

CHAIRMAN

**SEV Letter of Commitment
for the UN Global Compact COE**

Mr. Ban Ki-moon
UN Secretary-General
UNITED NATIONS
New York, NY 10017
USA

Athens, October, 1st, 2015
Re. No: 01594

Dear Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Through this Letter, I hereby confirm, on behalf of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV, <http://www.sev.org.gr/>), that SEV fully supports and advances to its members and stakeholders the ten principles of the Global Compact, related to the support and respect of Human Rights, the recognition of Labor Rights, the protection of Environment and the promotion of the Environmental Responsibility, as well as Anti-corruption.

Within this context, SEV also expresses its sincere intention / commitment to participate in an engage with the Global Compact in the following ways:

- Encourage our members to join the UN Global Compact;
- Join forces with the UN Global Compact to advocate the business case for key corporate citizenship issues to policymakers and the public; and
- Support the development and activities of a Global Compact Local Network.

Furthermore, as a proud member of the Global Compact since 2008, SEV pledges to submit a Communication on Engagement (COE) every two years, disclosing the federation's initiatives and efforts to engage with the Global Compact, as well as promoting public accountability and transparency.

Sincerely yours,



Theodore Fessas
Chairman

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Member of 

Communication on Engagement of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises- SEV

The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV, <http://www.sev.org.gr/>) is a proud member of the UN Global Compact since 2008, aligning with its main vision to create a sustainable and inclusive global economy that delivers lasting benefits to people, communities and markets. Our long-lasting interaction with the world's largest corporate sustainable initiative, offers us a constant inspiration and motive to keep promoting dynamically innovation, sustainable development, entrepreneurial ethics and corporate social responsibility in the private sector of Greece, driven always by the ten principles that unite us with the UN Global Compact.

SEV was founded in 1905 and constitutes the biggest independent institutional representative of the Greek enterprises, representing some of the most dynamic Greek large and medium-sized enterprises. SEV participates in the dialogue with the Greek society and State, in order to promote the sustainable development of the Greek entrepreneurial community, as a means of social growth and economic competitiveness and extroversion.

During the last 110 years of its operation, SEV organizes working groups, produces position papers and submits official proposals for the economy, industry, innovation, employability, education and development, aiming to contribute to a more sound entrepreneurial activity in Greece and endow modern companies with a louder and more persuasive voice.

This is SEV's first Communication on Engagement, through which we intend to promote public accountability and transparency, as well as to share with the UN Global Compact and its members from around the world, SEV's activities carried out during the period October 2013- October 2015, in the area of sustainable social responsibility with our employees, members, stakeholders and the local community in which we operate. In particular, in this first Communication on Engagement, we will disclose only a part of SEV's initiatives that have been successfully implemented, which are connected with the respect of Human Rights, the recognition of Labor Rights, the Anti-Corruption, as well as the protection of Environment and the promotion of the Environmental Responsibility.

**Communication on Engagement of SEV
in connection with the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact**

1. ENVIRONMENT & PROMOTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

i. “Competitiveness & Policies on Climate Change” Conference



In **February 2014**, SEV, through its Business Council for Sustainable Development, organized a scientific and business Conference entitled “Competitiveness & Policies on Climate Change”, with the participation of Governmental representatives, the Energy & Environment Minister, EU officials (DG of Climate Change, DG of Enterprise and Industry), as well as representatives of the Greek banking system and the local business community.

The conference’s main subject was the study that the Foundation for Economic & Industrial Research (IOVE) carried out on behalf of the SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development regarding “The Economic impact of carbon leakage, in Greece”.

The purpose of this study was to quantify the impact on the Greek economy from the "carbon leakage" associated with the implementation of the third phase of the Emissions Trading Scheme of the European Union (EU-ETS), which covers the period 2013 - 2020. The impact of the direct and indirect emission costs caused by the ETS on the Greek economy is examined, so that policy makers and all other stakeholders gain an insight into the magnitude of the risk of carbon leakage in the Greek economy and develop an informed view and position that will serve, in the current economic downturn, the urgent needs of the country, particularly in its effort to boost economic growth and job creation.

IOVE’s study established a common position shared by the business community and the country’s leadership, with regards to the Climate Change issue and how it can be associated with the business development. The study’s conclusions contributed to the creation of a “national position” which was promoted at the European Commission’s meetings and fora. Furthermore, the EU “carbon leakage” list for the period 2013-2020 fully satisfied the Greek side’s proposals.

ii. Sustainable Greece 2020



In **April 2014**, the Sustainable Greece 2020 initiative was launched by QualityNet Foundation in partnership with the leading Business Associations of Greece, aiming to raise awareness among the Greek business community and society at large, on issues of Sustainable Development, Responsible Entrepreneurship and Social Responsibility.

