THE RING

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

2020-2023

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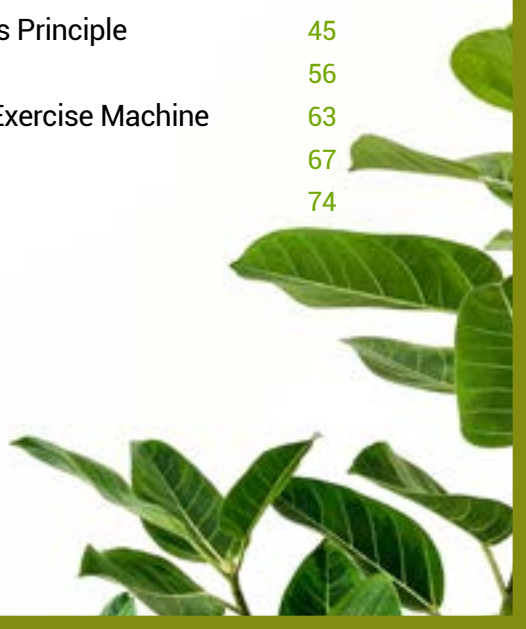

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CO2	Carbon Dioxide
CO2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
COO	Chief Operations Officer
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
GHG	Green House Gas
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GWP	Global Warming Potential
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCA	Life Cycle Assessment
MT	Metric Ton
ROI	Return on Investment
SAP	Sustainability Action Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMEs	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
UN	United Nations

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The information presented in this Sustainable Action Plan (SAP) was prepared and provided by Simee Adhikari in the capacity of a consultant for the Ring workspaces, LLC. Estimates and projections contained herein involve significant elements of objective judgement and analysis, and are based on certain assumptions. Actual results may vary from estimates and projections and these variations may be immaterial.

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PREFACE

*"You never change things by fighting the existing reality.
To change something, build a new model that
makes the existing model obsolete."*

~ Buckminster Fuller

The Sustainability Action Plan was prepared for The Ring Workspaces, LLC to fulfill the Capstone Thesis Requirement for the Masters in Liberal Arts with concentration in Sustainability at the Harvard Extension School, in the Summer of 2020. The basis of this research project stemmed from my experience as an entrepreneur and passion for developing practical sustainability tools and strategies that could be easily embedded in the ecosystem of small and mid-size companies. As the world moves further into rapid urbanization and economic growth, there will be a greater need for innovative approaches to utilize earth's limited resources responsibly. It is my passion not only to explore how but to develop actionable plans and practical tools to break down barriers to accessibility for future generations.

In truth, this has been a collaborative process, which could not have been possible without the support of many. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to The Ring executive team, staff, and community members for their support, collaboration, and invaluable insights. Special thanks to Chairman, Daniels Ikajevs, for believing in this initiative and COO, Janelle Branch, for her time and unwavering support during the development of this plan. Lastly, my deepest gratitude to my Capstone instructor and faculty William O'Brian for his mentoring and guidance throughout the capstone process and beyond.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ring Workspaces L.L.C. ("The Ring") is a dynamic organization offering co-working facilities to start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Clearwater, Florida. Sustainability is one of the Ring's three core operational pillars, with The Ring instituting several sustainability initiatives throughout 2019. These included eliminating single-use plastics, installing recycling bins, purchasing local produce, and working towards a WELL Building Standard certification. Ultimately, The Ring aims to become an industry leader among co-working facilities, particularly regarding sustainability and wellbeing practices.

However, after an initial GHG inventory exercise, Ring senior management identified the need to better integrate sustainable principles and practices throughout its strategy and operations. In particular, The Ring recognized the need to reduce its operational GHG emissions to net zero by 2030, reduce waste to landfill, and foster a greater culture of sustainability among Ring community members, including start-ups and SMEs. A Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) was commissioned to address these gaps and further refine The Ring's sustainability ambitions.

The SAP provides actionable steps to achieve The Ring's SAP goals through administrative, operational, and behavioral change initiatives over during a three-year period (2020-2022). Recommended initiatives are aligned with sustainability gaps identified through a comprehensive baseline assessment and community member sustainability survey conducted by the consultant. Behavioral change initiatives were informed by change management literature, namely Kotter's Eight Steps to Change (Kotter, 2014).

The SAP also provides practical tools and templates tailored to The Ring's needs to successfully implement the SAP's recommended initiatives. This includes ready-to-use awareness campaign material, informational documents for Ring community members, and a SAP reporting template. Finally, an implementation roadmap and post 2022 initiatives are provided to direct The Ring's future work on achieving its long-term sustainability goals.

BACKGROUND

2. BACKGROUND

Business activities are one of the primary drivers of conservation impacts, with the top 3000 companies responsible for an estimated $2+ trillion environmental damage. Reducing these impacts from key business sectors is an objective of many conservation strategies, but one sector that has been neglected is the start-up sector. This is despite the fact that many of today's start-ups are likely to be tomorrow's dominant forces in business, and the fact that the changes businesses need to be making are much easier to make before a business becomes established. The Ring Workspaces, aims to address this gap by embedding sustainability into the start-up ecosystem, reflected by an increase in the number of start-ups incorporating sustainability considerations into their business models and the number of investors and supporters demanding sustainability performance from their investments.
The Ring recognizes its need to embrace sustainability across its operational and strategic activities in order to reduce its environmental, social, and economic impacts. This section provides greater detail on The Ring's existing operations and future growth ambitions to give context and further inform SAP goals and recommended initiatives.

