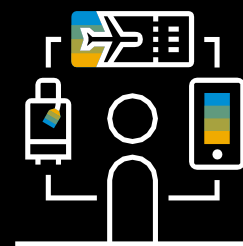


# Build sustainability into your travel program to achieve your goals.

## Supplement to TAMS Handbook



Sustainable policies can be good for the environment and your business.

As businesses rethink and rebuild their travel programs, it's an ideal time for travel managers to establish practices and metrics that align with their organization's sustainability goals.

Sustainability is top of traveler's minds as well, from fuel-efficient nonstop flights to electric ground transportation to virtual meetings.

Getting to sustainability means building policies and practices into T&E program.

Building choices into your travel and expense program is key. It starts by giving your business travelers easier ways to make sustainable choices and SAP Concur solutions will take you there.

With SAP Concur solutions, you have the ability to infuse your corporate travel & expense program into your organization's overall sustainability strategy.

Organizations can help employees take climate action through paperless expense processes, alignment with your travel suppliers to provide sustainable options and leverage tools that will help make informed decisions on sustainable travel and measurable impact on your organizations performance and goals.

### Key Insights from 2022 SAP Concur Traveler Pulse Survey

- 88% of business travelers are willing to take steps to reduce their environmental impact.
- 76% of Travel Managers have updated travel guidelines or policies with greater focus on sustainability.
- Travel represents 5% percent of global emissions, with corporate travel making up around 30 percent of that number.

When booking, travelers prefer more information to guide their purchase. Eighty-eight percent of business travelers would like to see sustainability information when booking business travel, including comparing sustainability measures.

SAP Concur has partnered with Thrust Carbon to help companies and employees monitor and better control the environmental impact of their business trips. Customers can connect their Concur Travel and Expense solutions to Thrust Carbon to calculate emissions from spend and itinerary data.

Learn more by visiting the SAP Concur App Center.

[Learn more at concur.com/sustainable-travel](https://concur.com/sustainable-travel)



TRAVEL AND MEETING SOCIETY



# Sustainability Handbook 2023



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# Introduction

The TAMS Sustainability Committee is a group of volunteers who meet regularly to share content, best practices, and ideas related to sustainability and business travel. The group's participants and the topics we cover are diverse. The goal is to create and facilitate valuable content for the broader TAMS community as they begin or continue their efforts to incorporate sustainable practices into their activities and travel programs.

Sustainability has many facets, and TAMS members typically address multiple elements of the Global Sustainability Goals in their efforts.

There is no doubt that sustainability is an important topic that is here to stay.

According to a 2021 survey conducted by Deloitte, sustainable business has moved into the corporate mainstream, with more than 400 companies pledging to decarbonize by 2050 at 2021's Davos World Economic Forum.

The list includes many of the world's largest corporations, and we are happy to report that smaller companies are making similar commitments.

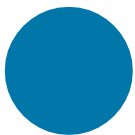
When it comes to sustainable business travel, this same Deloitte Report reveals that nearly a third of travel managers say that their company has a stated commitment to reduce emissions by a certain amount within a specific time frame.

**Most companies have pledged to reduce carbon emissions, but only a third have definite plans in place.**



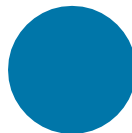
## Which best describes your company's commitment to environmental sustainability?

Nearly 1 in 3 companies has definite sustainability commitments



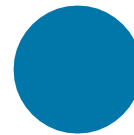
**31%**

Pledge to reduce carbon emissions by a specific amount within a specific time period



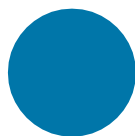
**21%**

Timeline in place but quantifying emission reductions is a work in progress



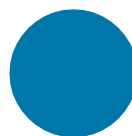
**11%**

Emission reduction quantified but working towards developing a timeline



**17%**

Pledge to reduce but no quantity or timeline commitment



**21%**

No sustainability commitment

Altogether, 79% of companies have pledged policies and procedures to support a future commitment to sustainable goals.

The increasing pressure to integrate sustainability into a company's DNA has led to greater scrutiny of business travel activities and the policies that guide them. As a result, 50% of those travel managers participating in the survey said that they plan to revise their business travel policies to decrease the company's environmental impact.

While there are many organizations actively building sustainable strategies, others find that the subject is hard to understand, confusing, difficult to measure, and flat-out overwhelming. Unfortunately, this lack of clarity often results in disrupted progress and lack of consistency, and despite the best efforts and intentions, plans fail to develop into real change.

