

Action over Noise: A Collective Guide For Sustainable Procurement

Leveraging sustainability as a driver of smart business strategy, resilience, and impact.

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Introduction

World Sustainable Procurement Day 2026

[World Sustainable Procurement Day \(WSPD\)](#), hosted annually by the Sustainable Procurement Pledge (SPP), is the largest global gathering of the procurement community dedicated to embedding sustainability into supply chains. More than an event, it is a worldwide movement, created by procurement, for procurement, breaking down silos and uniting our professionals across regions, topics and industries to share what works, challenge the status quo, and accelerate collective progress.

Now in its fifth year, WSPD continues to offer a unique, safe, non-commercial space and foster bold conversations, practical learning, and meaningful connections. It is both a moment of reflection, on the progress and lessons of the past year, and a catalyst for what lies ahead, with a shared commitment to harness the power of procurement to drive systemic change at scale and speed.

On 25–26 March 2026, over 1,000 participants and 95+ speakers came together across 26 diverse and impactful sessions, united by one ambition: to make sustainable procurement the default.

The Era of Execution

We are operating in a rapidly changing, increasingly complex world - now described as a BANI environment: brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible. Amid this uncertainty, the power of procurement is undeniable. Positioned at the intersection of organisations and supply chains, it is a strategic lever for resilience, sustainability, and real impact.

The question is not why, but how. This is the era of execution.

Procurement does not wait for perfect data or regulatory certainty before engaging supply chains. Across every conversation at WSPD 2026, the message was clear: not perfect action, not polished solutions, but bold, practical, incremental steps that move us forward today. This is the spirit behind this year's rallying cry: #ActionOverNoise. Procurement has stepped into its power and is working collaboratively to drive change at scale.

Convergence across sustainability topics

This paper reflects the SPP procurement community growing in maturity, confidence, and capability. As expertise deepens, so too does the conversation.

While still anchored in our core tracks of Planet, People, and Profession, this year we brought Convergence into the agenda to reflect how the community is already working to drive impact. It recognises that the most pressing challenges do not sit neatly within one theme, but at the intersection of all three. Climate cannot be addressed without people, and supply chains cannot be transformed without transforming procurement itself.

At the same time, strong themes have clearly emerged across the discussions, including demonstrating the commercial ROI of sustainability, strengthening collaboration across functions and supply chain partners, and accelerating capability through AI and emerging technologies.

Your Guide to Getting it Done

This paper, created in partnership with Equipoise, brings together key takeaways from 24 hours of exchange - including insights, lived experiences, practical tools, and collective wisdom from across the global procurement community.

Inside, you will find session summaries organised by thematic track, alongside curated resources and the "From Insight to Action" roadmaps, turning key shifts into clear, practical steps. Use this White Paper in the way that works best for you - as a learning companion, a conversation starter, a practical guide, or a moment to reflect and plan your next steps.

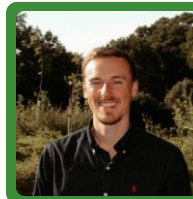
This is just one moment in a much bigger, ongoing conversation. The real work continues year-round within the SPP community - a free, open space where ideas are shared and turned into action. If something here resonates, connect with peers and help shape what comes next. [Join the SPP community](#) and be part of the movement driving sustainable procurement forward.

Hello from SPP & Equipoise



Emilie Doms

Community Knowledge
& Empowerment, SPP



Luke Abbott

Co-Founder & CEO, Equipoise
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One of the greatest privileges of my role at SPP is witnessing the honesty and courage of procurement professionals around the world. You share your challenges openly. You share your successes generously. And you show, again and again, that even in complex environments, you are committed to moving things forward.

During the WSPD 2026 opening, Anne-Claire Howard from UNOPS said: "We are one of the few functions that really connect strategy to reality... we have a unique responsibility to turn ambitions into tangible implementation."

I see that reflected across our community constantly, in the thousands of decisions procurement professionals make every day - decisions that reduce risk, build resilience, and create real impact for people and planet.

At SPP, we don't aim to create more noise. We don't reinvent what already exists. We focus on what our community tells us they need: clarity, connection, and practical ways to turn sustainability ambitions into real outcomes. Everything we share is grounded in lived experience - by procurement, for procurement.

This paper reflects that. It brings together insights from the community and it brings together the voices of people who are doing the work.

My hope is that you use this paper in whatever way supports you best. Bring it into team meetings, lunch-and-learns, or strategy sessions, or use it as a personal resource on your own journey. Share it widely, debate it, build on it. Let it help you simplify complexity and collaborate with intention - because the way forward is both compassionate and collective.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this possible. To Luke at Equipoise for bringing this paper to life, to our session organisers and speakers for sharing their insight, to our volunteers - Augustina, Nisha, Jose, and Miguel - for their support behind the scenes.

Thank YOU for being part of this movement, and for making sustainable procurement the default, one step at a time.

It is an honour for Equipoise to once again partner with SPP and be given the responsibility to distil the extensive insights from World Sustainable Procurement Day 2026 into impactful, replicable actions that scale across our community.

Equipoise is a sustainable procurement consultancy helping organisations drive growth, build resilience, & optimise costs by turning sustainability ambition into action.

I do this work because I believe Sustainable Procurement is the single greatest way that I can positively impact our world.

This year, our team approached the 26 rich and diverse sessions with deep curiosity. We mapped the cross-cutting themes, found the common threads and translated these insights into actions that you can apply in your organisation. What emerged from our review of WSPD is a white paper firmly anchored in #ActionoverNoise.

My hope is that this paper will be used to spark action, unblock barriers, and act as a vehicle for the positive change that defines the SPP community.

One conversation that particularly struck a chord with me was the Chief Procurement Officers' fireside chat on navigating a 'BANI' (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, Incomprehensible) world. It feels as though every year is fraught with new, unexpected supply chain shocks for procurement and rising tides pushing back on sustainability (ironic).

Yet, in the midst of all of this, over 95 speakers generously gave up their time and stuck their heads above the parapet to share their challenges and where they are finding traction in this BANI world. These individuals are true champions of change.

A huge thank you to the SPP team, Mélissa, Kathrin, and Emilie, who did an excellent job delivering such an impactful WSPD. A special thank you to Emilie, who has been working closely with us to bring this paper to life, and to all the participants whose expert contributions shaped these pages.

Here's to cutting through the noise, showing up for each other, and continuing our collaborative journey to turn sustainability ambitions into tangible, real-world impact.



Our thematic pillars

People

The People pillar focuses on putting people at the centre of procurement decisions. That means protecting human rights, improving livelihoods, ensuring safe and fair working conditions, and building inclusive and equitable supply chains.

Expect topics like supplier diversity, social value creation, ethical sourcing, living wages, and modern slavery due diligence - along with real-world examples of social impact in action.

This pillar supports procurement professionals to embed care for people into strategy and practice, and to use procurement as a force for dignity, equity, and positive change.

Planet

The Planet pillar focuses on using procurement as a lever for environmental action. From cutting emissions and enabling circularity to protecting biodiversity and natural resources, procurement plays a critical role in reducing the environmental footprint of global supply chains.

Expect conversations on climate targets, nature-positive procurement, circular business models, and how to practically integrate environmental impact into procurement strategies, sourcing decisions and supplier relationships.

This pillar empowers procurement professionals to build value chains that respect planetary boundaries and accelerate the transition to a more sustainable, resilient world.

Profession

The Profession pillar focuses on unlocking the full potential of procurement as a strategic, sustainability-driven profession. Procurement is no longer just a cost-driven function - it's central to business success, innovation, and resilience.

Expect themes like capability building, leadership, change management, procurement transformation, and aligning procurement with ESG strategy and business goals.

This pillar equips procurement professionals - and aspiring professionals - with the education, tools, confidence, and mindset to become the procurement leaders of tomorrow, and to position procurement as a key driver of sustainable growth, collaboration, and meaningful change.

Convergence

The Convergence pillar recognises that the most pressing sustainable procurement challenges don't sit neatly within a single theme - they live at the intersection of all three.

Convergence sessions bring People, Planet, and Profession together, exploring the places where they overlap, reinforce, and depend on one another. Because you can't address climate without addressing people. You can't transform supply chains without transforming procurement itself.

Expect cross-cutting conversations that reflect the complexity of real-world sustainability and the joined-up thinking needed to drive it.

A photograph of two hands, one from a darker-skinned person and one from a lighter-skinned person, reaching towards each other against a blue background. The word "People" is centered between the hands.

People



From Insight to Action

Three key shifts emerging from the People track, each one includes guidance to help you embed these approaches in your work.

Move from annual human rights and labour audits to continuous monitoring with genuine worker voice

The People track sessions challenged the reliance on periodic, site-level audits as the primary tool for human rights and labour standards. The consistent alternative proposed by speakers was a combination of anonymous worker feedback channels that create two-way dialogue year-round, technology-enabled screening that flags issues between formal reviews, and rapid remediation protocols so findings get closed out rather than filed.

The same point applies to gender equality – asking whether a supplier has a gender policy is far less useful than asking workers whether they experience equal opportunity in practice. For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, start by asking your highest-risk suppliers what feedback mechanisms exist for workers and whether you can see the results. The [Converged Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence \(HREDD\) Assessment Tool](#) and a [free self-paced HREDD e-learning course](#) are available at no cost. The DRIVE programme (UNOPS) offers a 64-criteria supplier assessment framework covering human rights, gender equality, and diversity that was cited in the sessions as a practical model for structuring this kind of engagement.

See Sessions: #6, #8, #10

Build supplier capacity before – or instead of – imposing compliance requirements

The tension between rising Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) requirements and the ability of smaller suppliers to meet them ran through every People session. Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) displaced by climate events are being handed additional compliance burdens rather than support – a reality documented in both [Too Hot to Work](#) and the [Mint Farms](#) case studies.

The same pattern appeared in human rights due diligence (collaboration over blacklisting), gender equality (co-created action plans over non-conformance notices), and supplier diversity, where standard onboarding processes were identified as the single biggest barrier for social enterprises entering supply chains.

