SUSTAINABILITY: Why it Matters
But first, what is ‘sustainable’? Or ‘sustainable development’? Or ‘sustainable business’? Or ‘sustainable practices’? Or ‘sustainable leadership’? Or ‘sustainable governance’? Or ‘sustainable agriculture’? Or ‘sustainable technology’? Or ‘sustainable tourism’? Or ‘sustainable’ this or ‘sustainable’ that?
SUSTAINABLE & SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable = able to last or continue or be maintained for a long time

Sustainability = our ability/capacity to extract and use resources, generate income, develop and maintain lifestyles in a manner that does not deplete those resources...

...and does not (negatively) impact people, economies, or environment in the process of extraction or use...

...while simultaneously ensuring that future generations can continue to access, benefit, and enjoy those resources.

Sustainability is a mindset

...being sustainable is simply about being WISE!
Today’s presentation relates ‘sustainable’ and ‘sustainability’ to:

• Resource extraction and use
• Income generation
• Development
• Lifestyle
• Impacts to people and the environment
• Methods for resource extraction, income generation and development
SUSTAINABILITY & IMPACTS

Sustainable __________ = __________ with long-term beneficial impacts and minimal negative impacts (and/or measures to minimize the negative impacts)

Unsustainable __________ = __________ with short-term beneficial impacts and with negative/disastrous impacts...

What impacts?

- Environmental Impacts
- Cultural Impacts
- Economic Impacts
- Social Impacts
- Physical Impacts
- Health Impacts
What is the ‘triple bottom line’?
THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

Initially formulated to advance the goal of sustainability in *business practices,* but now applies all other spheres – governance, education, agriculture, development, etc.

Basically, employs three measures:

- **Profit:** the economic value generated and the economic benefit to the surrounding community and society
- **People:** the fair and favorable practices to society, and the reduction of socio-economic impact
- **Planet:** the use of sustainable environmental practices and the reduction of environmental impact
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY: ‘TRADITIONAL’ REPRESENTATIONS

Balance economic growth with environmental protection

Triple bottom line 3 Ps
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY: 
INACCURATE REPRESENTATIONS

...much of the social and economic systems CANNOT exist independently from the environment
If you keep on developing your economy (without any regard for the environment), what happens?

Will both the economy and environment be ‘balanced’?

No way!

BUT, your economy CAN grow if you have a HEALTHY environment.

*Healthy Environment = Healthy Economy*

Plus, this illustration does not include the ‘society’ component.

*Healthy Environment = Healthy Society = Healthy Economy*
The view that economy (profit) is IN ISOLATION of the rest of society (people) and in a context that ignored the environment (planet) is INCORRECT.

*Remove ‘environment’, both ‘society’ and ‘economy’ will COLLAPSE.*

*Why?*

Furthermore, it is considered an ‘incorrect representation’ because *in practice*
- Interrelationships between these three dimensions were rarely considered.
- Limited consideration was given to overlaps between any two of these dimensions.
- Very rarely was there a sustainability mindset in which all three were included.
A healthy environment is the basis to everything...
...economies, quality of life (or simply our well-being).
Both economy and society are subsets of our planetary ecological system...
TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE:
WEAK VS. STRONG SUSTAINABILITY

Interconnected and Interdependent Benefits

Source: Maureen Hart - Sustainable Measures
SUSTAINABILITY MINDSET
VS. EXISTING MINDSET

SUSTAINABILITY

OUR ATTITUDE

Profit

People

Planet

Planet

People

Profit
EXISTING MINDSET

VS. EXISTING PRACTICES

OUR ATTITUDE

OUR PRACTICES

Profit

People

Planet

Profit

People

Planet
WHAT FUTURE HOLDS IF NO CHANGE
Another Dead Planet?!
Much of our current actions to resolve the issue

Campaigns, campaigns, & more campaigns...
SAVE THE EARTH – ARE YOU SERIOUS?

There’s some good news...

...and there’s some better news.

*The good news:*  
Earth will NOT die!

*The better news:*  
You may not be around to cause more damage to it...

*The Earth formed 4.6 b.y.a., but modern humans appeared only 2 m.y.a.*
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

You appeared only 4 seconds ago!

The Earth was there LONG BEFORE you arrive on this planet...

The Earth will still be there LONG AFTER you are gone.

There will still be life on Earth after you are gone...

BUT Earth may not be filled with the life as you now know it.

The Earth does NOT need saving...

...its you that need saving

So, SAVE HUMANS (not save Earth) would be a better message.
ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well-Being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life Below Water
15. Life on Land
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships for the Goals
ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY

THAILAND 4.0
Prosperity, Security, Sustainability

Innovative/Value-based Industry
High Income Country

New Engine of Growth

Priorities for Innovation

Smart City
Low-carbon Society
Medical Hub
Food Innopolis
Water Management & Technology

What to do and How?

1. Active Role of Private Sector
2. Demand-driven Policy
3. Offer Tailored Support Fund
4. Build a Global, Regional & Nationwide R&D Networks
5. Strengthen Vocational Training & Education System
6. Develop Infrastructure
7. Introduce Capability-Based Investment Promotion Scheme & Performance Based Conditional Grants & Incentives

Source: Dr. Suwit Maesalinnee, Deputy Minister of Commerce

Division of Economic Information
Department of International Economic Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand.
Inability for humans to live in harmony with the environment and to utilize natural resources in a sustainable manner, will lead to...

...a tragic loss of biodiversity, the natural ecosystems, and the ecosystem services (clean air, clean water, pollination, seed dispersal, mitigation against extreme weather events, etc.).
Achieving Sustainability: Obstacles

Economic Development Takes Precedence

+ Greed & Indifference Towards Natural & Biodiversity Resources

+ Indifference Towards Poverty & Social Inequity

Environment
Education
Health Care
Gender Issues
Ethics
Governance

The costs for developing countries: accelerated extraction of natural & biodiversity resources...
Removing the obstacles (to achieving sustainability) requires good governance, transparency, and accountability.

But, equally (if not more importantly) it requires a drastic change in our mindset...

...from being anthropocentric to being ecocentric...

A PART of Nature NOT APART from Nature
Why do not we behave and think that we are A PART OF Nature, rather than being APART FROM it?
SUSTAINABILITY is the GOAL...

To achieve sustainability, RESPONSIBILITY must be the ACTION.

Who should be doing these action(s)?

- All actors – you, me, institutions, corporates, governments, etc.

What responsible actions should we be doing?

- All those actions within the capacity of each actor – especially avoiding and reducing one’s impacts.

- In addition, we cannot remain silent about things that affect us and our future generations – we cannot afford to remain indifferent.
So... what will YOU do?
“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.