

# Part III

## Measurement and Assessment of Sustainable Innovation

### **Call for More Effective Sustainability Goals and Measurement**

For decades, scientists have been warning that human actions are putting the planet's future at risk. The effects of a sick planet can already be seen: from social, economic and climate stability to energy, food and water security—all increasingly suffering from environmental degradation and climate change.

In 2016, the interdependence between social, economic and environmental agendas was recognized at the highest levels through the defining of the new set of Sustainable Development Goals, which means a transition to an approach that decouples human and economic development from environmental degradation. The speed and scale of this transition is essential, and enterprises are key actors if the transition is to succeed.

For enterprises, transition will require effective sustainable development strategies for radical and systemic innovations. It is about developing new products, processes, services and technologies that enable the economic development and well-being of peoples and institutions while respecting the planet's natural resources and regenerative capacity.

However, innovations can only happen if companies set goals and measure their performance as seriously as has so far been done for economic performance. Robust monitoring and assessment planning and instruments that can tell where companies are with regard to their sustainability goals, where they should be headed and what their options are, are needed.

As the need for sustainability among various stakeholders of companies is growing, innovating for sustainability can be expected to grow in importance from the standpoints of organizational legitimacy, reputation and performance. Thus, companies that are forerunners in radical innovations for sustainability may have a competitive advantage. In time, all companies will be forced to turn their business models towards sustainability as that is the only way our planet can survive.

Liisa Rohweder, Dr. (Sustainable development), Secretary General, WWF Finland