2.1. Company Overview

The Ring Workspaces, LLC is a Florida-based limited liability company that offers state-of-the-art, eco-friendly, flexible, and smart **office spaces/ co-working facilities** that optimize human wellness, productivity, and performance using green building best practices. It is meant to be an incubator, accelerator, and innovative eco-system for start-ups, small, and mid-size companies.

The Ring ecosystem encompasses facilities, support, mentoring, and networking opportunities required for small and mid-size companies to gain knowledge, training, and experience necessary to succeed in the business world. As a co-working and business-as-a-service provider, the Ring offers a community-based ecosystem for young professionals, freelancers, startups, nonprofits, tech companies, and financial firms. All Ring members have access to enterprise-level amenities including a few unique offerings, namely a Sleep Pod, an indoor ping pong table, stand up desks, and a Podcast studio. A partial list of the Ring amenities is shown in Figure 1. (obtained from the Ring'swebsite)

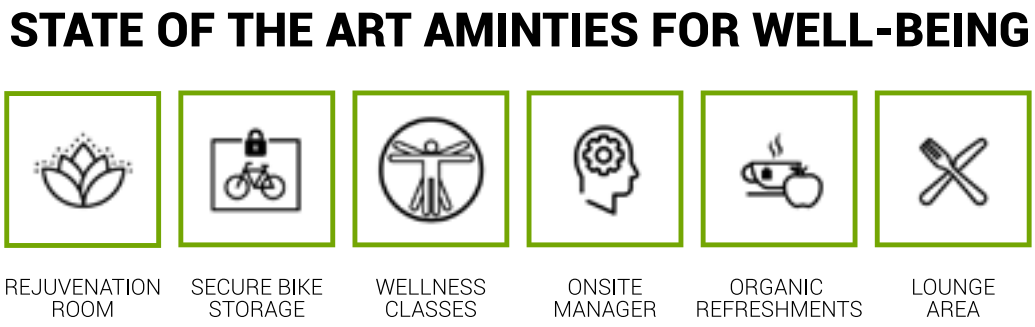


Figure 1: Enterprise Level Amenities offered at The Ring

The flex-space component allows the Ring members to work on a month-to-month or long-term basis following the trajectory of their organic incubation or growth pattern. Eligible members have the platform to **pitch their ideas** at the annual **"Ring Event"** which provides them with access to **venture capital funds**. The four types of Ring memberships are shown in **Figure 2:**

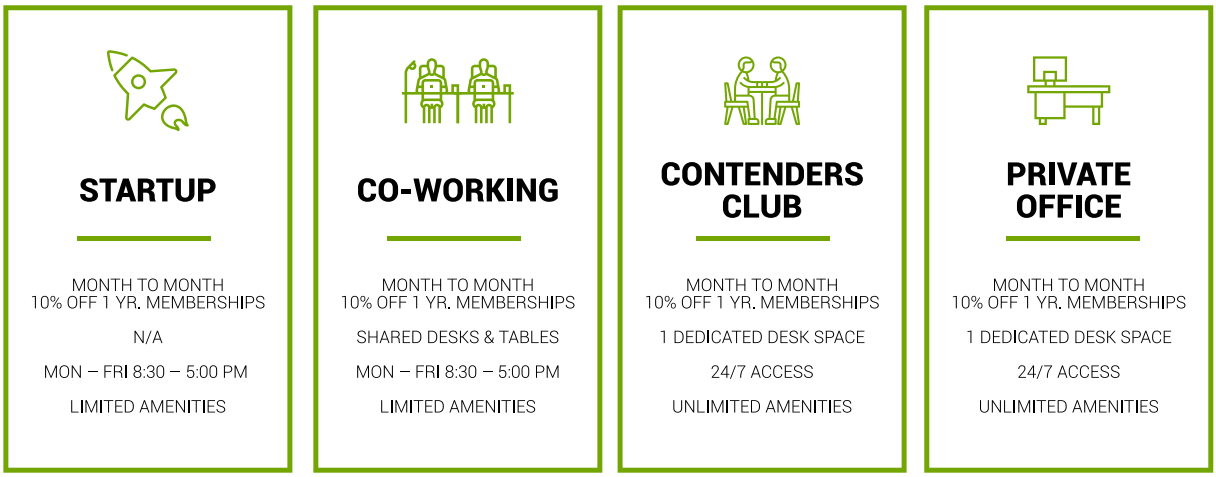


Figure 2: The Ring Membership Categories

2.1.1. Vision, Mission, Values

The Ring's **vision** is to **optimize human potential within the built environment**.

Its **mission** is to create the **healthiest workspaces in the world**.

