

INFORMATION ACTION BRIEF

A RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UN SDG 12 responsible production & consumption*

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



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ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION WITHIN AN INFORMATION CONTEXT

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

Drive the responsible production and consumption of information resources. Mobilize necessary information for the sustainable consumption and production in an economic system.

* <https://sdgs.un.org/>

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Information professionals play a critical role in providing stakeholders with information to engage in sustainable consumption and production. They also need to be responsible consumers and producers of information themselves. For example, increasing the use of digital materials while reducing print is a more responsible practice. Further, the efficient management of shared natural resources could be better managed with information sources and systems to track the production of greenhouse gases, energy usage, and increase the use of services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources. In a pandemic, disaster or emergency, information is vital to understanding the conditions of the crisis, survival and recovery, and to ensure the responsible production, distribution and consumption of recovery supplies. Documenting and preserving the practice of local production safeguards traditions and practices for future generations.

HOW IS THIS RELATED TO INFORMATION?

Production and consumption unchecked of any goods, including information, can result in damaging the environment, inequities in society, and consumerism in culture. There are many areas in the information realm that need attention, and here we highlight three select areas with specific resources.

Policy Formulation: Information in policy formulation and implementation gives opportunity to apply individual knowledge to collective action. It provides a pathway to resist and mitigate the negative social, cultural, economic, and environmental hazards of overproduction and over consumption of information products. Information policies are the impetus to guide responsible behaviors and actions. To learn about developing and implementing green policies, from four country cases, see: "Green Industrial Policy: Concept, Policies, Country Experiences" [i]

[i] <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/green-industrial-policy-concept-policies-country-experiences>



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“THE SITUATION THE EARTH IS IN TODAY HAS BEEN CREATED BY UNMINDFUL PRODUCTION AND UNMINDFUL CONSUMPTION. WE CONSUME TO FORGET OUR WORRIES AND OUR ANXIETIES. TRANQUILISING OURSELVES WITH OVER-CONSUMPTION IS NOT THE WAY.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainability/environment-zen-buddhism-sustainability>

Supply Chain Information Management: Information generates movements of resistance to political abuse and corporate mismanagement that promote imbalanced production and consumption within unchecked systems and structures in modern society. Information inspires sustainability, local empowerment, and producer-consumer confidence. As a place to start, read about “Information Management in the Supply Chain”. [ii] For a specific example, see the Field to Market Fieldprint Analysis, a free, online tool, which helps growers analyze management information by graphically representing the sustainability performance of their specific operation. [iii] Farmers learn how their management decisions impact natural resources and operational efficiency.

Socially Responsible Marketing: Marketing experts can effectively communicate information to influence consumers' decisions in identifying valuable directions for sustainable consumption marketing. For example, it is easier to leverage marketing through product policy actions than to develop centralized sustainable consumption marketing that goes against product marketing from the producers' perspective. The use of sustainable consumption awareness-raising information can go hand-in-hand with the provision of infrastructure and proper price incentives. Information tools like eco-labeling also lead to development of methods for quantifying impacts, allowing investigation of benchmarks, identifying areas for improvement potential, preparing the ground for mandatory measures, and increasing their political acceptability. To explore the role of information, see the “7 Examples of Awesome Social Responsibility Marketing.” [iv]

[ii] https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137359667_7

[iii] <https://fieldtomarket.org/our-programs/leading-with-science/fieldprint-platform/>

[iv] <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/social-responsibility-marketing-examples>



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WHAT CAN I (OR THE PROFESSION) DO?

Actions for social transformation in Practice[P], Service/community engagement[S], Education[E] and Research[R]

- 1.[P, S, E, R] Promote sustainable production and consumption of information and ICTs.
- 2.[P, R] Engage in responsible information creation, organization, management, reporting and dissemination, and consumption across organizational settings.
- 3.[E] Teach responsible strategies to further the role of information in a sustainable society.
- 4.[R] Gather evidence in assessment and evaluation of current production and consumption practices in industry and critically propose positive changes.
- 5.[E, R] Know your rights and responsibilities - learn about and teach local and international laws on information production and consumption.
- 6.[P, S, R] Utilize and/or compile and develop information repositories of best practices of responsible behaviors across organizations and institutions.
- 7.[P, S, E] Promote sharing of information to develop sustainable production and consumption in everyday life experiences.
- 8.[S, E] Generate community awareness programs to mobilize community action against irresponsible production and consumption.
- 9.[P, S, R] Design information products, ICTs and services that further a sustainable and responsive physical and cultural environment.
- 10.[P, S, E] Develop media literacy and digital literacy skills in the training of information professionals to educate younger generations in responsible consumption and production.

