



## Closing Ceremony

*While doing the course of the world forum 2010 a variety of topics and issues were discussed in great detail, with a multitude of speakers representing diverse range of ethnic backgrounds and industries.*

*The Lille world forum 2010 came to glorious end on the 26.11.2010 with eminent speakers addressing all present. The speakers discussed their solutions for a more sustainable future.*

### Speakers

Ernst LIGTERINGEN – Chief Executive, Global Reporting Initiative (Netherlands)

Maurice LEVY – Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Publicis (France)

Ellen MacArthur – Ellen MacArthur Foundation (UK)

Maurice Levy was talking about his perception of CSR. He thinks that many companies still follow the “shareholder value cult” from the eighties where many companies define shareholder value as their key priority. He questions what the best way for companies is to balance between profits and responsible behavior.

Maurice Levy pointed out that even if companies commit to responsible behavior they will always be questioned whether they are sincere or not. Therefore, there must be changes on national and international level (regulations). The governments are responsible for providing a stable environment that supports long term thinking.

On the other hand Maurice Levy sees a movement in the society that comes from employees and consumers. This movement is the second force in addition to governmental regulations that affect the companies.

In his speech Levy explained that the western way of life is not sustainable and has to be replaced by a new lifestyle. The behavior of the consumer needs to change dramatically. As well as the sustainable movement should be global, it should also be supported on the regional and local level.

Additionally Ethics have to be a vital part of CSR because only ethics can provide a base for continuity.

Ernst Ligteringen is the chief executive of the global reporting initiative. In his opinion there are 3 main barriers for a fast change to a more sustainable economy:

1. Data (sources) are not well known,
2. The effects seem to be far away,
3. No clear defined goal.



In the brink of the recent demographic changes it is imperative to change today's behavior. At the moment no country manages to have a high living standard without using more resources than they actually possess. For him the first thing that needs to change is that people are more aware of the implications that these changes bring. Only 3000 of 80.000 multinationals voluntarily monitor their sustainability performance.

The World Forum 2010 closed with Ellen MacArthur with a message of hope for the future. When Ellen MacArthur took the stage, she didn't stand behind the podium. She took a wireless microphone and stood in the middle of the stage with nothing coming between her and the audience. Her speech was divided into two parts. For the first part of her speech, she spoke in French and told us how she dreamed of sailing from a very young age, how she saved her lunch money for 8 years to buy her first boat, and how she went from an amateur sailor to one of the world's top competitive sailors. After breaking the world record for a single-handed non-stop circumnavigation, she took a trip to the small island of South Georgia, where she spent time alone to reflect on her life. At this point in her speech she began to speak in English and spoke of an abandoned village on this island. A village that was built for one purpose: to extract oil from the earth. This shocked her and made her realize that this is what humans do. They take resources, and when there are none left, they leave and move on to the next place. From her solo circumnavigation experience, Ellen understood the importance of resource management. She understood what the word 'finite' really meant. It was during this trip to South Georgia that she realized that there was something much more important than sailing: the planet. This is when she announced that she would stop competitive sailing and start her foundation. Her foundation has projects to teach younger generations about innovation and creative skills in order to build a more sustainable world. Her foundation's main message is to avoid the take-make-dispose lifestyle and to create and promote a circular economy. An economy that learns from nature rather than one that takes from nature. With this, the World Forum 2010 closed with a speaker who deeply touched the audience, many people were in tears, and most certainly these were tears of hope.

*Summary produced by EDHEC students*