

Title: Memo to the Executive Suite: Business Cannot Thrive Unless People and Planet Are Thriving

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Date: October 2, 2017

The Lane Report

I am proud to report that, once again, The Law Offices of Marc J. Lane, P. C., Marc J. Lane & Company and Marc J. Lane Investment Management, Inc., based on their human rights, labor, environmental and anti-corruption policies and practices, have been found to qualify as members of the United Nations Global Compact. The Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability coalition, has grown to become a critical platform for the UN to engage effectively with enlightened global business.

As part of its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UN recently adopted ambitious Sustainable Development Goals. To end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity, everyone needs to do their part: government, civil society and the private sector.

On September 18, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced a summit next year to finance the 2030 Goals, which have an annual price tag of an estimated \$7 trillion. But savvy business leaders are already mobilizing to fill the public policy void on global challenges from climate change to immigration and inequality, and embracing the Global Compact's call to align their corporate citizenship work to these Goals:

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Within the Goals are 169 targets, giving them context and greater meaning. Goal 1, for example, includes cutting the number of people who live in poverty in half by 2030, and altogether eradicating "extreme" poverty, people living on less than \$1.25 a day. Goal 5 calls for the elimination of violence against women. And Goal 16 supports the rule of law and equal access to justice. (For all the specifics, visit UN's SDG website at www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/.)

While the Goals provide a shared global framework for collective action on the world's most daunting social and environmental problems, every company will see them as offering its own opportunities to align their strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and to take actions that advance societal objectives. Those opportunities invite thought leadership and creative thinking beyond philanthropy and community involvement. Corporate sustainability starts with a company's value system and a principled approach to doing business. Each company should carefully consider how its programs and

initiatives can best be aligned with the specific Goals it seeks to prioritize, set aspirational objectives, track its progress in achieving them, and share what it accomplishes and learns with its stakeholders.

My book, *Profitable Socially Responsible Investing? An Institutional Investor's Guide*, suggests why companies propelled by core values can be expected to outperform their peers. And Marc J. Lane Investment Management, Inc.'s proprietary **Advocacy Investing**[®] strategy empowers investors to drive positive change by supporting those companies whose social-justice and environmental policies and practices reflect their own core values.

By establishing a culture of integrity, not only do companies uphold their basic responsibilities to people and planet; they also set the stage for long-term success. Going beyond efficiency gains, the Sustainable Development Goals offer business leaders a tool without peer for growing revenue and profitability while strengthening their competitive positions.



Marc Lane is an attorney, financial adviser and the author of *Profitable Socially Responsible Investing? An Institutional Investor's Guide*, published by Euromoney Institutional Investor PLC, and *Representing Corporate Officers, Directors, Managers, and Trustees*, published by Aspen Publishers. We invite you to reach out to Marc in confidence and learn how Marc J. Lane Investment Management, Inc. can add value to your investment portfolio. He can be reached at mlane@MarcJLane.com or 312-372-5000.

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