The shift speakers called for is a redesign of supplier development so that capability building comes before requirements, not after suppliers have already failed to meet them. If you are a leader, create an expedited onboarding pathway for SMEs and social enterprises. For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, when a supplier flags a compliance gap, ask what support they need before escalating.

See Sessions: #5, #6, #10, #20

Make the business case for gender equality as a supply chain resilience strategy

Speakers consistently framed gender equality not as a reputational or compliance obligation but as a driver of supply chain resilience, supplier talent retention, and access to a more stable supplier base. UN Women research presented in the sessions positioned gender-responsive procurement as a lever for organisational adaptability and long-term supply chain stability.

The practical action is to move beyond checking whether a supplier has a gender policy – most do – and start assessing whether it works. If you are a leader, build gender metrics into supplier scorecards and link progress to preferred supplier status. For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, ask for outcome data – pay gap figures, women in leadership percentages, worker survey results – rather than policy documents. [Gender Equality as a Driver of Resilient Supply Chains](#) and the [Gender Responsive Procurement Report](#) both provide a ready-made business case.

See Sessions: #4, #10, #25



Session takeaways

Supplier Diversity: Measuring Social Impact – What’s Changed in Europe and the US (#4)

The conversation: We explored how inclusive procurement and social impact measurement have evolved. Moderated by Andrea Fimian at fips consulting and the SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter, the session featured insights shared by Paulina Rabell at ESDP (European Supplier Diversity Program) and Marielle Khayat at YSI (Yunus Social Innovation). This session demonstrated how social sourcing, impactful sourcing, and supplier diversity deliver real-world impact through strategic sourcing decisions. ESDP, which connects diverse and small businesses with corporates, and YSI, which unites social enterprises with corporates, shared how sourcing decisions can create local jobs, sustainable growth, and lasting partnerships and therefore turn commitments into measurable results.

Insights & examples: L’Oréal moved beyond treating diverse sourcing as a one-off compliance exercise. By embedding a rural French social enterprise into their sustainable packaging supply chain and providing mentorship on global logistics, they helped the business scale and create local jobs. This capacity-building approach enabled the supplier to win other global contracts.

IKEA demonstrated the power of starting small and scaling progressively. They piloted local partnerships with social enterprises on services in repair, cleaning, and logistics and designed a step-by-step approach to scale cautiously and sustainably. To avoid overwhelming teams, practitioners were advised to simplify tracking using existing procurement platforms like SAP Ariba, and to adopt supplier-friendly terms, such as faster payment cycles.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must transition from basic spend reporting to measuring the social multiplier effect, such as local job creation. By starting with small, targeted pilots and investing in supplier capacity building, practitioners can transform social enterprises and small and diverse businesses into highly competitive, long-term strategic partners and create lasting impact.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter](#)

Human Rights Due Diligence and the Power of Listening (#6)

The conversation: We explored how to embed people-centred human rights due diligence into global supply chains. Hosted by Nisha Kulangara at the SPP Canada Chapter, the session featured insights shared by Marcus McKay at UNOPS, Francis West at Tetra Pak, and Antoine Heuty at EcoVadis. We discussed moving beyond desk-based risk assessments to establish continuous, two-way dialogues with affected workers.

Insights & examples: Marcus detailed UNOPS’ “Drive” methodology, which leverages proactive data screening to identify high-risk hotspots, focusing on supplier capacity building over punitive exclusion. They actively collaborate with suppliers to implement preventative measures and close capacity gaps.

Francis highlighted the importance of engaging affected stakeholders at Tetrapak, deploying anonymous worker-voice surveys via Ulula across warehousing and transport sites. This allowed them to uncover specific vulnerabilities, such as recruitment fee burdens, and immediately target their support on critical issues like living wages. Antoine at Ecovadis echoed this, demonstrating how leveraging mobile technology bypasses traditional audit limitations, uncovering hidden risks like sexual harassment or migrant worker exploitation, and enabling rapid, localised remediation.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must transition from static compliance audits to continuous, technology-enabled worker engagement. By facilitating safe, anonymous two-way dialogues and prioritising capacity building, practitioners can uncover hidden supply chain vulnerabilities and implement rapid, targeted remediation.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Human Rights Chapter](#) & [SPP Canada Chapter](#)



Session takeaways

Driving Gender Equality: The Power of Supply Chains (#10)

The conversation: We explored how to operationalise gender-responsive procurement to build resilient value chains. Facilitated by UN Women, the session featured capacity-building methodologies from UNOPS, MEDITEC, and the Watch and Jewellery Initiative 2030, focusing on moving past compliance to actively foster women's empowerment.

Insights & examples: UN Women introduced the Global Supply Chain Coalition to help businesses integrate the Women's Empowerment Principles directly into sourcing operations. Complementing this, the Watch and Jewellery Initiative 2030 shared practical experiences piloting gender-responsive procurement through industry co-creation.

To move from theory to practical action, UNOPS Honduras leveraged their DRIVE programme. Instead of simply checking if a supplier had a sexual harassment policy on paper, they assessed its functional accessibility—such as verifying the use of anonymous QR code reporting. They then provided hands-on coaching to help suppliers co-create corrective action plans.

This collaborative capacity building delivered measurable business returns. By embracing UNOPS training, local Honduran supplier MEDITEC completely overhauled its HR practices, growing its workforce to achieve 67% female leadership based entirely on merit and skills.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must move beyond checking compliance boxes and actively invest in supplier capacity building. By assessing the real-world functionality of supplier policies and co-creating targeted action plans, practitioners can foster resilient, gender-inclusive supply chains.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter](#)

Supplier Diversity in Asia: Unlocking Impact Through Social Enterprises (#20)

The conversation: We explored how to operationalise supplier diversity across Asia, overcoming the absence of unified certification bodies. Hosted by Nisa Camalia at CBRE and the SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter, moderated by Rachael Bah at KaiCari Impact Group, the session featured insights shared by Steven Jhangiani at Standard Chartered Bank and Fahmid Islam at Banglalink. We discussed unlocking the commercial and social value of local social enterprises through targeted capacity building.

Insights & examples: To overcome import disruptions, practitioners developed local SMEs to manufacture refrigerator parts, demonstrating how supplier diversity directly enhances supply chain resilience. When integrating these new entrants, they advised starting inclusion efforts within Tier 1 to build credibility before cascading to Tier 2. Rather than demanding flawless compliance immediately, practitioners must focus on capability building by helping suppliers close gaps and setting clear, manageable KPIs.

Standard Chartered dismantled barriers for SMEs by hosting "Shark Tank" style pitch events. This granted diverse suppliers direct access to budget-holding business stakeholders, bypassing rigid corporate hurdles. The panel stressed that practitioners must adapt Western-centric diversity definitions to Asian realities, leveraging local advocacy networks for validation rather than waiting for formal certifications.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must bypass rigid corporate onboarding barriers to integrate Asian social enterprises into core supply chains. By hosting direct-access pitch events, co-investing in capacity building, and prioritising Tier 1 inclusion, practitioners can drive immediate community impact and supply resilience.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter](#)



Key resources

Links

[AIM-Progress & Proforest – Integrating Human Rights into](#)

[Climate Action](#): A briefing series jointly produced by AIM-Progress and Proforest providing practical frameworks for procurement teams to integrate human rights due diligence into climate action – particularly in agricultural and forest-risk commodity supply chains where the two agendas most frequently collide.

[Business Leaders Guide to a Just Climate Transition](#): A practical guide for business leaders on embedding just transition principles into corporate strategy, supplier engagement, and procurement policy – ensuring that the shift to low-carbon supply chains does not come at the expense of workers or communities most exposed to transition risk.

[Converged HREDD Assessment Tool](#): A unified assessment tool that combines human rights and environmental due diligence into a single supplier evaluation framework, helping procurement teams move away from fragmented, siloed ESG questionnaires toward one coherent ask aligned with emerging regulatory requirements.

[Responsible Business Helpdesk – Free and Self-Paced HREDD e-Learning Course](#): A free online course providing procurement and sourcing professionals with a practical grounding in human rights and environmental due diligence – covering legal context, risk identification, supplier engagement, and remediation – designed for self-directed learning with no prior expertise required.

[Advancing Gender Equality in Global Supply Chains – Workshop Summary](#): Summary of a UN Women-convened workshop bringing together procurement practitioners and

gender equality experts to identify practical entry points for embedding gender-responsive practices across the procurement cycle, from supplier selection through to contract management.

[Gender Equality as a Driver of Resilient Global Supply Chains](#)

[– Explainer](#): A UN Women explainer making the business case for gender-responsive procurement, presenting evidence that supply chains with stronger gender equity show greater resilience, lower volatility, and higher adaptability – framing gender equality as a commercial lever rather than a compliance obligation.

[Global Supply Chain Coalition](#): The UN Women-led coalition bringing together corporate buyers committed to advancing gender equality through their procurement and supplier engagement practices, providing members with shared tools, benchmarking, and capacity-building support.

[Global Supply Chain Coalition – Programme Overview](#): Supporting documentation for the Global Supply Chain Coalition setting out the programme's structure, membership commitments, and practical resources available to organisations seeking to operationalise gender-responsive procurement across their supplier base.

[WEConnect International](#): A global network that certifies women-owned businesses and connects them to corporate and government buyers, cited in Session #20 as a practical entry point for organisations seeking to expand supplier diversity in Asia and globally – particularly relevant where local advocacy infrastructure for diverse suppliers is still developing.



Planet



From Insight to Action

Three key shifts emerging from the Planet track, each one includes guidance to help you embed these approaches in your work.

Don't wait for perfect data — you probably already know what your suppliers need to get started with

Organisations that defer supplier engagement until their emissions baseline is complete lose years of actual reduction. Use spend-based estimates to identify your highest-emitting suppliers, segment by decarbonisation maturity, and push for reduction plans with renewable energy switches, process efficiency improvements and [Science-Based Target \(SBT\) commitments](#) while better data comes in.

If you are a leader, integrate progress as a standing item in supplier management meetings and tie preferred supplier status to actions like setting SBTs. For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, use your next supplier meeting to start the conversation; you do not need a programme in place first. The [SBTi Getting Started Navigator](#) provides a free, step-by-step online tool for guiding suppliers through the target-setting process, and the [Chancery Lane Project](#) offers free climate contract clauses for procurement teams to use.