SEV, as well as SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development, are among the participants associations, supporting the initiative's strategic goal to develop a systematic dialogue and create methodologies and tools that would support national efforts towards Sustainable Development, on the **micro and macroeconomic level**.

The "Sustainable Greece 2020" initiative is developed with:

- the cooperation of 33 Business Associations, 120 Companies, 17 Local Authorities and 43 Organizations of the Civil Society,
- it is endorsed by International Organizations, such as the European Commission, the German Sustainability Council, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the EIRIS,
- the participation of representatives from the academia, the Business Associations, Companies, the Local and National Authorities and the Civil Society.
- the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Development & Competitiveness as well as the Greek Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change.
- the funding from organizations/members that participate in the Initiative as Sustainability Ambassadors.

Since its launch, Sustainable Greece 2020 Initiative is committed to the development of specific tools and methodologies, such as the **Sustainability Observatory**, the **Policy Paper for a Sustainable Development Strategy**, the **Social Needs Recording Mechanism** and the **Greek Sustainability Code**.

More specifically, the Initiative's Deliverables are the following:

The Sustainability Observatory

The Sustainability Observatory constitutes a monitoring mechanism of all the practices and the actions that are developed by companies and organizations with regards to issues of sustainable development and social responsibility.

The Sustainability Observatory has the goal:

- to point out where Greece stands as a member state on these issues
- to operate as a platform of exchange of knowledge and know how on sustainability amongst organizations and companies that they have already developed sustainability practices and actions or they have already started to do so.

Already 120 companies, 17 local authorities, and 43 Non-Governmental organizations participate in the Sustainability Observatory, which has gathered up until now 440 practices of organizations that support sustainable development and social responsibility. This particular mechanism responds to the recent need expressed by the EU institutions for the creation of monitoring tools for sustainable development at member states level, as well as to the need for the creation of a national systematic monitoring scheme of sustainability and social responsibility.

For more information: <http://observatory.sustainablegreece2020.com/>

The Bravo Sustainability Awards

The Bravo Sustainability Awards has the goal to reward all best practices developed by organizations and companies in Greece which contribute to the promotion of sustainable development, social cohesion and the creation of principles of responsible behavior, the development of the quality of life amongst the Greek society.

Through a systematic dialogue with more than 200 stakeholders, nominated practices are invited to evaluate the according to internationally recognized standards and criteria. With the scientific evaluation from academics in Greece and abroad, the development of a focus groups with technical experts, with an extensive network of 100 stakeholders that shape the trends in the Greek market and the participation of a wider audience in the evaluation process, a general stakeholder engagement is achieved regarding the practices of leading organizations in Greece on issues of sustainable development.

This year, 85 best practices from the business sector, 30 from the local authorities and 55 from the civil society has been submitted to the Bravo Sustainability Awards.

For more information: <http://bravo.sustainablegreece2020.com>

Greek Sustainability Code

The Greek Sustainability Code constitutes a practical tool of transparency and self commitment for companies and organizations across the country with regards to issues of sustainable development. Those organizations are invited to be connected to those issues through 20 Indicators that are based upon international standards. The Greek Sustainability Code receives know how from the European Sustainability Code and links participating organizations to a platform of sustainability at the EU and national level. The basis for the development of the Greek Sustainability Code has already been set, taking into account the requirements of the Greek market.

The Greek Sustainability Code responds to the recent EU Directive for the publication of non-financial data.

The Policy Paper

Through an open consultation, the Policy Paper will contain the proposals of all participants in the Dialogue, about what should be taken into account in the formulation of a national economy based on sustainable development and promoting the social cohesion. The Policy Paper, whose aim is to support the government's work, will be forwarded to the corresponding national and European institutions in order to help formulate the legislative process. The Dialogue outcomes aim to contribute the Local Authorities in their effort to shape a National Sustainable Development Strategy in Greece.

Social Needs Recording Mechanism

The Social Needs Recording Mechanism aims to systematically record the needs of Greek society at both national and local level, in order to connect them with the programs implemented by the private sector. The Social Needs Recording Mechanism's ultimate aim is to promote the development of cooperation between the private and public sector for in order to meet more effectively the specific needs of the Greek society.

iii. The Business & Climate Summit, a breakthrough moment

In **May 2015**, SEV, through SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development, participated to Business & Climate Summit which was held in Paris. This international summit brought 2.000 international business leaders, policymakers and investors in Paris, while it mobilized 25 worldwide business networks that represented over 6.5 million companies from more than 130 countries. The Summit's participants, including among others SEV, pledged the lead to global transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient economy.

During the Summit, business leaders and investors demonstrated the bold climate actions many of them are already taking, and called upon policymakers to support:

- the introduction of robust and effective carbon pricing mechanisms as a key component to gear investment and orient consumer behavior towards low-carbon solutions and achieve global net emissions reduction at the least economic costs. The first goal is to boost energy efficiency. It also



Hellenic Federation of Enterprises

includes the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies to redirect consumption to clean energy sources. Such policies need to be carefully designed and implemented to avoid competitive distortions in some specific sectors.

