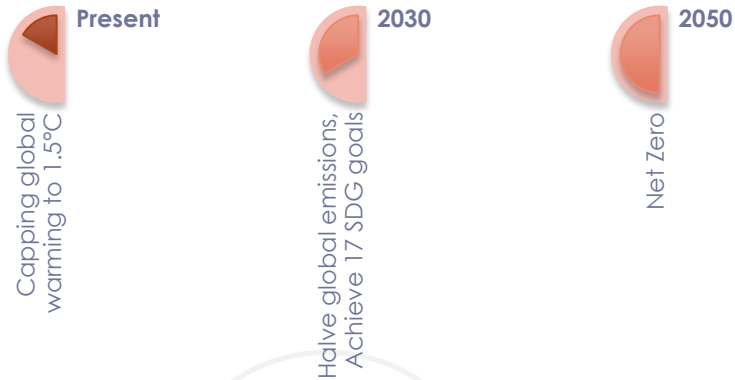




# GW Insights

January 2024

## Focusing on What We Can Do, Now

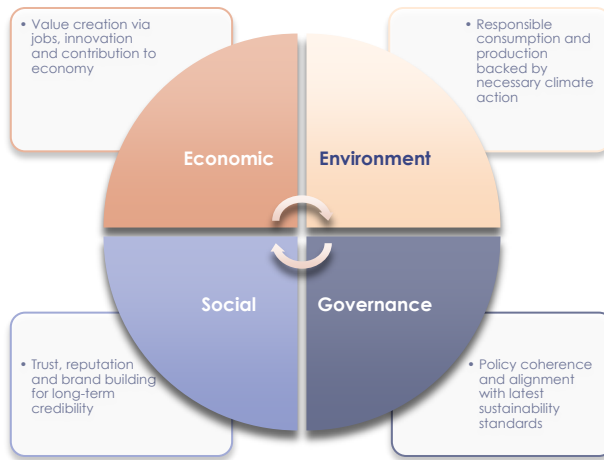


2023 saw the warmest year on record, and with extreme weather patterns reaching new heights, there is clear consensus human activities are contributing to climate change. How we move forward responsibly will bring larger paybacks in the mid to long term future. We just need the right start.

In six years' time, we might miss another Global Agenda – the United Nations Sustainable Goal (SDG). If its predecessor – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – is any indication of what it is to come, we might shift the goalpost again under some revised branding.

The good news though: the vision of a more sustainable world is getting sharper with clearer intentions and actions towards how we do so with each global policy blueprint; even if we might be challenged by the realist world pressures.

What is pivotal now, is knowing we can be self-empowered to make changes, ourselves and they need not be monumental or steep in the cost curve. We just need conscious leadership, intention to align with what is needed and drive relevant resources (that we have) to meet our goals.



At GW Consulting, we understand what the **macro** (i.e. systems-level) and **micro** (i.e. individual, interpersonal level) obstacles that may lie ahead of us. We are here to work around, over and through them with you to formulate your ideal EGSEE strategy – Economic, Governance, Social, Ethical and Environment.

If regulators and climate policies are to continue as they have been since 2020, the likelihood for legal and stakeholder scrutiny of businesses and its value chain will heighten. As consumers, regulators, investors get enlightened, businesses can translate this shift in preference for sustainability to build a new competitive advantage (s).



We can start with unpacking and internalising the principles behind SDG 12: responsible consumption and production for instance. Here, how we manage waste particularly has an intricate relationship with nature and its related ecosystem services that provide us with the resources we need to live, work and play with. Managing waste however requires a whole life cycle perspective, including more upstream considerations of where we procure our resources right up to where are they extracted from. It also involves

downstream considerations – how and why is our product disposed and is there a way to recover it, to avoid using more virgin materials? Are we disposing or recycling correctly? Who may we partner to upcycle/recycle/remanufacture? All very important questions as we make the circular economy transition.

Most times we are told greener or more sustainable alternatives are more expensive or hard to find as it may not be commercially viable yet due to safety or structural tests required. This need not limit us.

Take office buildings for example. We do not need huge investment to convert existing lighting to LED or implementing hybrid cooling measures. Energy savings here, effectively translate to cost savings. We may also regularly track our monthly bills to see if there is any leakage or overconsumption that we can curb. We can leverage on our stakeholders to provide us with these insights. Overall, these need not cost additional, if we empower our human resources to look for the right impact points.

