The business case for Net Positive:

How organizations can thrive in a resource constrained world

FUJITSU

uvance
Wayfinders
Consulting by Fujitsu

▶ Introduction

In the current macro-economic climate, organizations around the world face the dual challenge of driving revenue growth while meeting rising stakeholder expectations on ESG. With 53% of companies reporting a conflict between sustainability initiatives and other business priorities, simply deploying technology for compliance is no longer enough. When technology is adopted through a Net Positive mindset, it becomes a catalyst for accelerated impact – unlocking financial efficiencies and expanding a company's positive handprint on society and the environment.

A successful Net Positive business doesn't merely aim to "do less harm"; instead, it actively creates positive impacts that enhance long-term sustainability and contribute meaningfully to societal and environmental well-being. This approach drives cost transformation, reduces operational risks, strengthens supply chains, and enhances brand reputation. Sustainability and profitability are not at odds – they thrive together, enabling organizations to exceed expectations and lead their industries.

At Fujitsu, our Advancing Net Positive Agenda, developed and researched by Economist Impact, empowers businesses to move beyond the 'either sustainability or profitability' dilemma and thrive in a resource-constrained world. This initiative includes the Net Positive Index, an action-oriented framework designed to track and evaluate progress across multiple industries. The Index identifies common barriers organizations face, such as supply chain challenges, a lack of clear regulatory guidance, and organizational resistance.

Adopting a structured Net Positive roadmap can help businesses overcome these barriers, delivering measurable improvements in profitability and boosting investor confidence. To better understand how organizations can embrace this shift effectively, we spoke with Anna Lungley, Head of Sustainability Consulting at Fujitsu.

▶ Seeing Net Positive as organizational opportunity

Organizations are at very different stages in their journey towards Net Positive. While some are actively embedding sustainability into their core strategy, many still approach it as a separate, siloed initiative running alongside core business operations. Too often, ESG goals are treated as compliance checkboxes rather than opportunities for business growth. According to Anna, this mindset can hold organizations back from unlocking the true scale of opportunity created by the Net Positive movement.

A Net Positive approach repositions sustainability as a growth agenda and an opportunity for innovation. This means rethinking how products and materials are sourced, used, and repurposed throughout their entire lifecycle. Can supply chains become more circular? Could reshoring key operations reduce environmental impacts while also de-risking business continuity and creating jobs?

"

When you look at business challenges through a Net Positive lens, you will often spot new spaces for growth.

– Anna Lungley

"

Few companies currently think this way, but those that do gain greater visibility and control over their operations – a crucial advantage in today's volatile world. Environmental disruptions, such as Germany's river Rhine running dry and halting industrial supply chains in 2022, are becoming increasingly common, compounded by social challenges like rising inequality and geopolitical instability. Organizations that see Net Positive as a business opportunity, not just a responsibility, are better positioned to navigate this complexity, ensuring both long-term profitability and resilience.

Just 4% of companies give equal weight to financial, environmental, and social metrics when measuring value and performance.

> **ESG is essentially a risk management framework which helps organizations look at how they mitigate risk. Sustainable business transformation is all about evolving your business model into something that's sustainable over the long term, which by very definition, means that you have to consider both your dependencies and your impacts from a natural and social capital perspective.**
>
> *– Anna Lungley*

▶ Treating the cause, not the symptom

To fully unlock the Net Positive opportunity, organizations must shift from short-term fixes to long-term, systemic solutions. Sustainability efforts that focus narrowly on symptoms – cutting emissions here, offsetting impacts there – can miss the broader transformation required. As Anna notes, organizations must "radically rethink business processes to drive performance and efficiency over the long-term. Building a sustainable business is not an incremental change; it's a business transformation agenda."

Effective transformation requires robust and reliable data. According to the Net Positive Index, a significant barrier companies face is limited visibility and reporting, particularly around scope 3 emissions – indirect emissions within a company's value chain. Many companies struggle with gathering and analyzing this data due to fragmented systems and limited collaboration across their supplier networks.