- the establishment of an alliance between business and governments leading to the integration of climate policies into the mainstream economy. This should include enhanced public-private dialogues at global and national level, backed by a commitment to raise ambition in line with developments in climate science.
- A call for policymakers to leverage public funds and private sector finance, and to de-risk investment towards low-carbon assets, especially in developing countries. This should surpass the \$100 billion per year pledged in Copenhagen in order to shift the trillions of dollars needed to build the low-carbon, climate-resilient economy.

At the Business & Climate Summit, it was recognized that leading businesses are already taking action to build the prosperous, low-carbon economy of the future. In all sectors, business has developed solutions, continues to innovate and is preparing to accelerate the scale and pace of deployment.

At the Summit, SEV was represented by the Secretary-General and President of the BoD of SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development, Mr. Efthymios Vidalis. The results and conclusions that derived from the Summit were discussed during the General Assembly of SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development which was held right after the Summit. As a result, the Council's members unanimously decided the active participation of Mr. Vidalis at COP 21, in Paris, which is scheduled for December 2015.

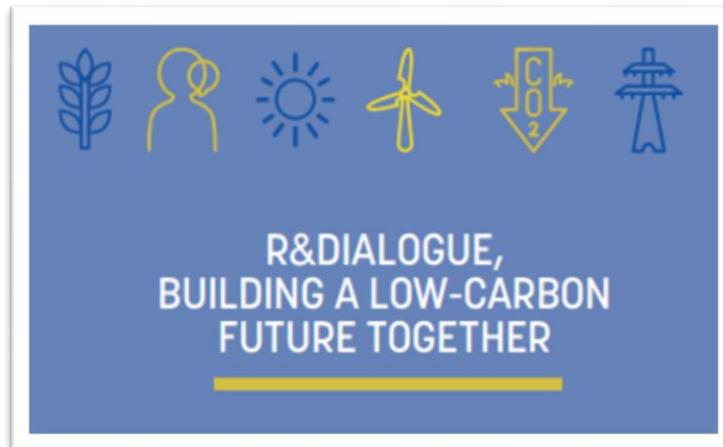
iv. Project “Clean Seas: Swear to Care”



In June 2015, SEV, through the SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development, supported the Greek NGO MEDASSET (Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles) and its project called “Clean Seas: Swear to Care”, putting in under its auspices. The project’s objective was to protect the marine environment and life in Greece especially during summer, through scientific research, environmental education, as well as raising public awareness.

Through SEV’s support, MEDASSET managed to formulate a comprehensive campaign, during which thousands of people have been exposed to the project’s messages and engaged to the campaign’s mission, to keep Greece’s beaches rubbish-free.

SEV actively supported the communication of the campaign, through the official website of SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development and by communicating directly the Council’s company members.



SEV, through SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development, is a proud member of the R&Dialogue, a consortium of a great number of partners from 10 European countries, whose objective is to establish a constructive dialogue between research and civil society communities, on how to achieve a low-carbon society within Europe.

The objectives of the European scope of R&Dialogue are to create a transition to cleaner and more sustainable energy sources that contribute to a growing European economy, as well as to sustainability and growth. To realize these ambitions several techniques and innovative tools are developed that can contribute in achieving our objectives. We believe that through enhancing the dialogue on the European scale and feeding our conclusions to the European Institutions and international stakeholders, we can speed this up process. SEV contributes to this project, by giving an insight in the role of energy for the European and the local economy of Greece, for producers and consumers, for environment and society.

Through R&Dialogue project, SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development interacts with other European organizations that want to improve the capacity of society to make decisions on sustainable energy solutions. This dialogue at European level is an important opportunity for obtaining feedback on the national situations from a more external point of view, identifying key issues that deserve attention in terms of the low carbon society in Europe.

To that end, in **June 2015**, R&Dialogue organized a conference in Athens entitled “A common vision for a low-carbon society: Perspectives, opportunities and challenges”. SEV Business Council for the Sustainable Development actively participated to the conference, presenting the activities that the global business community implements, in order to respond to Climate Change.

The event was attended by 50 highly experienced business executives, academicians, researchers and NGO representatives. SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development submitted proposals for the amelioration of the national dialogue and the coordination with international institutions, especially with the WBCSD, as it is among its partner organizations. The General Manager of SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development will represent R&Dialogue National Committee at the project’s final event, in Brussels, on November, the 18th, 2015.

vi. WBCSD: Global business community takes action for the climate change challenge- Expression of support of Pope Francis' encyclical



The screenshot shows the WBCSD website with the article "The Case for Business Action on Climate Change". The article text is as follows:

As members of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and on behalf of the 93 companies included in this letter, we recognize that regardless of faith, we can all appreciate the call to climate action contained in Pope Francis' encyclical, "On Care for our Common Home." It is a universal message – one that speaks to the challenges climate change is having on society and the environment and the role of individuals, civil society and institutions to address them.

