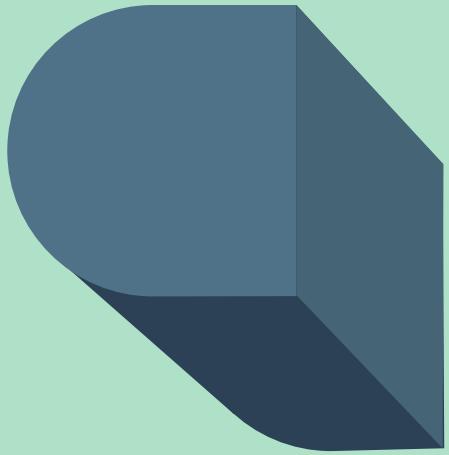




ESG GUIDE FOR THE PUBLISHING MARKET

How to Bring
Sustainability
into Your
Organization



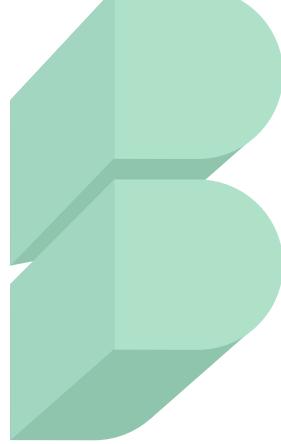
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HOW TO USE THE GUIDE



With this publication, we offer the members of the Brazilian Book Chamber (CBL) a practical guide with actions that contribute to make the book production chain increasingly sustainable—from an environmental and social point of view—, based on ethical and transparent governance. We sought to provide updated information and guidance, in a straightforward and practical way, in order to help organizations incorporate the ESG agenda (environmental, social, and governance) into their daily activities.

The main content of the guide is split into four chapters. The first one highlights the current moment of sustainability and its importance for the industry, emphasizing some key principals that must be adopted by any company to implement actions aligned with the ESG model.

The following chapters address specific matters related to environmental, social responsibility, and governance. At the end, you will also find references for further information on the topics covered.

Above all, the production of this guide was driven by the desire to provide members with a tool that serves as an ally in the pressing task that lies ahead for all companies, according to their profile, reality, and specific needs.



MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT

At the Forefront, Safeguarding the Future of the Publishing Market

An industry overlooking the future. This is a very appropriate way of describing today's publishing market, which is daily built through hard work.

With this in mind, the Brazilian Book Chamber created the CBL ESG Committee, and now presents the ESG Guide for the Publishing Market. I am very proud to share a piece which perfectly fits the demands of companies across all links in the book production chain.

From distributors to bookstores, including large and small publishers, the three ESG letters—representing the pillars of environmental, social, and corporate governance—must permeate the decision-making processes of entrepreneurs in our industry, and be taken into consideration in all strategic plans if we want to remain at the forefront, keeping pace with other Brazilian sectors that are innovating on this agenda.

With Brazil increasingly acting as a global key country and hosting events such as the Group of Twenty (G20), which will bring together world leaders to discuss sustainability, our guide becomes even more relevant.

Here, you will find updated information related to the ESG agenda, with guidance on how to apply environmental, social, and corporate governance initiatives in the various activities that bring books to readers, along with interviews with specialists on the subject, in a straightforward and practical way, focused on making our production chain increasingly sustainable, based on ethical and transparent governance.

I invite you to embark on this reading and collectively envision a publishing market that cares about the well-being and integrity of its professionals, the ecosystem of people impacted by our chain, and our planet. And, most importantly, with the ESG Guide for the Publishing Market, you will discover how you can start making the necessary changes toward a more sustainable future.

Happy reading!

Sevani Matos
President of the Brazilian Book Chamber



ATTRIBUTIONS OF CBL'S ESG COMMITTEE



CBL's ESG Committee aims to promote sustainable practices, social responsibility, and good governance in the publishing industry. Its main responsibilities include identifying and spreading initiatives that reduce environmental impact and encourage the use of recyclable and sustainable materials, as well as suggesting actions to reduce waste and increase energy efficiency.

In social responsibility, the Committee promotes efforts that can benefit publishing-related communities, encouraging inclusion and diversity programs, and supporting social projects that foster reading and education. In corporate governance, one of its tasks is the dissemination of best practices, setting guidelines for transparency and ethics, and supporting professional training.

One of the Committee's goals is the creation of a book club dedicated to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on the publishing industry's contribution to achieving the goals set. Furthermore, the group seeks partnerships with other entities to strengthen ESG initiatives, and works on setting metrics to evaluate the impact of social and environmental actions.



SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE



Every day, we are exposed to news, opinion pieces, studies, and movements that call for greater involvement in building a sustainable future for the planet. There is a growing concern and sense of urgency regarding climate change, the degradation of natural resources, and social vulnerabilities, among other issues.

In this context, consumers, investors, employees, and, to some extent, society as a whole are placing tangible demands on businesses across a wide range of industries to operate with social and environmental responsibility while pursuing their financial goals.

Thus, the ESG model is growing in importance. Alignment with an agenda that fosters the implementation of actions across these three pillars has become a key benchmark for evaluating companies, directly affecting market confidence, brand image, and even economic performance and results. Research shows that market analysts, for example, consider not only profitability and innovation capacity, but also corporate governance and the efficient management of environmental and social risks (both internal and external).

