



Peer Learning Groups

Connecting sustainability professionals to drive collective impact

SME Peer Learning Group Session pre-read: Environment

Topic background

The world today is facing unprecedented, interconnected environmental challenges in areas including climate change, clean water, ocean health, waste management and biodiversity. New corporate efforts are needed to increase stewardship of natural resources, implement innovative solutions, and contribute to sustainable development. The magnitude and urgency of climate change is becoming increasingly apparent. Climate change has direct impacts on the way humans live on the planet and how businesses operate. While the emissions from one small and medium sized company (SME) might be small, together they make up an essential piece of the climate puzzle. For larger corporations and multinationals, up to 90% of their emissions can come from their supply chain, which is composed largely of SMEs. Without SMEs we cannot achieve a net-zero future!

SMEs are agents of change, economic growth and social development and can be an integral source of environmental innovation. In this session participants will explore how SMEs can be empowered to actively contribute to the transition towards net zero by discussing common challenges, best practice and solutions and enablers to develop an environmentally sustainable strategy.

Before the session

Questions to consider:

- What initiatives does your company have in place to promote greater environmental responsibility? (Principle 7 & 8)
- What environmentally friendly technologies is your company leveraging and/or developing? (Principle 9)
- Has your company conducted a life cycle assessment and/or found where your company's highest CO2 impact lies and where you can make the greatest improvements? If yes, what did you learn from it?

Recommended pre-session materials

- [Eco-innovation, SMEs and the Circular Economy](#) - UN Environment's Eco-Innovation Manual (Webpage)
- [Learn about Science Based Targets for SMEs](#) (Guide)