

Major players' R&D leaders collaborate to help land net zero ambitions

Innovation leaders from seven global companies have joined forces to bring a technical and science-led footing to the realisation of net zero ambitions in an initiative led by Science Group Sustainability.

R&D and science and technology leadership from Procter & Gamble, PepsiCo and Mars as well as packaging specialist Amcor, Bayer's crop science division and chemicals firms Stepan Company and Solvay SA took part.

The participants collaborated over the development of key principles to enable material progress on carbon reduction. They share the belief that the complexity of net zero and other sustainability issues requires joined up thinking between sectors, disciplines and companies.

A member of the forum says: "Tackling climate change is a marathon not a sprint and, whilst net zero goals and pledges may stretch beyond our personal tenure, we must own the problem. We need to reach significant milestones in the short-term and not trust that technological advances will 'find a way' in the long-term."

The group met regularly over a 12-month period as part of a Science Group Sustainability CTO Forum. They analysed challenges hindering carbon reduction and considered ways to resolve them. Together, they identified ten principles that will help companies as they journey towards net zero. These range from articulating carbon and other sustainability themes as distinct but related issues, to ensuring carbon impact is part of any conversation about innovation.

Another member of the forum says: "We can't treat carbon reduction as an afterthought, it must be woven into the fabric of our innovation practices from origination through to

execution. We must use it as a lever to think differently so that we find opportunity to create irresistible experiences for our consumers whilst also reducing carbon.”

Science Group Sustainability has developed a [Net Zero Playbook](#) and published an abridged version outlining the strategies trialled by the seven participants. It demonstrates how the R&D function can evoke new ways of thinking and working that prioritise reduction of carbon emissions. It includes a maturity model detailing and describing the ten principles that companies can embrace as they commit to, plan, and act on goals.

Michael Zeitlyn, President Advisory Services at Science Group Sustainability, says that while the specifics vary between companies and industry sectors, there are many common challenges and much can be learned from each other, not least the need for a joined-up effort both within the organisation and across the supply chain.

“Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is complex and brings immense technical challenges,” Zeitlyn explains. “Innovation has a vital role to play, but it can’t go far enough in isolation. We need to see strategic alignment across multiple business functions, from R&D and product stewardship to procurement and compliance departments. We are all on a journey to net zero, and it’s going to be tough, but we can achieve more when we work together,”

Science Group Sustainability is a cross-divisional entity set up by Science Group plc, the parent company of R&D consultancy Sagentia Innovation, Leatherhead Food Research and regulatory consultancy TSG Consulting. Experts from different parts of the Group facilitated the CTO Forum’s sustainability discussions.

An abridged version of the Net Zero Playbook is freely available to businesses via <https://sustainability.sciencegroup.com/net-zero-playbook/>.

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About Science Group plc

Science Group Sustainability combines expertise and knowledge from across Science Group companies. Science Group plc (AIM:SAG) is a science-led advisory and product development organisation. The Group has three divisions:

- R&D Consultancy: providing advisory, applied science and product development services cross-sector helping clients derive maximum return on their R&D investments.
 - Regulatory & Compliance: helping clients in highly regulated markets to launch, market and defend products internationally, navigating the frequently complex and fragmented regulatory ecosystems.
 - Frontier Smart Technologies: designing and manufacturing chips and modules for the DAB/DAB+ radio markets with 80% market share (excluding the automotive market)
- With more than 400 employees worldwide, primarily scientists and engineers and speaking more than 30 languages collectively, the Group has R&D centres in Cambridge and Epsom with more than ten additional offices in Europe, Asia and North America.

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