

Participation in Initiatives

United Nations Global Compact

The United Nations Global Compact is a set of voluntary action principles for corporations proposed by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland in January 1999. He proposed a means to harness the creative powers of the private sector to fulfill the wishes of underprivileged people and meet the needs of future generations. It is neither a regulatory means nor a legally binding code of conduct, but rather a strategic policy initiative that encourages corporations to come together as global citizens to solve the various problems that could arise as a result of economic globalization. Participating corporations are asked to support and put into practice ten universally-accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption. As of July 2019, over 13,600 corporations, labor unions, and civil society organizations from around the world are participating in the UN Global Compact.

Mitsui & Co. signed and pledged its support for the UN Global Compact in October 2004, and has been participating as a member of the Global Compact Network Japan (GCNJ), complying with the principles as part of its own corporate guidelines. Since then, Mitsui has been conducting a companywide survey every other year in order to check compliance with the UN Global Compact principles, and is working to comply with and practice the principles, as well as to pursue SDGs on a global group basis.



Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact

Human Rights

1. Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
2. make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labor

3. Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
4. the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor;
5. the effective abolition of child labor; and
6. the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

7. Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
8. undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
9. encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Anti-corruption

10. Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a clear statement of global priorities and visions that need to be realized so that poverty can be eliminated and all people can enjoy dignity and equality of opportunity, with consideration given to balancing sustainable growth and the limits of the Earth.

As a general trading company, Mitsui conducts a diverse range of business across nations and regions. We believe that this allows us to make a wide-ranging contribution to the achievement of all the 17 goals set out under the SDGs. We will continue to raise awareness of the SDGs on a global group basis, to reflect the SDGs in our business strategies, and to ensure that our business activities are constantly guided by a determination to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

In this report, we also explain the themes set out under Mitsui's Materiality and SDGs, and how we have linked these to the SDGs to focus our efforts on tackling the SDGs' 17 goals and 169 targets, while introducing some of the specific activities that we have implemented.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Mitsui SASUGAKU: Hosting of a sustainability workshop for increasing awareness of the SDGs – “Thinking about Business in 2030”

In December 2018, we hosted a workshop using the workshop-style methods used in “SASUGAKU”** entitled “Mitsui SASUGAKU – Thinking about Business in 2030,” with the aim of increasing the understanding of the SDGs.

There were 35 participants on the day of the workshop, mostly Sustainability Promotion Officers. Sustainability Promotion Officers assigned to each organizational unit are responsible for supporting the implementation of sustainability management through our business activities. The workshop was conducted, focusing on risks and opportunities for Mitsui’s business, and on the creation of new value through business. In doing so, the “SASUGAKU Compass for Creating the Future” and “Future Chronology,” which are the main teaching materials of the SASUGAKU, social issues to be solved by 2030 as stated in the SDGs, and the “Future Forecasting Materials,” created based on disclosure data were referred. Each group chose one of three themes—water, healthcare/wellness, and mobility—and explored business ideas by linking various elements from the aforementioned materials. The workshop made participants realize that all of the ideas reflected the linkage between the SDGs and Mitsui’s Materiality.

We will continue to work toward deepening our understanding of the SDGs, and will engage in initiatives leading to solving many of the challenges that society will face through our business activities.

* SASUGAKU (meaning “Sustainability Learning”) was designed with the goal of developing recognition among people that the many challenges facing the society in which we live are issues that affect us all directly, and of finding the best ways of overcoming these challenges. Since 2014, Mitsui has offered new learning opportunities for upper-grade elementary school children, who will create the future, in the form of the Mitsui “SASUGAKU” Academy.



TCFD (Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures)

In December 2018, Mitsui declared its support for the TCFD (Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures) recommendations, which aim to facilitate companies to recognize financial impacts arising from the risks and opportunities associated with climate change and to disclose such climate-related information.

World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum is an independent international organization that engages leaders from the worlds of business, politics, academia, and other sectors of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas in the spirit of global citizenship, through cooperation between the public and private sectors, for the improvement of the world situation.

As a partner company, Mitsui attends the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland every January, as well as the regional meetings.

