

# Summary of Proceedings

## Meeting of EDC's Advisory Council on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

**Tuesday May 2, 2017**

**EDC Head Office**

**Ottawa, Ontario**

**Theme - "Meeting Expectations for Transparency"**

Twice per year, Export Development Canada (EDC) brings together its Advisory Council on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The Council is comprised of leaders from business, civil society and academia to share insights with EDC's executive management, and to serve as a sounding board for EDC's own CSR journey.

The following is a summary of the proceedings of the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The list of participants appears at the end of this summary. Terms of reference and members' biographies can be found on [edc.ca/csr](http://edc.ca/csr).

This meeting of the CSR Advisory Council was broken into three different sessions. In two sessions experts and stakeholders from outside EDC were invited to join targeted discussions; one on climate change, and one on transparency and disclosure. The goal was to encourage a dialogue with key stakeholders, develop an understanding about what is material to people impacted by EDC's business, and learn about some of the areas where EDC can further develop its practices. The third session was a roundtable discussion of the Council about trends in they are seeing, and updates about EDC including the new Target Operating Model(TOM).

After the sessions were complete Members of the Council and staff provided feedback on the whole meeting. Generally the feedback was that the sessions were very effective at highlighting potential areas of focus and opportunities, inviting external groups to the discussion added value and depth. In the future, questions and action items will be developed in advance to allow for a more targeted discussion.



Below is a summary of the discussions.

### **Summary of roundtable discussion (Council Members and Staff)**

Members of the Advisory Council discussed trends they are seeing in business and globally. Concerns were raised about the new leadership in the US and the impact it can have on Canadian businesses in a number of different respects. More immediate concerns were the impact of NAFTA negotiations; the trend of “alternative facts” and the potential this has to undermine the case for climate change reduction initiatives; competitiveness for Canadian companies in the US and access to our key trading partner. It was noted that in many cases business has been operating separate to policy, and many initiatives linked to sustainability and CSR are being driven by business demands not government. Climate change continues to be an important part of the discussion, and an area where EDC can play a role in supporting Canada’s goals. For Canadian business climate change reduction efforts should be seen as an opportunity and not as a cost burden. Carbon-competitiveness is something more Canadian businesses are considering in their long-term plans, even those in high carbon emitting industries.

Many council members expressed the view that more visible standards on human rights impact assessments is going to be expected of organizations. A clear and measurable human rights policy is something that will be expected, and that companies will be held accountable for.

### **CSR as a Differentiator**

Key points of the CSR as a differentiator discussion were around how can link to the TOM by bringing knowledge solutions, and anticipating the needs of Canadian business. Comments were that CSR as a differentiator should focus on organizational purpose, as well as finding a balance between employee engagement, communication and CSR policy. Consideration needs to be made for the policies of the DFI, and what effect this will have on EDC’s practices in transactional CSR and disclosure.



## **Stakeholder roundtable discussion: Transparency and Disclosure**

### **External attendees:**

**Claire Woodside** – Director, Publish What You Pay Canada;

**Pascal Paradis** – Executive Director, Avocats sans frontières;

**Brent Bergeron** – Executive Vice-President, Corporate Affairs and Sustainability, GoldCorp;

**Duane McMullen** – Director General, Trade Commissioner Service;

**Iain Christie** – Canadian Aerospace Industries Association

The discussion was about transparency, where EDC is today, and where it needs to go in providing transparency to its stakeholders. Increased disclosure and transparency is a trend which is continuing to grow in business around the world. This goes beyond financial transparency, but also transparency about process and standards.

Comments around the table were that EDC has an opportunity to be a leader in this space but right now has a lot of work to do in the way it discloses transactions and responds to stakeholder requests.

From the external business representative in the room there was a consensus that transparency and disclosure can be a competitive advantage as it can help support long-term sustainability.

Feedback for EDC was centered around updating the disclosure policy to be clearer, as well as providing more information about due diligence around corporate loans. There also needs to be more transparency with stakeholders about how EDC investigates when a company is accused of acting improperly. The view was that EDC's reputation conveys Canada's reputation. To move the needle in CSR EDC needs to be more transparent in its approach.

### **Close of meeting**

In conformity with management practice at EDC, members were asked to offer feedback on the quality of the meeting. Perspectives were favourable with members expressing a preference for such in-depth discussions on a single topic. Areas for improvement noted the need to conclude discussions with a path forward, and encouragement to bring more critical voices to the discussion to contribute to 'creative conflict'.

The next meeting will be held November 03, 2017.



## **Participants**

### **From the CSR Advisory Council**

**Gordon Lambert**, Suncor Sustainability Executive in Residence, Ivey School of Business, Western University

**Marie Lucie Morin**, Corporate Director

**Jean-Louis Roy**, President, Partenariat International

**Ed Waitzer**, Partner, Stikeman Elliott LLP

**Christa Wessel**, Senior Advisor, The Change Alliance

**David Wheeler**, President and Vice-Chancellor, Cape Breton University

### **Absent**

**Pablo de la Flor**, Vice-President, Corporate Affairs, Banco Crédito de Perú

**David Runnalls**, Senior Fellow, Sustainable Prosperity

### **From Export Development Canada (EDC)**

**Herbert M. Clarke**, Member, Board of Directors

**Benoit Daignault**, President & CEO, and Council Chair

**Catherine Decarie**, Senior Vice-President, Corporate Affairs & Secretary

**Stuart Bergman**, Director

**Rob Fosco**, Vice-President, Corporate Social Responsibility

**David Bhamjee**, Vice-President Corporate Strategy

**Caroline Elie**, Senior Advisor, CSR

### **Guest Speakers**

**Brent Bergeron** – Executive Vice-President, Corporate Affairs and Sustainability, GoldCorp

**Iain Christie**, Executive Vice-President, Aerospace Industries Association of Canada (AIAC)

**Duane McMullen**, Director General, Trade Operations, Global Affairs Canada

**Pascal Paradis**, Executive Director, Avocats Sans Frontières Canada

**Claire Woodside**, Director, Publish What You Pay (PWYP) Canada