See Sessions: #7, #9, #16

Embed sustainability criteria into the commercial process, not alongside it

Sustainability only sticks when it lives inside normal commercial machinery. [Carbon shadow pricing](#) in competitive tenders, modal shift requirements in logistics Request for Proposals (RFPs), Science-Based Targets as a condition of preferred supplier status, Product Carbon Footprint (PCF) data mandated in key contracts, decarbonisation progress on supplier meeting agendas — each session reached the same conclusion from a different category angle.

Carbon Pricing is a particularly powerful lever, making emissions visible in financial terms at the moment of a sourcing decision. If you are a leader, review your contract clauses, RFP scoring criteria, and preferred supplier framework. For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, add one emissions criterion to your next RFP.

See Sessions: #1, #2, #7, #9, #14, #16

Collaborate at every level to unlock scale for renewables, resilience, and circularity

Collective purchasing and shared infrastructure solve what individual action cannot. Whether tackling Scope 3 emissions, nature risks, or material recovery, collaboration unlocks these levers for both you and your suppliers.

Across most industries a lack of scale hinders access to cost-effective renewables. By collaborating cross-industry and aggregating demand through multi-buyer virtual Power Purchase Agreements (vPPAs), companies negotiate better terms. Even when an individual company, Bayer bundled demand with multiple suppliers in China, they increased renewable energy use to 50% while saving over 2% on energy costs.

Zooming into specific industries and supply chains, shared risks demand shared investments. Retailers recognise systemic water and biodiversity risks cannot be solved at isolated farms. Through [Collective Action Landscape Projects \(CALPs\)](#), Edeka partnered with 63 organisations in a Colombian river basin. Co-investing in ecosystem restoration secured their banana supply chain against a projected 20% rainfall drop.

Within your own operations, seek strategic partnerships to enable climate action. Rather than building a new fleet to collect post-consumer materials, one organisation partnered with Biffa to use its existing agile waste network. This created a financially viable, closed-loop reverse logistics system without new capital expenditure.

If you are a leader, look beyond your four walls. Join cross-industry cohorts like the [Supply Chain Renewables Initiative](#). Pool resources in pre-competitive forums to fund landscape interventions. Internally, partner with organisations who already own the infrastructure you need.

For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, share these pre-competitive educational resources and cohort opportunities so they are not navigating complex environmental risks alone.

See Sessions: #7, #11, #22, #24



Session takeaways

Carbon Pricing: Would it Work in Your Organization? (#1)

The conversation: We explored integrating carbon pricing into procurement to drive Scope 3 decarbonisation. Through an interactive cross-functional role-play, featuring perspectives from Xavier Houot at Bain & Company and Kathrin Decker at SPP, and case studies from Sruthi Surendran at Novonesis and Chris Low at Haleon, we discussed how the SPP Carbon Pricing Principles help companies navigate adoption issues.

Insights & examples: A role-play between Procurement, Sustainability, and Finance demonstrated how to overcome internal scepticism regarding cost pressures and data quality. Participants revealed that a carbon shadow price can be seamlessly integrated into sourcing decisions using concrete cost calculations, competitive tender dynamics, and phased supplier engagement, without disrupting competitiveness or EBIT targets.

Chris Low at Haleon and Sruthi Surendran at Novonesis shared their real-world experiences, ranging from targeted pilots to full-scale implementations. They highlighted how the SPP Carbon Pricing Principles provide an actionable framework to navigate poor Product Carbon Footprint (PCF) data, train Procurement, support SME suppliers, and manage change across standard procurement processes.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must transition carbon from a passive reporting metric into an active, decision-relevant commercial factor. By utilising the SPP Carbon Pricing Principles to initiate shadow pricing pilots and gradually scaling them, practitioners can effectively institutionalise shadow carbon pricing without compromising commercial targets.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Carbon Pricing for Procurement Initiative for Impact](#)

Decarbonizing the Value Chain: Logistics Deep Dive (#2)

The conversation: We discussed translating scope 3 ambitions into lane- and supplier-level logistics actions. Facilitated by Canan Pask at Henkel and Clara Grandry at Tetra Pak, the session featured practical frameworks implemented and shared by all four panellists, including Arda Albayrak at Henkel and Cristian Canas at Tetra Pak. We explored how to turn decarbonisation opportunities into execution.

Insights & examples: Tetra Pak tackled logistics emissions by focusing on controllable levers like route optimisation and transport mode shifts. By moving high-emission air freight to ocean and rail, they drove immediate reductions. They stressed the importance of cross-functional alignment, working with finance to balance the working capital costs of longer transit times against carbon savings.

Henkel operationalised their "Climate Connect" programme by embedding climate metrics directly into e-sourcing tools, making sustainability a default in every tender. They highlighted an end-to-end project in Turkey combining solar-powered warehouses, electric vehicle shuttles, and a road-to-rail shift, saving 5% of regional logistics emissions. For high-cost levers like biofuels, Henkel utilised third-party audited in-setting certificates, monetising CO2 saved to justify premiums.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must move from theoretical planning to executing controllable logistics levers like modal shifts. By embedding climate requirements into tenders and demonstrating clear ROI, teams can secure cross-functional buy-in and balance commercial viability with tangible environmental impact.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Scope 3 Chapter](#)



Session takeaways

Supplier Engagement for Scope 3 Decarbonisation: Best Practices and Ecosystem Collaboration (#7)

The conversation: We explored practical strategies for accelerating Scope 3 emissions reductions through supplier enablement. Moderated by Oliver Hurrey at Galvanised, the session featured actionable frameworks shared by Nolly Mangolele at BAT, Tim Vollbrecht at Bayer, Chris Morris at Accenture, and Moritz Nill at CTRL-S. We discussed bridging the gap between endless data collection and executing tangible decarbonisation initiatives.

Insights & examples: BAT successfully operationalised their Supplier Enablement Programme by implementing a 7-matrix maturity framework. Instead of creating parallel sustainability meetings, they integrated these metrics directly into existing commercial Quarterly Business Reviews (QBRs), normalising decarbonisation as a core business expectation.

Bayer tackled supplier complexity by using a "decarbonisation ladder" to segment their supply base, offering tailored interventions ranging from basic greenhouse gas training to promoting renewable energy adoption via the Energize programme.

Moritz at CTRL-S challenged practitioners to break the cycle of "measurement paralysis." Rather than waiting years for perfect product carbon footprints, they advised immediately mandating known abatement levers, such as switching to green electricity, and tracking the resulting emissions drop after implementation.

Key learnings: To drive immediate climate progress, procurement teams must stop waiting for flawless data and start demanding actionable execution. By integrating sustainability targets into routine commercial reviews and mandating proven interventions like renewable energy, practitioners can rapidly scale real-world decarbonisation.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Scope 3 Chapter](#)

Supplier Decarbonization: From target setting to real-world impact (#9)

The conversation: We explored how to transition from engaging suppliers to set emissions targets to executing tangible decarbonisation. Moderated by Maria Terracina at Pfizer and the SPP Pharma Chapter, the session drew on framework shared by Diana Farmer from SBTi, and cases from Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Novonesis. We discussed leveraging Science Based Targets (SBT) alignment to drive measurable impact.

Insights & examples: Pfizer exceeded their 2025 supplier engagement targets by integrating sustainability directly into their procurement model and empowering an internal network of "Net Zero Champions" to lead sustainable supplier dialogues.

AstraZeneca are moving beyond target-setting by mandating their top 150 emitting suppliers to create actionable 50% decarbonisation plans in 2026. They've already embedded SBTi requirements into standard contract clauses, linking commercial performance directly to climate action, and introduced a formal process to phase out resistant suppliers.

Novonesis launched "PAVE to ZERO," an outcome-based programme that segments suppliers by maturity. They drive immediate action through carbon pricing tenders and provide low-maturity suppliers with capacity-building resources via the TfS Academy.

Key learnings: To drive real-world impact, procurement professionals must transition from requesting supplier commitments to decarbonisation execution. By tying preferred supplier status to SBT validation and providing targeted capacity building, practitioners can successfully convert theoretical targets into measurable emissions reductions.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Pharma & Life Sciences Chapter](#)



Session takeaways

Circularity in Action: Recycling Deep-dive (#11)

The conversation: We explored how procurement can transition from linear models to designing circular systems. Hosted by Sandra Gaspar at the SPP Circularity Chapter, the session featured practical insights collaboratively shared by Daniel Barret at Biffa and Sandra Gaspar. We discussed overcoming the logistical hurdles of collecting low-volume, post-consumer materials to achieve a full closed-loop supply chain.

Insights & examples: To achieve circularity without investing significantly in recycling infrastructure organisations partner with Biffa's to leverage their existing network of transport and waste management assets. This strategic collaboration eliminated new CapEx requirements and allowed collections from previously unviable segments, such as small installers and domestic clients. By utilising an existing reverse logistics infrastructure, the pilot remained financially viable at the portfolio level, even if individual small collections appeared costly.

Sandra and Daniel highlighted that circular systems are rarely perfect at launch and often bring unexpected administrative and compliance complexities. To mitigate this, they advised starting with geographically bounded pilots, defining clear success guardrails, and accepting imperfect, iterative progress rather than waiting for a flawless system.

Key learnings: To deliver circularity at scale, procurement must design systems beyond organisational boundaries, designing for circularity from the outset, building trusted partnerships with shared commitment to circular outcomes, leveraging existing infrastructure, and managing performance at portfolio level rather than per transaction, delivering scalable circular flows while strengthening long-term supply security.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Circularity Chapter](#)

PCFs with Purpose: Driving Emissions Reduction in the Chemical Industry (#14)

The conversation: We explored how to utilise Product Carbon Footprints (PCFs) to drive tangible emissions reductions within the chemical sector. Moderated by Daniele Dalla Vecchia at Together for Sustainability, the session drew on frameworks shared by Yetunde Omolayo at Dow Chemicals and Jiaxi Guo at BASF. We discussed moving from isolated carbon data collection to actionable, value-chain collaboration.

