

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

“A commitment to sustainability is a commitment to the future of your business.”

A commitment to sustainability reflects a strategic investment in the long-term resilience and relevance of a business. It signals an understanding that environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and sound governance are not peripheral concerns but core drivers of value creation, risk management, and stakeholder trust.

This handbook endeavours to provide a comprehensive exploration of sustainability through the lens of governance, drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives and empirical examples. It is designed to equip researchers, students, and professionals with the tools to critique existing paradigms and design responsive, transparent, and equity-driven structures.

Our collective future rests on choices made today, choices that must prioritize planetary well-being, intergenerational justice, and institutional accountability. Governance, when informed by sustainability science, holds the promise of cultivating societies that are both prosperous and conscientious.

In alignment with its vision and commitment to advancing sustainability, the Institute of Company Secretaries of India launched the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Awards in 2022. This initiative was aimed at fostering the integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance principles into corporate practices, while acknowledging the efforts of businesses transitioning toward sustainable models.

Embedding sustainability into core business strategy enables organizations to build lasting stakeholder trust. This strategic alignment not only safeguards long-term value but also positions businesses to lead responsibly in a rapidly changing environment. In recognition of this imperative, the Institute is proud to present the **Handbook on Business Responsibility and Sustainability**, a comprehensive resource designed to guide businesses in embedding responsible practices, fostering transparency, and driving long-term value through ethical and sustainable growth.

I extend my sincere appreciation to Ms. Prachi Dwivedi, Senior Executive Assistant, CS Iqra Jabeen Ansari, Executive (Academics), CS Richa Gupta, Executive (Academics), for their valuable contributions under the overall guidance of CS Anamika Chaudhary, Joint Director, Directorate of Sustainability & Governance. Their collective efforts, steered by the leadership of CS Asish Mohan, Secretary, ICSI, and CS Manish Gupta, Chairman, Corporate Laws and Governance Committee, ICSI, have been instrumental in shaping this publication.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to CS Priyadarshini Mahapatra, Senior General Manager, Company Secretarial, Tata Motors Limited and CS Murli Balasubramaniam, Former General Counsel & Company Secretary, Nestlé India Limited, for their valuable contributions that have significantly shaped this publication. Their insights and expertise have been instrumental in bringing this work to fruition.

I also extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the corporates whose exemplary practices have paved the way for promoting effective compliance. Their commitment to responsible governance continues to inspire and drive meaningful change.

It is with sincere hope and conviction that this publication will serve as an invaluable guide for both corporations and the professionals.

With warm regards,

(CS Dhananjay Shukla)

President

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India