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"TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE ACCOUNTING NEED OF THE HOUR FOR SUSTAINABILITY GOAL"

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ABSTRACT

Being sustainable has been the talk of the business town in the past decade. But the big question still remains- How to measure the degree to which an organisation is being sustainable? There are various benchmarks for measuring performance in Corporates. One of this new accounting framework is called Triple Bottom Line accounting (TBL), 3BL and 3P's. It went much beyond the traditional boundaries of measuring profit, return on investments, shareholder's value, etc. TBL accounting focuses on comprehensive investment results i.e. in line with performance along the interrelated dimensions of profit, planet and people. Hence TBL accounting can act as an important tool to support sustainability goal of the organisations. TBL accounting is gaining interest from for-profit businesses, non-profit organisations and government sector as well. Many businesses have already shifted to TBL accounting sustainability framework. Similar approach is also shown by non-profit organisations and government sectors at national, state and local level around the globe.

This paper revisits the TBL accounting sustainability framework concept, tries to explain its utility for organisations, policy makers and economic development highlights certain practitioners and of putting TBL examples recent accounting into practice.

(Key Words: (TBL), 3BL, and 3P's. forprofit businesses, non-profit organisations and government sector, sustainability framework concept, social, human and environmental capital)

INTRODUCTION

(abbreviated line bottom Triple as TBL or 3BL) is an accounting framework with three parts: social, environmental (or ecological) and financial. These three divisions are also called the three Ps: people, planet and profit, or the "three pillars of sustainability". Interest in triple bottom line accounting has been growing in both for-profit, nonprofit and government sectors. Many organizations have adopted the TBL framework to evaluate their performance in a broader context. The term was coined by John Elkington in 1994.

In traditional business accounting and common usage, the "bottom line" refers to either the "profit" or "loss", which is usually recorded at the very bottom line on a statement of revenue and expenses. Over the last 50 years, environmentalists and "social justice" advocates have struggled to bring a broader definition of bottom line into public consciousness by introducing full accounting. For example, if a corporation shows a monetary profit, but their asbestos mine causes thousands of deaths from asbestosis, and their copper mine pollutes a river, and the government ends up spending taxpayer money on health care and river clean-up, how do we perform a full societal cost benefit analysis? The triple bottom line adds two more "bottom lines": and environmental (ecological) concerns. With the ratification of the United Nations and ICLEI TBL standard for urban community accounting in early 2007, this became the dominant approach to public sector full cost accounting. Similar to natural apply standards capital and human capital measurement to assist in measurements required by TBL, e.g. the Eco Budget standard for reporting ecological footprint.