Japan Business Federation (Keidanren): Committee on Corporate Behavior & Social Responsibility, Committee on Gender Diversity, Committee on Environment and Safety, Committee on Nature Conservation

Mitsui is a member of Keidanren’s Committee on Responsible Business Conduct & SDGs Promotion, which works to ensure ethical behavior by businesses, promote CSR, and expand and encourage social contribution activities by businesses and businesspeople, including support for disaster recovery efforts. We are also a member company of the Committee on Gender Diversity, which implements the Action Plan on Women’s Active Participation in the Workforce, urges employers to promote women to managerial and executive positions, and promotes initiatives for realizing a society in which a diverse range of human resources, including LGBT people, are able to take on active roles.

In addition, we are member of the Committee on Environment and Safety, which works toward the implementation of environmental policies designed to be compatible with economic activities, including the promotion of voluntary action plans and countermeasures relating to global warming, waste, recycling, and environmental risks. We also joined in the Task Force on Business and Human Rights and engaged in activities directed towards realizing a sustainable society (the aim of said Keidanren Committee) through participation. Moreover, since 2012, a Mitsui employee has been seconded to Keidanren’s Committee on Nature Conservation, a committee dedicated to conserving biodiversity and protecting the natural environment, to a) support nature conservation activities of NGOs, b) promote interchange between corporations and NGOs, and c) encourage corporations to act towards nature conservation and biodiversity.

Japan Foreign Trade Council: Global Environment Committee, CSR Study Committee

As a member of the Global Environment Committee of the Japan Foreign Trade Council Inc., Mitsui monitors energy use for all trading companies and promotes reduce/reuse/recycle (“3R”) activities. We also gather information about new energy technology through our business activities, and contribute to the development of the trading company sector’s voluntary action plan for environmental initiatives for a low-carbon, recycling-oriented society.

Mitsui also engages in activities as a member of the Japan Foreign Trade Council’s CSR Study Committee, which studies CSR-related issues and conducts surveys and research about trends in Japan and overseas.

Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC)

As a member of the Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC), which was established by Keidanren, Mitsui engages in activities that help Japanese companies to be accepted as good corporate citizens by the countries and regions in which they conduct business, in accordance with the purpose of CBCC. Mitsui works to ascertain the views of various stakeholders, including overseas CSR-related organizations, by participating in presentations, seminars and business dialogue on CSR-related themes.

Japan Forum of Business and Society (JFBS)

As a member of the Japan Forum of Business and Society (JFBS), Mitsui is engaged in connecting theory and practice in the business world concerning issues relating to sustainable growth, which affect the relationship between businesses and society, through wide-ranging collaboration and cooperation with academia, industry, government, labor, and NPOs/NGOs. We are engaged in academic research and discussions on corporate governance, environmental management, social contribution, labor, human rights and other aspects, as well as in human resources development that embodies sustainability education.

In a panel discussion under the theme of “communications with consumers” during the JFBS Annual Conference in August 2018, a Mitsui representative spoke about our sustainability initiatives and the role of trading companies in the achievement of value chain sustainability.

Japan Business and Biodiversity Partnership

The Japan Business and Biodiversity Partnership was established through a collaborative initiative by Keidanren, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Keizai Doyukai (Japan Association of Corporate Executives) with the aim of promoting private-sector initiatives on biodiversity. As a member company, Mitsui promotes biodiversity conservation initiatives in partnership with NPOs, NGOs, research institutions, and other related entities in Japan and overseas. Furthermore, Mitsui contributes to conservation of biodiversity in its supply chains by promoting a sound resource-cycle policy in its business management focusing on the lifecycles of products and services.

Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®)

The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) is an international non-profit organization that promotes environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world’s forests.

Mitsui has obtained FSC® forest management (FM) certification at all 74 of its forests, which in total approximately 44,000 hectares, while Mitsui Bussan Forest Co., Ltd., a Mitsui subsidiary, has obtained Chain of Custody (CoC) certification for the processing and distribution of cut lumber (FSC®-C031328). As the biggest supplier of Japanese-grown lumber with FSC® certification, Mitsui is helping to promote the FSC® in Japan and to discuss and draft the Japanese version of principles, standards, and risk assessments. Mitsui has obtained FSC® certification for its forest resources business as well, and promotes responsible management of forest resources.

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is a non-profit organization established to promote the sustainable production and utilization of palm oil through the conservation of tropical rain forests and biodiversity. Mitsui supports the RSPO’s philosophy of contributing to sustainability through industry, and has been collaborating on various business-based initiatives since joining the organization in 2008.