CIRAS Releases Guide to Implementing Sustainability Across the Supply Chain

The recently released report *Sustainable Supply Chains: A Guide for Small- to Medium-sized Manufacturers* provides the tools and knowledge to begin making changes to your small- to medium-sized enterprise (SME) that benefit the triple bottom line—financial, social, and environmental success. The report, developed by CIRAS in partnership with the Iowa State University College of Business, provides research, best practice analysis and examples of companies successfully implementing sustainability across the supply chain.

This report highlights the importance of supply chain sustainability from a business perspective and discusses findings from recent surveys on the benefits and challenges of supply chain sustainability. In order to address the needs of SMEs, the guide provides a 4-step process to implementing sustainability along with an easy to use self-evaluation tool.

A recent report by the Boston Consulting Group and MIT (Berns 2009) concluded with two key recommendations:

- Companies need to develop a better understanding of the implications of sustainability for their business—and the companies already doing so are being rewarded.
- Companies will need to develop new capabilities and characteristics, including the ability to operate on a systemwide basis and collaborate across internal and external boundaries; a culture that rewards and encourages long-term thinking; capabilities in the areas of activity measurement, process redesign, and financial modeling and reporting; and skills in engaging and communicating with external stakeholders.

Taking the time to perform a self-evaluation on your current business practices can be an important first step in beginning to view your suppliers as part of your system as opposed to something out of your control.


For more information, visit the CIRAS website [http://www.ciras.iastate.edu/](http://www.ciras.iastate.edu/) or contact Mike O’Donnell, 515-294-1588; [modonnill@iastate.edu](mailto:modonnill@iastate.edu)