“The New Sustainability: Regeneration,” the latest report from The Innovation Group, explores the rising need for better sustainability. Doing less harm is no longer enough. The future of sustainability is regeneration: replenishing and restoring what we have lost and building economies and communities that thrive, while allowing the planet to thrive too.

2018 has seen record heatwaves on four continents, wildfires in the Arctic Circle and perilous water shortages in South Africa, Australia and India. Scientists now talk of a “sixth mass extinction” of wildlife, birds, insects and marine life. Living systems, they say, are in decline. And there’s no question that human activity is responsible.

Despite 195 countries signing up in 2015 to the Paris Agreement to reduce carbon emissions, global use of resources continues to exceed planetary boundaries. As governments struggle to keep the fragile Paris Agreement on track, businesses and brands have an opportunity to play a decisive role in the sustainable future.
What was perhaps once seen as a burden or a box-ticking exercise is now a major opportunity for innovation and even revenue. Peter Diamandis, executive chairman of the XPrize Foundation, says it best: “The world’s biggest problems are the world’s biggest business opportunities.”

According to conservative estimates, a new sustainable economy could be worth $12 trillion and create 380 million jobs. It’s potentially a win on many fronts for brands, which can drive efficiency and minimize exposure to risk while aligning with the values of stakeholders, from employees to customers.

Consumers are already operating from a sustainability mindset, even if they struggle to make it a lifestyle. They are increasing the pressure on brands to make it easier for them to do so, calling for greater transparency and pushing for more sustainable options.

To understand these consumer attitudes and behaviors across countries, The Innovation Group commissioned an original survey of just over 2,000 adults in the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and China. The study was conducted by SONAR™, J. Walter Thompson’s proprietary research unit.

Key findings include:

- 92% of consumers are trying to live more sustainably, but 54% think they could be doing more
• 92% of consumers say sustainable business practices should now be standard
• 90% of consumers say that companies and brands have a responsibility to take care of the planet and its people
• 91% of consumers think companies/brands that pollute the environment should be fined
• 86% of consumers agree that companies/brands that continue to deplete finite resources are stealing from the future

The report covers seven sectors. Highlights include:

**Natural Wellbeing**: the benefits of being in nature for our physical, emotional and mental wellbeing are increasingly being recognized. Can reconnecting with nature help us all live a healthier and happier life?

**Climate-Positive Commerce**: Retailers are offering convenient ways for conscious consumers to combat climate change.

**Good Business**: Good business is an opportunity for brands to have a positive environmental and social impact, and drive profit in the process.

**Fashion Cleans Up**: As consumers increasingly demand the facts behind the labels, the fashion industry is facing up to a number of environmental and ethical challenges.

**Vegan Evangelism**: Veganism is fast gaining widespread appeal, transitioning from niche to mainstream. Are we on the brink of a vegan revolution?

Download 'The New Sustainability: Regeneration' here.