Very few companies open their supply chains to third-party scrutiny – a critical finding highlighted in the Net Positive Index. This transparency gap limits the ability to manage risks and capture opportunities effectively. However, by permitting NGOs and independent stakeholders to examine supply chains, diversifying supplier bases, and embracing circularity, companies can significantly reduce waste and resource consumption, create new jobs, lower human rights risks, and bolster long-term resilience.

Technologies such as IoT and AI play a crucial role in addressing these data challenges, enabling better collection, analysis, and transparency. One example is the PACT initiative – a multi-stakeholder collaboration where Fujitsu works with global suppliers to exchange product-level data on CO_2 emissions. Initiatives like these enable organizations to gain precise, actionable insights, allowing them to make informed decisions that genuinely advance sustainability goals across entire value chains.

Fujitsu Social Digital Twin Technology pilot in London is currently simulating scenarios to influence commuter behavior and reduce CO_2 emissions. By analyzing data from 15,000 commuters, the pilot shows a potential 12% reduction in CO_2 emissions through varied incentives

Yet, technology and data alone aren't sufficient. Enlightened leadership is key. As Anna notes, "Organizations need ambidextrous leadership – leaders who can execute seamlessly in the now whilst not losing sight of the long-term vision. Adopting this longer-term perspective is essential for Net Positive transformation, mapping the entire value chain to uncover risks and opportunities for growth."

The opportunity, therefore, is clear: organizations that embrace innovation, leverage data-driven insights, and commit to systemic change won't just meet ESG expectations – they will enhance productivity and establish a lasting competitive advantage.
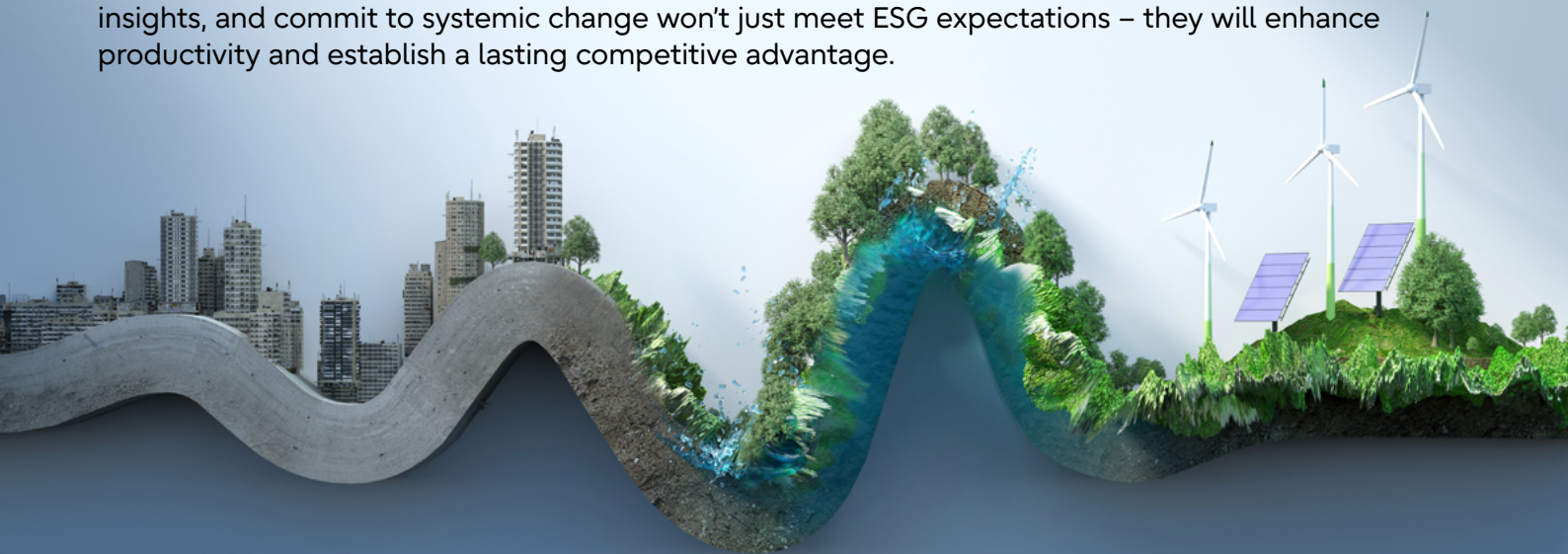
▶ Fujitsu consultative approach: Co-creating Net Positive operations

Achieving Net Positive requires more than ambition – it demands a structured, data-driven approach that integrates expert consultation with advanced technologies. Fujitsu Uvance Wayfinders consulting team adopts a holistic approach, collaborating closely with organizations to accelerate transformation and embed a Net Positive ethos into core business strategy.