Ring's "Why" is encompassed in its five core values: **Innovation**, **Integration**, **Inspiration**, **Integrity**, and **Ingenuity.**

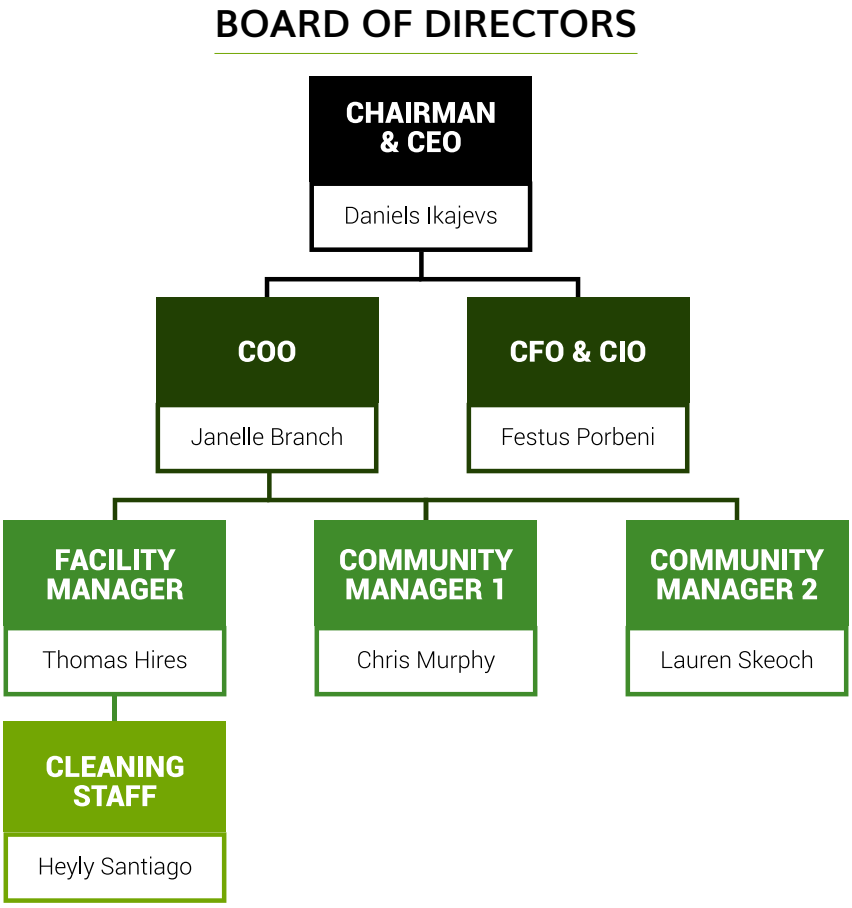
2.1.2. The 3 Pillars of the Ring

3 Pillars of the Ring are:

Health/ Wellness–Sustainability–Innovation

As of 2019, the Ring has been registered with the International WELL Building Institute and is currently pursuing the WELL Certification. In March of 2019, the Ring was selected to partake in the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's COGFX study aimed at assessing the impact of Green Buildings on Occupant Cognitive Function. The Ring was the only coworking space in the state of Florida to be part of the study.

2.1.3. Organizational Chart



2.1.4. The Ring's "Member Community"

The Ring's Clearwater facility currently houses 94 companies consisting of 131 member occupants who are highly focused on productivity and growth. They do not take a laid-back approach to business and are driven to succeed. The current member profile includes solo entrepreneurs, owners of small businesses, and workers of remote teams who aspire for personal and professional growth. As of Q3 2020, The Ring's community has grown significantly spanning over seven major industries as shown in Figure 3. Though the Ring community is comprised of members from all age groups, Millennials are the primary target and standard demographic for the co-working space and holds over 58% of the memberships.

Figure 3: The Ring Member's Industries of Operations

2.1.4.1. The Ring Member PERSONAS

The following are not profiles of actual Ring members but are PERSONAS developed in collaboration with the Ring senior management from behavioral insights gleaned through interactions with Ring members, the sustainability survey, and inputs from the Ring community managers. These personas reflect the attitude, behaviors, goals, and pain points of Ring community members in regards to sustainability.

