Putting Principles into Practice in Your Co-op

November 23, 2012
10:45am - 12:15pm

Co-operating to Build a Better Nova Scotia
Are Co-ops More Sustainable?

- Sustainability why should it concern us?
- IS the co-operative model better suited to environmental stewardship?
- Case Studies
- Discussion
Why is business concerned with Sustainability?

- Water
- Biodiversity
- Soil
- Forests
- Global Trade
- Technology
- Population

Life Supporting Resources Declining

Demand for life supporting resources Rising

© 2008 The Natural Step
The Business Case for Sustainability

1. Increased revenue
2. Reduced energy expenses
3. Reduced waste expenses
4. Reduced materials and water expenses
5. Increased employee productivity
6. Reduced hiring and attrition expenses
7. Reduced strategic and operational risks

Source: Bob Willard *The Sustainability Advantage* 2009
A System’s Prospective
Is the co-op model better suited for environmental stewardship?

- Co-op structure
  - Long term view
  - Stakeholders considered
  - Collaborative
  - Strength in Community Development

- 7th principle - Concern for Community

- Industry leaders - The Co-operators, MEC, Vancity

- Co-op rooted in social sustainability - still far to go with environment
Case Studies - The Co-operators

Why
• It hit the balance sheet – extreme weather
• CEO

How
• CEO gets it – Corporate lead – grassroots fueled
• Got house in order
  • Operations, Products/services, stakeholders engagement
• Hired experts
• 2 AGM’s with sustainability as the theme
• Staff took 1 hour online course
• Produced a video about with TNS and Bob Willard
Case Studies - MEC

Why
• Founded in enjoyment and respect for nature
• Retail apparel has a long way to go

How
• Support people being active outdoors, protecting these spaces
• 1% for the planet
• Member story telling
• 7th principle – should include environment
Case Studies - VanCity

**Why**
- Environmental performance coincides with financial performance

**How**
- Focus on principles 3, 5, 6, and 7
- Environment is part of decision-making not just a volunteer green committee
- 1\textsuperscript{st} Carbon Neutral – GREAT PR!
- Developed green guides which are available for other orgs
- Best financial results in 65 years!!
Discussion

• Is the co-op model better suited for environmental stewardship than other business models?
Discussion

• Do the co-op principles make co-ops more sustainable?
Discussion

• How does your co-op live by the co-op principles?
Questions?

Amanda Hachey
adhachey@gmail.com