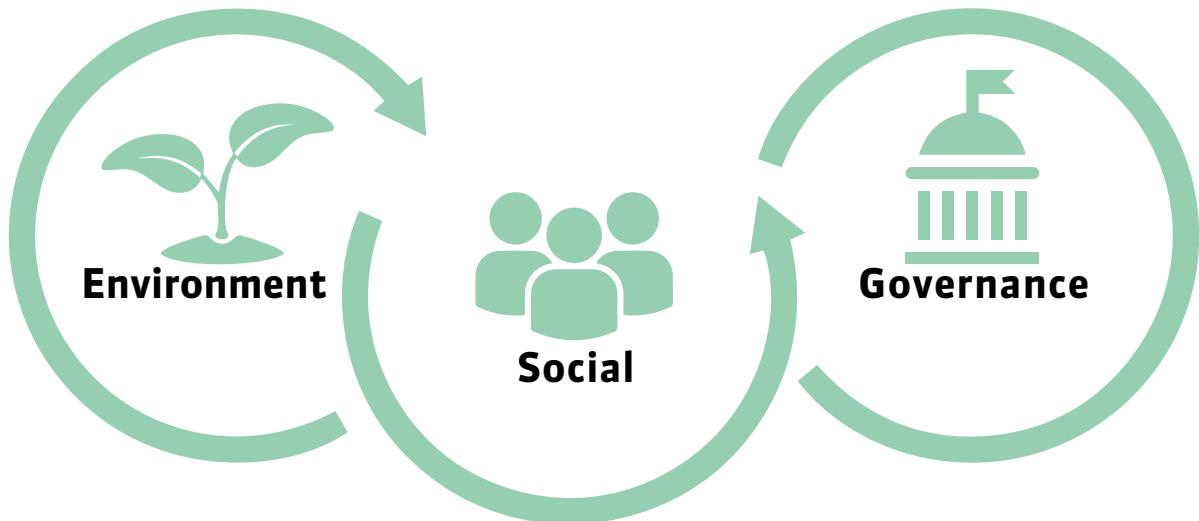
Governmental increase in the level of regulation is an equally important trend. Legislation has been expanding and becoming stricter in terms of environmental protection, compliance with labor and social standards, and requirements for transparency and integrity in corporate activities.

For all these reasons, now is the time to bring sustainability into organizations. Beyond mere compliance, organizations should aim at the benefits the ESG agenda can bring to society, striving to mitigate environmental and social impacts and improve relations with the audience, especially younger generations.

Whether your company is small or large, every step counts. Each action implemented and every successful program with tangible results makes a difference in this journey. Not all areas must be tackled at once and immediately, but there is no time to waste. What matters the most is the commitment to the collective pursuit of solutions to the issues that challenge society.

This Guide follows this direction, highlighting decisive requirements from the early stages and sharing possibilities and opportunities to support those who address sustainability issues in the world of books.





Sustainability and ESG

Learn more

The origins of the ESG (an acronym for environment, social, and governance) model date back to 2004.

A publication by the United Nations Global Compact and the World Bank reported the first meeting between major financial institutions to create a platform able to connect companies, public agencies, and investment professionals around an agenda that encompassed environmental, social, and governance topics.

Hence, one can have an idea of the difference between sustainability and ESG. Being sustainable is a broad concept related to the ability to meet current needs without jeopardizing the future generations' ability to meet their own needs.

The ESG model, on the other hand, provides criteria to objectively assess the performance of organizations in their efforts to reduce their social and environmental impacts through proper governance practices, and based on indicators that can be shared with investors and other stakeholders.

Where to Start

The first step to implement the ESG agenda is to work on the organization's purpose, which is necessarily linked to leadership. Managers must set the company and business' directions, as well as inspire and guide employees to also contribute within the scope of their responsibilities.

A company committed to sustainability views social and environmental issues broadly and, more importantly, strategically and directly related to business goals. Thus, it promotes the incorporation of actions and programs into corporate planning, encourages innovation in processes and products, and seeks to consolidate a favorable organizational culture that values proper practices and people engagement.

Once your organization adopts these practices, it should move on to learn about successful initiatives and effective approaches. In the book production chain, a recent initiative points exactly in this direction: the SDG Publishers Compact.

SDG Publishers Compact

In October 2020, the International Publishers Association (IPA), in partnership with the United Nations (UN), released a document listing ten actions to help the publishing industry accelerate progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since then, over 300 organizations—such as companies and associations, including CBL—have committed to the proposed compact, pledging to share data and best practices, and identify gaps that still need to be bridged. (See page 42 for references and links to the full text and the list of SDGs).

The ten commitments help answer a question many entrepreneurs and executives share when facing sustainability challenges: What can I do, and where should I start?

Furthermore, it is clear that there are two key aspects to the publishing industry.

The first is common to all sectors of economic activity. It concerns companies' commitment to the ESG agenda, which translates into effective measures put into practice in daily operations. For example: raising awareness and promoting the SDGs among employees and suppliers, as well as ensuring accountable leadership for advancing the topic internally.

