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The Business Case for Corporate Sustainability: Literature Review and Research Options

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In the last ten years, the notion of a "business case"™ for corporate sustainability has increasingly been used by the corporate sector, environmental organizations, consultancies and so on, to seek justification for sustainability strategies within organizations. In this paper, we aim to systemize and assess existing research and tools related to this increasingly popular concept. We present a review of (1) theoretical frameworks, (2) instrumental studies aiming to either prove or disprove a hypothesized causal sequence between corporate social or environmental performance and financial performance, (3) descriptive studies examining managers'™ actual perceptions and practices, and finally (4) tools. We identify a clearly insufficient understanding of managers'™ key arguments or business logic for adopting corporate sustainability strategies (how "business cases"™ are built, how effective they are and what barriers they face). We attribute this primarily to lack of descriptive research in these areas.



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Keywords

Corporate sustainability; Business in society; Environmental performance; Financial performance; Corporate social responsibility

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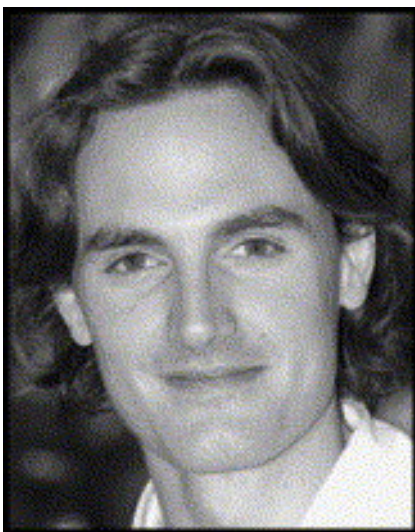
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