Because of this, we believe that it is impossible to address all aspects of "sustainability" in a single document and therefore thought the best way to help you start or accelerate your sustainability journey was to limit our focus to "sustainable business travel" through the lens of climate change.

Our goal is simple: to assist those community members interested in starting or expanding their efforts to create more sustainable travel policies within their organizations.

We are also working to provide a framework for ongoing conversations related to sustainability, including basic definitions that can be used by suppliers, buyers, and partners when beginning some of these discussions. Our "Glossary of Sustainability Terms, Definitions, and Regulations" is presented in a companion document, delivered with your copy of this handbook.

We hope to be a resource in your sustainability journey and help community members decode some of the mysteries surrounding the topics involved so that TAMS members can engage more comfortably in discussions related to sustainability in their respective departments and organizations.

One of the biggest challenges people face when first approaching sustainability is understanding that, in many ways, **sustainability is a journey, not a destination.**

We hope you will treat the Sustainability Handbook as your traveling companion as you navigate the road to decarbonization and the other positive social, economic, and human aspects of sustainability.



# Sustainability: The "What" and the "Why"



## The What: "Sustainability" Defined.

The most often quoted definition of "sustainability" comes from the UN World Commission on Environment and Development: "sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

According to the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): sustainability is based on one single belief: "Everything we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment."

By extension, we can define corporate sustainability as the strategy whereby a business delivers its goods and services to its customers (directly or through a supply chain) in an environmentally sustainable manner that supports economic growth.

In other words, corporate sustainability means that a company takes the "long view" in prioritizing long-term growth through sustainable methods instead of focusing on short-term financial gains.

## The Why:

**The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, adopted by 197 nations in 2015, provides a roadmap to achieve a better and more sustainable future. The goals specifically address the many global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice.

At its core, these nations have agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each of which calls for immediate action by all signatories - developed and developing countries alike - in a global partnership.

# The Global Goals for Sustainable Development - United Nations



The Sustainable Development Goals call for immediate action that protects the planet while promoting prosperity and recognizing that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth. The goals also address various social needs, including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

The goals also recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth while tackling climate change and preserving our oceans and forests.

Since 2020, the goals have also provided a critical framework for complete COVID-19 recovery and coping with the "new normal."

With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) deadline less than eight years away, the human impact of failing to meet the targets is staggering.



# The "Real" Why? Sustainability Matters to Corporations



Sustainability is a global business opportunity to demonstrate environmental and social accountability more meaningfully and transparently.

Pressure to change the ways of doing business - specifically to prioritize sustainable and responsible practices - is coming from the C-Suite. Customers, investors, employees, and regulators say that companies need to strive for a higher standard to deliver positive change and reduce their impact on the climate.

Of course, it is also perfect for business. When customers expect it, governments mandate it, and marketplaces reward it, revenue growth rises, and the cost of operations shrinks. Sustainability also provides a larger purpose and helps companies strive for primary goals like efficiency, sustainable development, and shareholder value, which means a better reputation and public goodwill.

The world is transitioning to a zero-carbon economy. Today, more than 2,000 businesses and financial institutions are working with the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) to reduce emissions.

Transparency in reporting is now the rule rather than the exception. Walmart Stores, Inc., for example, has pledged to reach zero emissions by 2040; Morgan Stanley, which has committed to net-zero "financed emissions" by 2050; and Google, which has pledged to operate carbon-free by 2030.

