



MEC ON SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

DEFINE WHAT'S IMPORTANT AND SET AMBITIOUS GOALS

Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) has developed a successful sustainable materials program. With humble beginnings driven from “gut feelings” to what it is today, the program evolved and continues to move forward by taking the following steps:

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ASSOCIATION

TOGETHER WE ARE A FORCE.™

1. Determine priorities

- » MEC defined what is important for the brand and key stakeholders through a Materiality Assessment (see next page).
 - MEC recognized they had to focus resources on a few key issues critical to their brand and stakeholders and where they had the highest potential to influence change.
 - MEC prioritized animal welfare, better chemistry, energy and GHGs, and water scarcity for their materials program.

MEC recommends:

You don't have to make this a complicated process. It could be as easy as having a few conversations with internal stakeholders and industry peers.

2. Explore and understand options

- » Industry engagement: MEC collaborated with peers on common industry initiatives to leverage and add scale beyond their own reach.
- » External resources: MEC reviewed Textile Exchange's Material Snapshots (<http://textileexchange.org/publications/>) and the Higg Index MSI (<http://product.higg.org/product-tools>) to compare raw material and processing options.
- » Desktop assessment: MEC compared options that were similar in end use and functionality, as this enables changes to be most readily made. Example: Replace conventional cotton with organic cotton.

MEC recommends:

Focus on areas where you already have and/or specify information (such as raw material type). Start small – you don't have to score all materials in the MSI to identify the hot spots where changes can be made. For example, MEC quickly identified materials that were common to a broad range of products which allowed for significant scalable wins.

3. Adopt available standards/certifications to verify material choices and measure progress

- » Based on MEC's priority impact areas and the options available, MEC decided to focus on sourcing materials with the following KPIs in the form of standards/certifications:
 - bluesign certification to address chemical impacts and resource utilization in textile manufacturing.
 - Certified Organic Cotton (OCS/GOTS) to address on farm chemical impacts in the growing of cotton.
 - Responsible Down Standard (RDS) to address the ethical treatment of geese and ducks in our supply chain.
 - Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) to address the ethical treatment of sheep in our supply chain.

MEC recommends:

Develop a clear understanding of how each standard/certification ties back to your priorities. What are the strengths and gaps? Be willing to take steps knowing not all priorities may be addressed.