For years, the body of science behind climate change has grown clearer and more focused. The planet is warming with severe consequences that threaten business growth and a healthy economy. We believe that we have reached a tipping point on climate change and that there is an unstoppable shift to a global economy that is significantly less harmful to the environment. As the world transitions to this new economy, it will be important to provide economic progress and a higher quality of life for all people in all regions of the world.

The private sector will play a key role in this transition and can help build prosperity and secure a better world for what will soon be nine billion people. Increasingly, business leaders are working collaboratively with competitors and with nongovernmental organizations to set goals to significantly reduce natural resource use, invest in clean energy, improve global health and feed more people. A common thread that cuts across all of these efforts is finding new and innovative ways to use technology to achieve these social and environmental commitments.

No company is perfect. But, all companies are made up of people who want to leave a higher quality of life and a better world for generations to come. As leaders of these companies, we are committed to using our innovation, scale and entrepreneurial spirit to seek ways to address both the environmental and societal challenges created by climate change. Ahead of the Paris climate negotiations this December, we will help do our part to facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy.

SEV Council for the Sustainable Development, as member of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, recognized in **September 2015, that regardless of faith, we can all appreciate the call to climate action contained in Pope Francis' encyclical, "On Care for our Common Home." It is a universal message – one that speaks to the challenges climate change is having on society and the environment and the role of individuals, civil society and institutions to address them.**

The planet is warming with severe consequences that threaten business growth and a healthy economy. We believe that our planet has reached a tipping point on climate change and that there is an unstoppable shift to a global economy that is significantly less harmful to the environment. As the world transitions to this new economy, it will be important to provide economic progress and a higher quality of life for all people in all regions of the world. The private sector plays a key role in this transition and can help build prosperity and secure a better world for what will soon be nine billion people. Increasingly, business leaders are working collaboratively with competitors and with nongovernmental organizations to set goals to significantly reduce natural resource use, invest in clean energy, improve global health and feed more people. A common thread that cuts across all of these efforts is finding new and innovative ways to use technology to achieve these social and environmental commitments.

To that end, SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development called all its members-Greek companies to action, inviting them to express their support by co-signing Pope Francis' encyclical, so that it could be published and made globally known before Pope's scheduled visit to Washington and New York, in late September. As a result, 14 Greek companies expressed their written consent and support.

2. HUMAN RIGHTS & ANTI-CORRUPTION

i. Participation to event on Human Rights and Anti-corruption



In **December 2014**, SEV supported and participated in the 1st regional meeting of the South-East Europe Global Compact Local Networks, organized by the Global Compact Network Hellas and the Hellenic Network FOR CSR. The event that took place in Thessaloniki, focused on the “Human Rights and the Anti-corruption”, bringing more than 150 participants, who had the chance to get informed about all the initiatives that the Greek and international private sector takes, in order to alleviate the negative phenomenon of the Human Rights violation and the Corruption.

The event was held under the auspices of the Office of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings, adjacent to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and was co-organized by the Hellenic-American Chamber and the Transparency International – Greece.

It is worth mentioning that SEV Business Council for Sustainable Development is member of the Coordinating Committee of Global Compact Network Hellas.

The event was attended by more than 150 persons. SEV’s representative officially expressed the strong commitment of the Council’s company members to defend the human rights and fight against the corruption. The event’s conclusions were discussed during the Council’s annual General Assembly, in June 2015.

3. Labour & Promotion of Labour Rights



Comprised of three active Working Groups (Working Group on Labour Issues, Working Group on Health & Safety in working environments, Working Group on Female Entrepreneurship), SEV's Human Resources department ensures the Federation's leading role in promoting labour good practices in Greek private sector, as well as its institutional role to represent the entrepreneurial sector on national, European and international level.

In **May 2015**, on the occasion of SEV's Annual General Assembly, the Federation initiated an open dialogue with the participation of several distinguished representatives of European industrial organizations (such as the President of the Federation of German Industries, Mr. Ulrich Grillo, the Vice President of the Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations, Mr. José Vincente González and the Director of BUSINESSEUROPE, Mr. Markus I. Beyrer), who submitted their views on how to build a development strategy for Europe.

To that end, SEV produced a Working Document with 82 proposed actions in 11 major policy sectors, including, among others, the creation of new job positions in private sector.

The entire Working Document is available [here](#).

In order to widely diffuse the working document's ideas, suggestions and conclusions, SEV has dispatched the entire document to all its stakeholders, as well as to all competent ministers.