

March 24, 2020

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From: 31 May 2018

To: 31 May 2020

[24 March 2020]

I am pleased to confirm that the Stockholm Resilience Centre at Stockholm University reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

Although the Stockholm Resilience Centre engages in a broad spectrum of research and collaborations that are aligned with the Principles set forth by the United Nations Global Compact, and which help to build a scientific basis for understanding humanity's relationship with the biosphere, this Communication of Engagement focuses on four specific areas:

- (1) Our engagement with the United Nations Global Compact Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business;*
- (2) Our executive programme in resilience thinking;*
- (3) The keystone dialogues and Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS);*
- (4) Selected research outcomes of particular relevance for understanding the potential of the private sector to play a constructive role in biosphere stewardship*

In addition, I am pleased to make our 2019 annual report available to provide further information about the range and depth of activities being undertaken by the Stockholm Resilience Centre at Stockholm University.

*Sincerely yours,
Line Gordon, Executive Director*

Stockholm Resilience Centre

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Part II. Description of Actions

The vision of the Stockholm Resilience Centre is a world where social-ecological systems are understood, governed and managed, to enhance human well-being and the capacity to deal with complexity and change, for the sustainable co-evolution of human civilizations with the biosphere. Efforts to realize this vision include research activities, the establishment of collaborative partnerships and educational efforts. Across all these categories, work is being done at the local, regional and global level to build the knowledge and experience base needed to ensure a sustainable future for humanity and the biosphere. The following represents a sampling of activities of particular relevance to the ambitions of the United Nations Global Compact and its principles.

(1) Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business

The United Nations Global Compact launched its Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business at the United Nations in September 2018, with the Stockholm Resilience Centre as one of its founding members, alongside Global Compact companies, international organizations, civil society organizations, and other academic institutions.

The Stockholm Resilience Centre has actively contributed to all of the Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business's activities and outputs since its formation. Specifically, these include:

- 1) Co-authoring “**Mapping Ocean Governance and Regulation**”, a working paper for consultation by the platform in September 2018. This report provides a cross-sectoral view of regulations and governance across six ocean-based industries (shipping, offshore oil and gas, offshore renewable energy, marine aquaculture, marine fisheries, and seabed mining), while also surveying the voluntary programs and green clubs contributing to private governance of these industries that goes beyond existing regulatory frameworks.
- 2) Serving as a contributor and member of the editorial board of “**Global Goals, Ocean Opportunities**”, launched in June 2019 at the Our Ocean Conference in Oslo, Norway, and focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and exploring the business case for mainstreaming sustainable business practices for a healthy, productive and well-governed ocean.
- 3) Serving as a contributor and member of the editorial board of “**Ocean Stewardship 2030**”, a report in preparation for the UN Ocean Conference (June 2020) incorporating ambitions from across the Action Platform membership for tipping points towards ocean stewardship, including through the identification of weakness in the global governance and regulatory framework, and commitments by industry to contribute to improving these conditions in conjunction with governments and relevant bodies.

All of these materials as well as further information about the United Nations Global Compact Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business are available here:

<https://www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action-platforms/ocean>

(2) Our executive programme in resilience thinking;

Initiated in 2018, the Executive Programme in Resilience Thinking is a commissioned education programme that aims to create transformative business leadership. It connects CEOs and board members of large companies with experts in sustainability science and resilience thinking. There were 16 alumni of the 2018/2019 programme, 15 alumni of the 2019/2020 programme, and participants are now being recruited for the third round. Three important characteristics of the programme are that it is (1) science-based, and built on interactions between participants and leading sustainability scientists and resilience thinkers; (2) future-oriented, intentionally making an effort to explore how emerging technologies, global change and innovation are intersecting; (3) business-driven, aiming to identify new business opportunities, while accelerating action towards transformational change.

More information about the Executive Programme in Resilience Thinking, its current participants and alumni, and contributors is available here: <http://executive.stockholmresilience.org>

(3) The keystone dialogues and Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS);

The concept of keystone actors was inspired by the 'keystone species' term in ecology, developed by Prof Robert T. Paine to describe species that play a disproportionate role in the functioning of an ecosystem. In a 2015 publication, a research team led by Prof Henrik Österblom of the Stockholm Resilience Centre used the concept to explain how the largest companies in a given industry can operate similarly to keystone species in ecological communities: they can have a disproportionate effect on the structure and function of the system in which they operate.