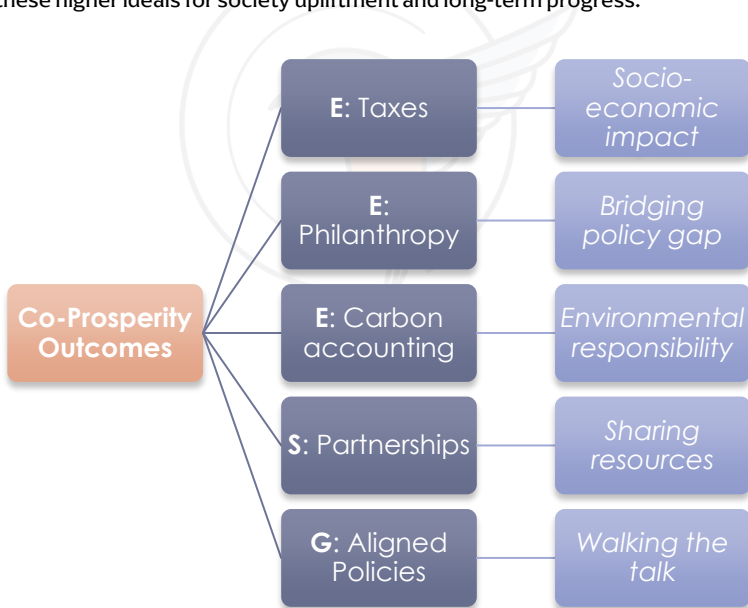
This might require a shift in perceiving the world we want to live in. When we focus only on creating economic value within the business value creation model of EGSEE, we are creating an unstable foundation for the future. While economic prosperity is crucial for other advancements to take place, it is based on a largely mutually exclusive mindset. We have to take to make and we can afford to waste with trends like fast fashion and e-commerce providing cheaper alternatives now.

In an EGSEE world on the other hand, we may choose to prioritise the other verticals (environment, social and governance) with economic interest. We say almost because not all firms will be able to do so. Some given their smaller size may need to prioritise economic survival above everything else. Nevertheless, there are still low hanging fruits we can embrace that will only boost our bottom-line because we are optimising our resources.

Most times we do not know how much we have especially when it comes to information, available data and alternative skillsets helmed by our employees. Boosting “S” for example, could mean letting our staff share what they are good at with others. Inter-departmental learning and sharing is also useful especially with the various transitions towards digital, green technology and

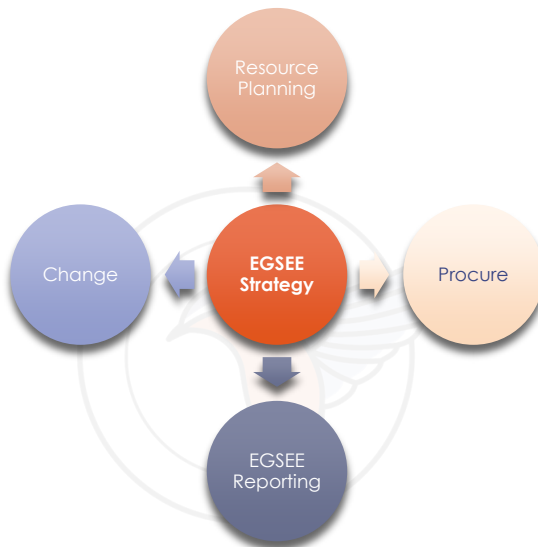
sustainability happening now. With global reporting standards converging to include much needed non-financial data to investors looking for simplification, there is an even greater need for cross-departmental training. This would help share compliance burdens and boost interest of individuals to learn from each other rather than have to depend on external trainers to provide the same insights.

EGSEE thinking therefore offers fair allocation of weightage to all four aspects of business value creation, with some markets requiring stronger weightages for 'Social' and 'Governance' verticals to accelerate their sustainable development journey. This integrated approach offers outcomes that may be intangible. Hence, developing company-specific theory of change models will be useful – what future do we want and how are we shaping it with our activities. How may our strategy embrace this ethos of co-prosperity and what quantitative indicators may we use to track business contribution towards these higher ideals for society upliftment and long-term progress.



The fact remains that businesses are well-placed to contribute a substantive shift in the well-being of our world, given their financial independence, stakeholder interest to do better and overall position in society as value creators.

As such, the overall value creation strategy for businesses could minimally include requirements for 1) planning 2) procurement 3) reporting and 4) change management to learn and improve systems with personnel feedback loops. Working with supply chain partners will be helpful alongside internal stakeholders such as employees and board members. This will inevitably complement independent external systems set up by government agencies, non-profits and institutes of higher learning that are working on mitigating, adapting and reducing community-level impact of human activities.



At GW, we want to build a self-reliant world, with conscious leaders who embrace dignity as an intrinsic value. There is still much we can do to bridge the action gap.

We look forward to your feedback at [hello@goalweaver.biz](mailto:hello@goalweaver.biz)