

## **The Evolution of Sustainability as a Corporate Imperative**

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### ABSTRACT

While the environmental movement and the concept of sustainability have been part of public discourse and government policy for more than 50 years, widespread corporate interest in sustainability has intensified only over the past 5 to 10 years. The definitions, scope and rationalization of sustainability differ considerably among companies, customers and shareholders. In this paper, we examine these differences and discuss the evolution of sustainability as a corporate imperative. Specifically, we address sustainability as a factor of production, a corporate social responsibility, a source of competitive advantage, a key driver of innovation, an avenue for mitigating risk, and a means of survival. We also discuss the compatibility of sustainability with corporate growth strategies and consumer economies.