

Press Release

Lausanne as birth place for a new coalition for Switzerland: “Switzerland as a Global Sustainability Hub”

Lausanne, Switzerland, 21 September 2014 – during the annual Business-for-Society Forum hosted by Business School Lausanne, representatives of a high-level thought leadership meeting discussed the outcome of their initiative to create a multi-stakeholder coalition for Switzerland’s future.

The Forum took place on Saturday, 20 September, at the Beau-Rivage Palace in Lausanne with more than 500 stakeholders from more than 40 countries. The Forum provided academia, business, NGO and government representatives an opportunity to voice their hopes and aspirations for the repositioning of Switzerland as a sustainability hotbed for the world. Moderated by [Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever](#), panelists [Dr. Katrin Muff, Dean of Business School Lausanne](#), [Nick Beglinger, President of swisscleantech](#), [Jean Laville, Deputy CEO of Swiss Sustainable Finance](#), and [Bruno Oberle, Director of the Federal Office of the Environment \(FOEN\)](#) shared their vision for Switzerland as a “Global Sustainability Hub”.

The forum followed a strategic meeting held earlier the same day in Lausanne where a dozen thought leaders from all disciplines and sectors gathered to discuss perspectives on a new vision for Switzerland and a coalition supporting the idea of a *Swiss Sustainability Hub*. The premise of the hub, which would function as an inter-institutional space, is that the world and Switzerland need a step-change. What has been achieved to date is important and impressive but by far not sufficient to get us on track for a world where “all people can live well and within the limits of the planet” (WBCSD). Switzerland, in dire need for a new identity given its current banking crisis, with its deep ecological roots, social values and international reputation, may well have a unique opportunity to re-orient its innovation power around the notion of sustainability – to balance economic, environmental and social needs in such a way that Switzerland would one day be celebrated for contributing to a better world.

BSL Graduation Ceremony

Paul Polman and Kate Robertson were awarded an honorary degree (Doctorate Honoris Causa) from BSL at the annual Graduation Ceremony held the same day at the Beau-Rivage Palace. Paul Polman, CEO of Unilever, is selected for the award in recognition of his exceptional contribution to putting sustainability at the core of the corporate world. The honorary award of BSL was also received by [Kate Robertson](#), Co-Global President for Havas Worldwide and Co-Founder of One Young World, who stands out for uniting young responsible leaders worldwide. Both guests addressed BSL’s new graduates from bachelor, master, MBA, executive and doctoral programs.

About Business School Lausanne

Business School Lausanne (BSL) is a leading innovator in business education and ranks 3rd in Switzerland (QS 2013-14 Top 200 Global Business Schools). The school’s ACBSP accredited degree programs include BBA, Masters, full-time modular MBA, Executive MBA and DBA programs. BSL also provides Executive Training in General Management, Corporate Finance (with preparation for the CFA Level I examination), and Sustainable Business (in collaboration with the University of St Gallen). BSL takes a pragmatic approach to learning by applying theory to practice and is backed by a multidisciplinary faculty of business professionals. BSL attracts students from around the world, creating a multicultural environment of more than 60 nationalities. Established in 1987, BSL is the co-founder of the 50+20 initiative on Management Education for the World (www.50plus20.org) in partnership with the Global Responsible Leadership Initiative (www.grli.org) and the Principles of Responsible Management Education (U.N. backed PRME).

For further information, please contact:

Dr. Katrin Muff, Dean of BSL, +41 21 619 06 06, katrin.muff@bsl-lausanne.ch
Denitsa Marinova, BSL Communications, +41 21 619 06 06, denitsa.marinova@bsl-lausanne.ch