At the heart of this approach is curiosity, engaging diverse stakeholders, thoroughly analyzing business challenges from multiple angles, and leveraging cutting-edge technology to generate actionable insights. Wayfinders consultants guide organizations through every stage of the transformation journey, providing support in:

- **Value creation modeling:** Defining the scale of transformation required in a resource-constrained world.

- **Double materiality assessments:** Mapping entire value chains to pinpoint significant impacts, risks, and opportunities.

- **Data maturity assessments:** Integrating IoT, AI, blockchain, and quantum-inspired solutions to ensure data integrity and address complex supply chain challenges.

- **Net Zero technology transition planning:** Embedding decarbonization, circularity, and ethical design into long-term strategies.

Fujitsu consultative approach is not about promoting prepackaged solutions; it is about genuinely co-creating success. By working closely with organizations and engaging a broad ecosystem of partners, NGOs, and leading technology providers, Fujitsu ensures businesses have the right tools and expertise to deliver meaningful impact and achieve lasting competitive advantages.

▶ Delivering business success through a Net Positive approach

Seeing is believing when it comes to Net Positive improvements, as demonstrated by some of Fujitsu recent collaborative efforts.
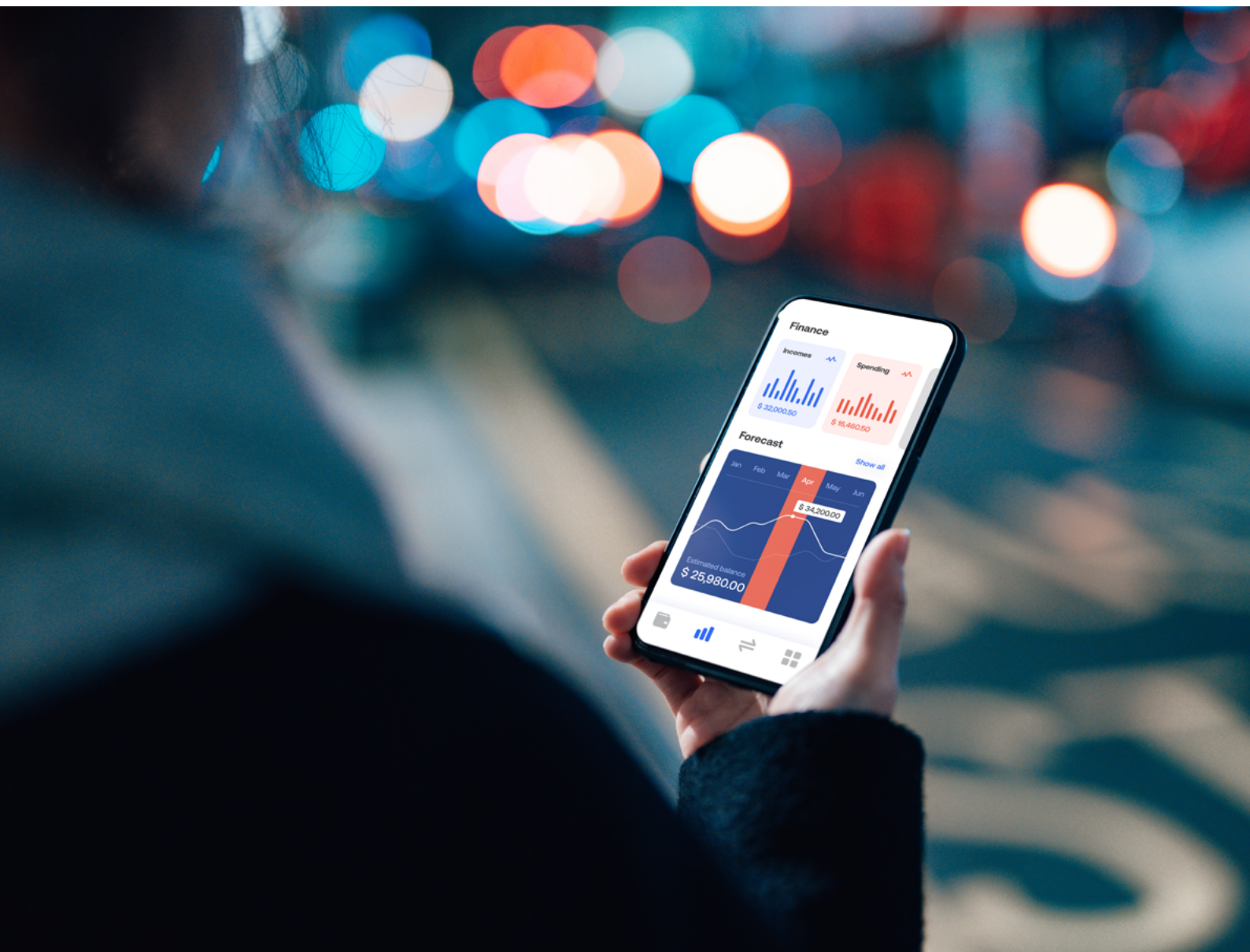
## Case study: Exploring quantum computing in banking for Net Positive benefits

