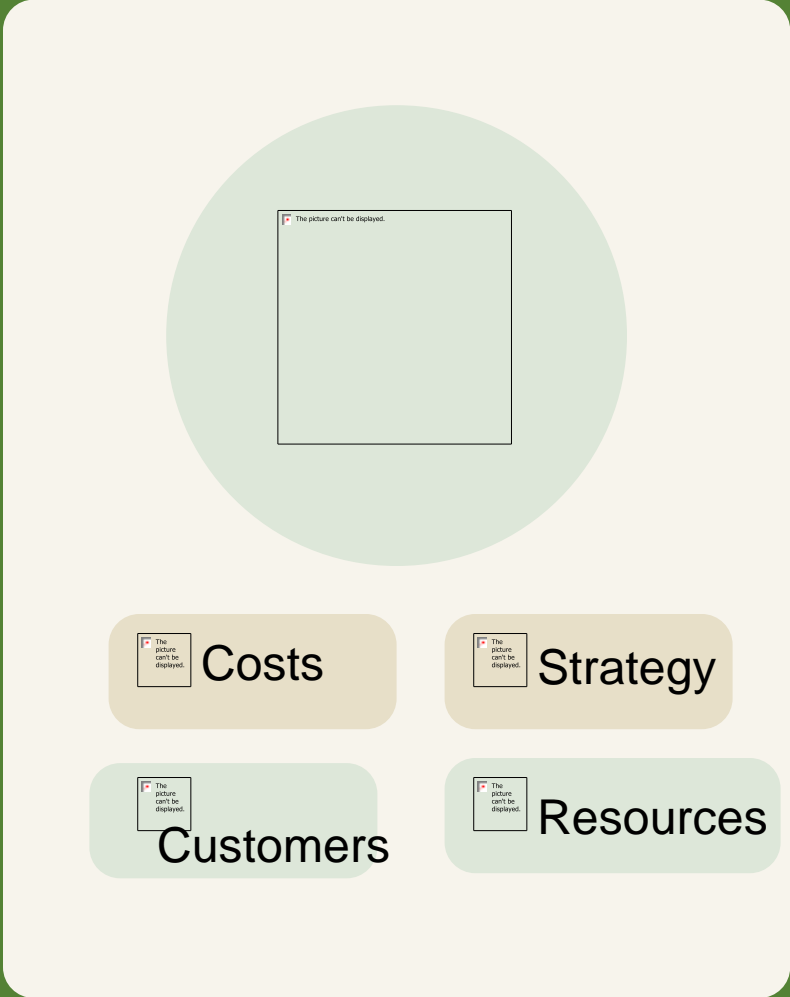


Sustainability in Business

30-minute presentation for young entrepreneurs and people planning to start a business

From cost to competitive advantage

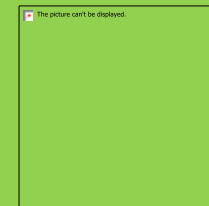


What we will cover in 30 minutes

From the basics to actions a new business can implement immediately

- 1 What sustainability in business means
- 2 Why it matters from the very start
- 3 Practical levers: product, operations, supply chain, people, data
- 4 How to assess whether a business is becoming more sustainable
- 5 Audience activities and a 30-day action plan

Core idea
Sustainability is not a separate project. It is a business-design choice — how to earn while using fewer resources and causing less harm.



Goal: think systemically

What sustainability in business means?

A business creates long-term value for itself, the customer, society, and the environment

Simply put: a sustainable business does not profit from excessive resource use, hidden costs, or short-term thinking, but from a smart model that can still grow in 3-5 years.



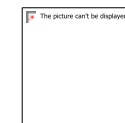
Economics

Profit, cash flow, efficiency, resilience



Social impact

Employees, customers, community, fair cooperation



Environment

Energy, materials, emissions, waste, nature

Important: in the long term, these three pillars are not in conflict. Good design allows one to strengthen the others.

Why think about it at the start of the business?

Decisions made early become expensive to change later



Lower costs

Less energy, fewer materials, fewer losses.



Stronger offer

The customer more easily understands why they should trust you.



Better reputation

New businesses can build a culture of trust and transparency from day one.



Easier to attract partners

In procurement, investor discussions, and partnerships, it becomes a filter.



Lower risks

Less dependence on price fluctuations, supply disruptions, and reputation crises.



More innovation

Sustainability constraints often create better business models.

Market signals: sustainability is becoming the norm

Even small businesses are already doing more than just sorting waste

93%

EU SMEs implement at least one resource-efficiency measure

25%

SMEs have a strategy to reduce their carbon footprint or achieve climate neutrality

12%

Generate renewable energy on site

23%

Purchase energy from a renewable energy supplier

What this means for a new entrepreneur

Sustainability is no longer a niche — it is becoming basic market hygiene.

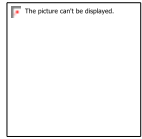
You will not compete only on price, but also on transparency and efficiency.

Pressure will often come indirectly: from customers, partners, and funders.



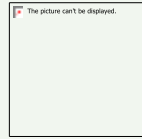
5 levers to make a business more sustainable

Start not with a perfect strategy, but with concrete design decisions



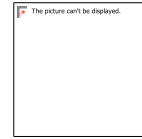
Product

Is it durable, repairable, recyclable, and free from unnecessary packaging?



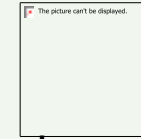
Operations

Energy, water, transport, premises, digital consumption.