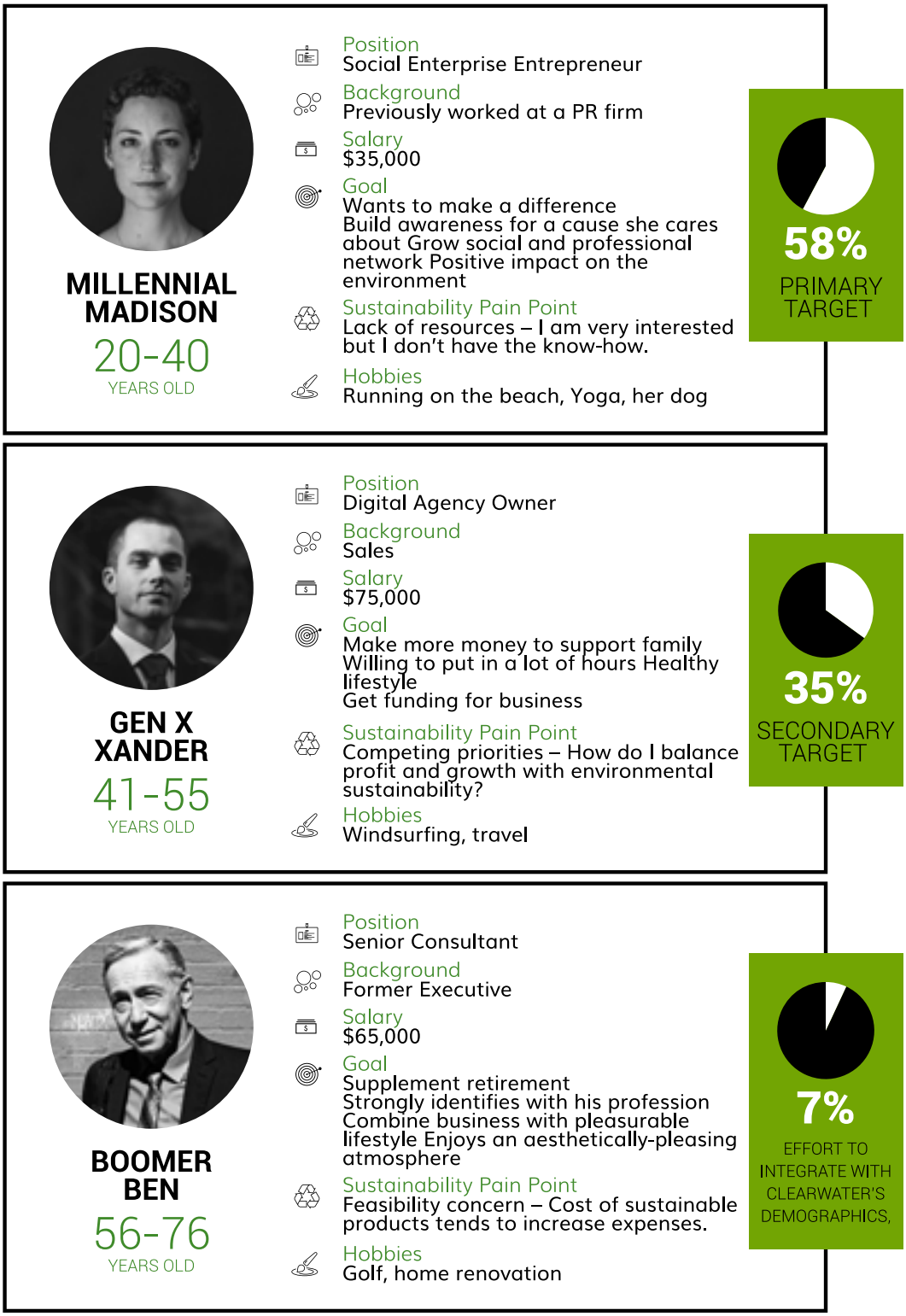


Figure 4: The Ring Member's Industries of Operations

2.1.5. Expansion Plans, Sustainability Aspirations, and Impact Potential

As of Q2 2020, The Ring's Florida head-quarter is home to 94 companies comprising of 131 member occupants, boasting a 97% occupancy rate of the private office spaces. Following their initial success, the Ring plans to expand to 20 more locations across the USA in the next five years which has the potential to impact over 5000+ small businesses. Given, that the Ring is home to a start-up for 12 to 18 months on an average, before transitioning to a conventional office set-up, the potential ripple effect of these start-ups and SMEs embracing sustainable practices could be very significant and meaningful. Therefore, the Ring wishes to seize this unique opportunity and become a market leader in the industry by "being the change it wishes to see in the world." In pursuit of this ambitious mission, the Ring executive team wishes to set up a Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) that supports their vision to become carbon neutral by 2030, along with creating an organizational culture of sustainability (see **SAP Goals section**).

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

3. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

As part of the SAP Statement of Work, key stakeholders were identified for SAP consultation and its implementation. Those identified as the Ring's key SAP stakeholders are as follows:

3.1. The Ring's Senior Management and Staff

This group of stakeholders will review, approve and implement the Sustainability Action Plan.

- **Daniels Ikajevs, Chairman/ CEO**
  Will be the process owner for the SAP roadmap
- **Janelle Branch, COO**
  Will be key in driving the change management necessary to implement the SAP. She will also be the initial Sustainability Manager.
- **Festus Porbeni, CFO and CIO**
  Will hold responsibility for all financial allocations and marketing efforts of the SAP
- **Facility & Community Managers**
  Will be key in observing and implementing the operational aspects of the SAP on a day to day basis
- **Cleaning Staff**
  Will adhere to the green cleaning protocol/ guidelines outlined in the SAP

3.2. The Ring's Board of Directors

This group of stakeholders will review the SAP.

3.3. The Ring's "Member Community"

The member community (young professionals, freelancers, startups, nonprofit organizations, tech companies, and financial firms) was an integral part of developing the SAP and the plan should address what behavior changes this group will need to make in order to ensure the success of the plan.

