



A New Model for Private Sector Engagement on Sustainability: the ICLEI Green Business Challenge

Sala B, Rio State Pavillion, Athletes Park



18 June 2012, 18:00 – 19:00

Rationale

It is clear that the private sector has a critical role to play in the transition to a green economy. But it is often unclear how local government's can best engage the private sector in ways that support the wider goals of sustainability. Getting the model right can enable a dramatic reduction of environmental impacts – from carbon to waste to water; and a dramatic increase in energy efficiency, recycling, and greener purchasing. One model that is unfolding in the United States is the ICLEI Green Business Challenge (GBC). Originally launched by ICLEI and the City of Chicago as part of the Chicago Climate Action Plan, the Challenge has helped Chicago businesses save over 124 million kilowatt hours of electricity, and lowered Chicago's carbon footprint by over 85,000 metric tons. Over 200 businesses have participated so far in Chicago, and now 10 other cities, including Austin, Houston and San Diego are rolling out their own Green Business Challenges across the US.

This session in the ICLEI Global Town Hall will allow local government leaders to:

- Understand the key elements of the Green Business Challenge model
- Learn best practices from successful Green Business Challenges in the US
- Understand the program support tools available from ICLEI USA
- Determine the requirements for successful roll out of a GBC in your local government
- Gain insight on how to attract private sector support to enable your own Green Business Challenge

Speakers

- **Karen Weigert, Chief Sustainability Officer, City of Chicago, USA**

Karen Weigert serves as Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Chicago. She was appointed in 2011. As Chief Sustainability Officer Karen works to guide the City's sustainability strategy and implementation, bringing innovative, practical solutions throughout the work of the City.

Prior to her appointment Karen served as Senior Vice President of ShoreBank (later Urban Partnership Bank) where she built a national consumer group that generated deposits to support environmental sustainability



and community development in low to moderate income urban neighborhoods. Before her work in community banking Karen was a strategy consultant at McKinsey where she served clients on topics including transportation, finance, energy and land use. Karen began her career as an investment banker at Goldman Sachs and later served as an appointee in the Clinton administration focused on global environmental issues and agriculture.

Karen is a producer and writer for the documentary film Carbon Nation which is focused on solutions to climate change. She is also a former board member of CNT, Foresight Design Initiative and Earth School Educational Foundation.

Karen graduated from the University of Notre Dame (Phi Beta Kappa) and Harvard Business School.

- **Michael Schmitz, Executive Director, ICLEI USA**

Michael is a recognized leader in the sustainability and climate change field, he has consistently achieved success through building strong and dynamic teams. Michael is an attorney and non-profit leader with business experience who brings to the job over two decades of experience in policy at the federal, state, and local levels. Before joining ICLEI, Michael was Principal of Go Forward Consulting specializing in strategic research, analysis and policy development. In this capacity he served as Executive Director of CLEEN, a statewide coalition of environmental and public health organizations advocating for the protection of California's clean water and environmental health.

Prior to founding the firm in 2003, he was a civil rights attorney and senior legislative counsel for the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus focusing on environmental, trade, and economic development policies.

He holds a bachelor's and master's degree from Stanford, a law degree from UC Hastings in San Francisco, and a master's degree in Urban Planning from UCLA.

- **Yalmaz Siddiqui, Senior Director of Environmental Strategy, Office Depot.**

Yalmaz Siddiqui, is Office Depot's Senior Director of Environmental Strategy. He is responsible for setting strategy, defining metrics, and driving integration of a wide range of environmental programs into the global organization. Office Depot's industry-leading approach spans the entire company - from supply chain to operations to sales - and can be summarized in a global commitment to buy greener, be greener and sell greener. In 2011, the results of this approach were recognized in Newsweek Magazine's Annual Green Rankings in which Office Depot was ranked #1 greenest large retailer in America, and #8 greenest large company overall.

Yalmaz holds a Master of Philosophy in Environment & Development from Cambridge University in England where his thesis focused on Industrial Ecology, Life Cycle Analysis and Bio-mimicry. He also has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree in Marketing & International Business from McGill University in Canada. He is currently Co-Chair of the Green Products Roundtable (a multi-stakeholder group working on defining 'green products' for institutional purchasers); a member of NACEPT (the National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy & Technology - a board that provides independent advice to the EPA Administrator) and was the only Private Sector recipient of the Responsible Purchasing Network's 2009 Responsible Purchaser of the Year Award.

For additional information about the session please contact globaltownhall@iclei.org.