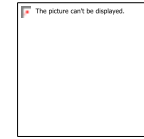
Supply chain

Who you buy from, what you buy, how far you transport it, and what you expect from partners.



People

Safe environment, fair relationships, clear internal culture, diversity.



Data

What you measure, you manage: waste, costs, returns, emission sources.

Practical priority: choose 1-2 levers with the greatest impact on costs and customer experience.

How it looks in practice across different business models

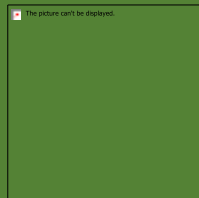
Sustainability is not one recipe — it must fit the way you make money

Business type	Sustainable choice	Business benefit
E-commerce	Less packaging, reusable boxes, smarter logistics	Lower cost per shipment, fewer returns
Services	Remote work, energy-efficient premises, digital processes	Lower overhead costs, faster service
Manufacturing	Fewer returns, recycled materials, repair	Lower raw-material costs, new revenue channels
Food	Local suppliers, reducing leftovers, seasonal offer	Fewer write-offs, a better story for the customer

What to measure when the business is small or just starting
You do not need a full ESG system yet — a few management metrics are enough

A good starting principle

Choose 5-7 metrics you can collect every month without a complex system. If the data does not help you make decisions, do not collect it just for a nice-looking report.



Energy
cost per product /
service

Customers
repeat purchases,
complaints, trust

Materials
raw material loss,
packaging per unit

Team
turnover, safety,
engagement

Waste
write-offs, leftovers,
damage

Delivery
distance, delivery
accuracy, partner
quality

Most common mistakes

Sustainability becomes ineffective when it remains only a story or a sense of guilt

What does not work



Starting with communication instead of real action.



Trying to do everything at once.



Ignoring economic logic and cash flow.



Not involving the team and suppliers.



Measuring activity, not results.

What works



First fix the biggest sources of cost and waste.



Focus on 1-2 priorities per quarter.



Treat sustainability as an improvement to the business model.



Build requirements into processes and collaboration criteria.



Measure changes and adjust decisions.

Audience activities

3 short tasks to turn the idea into your own business context

1

Impact map

Identify the biggest resource, waste, and social-impact points in your business.

Write down 5 main resource-consumption points.

Mark where waste or unnecessary costs arise. Identify the 2 most critical points.

7 min**2**

Business model redesign

Find one way to reduce negative impact while increasing customer value. Take one problem point. Come up with one change in the product or process. State how it helps the customer and the business.

10 min**3**

30-day step

Define one metric and one action that you will start measuring next month.

Choose one metric.

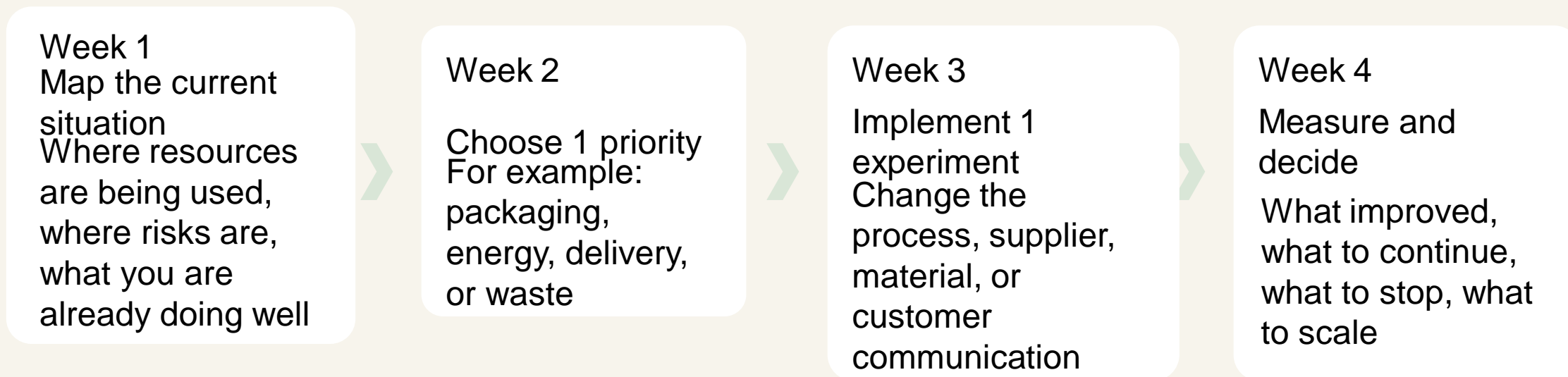
Define one action to test for 30 days.

Write down what success will look like.

5 min

30-day action plan for a new business

A simple rhythm to start with, even without a large team or budget



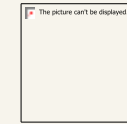
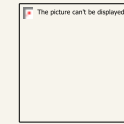
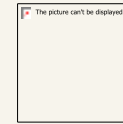
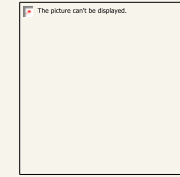
The key principle: not to be “perfectly sustainable,” but to reduce one significant loss or risk every month.

Conclusion

Sustainability is good business design

For a new venture, it means three things:

build a model that reduces waste,
strengthen trust with customers and partners,
make decisions that still work several years from
now.



A question to ask
yourself after this
presentation

Which one decision in
my future business
today will create less
waste and more value
tomorrow?