3.4. Investors/ Venture Capitalists

This group of stakeholders may demand sustainability performance from their investments.

3.5. City of Clearwater Governing Body and Staff

In 2018, the Ring received a $600,000 loan-to-grant aid from the City of Clearwater that is conditional upon certain sustainability performance metrics. Therefore, the SAP should reflect and outline the requirements.

3.6. The Ring Community Partners on Sustainability Initiatives

The SAP explores partnership opportunities with local NGOs, government entities, universities, and corporate leaders to provide relevant educational workshops on sustainable business practices to Ring community members, and volunteer opportunities. The potential stakeholder list includes:

- **City of Clearwater's Sustainability Manager (Sheridan Boyle):** communicate Ring's sustainability commitment and SAP, as well as Partner with the City on educational opportunities on sustainable business practices.
- **Clearwater Chamber of Commerce:** communicate Ring's sustainability commitment and SAP, as well as share learnings on implementing sustainability and reducing GHG emissions as a business.
- **Tampa Bay Regional Resilience Coalition:** sign on as a corporate member and explore partnerships for educational opportunities on sustainable business practices for Ring community members.
- **Tampa Bay Climate Alliance:** community partner for potential volunteer opportunities focused on climate action for Ring staff and Ring community members.
- **Tampa Bay Watch:** partner to provide with online education opportunities to Ring staff and Ring community members through the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center's online training and course offerings.
- **University of South Florida:** possible partner for delivering sustainable business practice education opportunities and share learnings on embedding sustainability within business practices.
- **Patel College of Global Sustainability:** partner with for sustainable business practice education opportunities, including the annual Women in Green Summit or corporate community engagement opportunities with master students.
- **Sierra Club Florida Chapter:** partner with for ocean clean up volunteer opportunities as well as their annual sustainability event held in Clearwater.

RATIONALE

4. RATIONALE

This section outlines The Ring's rationale behind implementing the SAP, as well as possible opportunities and risks of implementing the SAP. This section also includes the client's requirements in developing the SAP.

4.1. Driver's for Change

4.1.1. Business Drivers

Over the past two decades, there has been extensive research into the business case for sustainability, with many organizations embracing sustainable practices and principles (Schaltegger et al, 2019). According to the 2019 PwC's Annual Global CEO Survey report, business leaders around the globe are also increasingly recognizing the opportunities that climate change initiatives offer compared to ten years ago. These include:

- **Reputation and trust:** transparent communication about sustainability practices can build goodwill, improve brand image, and reduce reputation risks
- **Employee motivation:** attracts new talent, reduces absenteeism, and increases productivity
- **Brand loyalty:** customers, especially millennials, are willing to pay higher prices for products from companies committed to sustainability
- **Ability to raise capital:** sustainability reporting can signal quality and good management as well as opening up opportunities to access SRI investors
- **Stakeholder engagement:** sustainability-related initiatives can build networks with the broader community

4.1.2. Social Drivers

The SAP initiatives seek to extend social benefits of The Ring's key stakeholders and the broader Clearwater community. The Ring seeks to place people and promoting their needs at the core of its business. As such, The Ring is committed to uphold, protect, and promote:

- **Human rights:** these include those codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including those in regard to workers such as the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (UN, 1948). The SAP will continue to drive The Ring's work towards promoting Ring community members' and employees' rights and wellbeing.
- **Social and Environmental Justice:** populations are experiencing the effects of climate change differently, often with marginalized people experiencing less protection from environmental and health-related hazards (Center for Economic and Social Justice, 2016). With the SAP, The Ring is publicly committed to reducing its environmental impacts, with key initiatives to help drive The Ring's work in promoting social justice and greater community connections.

4.1.3. Environmental Drivers

Climate studies have unequivocally demonstrated that human-generate climate change is occurring, creating many climate hazards and vulnerabilities for business operations and society at large (IPCC, 2019). These environmental impacts include:

- **Rising temperatures:** global temperatures are expected to rise between 1.1 and 5.4 degrees Celsius by the end of the 21st century. This increase in temperature will increase energy costs related to cooling The Ring's facilities.
- **Rising sea levels:** global seal levels are projected to rise between 1 foot to 8.2 feet by 2100, causing significant impacts to low-lying areas on Florida's coastline where the Ring's HQ is currently located.
- **Increase in extreme weather events:** a rise in global temperatures is expected to drive the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Given The Ring's location, an increased number of cyclones and hurricanes could affect operations.

4.2. SAP Opportunities and Risks

As part of the process of identifying opportunities and risks associated with the implementation of the SAP, a SWOT analysis was conducted (see **Appendix A**).

