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Unilever Named #1 in 20th Annual Sustainability Leaders Report

by [Sustainable Brands](#)

May 19, 2014

The 2014 Sustainability Leaders

A GlobeScan/SustainAbility Survey



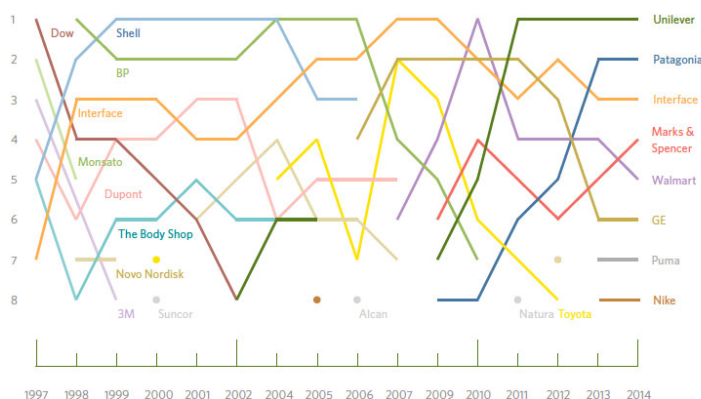
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A survey released this week of expert stakeholders from business, government, NGOs and academia across 87 countries shows that Unilever, Patagonia, Interface and M&S are viewed as leaders in corporate sustainability.

For the fourth year in a row, and by the largest margin yet, Unilever is regarded as the number-one corporate sustainability leader, with 33 percent of expert respondents identifying the company (up 8 points from 2013) as a “leader in integrating sustainability into its business strategy.” Nearly one in ten (9 percent, down 5 points) mention Patagonia, 7 percent mention Interface (down 4 points) and 6 percent point to M&S. Other companies named to the top 12 include: Nestlé, Natura, Nike, GE, Walmart (down 5 points), Puma, IKEA (first time in the top 12 list since 2004) and Coca-Cola.

The [Sustainability Leaders report](#) marks 20 years’ worth of the authors’ tracking and analysis of the evolution of the sustainability agenda, and of the leaders and institutions most responsible for driving it forward. The report provides an overview of perceived corporate sustainability leaders from 1997 to 2014 — my, how they’ve changed:

Ranking of Top 8 Leadership Companies, 1997-2014



“The standards of leadership are dynamic and the landscape of corporate leadership has evolved since 1997, including several distinct eras defined by a handful of influential and varied companies,” said SustainAbility’s Director of Research, Christ Guenther. “In the present era, the consumer products and food industries, represented in part by major retailers who exert significant influence over global supply chains, rise to the top.”

Eric Whan, Director of Sustainability at GlobeScan, said: “Comparing the current

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crop of recognized leaders with those from a decade ago, we see that we have moved from an era of 'do no harm' leadership where risk management was the dominant framework to one where early stages of transformation are emerging."

In other Unilever news, at an event last month the company's executives [reported progress](#) on its 10-year Sustainable Living Plan, launched in 2010, as well as its plans to further expand the ambitions outlined in the plan, to bring about broader change on a global scale. One area in which significant progress has been made is in the sustainable sourcing of agricultural raw materials, now standing at 48 percent (up from 14 percent in 2010) — later that week, Unilever announced the incorporation of [algae oils](#) into its Lux brand soap (branded Caress in the US), one way it is continuing to up the ante in this area.



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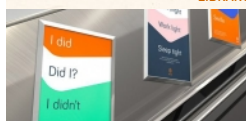
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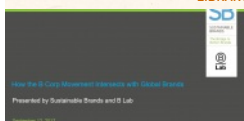
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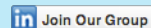
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