

Getting Personal on Leading an ESG Agenda

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When I was about 10 years old, my parents took me on a hike into the hills near our home in Johannesburg, South Africa. We climbed until we reached a clearing looking out over the city. I'd never seen it that way before—both sprawling and small at the same time.

My eyes were drawn to a brown haze hanging over the skyline, so I asked my dad what it was. After he told me it was pollution, I said: "When I grow up, I'm going to build a giant vacuum cleaner that sucks all of that pollution out of the sky."

I'll be the first to admit: I haven't built the vacuum. Yet. I still sometimes find myself thinking about how it could be done. But I've never lost my connection to that girl on the hill. The one who could envision a future that was different from today, and who wanted to do her part to make it possible.

Fast forward to the moment we are in today. The release of the **latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report** last week is a stark and unequivocal call-to-action for the world. While not unexpected, the report's conclusions are sobering, even to those of us who have committed our life's work in pursuit of sustainability. In moments like this, staying grounded in "our personal why" can be a powerful catalyst.

For me, this is to imagine how empowered that girl would be to see me now: a woman working at one of the most innovative tech companies in the world, leading its first Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) office, determined to make a difference by

driving an **ambitious agenda** that aims for nothing short of creating a more equitable, sustainable and resilient world.

In the decade that I've worked at VMware, I've seen corporate responsibility evolve from being peripheral to the company to being a part of everything at the company. Today, ESG at VMware isn't a program or initiative—it's a complete realignment in how we think about the long-term future of our business.

What's behind this seismic shift? First and foremost, ESG is an overdue business imperative. And while the events of 2020 brought an increased global awareness, the challenges facing our world escalate. It has now become more evident than before that our lives, our business and our communities are interconnected in ways both large and small.

This interdependence means that ESG is also foundational to any business' resilience and future success. Potential investors, customers and employees aren't only looking for healthy balance sheets, innovative products and great benefit programs anymore. They want to know what you stand for—and how what you're doing creates value for people and the planet. And they're using what they find out to make funding, buying and employment decisions.

Late last year, VMware announced its commitment to ESG with the **2030 Agenda**: 30 specific, measurable goals we'll achieve by 2030 that will:

- Broaden trust in VMware and its products, people, and industry leadership by focusing on security, keeping people's information safe, working from a privacy-first mindset, and being transparent about how we do business.
- Increase equity by enabling our company and our customers can create a distributed and digital workforce future that is accessible, inclusive, and just for all.
- Drive sustainability by decarbonizing IT infrastructure for our customers and partners, as well as our own operations and supply chain.

The most important thing about these commitments is that they won't just impact what we do at VMware. We're baking them into the products we make and the solutions we offer our customers. In this way, we are contributing to support our stakeholders make progress on their ESG goals—like our own Fibonacci spiral amplifying our impact even further.

The 2030 Agenda is ambitious. I'll be the first to admit it. Achieving our goals will take relentless focus and require not only commitment from the top but also that of our 35,000+ employees around the world. But I'm confident we'll get there. Because we must get there.

I sometimes think about the girl on the hill and her vacuum. It's family lore at this point: the moment my passion sparked, and my path was set. But more often, I think of my son. He's a few years older than I was when I first dreamed of the cleaner, better future I wanted for the world. Now, I dream of the safer, more equitable and climate-resilient future I want for him. I know it's within our grasp—we just have to seize it.

In the coming weeks, I'll take a deeper dive into the three pillars of VMware's 2030 Agenda: sustainability, equity and trust. Until then, why is ESG personal to you?

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