

World Benchmarking Alliance names the most influential 2000 companies for a sustainable future

20 January 2020: The World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) has today revealed the SDG2000, a list of the companies that have the most influence over our ability to move to a more sustainable future. The list – comprised of companies which collectively make up half of the entire global economy and are responsible for \$43trillion in revenue - is part of WBA's mission to measure the private sector's impact and efforts in sustainability with one global accountability mechanism.

As companies face increased expectation to deliver on commitments to meet the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, the SDG2000 identifies the 2,000 companies with the most impact across seven key transformation areas: Food Systems; Decarbonisation and Energy; Circular; Digital; Financial; Urban; Social.

With the companies now identified, WBA will rank those listed on their performance and impact on the SDGs – ensuring the results and findings are freely and publicly available to all. Through this transparency the rankings will hold businesses to account by highlighting peer to peer performance. This will inspire leaders to make the changes necessary for real impact and act as an accountability mechanism for those who are falling behind.

Pauliina Murphy, Director at WBA, said: "Companies must compete globally, and to be successful, they need to embed the right sustainability practices at the very core. There is no greater urgency than tackling inequality, climate change and biodiversity loss. These SDG2000 companies have the potential to drive forward systems change. Our benchmarks hold a mirror to companies on their performance, which encourages a race to the top and hold laggards to account."

The range of industries within the SDG2000 shows that no one single group can be held up as the one to change, a pan-sectoral effort is needed. Listed, private and state-owned companies identified include Apple, Facebook, Netflix, Tesla, Coca Cola, Tencent and Starbucks, demonstrating the scale of effort needed across industries. Taking impact as the key differentiator, the list also reveals the influence wielded by companies and groups like Saudi Aramco, Africell and Safaricom in Africa, Cargil, Bancocolombia and Temasek whose global footprint and control over segments of production and/or service provision make them key players in future sustainability.

SDG2000: key findings

- The list has a global footprint with headquarters across seventy- four countries from Algeria to Vietnam
- One in four of the companies are headquartered in developing, emerging or frontier markets. The most influential companies by number of headquarters are US, EU, China, Japan
- The list spans industries from apparel, asset managers and agricultural products to telecoms, utilities and waste management by direct impact and through supply chains
- A number of companies are so diversified that they feature across four of the seven transformations. They include Glencore, Tata Group Mitsubishi and China Resources Holdings
- The circular economy - circular is currently the largest transformation with 750 companies

Richard Hardymont, Research Director at WBA, said; “For the first time, we have identified the who – the most influential companies when it comes to sustainable development. As investors, employees and consumers demand more from business, WBA benchmarks will set out whether these keystone companies are performing.”

View the full SDG2000 list here www.sdg2000.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Taking the SDG2000 list forward: WBA consists of over 115 multi-stakeholder allies who, collectively, represent \$15.3 trillion of assets under management. The goal of the Alliance is to create momentum in change, encouraging industry peers and partners to take responsibility for the impact they currently create, and, importantly, have the potential to create.

As the SDG2000 is free and available to all WBA encourages everyone regardless of whether they represent companies, investors, governments or themselves to read the report and use the tools provided to start creating a positive change.

SDG2000 Methodology: Identifying the who?

For the first time WBA has applied systems thinking to the UN SDGs to identify the global 'keystone companies' that will have disproportionate influence on industry's collective chance of success for meeting these goals.

The SDG2000 started by looking at the seven transformations needed to meet the UN SDGs. They are: social, food and agriculture, decarbonisation and energy, circular, digital, urban and financial. The research team then identified relevant industries that can positively and/or negatively impact these transformations with a focus on influence as well as impact. This was informed by work from leading research bodies from the UN, inter-governmental sources, industry, academia and civil society.

Within these industries, WBA then identified the 2000 'keystone companies' based on five criteria. These are the companies' dominance of global production and revenues/and or volumes within a particular sector, control of globally relevant segments of production or services, the influence on eco-systems and supply chains, global governance processes and institutions and footprint, particularly relevant in developing countries.

About WBA

The World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) is a non-profit organisation seeking to generate a movement around increasing the private sector's impact towards a sustainable future for all. WBA's transformative benchmarks compare companies' performance on the global challenges the world faces. A group of more than 115 Allies will provide WBA with the necessary support to be a successful driver of change. The benchmarks empower all stakeholders, from consumers and investors to employees and business leaders, with key data and insights to encourage sustainable business.

www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org

Contacts

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