United Nations Environment Assembly

The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Combating Climate Change

Now more than ever, the business world and climate change are directly linked. Business plays a central role in climate change. Much of the CO2 emissions causing climate change come from business-driven economic activity.[1] Despite this, business can also play a huge part in the innovation and solutions to prevent, mitigate and adapt to climate change.[2] When talking about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the framework for this is defined in the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, specifically the principles relating to the Environment.[3] There are three principles underneath this section. Principle 7, "businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges" Principle 8, "undertaking initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;" and Principle 9, "encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.".[4] These principles are seen as an important part of a business's value systems. In addition to the UN Global Compact, The United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner also has several 'pillars' that are considered a fundamental part of CSR and combating climate change. Pillar 1, Protecting Human Rights, Pillar 2, Corporate Social Responsibility to Protect, and Pillar 3, Access to Remedy. These are three of the strongest points to help businesses run responsibly and make sustainable development a priority.

The Role of Ecosystems in Disaster Risk Reduction

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction was created on March 18th, 2015 in Sendai, Japan to promote a guideline through 2015-2030 on strengthening communities and Member States by "Building Back Better"[5]. This plan of action has reached a midterm review, raising global concern as UN General Assembly President Csaba Kőrösi announces insufficient progress towards the Framework. Kőrösi explains, "Eight years on, we must admit that our progress has not kept pace with the urgency of our days. The known number of people affected by disasters has jumped 80-fold since 2015".[6] Disasters have grown through a "triple crises" upon ecosystems of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Currently more than a million species are at risk of extinction.[7] In December 2022, the United Nations Environment Programme passed the Kunming-Montreal Global Diversity Framework and invites the General Assembly to acknowledge this framework to accomplish UN progress towards 2030 goals.

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[1] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/ClimateChange/materials/KMBusiness.pdf
[2] https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/ClimateChange/materials/KMBusiness.pdf
[3] https://unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles
[4] https://unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles
[5] https://www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030
[6] https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1136782
[7] https://www.unep.org/resources/kunming-montreal-global-biodiversity-framework?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIxe6B54e U_wIVRAxlCh3bogCoEAAYASAAEgIdKvD_BwE