The second aspect relates to the publishing industry, which, through authors and content published, can amplify the dissemination and promotion of sustainability to different audiences, starting with children. After all, publishers, distributors, and bookstores are part of an ecosystem that plays a key role in combating misinformation.



Stay tuned

The IPA document reinforces the idea that it is not advisable to try to embrace too broad a range of social and environmental causes. In item 10, the text recommends "adopting at least one SDG goal" and sharing progress achieved annually.

In the following chapters, we will describe opportunities in the environmental, social, and governance fields that, in some way, align with the SDGs.

Goals, Monitoring, and Communication

As in business, your company must set clear goals for the ESG agenda within the organization. This involves:

- Diagnosing the company's current situation in relation to the three areas of the ESG model.
- Identifying priorities, including areas with the greatest potential impact, both from the company's perspective and from that of its stakeholders.
- Setting measurable goals, with milestones to be achieved and deadlines for doing so.
- Setting indicators that enable monitoring the progress achieved, both in terms of quantity and quality.
- Communicating goals and results to internal and external stakeholders—a decisive step in building trust. Demonstrating that the company's commitment to sustainability translates into concrete initiatives fosters engagement among employees, suppliers, and other partners.

When evaluating results and, especially, when communicating them, it is essential to be transparent and consistent with what was truly accomplished. Any stance that could be interpreted as an attempt to exaggerate the company's achievements or to overstate actions of lesser impact can be extremely damaging to the business' and brand's reputation. This is known as "greenwashing," a misleading practice in which a company claims to be more environmentally responsible or sustainable than it really is, and "social washing," the overstatement of an organization's actual social initiative results.

Processes and People

Once your organization has set its goals within the ESG agenda, the next step is to review processes—so that they bring the desired effects—and ensure team engagement, covering all hierarchical levels and providing proper guidance to suppliers and partners.

Going beyond corporate boundaries, a valuable exercise involves actively listening to stakeholders and thus building collaboration mechanisms that can support the implementation of the ESG agenda in a viable and effective way in the long term.

Strategies to engage people may include training, recognition, and incentive tools, as well as social and environmental projects in collaboration with third parties.

Stakeholders and Audiences of Interest

Learn more

This is a useful distinction along the journey to bring ESG into your organization, especially regarding communication, listening, and engagement initiatives.

Stakeholders are those with whom the organization holds direct interaction. They include customers, business partners, suppliers, employees, investors, and groups with which it is important to maintain a positive relationship, with benefits for reputation and image.

Audiences of interest, on the other hand, form a broader group of people or entities affected by the company's activities or decisions, but with whom it does not necessarily hold a direct relationship. They may include specific communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and universities, for example. It is valuable to take into account the needs, concerns, and expectations of both audiences in the company's decision-making process.



“Bringing the industry together to act in time”

Interview with Karine Pansa

Partner and Editor-in-chief of Girassol Brasil, and President of the International Publishers Association (IPA)

What is the importance of the SDG Publishers Compact?

It is an important initiative that allows publishers to clearly state their commitment to the SDGs and take the first practical steps toward achieving the proposed goals.

Many publishers are already making changes through the books they publish. However, the Compact also helps them reflect on how to run their businesses in line with the SDGs.

Since the launch of the Compact in 2020, over 300 publishers and publishers associations have signed the document. We have seen strong interest from publishers and their associations in sharing best practices, and this community is leading the way.

What is your assessment of the current state of ESG practices in the publishing industry?

From an international perspective, organizations are at very different stages. I believe that most major publishers have already incorporated ESG principles into their businesses. The latest report from the Publishing 2030 Accelerator focused on the accounting aspect of business, and how this could affect publishers' approach to sustainability.



At the same time, the majority of publishers are small and still face greater difficulty in directly engaging with the ESG agenda, despite their interest in social and environmental issues. There are also regions where publishing a book is such a logistical challenge that turns sustainability into an afterthought. In these cases, publishers associations can play a key role in supporting the entire industry.

Could you mention initiatives that stand out?

There are many initiatives worth highlighting. For example: the UK Publishers Association launched a carbon calculator that allows its members to monitor carbon emissions across various aspects of business, assessing their performance from a sustainability perspective.

At IPA, we have the SDG Dashboard, which highlights different initiatives from various publishers and associations, ranked by SDG.

What are the main challenges the industry faces in advancing the ESG agenda?

The main challenge will be to gather the entire industry, internationally, around a common goal. Each market has its own regulatory framework and obstacles.

As with most activities across different industries, the question is whether we will be able to act in time.

In addition to implementing sustainable actions, how can the industry contribute to the debates on the topic?

We can drive conversations about the SDGs to a wide variety of audiences. The SDG Book Club, for example, has shown there are great works that make SDG-related topics accessible to young people.

What message would you like to leave for the publishing industry?

I would very much like to encourage all publishers around the world to take the first step, even if it is a small one. Sign the SDG Publishers Compact, identify an aspect of your business where you can focus on to make improvements, and then, do not act alone. Work with local associations to share the lessons you have learned and seek to learn from other publishers who are also on this journey.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

When it comes to the environmental dimension of the ESG model, the overall goal of an organization, regardless of its size, should be to mitigate or reduce the negative impacts of its activities, and the risks associated to them, which is an essential step for ensuring operations and the business are sustainable in the long term.

