

Energy Sustainability Interest Group 2009



The Energy Sustainability Interest Group provides a venue for companies to craft business solutions to sustainable energy challenges.

The concept of sustainability was born out of the idea that economic development and environmental protection are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In 1987, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development coined an often-cited definition of sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future. Since then, public and private organizations have sought practical applications of sustainability and wrestled with putting the concept into practice.

The availability of electricity is a basic input to a sustainable society, but the electric sector faces unique challenges in balancing the social benefits of providing reliable electricity with environmental impact. In addition, many companies, including those in the electric sector, are finding new ways to create sustainable value. This is accomplished by finding and focusing on activities that provide a combination of shareholder value and stakeholder value. Over the long-term, the electric industry has a critical role to play in creating a sustainable energy future by developing and demonstrating many of the technologies and practices to support such a future. But the industry also benefits by engaging in discussions and sharing information about what sustainability means to the industry and developing common strategies to achieve that goal.

The Energy Sustainability Interest Group will bring companies together to:

- Create a forum for a sustainable energy future
- Discover strategic value in sustainable business practices
- Exchange best practices
- Solve sustainable energy challenges collaboratively

Value

In 2008, EPRI formed the Energy Sustainability Interest Group with 18 members participating. The companies represented a good cross section of the industry. During this first year, the group participated in 2 workshops, established a collaborative website and held 8 webinars.

The principal finding from this experience was the great interest in maintaining active links between companies. Participants agreed there is a clear benefit to discussing common sustainability challenges, learning from one another's experiences, and working together to craft business solutions to sustainability challenges. This group also provides the industry with opportunities to work on a common, industry-wide definition of sustainability and a mechanism for reshaping that definition as the concept evolves over time.

The Energy Sustainability Interest Group's continuing purpose is to create business value and to drive innovation, rather than to pursue environmental or social targets for their own sake.

Drivers and Trends

Internal and external pressures and the global marketplace are leading companies to start viewing the future through a sustainability lens. Financial markets are increasingly using the measure of sustainability as a factor in valuing a company. Being a sustainable company offers competitive advantages

with customers and employees. Acting sustainably not only improves relationships with all stakeholders, but can also create new business opportunities.

Project Summary

The topics to be addressed in the interest group and the priority of the work will be guided by the interest group members. EPRI will lead and organize interest group meetings, conference calls, webcasts, and other means of communication.

In 2008, participants identified several areas where immediate benefit could be obtained by working together and sharing information. These topics included:

- Defining what energy companies are doing to be sustainable
- Understanding the impact of intangible value for energy companies
- Exploring processes and metrics being used by energy companies
- Working together to improve supply chain sustainability
- Engaging with companies that may be important players in the energy systems of the future
- Identifying tools for life cycle analysis
- Sharing information on sustainability reporting
- Developing technology solutions
- Understanding the financial/investment criteria for sustainability screening
- Exploring innovative approaches companies have tried and analyze the resulting impact

Deliverables

Interest group members will be invited to share information on their company's sustainability program irrespective of the program's development status. They will have the opportunity to interface with EPRI and each other through a series of workshops in order to progress to the next sustainability level appropriate to their organization. Additionally, an interactive website is available to interest

group members. This website allows communication within the interest group and serves as an information repository for best practices, reference materials, webinar recordings and other information that will be valuable as electric companies strive to create sustainable value.

Price of Project

The price for interest group membership is \$10,000 per company per year. Any company that funds at least one EPRI membership program may use tailored collaboration funds for up to 50% of the price of annual participation.

Project Status and Schedule

Eight webcasts addressing the topics identified as high priority by the group were offered and recorded for on-going use by the group. A workshop was held in October 2008 discussing "the triple bottom line"—economic, social, and environmental success—and included information on sustainability indices, reports about sustainability measures and practices at participating companies. A database of sustainability metrics and goals has been initiated and will continue to be updated. The next workshop is scheduled for April 2009 and another is planned for the fall. Additional webcasts will be scheduled to allow interested members to discuss sustainability progress and strategies at their respective companies.

Who Should Participate

Any company with an interest in a sustainable energy future can join this interest group.

Contact Information

For more information, contact the EPRI Customer Assistance Center at 800.313.3774 (askepri@epri.com).

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