

# Sustainable Growth: Our Common Future

The theme of the NAHSS 2019 is Sustainable Growth. This subject entails a rate of economic growth that can be maintained without creating significant social, environmental and/or other economic problems, especially for future generations. This one-pager briefly discusses different components that aim to benefit the process of sustainable growth.

*Meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future.” (UN Report ‘Our common Future’, 1985)*

## Macroeconomic growth

In what way is it possible to create economic growth that is forceful and at the same time socially and environmentally sustainable? The challenge of environmental sustainability is currently receiving considerable attention worldwide, which is visible via e.g. the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDG).



## ‘Global challenges, Dutch solutions’

Dutch enterprises are advancing the SDGs by contributing to innovative solutions. They meet the challenges by making production and consumption sustainable within various areas, such as:

- **Accessibility:** the development of safe, smart and sustainable methods of mobility and a good infrastructure including sustainable industrialisation and development.
- **Living:** making cities safe and resilient, e.g. via energy neutral housing.

*(Report ‘Global Challenges, Dutch solutions’, 2017)*

## Microeconomic growth

Sustainable economic growth on a micro level refers to the realistically attainable growth level that a company can maintain without encountering issues that affect the company on the long term. As such, it involves strategies relating to e.g. working conditions, partnerships and customer retention. Achieving a sustainable growth rate is challenged by rapidly changing political, economic and consumer trends.

### 7 Steps to Sustainable Growth



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## China’s ‘New Normal’

On an absolute scale, China is currently the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases. This worrying fact has driven the country to become the world leader in the production of sustainable energy. President Xi Jinping recently announced a new era of China’s economic growth by using the phrase “the new normal”; a starting point of transforming development modes and thereby establishing slower, but more sustainable growth.

### SDGs

One of the key areas China has suggested to focus on regarding the SDGs, is to implement innovation-driven development strategies and to generate momentum for sustainable, healthy and stable economic growth.

### Sustainable milestones

Examples of China’s sustainable milestones are manufacturing nearly two-thirds of the world’s solar panels and establishing the world’s greatest market of electric vehicles.

### Circular economy

Opposed to a ‘linear’ system, a ‘circular’ economy is regenerative by design and aims to retain as much value as possible of finite resources. Since the 1990s, this concept has been an integral part of China’s national policy and, by formulating circular economy legislation, China takes a leading position in the development of this system.

*(Report ‘The circular economy opportunity for Urban and Industrial Innovation in China, 2018)*