There are impacts common to most companies and sectors of the economy, such as greenhouse gas emissions and waste generation. Similarly, there are issues related to management and support activities, which occur within offices but also involve external work, such as commuting by car and air travel, for example.

At the same time, one can identify specific opportunities associated with book production and, therefore, throughout the publishing industry's value chain. Finally, each company can set its own environmental goals according to its profile, the work it performs, its stakeholders, and even the characteristics of the location in which it operates.

With such a wide range of possibilities to explore, it is essential to understand your company's current environmental impacts by running a thorough assessment of its environmental performance in relevant areas of its operations. After that comes the stage of setting priorities and realistic goals, as well as how to achieve them, including improvement plans.

Stay tuned

When assessing the possible environmental impacts of your company's activities, remember you may not need to start from scratch. There might already be practices, even everyday ones, that are heading in the right direction and can be leveraged, expanded, or improved.



Opportunities in the Value Chain

Analyzing the value chain of the publishing industry can help companies and professionals identify different perspectives in order to optimize processes, avoid waste, reduce costs, and achieve efficiency gains that, in addition to benefiting the business, also bring direct and indirect benefits to the environment.

This means reviewing every stage of book production—including authors, suppliers, printers, couriers and so on—until it reaches the reader. The IPA Publishers Compact (see p.14) itself mentions the importance of collaboration and partnerships in the development and implementation of innovative actions and solutions.

In this context, equally relevant is risk management, which must be mapped, assessed, and measured across all the chain. In addition to the risks related to each company, it may also be necessary to take into account those related to the activities of suppliers, service providers, and business partners.

**Stay
tuned**

Innovation is key in seeking new processes, alternative approaches, and incremental improvements to respond to sustainability demands, especially in the environmental field. It is worth encouraging creativity by fostering an environment in which teams feel comfortable suggesting new ideas and even testing them without fear of failing.

While striving for innovation, keep in mind that technological changes and the availability of products with lower environmental impact are growing every day. Nothing is definitive in this field. What matters is having an open eye to new developments and studying how to implement changes.

Regardless of specific assessments and efforts, some topics are already emerging as potential opportunities for environmental gains, including direct benefits for businesses, such as cost optimization:

Paper: ongoing advances in this area pave the way for increasing alignment with best environmental practices (see specific text further ahead).

Graphic design and specifications: resource and energy savings can be achieved, for example, by choosing a book format that minimizes paper waste, adopting sustainable bookbinding processes, designing plastic-free products, or using non-oil-derived resources. The font used in texts can also reduce the book size without affecting readability, affecting the entire production, distribution, and sales chain. Durability must also be considered. For example, plastic laminates for book covers are more durable, yet less environmentally friendly than machine varnish, especially in water-based formulations. Hardcovers are more robust but less sustainable. In some cases, it may be preferable to have more fragile books, since they are easy to recycle.

Encouraging circularity: this is a relevant concept in tackling waste and excessive waste—one that is gaining increasing traction in various sectors. It is interesting to support the donation of second-hand books to libraries, schools, and community organizations, for example, to extend their lifespan, and, likewise, to facilitate the recycling of those which are no longer useful, along with waste picker cooperatives and other community initiatives. Furthermore, in the book production process, concern for paper waste is crucial, including trimmings or scraps, which can be reused or used as byproducts, including stationery.

Other materials: inks, glues, finishes, and laminates usually contain polluting and non-renewable ingredients. It is worth learning more about alternative and eco-friendly materials, and studying the environmental and financial impacts in partnering with printing companies to make a more reasonable decision.

Printing: printing with water-based ink is growing. Additionally, digital printing is evolving and may be an option in some cases, such as for smaller runs and to fill inventory gaps.

Energy consumption: printing companies must ensure the energy efficiency of their equipment and, ideally, seek renewable energy sources—if not directly, then through the free energy market, which can also result in lower rates. This is also convenient for offices, considering each company's energy consumption and supply characteristics.

Packaging: it is increasingly possible to find renewable alternatives to plastic and other unsustainable materials.

Transportation: it represents an important environmental impact due to greenhouse gas emissions. However, there is a significant challenge related to the country's size and the predominance of highways. One possibility is promoting logistical efficiency, mainly regarding the volume of items transported and route selection. For air shipping, it is always recommended to try to reduce the number of flights. In case it is not possible, seeking compensation may be an option.

Release: one of the main issues in this regard is the materials used, as well as potential waste and waste generation. Find ways to collect samples or learn more about the adequate disposal of such materials.

Waste: it is highly recommended to have a waste management system ranging from packaging reuse to the disposal of recyclable waste generated on a daily basis. In offices, ensure the proper disposal of all waste and, if possible, use specialized waste management services. All office waste can be properly disposed, from paper recycling to the conversion of organic waste into biomass.

Electronics disposal: when replacing computers and printers, look for venues dedicated to receiving, recycling, or recovering these devices. They can be donated or disassembled for components.