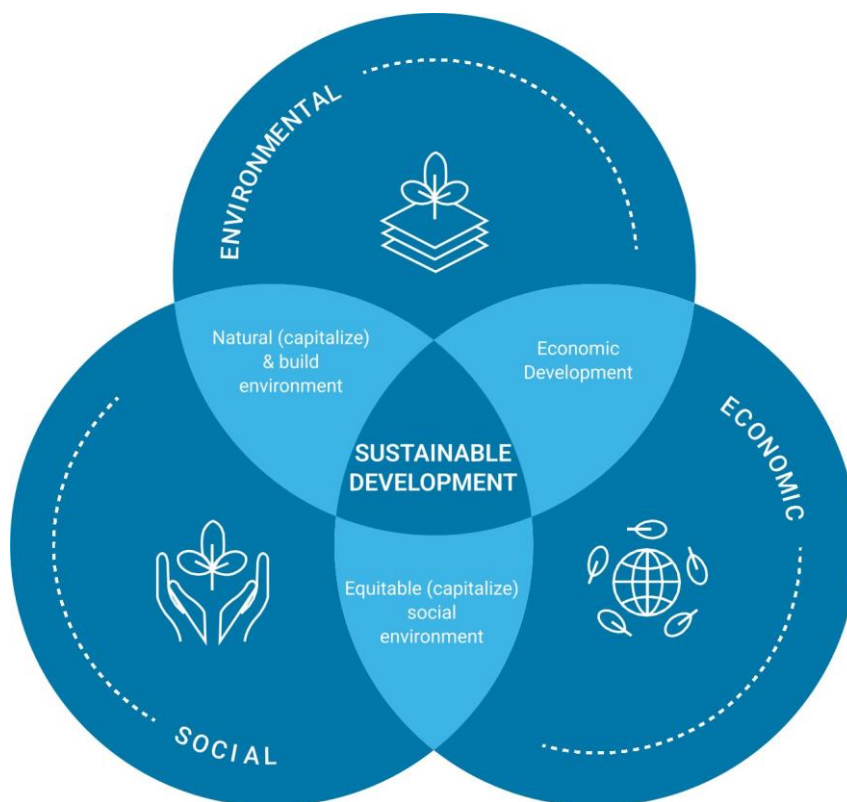
The current trend is making sustainability and public commitments best practices for every organization. So, in 2023, it appears that it isn't as "hard to be green" as Kermit once thought.

Of course, switching to sustainable practices comes with its challenges. It's often hard to understand the actual environmental impacts of many companies, especially small to medium-sized organizations. Some companies still fight for transparency in reporting, but pending regulation and legislation will help make this a thing of the past.

As challenging as establishing goals and public reporting, transparency's ROI and improved trust and goodwill are impressive.

**And why should this matter to us?** More so than ever before, the opportunities and benefits of integrating sustainability into an organization outweigh the challenges.

# The Three Pillars of Sustainability



As the above diagram illustrates, sustainability is more than just addressing environmental issues. Discussions about sustainability fall into "three pillars": environmental, economic, and social.

Ideally, a sustainable program or enterprise will consider all three aspects in its sustainability plan.

Sustainability is no longer just a buzzword. More and more experts and scientists stress every year how human actions are negatively impacting the natural balance of our home, the Earth.

## Meet visionary corporate leaders taking ambitious climate action.

Early 2021, an industry survey\* asked business travel managers and executives, “has your company changed its overall carbon reduction targets (not just for travel) in the last 12 months?”

Receiving three hundred and eighteen (318) responses of which 226 were based in North America.

- 36.2% increased commitments.
- 20% did not have reduction targets but had started to consider them.
- 14.9% kept commitments the same.
- 14.9% did not have reduction targets and didn't expect to implement them.
- 11.8% were unsure of their companies' targets.
- 2.2% decreased commitments.

The survey results indicate a general push toward increasing sustainability commitments or implementing them.

In conjunction with The Paris Accord, 197 nation signatories have committed to a 55% emission reduction no later than 2030.

This commitment has sharpened minds on reducing a portion of a company's emissions from business travel. Therefore, driving awareness in companies and employees has never been so important.

**2844**

Companies  
taking action

**1309**

With science  
based targets

**1401**

Commitments to  
1.5 C

\*BTN Sustainable Business Travel Survey

# Sustainable Business Travel The "How" and the "Where"



**Sustainable** business travel is defined as non-commuting travel for business-related activities, such as off-site meetings and events via commercial airlines, ferries, and ground transportation, including buses, trains, taxis, rental cars, shuttles, and private transportation cars & drivers, and personal vehicles.

How business travel practices fit into the mix will differ for every company. A consulting company, for example, might tie 80 percent or more of its carbon emissions to travel. On the other hand, a mining or energy company might set that number somewhere closer to 5 percent.

Whether attending meetings, visiting new clients, or simply jumping into a cab at the airport, business travel can quickly increase a company's environmental impact. As a result, companies have declared a new urgency to tackle their business travel carbon footprint.

## How Travel Managers Meet Targets

As a travel manager, what have you been tasked with delivering or managing to meet carbon emissions reduction targets?

Emissions data on current travel activity



Overall Travel Reductions



Traveler booking behavior modifications



Sustainability-oriented supplier partnerships



Carbon offset provider partnerships



Recommendations for alternative fuel programs, carbon sequestration, or other investment in innovation-oriented carbon reduction programs



Carbon budgets for business units or individual travelers



None of the above/other



## The "How". Take control of the out- of-control.



## Establishing A Sustainable Business Travel Strategy

To create an effective policy, you should begin by determining your corporate management's commitment to achieving environmental performance goals and what strategies you can establish to support these efforts.