Keystone actors in the seafood industry were identified by Österblom et al. (2015) (<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0127533>) as having the following four characteristics: (1) they dominate global production revenues and volumes within a particular sector; (2) they control globally relevant segments of production; (3) they connect ecosystems globally through subsidiaries; (4) they influence global governance processes and institutions.

SeaBOS is the result of this science-based identification of "keystone actors" in global seafood. It currently consists of ten of the largest seafood producers in the world, engaged in wild capture fisheries, aquaculture and feeds, with companies based in Europe, North America and Asia. Stockholm Resilience Centre and the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences are scientific partners to the initiative. It is funded by the members, with support from the Walton Family Foundation, the David & Lucile Packard Foundation and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. More information about SeaBOS is available at: <https://keystonedialogues.earth>

(4) Selected research outcomes of particular relevance for understanding the potential of the private sector to play a constructive role in biosphere stewardship

Under the broad umbrella of its mission to advance research for governance and management of social-ecological systems to secure ecosystem services for human well-being and resilience for long-term sustainability, the Stockholm Resilience Centre is working to apply and further

develop this research through practice, policy and academic training.

In 2018, over 160 academic publications were produced by SRC researchers, with this number rising to over 190 in 2019. SRC publications were cited over 14,000 times in 2019 alone, and appeared in leading publications such as *The Lancet*, *Nature* and *Nature*-related journals, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, USA (PNAS)*, *Science*, and *Science Advances*.

A full list of publications can be found in the Annual Reports of the Stockholm Resilience Centre at: <https://stockholmresilience.org/about-us/annual-reports.html>

Recent high-profile publications of particular relevance to the United Nations Global Compact include:

Bebbington, J., H. Österblom, B. Crona, J-B. Jouffray, C. Larrinaga, S. Russell, B. Scholtens. 2019. Accounting and accountability in the Anthropocene. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* 33(1): 152-177.

Elmqvist, T., E. Andersson, N. Frantzeskaki, T. McPhearson, P. Olsson, O. Gaffney, K. Takeuchi, C. Folke. 2019. Sustainability and resilience for transformation in the urban century. *Nature Sustainability* 2(4): 267-273.

Folke, C., H. Österblom, J-B. Jouffray, E.F. Lambin, W.N. Adger, M. Scheffer, B.I. Crona, M. Nyström, S.A. Levin, S.R. Carpenter, J.M. Anderies, S. Chapin, A-S. Crepin, A. Dauriach, V. Galaz, L.J. Gordon, N. Kautsky, B.H. Walker, J.R. Watson, J. Wilen, A. de Zeeuw. 2019. Transnational corporations and the challenge of biosphere stewardship. *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 3(10): 1396-1403.

Keys, P.W., V. Galaz, M. Dyer, N. Matthews, C. Folke, M. Nyström, S.E. Cornell. 2019. Anthropocene risk. *Nature Sustainability* 2(8): 667-673.

Nyström, M., J-B. Jouffray, A.V. Norström, B. Crona, P.S. Jørgensen, S.R. Carpenter, .. Bodin, V. Galaz, C. Folke. 2019. Anatomy and resilience of the global production ecosystem. *Nature* 575(7781): 98-108.

Spijkers, J., T.H. Morrison, R. Blasiak, G.S. Cumming, M. Osborne, J. Watson, H. Österblom. 2018. Marine fisheries and future ocean conflict. *Fish and Fisheries* 19(5): 798 – 806.

Springmann, M., M. Clark, D. Mason-D'Croz, K. Wiebe, B.L. Boodrys, L. Lassaletta, W. de Vries, S.J. Vermeulen, M. Herrero, K.M. Carlson, M. Jonell, M. Troell, F. DeClerck, L.J. Gordon, R. Zurayk, P. Scarborough, M. Rayner, B. Loken, J. Fanzo, H.C.J. Godfray, D. Tilman, J. Rockström, W. Willett. 2018. Options for keeping the food system within environmental limits. *Nature* 562(7728): 519 – 525.

