

## Publication

## An Empirical Exploration, Typology, and Definition of Corporate Sustainability

**JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)****ID** 3827221**Author(s)** Bergman, Manfred Max; Bergman, Zinette; Berger, Lena**Author(s) at UniBasel** [Bergman, Zinette](#) ; [Bergman, Manfred Max](#) ; [Berger, Lena](#) ;**Year** 2017**Title** An Empirical Exploration, Typology, and Definition of Corporate Sustainability**Journal** Sustainability**Volume** 9**Number** 5**Pages / Article-Number** 753**Keywords** corporate responsibility, business ethics, globalization, culture, business and society, sustainability, UN SDGs, Agenda 2030**Mesh terms** Science & TechnologyLife Sciences & BiomedicineGreen & Sustainable Science & TechnologyEnvironmental SciencesEnvironmental StudiesScience & Technology - Other TopicsEnvironmental Sciences & Ecology

The relationship between business and society is evolving. On the one hand, social, environmental, and long-term economic issues subsumed under the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are inspiring intergovernmental organizations, governments, NGOs, NPOs, foundations, and civic society to legislate and regulate corporate behavior toward a greater concern for the wellbeing of groups, regions, or entire societies. On the other, a growing trend toward protectionism, nationalism, and populism may be the consequence or expression of a dissatisfaction with the perceived dissociation of the private sector from society. As a form of self-regulation, corporate responsibility deals with the complex responsibilities businesses have toward society. However, it tends to be hampered by an emphasis on theology and philosophy-based business ethics, which are difficult to integrate into day-to-day business operations or to translate between national or corporate cultures. In this article, we argue that corporate sustainability could be a more useful concept to help improve on how government, the private sector, and academia understand the links between business and society, and how to translate the interdependence between business and society from one culture to another. For this purpose, we empirically analyzed the relevant academic literature on corporate sustainability, using Content Configuration Analysis. Our analyses revealed three conceptual types and nine subtypes of corporate sustainability. Based on their assessment, we suggest conceptual preferences and a definition of corporate sustainability, which fulfil criteria that may render the concept more useful to global political and socioeconomic negotiations among stakeholder groups for the long-term benefit of business and society.

**Publisher** MDPI**ISSN/ISBN** 2071-1050**URL** <https://doi.org/10.3390/su9050753>**edoc-URL** <http://edoc.unibas.ch/55083/>**Full Text on edoc** No;**Digital Object Identifier DOI** 10.3390/su9050753**ISI-Number** 000404127800078**Document type (ISI)** Article