Water consumption: a sustainable future involves conscious water consumption. Start by identifying and monitoring the main sources of water use in your operations to assess opportunities for reduction and optimization. Gains often come from more efficient processes, preventive maintenance, and changes in people's behavior.

Cooling gases: safe handling and storage practices to avoid leaks and reduce health and environmental risks.

When replacing or disposing cooling equipment, please consider proper recycling or recovery of cooling gases. Certified recycling services are also available.



Paper Consumption

The paper industry stands out for its supply of sustainable raw materials, renewable energy, and significant recycling rates. In Brazil, the pulp and paper industry plants over three million hectares of trees for its own consumption, encouraging sustainable forest development and purchasing timber from reforestation companies and qualified independent producers. In addition to planting trees for industrial use, it preserves natural forest areas.

More recently, the trend toward using certified paper—that is, paper recognized as having been produced in a more sustainable and responsible manner—has been gaining momentum. There are several certifications available, among which are the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), and, at the national level, the Brazilian Forest Certification (CERFLOR).

In practice, certifications evidence the paper comes from sustainably managed forests, where environmental laws and labor rights are observed. In parallel, they may include requirements for biodiversity conservation, protection of sensitive areas and reduction of the environmental impact of forestry operations.



Forest Certifications

Learn more

These initiatives aim to promote environmentally adequate, socially beneficial, and economically viable forest management practices; ensure the traceability of products back to the wood source; and support the marketing strategy for certified products.

FSC is an independent, non-profit organization founded in 1994 from the need to ensure environmental conservation and the sustainable development of forests worldwide.

CERFLOR is a national forest certification initiative, whose standards are developed within the scope of the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT) and whose applications are managed by the National Institute of Metrology, Quality, and Technology (Inmetro). It is endorsed by PEFC, an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organization created in 1999.

It is also important to know there are two types of certification: forest management, which guarantees the wood used comes from a responsibly managed forest; and chain of custody, which provides traceability of the certified raw material through all stages of transformation, from the forest to the end consumer.



Management and Support

Management and support roles, essential to the operation of any company, provide daily opportunities for rational energy consumption and reduced use of plastic and paper, among other items. Attention should be on commuting and travel, by either car or plane, considering measures such as:

- Prioritizing ethanol-powered or hybrid vehicles.
- Supporting the use of alternative means of transportation.
- Limiting air travels, especially international ones.

Carbon Offsetting

Learn more

Companies committed to sustainability should always strive to significantly reduce carbon emissions, although this is not always feasible. In these cases, there are alternatives, such as offsetting. This system allows reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This offsetting of emissions is achieved through carbon reduction or capture initiatives. For example, planting trees to capture and store carbon from the atmosphere, or even preserving existing forests, preventing them from deforestation and carbon release.

Another possibility is purchasing carbon credits in equivalence to the emissions, thus helping to sponsor sustainable projects.



Sustainability in Retail

Through direct contact with consumers, bookstores have several opportunities to engage with sustainability, both in relation to the environment and social issues affecting society. Therefore, they can improve the company's brand and reputation, attract conscious customers, engage employees, and stand at the forefront of a movement that is increasingly taking hold in various retail sectors.

From an environmental perspective, how stores handle materials such as paper, packaging, and plastic items, as well as the responsible use of electricity, makes all the difference. Waste management, the use of renewable energy sources, water management, and the use of eco-friendly cooling gases are other initiatives that can be physically implemented in the bookstores.

Creativity should also be a plus—for example, using your space for various activities, such as collecting recyclable materials, promoting debates, and showcasing best practices.

Promoting Environmental Issues

According to the IPA SDG Publishers Compact, the publishing industry's mission is to promote content addressing SDG matters, such as equality, sustainability, justice, and environmental preservation. This involves spreading knowledge, fostering debate on topics such as the scarcity of natural resources and the climate crisis, and combating misinformation. This can start with children, awakening them for the sustainable future of the planet.



SOCIAL ACTIONS

Social work within the ESG model is quite comprehensive: it ranges from promoting diversity to social responsibility through actions that contribute to community well-being, including caring for the health and safety of employees. In the case of the publishing industry, it is also possible to include publishers, distributors, and bookstores, which must support topics such as equity and freedom of expression, pillars of CBL's work.

In all these aspects, it is not about reducing the harmful effects of activities, but generating positive social impact. In other words, through concrete actions and management practices, the publishing world can play a significant role in building a fairer, more equitable, and sustainable society.

These actions impact mainly three stakeholders: employees, the community, and society. Despite the multitude of potential actions, some topics stand out and offer excellent opportunities for effective work.

Bibliodiversity

Learn more

A newly popular concept is bibliodiversity. The idea is to promote greater diversity in the publishing world, reflected in the representation of different ethnic, religious, linguistic, and regional identities, as well as various literary genres and several forms of linguistic expression, and the many topics that concern society today.

A very clear benefit of bibliodiversity is that it allows a greater number of readers to see themselves in the book pages. This applies both to adults—who consume works of literature, for example—and children and young people, whose education involves school libraries and classroom readings.