Steffen, W., J. Rockström, K. Richardson, T.M. Lenton, C. Folke, D. Liverman, C.P. Summerhayes, A.D. Barnosky, S.E. Cornell, M. Crucifix, J.F. Donges, I. Fetzer, S.J. Lade, M. Scheffer, R. Winkelmann, H.J. Schellnhuber. 2018. Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 115(33): 8252 – 8259.

Villarrubia-Gomez, P., S.E. Cornell, J. Fabres. 2018. Marine plastic pollution as a planetary boundary threat: the drifting piece in the sustainability puzzle. *Marine Policy* 96: 213 – 220.

Willett, W., J. Rockström, B. Loken, M. Springmann, T. Lang, S. Vermeulen, T. Garnett, D. Tilman, F. DeClerck, A. Wood, M. Jonell, M. Clark, L.J. Gordon, J. Fanzo, C. Hawkes, R. Zurayk, J.A. Rivera, W. De Vries, L.M. Sibanda, A. Afshin, A. Chaudhary, M. Herrero, R. Agustina, F. Branca, A. Lartey, S.G. Fan, B. Crona, E. Fox, V. Bignet, M. Troell, T. Lindahl, S. Singh, S.E. Cornell, K.S. Reddy, S. Narain, S. Nishtar, C.J.L. Murray. 2019. Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT–Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems. *The Lancet* 393(10170): 447-492.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

(1) Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business

The engagement with the Action Platform for Sustainable Ocean Business has resulted in the co-authoring and co-development of three reports that have brought industry perspectives and ambitions for transformative change into high-level venues, with a strong foundation in the latest science and thinking on ocean stewardship and resilience thinking. The first of the three reports (“Mapping Ocean Governance and Regulation”) was launched in September 2018 at the United Nations in New York, with participation by industry leaders, as well as HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and HRH Crown Prince Haakon of Norway. The second (“Global Goals, Ocean Opportunities”) was launched at the Our Ocean Conference in June 2019 in Oslo, Norway, by Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg, UN Global Compact CEO Lise Kingo, and representatives of Action Platform companies, while the third report (“Ocean Stewardship 2030”) is planned for launch in June 2020 at the United Nations Oceans Conference in Lisbon, Portugal.

(2) Executive programme in resilience thinking

The executive programme in resilience thinking was launched in 2018, with 16 participants completing the 2018/2019 programme and 15 participants completing the 2019/2020 programme.

(3) The keystone dialogues and Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS);

Four keystone dialogues have been held at CEO level, and two working meetings have been held to bring together a broader number of operational staff and scientists to progress activities. SeaBOS has been institutionalized as a “legal entity” with human capacity (Managing Director and assistant) and financial capacity (membership fees). Work is currently structured around six task forces, each comprised of operational staff from multiple SeaBOS companies and supported in their work with scientific input, including background briefs produced by the SRC in collaboration with its scientific partners. The task forces focus on (1) addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and forced labour; (2) improving traceability in global seafood; (3) working with governments to improve regulations; (4) transparency and governance of SeaBOS; (5) reducing ocean plastics; (6) climate resilience. Accomplishments within the task forces include, for instance, that all companies are now reporting at an ambitious

level according to criteria that are internationally recognized (Global Reporting Initiative - GRI); companies have begun completing internal inventories of their seafood sourcing to identify presence of threatened species or seafood sourced from problematic areas; Strategic partnerships have been established to amplify and progress the SeaBOS vision, particularly with the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST), Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI), High Level Panel on a Sustainable Ocean Economy (HLP) and UN Global Compact (UNGC). In addition, SeaBOS has inspired research published in the world's leading scientific journals, including Nature, Nature Sustainability, Nature Ecology and Evolution and Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). For more details on SeaBOS and its individual accomplishments and ambitions, see: <https://keystonedialogues.earth>

(4) Selected research outcomes of particular relevance for understanding the potential of the private sector to play a constructive role in biosphere stewardship

In 2018, Stockholm Resilience Centre researchers published over 160 scientific articles, and its publications were cited over 10,000 times. In 2019, over 190 were published and its publications were cited over 14,000 times in 2019 alone. Several publications have been particularly influential. Further information on the metrics of SRC publications, their impact, and the recognition they have received can be found in the SRC Annual Reports at: <https://stockholmresilience.org/about-us/annual-reports.html>