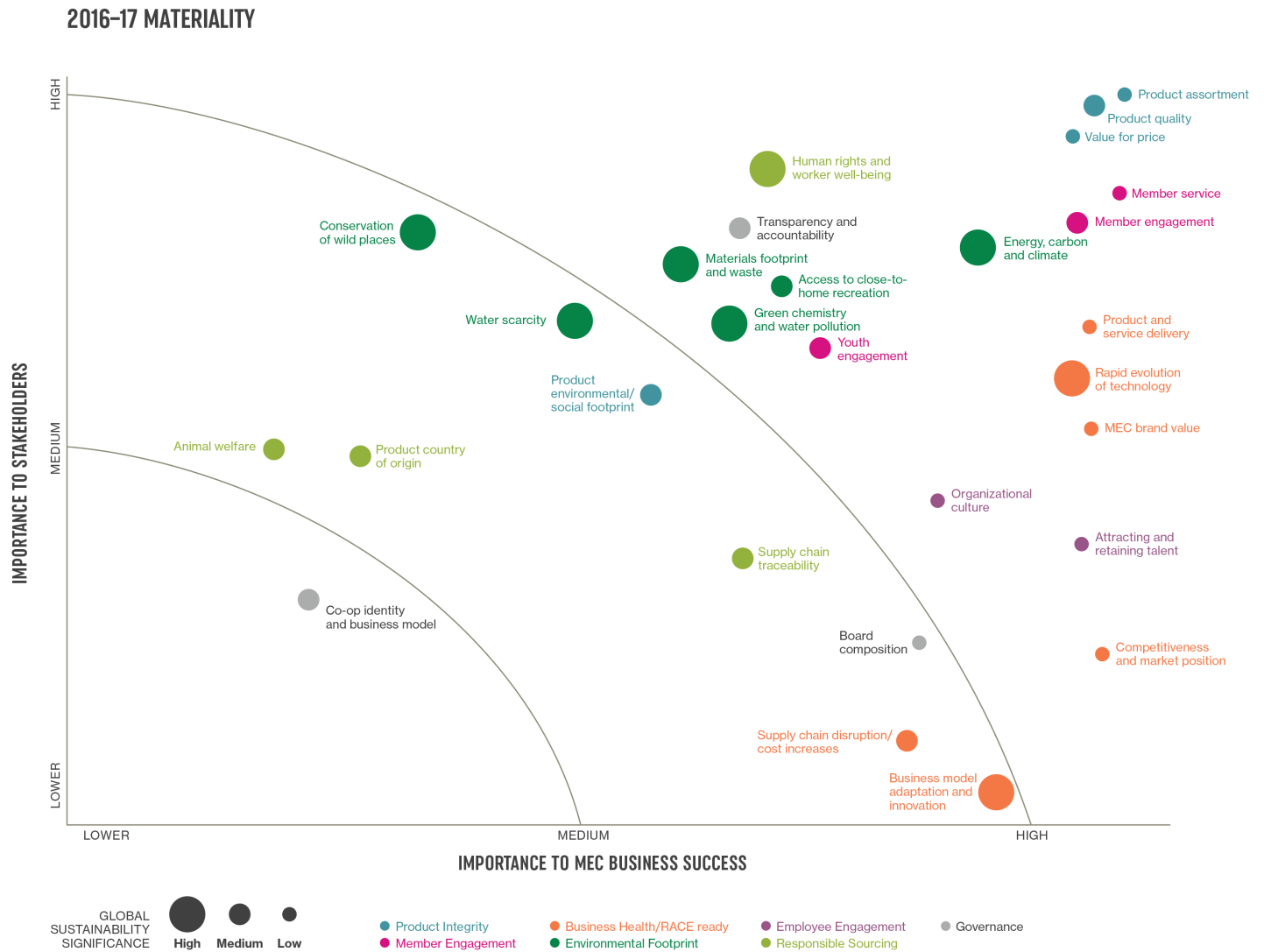
4. Set ambitious goals and make them public

- » MEC set targets for each of the KPIs:
 - Convert 100% of textiles used to be bluesign approved by end of 2017.
 - Maintain 100% of cotton fiber used is certified Organically Grown (OCS/GOTS).
 - Maintain 100% of down used is RDS certified.
 - MEC is currently working with their suppliers to determine its target date for converting to 100% RWS certified wool.

MEC recommends:

Setting aspirational targets of 100% helps change the tone from "why" to "how". It demonstrates a strong commitment to why that choice matters. However, goals should be set such that they are achievable and can be met over time. Tie goals back to priorities and set interim targets. Review goals periodically and update KPIs as needed. Things change... be okay with "two steps forward, one step back".

MEC's 2016 - 2017 Materiality Assessment



By clearly understanding the issues that affect our business, as well as our members and other stakeholders (such as our staff, vendors, advocacy groups and industry associations), we can prioritize our strategy and reporting, and mitigate our biggest social and environmental impacts and risks. Our materiality matrix (pictured) provides a snapshot of these high-priority issues and where they land in terms of their importance to our stakeholders, and their impact on MEC's business success.

We deem an issue to be material based on:

- The degree to which it aligns with MEC's vision and purpose
- Its importance to our stakeholders
- Its potential impacts on our business
- Whether and how much we can influence it

Some of these issues represent risks, others represent opportunities, and many represent both. In addition, many of these issues are interconnected. For instance, apparel manufacturing uses a large amount of water and chemicals to process textiles, so we work to mitigate our impacts by buying organically grown cotton and by partnering with organizations such as bluesign® (water scarcity, materials footprint and waste, and green chemistry and water pollution issues). By having good visibility of our supply chain, we mitigate the risk of potentially costly supply chain disruptions.

While we report on all the issues that matter most to our stakeholders and MEC, we have not set targets or established KPIs for every material issue.