Insights & examples: Daniele at TfS highlighted the critical need for methodological standardisation to enable PCF data comparability, PCF data use in calculations, a more transparent and consistent Scope 3 GHG emissions reporting, and a more solid base for making business decisions. To do this, TfS developed a sector-specific PCF methodology (PCF Guideline & Data Model), partnered with SiGREEN to enable scalable and secure PCF data exchange, and constantly publishes useful resources to further support companies in their decarbonisation journey. This ensures practitioners have access to interoperable, decision-grade data, in alignment with other cross-industry frameworks like PACT.

Daniele, Yetunde, and Jiaxi stressed that practitioners must proactively demand primary PCF data rather than relying on industry averages, which often mask significant regional or supplier-specific variances. To overcome low supplier maturity, Dow and BASF deployed targeted capacity building, directing suppliers to the TfS Academy to upskill their carbon accounting capabilities, and using other TfS resources to collaborate with them.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must mandate primary PCF data from suppliers using standardised, industry-aligned methodologies. By leveraging secure data-exchange platforms and actively upskilling low-maturity suppliers, practitioners can transition from basic emissions tracking to executing targeted, commercial decarbonisation strategies.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Scope 3 Chapter](#)

Session takeaways

Enabling Circular Economy Through Procurement: Insights from South East Asia (#18)

The conversation: We explored how to implement circular economy practises within Southeast Asian supply chains, moving from linear materials flows to regenerative systems. Facilitated by Chee Kin Lin at EZ Solutions, the session featured insights shared by Dr. Rene Van Berkel at Thammasat University and Thomas Thomas at ACEBA / ARABIA / SWITCH Asia PSC. We discussed overcoming regional market limitations through collaborative innovation and rigorous tender requirements.

Insights & examples: Practitioners demonstrated how to enforce end-of-life accountability by mandating that vendors detail reuse and recycling treatments for parcel sorting machines directly within multi-million-dollar tenders. Furthermore, by repurposing older barcode scanners for developing markets, they avoided landfill disposal and generated revenue to offset new equipment costs.

To support regional progress, the ASEAN Circular Economy Business Alliance (ACEBA) provides a framework for practitioners to adopt circular inputs and drive circular processes and outputs. Examples included co-creating product specifications with suppliers, such as able recycling uniforms into new garments in Indonesia, and Mango Mojito manufacturing sneakers from recycled PET in Thailand. The speakers stressed that procurement must replace standard terms of reference with proactive supplier collaboration to source these alternative materials at scale.

Key learnings: To enable the circular economy, procurement professionals must mandate end-of-life supplier treatments during the tender process and pursue co-creation partnerships. By prioritising secondary and renewable materials with a long lifetime and repurposing existing assets, teams can mitigate supply risks, deliver sustainability benefits whilst generating tangible commercial returns.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Circularity Chapter](#)

How Every Region Can Cut Costs and Carbon with Renewable Electricity (#22)

The conversation: We explored how to simultaneously cut costs and scope 3 emissions through renewable electricity. Moderated by Jing Ze at Bayer, the session drew on regional frameworks shared by Yuqi Ruan at Bayer, Simon Gerrard at Schneider Electric, and Chris Low at Haleon. We discussed overcoming market complexities and supplier cost concerns.

Insights & examples: Bayer successfully accelerated supplier decarbonisation in China using a bundled purchasing approach. By aggregating demand, they secured highly competitive renewable energy contracts, enabling two suppliers to achieve 50% renewable usage whilst generating a 2% energy cost saving.

Chris at Haleon highlighted the commercial value of acting swiftly. In the US, they are leveraging the Inflation Reduction Act to secure a 5% tax saving from investing in renewables. In Europe, they entered a Virtual Power Purchase Agreement (vPPA) in Spain to secure long-term guarantees of origin while generating revenue, addressing both Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions.

Crucially, while the SBTi and the GHG Protocol finalise the rules of how renewable electricity can be used to claim emission reductions, entering long-term contractual arrangements now provides a cost-effective way to mitigate emissions. These arrangements are expected to be “grandfathered” into the GHG Protocol rules for any scopes where tougher time-based and location-based matching rules will apply.

Key learnings: Procurement teams must dismantle the assumption that renewable electricity carries a premium. By aggregating demand into bundled contracts and capitalising on vPPAs now, practitioners can secure grandfathered emission reductions, delivering immediate dual-value outcomes: tangible decarbonisation and commercial cost reduction.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Scope 3 Chapter](#)

Session takeaways

How Retailers Drive Collective Action in Fresh Produce Supply Chains (#24)

The conversation: We explored how to move beyond farm-level certifications to build resilience through Collective Action Landscape Projects (CALPs). Moderated by Christian von Loewenich at WWF Germany, the session featured insights from Heike Vesper at WWF Germany and Caitlin McCormack at 3Keel, and a panel with Stephanie Finkbeiner at EDEKA, Xavier Roussel at Dole, and Una Hrnjak at Aldi Süd. We discussed tackling systemic water and biodiversity risks.

Insights & examples: Stephanie at EDEKA demonstrated the commercial power of landscape-level collaboration in Colombia. By partnering with 63 organisations in a shared river basin, EDEKA co-invested in ecosystem restoration and water governance, directly securing their banana supply chain against a projected 20% rainfall drop by 2040. This proved that resolving systemic issues requires ecosystem-wide funding, not isolated farm audits.

Una at Aldi Süd reinforced this by pooling resources with other food and beverage companies via pre-competitive forums like the UN Water Resilience Coalition. By cost-sharing interventions and standardising volumetric water benefit accounting, they prevented duplicated efforts. Dole added that engaging non-traditional stakeholders, such as local indigenous communities and regional governments, is critical to executing effective on-the-ground remediation.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must transition from isolated compliance checklists to co-investing in collective landscape action. By mapping specific risk hotspots and pooling resources with peers in pre-competitive forums, practitioners can secure long-term material availability and protect vulnerable ecosystems.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Nature & Biodiversity Chapter](#)





Key resources

Links

[Carbon Pricing Case Study – Haleon](#): A practical case study documenting how Haleon implemented carbon shadow pricing in competitive procurement tenders, including the methodology used, the commercial and emissions outcomes achieved, and lessons for buyers looking to make carbon visible at the moment of sourcing decisions.

[SPP Carbon Pricing for Procurement Initiative](#): The Sustainable Procurement Pledge's initiative page bringing together tools, frameworks, case studies, and community guidance for procurement teams implementing internal carbon pricing – providing a starting point for organisations at any stage of maturity on this topic.

[Version 2: Guiding Principles for Integrating Carbon Pricing into Procurement](#): The updated SPP principles document setting out a shared framework for how organisations can embed carbon pricing into sourcing decisions in a way that is credible, consistent, and commercially actionable – co-developed with procurement practitioners across sectors.

[Battery Electric Truck Emissions – Study Summary](#): A study summary comparing lifecycle emissions from battery electric trucks against conventional diesel alternatives across different regional energy grids, providing logistics procurement teams with the evidence base for modal shift decisions and decarbonisation lever prioritisation.

[Sustainable Procurement: A Strategy for Resilience and Growth](#): A strategic framework document positioning sustainable procurement as a driver of supply chain resilience and commercial growth, designed to help procurement leaders build the internal business case for Scope 3 supplier engagement programmes with senior stakeholders.

[SBTi – Slide Deck for Presenting Science-Based Targets to Your Suppliers](#): A ready-to-use presentation developed by the Science Based Targets initiative for procurement and supplier management teams to introduce the concept of science-based target setting to suppliers – reducing the time and expertise required to initiate decarbonisation conversations at scale.

[SBTi – Supplier Engagement Guidance Executive Summary](#): A concise summary of SBTi's full supplier engagement guidance, distilling the key steps, requirements, and best practices for buyers seeking to support their suppliers through the science-based target-setting process without committing to reading the complete technical document.

[SBTi – Supplier Engagement Guidance Full Document](#): The complete SBTi guidance for organisations engaging suppliers on science-based targets, covering segmentation approaches, engagement strategies, data requirements, target validation, and how to integrate SBT commitments into commercial supplier management frameworks.

[SBTi Resource Library](#): A curated library of Science Based Targets initiative tools, templates, and guidance documents covering target setting, supplier engagement, sector pathways, and progress reporting – a single access point for procurement teams building or scaling a supplier decarbonisation programme.

[Responsible Use of PCF Guide](#): A guide addressing how procurement teams should use product carbon footprint data responsibly – including how to avoid greenwashing, how to account for data quality limitations, and how to translate PCF figures into meaningful supplier engagement and sourcing decisions rather than simple numerical comparisons.

[TfS PCF Data Model](#): The Together for Sustainability data model standardising how product carbon footprint data is structured and exchanged between buyers and suppliers in the chemical industry – enabling consistent, comparable PCF data to flow through supply chains without exposing commercially sensitive process information.

[TfS PCF Guideline](#): The Together for Sustainability sector guideline for calculating and reporting product carbon footprints in the chemical and materials industry, providing procurement teams with a recognised standard to specify in supplier contracts and RFPs as an alternative to generic industry-average emission factors.

[TfS PCF Verification and PCF Program Certification Framework](#): The TfS framework for verifying the accuracy of supplier-reported product carbon footprint data and certifying PCF programmes, providing buyers with the assurance mechanisms needed to trust and act on primary PCF data received through the supply chain.

[Mars Partners with Clean Electricity Suppliers](#): A case study documenting how Mars structured partnerships with clean electricity suppliers to reduce Scope 3 emissions across its supply chain, illustrating how a large buyer can create the commercial conditions for supplier renewable energy investment through aggregated demand signals and long-term offtake commitments.

[Supply Chain Renewables Initiative](#): A pre-competitive initiative enabling buyers to pool renewable electricity demand across their supply chains, making it financially viable for smaller suppliers to access clean energy by aggregating purchasing power that no single organisation could achieve alone – with early-mover organisations securing more favourable terms.

[The WWF 2026 Retailer Collective Action Landscape Engagement Report](#): A WWF-commissioned report presenting the case and a practical framework for retailers to fund and coordinate landscape-level biodiversity and water interventions in fresh produce supply chains – demonstrating that collective action by multiple buyers can address systemic environmental risks that no single procurement team has the leverage or resources to tackle alone.



