

## **Sustainability in a Regional and Global Sports/Outdoor Industry**

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### **Regional identity through a business eye**

In the Jämtland Härjedalen region, outdoor sports activities and the many companies that provide high-end equipment for outdoor life are an integral part of the regional identity, culture and business life. While rooted locally, the outdoor and sports business is tightly linked to complex supply chains branching out to the textile and chemical industry. This often includes suppliers and customers in other parts of the world, providing a broad range of sustainability challenges.

### **A new and creative approach**

The project ‘Sustainability in Sports/Outdoor’ was initiated by Peak Innovation, supported by Mid Sweden University and run in cooperation with Elevenate, Hilleberg, Icebug, Lundhags and Skhoop; five small and medium sized (SME) companies from the sport/outdoor industry in the region. This project has taken a new and creative approach to sustainability challenges by developing and introducing a method for SME’s to embed the sustainability concept into their core business, rather than focusing on single issues of mitigation and risk management.

The main project goal was to establish and test a method for value-driven sustainable development. The method is targeted at the challenges of smaller organisations handling complex value chains. Another emphasis has been on making the company strategies and efforts towards sustainability resilient, forward-thinking and measurable.

### **Preliminary Results**

Results include increased awareness and engagement both within the companies and in their value chains, as well as direct inputs to product and process development. The companies have in collaboration created knowledge, engagement, and concrete actions, such as clearly communicating new sustainability ambitions to their suppliers, distributors and customers. Thus accelerating change towards more sustainable business operations.

**The broader perspective**

This paper is part of a research where the overarching question is how to link creativity and innovation tighter to sustainable development. Creators of new solutions, relations and experiences are well suited to drive sustainable development, but need supportive conditions to succeed. By exploring the connections between creativity, sustainability and organisational management we aim to find a set of conditions that strengthen the work within sustainable innovation, in both business and society.