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## **BUSINESS AND NGO'S MUST GO ARM-IN-ARM TO HELP TACKLE WORLD'S BIGGEST ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES.**

**Unilever and panel of experts discuss need for collaboration.**

**26 May 2014** – The transformational impact of business joining forces with Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) will bring about the tipping point in finding solutions to the key social and environmental issues facing our world, said experts at a special panel discussion held to mark the third year progress of the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan.

A panel of experts from leading NGO's including the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Oxfam, Taronga Zoo and the Centre for Sustainability Leadership (CSL) told Unilever ANZ employees that collaborative partnerships are crucial to driving fundamental change on large-scale, global issues and called on business to focus their reach, expertise and resources on the areas where they can have the most positive impact.

The speakers discussed a range of areas where Unilever and other business must become part of the solution, including eliminating deforestation from supply chains, improving livelihoods of smallholder farmers and local communities as well as opening up more opportunities for women.

The Panel also addressed the need for more businesses to embrace the idea that values-driven business models can be successful at the same time as contributing to sustainable social and economic development.

WWF Manager of Sustainable Forestry and panellist Tim Cronin said, "Unless business is bought into sustainability, there isn't going to be a solution to the environmental challenges we face as a society. Making sustainability profitable is what will really 'mainstream' this idea about business being a force for good."

Panellists at the event were united in their agreement that Governments, NGO's and businesses are all accountable when it comes to bringing about change and creating a sustainable future. This follows Unilever's [recent call](#) for all companies to step up their commitment to tackling Climate Change globally, with a co-ordinated industry approach.

Vice President of Marketing & Managing Director of Foods & Refreshments at Unilever ANZ, Hugo Verkuil said, "We are all responsible; Governments have the power, NGO's have the knowledge, and business has the reach and influence to make change happen. Unilever reaches 15-20 million people every day across Australia and New Zealand through our products – we have the opportunity to be a real lever for change, and we will continue to challenge each other and our competitors to bring about industry-wide, long term change."

Following a successful third year of the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan, Unilever recently announced its intention to expand the Plan and bring about broader change under its enhancing livelihoods goal, by adding three new targets to be achieved by 2020:

- Fairness in the workplace - putting more emphasis on human and labour rights
- Opportunities for women – enhancing the role of women in the value chain
- Inclusive business models – social and economic development for smallholder farmers, micro entrepreneurs and young entrepreneurs



Oxfam's Economic Justice Coordinator, Kelly Dent, reinforced this focus and said; "You can't have sustainable development without gender equality."

It also follows Unilever's recent call for Business to step up their commitment to Climate Change, with a co-ordinated industry approach.

Unilever Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) currently has a 44.8% female workforce, which is 3.3% above its Sustainable Living Plan target, while women also represent over 40% of the ANZ senior leadership team. Through the Plan, Unilever will continue to focus on further developing areas of its business where women are underrepresented, including in its supply chain and customer development teams.

Across ANZ Unilever reported excellent progress in the Sustainable Living Plan in 2013, including:

- Reducing CO2 emissions per tonne of production in Australia by 5% compared to 2012 and by 20% compared to the 2008 baseline.
- Purchasing an additional 4000 Streets ice cream freezers that use climate-friendly hydrocarbon refrigerant (R290), which not only emit less CO2 but are also more economical to run.
- Reducing total waste per tonne of production in 2013 in Australia by 19% and in New Zealand by 76% compared to 2012.
- Reducing water abstraction per tonne of production in Australia by 17% and 31% in New Zealand when compared with 2012, and by 36% in Australia and 21% in New Zealand compared to the 2008 baseline.
- Reaching over 300,000 young people to date through 'Dove Body Think' workshops run in partnership with the Butterfly Foundation.

To view the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan progress report, click here:

<http://www.unilever.com/sustainable-living-2014/>

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**About Unilever**

Unilever is one of the world's leading suppliers of Food, Home and Personal Care products with sales in over 190 countries. Globally, Unilever has over 173,000 employees, and in 2012 generated annual sales of over €50 billion. In Australasia, Unilever employs more than 1,500 people, and has offices and manufacturing facilities throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Working to create a better future every day, we help people feel good, look good and get more out of life. Unilever's portfolio features some of the world's best-known household names. In Australasia, our name brands include Flora, Lipton, Bushells, Dove, Rexona, Lynx, Vaseline, Omo, Surf, Continental, Toni & Guy, Clear and Streets.

Our ambition is to double the size of our business, whilst reducing our overall environmental footprint and increasing our positive social impact. We are committed to helping more than a billion people take action to improve their health and well-being, sourcing all our agricultural raw materials sustainably by 2020, and decoupling our growth from our environmental impact. Supporting our three big goals are more than 50 time-based targets. See more on the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan at <http://www.unilever.com.au/sustainable-living/uslp/>

Unilever has been recognised in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Indexes for 14 consecutive years. We are included in the FTSE4Good Index Series and attained a top environmental score of 5, leading to inclusion in the FTSE4Good Environmental Leaders Europe 40 Index. In 2012 Unilever led the Climate Counts Company Scorecard and the list of Global Corporate Sustainability Leaders in the GlobeScan /SustainAbility latest annual survey (2012) - both for the second year running. The company is an employer of choice in many of the countries in which it operates and is seen as a symbol for innovation and leadership development.

For more information about Unilever and its brands, please visit [www.unilever.com.au](http://www.unilever.com.au)

