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# Walmart's Regenerative Approach: Going Beyond Sustainability



Sept. 21, 2020

By Doug McMillon, President & CEO, Walmart

Every journey begins for a reason.

Fifteen years ago, Walmart started on our journey to become a more sustainable company. We set aspirational goals to achieve 100% renewable energy, zero waste and a more sustainable supply chain for people and the planet. This commitment to sustainability came after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast, when we saw firsthand how climate change could impact communities. We realized then that our scale and unique strengths could make a positive and meaningful difference for communities.

Since then, our associates have worked together, partnered with suppliers, NGOs and academics. And we've made a lot of progress on climate, waste, nature and economic opportunity for people. But it's not enough. Collectively, we must do more.

This Climate Week NYC, Walmart seeks to go beyond sustainability as it is understood and practiced today. By raising our ambition for climate and nature, we have set ourselves on a path toward becoming a regenerative company.

Regenerating means restoring, renewing and replenishing in addition to conserving. It means decarbonizing operations and eliminating waste along the product chain. It means encouraging the adoption of regenerative practices in agriculture, forest management and fisheries – while advancing prosperity and equity for customers, associates and people across our product supply chains. And, working with our suppliers, customers, NGOs and others, we hope to play a part in transforming the world's supply chains to be regenerative.

The reasons why are all around us – in the air we breathe, the ground we walk on, the world we share. Ice sheets are collapsing. Extreme weather events are increasing. Too often, our days are marked by dire news of a climate crisis in hyper-drive: record temperatures, deadly wildfires of unprecedented scope, hurricanes threatening coasts at “unsurvivable” speeds.

And we're losing critical landscapes and biodiversity at an alarming rate. Studies show animal populations have declined by around 68% over the past 40 years, and one-fifth of the Amazon's rainforest has disappeared in just 50 years. As a society, we are at an inflection point. If we don't act now, we may not have an opportunity to do something later.

The science is clear and consistent. Fossil fuel combustion is the primary cause of warming, and the world must be more aggressive in moving toward renewable forms of energy. More than that, though, to avoid the worst effects of climate change, the world must reduce, avoid and remove greenhouse gas emissions. No longer is it enough to “slow down” climate change and protect what we have left. Society must bend the curve on emissions and restore nature.

That's why Walmart is targeting zero emissions in our own operations by 2040, not just in the U.S., but globally. And we intend to achieve this without carbon offsets by harvesting enough wind, solar and other energy sources to power our facilities with 100% renewable energy by 2035, moving to cooling equipment that uses low-impact refrigerants and electrifying our vehicles, including long-haul trucks, by 2040. These goals are ambitious, and we will need innovation and infrastructure to get there.

And along with elevating our ambition for climate, we are elevating our ambition for nature. Walmart, along with the Walmart Foundation, is committing to help protect, manage or restore at least 50 million acres of land and one million square miles of ocean by 2030. Through our own actions, supporting those of suppliers and philanthropy, we will focus on critical landscapes that produce food and other consumer products. And we'll do this work by aiming to improve how products are sourced, promote the adoption of nature-friendly policies and certifications, continue supporting preservation efforts and invest in place-based partnerships that combine conservation, restoration and sustainable management.

Our journey continues, but our destination has changed. We want to go beyond sustainability to become a regenerative company dedicated to placing nature and humanity at the center of our business practices. Restore, renew, replenish. That's regeneration. That's a better world.

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*Walmart is a member of RE100 with the aim of 100% of its electricity from renewable energy by 2035. We are proud to have Walmart as this year's Opening Ceremony Sponsor for Climate Week NYC.*