4.2.1. Opportunities

Through the SWOT analysis and initial discussions with Ring senior management, several key opportunities were identified, including:

- **Cost Reduction:** initiatives to reduce energy use and waste could provide significant costs saving for The Ring.
- **Environmental Impact Reduction:** SAP initiatives would reduce the environmental impact The Ring's operations have on the environment, namely through GHG emission reductions.
- **Marketing Impact:** The Ring is seeking to position itself as a market leader in sustainable and healthy co-working spaces. The SAP initiatives are expected to significantly contribute to achieving this ambition by differentiating The Ring brand from other co-working spaces.
- **Reduction of Reputational Risks:** By instituting sustainability initiatives, including social-focused initiatives, The Ring reduces the risk of environmental or social-related scandals.
- **Occupant wellbeing and client retention:** many initiatives would promote a healthy workplace and improved air quality (i.e., through the Green Cleaning protocol and indoor garden). Many initiatives would also provide additional value offerings to Ring members at no additional charge.
- **Embedding sustainability in the start-up ecosystem:** The Ring is in a unique position to model best practices and provide guidance in regard to sustainability to business start-ups. This will have a long-term – and potentially wide – impact given The Ring's expansion plans.

4.2.2. Risks

Through the SWOT analysis and initial discussions with Ring senior management, several key opportunities were identified, including:

- **Capital investment hurdles:** As The Ring is still growing and is a start-up itself, there are financial limitations to implementing SAP initiatives.
- **Data availability:** Data will need to be actively collected through waste audits, a basic GHG inventory, and an annual sustainability survey. Therefore, a significant amount of staff time will need to be allocated towards organization and implementation of the SAP.
- **Change in management/ unexpected events:** The current Ring senior management has demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability. However, in light of staff turnover, or additional demands on existing senior management, commitment to implementing the SAP could waiver.

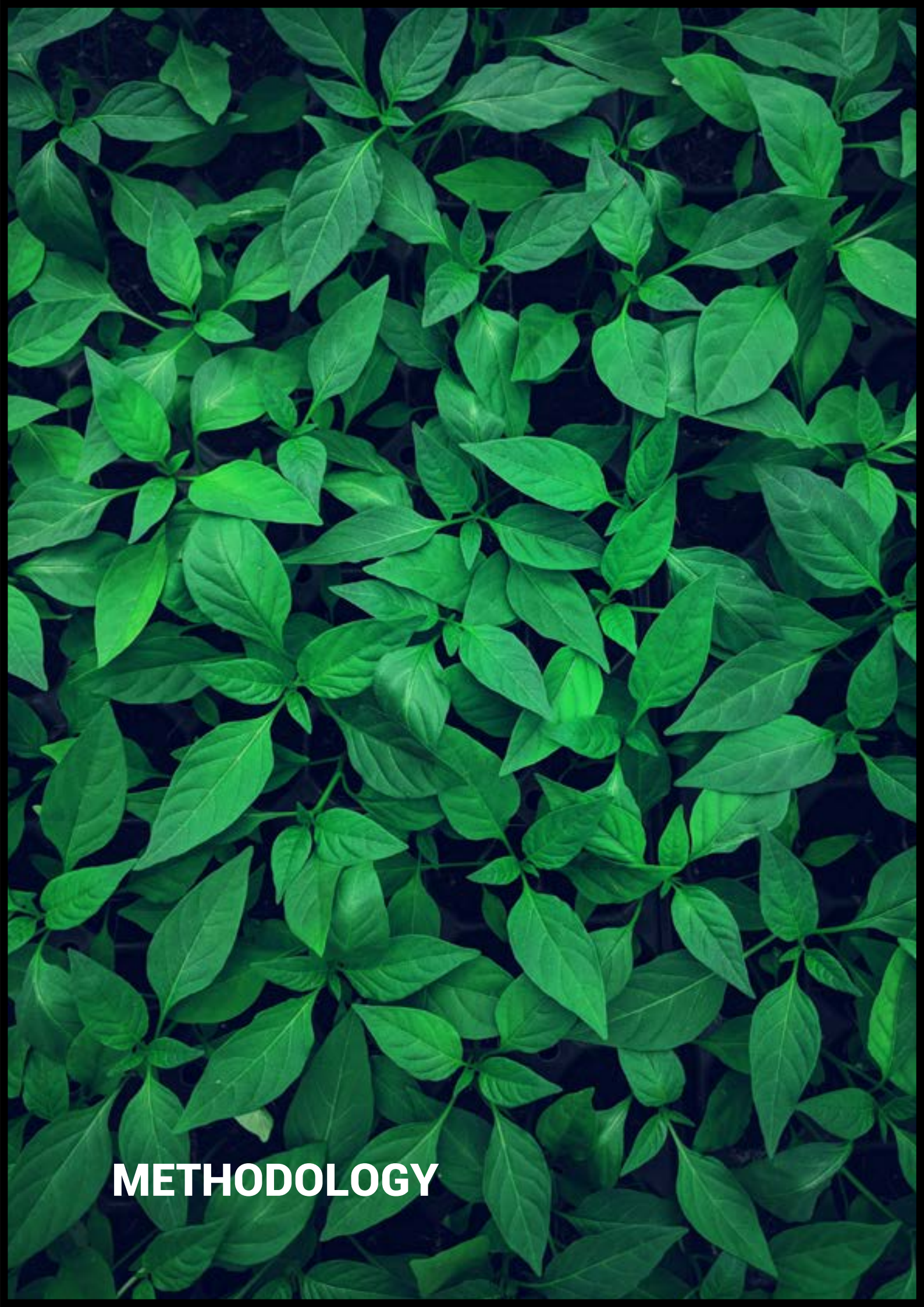
Risk management and mitigation strategies for the identified risks above are addressed in the Ensuring Stakeholder Buy-in of the SAP Goals section.