Profession



From Insight to Action

Three key shifts emerging from the Profession track, each one includes guidance to help you embed these approaches in your work.

Build cross-functional governance – procurement cannot own Scope 3 execution alone

The governance gap – sustainability strategy set by one team but executed across many – appeared persistently across Profession sessions. Supplier decarbonisation stalls without Finance alignment on how to value carbon in sourcing decisions and without Operations involvement in implementation. Without cross-functional ownership, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) data stays in parallel systems rather than informing commercial decisions.

If you are a leader, create a named cross-functional steering group – Procurement, Finance, and Sustainability as a minimum – define who owns what, and build accountability into performance reviews across all three functions, not just procurement's. The [top five Chief Procurement Officer priorities guide](#) is a useful conversation-starter with senior stakeholders.

See Sessions: #7, #9, #15, #16

Build role-specific procurement capability – generic sustainability training does not change buyer behaviour

Four sessions converged on the same finding: awareness-level sustainability training has not moved the needle on what procurement actually do in tenders and supplier meetings. The fix is training built around real procurement tasks – writing sustainability criteria for a Request for Proposals (RFPs), running a decarbonisation conversation in a supplier management meeting, using artificial intelligence to accelerate tender scoring, supplier research, and contract review while applying human judgement on final decisions – and differentiated by seniority and category rather than delivered as a single organisation-wide programme. AI tools are effective for procurement tasks and are now a practical skill in their own right, not an add-on.

The following are great self-directed learning resources: the [SPP Procurement Wheel](#) maps where sustainability fits across the entire procurement cycle and is freely available as an interactive tool. [The SPP Scope 3 Resource Hub](#), co-developed with 250 procurement practitioners and Equipoise, provides a free end-to-end guide from greenhouse gas basics through to embedding requirements in contracts, including ready-to-use AI prompts for procurement tasks. For supplier-facing training, the [TFS Academy](#) offers more than 300 courses across over ten languages, free for members, and was specifically recommended as a resource to direct suppliers to.

See Sessions: #3, #13, #19, #23

Frame sustainability in the language of commercial return

Across the Profession sessions, speakers were consistent on one point: sustainability secures organisational backing when it is presented as a business driver rather than a separate agenda. Chief Procurement Officers (CPOs) described demonstrating value through risk reduction, supply chain resilience, cost savings, and competitive differentiation – and positioning sustainability as integral to those outcomes rather than an addition to them.

Renewable electricity procurement can generate net cost savings. Supply chain finance linked to sustainability performance creates outcomes Finance can act on. The [Business Action Bank](#) provides a searchable database of actions with business case framing. If you are a leader, develop two or three Return on Investment (ROI) narratives tailored to your Finance team's priorities. For buyers engaging directly with suppliers, frame your next sustainability proposal in terms of risk and cost, not values.

See Sessions: #3, #16, #22, #23



Session takeaways

Sustainability that Pays: Leadership Perspectives on ROI (#3)

The Conversation: We explored how to frame the commercial value of sustainable procurement. Moderated by Lewis Howard at BRAE, the session featured leadership methodologies shared by Christophe Quiquempoix at Schneider Electric and Robert Williams at AstraZeneca. We discussed moving beyond theoretical risk reduction to drive measurable cost efficiency and growth differentiation.

Insights & examples: AstraZeneca translates sustainability into a tangible commercial proposition by making science-based targets a mandatory requirement for preferred supplier status. They demonstrated how to navigate internal budget blockers; to justify the higher premium of transitioning to biomethane in the UK, procurement joined the dots by offsetting those costs with significant energy efficiency and electrification works.

Schneider Electric accelerates impact by providing a comprehensive support infrastructure including free training, workshops, and green financing access before demanding supplier capability upgrades. They frame decarbonisation as top-line growth by making sustainability account for 20% of the criteria when awarding new business to strategic suppliers. Crucially, they advised against waiting for a flawless ROI calculation; their Zero Carbon Project achieved a 56% emission reduction simply by taking bold initial steps.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must clearly articulate the commercial return on sustainability by tying preferred supplier status directly to ESG performance. By offering upfront capacity-building support and offsetting green premiums with energy efficiency savings, practitioners can secure rapid internal and supplier buy-in.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Champions Program](#)

Empowering Procurement: simplifying sustainability action with skills, tools, and training (#13)

The Conversation: We explored how to equip category managers with the skills and tools they need to drive sustainability. Hosted by Oliver Hurrey at Galvanised, the session featured practical capability-building frameworks shared by Alice Ahlinder at Tetra Pak, Sruthi Surendran at Novonesis and Luke Abbott at Equipoise.

Insights & examples: Alice recognised that generic corporate training wasn't enough. Tetra Pak built basic, intermediate and advanced programs specifically tailored for their supplier manager department. By integrating the SPP Sustainable Procurement Wheel and showcasing internal champions' efforts to embed sustainability into real tenders, meetings and contracts they boosted practical adoption.

Novonesis moves beyond theory by democratising data. They deployed actionable toolkits, including an in-house "Emitless" scenario calculator, preventing data bottlenecks for buyers. They also embraced "learning by doing," using small-scale carbon pricing pilots to help practitioners gain the confidence needed to lead natural, supplier-driven sustainability dialogues.

Luke at Equipoise announced a new free resource for the SPP, the [Scope 3 Resource Hub](#). This includes free e-learning modules and resources, from their Scope 3 Procurement Training, to provide procurement with an A-Z guide for supply chain decarbonisation.

Key learnings: To drive immediate impact, procurement leaders must replace generic ESG training with role-specific resources. By democratising data access, utilising available SPP tools, and launching low-risk pilot programs, practitioners can build the practical confidence needed to turn sustainability theory into everyday sourcing action.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Scope 3 Chapter](#)



Session takeaways

Turning Scope 3 Ambition into Action – Building Governance to Drive Real Progress (#15)

The conversation: We explored building robust internal governance to translate Scope 3 ambitions into cross-functional execution. Hosted by Shawn Buckley at Impact Pathways, with insights shared by Bridget Ferrari at Takeda, Madyson Partenheimer at Magnera Corporation, and Nancy Gillis at the Scope 3 Peer Group, the session introduced a five-dimension governance framework.

Insights & examples: The framework emphasises that one-size-fits-all messaging doesn't work. Scope 3 must be communicated in ways that resonate with each function's priorities, supported by tools to make progress actionable. Panelists discussed how incentives can reinforce or undermine governance, the critical role of middle managers in delivery, and the necessity of clarifying where ownership is still unclear.

The Working Group is currently building a practical toolkit of templates and enablers to help practitioners put this framework into action, clarify ownership, navigate competing priorities, and communicate Scope 3 in terms that resonate across functions.

Key learnings: Effective Scope 3 governance requires more than ambition. It demands cross-functional integration, shared language that resonates with each function's priorities, and clear accountability from corporate targets down to team-level ownership. Practitioners who can translate Scope 3 goals into terms each function cares about, clarify ownership where it's currently ambiguous, and align incentives to reinforce rather than undermine progress will be best positioned to turn strategy into execution.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Scope 3 Chapter](#)

Partnering for Impact: Advancing Sustainable Procurement Together (#16)

The conversation: We explored the shift from sustainability pledges to execution. Introduced by Kathrin Decker at SPP, the session featured insights from Mo Ahmad at SAP and Chloé D'allaud de Caseneuve at EcoVadis on embedding regulatory-ready ESG data and AI directly into ERP systems.

Insights & examples: Mo and Chloé highlighted that the “era of pledge” has ended; sustainability is now a core financial KPI used by CFOs for risk management and credit facilities. To execute this, practitioners must replace industry-average estimates with primary, supplier-specific Scope 3 data, applying the “80/20 rule” to target the minority of spend generating the most emissions.

Organisations can embed sustainability across the source-to-pay lifecycle by deploying contactless supplier risk mapping, integrating ESG checks into onboarding, and using visual “preferred choice” badges in guided buying. AI acts as a force multiplier to automate this risk detection. Crucially, practitioners can accelerate progress by linking verified ESG performance to supply chain finance incentives, offering a lower cost of capital to high-performing suppliers.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must stop managing sustainability as a parallel initiative and embed audit-ready ESG data directly into everyday sourcing tools. By integrating AI-driven risk mapping and leveraging supply chain finance incentives, teams can turn high-level commitments into verifiable buying decisions.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)



Session takeaways

AI in Procurement: Upskilling People and Capabilities (#19)

The conversation: We explored how to upskill procurement teams to leverage artificial intelligence for sustainability. Facilitated by Mat Langley at Metcash and SPP Emerging Technology Chapter, the session featured implementation frameworks shared by Mat, Chee Kin Lin at EZ Solutions and Vinitha Mathew at Novonesis. We discussed shifting AI from a basic tactical tool to an embedded sourcing process.

Insights & examples: Novonesis transformed daily purchasing by integrating an AI-powered assistant directly into Microsoft Teams, enabling buyers to instantly access sustainable product alternatives and policy guidance. Furthermore, they deployed an AI vendor intelligence platform to intercept early ESG risk signals, allowing category managers to initiate proactive supplier dialogues before risks escalate.

To navigate the complex technology landscape, practitioners were advised to build upon their existing source-to-pay backbone with targeted orchestration layers. A key methodology involved creating specific AI "agents", such as an archive retrieval tool, trained on precise job descriptions to eliminate 'black box' hallucinations. However, the speakers strongly warned that AI amplifies existing logic; robust programme governance covering legal data ownership and continuous monitoring is mandatory to prevent scaling poor sustainability decisions.

Key learnings: Procurement leaders must upskill their teams to utilise targeted AI agents for routine data retrieval, freeing capacity for strategic supplier collaboration. By embedding strict governance and integrating AI directly into daily workflows, practitioners can rapidly scale sustainable sourcing outcomes.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Emerging Technology Chapter](#)

International Financial Institutions as Catalysts for MENA & Gulf Sustainable Procurement (#21)

The conversation: We explored how international financial institutions are shifting from rigid compliance to risk-based, capacity-building frameworks. Moderated by Hady Agina at World Bank Procurement, the session featured insights shared by Despoina Kouria at The World Bank Group, Taha El-Feel at the Islamic Development Bank, and Farid Yaker at UNEP. We discussed accelerating Sustainable Procurement across the MENA and Gulf regions.

