub
1	98	89	54.3	59
2	98	74	47.2	59
3	98	69	43.0	66
4	75	93	35.9	58
5	85	56	35.5	55
6	88	90	33.9	59
7	85	36	30.9	52
8	85	76	30.5	55
9	*	*	28.5	56
10	*	*	25.1	48
11	95	*	25.1	57
12	98	*	24.9	*
13	*	81	23.0	48
14	*	*	19.4	*
15	*	*	18.9	*
16	75	*	14.0	47
17	*	*	13.1	48
18	*	81	13.1	49
19	*	*	10.5	*
20	*	*	8.7	*

Validating the Model

To be valid, the IRI Sustainability Tool must be able to distinguish between organizations that are just beginning their sustainability journeys and those that are well along the path to maturity. Further, the IRI tool should agree in general with other, more broadly based sustainability rating systems. To test whether the tool provides a valid statistical discrimination between the various maturity levels, we asked IRI member companies to complete the assessment tool.

We encountered two issues with the study that could not be resolved. First, the sample size is small; 20 companies are not enough to allow definitive statistical conclusions. Second, we could not control who at the participating companies actually completed the assessment. While the team requested that the tool be completed by someone with knowledge of the companies' sustainability practices, we cannot be certain that this happened in every case. Despite these challenges, analysis did provide results to support the claim that the IRI Sustainability Tool discriminates between the different levels of maturity, using one-way ANOVA testing and finding very small p-values.

We confirmed the validity of the tool by comparing the results of participating companies to their performance on three widely known, well-respected ranking systems for which relevant data were readily available: the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP 2013), the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI 2013), and the CSRHub database (CSRHub 2013) (Table 4). For simplicity, a total score, arrived at by summing the maturity scores for each of the 14 dimensions to produce a maximum possible score of 56, was used to compare the IRI Sustainability Tool to the other ranking systems.

Comparison to CDP and GRI Ratings

Of the 20 companies in our sample, 10 participated in the CDP and 11 participated in the GRI. A total of 13 companies reported to either one or both standards. The most striking feature of these data is the fact that the eight companies with the highest IRI tool scores participated in both the GRI and CDP. Furthermore, the average maturity score of the 10 CDP participants was 34.7, nearly twice the average score for the other companies in our sample (18.8). Similar results held for the GRI; the average maturity score of the 11 GRI participants was 34.1, with the other companies in our sample averaging 17.8. Although the sample sizes are small, hypothesis testing indicated that the IRI tool scores for CDP and GRI participants are statistically different from the tool scores for the remaining companies with p-values of 0.0017 and 0.0013, respectively.

The CDP and GRI are voluntary reporting standards that focus on the results achieved by a company to reduce its environmental impact, rather than the much broader set of sustainability-related activities and behaviors that the IRI Sustainability Tool assesses. A company may be able to track the metrics required for these reporting systems without instituting the cultural transformation suggested by the behaviors measured in the IRI tool. Given these facts, a strong correlation between the IRI tool and the GRI and CDP ratings might not be expected. However, because participation in both CDP and GRI is voluntary and collecting and providing the required data can be an arduous task, it would be expected that companies willing to participate in these regimes would be more advanced in their sustainability maturity-and would therefore score higher on the IRI assessment tool as well, producing a correlation.

On the other hand, there may be situations where market forces compel a company to report results for CDP or GRI even though they do not have a high level of sustainability maturity. In either case, the study shows that the eight highest maturity scores from the IRI Sustainability Tool came from companies participating in both CDP and GRI. When coupled with the large difference between the maturity scores of CDP/GRI participants versus nonparticipants, which our analyses show to be statistically significant, the study suggests that the IRI Sustainability Tool can at least discriminate large differences in the level of sustainability maturity.

Comparison to CSRHub Ratings

The CSRHub rating is more like the IRI tool than the CDP and GRI in that it considers sustainability behaviors and activities as well as results. However, the CSRHub and the IRI tool are not likely to correlate perfectly because the CSRHub includes many more elements and covers a much broader view of sustainability. In addition, the CSRHub uses many sources of data that are external to the company, while the IRI tool relies on self-reported data, introducing a measure of subjectivity into the process. However, since both the CSRHub and IRI Sustainability Tool attempt to

TABLE 5. Table of correlations for change in operating margin

	Incr. in Operating Margin	Strategy Score	Design Tools Score	Total Score
Increase in Operating Margin	1.000	0.607	0.689	0.677
Strategy Score	0.607	1.000	0.862	0.959
Design Tools Score	0.689	0.862	1.000	0.971
Total Score	0.677	0.959	0.971	1.000

assess a company's progress toward changing the way that sustainability factors into the day-to-day decision making and operations of the company, a reasonably good correlation would indicate the IRI model has some ability to capture different levels of maturity.

The CSRHub website had scores for 15 of the 20 companies participating in our study. For these companies, we calculated correlation coefficients between the overall CSRHub rating and the IRI total score. While the sample size is small, the results suggest a linear correlation between scores on the CSRHub Rating and those on the IRI Sustainability Tool. If the sample size were larger, the 0.805 correlation coefficient between the overall CSRHub rating and the IRI total score would suggest a fairly strong positive linear relationship between these two variables. Unfortunately, the current data set is too small to make a definitive conclusion.

Correlation with Financial Metrics

A recent survey of C-suite executives, conducted by Siemens and McGraw-Hill Construction, investigated the expected business benefits of increasing focus on sustainability. The survey found that 92 percent of respondents expected a reduction in input costs, 50 percent expected greater worker productivity, and 37 percent expected greater manufacturing productivity (Kobb and Bernstein 2012). If these expectations are realized, then the operating margin of the company should improve over time as a result of the increased focus on sustainability.