4.3. Client-Specific Requirements

During the initial meeting with Ring senior management and while negotiating the Statement of Work, the client provided the consultant with the following requirements in developing the SAP:

- The framework on the path to net zero emissions by 2030
- Desire to create a "culture of sustainability" at the Ring and lead by example
- Focus on both short-term sustainability wins as well as longer term goals
- Total budget for SAP implementation not to exceed $25,000

To reflect the client's timeline requirements, the consultant developed the SAP to cover a three-year period from 2020-2022. The SAP will be revised in 2022 to reflect The Ring's expanding operations, emerging opportunities, and new regulations and policies. The SAP goals will remain in place; however, short- and medium-term initiatives will be developed and revised as needed.



METHODOLOGY

5. METHODOLOGY

In developing the SAP, an evidence-based approach was undertaken in identifying the key goals and recommended sustainability initiatives. Throughout the process, a holistic lens to sustainability was adopted, extending beyond reducing carbon emission metrics to also include social and economic dimensions of sustainability (WCED, 1987). The methodological approach drew from best-practice sustainability planning and sustainability science methodologies, including The Natural Step's ABCD Planning Method and the SDG Compass Tool.

5.1. Visioning SAP goals

The first step of developing The Ring's SAP was meeting with The Ring's senior management to identify their core sustainability ambitions and what The Ring would ideally look like in a green future (i.e., operating within ecological boundaries and supporting social equity). After this meeting, a Statement of Work was prepared by the consultant, which included client requirements, deliverables, key stakeholders, availability of data sources, and an approximate timeline. The Statement of Work was reviewed and approved by the Ring senior management.

Please note that due to COVID-19 social distancing measures, all remaining interactions between the Ring and the consultant were virtually conducted. Baseline assessments were conducted in collaboration with the Ring Community Manager and COO.

During the Visioning of SAP Goals stage, the consultant worked with the senior management to align current and future sustainability ambitions with emerging sustainability trends and policies at the local, national, and international level, including the UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs). This first stage also established a common understanding of sustainability among The Ring's senior management and fostered greater corporate buy-in for the SAP and future sustainability initiatives.

5.2. Conducting a Sustainability Baseline Assessment

After establishing the overarching sustainability goals for the SAP (**see SAP Goals section**), the consultant conducted a sustainability baseline assessment and reviewed The Ring's GHG Inventory (see **Appendix B**). The sustainability baseline assessment and associated survey (see **Appendix C** and **Appendix D**) builds off of established sustainability assessments for service organizations (Hitchcock and Willard, 2015). Impact areas were assessed in the following categories:

- **Environmental:** energy use, transportation (including business travel and commuting), waste management, ICT use, water use, and supply chain-related environmental impacts
- **Social:** Human resources, organizational culture, local community
- **Economic:** Sustainability metrics in budgeting and financial decisions, SRI

investing, sustainability reporting

The assessment process was intended to 1) provide a baseline to measure The Ring's sustainability progress, and 2) identify areas of improvements for sustainability initiatives. The survey was distributed electronically in July 2020 to 94 Ring community members, of which 41 completed the survey (44% response rate). This is considered an acceptable response rate in organizational research (Baruch & Holtom, 2008). Responses were collated and analyzed to inform recommended sustainability initiatives for the SAP.

5.3. Developing and Prioritizing Recommended Sustainability Initiatives

From baseline assessment, community member survey, and the long-term SAP goals articulated from the previous two stages, the consultant conducted a gap analysis and utilized 'backcasting' techniques to develop tailored sustainability initiatives for The Ring. Backcasting is a common scenario methodology for planning strategic initiatives in sustainability and future studies. Compared to traditional planning approaches that focus more on present trends and constraints, backcasting requires the organization to design steps towards an ideal future, and to adopt a systems-oriented vision of environmental, economic, and social impacts (Bibri, 2018).

Recommended initiatives were discussed and prioritized with senior management. High impact, low-cost initiatives were given priority given the limited operating budget of The Ring at this time. Any initiatives that were considered of high impact but not within budgetary constraints were included in the **Future Initiatives section** of this report.

5.4. Ongoing Monitoring and Reporting on the SAP

After the SAP initiatives were agreed upon by The Ring senior management, relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) were selected to monitor and report on the implementation of the SAP. As The Ring is still a start-up itself and has limited resources at this time to monitor SAP initiatives, only 9 KPIs were selected (see **Performance Metric and Reporting Section** for more details). The consultant also prepared a sustainability reporting template (found at **Appendix I**) to aid The Ring's reporting activities on the SAP.