Employee Development and Care

Offering good jobs and professional opportunities contributes to the social well-being of the communities where companies operate. However, it is necessary to go further, supporting people's growth through individual development plans (personal and professional) and training courses. Development, in turn, must take place in a healthy, safe, and inclusive work environment.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity

Across all segments, one of the central topics on the agenda of companies committed to the ESG model is how to promote diversity, inclusion, and equity, both inside and outside the organization, and in a society as diverse as Brazil's, fostering a more inclusive culture is crucial.

This involves promoting diversity at all levels of the organization—from the bottom to the top—including gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation equalities and skills. As with other elements of the ESG model, this is a challenge that must be assessed from the perspective of benefits, not obligations. Several essays show greater diversity drives innovation, as well as decisions that are more connected to the tripod of perspectives, habits, and preferences that make up society.

Aim at ensuring a plural environment where everyone can reach their full potential and be valued for their unique abilities. Concrete measures also include building an inclusive culture through standards and awareness campaigns, as well as training support.

More Women in Leadership Positions

Stay tuned

In order to learn how to increase diversity in the publishing industry, it is worth exploring an initiative that has been gaining traction worldwide: PublisHer, a movement aiming to address gender inequality. Among the issues to be overcome, one of the most significant is the lack of mobility and career progress, which effectively holds women back from moving from operational roles to strategic positions.

Promoting diversity and inclusion within the organization effectively contributes to greater equity. This principle, however, must also translate into fair and transparent compensation policies and benefits accessible to all employees. Beyond the company's borders, similar criteria must be adopted for suppliers and service providers.

Accessible Books

Learn more

Nation-wide accessibility is set forth in several legal instruments, such as the Brazilian Inclusion Law. People with disabilities, for example, are granted the right to culture and entertainment with equal opportunities. In practice, this means access to cultural assets, such as books in accessible formats—digital files that can be recognized and accessed by screen reader software or other assisting technologies that may replace them—allowing for reading with machine speech, large print, different contrasts, and braille printing. CBL supports initiatives to ensure book accessibility.

Social Responsibility

Social responsibility can be understood as the set of practices allowing a company to make a difference in the communities in which it operates and in society, which involves business conduct, corporate management, and specific projects.

A key step is respecting and protecting human rights in all operations and supply chains, fighting discrimination, child labor, and other violations.

Infrastructure, health, education, and cultural initiatives can directly influence social and economic development, as well as the quality of life of residents. This, in turn, helps reduce social inequalities, generating greater equity.

The process of developing and implementing cultural and educational initiatives is as important as the goals. Initiatives are always welcome, but for them to be more effective and reach the audience more successfully, look for an open, ongoing, and transparent dialogue and, above all, actively listen with respect, empathy, and sensitivity to the needs, concerns, and interests of communities. This way, it is possible to shape a long-term relationship, which is more productive than one-off achievements.

It Is Good for Everyone

Social responsibility must run through the entire book value chain. Publishers, distributors, and bookstores must follow responsibility principles and be able to implement social initiatives tailored to the needs of their businesses and target audiences. Partnerships with non-profit organizations provide an effective way to diagnose needs and prioritize actions.

