

# WILD PLANET TRUST: THE SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION OF A 100-YEAR-OLD START-UP (A)

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## ABSTRACT

WILD PLANET TRUST IS A REGISTERED EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC AND CONSERVATION CHARITY BASED IN DEVON, UK. THE TRUST'S HISTORY DATES TO 1923, WHEN ITS FOUNDER HERBERT WHITLEY FIRST OPENED THE PAIGNTON ZOO IN DEVON.

This case study focuses on how in 2021, nearly 100 years after the Trust opened its doors, the business was in decline, and significant transformation was needed to survive the next 100 years. In 2021, the Trustees appointed Dennis Flynn as the Wild Planet Trust's CEO to lead this vital transformation. Upon joining the organisation, Dennis was tasked with restructuring the organisation and designing a new and diversified business model that would position the Trust on a path toward a long and sustainable future.

Following a long history rooted in wildlife conservation and education, in July 2023, the Trust celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And while its centenary year marked the perfect time for Wild Planet Trust to reflect on its incredible history, it also provided an opportunity to transform and look forward to the next 100 years.

This case is for educational purposes and is not intended to illustrate either effective or ineffective management of an organisational situation. The situations and circumstances described may have been dramatized or modified for instructional purposes and may not accurately reflect actual events.

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## AUTHORS

# PROFESSOR PAOLO TATICCHI, OMRI PROFESSOR & SCHOOL DEPUTY DIRECTOR

### Biography

Paolo Taticchi is Professor in Strategy and Sustainability & School Deputy Director (MBA, Global Engagement, Executive Education) at UCL School of Management.

Highly active in executive education, Paolo has trained thousands of managers and executives of Fortune Global 500 companies; and is a sought-after speaker regularly invited to give keynote talks at world-class academic, governmental and industry events.

Paolo's research on corporate sustainability and performance measurement is internationally recognized. Paolo's latest books include "Corporate Sustainability in Practice", which was published in January 2021, and "Sustainable Transformation Strategy", published in May 2023.

Outside of the academy, Paolo has significant consultancy experience in the fields of strategy, education, and sustainability. He has worked in this capacity for firms of various sizes, and in a range of different industries. Today, he advises (or serves in the advisory board) influential organizations and is one of the scientific advisors of the Ministry for the Ecological Transition in Italy.

He has received numerous awards for the impact of his work. His projects, quotes and opinions have been featured over 350 times in international media outlets. In 2021-2023, Paolo was indicated by Italian's leading business daily Sole 24 Ore as the most influential Italian under the age of 40.

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# MELINA CORVAGLIA-CHARREY RESEARCH ASSISTANT

### Biography

Melina is a Research Assistant at UCL School of Management, where she supports various projects focused on business strategy and sustainability, including case studies and white papers. Melina is also a consultant supporting organisations with their marketing and business communications needs, and sustainability reporting.

In collaboration with Professor Taticchi and Melissa Demartini, Melina co-authored a book titled "Sustainable Transformation Strategy", published in May 2023.

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Previously, Melina worked in the Media Sponsorship & Marketing field for 15+ years in Canada, where she collaborated with various Fortune 500 companies and brands to develop strategic partnership marketing initiatives, including several programmes that garnered awards from the Sponsorship Marketing Council of Canada. More recently, Melina worked as a Sustainable Content Marketing Strategist for a UK based consulting agency specialising in the sports and sustainability field.

Passionate about the field of sustainability in sport, Melina is a current member and volunteer with Sport and Sustainability International, a not-for-profit organisation that is focused on accelerating sustainability in and through sport. A mother of two young girls, Melina is motivated to support, learn from, and collaborate with individuals and organisations that are striving to create a better world for future generations.

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