SAP GOALS

6. SAP GOALS

6.1. The Ring's Sustainability Goals

This section outlines The Ring's long-term goals that underpin this SAP. The consultant worked closely with The Ring's senior management using sustainability visioning exercises (see **Methodology section** for more information) to establish these three goals and to ensure that the goals met client requirements:

Figure 5: SAP Goals

6.1.1. Goal 1: Achieve carbon neutral operations by 2030

The net-zero emissions reduction target for Goal 1 by 2030 was a key part of The Ring's senior management's sustainability ambitions, with an interim goal of reducing emission per Ring occupant by 30% below 2019 levels by 2025. While the 2030 goal represents an absolute emission reduction target, the interim goal is an intensity target due to the planned expansion of The Ring to up to 20 new locations over

the next five years. Using 2019 as the base year, a 30 percent reduction of GHG emissions per Ring occupant would reduce GHG emissions from 3.32 metric tons of CO2e to 2.32 metric tons CO2e per Ring occupant. This decrease is expected to be achieved primarily through energy efficiency and green transportation measures (Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions). Carbon offsets are only to be considered when all energy reduction and efficiency measures have been exhausted. The target is based on a fixed base year of 2019, for which the earliest accurate data is available.

6.1.2. Goal 2: Reduce waste to landfill by 50% by 2030

This goal was set with the ambition of moving towards a zero-waste enterprise. Leading firms, including Microsoft, Toyota, and Google, have committed to similar zero waste to landfill goals (Esposito et al., 2017). Given The Ring's limited waste products, a fifty percent reduction can be primarily achieved through recycling initiatives, food composting, and reducing disposables. The base year for Goal 2 will be 2020, when the first waste audit was conducted (during SAP baseline assessment).

6.1.3. Goal 3: Foster an organizational culture of sustainability

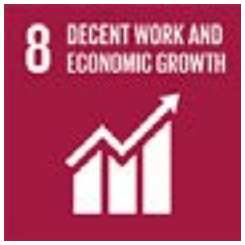
This goal was selected by Ring senior management, given the opportunity to take the lead in setting a 'best-practice' example for Ring community members. The Ring sees its sustainability initiatives as an opportunity to educate Ring's community members on how to integrate sustainability in business practices. The base year for Goal 3 will be 2020 when the first baseline assessment and member survey data was collected. Note that Goal 3 uses survey questions as proxies to measure progress.

KPIs were established to measure and monitor the progress of all three goals as outlined in the **Performance Metrics and Reporting section** of this document. The goals are intended to drive this SAP's recommended sustainability initiatives, and subsequent sustainability action plans for both The Ring's Clearwater location and future sites as the business expands.

The SAP goals were set aggressively but realistically in retrospect of and in alignment with the following global, regional, and local sustainability agendas, as outlined below. Also (see **Figure 5**).

6.2. Alignment with Global Goals

Aligning The Ring's SAP with the UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) was a core part of goal visioning exercises with The Ring senior executive team (see **Methodology section** for more information). The following SDGs were selected as particularly relevant to The Ring's SAP ambitions:



SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth:

given The Ring's role in decoupling economic growth from environmental degradations through creating a sustainability-focused ecosystem for start-ups

SDG 9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure:

given The Ring's role in fostering innovative, green approaches to co-working spaces, as well as among Ring community members.

SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production:

given The Ring's effort on reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.

SDG 13 Climate Action:

given The Ring's focus on reducing its own GHG emissions (particularly in regard to commuting and energy use) as well as encouraging Ring community members to reduce their own business' GHG emissions.

In addition, the SAP Goals were informed and aligned to the following international sustainability and emission reduction ambitions, including the Paris Agreement and The UN Global Compact's Ten Principles

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Global reduction target (IPCC AR5) OF 40-70% reduction by 2050 compared to 2010 and GHG emission near zero by 2100 (IPCC, 2014)
- COP21 in Paris <2 degrees C (strongly urge <1.5 degrees C) which urges all parties to make "nationally determined contributions" (COP21, 2015)
- Principle 8 of The UN Global Compact: Initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

6.3. Alignment with Local and Regional Goals

Aligning The Ring's SAP goals with regional and local sustainability goals were also considered in SAP visioning discussions. The City of Clearwater in Florida has demonstrated a growing commitment to sustainability over the past five years, having recently appointed a Sustainability Manager to drive initiatives with the business community, local government, and residents. In 2019, Clearwater's mayor signed on as a Climate Mayor, a coalition of U.S. mayors working together to address climate change challenges in their communities. Specific sustainability initiatives considered when drafting the Ring SAP goals included:

- Florida's statutory goal to achieve a recycling rate of 75% by the end of 2020 and waste initiatives by "Keep Florida Beautiful"
- The City of Clearwater's (where The Ring HQ is located), 2011 Greenprint Sustainability Plan, which promotes green transport and waste reduction.

- City of Clearwater's 2018 Resolution 18-08 encouraged Clearwater businesses to support initiatives to lessen the negative impact of single-use plastic, plastic bags, and styrofoam products.

Figure 6: The Ring's SAP Goals Alignment