A major global bank explored the potential of quantum computing using an advanced Quantum Value Assessment (QVA) framework to identify practical applications and drive innovation. The project focused on ESG portfolio optimization, fraud detection, and risk management.

This successful demonstration emphasized the transformative potential of quantum computing, underscoring the importance of strategic partnerships and proactive exploration of emerging technologies to drive business value and maintain competitiveness in a rapidly evolving industry.

Case study: AI-powered energy optimization through data integration

International home improvement company Kingfisher aims to cut Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 2040. With over 300 stores and warehouses, energy optimization is a strategic priority. Fujitsu helped optimize energy consumption, using advanced data analytics and machine learning to identify system errors and anomalies. In the project's first year alone, this led to a significant reduction in carbon emissions (7,200 tons) and energy usage (39 million kWh).

As a result, Kingfisher's energy procurement and property sustainability strategies have become more data-driven and focused on embedding sustainability checkpoints across store operations.
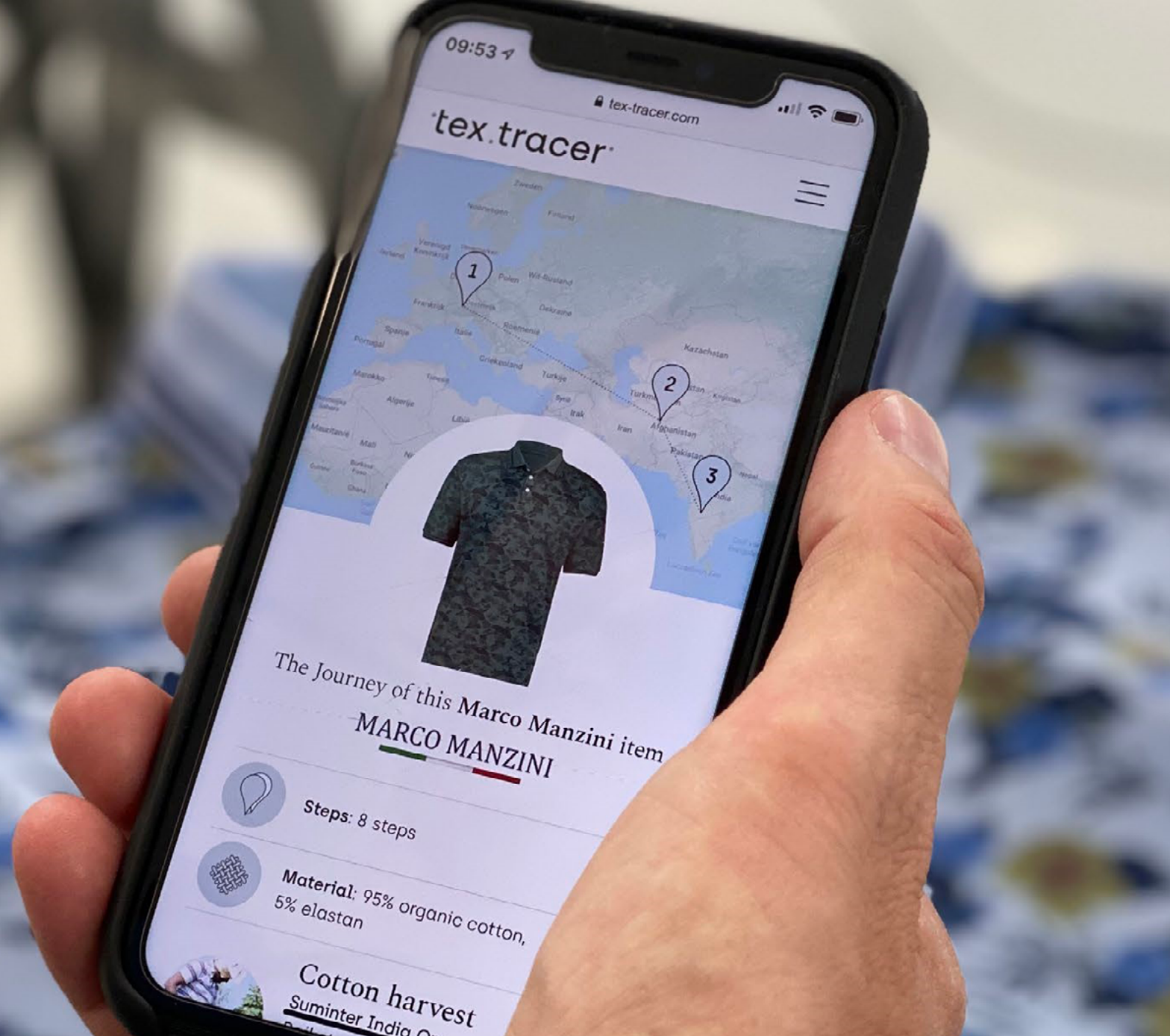
Case study: Enhancing supply chain transparency to improve consumer trust

The fashion industry needs improved supply chain transparency. Tex.tracer, a platform developed with Fujitsu, provides brand owners and consumers with detailed supply chain insights, showcasing the entire journey from raw material to eventual purchase. This data needed to be stored in a decentralized database that would ensure privacy, trustworthiness, and credibility.

Blockchain technology provided a public electronic ledger that can be openly shared among disparate users to create an unchangeable record of transactions with each entry time-stamped and linked to the next one. This platform prepares brands to perform accurate diligence and allowed consumers to trace garment history via QR codes, all of which enhanced supply chain transparency and sustainability.