Insights & examples: To bridge the gap between policy ambition and system readiness, practitioners must prioritise capacity building alongside the deployment of e-procurement platforms. The World Bank operationalises this by hosting targeted vendor forums, actively demystifying tender processes to integrate SMEs and women-owned businesses into global value chains.

In Oman, the In-Country Value (ICV) policy successfully embedded sustainability into everyday sourcing. By evaluating suppliers with specific rated criteria, the government directed nearly 20% of supply chain spending to local SMEs, fostering regional resilience and localising copper cathode manufacturing to reduce transport emissions.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must move beyond top-down mandates and actively co-invest in supplier capacity. By adopting flexible, risk-based frameworks and standardising e-procurement criteria, teams can transform everyday purchasing decisions into a direct driver of regional economic growth and resilience.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Public Procurement Chapter](#)

Session takeaways

CPO fireside chat: Procurement in a BANI world (#23)

The conversation: We explored how Chief Procurement Officers balance financial performance and sustainability in a "BANI" (brittle, anxious, non-linear, incomprehensible) world. Introduced by Kathrin Decker at SPP, the chat featured insights from Ard Verboon at Schneider Electric, Jennifer Jewson at LyondellBasell, and Bertrand Conquéret at Henkel on maintaining momentum amid geopolitical volatility.

Insights & examples: The CPOs emphasised that sustainability is a long-term business imperative that must remain embedded alongside traditional KPIs like cost, cash, and growth. Rather than viewing them as competing priorities, leaders must treat sustainability as a balancing act, managing multiple dimensions simultaneously without losing strategic direction.

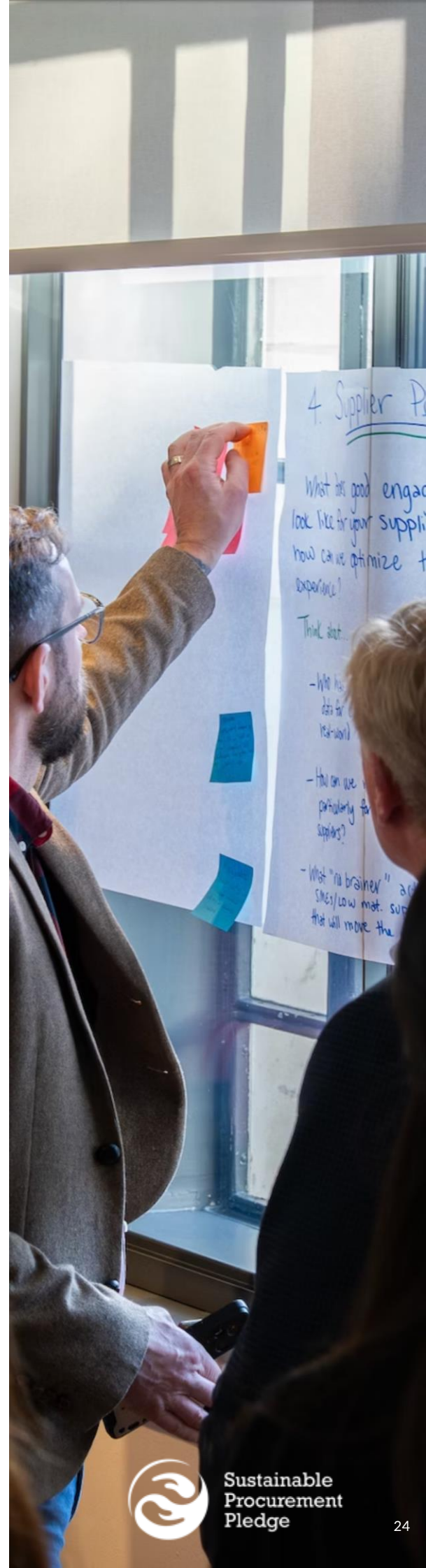
They shared concrete examples demonstrating how sustainability delivers measurable business value, from scaling renewable energy investments to launching chemical recycling initiatives. These actions drive risk resilience, operational efficiency, and financial performance, yielding significant CO₂ reductions and measurable growth in "impact revenue."

To make this scalable, the panel highlighted the role of advanced analytics and emerging AI in calculating product-level carbon footprints across massive SKU portfolios. They stressed that directional insight and speed of execution are far more important than waiting for absolute data precision.

Key learnings: Sustainability is a long-term leadership choice that must remain anchored despite external volatility. By embedding sustainability into core processes and metrics, collaborating through industry ecosystems, and investing in AI tools, procurement leaders can successfully balance cost, resilience, and environmental impact. No single organisation can deliver this transformation alone; proactive supplier partnerships are critical to maintaining business performance.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Champions Program](#)





Key resources

Links

[An Integrated Framework for Sustainable Supplier Selection and Evaluation in Supply Chains](#): A practitioner-oriented framework consolidating environmental, social, and governance criteria into a structured supplier selection and evaluation methodology – designed to help procurement teams move beyond ad hoc sustainability scoring toward a repeatable, defensible approach embedded in standard sourcing processes.

[Approaches for Supporting Sustainable Supplier Selection – A Literature Review](#): A literature review surveying the methods and tools procurement teams use to embed sustainability into supplier selection decisions, offering buyers and procurement capability leads an evidence-based foundation for designing or improving their own supplier evaluation approaches.

[Circular Procurement in 8 Steps](#): A practical step-by-step guide walking procurement teams through the process of designing and running circular procurement – from defining circular requirements and engaging the market early through to contract clauses, supplier development, and end-of-life considerations – applicable across categories and sectors.

[Environmental Purchasing and Supplier Management \(EPSM\) – Theory and Practice](#): A comprehensive resource combining the theoretical foundations of environmental purchasing with practical supplier management approaches, providing procurement professionals and capability leads with the conceptual grounding to design programmes that go beyond compliance and create lasting environmental value.

[Responsible Procurement: Leading the Way to a Sustainable Tomorrow](#): A guide positioning responsible procurement as a leadership discipline rather than a back-office function, setting out how procurement professionals at all levels can drive sustainable outcomes through supplier relationships, commercial decisions, and internal influence – with practical examples across the procurement cycle.

[Chief Procurement Officers – It's Not Easy Being Green](#): A report examining the structural barriers CPOs face when trying to advance sustainability agendas within their organisations – including misaligned incentives, cross-functional governance gaps, and the difficulty of translating sustainability commitments into commercial decision-making – with recommendations for how leaders can overcome them.

[The Power of Procurement – Top 5 Priorities for Procurement Leaders](#): A guide identifying the five strategic priorities procurement leaders should focus on to maximise the function's contribution to sustainability and business resilience, designed as a conversation-starter for CPOs engaging Finance, Operations, and senior leadership on the commercial case for sustainable procurement.



Convergence

From Insight to Action

Three key shifts emerging from the Convergence track, each one includes guidance to help you embed these approaches in your work.

Join pre-competitive coalitions — the hardest challenges cannot be solved by one procurement practitioner

The single most consistent message across Convergence sessions was that many of the sustainability challenges procurement now faces — critical minerals due diligence, landscape-level water and biodiversity risk, renewable energy access for suppliers, health system sustainability standards — are simply beyond the reach of any single organisation. The response is not to build proprietary solutions but to participate in the collaborative infrastructure that already exists.

If you are a leader or individual working directly with suppliers, identify where pre-competitive collaboration already exists in your category portfolio and engage actively rather than observing, for example, the cross sector collaborations like the [Sustainable Procurement Pledge](#) and industry specific collaborations like the [Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health](#) for health sector procurement. Find an initiative for your sector [here](#). Sessions #22 and #24 both showed that organisations which moved early into collective action were better placed commercially; those that waited found the terms of participation less favourable.

See Sessions: #5, #12, #17, #22, #24

Treat human rights and climate as one agenda — separating them creates unintended harm

The Convergence sessions showed the cost of siloed ESG work. Suppliers described receiving fragmented, contradictory requests from climate and human rights teams within the same buying organisation. In critical minerals, decarbonisation supply chains generated new human rights risks when procurement teams optimised for carbon without assessing labour conditions in mining — a dynamic that was raised as a structural problem, not an edge case.

The [WBCSD Just Transition guide](#) and the [AIM-Progress and Proforest briefing](#) both provide frameworks for integrating the two agendas.

The [Women's Empowerment Principles](#) includes Principle 5 specifically on supply chain and procurement, and was referenced across sessions as a practical foundation for gender-integrated procurement. The recently launched Global Supply Chain Coalition provides capacity-building tools and programmes for organisations seeking to act on these principles. If you are a leader, create a unified sustainability scorecard so suppliers receive one coherent ask. For individuals engaging directly with suppliers, before issuing any new sustainability requirement, check whether it could inadvertently worsen conditions on another dimension.

See Sessions: #8, #12, #17

Engage with complex, high-risk suppliers and geographies — do not exit them

Three sessions directly challenged the instinct to de-risk by disengaging. In critical minerals, speakers were explicit: exiting high-risk mining regions removes the only leverage Procurement have to improve conditions and transfers risk to less scrupulous buyers. The same logic applies to labour rights — blacklisting removes the relationship needed for remediation — and to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) under climate stress, where withdrawal punishes the suppliers most in need of support.

The consistent position across sessions was that risk-based engagement is more effective than risk-based avoidance, but it requires clear frameworks and dedicated capacity. The OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct — endorsed by 52 countries and embedded into the standards of major metals exchanges — provides a free six-step framework for structuring this kind of engagement, and the OECD Minerals Guidance applies this specifically to conflict-affected and high-risk mineral supply chains. The [BHRC Transition Minerals Tracker](#) and [Stop and Listen analysis](#) sit alongside these as practical intelligence tools for identifying where the risks are.