### Components of a Sustainable Business Travel Strategy

- **Commit to a Process:** Establish sustainability as a management goal
- **Set your Emission Reduction Targets:** Develop sustainability targets by establishing a baseline of where you are and where you intend to be 3-5 years in the future
- **Set Measurement Metrics**
- **Start Measuring Actions:** Establish measuring mechanisms to track and report on the metrics you will be monitoring.
- **Develop Your Sustainable Business Travel Policy:** State what you will do to improve metrics within your timeframe.
- **Review and Revise:** Develop a process for an annual internal review of progress.





As we've said, each organization will have different requirements for business travel based on the services it offers, its scale of operation, and its location. Regardless of your unique needs, once you have set your goals and targets, the next step is to create a new or revised travel policy, implement it, and communicate it to your staff.

If you need inspiration in building your new policy, start by asking yourself the following questions:

- What are the **Corporate Goals** we could directly impact?
- What sustainable business travel policies will support these goals?
- Are there corporate leaders that will champion business travel sustainability initiatives and support the effort to reduce emissions and improve other key metrics?
- What standards will we establish and follow to ensure improvement over time?
- How will we measure success?

The answers to these questions should provide you with enough information to create a more sustainable business travel policy, from defining your goals to supporting the right behaviors and measuring your success.

Your corporate travel policies will continue to guide your employees' behavior, and once revised through the "lens of sustainability," they will provide the critical first step to help catalyze your entire organization to adopt more sustainable travel practices and contribute to your company's sustainability goals.

### What should be included when writing a Sustainable Business Policy

Title	It should be clear and concise.
Purpose	Indicate why a policy exists and give context. For example, you can refer to larger sustainability goals or provide a traveler's well-being health perspective.
Details of Policy	The substance of the policy. Describes what should be done as well as the deliverables and the timeline. List your sustainability strategies here, considering the aircraft and route when flying, preferred supplier selection such as green hotels, electric or hybrid rental cars, etc.
Applicability	To whom does this apply? Who is exempt?
Definitions	If necessary, define any terms used.
Designated Help	Where should an employee go if they need help interpreting policy?
Policy Authority	List the highest authority person who has signed off on the policy.
Related Policies and Procedures	List any related policies or procedures. For example, encouraging travelers to look for locally owned dining options that support the use of locally sourced ingredients.
Implementation Procedures	You can list your implementation procedures within the document or separately. If they are part of a separate document, name the document here.
Policy review	Give a timeline for when you will next review the policy.

Make sure that you look at the following areas of your policy where you may be able to reduce your impact on travel-related emissions significantly.



## General Sustainable Travel Policy Guidelines

Discourage one, or two-day trips.

Designate an online booking tool that allows you to track the emissions generated by each itinerary.

Ensure approval processes are in place and traveler compliance is monitored and, when necessary, reinforced.

Encourage the use of the preferred booking methods to make itinerary changes.

Suggest limiting the number of travelers per trip and ask for more meetings per trip to help your travelers make the most of their time on the road to reduce your carbon footprint.

Set guidelines that limit the number of trips per month, per traveler. Promote

the use of public transportation when traveling in familiar locations.

Encourage the use of apps to avoid paper.

Ask your travelers to pack lighter luggage to reduce their environmental impact.

## Transport and accommodations

Encourage air travelers to choose a newer aircraft and fly direct instead of connecting. Newer aircraft burn significantly less fuel (look for Boeing 787, Airbus 321 NEO, or the Airbus 350), and so do direct flights. Choosing both will mitigate your carbon impact.

Add preferred hotels to your booking tool; Select green-certified accommodations.

Consider trains before planes, especially when traveling abroad.

Encourage hybrid or electric cars when renting cars or booking private drivers.

## There are also new services and Ideas you might also want to consider and include in your "more sustainable" policy:

If you don't currently use a travel booking tool that shows the CO2 impact of different travel options, consider making a change so that travelers and admins can make informed decisions regarding the environmental impact of their choices.

Work with your TMC to create and implement a **Sustainable Hotel Program**.

Create a supplier scoring system: Ask targeted questions in your next hotel RFP or use the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) ranking to identify local transportation opportunities.

Map your preferred airlines considering their DJSI rank, CO2 reporting, and compensation.



