



Where Do you See the Topic of Sustainability in 2030?

I see that this is a movement that will continue to intensify over the next decade. The question is if it will move fast enough to reach the set targets for combatting climate change and other parts of the SDGs. To be successful, we simply can't afford major disruptions. [...] If we look only at the rapid technological developments, the overall circumstances at companies, and their willingness to transform, we have a good foundation for achieving what is needed by 2030.

Fredrik Gustafsson, Senior Manager of Sustainability Transformation, Cordial

Cordial is a management consulting firm based in Stockholm, Sweden. Its main focus is strategy, transformation, and business development with sustainability as one of the key areas.

My hope is that it will be something that we talk less about because it'll already be such a natural part of how we work and do business. This would mean that we've reached the tipping point where we're finally starting to go in the right direction globally.

Henrik Larsen, Chief Procurement Officer, A. P. Møller-Mærsk

A. P. Møller-Mærsk is an integrated container logistics company and member of the A.P. Møller Group. With a dedicated team of over 80,000 people, they enable global trade for a growing world.

I believe that climate change will remain highly important over the next decade. By solving the challenge of climate change we'll also cover many of the other challenges related to environment, such as air pollution, over consumption, deforestation, and biodiversity. Human rights and especially human rights issues in the supply chain will also keep gaining traction.

Chaojun Li, Global Head of Sustainability, WS Audiology

WS Audiology develops, manufactures, sells, and distributes hearing aids. WS Audiology's ambition as a global leader is to unlock human potential by making wonderful sound part of everyone's life.

The biggest issue for the next couple of decades will be climate change and the required decarbonization. It's fundamental and already galvanized. Policymakers and NGOs will demand that companies in any sector of any size prove that they have reduced carbon emissions by credibly reporting on their demonstrable actions. If corporations fail to do so, they will come under immense reputational and regulatory pressures. So, it is in the corporations' interests to move fast and in earnest on this issue. Linked to this, as well, is the other big development in that we're going to be increasingly moving away from linear, purely extractive industries and extractive industries-based value chains to increasingly circular economy-based value chains. This is an overdue development.

Dr. Nicholas Garrett, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, RCS Global Group

RCS is a proven leader in data-driven ESG performance, responsible sourcing, and responsible mining assurance.

Renewables are more competitive than coal so we hope market forces will win out, but it needs time to make that transition happen. Coal has no place in the world. Oil's place in the world is also diminishing as the uptake of electric vehicles accelerates. There'll still be some used in aviation and shipping but eventually there'll be alternative fuels in these sectors as well.

Although gas produces half of the emissions of oil it still produces emissions. Because of the current high energy prices people think they need to invest more in gas production, but we should actually be investing more in gas storage because the same storage facilities could be used for hydrogen in the future. Natural gas pipelines could also be repurposed to help transport hydrogen.

The future is renewables and green hydrogen, and we need an infrastructure that supports them.

Dr. María Mendiluce, Chief Executive Officer, We Mean Business Coalition

We Mean Business Coalition is a global non-profit coalition working with the world's most influential businesses to take action on climate change.

As we said in Sect. 1.1, it is time to change the way we treat the planet and all its ecosystems. It is time to change the way some people are abused for the sake of lowering the cost of consumer goods. It is time to change the way we live, time to change the way we do business, and time to put sustainability on top of the agenda when making supply chain and procurement decisions. The world in 2030 should be a cleaner, more equitable place than it is now. This will be the case if the highly informed insights from the pioneering sustainability leaders featured above and throughout this book come true.

The quotes above are a clear indication that attitudes about sustainability, and the increasingly prominent role it plays in procurement, will have changed dramatically by 2030. In line with the UN SDGs, the aim is to end poverty and hunger, equally value the human rights of all, achieve gender equality, and ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. If equal importance is attached to the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development, they could go a long way in helping us to solve many of the problems that human activity has caused. Thankfully, an increasing number of people, governments, and companies agree with this and are acting accordingly.

One point came across very clearly throughout our research for this book. Whether we were talking to seasoned professionals from a variety of industries who have been championing sustainability in their companies for some time, dedicated people from the non-profit sector, entrepreneurs from start-ups, or energetic, determined young procurement professionals, all agreed that boosting sustainability-related actions needs to happen now.

However, it is the younger generation—the future workforce, managers, and leaders of the corporate world—that is proving to be one of the strongest and most determined drivers of sustainable development. In the course of developing the ideas and gathering the details for this book, we took every opportunity to speak to the new generation of young procurement professionals. Not surprisingly, they are ambitious and strive for attractive roles, decent salaries, and good career development opportunities. But they also want their jobs to be purpose driven, they want to know that what they do makes a positive difference to the people and natural world around them. For them, sustainability has been an important element of their jobs since their careers began.

To attract the right talent from among these young professionals, the procurement function will have to change so that sustainability is an inherent part of the role. Sustainability has to be clearly visible in procurement's strategy and targets. This "movement" needs the support of top management as well as being anchored across the organization and other functions. Young professionals are also digital natives, so they understand how transformation works and how digital tools can be applied to all aspects of their lives, including tackling the business challenges of sustainability.

Procrastination must be replaced by proactivity. This is especially true where decarbonization is concerned and the goal of staying within the 1.5 °C temperature rise target, which leading scientists say is essential for our survival and the survival of future generations. We are in a race against time and the clock that will determine our future is ticking loudly. It is a sound that can no longer be ignored. Procurement has a prominent role to play in helping us to win this race. It can be the function that really takes control of the corporate sustainability agenda by re-inventing itself so that sustainability criteria are on a par with cost efficiencies and quality when it comes to purchasing decisions or the choice of which suppliers to partner with.

This is the essence of this book. Define a purpose for procurement that incorporates sustainability. Build a challenging strategy and roadmap and systematically anchor sustainability in all relevant processes throughout the organization. Create transparency about the environmental, social, and ethical dimensions of the supply chain by monitoring all relationships with suppliers and partners across the value chain. Digital tools are invaluable here just as they are for helping to understand the supply chain beyond tier 1—it is generally the smaller, lower-tier suppliers that carry the most risk. And when developing measures, focus on high-risk issues first and work *with* suppliers to create joint roadmaps. Collaboration and co-creation, internally with cross-functional teams, and externally with partners and suppliers, are two of the keys that will unlock many sustainability challenges. Finally, a sustainability transformation is a marathon, not a sprint, so find a rhythm, maintain energy and dedication, and keep going. The rewards will be worth the effort.

Above all, please act *now*.

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