



CSR Asia Summit 2014

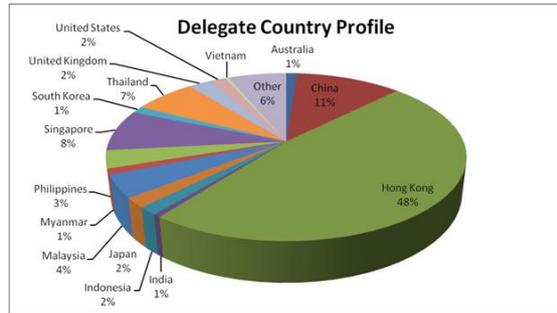
10 years of responsible business solutions

16 - 17 September 2014
Kowloon Shangri-La | Hong Kong

10 years of responsible business solutions - predictions for the upcoming 10: CSR Asia Summit 2014

The 10th Anniversary CSR Asia Summit went ahead successfully last week despite a typhoon whirling through Hong Kong threatening to disrupt proceedings. Attendees were undeterred, 2014 marked the largest Summit so far with 528 delegates attending from 31 countries.

The theme of the Summit this year centred around 10 years of responsible business solutions. Together speakers and attendees debated and discussed the challenges and milestones of the last decade and the lessons learnt. Also discussed were predictions for the next decade. Dr. Richard Welford, Chairman of CSR Asia highlighted two key regional issues: the rise in the number and severity of natural disasters as well as human rights abuses.



“As climate change kicks in, we're going to see more storm-related and flood-related disasters,” said Dr. Welford. “Another hot topic is human rights, particularly, modern day slavery, and deep down the supply chain of many companies, there are some abusive labour practices so it's not good enough to audit the first factory tier. We need to go beyond that. ”

Another widely discussed topic was mandatory sustainability reporting which is set to become the norm for listed companies around the region. The message from Dr. Richard Welford was that we need to ‘think smart’ when it comes to disclosure. “It’s not enough for companies to simply hand over a hundred page document which is unlikely to be read. With mandatory disclosure likely to be introduced and stakeholders demanding more visibility, we need to think innovatively about how we communicate our message.”

The issue of reporting and disclosure was prevalent during the conference, and the Summit also marked the launch of a the Channel NewsAsia Sustainability Ranking, which has been developed by partners CSR Asia, Channel NewsAsia and Sustainalytics. As the first of its kind in Asia, the ranking identifies leading firms in corporate sustainability across 10 key Asian economies. The index lists the top 100 companies with the highest sustainability performance. It also highlights the overall top 20 companies, and the top 3 businesses per economy. You can see the [full ranking here](#).

The Channel NewsAsia Sustainability Ranking is a celebration of companies ‘getting it right’ and the Summit highlighted various other examples of far sighted companies that have demonstrated positive economic, environmental and social impact through their actions. The Coca-Cola foundation said that for the second half of this decade it aims to empower 5 million women, achieve 100% water replenishment and pursue energy balance for well-being. From 2015 Swire Pacific will integrate CSR with their core business and consolidate CSR implementation in business process, and Fuji Xerox are moving towards net zero impact on the environment.



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Over the two-day event many key topics were discussed including inclusive business, measuring impact, climate change, human rights, supply chains and poverty. Debate also centered on creating collaborative partnerships. To help facilitate and encourage the fostering of new partnerships, the Summit hosted the NGO marketplace which was heralded a success by all parties. It created a space for business and NGO's and foundations to collaborate and engage.

This engagement - of all in attendance was highlighted as one of the key successes of the Summit this year. Participants asked controversial and thought provoking questions, and speakers and delegates actively tried to problem solve together. Everyone agreed there is still a lot to learn if we are to tackle the global challenges that remain. A clear call-to-action coming from many of this year's Summit delegates was that responsible business practice shouldn't be simply an add-on, it should be integrated at the very core of business strategy. With the pace of change set to accelerate in the CSR space over the next decade businesses need to be prepared to think innovatively and creatively about how they can make solutions scalable.

The CSR Asia Summit will be returning next year, taking place on 7th and 8th October in Kuala Lumpur. Keep tuned for updates!