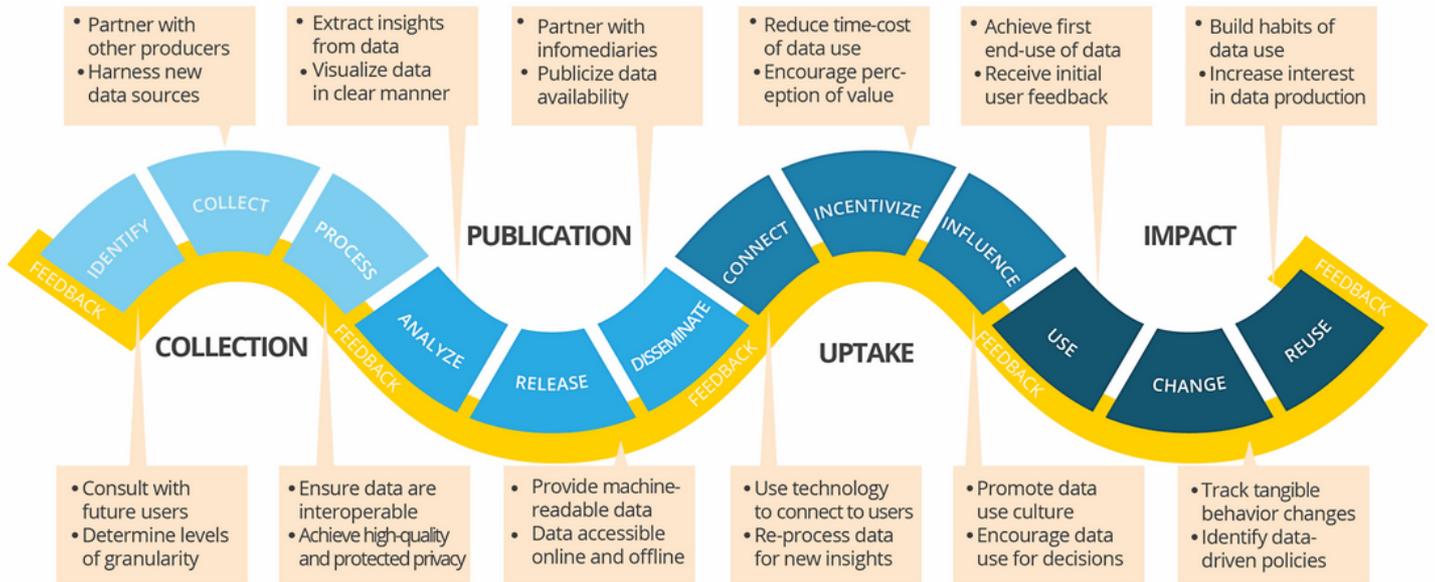
SUMMARY

Information plays a role in helping society be responsible consumers and producers. The information community also needs to be responsible consumers and producers of information themselves. Information actions that can advance sustainability include developing data tracking systems in the producer-consumer cycle, compiling data for awareness campaigns and green services, using ICTs on renewable energy, advocating for the ethical production of information goods and technologies, and more.

RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION INFOGRAPHIC



DATA VALUE CHAIN



GAPS IN THE INDUSTRY

THE QUESTIONS THAT REMAIN ON THE MINDS OF RETAIL AND CONSUMER GOODS EXECUTIVES

DIGITAL WORLD

- 1 How can businesses simplify consumers' daily lives through **new technology**?
- 2 How can companies deal with **data transparency** better?
- 3 How does the digital world impact **existing regulations**?

2 Transform product identification and information to improve supply chain transparency



- Value & Impact**
- Decrease waste in the supply chain
 - More accurate data for everyone

SOURCES

Graphics

1. <https://opendatawatch.com/publications/the-data-value-chain-moving-from-production-to-impact/>
2. <https://www.theconsumergoodsforum.com/infographics/the-future-value-chain-infographic/>