See Sessions: #5, #6, #12



Session takeaways

Small but Mighty: The Suppliers Behind Resilient Supply Chains (#5)

The conversation: We explored how to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in building sustainable, resilient supply chains. Moderated by Nalini Bates at the SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter, the session featured insights shared by Ashwini Hingne and Eliot Metzger at WRI. We discussed overcoming the capacity and resource constraints SMEs face when adapting to ESG requirements.

Insights & examples: Ahwini and Eliot highlighted the dangers of a "push and pull" compliance approach, advocating for mutual partnerships. In the mint supply chain, major buyers collaborated with Indian farmers to understand local challenges like climate displacement, rather than simply enforcing standards, ensuring long-term supply resilience.

Nalini shared an example of a successful structural approach by the UK National Laundry Group. By uniting small, local laundries under one shared framework, they provided corporate buyers with national scale, consistent quality, and centralised ESG compliance. This allowed SMEs to remain competitive while alleviating the administrative burdens imposed by large clients.

Practitioners were encouraged to support regional SME clusters. This pre-competitive collaboration localises infrastructure, helping SMEs efficiently upskill workers and transition to lower-carbon operations without bearing the entire financial burden alone.

Key learnings: To build resilient supply chains, procurement professionals must replace rigid compliance mandates with collaborative capacity building. By co-investing in local SME clusters and leveraging shared industry frameworks, practitioners can help small suppliers meet sustainability goals while maintaining commercial competitiveness.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Supplier Diversity Chapter](#)

The Power of Procurement: For Human Rights and Climate Action (#8)

The conversation: We explored the critical necessity of converging climate and human rights strategies within everyday sourcing decisions. Facilitated by Victoria Folbigg at Folbigg Consulting and Louise Herring at AIM-Progress and SPP Human Rights Chapter Co-Chairs, the session featured practical integration examples shared by Maxfield Weiss at CIPS, Harry Aldwinckle at Tetra Pak, and Adélaïde Cipagauta at IFF. We discussed eliminating internal silos to prevent supplier fatigue and conflicting commercial signals.

Insights & examples: Adélaïde recognised that sending fragmented ESG requests caused supplier disengagement and risky trade-offs, such as switching geographies for lower carbon emissions at the expense of local community livelihoods. To solve this, IFF built a bridge between responsible sourcing and procurement teams by aligning KPIs to manage sustainability trade-offs more holistically.

Tetra Pak embedded human rights due diligence directly into their existing climate initiative. By nominating an individual as a dedicated spokesperson to work with category managers, they simplified supplier communications and improved early-stage sourcing assessments.

Maxfield at CIPS emphasised that suppliers experience sustainability as one combined pressure, not separate agendas; therefore, procurement must align expectations into coherent commercial contracts with unified transition plans.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must dismantle internal ESG silos and present a unified sustainability strategy to suppliers. By integrating climate and human rights criteria into a single commercial framework, practitioners will reduce supplier fatigue, avoid harmful trade-offs, and drive comprehensive value chain resilience.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Human Rights Chapter](#)



Session takeaways

Critical Minerals: Confronting the Hard Truths of the Just Energy Transition (#12)

The conversation: We explored balancing supply security with responsible sourcing in critical mineral value chains. Moderated by Wouter van Monsjou at WBCSD, the session drew on frameworks shared by Kanishk Negi at Schneider Electric, Caroline Avan at BHRC, and Benjamin Katz at the OECD Center for Responsible Business Conduct. We discussed managing high market concentration without abandoning human rights.

Insights & examples: Benjamin challenged the instinct to simply avoid high-risk sourcing regions, noting that disengagement removes procurement's leverage. Instead, he advocated for risk-based due diligence, collaborating closely with smelters and refiners who act as crucial supply chain pinch points.

Caroline grounded the discussion in evidence, highlighting the sharp rise in human rights allegations in transition mineral supply chains - from water pollution to labor rights and Indigenous Peoples' FPIC violations - and how these translate into real litigation, project delays, and financial losses for companies

Kanishk demonstrated how downstream companies, despite being several tiers removed from extraction, can spark systemic change. Schneider Electric initiated industry-aligned due diligence and actively shared supplier feedback with internal R&D teams to accelerate the design of products using recycled materials. Kanishk stressed that progress begins with persistent supplier conversations, even when visibility is poor.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals should not treat risk avoidance as the sole strategy and instead pursue active engagement in high-risk areas. By leveraging industry coalitions and linking supply chain data to R&D, practitioners can drive both transparency and long-term material resilience.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Human Rights Chapter](#)

Connecting the Health System Value Chain: Procurement-Led Collaboration for Sustainable Transformation (#17)

The conversation: We explored how global sustainability commitments can be translated into concrete procurement action. Introduced by Kathrin Decker at SPP, the session featured insights from Megha Rathi and Elena Villalobos Prats at WHO/ATACH, Elisa Frenz at Health Proc Europe, Robert Williams at AstraZeneca, and Guy Battle at Social Value Portal. We discussed harmonising standards across diverse country contexts to build climate-resilient health systems.

Insights & examples: Healthcare supply chains account for up to 70% of the sector's global emissions. WHO's ATACH initiative demonstrated that moving from ambition to impact across 100+ countries requires tailored approaches rather than a one-size-fits-all model. While high-income countries embed sustainability directly into policy, lower-income regions drive immense momentum through pragmatism and resourcefulness.

To support suppliers at scale, pharmaceutical representatives stressed the need for unified signals from public buyers, pointing to initiatives like the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Initiative (PSCI) to prevent fragmented requirements. Addressing this, Health Proc Europe and SPP announced the co-creation of a Sustainable and Resilient Procurement Toolkit under the Alliance for Procurement Impact. This evolving initiative will provide practical templates, best practices, and harmonised standards that healthcare systems can readily apply, reducing duplication and complexity.

Key learnings: Procurement acts as a decisive bridge between global climate commitments and real-world health outcomes. By harmonising expectations and aligning public and private sector signals, practitioners can accelerate supplier progress. Professionals must actively engage in cross-industry coalitions—like the SPP and HPE co-creation process—to shape standardised toolkits and build resilient medical supply chains.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [SPP Pharma & Life Sciences Chapter](#) and [SPP Public Procurement Chapter](#)

Session takeaways

2026 WSPD Closing Session – Around the table: what the reports say #25

The conversation: We closed with the current global trajectory of sustainable sourcing. Hosted by Thomas Udesen at Aldi Süd and co-founder of the SPP, the session drew on fresh research and data shared by Maxfield Weiss at CIPS, Diane Buzea at WBCSD, Marina Sutormina at UNOPS, Dexter Galvin at EcoVadis, and Jack Torrance at Procurement Leaders. We discussed how accountability for sustainability is actively shifting directly into the procurement function.

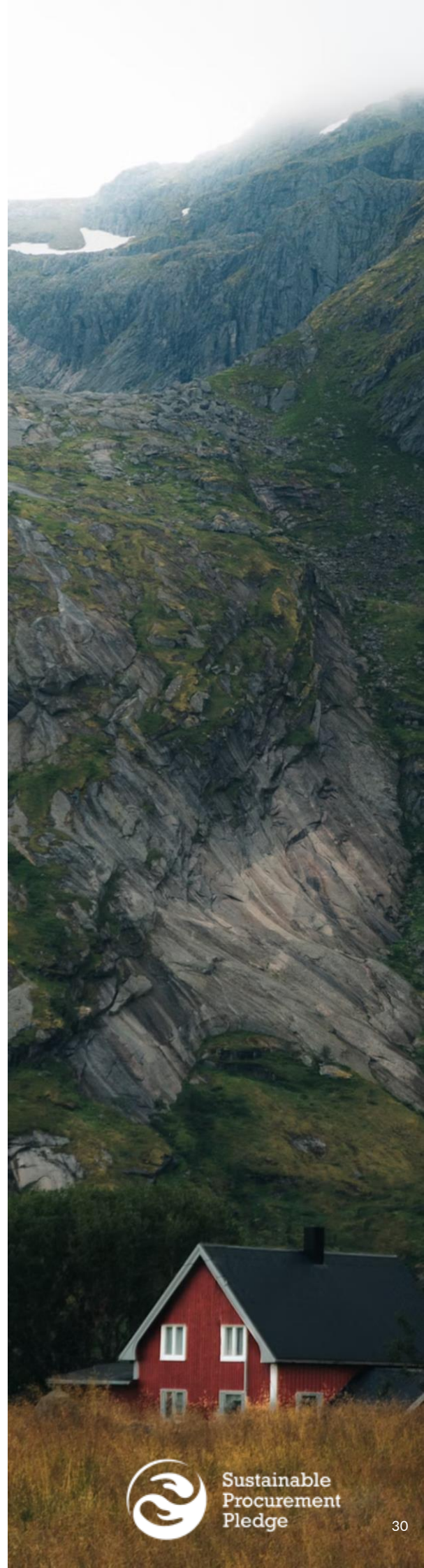
Insights & examples: Maxfield at CIPS revealed that the share of organisations placing primary responsibility for sustainability within procurement has doubled over the past year. Sustainability is no longer a separate corporate exercise; it is fully embedded into commercial sourcing decisions. EcoVadis data reinforced this, showing 87% of US executives are maintaining or increasing sustainability investments to secure competitive advantage despite political headwinds.

To accelerate execution, the WBCSD launched the open-access "Business Action Bank," offering practitioners over 250 concrete, replicable case studies detailing exact implementation steps and costs. Marina at UNOPS showcased the power of proactive supplier screening via their "Supplier Sustainability Drive," enabling them to successfully embed environmental and social criteria into over 60% of their global tenders.

Key learnings: Procurement professionals must recognise that they are now the primary owners of corporate sustainability execution. By leveraging open-source playbooks, embracing digital supplier screening tools, and holding firm on commercial ESG integration, practitioners can definitively shift from target-setting to measurable impact.

Watch the session recording: [Catch up on YouTube](#)

Get active: [Join the SPP Community](#)



Key resources

Links

[Climate Resilience Takes Root on India's Mint Farms](#): A WRI case study examining how smallholder mint farmers and their supply chain partners in India are building climate resilience through crop diversification, agroforestry, and strengthened market linkages.

