Alcantara and Venice International University –VIU

**Coping with Change: Global Warming and Decarbonization**

**4th International Symposium – 1-2 March, 2018**

San Servolo Island, VIU Premises, Venice, Italy

*Venice, 2 March 2018* – “**Global Warming and Decarbonization**” is the topic that has been discussed during the fourth edition of the “International Symposium on Sustainability” organized and promoted by Alcantara, in partnership with Venice International University - VIU.

The intensive two-day workshop involved about thirty Eastern and Western world-class scientists, economists, academics, managers of top corporations, and science writers who evaluated the impact of **Global Warming and Decarbonization** on people’s live, companies’ behavior, and communication, highlighting the role played by technology and innovation to face this subject.

This mix of approaches drew an up-to-date scenario and proposed an innovative way to deal with them.

Greetings and opening remarks came from **Ambassador Umberto Vattani** – President of Venice International University - VIU – and **Mr. Andrea Boragno** - Chairman and CEO, Alcantara S.p.A.

In particular, they both highlighted the reason why academies and companies have to combine their efforts to develop a common knowledge about the discussed topics, to drive the debate among scientists, businesspeople and experts in communication, in order to enhance a clear information toward citizens.

Ambassador Umberto Vattani commented: “In April 1968 was founded in Rome, at the Accademia dei Lincei, the Club of Rome. This prestigious Institution made the first serious attempt to tackle the issues of Sustainability. These very days (March 2018), exactly fifty years later, Venice International University has organized, together with Alcantara, a global seminar to show how much progress has been made in understanding the causes and, more important, the remedies needed to prevent a further deterioration of the Environment. What we need now is to press hard for the implementation of the solutions which do exist, with the active involvement of scientists, business leaders and private citizens”.

Mr. Andrea Boragno added: “During these two days of Symposium it emerged clearly that there is still an important gap between what science and research state and what society, at different levels, knows and understands about the issue of climate change and decarbonisation. At the same time, it has been confirmed, together with the urgency of undertaking drastic actions, that nations are not on track on the 2-degree goal and that unilateralism is growing worldwide.

For this reason, Alcantara and Venice International University have decided to launch a project aimed at closing gaps through exchange, identification of actions and confrontation among academics, scientists, corporations, business persons”.

New and relevant perspectives came from speakers and panelists. In particular, several scientists, experts and academics highlighted the main patterns to apply to interpret the current situation and to address the possible solutions toward the topic of climate change.

**Prof. Massimo Inguscio** – President of CNR, the Italian National Research Council – stated: “Science and researchers have a key leading role to create the correct background and awareness to share knowledge and address future choices and behaviours for citizens, policy makers, institution and business leaders and other stakeholders involved. We are all part of one united world. Science is always inclusive and aims for ideas and progress for peace and the health of Humankind and other living creatures”.

Furthermore, **Dr. Georg Kell** – founder and former Executive Director of UN Global Compact and Chairman of Arabesque, added: “To overcome the current dilemma of inaction in facing global warming and decarbonisation, we have to create convergent goals between business and society. Technology and finance can build now this bridge detecting and evaluating investments through big data analysis with extra-financial indicators like carbon cost, that estimates the benefit of reducing gas emissions”.

**Dr. Daniel Klingenfeld** - Head of the Director's Staff, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research- stated: “Global greenhouse gas emissions and atmospheric Co2 concentrations keep on increasing, further destabilizing the climate system. We need to implement a roadmap for a rapid decarbonisation in order to meet the Paris climate targets”.

While **Onorevole Giovanna Melandri** - Founder and Chairman of the Human Foundation and Chairman of the MAXXI Foundation - commented: “The achievement of ambitious goals in terms of decarbonisation and reduction of global warming, requires close collaboration between policy makers, companies and investors. In this perspective, investments in innovation must have measurable social impacts and significant economic returns. Therefore, with Human Foundation and the Global Social Impact Investment Steering Group we work at the development of a new asset class”.

Moreover, several multinational Companies and International experts, reported their experience and presented their vision, investments and technological programs devoted to face the issues related to global warming and decarbonization. In particular, they focused their attentions on the conditions to put in place to reach their goals and to favor the utilization of their upcoming solutions.