▶ Conclusion

A future defined by innovation

Net Positive transformation is no longer a question of if but a matter of when. Government regulations are increasingly mandating sustainability practices through targets set for 2030, 2050, and beyond. However, the most significant drive for change is emerging from stakeholders: consumers who demand ethical business practices, investors who prioritize resilient and responsible companies, and regulators who reinforce accountability.

Yet, the true opportunity extends well beyond mere compliance. Organizations leading the charge in Net Positive innovation will benefit from more than just meeting regulatory requirements. They will attract and retain top talent, effectively manage risks, and significantly enhance their brand equity. Crucially, these organizations will also unlock sustainable growth, positioning themselves favorably among investors, regulators, employees, and consumers who increasingly expect demonstrable action and results.

Today, sustainability is less about claims and more about transformative actions enabled by advanced and emerging technologies. Leaders in this field are those embedding sustainability by design, integrating it into every stage of their product lifecycle to generate business value and societal benefits. In a future defined by innovation, organizations that take decisive action today will not merely keep pace –they will set new industry standards.

[?]   **Contact us to find out more**

▶ **Contributors**

Anna Lungley
Head of Sustainability Consulting at Fujitsu

Anna Lungley is Head of Sustainability Consulting at Fujitsu. Previously she was Chief Sustainability Officer at Dentsu Group as well as being a member of the global executive team. Prior to Dentsu, Anna served in a similar capacity at BT Group with an extensive background directing and implementing sustainability strategies within organizations.