[Empowering People to Build Resilient and Equitable Supply Chains – A CREST Initiative](#): Framework from the CREST initiative setting out how buyers can design supplier development programmes that simultaneously build resilience, equity, and sustainability capacity in SME supply chains.

[People Are Missing in Corporate Supply Chain Goals](#): Research showing that workers in SME supply chains are systematically excluded from corporate sustainability commitments, with recommendations for closing the gap between headline targets and supply chain reality.

[Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Enterprises \(RISE\)](#): ILO programme supporting SMEs in developing countries to build resilience while meeting international labour and environmental standards – a practical model for supplier development beyond compliance.

[Supplier Diversity Advocacy Organisations](#): A curated directory of organisations supporting supplier diversity across different regions, designed to help procurement teams identify the right local partners for expanding their diverse supplier base.

[Too Hot to Work – Heat Stress Inside Surat's Textile MSMEs](#): Field research documenting how extreme heat is reducing productivity and threatening worker health in India's textile SME sector, making the case for climate adaptation as a supply chain resilience issue.

[Responsible Sourcing Initiative](#): A cross-sector framework for integrating human rights and climate due diligence into sourcing decisions, designed to help procurement teams treat the two agendas as a single coherent process rather than parallel workstreams.

[BHRC 2025 Global Analysis – Human Rights Defenders Attacks Database](#): Business & Human Rights Resource Centre database tracking attacks on human rights defenders in business-related contexts globally, with particular relevance to extractive and critical mineral supply chains.

[BHRC 2025 Global Analysis – Just Transition Litigation Tracker](#): Tracker of legal cases related to just transition obligations, providing procurement teams with an early-warning view of where corporate accountability for transition-related harms is being tested in courts.

[BHRC 2025 Global Analysis – Stop and Listen](#): Analysis making the case for centring affected community voices in transition planning and supply chain due diligence, with practical guidance on meaningful stakeholder engagement in high-risk mineral regions.

[BHRC Transition Minerals Tracker](#): An intelligence tool tracking human rights risks and company performance across critical mineral supply chains – cobalt, lithium, nickel, and others – to support risk-based supplier engagement rather than disengagement.

[Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2025 – Executive Summary & Analysis](#): IEA analysis of supply and demand dynamics for minerals essential to the clean energy transition, providing procurement teams with the strategic context for sourcing decisions in high-risk mineral categories.

[WBCSD – A Mindset Shift on the Just Transition for Business](#): Guide challenging nine common assumptions businesses make about the just transition, offering procurement and supply chain teams a framework for integrating climate and social equity into a single coherent approach.

[WBCSD – Business Leaders Guide to a Just Climate Transition](#): Practical guide for business leaders on embedding just transition principles into corporate strategy, procurement policy, and supplier engagement – with sector-specific examples.

[Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health \(ATACH\)](#): WHO-convened coalition supporting health systems globally to decarbonise procurement and supply chains, offering a model for pre-competitive collaboration in a sector where sustainability and health outcomes are directly linked.

[API Workshop Report](#): Report from a practitioner workshop on sustainable health procurement, covering cross-sector collaboration mechanisms, value chain transparency, and practical approaches to embedding sustainability into health system sourcing.

[Health Proc Europe \(HPE\)](#): European network of health procurement professionals working collectively to embed sustainability into health system supply chains – a working example of the sector coalition model recommended across Convergence sessions.

[2025 US Business Sustainability Landscape Outlook – Full Report](#): Comprehensive report mapping the current state of business sustainability in the United States, including trends in procurement commitments, regulatory developments, and the gap between ambition and action.

[2025 US Business Sustainability Landscape Outlook – Summary](#): Condensed version of the full Outlook report, providing a quick-reference overview of where US businesses stand on sustainability and what is driving or stalling progress.

[Business Action Bank](#): A searchable database of sustainability actions with business case framing, enabling procurement teams to find evidence-based approaches with demonstrated commercial return across different categories and geographies.

[Carbon Action Report 2025](#): Annual report tracking corporate carbon action progress across sectors, providing procurement leaders with benchmarking data and a picture of where collective action is accelerating and where it is stalling.

[Early Market Engagement for Innovation, Efficiency, and Sustainability](#): Practical guide on how procurement teams can use early market engagement to stimulate sustainable innovation, shape supplier capability, and embed sustainability requirements before a formal tender process begins.

[Gender Responsive Procurement Report](#): Report documenting the evidence base and practical frameworks for embedding gender equality into procurement processes and supplier relationships, positioned as a business case for supply chain resilience rather than a compliance exercise.

[Promoting Decent Work Through Public Procurement](#): ILO guidance on using public procurement as a lever to advance decent work standards across supply chains, with country examples and policy recommendations applicable to both public and private sector buyers.

[UNOPS 'Purchase for Impact' Report](#): Report from UNOPS demonstrating how purpose-driven procurement generates measurable social, environmental, and economic impact – offering a replicable model for organisations seeking to align procurement spend with broader sustainability goals.

5 YEARS OF IMPACT



With thanks to our community

This is the power of procurement

This White Paper would not exist without the incredible people behind it. To our session organisers and speakers, thank you for your openness, energy, and willingness to share your experiences so generously. Your insights are what bring this guide to life, and we are proud to showcase your contributions here. To our volunteers working behind the scenes, thank you for your time, dedication, and support in making WSPD possible. A special thank you to Luke Abbot at Equipoise for his partnership in shaping this White Paper - transforming the wealth of insights shared across WSPD into a practical, accessible guide for the wider community. And to everyone featured here, thank you for being part of this movement and for continuing to push sustainable procurement forward.

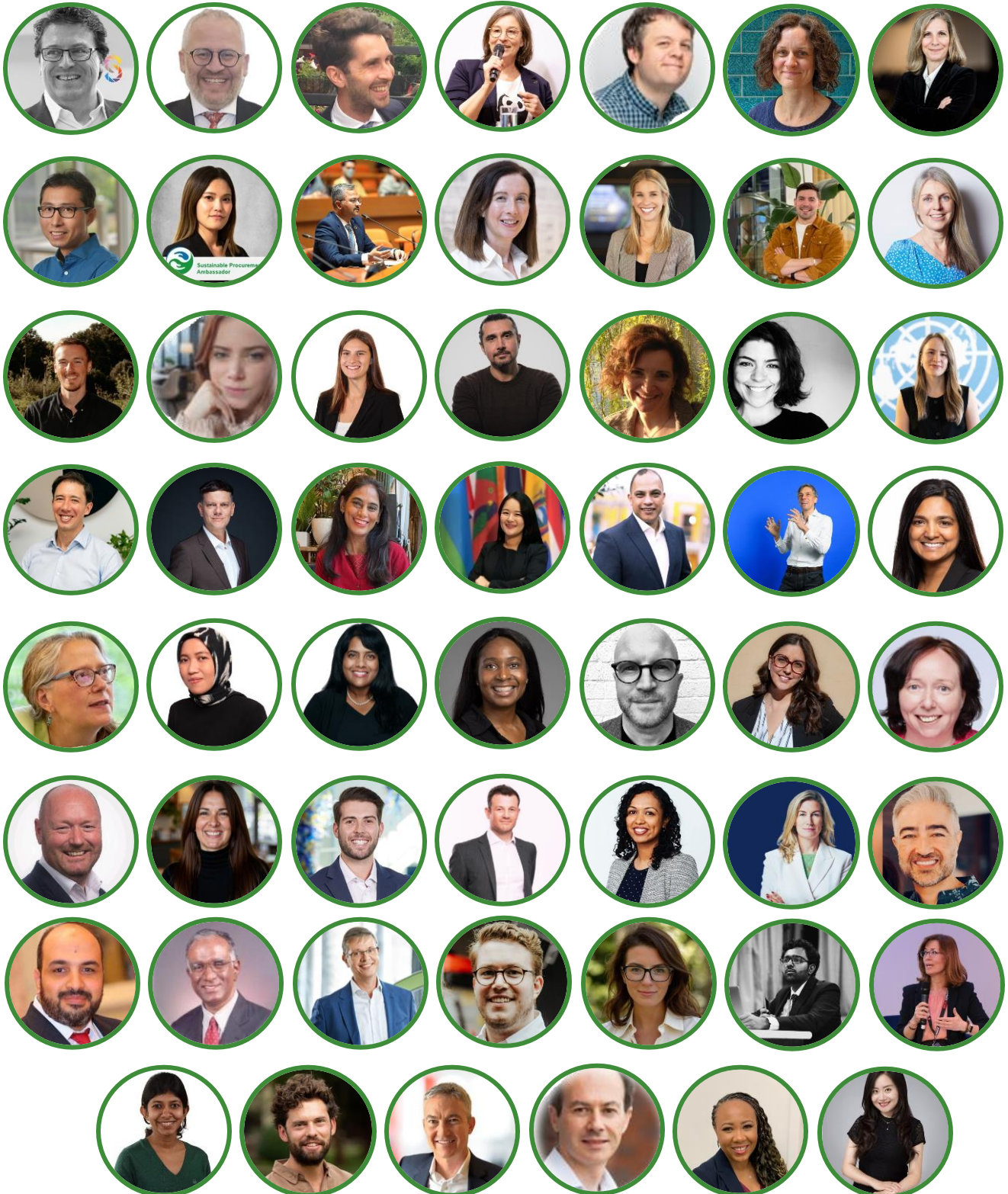


5 YEARS OF IMPACT



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Activate your power

Join the Community that gets it done!

About the Sustainable Procurement Pledge

The Sustainable Procurement Pledge (SPP) is an international grassroots and non-profit organization for procurement professionals, academics, and practitioners, driving awareness and knowledge on responsible sourcing practices and empowering people in procurement. With more than 18,000 ambassadors, SPP fosters the positive impact of procurement. The Pledge is based on the United Nations Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals and centers around five key principles of which the pledge comprises. These SPP principles set the frame and values for our collaboration, and how we collectively drive our vision that all individuals acting within global supply chains across the world will apply Sustainable Procurement practices by 2030. Learn more at spp.earth or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/spp-earth) or get in touch via info@spp.earth.

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Action over Noise: A Collective Guide For Sustainable Procurement

Leveraging sustainability as a driver of smart business strategy, resilience, and impact.