

Business Leaders Seeking to Step Up their Sustainability Leadership Now Have a Roadmap

Looking to transform your business to contribute to sustainable development without sacrificing profits? Learn from the Swedish approach in new leadership book by and for senior executives

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, OCT 20, 2020 Faced with the pressing realities of climate change, social unrest, loss of ecosystems and the global pandemic, consumers and employees expect companies and brands to take a stand and become part of reshaping a more sustainable world. Business leaders who want to engage but aren't sure where or how to start can find guidance in the book *Sustainability Leadership: A Swedish Approach to Transforming Your Company, Your Industry and the World* (Palgrave MacMillan) by Henrik Henriksson, President and CEO of global sustainable transport company Scania and Elaine Weidman Grunewald, global sustainability executive and co-founder of the AI Sustainability Center.

Sweden may be a small country, but it has long punched above its weight and is well renowned globally for its progressive actions on sustainability, both as a nation and within the business sector. While far from perfect, Sweden is brimming with examples of companies that serve as inspiration as to how to align business strategy to solving problems and making an impact for society. How can business leaders keep focus on profitability while forcefully moving the needle on sustainability? By using the ingredients of Sweden's "secret sauce." Swedish companies are intrinsically connected to their heritage: the culture, the values, the particular model of social democracy, the government's prominent role as a champion of sustainability and equality, and, not least, a national affinity for nature and respect for the environment that almost verges on religious zeal.

Tapping into the Swedish approach, the book offers business leaders a roadmap for transformation. The authors take decades of practical, hands-on experience in steering their organizations on a more sustainable path and distill it into a simple but powerful three-step leadership model:

- **The Foundation:** clarifying and setting a company's purpose, aligning it with culture and values, and ensuring the basic expectations for sustainability leadership are in place.

- The Core: integrating sustainability into the business model, day-to-day operations, R&D, product portfolios and sales, across the value chain
- The Leap: moving from incremental to exponential solutions and impact by applying a societal and planetary lens, having society as your stakeholder, and using tools and accelerators like digitalization to amplify your ambition.

“I have long been convinced that sustainability and profitability go hand in hand, and that sustainability presents a great opportunity for growth and innovation,” says Henriksson. “I attribute a lot of my own conviction to a Swedish corporate leadership approach where combining a company’s business strategy with societal and environmental progress is the norm, not the exception. It is a mindset that I share with many other heads of business from Sweden, and ultimately as a leader, it’s about what legacy you want to leave.”

The world is running out of time to shift course and there has never been a more pivotal moment and responsibility for the private sector to act. The opportunity to be proactive has never been greater.

“The science is clear and in today’s somewhat uncertain political environment, it makes no sense for large corporations to sit around and wait for policy and the public sector to take the lead,” says Weidman Grunewald. “There is a growing sense of urgency that business sustainability leadership needs to accelerate, fast. The operative phrase in these uncertain times needs to shift from ‘take no risks’ to ‘take the leap.’”

Sustainability Leadership: A Swedish Approach to Transforming Your Company, Your Industry and the World provides peer-to-peer insights from leaders who show the way forward, candidly sharing both their successes and their missteps on their own sustainability journeys. Packed with real-world examples, tools and recommendations, the book serves as both inspiration and a practical guide to leadership.

The live-streamed global launch of the book will take place on Oct 22 in Stockholm. Several of the CEOs who contributed to the book—Eva Karlsson, CEO of [Houdini](#); Elsa Bernadotte, COO of [Karma](#); Hans Vestberg, CEO of [Verizon](#), and Rickard Gustafson, CEO of [SAS](#)—will join Henriksson and Weidman Grunewald along with leading climate scientist Johan Rockström, Potsdam Institute. The discussion will focus on how these leaders take on society as a true stakeholder for their business, and their quest to change the world for the better.

The other CEOs and prominent business leaders from Swedish industry and its vibrant start-up community who participated in the book include: Mia Brunell, Livfors, Axel-Johnson; Jonas Samuelsson, Electrolux; Christian Sinding, EQT; Georgi Ganey, Kinnevik; Peter Carlsson, Northvolt; Åsa Bergman, Sweco; Johan Dannelind, former CEO of Telia Company; Sam Manaberi, Trine; Niklas Adalberth,

Norrskan Foundation; Jacob Wallenberg, Chair of Investor AB and Michael Treschow, Director, Board of Directors, Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation; Osvald Bjelland, Founder and CEO, Xynteo; Mats Granryd, Executive Director, GSMA, and Anna Borgström, Netclean. Experts in sustainability providing key insights include John Elkington, Chairman of Volans; Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, and Georg Kell, Founder, UN Global Compact and Chairman, Arabesque.

There is no cost to attend the livestreamed event hosted at [Norrskan Foundation](#), which will receive all proceeds of the book for its work supporting entrepreneurs to solve some of the world's greatest sustainability challenges. [Register here](#) to attend the event; an on-demand version of the event can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/ScaniaGroup>. The book is available at [Palgrave MacMillan's website](#) and through online book stores globally.

See what global business and sustainability leaders like Herbert Diess, Chairman of the Board of Management, Volkswagen AG; N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons, Rick Haythornthwaite, Chairman of Mastercard and Lim Boon Heng, Chairman, Temasek and others [are saying about the book](#).

About the Authors

Henrik Henriksson

As CEO of Scania, a leading global sustainable transport company headquartered in Stockholm, Henrik Henriksson, has become a beacon in the shift towards a fossil-free transport system. He is an advisor to the Swedish government and part of its Agenda 2030 delegation and its Commission for Electrification of the transport sector. He continues to position Scania as a role model in decarbonizing the heavy commercial vehicle sector.

Elaine Weidman Grunewald

Elaine Weidman Grunewald is an expert on global sustainability and development issues. She has worked for over two decades in the private sector, focusing on digitalization and sustainable development challenges across multiple sectors. She spent nearly 20 years at Ericsson, where she was SVP and Chief Sustainability and Public Affairs Officer and a member of the Executive Team. In 2019, she co-founded the AI Sustainability Center, a world-leading center for identifying, measuring and governing ethical and societal implications of AI and data-driven technologies, based in Stockholm.

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