EU Sustainability Omnibus – A Call for Evidence-Based Policy-Making (Copenhagen Declaration)[1]

We, the undersigned professors, particularly from EU Member States and other European countries, conduct research and teach in areas related to corporate sustainability and responsibility. We are united in our concern for the future of sustainability policy in Europe.

While we support the European Union's efforts to simplify regulations and create more efficient frameworks, we are alarmed by the current direction of the EU Omnibus process. This initiative risks weakening the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). We urge European policymakers to pursue simplification without compromising the integrity and ambition of these vital regulations.

1. Simplify with Evidence

The current omnibus proposal lacks a strong evidence base. We call for a more thorough integration of scientific research on sustainability reporting and due diligence into the remaining stages of the legislative process—particularly the final negotiations in the European Parliament and the subsequent trilogue.

2. Align with Climate Science

Key provisions of the current proposal overlook established climate science. Especially the proposed weakening or elimination of climate transition plans undermines their role as critical tools to align business models with scientific climate targets. These plans are essential roadmaps for a sustainable transformation.

3. Ensure Regulatory Consistency

To maintain coherence with the Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD), companies with more than 500 employees should remain within the reporting scope of the CSRD. This inclusion is necessary to create a consistent and meaningful pool of reporting entities across the EU.

4. Balance Costs and Benefits

We encourage negotiators to consider compliance costs alongside the substantial strategic advantages of robust sustainability reporting and due diligence. The current proposal focuses almost exclusively on reducing burdens, neglecting the wealth of research demonstrating the long-term business value of sustainability reporting and due diligence practices.

5. Safeguard Risk-Based Due Diligence

The CSDDD must retain a requirement for risk-based due diligence that aligns with international standards, particularly the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. This alignment ensures legal clarity and ethical consistency across borders.

Sustainability is not a regulatory burden but a strategic advantage that enhances Europe's competitiveness, resilience, and capacity for innovation. Undermining the EU's sustainability framework jeopardizes the conditions necessary for European businesses to succeed in a world increasingly shaped by climate risks, evolving investor expectations, and rising global demand for transparency and purpose.

[1] The text of the Declaration was co-authored by a group of scholars during the 2025 Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Meeting in Copenhagen.

Note: All co-authors and signatories signed in a personal capacity and the signature does therefore not reflect endorsement by the relevant educational institution.

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Academic Evidence Supporting the Copenhagen Declaration

The following exemplary academic research underpins the Copenhagen Declaration. It demonstrates that each of the five demands is supported by robust research insights that merit consideration in policy-making, particularly given that the Omnibus I Simplification Package was adopted without an impact assessment. This list was compiled by the Declaration's co-authors but is not formally part of the Declaration itself. It represents a small selection of relevant articles from the substantial body of academic evidence of recent years.

1. Simplify with Evidence

The current omnibus proposal lacks a strong evidence base. A large body of peer-reviewed literature demonstrates that mandatory sustainability reporting improves corporate accountability, transparency, and outcomes.

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2. Align with Climate Science

Climate transition plans are vital tools for aligning corporate strategies with science-based targets. Removing or weakening them undermines the EU's climate commitments.

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