

Management summary GreenVision FM

This study on global Sustainable Facility Management was initiated by the Professorship Facility Management of the NHTV, Breda University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. It was done by four graduate students, who together formed the research group GreenVision FM and carried out under the supervision of the Professorship Facility Management.

The purpose of this project was twofold. The first of which is to find out what the possibilities are of one global community of FM associations, companies, NGO's (Non Governmental Organizations) and governmental organizations that work together by sharing knowledge, opinions, contacts and visions. This will be done by looking into and combining the fields of Facilities Management with Sustainability. The second mission is to start up a place where organizations can interact and communicate with each other on Sustainable Facility Management.

The official research question of the research was: *In what way can the Facility Management industry incorporate the principles of responsible/sustainable management on strategic level and in that way contribute **significantly to a sustainable earth on a global scale?***

In the perspective of the mentioned research question the focus was on defining what Sustainable Facility Management is in order to provide clear and solid input to contribute significantly to a sustainable earth. Consequently, the research problem is: ***There is a lack of knowledge sharing on the subject of Sustainable Facility Management. How can we stimulate the sharing of knowledge and go from talking to action.***

The **first phase** of the project focused on making an inventory of the needs on this subject and was about analysing and defining the processes where Facility Management has a strong relation with Sustainability.

Facility Management

GreenVision FM searched to describe what the context of Facility Management is. There are many definitions for Facility Management and therefore the correct one is hard to choose, one general assumption on Facility Management is that FM is responsible for the management of all supporting services. Research by GreenVision FM has shown that the following categories are internationally accepted as the main aspects within the Facility Management sector: security, catering, cleaning, health and safety, secretarial services, postal services, ground management, building management, IT & data management and telecommunication.

The IFMA (International Facility Management Association) definition was used to subdivide the different FM services, this subdivision can be made between people, processes, place and technology. The definition stated below was created by combining the definitions of the main FM associations and is accepted by Global FM:

"FM is the management activity which supports businesses, many other types of organizations and particularly the users of the built environment, through the provision of facilities and associated support services."

Sustainability

To uncover the generally accepted definition of Sustainability desk research was done. Sustainability is based on the principles of the Club of Rome. The Triple Bottom Line (People, Planet, Profit) of J. Elkinton (Elkington, 1994) was used as basis for this study. Sustainability has the following generally accepted definition which was stated in the Brundland report, published in 1987.

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

The following categories are internationally accepted as the main aspects within sustainability: human rights, local community, workforce possibilities, land contamination, emissions to air, biodiversity, use of resources, emissions to water, solid waste disposal, life cycle of building/products, transport, use of energy and marketplace. To subdivide the different Sustainability categories, Social, Environmental and Economic were used instead of People, Planet, Profit, the triple bottom line.

Sustainable Facility Management (SFM)

Currently no specific definition of Sustainable Facility Management has been defined. To solve this, GreenVision FM created a definition by integrating Facility Management and Sustainability into one definition. The definition is stated below:

“Sustainable Facility Management is the activity which encompasses multiple disciplines to ensure functionality of the built and live environment by creating a balance between environmental, social and economic aspects into the profession.”

By: GreenVision FM©, April

2009

Stimulate knowledge sharing

During the research it became clear that there is not enough knowledge sharing on the field of Sustainable Facility management. To realize Sustainable Facility Management knowledge sharing on a global scale, a “tool” needed to be developed where knowledge can be brought together. As input for the tool, information (knowledge) has to be brought together from various organizations that have multiple interests and with an international reputation. When good initiatives (prime examples) are shared, more and more organizations will give and receive input from the developed tool.

How to share knowledge

To dissect Facility Management and Sustainability a matrix that covers all the FM services and Sustainability categories was created by the research group. This matrix enables users to select the topics they would like information about. Eleven Facility Management services and thirteen Sustainability categories have been formed. Inside the matrix there are 143 confrontation areas where Facility Management has a relation with Sustainability. The lack of knowledge sharing can be solved by creating a web based open source platform where governments, businesses, NGO’s and individuals can come together to share knowledge on Sustainable Facility Management.

In order to create a good working platform it should be filled with prime example business cases on Sustainable Facility Management that are gathered from all kinds of organizations come together for anyone to see. The prime example business cases will function as examples for other organizations to make their processes more sustainable. The platform will also hold a forum where Sustainable Facility Management can be discussed and a literature section where researches and other literature can be published. Research has shown that organizations are willing to share their business cases on Sustainable Facility Management, GreenVision FM believes that uploading business cases (prime examples) will increase the organization’s reputation and therefore will add value to an organization.

The platform that has yet to be created needs to be led by a leading coalition that holds sustainability experts from different types of organizations. Favorably the leading coalition consists of members from governments, businesses and interest groups in order to create an impartial entity that is taken serious by numerous partners.

Business cases that will be published on the platform need to be assessed on several criteria; the business cases need to be sustainable, bearable or green in order to be

published on the platform. Before the business cases will be published, the leading coalition will give the case a rating. This rating consists out of the following topics that need to be assessed;

- Social influence
- Environmental influence
- Economic influence
- Transferability
- Complexity

The rating of the business cases will determine the impact a cell from the matrix has on Sustainable Facility Management. The more business cases that are on the platform, the more accurate the relation of the cell can be calculated. Readers of the platform will get the possibility to give a general rating to the case. This rating will be used to stimulate the dialogue on the platform's forum and as a tool for the leading coalition to determine which cases might get outdated.

When the platform is functional it will serve as an international repository of all kinds of prime examples business cases on the field of Sustainable Facility Management. Organizations will upload their own business cases that will show how they have tackled some problems on a sustainable matter, these examples can be copied by other organizations in order to create a Sustainable Facility Management sector on a global scale. The platform will keep itself alive by strictly controlling the input on the forum and by means of partnerships with FM industry organizations. Best practice cases from companies have been gathered and published in the matrix.

The research group contacted Global FM, the world-wide Facility Management association that is founded by the different national Facility Management associations (IFMA, BIFM, FMA, etc.). Global FM was established to shorten the communication lines between the different national associations. GreenVision FM spoke with the upcoming chairman, Teena Shouse and she offered a partnership with GreenVision FM because the scope of the research fits the research goals that Global FM formulated. Global FM will help to create bearing surface and to function as discussion partner for the project.

The research group hopes that the advice described in this research report will be converted into a good working global open source web portal that contains a lot of information and practical tips and tricks on how to conduct Sustainable Facility Management. This to create a more Sustainable Facility Management industry and therefore a more Sustainable world.