**Shift** to trains and local transport options like trams and subways.

**Choose** rental car and ground transportation providers with hybrid and electric vehicles.

**Implement** environmental metrics in your travel reporting statistics.

**Leverage** digital technology solutions (Zoom, Teams, Citrix, etc.) as alternatives to business travel.

By incorporating these sustainability elements into your travel policy, you will future fit your program to minimize disruptions and maximize employee safety and productivity - making travel an integral part of achieving your organization's sustainability goals.

Once your policy is developed, it might be possible to further improve your emission reduction performance by building the right supplier mix.

Your suppliers are crucial in helping meet or exceed your environmental goals. Understanding your suppliers is also a big step towards addressing environmental sustainability and social responsibility. A holistic approach will help weed out bad actors and unsustainable practices you could unknowingly support. It is essential to ask and understand what your travel suppliers are doing to support sustainable travel. Then consider how they may impact or improve your program's sustainability aims.

# Monitoring and Measuring Success

Peter Drucker became a consulting guru when he famously said, "You can't manage what you can't measure." That is undoubtedly true when evaluating your business travel program and your travelers' impact on the environment.

Unless you measure something, you don't know if it is getting better or worse. Therefore, the heart of any successful sustainable business travel program is good data collection and monitoring.

A commitment to the environment and society is increasingly on everyone's agenda. As a result, technology plays a critical role in providing Corporate Travel Managers with the tools they need to capture travel-related emission data and gain visibility into their company's business travel activity.

Data drives decisions. Therefore, only good data will validate correct choices are being made. Consequently, you must ensure you have the most comprehensive and accurate data to monitor your progress towards your responsible travel goals.

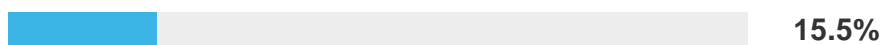
In 2023, many companies are beginning to calculate their emissions, and the TMCs and travel and expense management providers are moving quickly to capture, convert, and deliver business travel emissions data to you.

In a 2021 survey\*, nearly seventy percent of travel buyers stated that they depended on their TMC and OTA partners to provide the data and decision-making support required to plan effective, sustainable business travel policies. With the increased engagement of the TMCs, engaging directly with travel suppliers or carbon offsetting companies was much less frequent.

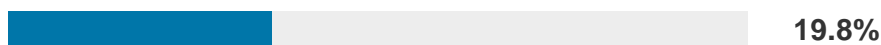
TMC or booking tool providers for the required information/reporting



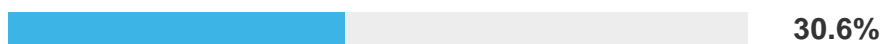
Direct relationships with carbon calculator technology providers



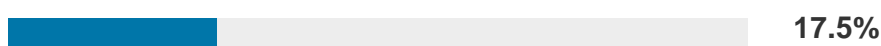
Direct relationships with carbon offsetting providers, alternative fuel providers, carbon sequestration companies



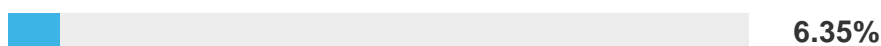
Supplier agreements that include sustainability targets and/or collaborative emissions goals



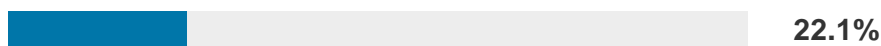
Third-party consulting company with expertise in sustainability



Other



I don't know/none





Whether reporting on your employees' carbon footprint or looking at the most frequently used transportation methods, having detailed information at your fingertips is the key to helping you make proactive changes to your corporation's business travel policies.

Taking stock of current practices and using that information and data to make better, more informed decisions for the future is a goal worth pursuing. Whether reporting on your employees' carbon footprint or looking at the most frequently used transportation methods, having detailed information at your fingertips is the key to helping you make proactive changes to your corporation's business travel policies.

Taking stock of current practices and using that information and data to make better, more informed decisions for the future is a goal worth pursuing.

As a result, TMCs are aware of the shift to sustainable travel practices and are ramping up their credentials in the space to capture and deepen relationships with corporates. It may be time to look at your current reporting tools to ensure that you get the best information possible.

You'll also want to work with your hotel and ground transportation suppliers to determine the level of data and analytics they can supply. You'll want to know how they're meeting your sustainability goals, so find out what information they can give you now and be clear on your future needs.



## Closing Remarks

This Sustainability Handbook, created by the TAMS Sustainability Committee, is an evolving "playbook."

TAMS believes that sustainability is a critical component to travel and meetings programs and will continue to focus on this ever-evolving topic to deliver value to our membership. Stay tuned!