While data indicating when each of the companies in this study began their sustainability efforts was not readily available, the change in operating margin over a multiyear period was calculated for 16 of the 20 companies in the study. We calculated the correlation coefficients between four variables: increase in operating margin, IRI strategy score, IRI design tools score, and IRI total score (Table 5). The analysis found the correlation coefficients between an increase in margins and IRI Sustainability

Industry	No.
Chemical, Materials, Petrochemical	6
Consumer Products	3
Computers, Electronics, Software, Telecom	2
Industrial Equipment/Machinery	1
Pulp & Paper	1
Services (for-profit)	1
Automotive	2
Other	5
Total	21

Tool scores to be greater than 0.6. This value indicates that a linear relationship could exist between IRI Sustainability Tool scores and increased operating margins. Since many factors impact operating margin, this moderately strong relationship further supports the validity of the new tool.

Segmenting the IRI Sustainability Tool Responses

Analyzing the data collected in the validation process offers some interesting insights into the progress of sustainability in industry. The 21 companies that responded to our call for participants came from a variety of industries and spanned a range of company sizes (Tables 6 and 7).

A company's assessment results are displayed on a spider graph, with a given point's distance from the center reflecting the company's maturity in that dimension. In our example, the results from all 21 companies are combined and the highest, lowest, and average scores are shown (Figure 1). Unanswered questions were assigned a 0 score. Groups that had no manufacturing, such as service organizations, generally scored zero in the product design area and were not included in the averages for these categories. Examining the combined data reveals that:

- Participants generally scored highest in Corporate Sustainability Policy and Government Policy & Regulation. Maturity in design categories lags maturity in strategy categories.
- Maturity levels differ markedly by company size, with larger companies (revenues > \$1 billion, employees > 10,000) typically scoring higher than smaller ones (revenues < \$1 billion, employees < 10,000).
- On average, the scores for the Policy, Strategy, Regulation, and Trends dimensions are a full point higher than the average scores for all other dimensions, including the three remaining strategy-related dimensions.

We did attempt some basic analysis of differences across industry categories, although the small sample size made this difficult. Only the chemical/materials/petrochemical

TABLE 7. Number of respondents by income

Income	No.
Less than \$1 million	0
\$1 million to \$100 million	0
\$100 million to \$500 million	3
\$500 million to \$1 billion	1
\$1 billion to \$50 billion	15
Greater than \$50 billion	2
Total	21

industry category had enough respondents (6) to allow for separate analysis (Figure 2). Here, as in the full sample, Corporate Sustainability Policy and Government Policy & Regulation were the strongest overall dimensions. Companies in these industries scored higher on the design tools dimensions than the average for other industry categories.

Implications

Our analysis demonstrates that the IRI Sustainability Maturity Model and Sustainability Assessment Tool describe the sustainability-



FIGURE 1. Sustainability maturity assessment for all respondent companies

related behaviors related to R&D and NPD and provide companies with a tool to understand their progress in integrating sustainability into daily practice. Further exploration—and more data—are required to understand how well the tool is able to discriminate small differences in the level of maturity, and to substantiate the preliminary analyses offered here. However, when combined with the maturity model, the IRI Sustainability Assessment Tool provides companies with a consistent metric and a clear path forward to raise their level of maturity with regard to sustainability.

Although we do not have enough data to offer broad conclusions about our results, we do think the data suggest some patterns in sustainability behaviors. In all but the most mature companies, scores were significantly higher for strategy dimensions than for design tools items. It seems likely that this pattern is the result of a time delay between the development of a strategic intent and the implementation of that intent throughout the organization. It may also be that the scores demonstrated the difference between a company's aspirations for sustainability, represented by the strategy score, and its execution of the tasks needed to promote sustainability, captured in the design tools score. The consistently higher scores for the Government Policy & Regulations and Corporate Sustainability Policy dimensions suggest that these may be the initial drivers for sustainability.

Conclusion

Most people would agree that sustainability has become more important to business success in the past few years. Issues such as energy management, water scarcity, and greenhouse gas emissions, among others, guarantee that sustainability will continue to be a priority for the foreseeable future. Sustainability is a very broad subject area that encompasses many diverse issues. It is important that companies adopt a framework or model for sustainability that allows them to identify the actions required



FIGURE 2. Sustainability maturity assessment for chemical, materials, petrochemical

to meet the sustainabilityrelated needs of customers, employees, and other stakeholders. The IRI Sustainability Maturity Model described in this paper and used as the basis for the IRI Sustainability Tool is freely available through IRI or by contacting any of the authors of this paper; the tool itself can be accessed at www.iriweb.org/ sustainabilitytool.

Assessing progress should be a key element of any attempt to integrate sustainability into business processes. Most models and frameworks currently in use do have some type of assessment tool, but often the assessment requires engaging a third party or comes in the form of a rating process that may or may not allow the company to provide input to the rating organization. Our tool can be self-administered as often as desired with very little effort. Further, it correlates quite well to operating margin. This is important because, at the end of the day, sustainability programs based on philanthropy will not survive. Sustainability must be linked to the business metrics that executives and shareholders care about.

Finally, companies need clear and relevant metrics to track their implementation progress, benchmark against other companies, and report their progress to the outside world. As seen in this study, companies adopt different metrics based on their particular needs. Companies should spend some time developing a strategy of implementing sustainable practices, and then adopt those metrics that best describe their implementation strategy.

We believe this tool could benefit from further work. Achieving statistical reliability for cross-industry benchmarking requires much more data than we have been able to collect, and further research is needed on developing systems and tools to help companies make progress in their journey toward sustainability.

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The IRI Sustainability Maturity Model and Assessment Tool provide companies with a tool to understand their progress in integrating sustainability into daily practice.

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