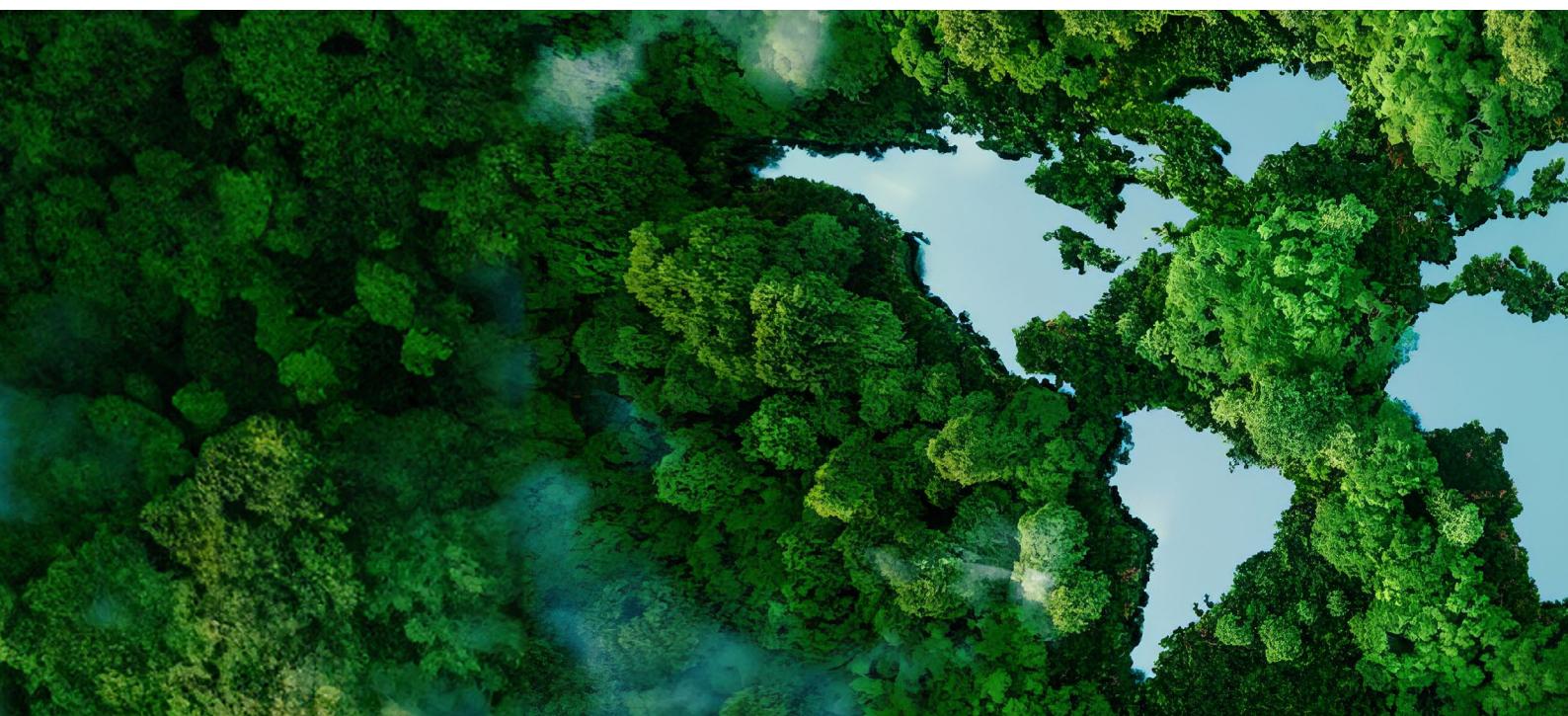
Education

Due to the obvious connection with books and reading, investments in education are a natural fit for companies in the publishing industry. In addition to filling specific gaps, educational projects increase employment opportunities and, therefore, social development.

Here, inclusive education stands out, based on making sure children and young people, regardless of their individual characteristics, have access to high-quality education, while respecting individual differences and needs. This approach is especially valuable for children with disabilities. Learn more about similar projects, which often involve partnerships between different stakeholders, including governments, schools, civil society organizations, and other companies.

Content that Makes a Difference

Indisputably, books are a powerful tool for building a better society and a better planet. The diversity of authors, themes, and formats, among other aspects, proactively meets a growing demand for representation and inclusion from readers and social groups. Thus, companies in the book value chain simultaneously enjoy the benefits of meeting social demands and strengthening their brands and market positioning.



Freedom of Expression

Equally important is the defense of freedom of expression, a basic condition for the dissemination of knowledge, debate, and the progress society strives for. Recently, CBL was among the signatories of an international statement on the freedom of expression. “It is the responsibility and mission of publishers, booksellers, and librarians, through their professional judgment, to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing everyone with access to authors’ works,” the document states.

Social Role of Books

Directly or through representative entities, such as CBL itself, it is important that all companies taking part in the book production chain act to fully fulfill the social responsibility of the publishing industry: generating jobs and income; spreading information and sharing knowledge; educating children, youth, and adults; promoting the free expression of the multiple voices that make up society; promoting debates that respect democratic principles; and several other fronts.





GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY

Governance is key to ensure that companies act sustainably, with social and environmental responsibility, and can bring benefits to all their stakeholders, beyond corporate boundaries. To a large extent, this is the “how” of the ESG model.

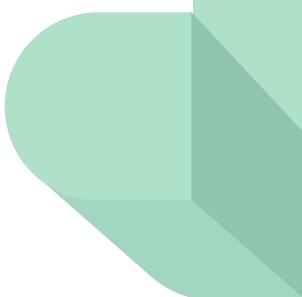
Through governance practices, companies create structures and processes that make decision-making transparent, including those affecting environmental and social actions. Such transparency should be in agreements throughout the value chain, preferably with due formalization.

Measures promoting good governance include setting clear policies, accountability, and compliance with laws, regulations, and standards of conduct. Effective governance also benefits companies by helping to mitigate risks and protect the brand reputation and senior leadership.

Integrity plays a special role in the governance agenda within the ESG model. Adherence to ethical principles and the adoption of mechanisms that ensure compliance with standards strengthen the trust bonds within the company’s value chain, as well as between investors, customers, employees, and the community.

Stay tuned

Good governance practices are not limited to larger corporations. While large companies tend to have more complex structures, small and medium-sized businesses can benefit from measures and actions tailored to the ESG model, proportional to their size, corporate structure, and activities, for example.



Governance Instances

One of the purposes of governance is to promote more effective, accountable, and transparent management—one that is not concentrated in the hands of a few. Governance bodies are key instruments for achieving this goal, with their decision-making, control, and monitoring systems.

A good example, adopted by most large companies, is the independent Board of Directors, responsible for setting the company's strategy and overseeing executive management. In smaller companies, on the other hand, an Advisory Board, made up of external experts, may be a valuable tool for strategic guidance and risk mitigation, for example. Equally important for governance is an internal control body, which is the case with internal audit and the compliance department.

Therefore, as a first step, you must understand your organization's context and, based on this assessment, design a governance model that can work well. It is important to consider aspects such as company size and complexity, business and activities characteristics, specific needs, structure, organizational culture, and even long-term goals.