**Mr. Yoshikazu Tanaka** – Chief Engineer ZF MS Product Planning Mid-size Vehicle Company, Toyota Motor Corporation – presented today Toyota’s engagement on building an hydrogen-based mobility: “Since 1992, Toyota has started its proprietary development of fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV) and started to sell at the end of 2014. Next scheduled step is to make the use of hydrogen-based cars more popular, reducing their cost of adoption”.

Also **Mr. Ryo Chishiro** – Senior Staff Officer, Hydrogen Project Development Center, Corporate Technology Division, Kawasaki Heavy Industries, explained the company’s approach to the Hydrogen-based society: “We will start to demonstrate the technologies for hydrogen supply chain in 2020. Moreover, we are continuously developing new technologies for hydrogen society, as carrierships and gas turbines”.

**Dr. Hermann Pengg** - Head of Project Management e-fuels, Audi AG, added: “The cradle to grave analysis shows: sustainable transport needs sustainable electricity, green hydrogen, or green gaseous or liquid fuels. This is why we are building demonstration plants with start-up partners”.

**Dr. Paul Jefferiss** - Head of Policy, Long Term Planning and Policy BP, noted: “To help us understand future uncertainties in the energy transition, and aid our analysis and decision making, the Company uses a range of scenarios and other inputs. These scenarios are not a prediction of what will happen or what BP would like to happen. Rather they explore the possible implications of different judgments and assumptions.

Despite the differences among scenarios, they suggest demand for oil and gas will remain significant”.

Last part of the Symposium was dedicated to the opinions of some important science writers, journalists and experts in communication.

**Mr. Alex Kasprak** - Science writer and digital expert at Snopes.com, highlighted the problem of miscommunication: “is growing within the internet age. I suggest an effective way to fight scientific mis-communicators and combat their fake news: present and explain actual science to the audience going into details in order to educate the public. Do be unrelenting in calling out to bad communicators, they are not confident as they appear”.

**Mr. Andrea Boragno** and **Ambassador Umberto Vattani** stated that they are considering this Symposium a starting point to give continuity to the exchange of opinions and to propose solutions, coming from the exchange from academia, science and world class experts.

**Alcantara S.p.A. – www.alcantara.com**

Founded in 1972, Alcantara represents a prime example of Italian-produced quality. As registered trademark of Alcantara S.p.A. and result of a unique and proprietary technology, Alcantara® is a highly innovative material, offering an unrivalled combination of sensory, aesthetic and functional qualities. Thanks to its extraordinary versatility, Alcantara is the choice of leading brands in a number of application fields: fashion and accessories, automotive, interior design and home décor, consumer-electronics. These features, together with a serious and certified commitment in terms of sustainability, make Alcantara a true icon of contemporary lifestyle: the lifestyle of those who want to fully enjoy their everyday life, respecting the environment. Since 2009 Alcantara is certified “Carbon Neutral”, having defined, reduced and offset all the CO2 emissions derived from its activity. To mark out the path of the company in such a field, every year Alcantara draws up and publishes its own Sustainability Report, certified by Bdo authority and available also on the corporate website. Headquartered in Milan, Alcantara production site and R&D department are located in Nera Montoro, in the heart of Umbria Region (Terni).

**For further information:**

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**Venice International University –** [**www.univiu.org**](http://www.univiu.org)

Venice International University is something unique in the academic world - a consortium of 17 universities from all over the world with an autonomous campus on the island of San Servolo, Venice, Italy.
Universities today must play a strategic role in addressing the new global challenges: sustainable development, climate change, energy and food security, urban growth, welfare, ageing populations, global ethics, protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, human rights, equality, and global governance.
VIU's academic and thematic programs adopt interdisciplinary approaches in an international context, nurturing the ability of students to develop different skills, to work across disciplines, to react with great flexibility and a broad intellectual range.

The VIU **TEN Program on Sustainability** (Thematic Environmental Networks) develops research and capacity-building activities to promote Sustainable Development at a global level, with particular attention to emerging economies where target groups consist mainly of policy officers, public officials and civil servants. The TEN Program has developed an extensive intersectorial network of stakeholders in the field of Sustainability, including: businesses that adopt innovative processes; government authorities; research and cultural organizations and universities, building an international platform for the exchange of knowledge and information on Sustainability tools and policies.

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