

# THE STOCKHOLM ACT

## Principles

The Stockholm Act brings together people from art, science, politics and business for a week-long festival to explore the steps we need to take to build a sustainable world.

The intention is to deepen and accelerate sustainable development. The design principles ensure the festival has a clear sense of purpose that everyone can relate to and work with. They are an agreement between the founders and are conceived to reflect deep-rooted principles, built through research and understanding of change and sustainability.

The design principles provide a framework for everyone creating the festival together. They provide a guide for individual and group action, and are the basis for contracts with all our partners.

### 1.

## Let's look at the world as a whole

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We accept that each of us has a relationship with the planet.

Today's society connects humans and nature all over the world. This global dynamic that humans and nature have created requires that we think about the planet as a whole when dealing with global challenges, the UN Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

When we talk about global, it is important to appreciate that everything local contributes to global dynamics and connections. All humans are rooted locally and contribute to the global relationship we have with the planet, and nothing we consider global can exist without affecting the local.

## 2.

### **Open new pathways**

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We create a time and place where people can explore new perspectives and narratives.

Making the Agenda 2030 a reality will require bold transformative steps, alongside a desire to shine light onto the myriad of positive things already being done to reach the sustainable development goals. When different perspectives meet, it's possible for new structures, mindsets and practices to emerge.

We need to change the way we change, and search for new direction. This transformation requires confidence and creativity and can be an anxious and uncertain process. It is important to encourage new kinds of leadership, where there are opportunities for new thoughts and ideas to arise, to help us build the knowledge and trust in our capacity to change, as individuals and as a society.

## 3.

### **Bring together all dimensions of society**

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Knowledge and experience from art, science, politics and business combine to create new, sustainable societies that are attractive to many.

Culture has always played a pivotal role in deep societal change. Sustainable development is the big change and challenge of our time.

Culture is a collective, intellectual and expressive process that engages and provokes, yet also provides us with a sense of evolving, but rooted identity, that we can build and express our ambitions through. We need more spaces where this can happen. Culture is the kitchen where we bring together art, science, politics and business.

## 4.

### **Dare to handle uncertainty**

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The past gives lessons, but the future is an unknown place we'll create together.

Sustainable development requires from us the skill to take in and handle global challenges. We need to learn new things and accept that many of the mental maps and basic assumptions that were used when creating the structures of today's society are outdated.

The confidence to handle uncertainty comes from understanding deep-rooted connection to things that matter most, while daring to meet new and other perspectives. By realising that friction between perspectives is necessary for learning, we develop the ability to challenge, listen to and respect each other.

## 5.

### **Safe spaces for everyone**

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We must create spaces where we connect to nature, ourselves and each other.

Global challenges and dynamics are creating a great turbulence in the world, but collective human capacity is more than capable of understanding what we need to do next. To find a sustainable pathway that meets the goals of Agenda 2030, we have to take care of and build spaces where we can listen to signals of change. We need spaces where we can build up trust to meet the unknown, and spaces where we can apply long-term thinking.

We also need spaces that bring out compassion and moral courage, where we can contemplate, establish our common connection to nature, and formulate what is important to us. We need spaces where we can listen to important stories about our capacity to handle change in a human way.

## 6.

### **We are all developing countries**

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The agenda for global action isn't about catch-up – it's about defining and creating a new world.

Nobody, and no one society, knows how to do this – we are all learning. The sense that some countries are developed and can provide the answers to the rest is no longer an adequate framework.

The issues we are dealing with are complex and have not existed together in this particular form before – there is no one right answer, no simple pathways to follow. We need to learn from each other and together, because while nobody knows what exactly needs to be done, many have important knowledge, experience and competence. We need to include every perspective, from each part of the world.

## 7.

### **Playful, action-based learning**

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Turning constraints into play has made humans come up with fantastic things.

Space for play is important because it brings out our capacity to create, imagine, cooperate and act. Narrow, learned or conditioned forms of behaviour, sense-making and interaction hold people and organisations back from imagining and building new approaches and perspectives about the future. It is important to make play and action possible for all, whatever their age or context, and whoever they are.

Playfulness is one of the beautiful human values that makes us resilient and able to transform. Helping people move beyond existing assumptions and toward transformational change involves drawing out our natural capacity for play and joyfulness – processes and feelings we are all familiar with, particularly through childhood. Action-based learning and testing helps because it provides possibilities to play as we experience and use all our senses, and reflect, test and develop new skills.

## 8.

### **Partners as co-creators**

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We accelerate sustainable development by working and standing together and being generous and open with our ideas.

Making it easy to share knowledge and experience between different dimensions of society is essential for sustainable development. The Stockholm Act aims to help those who can influence change reinterpret their roles and organisations to support collective co-creation and problem solving.

As a non-profit project, we welcome everyone who aligns with our design principles, and will acknowledge all partners as co-creators. The intention of the festival is to contribute to local and cosmopolitan learning by creating possibilities to shape, and take people through, a diverse range of spaces and experiences. The festival will use just enough technology to share knowledge and communicate broadly, and be documented in ways that help others learn and develop ideas for how other festivals can catalyse sustainable development and the Agenda 2030.

## 9.

### **Attract resources to sustainability**

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It is important to develop new economic models that help people organise and mobilise toward the Agenda 2030.

The resources that today underpin unsustainable structures need to be attracted to sustainable ones. By drawing people, finance and better feedback loops from nature into the definition of new models of a sustainable society, we open up this capacity and motivation.

We can create a modern society that, through understanding our relation to sustainability, can strive for and create elegant and resourceful lives that are rooted in a harmony with the natural environment. The opportunity exists right now to channel resources into new ideas and new kinds of cooperation, that aim to create long-lasting value and investments that help us build pathways toward the Agenda 2030. This includes possibilities for meaningful and sustainable jobs, work tasks and new kinds of roles beyond what has existed to date.

## 10.

### Modularity

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The festival is a living organism, whose resilience depends on basic structures that can scale up or down, so it is possible to handle change and uncertainty more easily.

We are designing the festival around a core – a culture house – to which it is possible to add or take away parts. This principle, of modularity, is a key way to manage complex systems, of which the festival is one. The Stockholm Act has this built-in-modularity in order to be able to handle changing needs, possibilities and available resources. We seek to create structures that support people and organisations to take bold, transformative steps, not merely to cope or adapt to the global challenges we face today.

The Act needs to be a space where we get the chance to create and experience structures and practices that are better suited to handle sustainable development, that help us move toward the Agenda 2030. By bringing initiatives together we will bring out emergent properties – but while we know this will happen, we do not know what these emergent properties will be. The Stockholm Act needs to operate in systems, including financial ones, that are not sustainable, while at the same time being part of creating new ones that are, which help society move through a transformation, to establish new structures, mindsets and practices.

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For further information see [www.stockholmact.se](http://www.stockholmact.se)

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