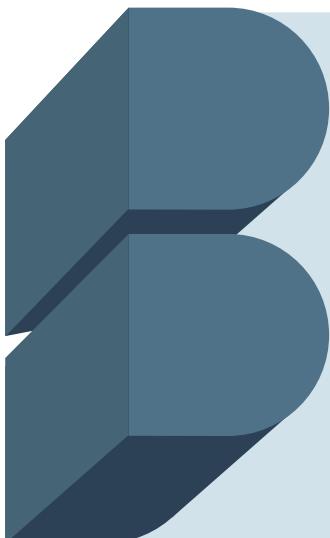
Compliance

In the ESG model, effective compliance efforts are essential. In practice, this means “being in compliance,” ensuring compliance with standards and legislation.

In large companies, compliance activities comprise integrity programs, along with a Code of Ethics, corporate policies, and a report channel, based on confidentiality and the expeditious processing of reports received. Equally common is the development of anti-corruption policies, which focus especially on setting out rules for interactions with public bodies. Training, internal campaigns, and progress monitoring are crucial to fostering a culture of ethics and integrity.

However, even small companies can benefit from appointing a professional—or a leader—dedicated to compliance activities, with know-how and experience in the regulatory field, especially regarding those affecting the publishing industry.

Above all, they must have the autonomy to make decisions without undue internal interference or external pressure, including disciplinary measures and policy and procedure reviews.



Anti-Corruption Act

Learn more

Established in 2013, and also known as the Clean Company Act, it has become one of the main interests of Compliance in all companies. In practice, it requires organizations to create more internal standards, spread ethical values, control mechanisms, and punishments. It also sets that companies can be held liable for acts of corruption, regardless of fault or intent.

Code of Ethics

An initiative accessible to organizations of all sizes and profiles is the creation of a Code of Ethics, which plays a very important role in setting a culture that promotes integrity and transparency, sharing a clear message of commitment to best governance practices with the market. For smaller companies with leaner management structures, this can be an even more decisive step.

The decision of having a Code of Ethics can bring benefits from the very beginning of the drafting process, allowing the participation of employees and even other stakeholders at certain stages. This approach strengthens trust bonds and paves the way for the commitment required to comply with the rules.

Once completed and validated by company leadership, the Code of Ethics will have the main role of setting standards of conduct for everyone working in the organization and third parties, making an objective distinction between the expected and unacceptable behaviors. It works as a guide for potential ethical dilemmas, for example, by setting procedures for dealing with situations in which personal interests may conflict with the company's interests.

Codes of conduct also generally reflect the organization's commitment to free competition and free enterprise, not just through compliance with national legislation. A specific chapter on this topic should include rules on advertising, pricing practices, commercial relations, among others.

Stay tuned

Along with developing the Code of Ethics, intensive communication of the principles of integrity and respect for the law is intrinsic to implementing an ESG agenda. Policies and standards are very important, but they make a difference only as they reach people in their daily activities.

GDPL

A law that has been challenging companies, especially those handling content, is the General Data Protection Law (GDPL). For the publishing industry, its impact involves:

- Data related to employees and other stakeholders in the editorial process (authors, translators, proofreaders): the GDPL ensures the information is strictly protected.
- Readers and consumers: their data is also protected. Information must be transparently processed, with the consent of the data subjects.
- Marketing actions: still permitted, but requiring adaptation. In general, it is essential to maintain transparency regarding the collection and processing of data, always asking for the data subject's consent.





MORE SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Trade fairs, exhibitions, conferences, and other events involve a wide variety of materials, resources, and processes, hence the opportunity to show your commitment to sustainability through practical measures. Check out some tips.



Choose recycled and recyclable materials, or materials that can be reused at other events.



Whenever possible, choose small, local suppliers.



Use equipment and furniture that will be used in future editions of your event.



Make sure suppliers use modern, energy-efficient technology.



Transparently disclose event data related to environmental, social, and governance aspects.



Try to reduce packaging.



Plan in advance the proper disposal of waste and everything you will use at your booth.



Strive for offsetting carbon emissions from flights.



Try to use electric cars for transportation in the vicinities of the event.



Promote diversity during the event.



Promote the SDGs and sustainability topics.



Use accessibility criteria at the event venue, in lectures, and in printed materials, for example.



Provide recycling bins.



Opt for LED lighting.



Make sure to turn off the lights at night.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

SDG Publishers Compact

<https://sdg.internationalpublishers.org>
<https://sdg.internationalpublishers.org/sdg-publishers-compact/>

Global Compact

<https://www.pactoglobal.org.br/>

Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)

<https://www.cdp.net/en>

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

<https://www.globalreporting.org/>

CBL — Book club

<https://www.cblservicos.org.br/clube-de-leitura-ods/obras-selecionadas/>

Two Sides

<https://twosides.org.br/>

Leading with values

<https://ideiasustentavel.com.br/lideranca-com-valores/>

Brazilian Institute of Corporate Governance

<https://www.ibgc.org.br/>

All for education

<https://todospelaeducacao.org.br/>

Alana Lab

<https://alana.org.br/alana-lab/>

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