The race toward a sustainable future is on—and the competition is fierce. Since the 2010 release of the Ceres Roadmap—a strategic vision and practical framework for sustainable corporations in the 21st century economy—the economic, environmental, social and political landscape has shifted. And with the urgency of global environmental and social threats increasing, integration of sustainability into core business systems and decision-making, and capturing the competitive advantage this offers, becomes even more critical.

The Ceres Roadmap presents 20 expectations in the areas of governance, stakeholder engagement, and performance that companies should seek to meet by 2020 in order to transform into truly sustainable enterprises. As we pass the halfway point on the road to 2020, it is an important time to take stock of our changing world and refresh the Ceres Roadmap expectations to reflect global sustainability trends. Among the key changes we’ve seen in the past few years:

- Business impacts of wide-ranging environmental and social threats are bigger than ever and cannot be ignored. Over the past five years, the World Economic Forum has consistently ranked both climate change and the global water crisis among the top five global risks.

- The international community is coming together to take action, from the United Nations’ recent release of the Sustainable Development Goals to the historic global climate agreement in Paris, governments from across the world are taking strong actions to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, build a low-carbon economy and provide decent work and economic growth for all.

- Roles and responsibilities of companies to protect human rights have been defined. With an unprecedented move by the United Nations’ Human Rights Council, the international community recently endorsed the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and in 2015 the world’s first comprehensive guidance for companies to report on how they respect human rights was released.

- Investors are putting their money into sustainable investments. From 2013 to 2014, sustainable investors grew by 76 percent and assets of mutual funds using environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks and opportunities, and heightened focus on environmental and social performance. We also found that sustainability challenges are providing tremendous opportunities for companies to improve performance, realize large savings through energy productivity, access and retain the best talent, and strengthen valuable partnerships in many sectors, reap the benefits of clean technology and clean energy investments.

- The revised Ceres Roadmap expectations presented here remain consistent with the original vision and commitments put forward in 2010—but acknowledge the changing context and our improved understanding of effective strategies for becoming a sustainable corporation.

Some highlights of the revised expectations include:

- Adjusting the Board Oversight expectation under Governance to reflect key changes in Ceres’ recent collaboration with corporate board members and governance experts, and an expansion of the role of the existing board in linking compensation with sustainability metrics to include all employees, not just executives.

- Expanding the focus on Investor Engagement to include what companies should communicate to investors and how to engage this critical community.

- Underscoring the urgent need to limit temperature increases below 2 degrees Celsius through Performance commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, procure renewable energy, and improve energy productivity.

- Acknowledging the escalation of global water risks with an expansion of the Water Management expectation to address both direct operational and supply chain impacts within regions of high water risk; and

- Supporting the international community’s collective effort to define the role of business in protecting human rights through the expectations covering a Human Rights and Supply Chains.

The Ceres Roadmap is a resource to help companies re-engineer themselves for success in a world beset with unprecedented environmental and social challenges that threaten the economy and local communities. It is our hope that the Ceres Roadmap expectations will guide companies toward corporate sustainability leadership, and ultimately, promote an accelerated transition toward a more sustainable global economy.

20 EXPECTATIONS FOR CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP BY 2020

ACCOUNTABILITY: In order to realize meaningful and long-lasting sustainability performance improvements, companies must institute accountability mechanisms that integrate sustainability considerations into core business systems and decision-making. The first three areas of the Ceres Roadmap expectations—Governance, Stakeholder Engagement and Disclosure—are focused on companies establishing and formalizing accountability for sustainability across the entire enterprise.

VISION: Companies will regularly engage in robust dialogue with stakeholders across the whole value chain, and will integrate stakeholder feedback into strategic planning and operational decision-making.

- MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS
  Companies will regularly conduct a formal materiality assessment process to determine the most relevant sustainability issues for the business. Companies will engage both internal and external stakeholders in the materiality assessment process and consider stakeholder concerns in the setting of priorities.

- SUSTAINABILITY RISK MANAGEMENT
  Companies will proactively identify a diverse group of stakeholders and regularly engage with them in a manner that is formalized, ongoing, in-depth, timely, and involves all appropriate parts of the business. Companies will disclose how they are incorporating stakeholder input into corporate strategy and business decision-making.

- C-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT
  Senior executives will participate in stakeholder engagement exercises to inform corporate strategy, management and enterprise-wide decision-making.

- STRATEGIC COLLABORATION
  Companies will collaborate within and across sectors and civil society to innovate, scale and open source sustainability solutions.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- GOVERNANCE
  Corporate boards will form a formal oversight committee responsible for determining the sustainability strategy and long-term performance.

- DISCLOSURE
  Companies will issue annual reports and include a statement summarizing the corporate strategy and performance against elements of the Ceres Roadmap.

- PERFORMANCE
  Companies will report regularly on their sustainability strategy and performance. Disclosures will include, where available, standardized, independently verified metrics encompassing all material stakeholder concerns, and details of goals and plans for future action.

- ACCOUNTABILITY
  Companies will disclose the relevant sustainability indicators utilizing the Global Reporting Initiative Sustainability Guidelines as well as additional sector-relevant indicators.

- SCOPE & CONTENT
  Companies will regularly disclose trended performance data and targets relating to global direct operations, subsidiaries, joint ventures, products and supply chains. This disclosure would demonstrate integration of sustainability into business systems and decision-making.

- VEHICLES FOR DISCLOSURE
  Companies will release sustainability information through a range of disclosure vehicles including sustainability reports, annual reports, financial filings, corporate communications, investor presentations, and social media.

- PERFORMANCE
  Companies will collaborate within and across sectors and civil society to innovate, scale and open source sustainability solutions.

DISCLOSURE

- GOVERNANCE
  Corporate boards will provide formal oversight of corporate sustainability strategy and long-term performance.

- DISCLOSURE
  The CEO and company management—from C-Suite executives to business unit and functional heads—will take accountability for achieving sustainability goals.

- PERFORMANCE
  Companies will publicly report on sustainability performance on a regular basis within the context of the company’s sustainability commitments and strategies.
The five sections that follow focus on building the systems across a corporation's value chain to enable ongoing performance improvements in three priority environmental and social impact areas:

**Climate Change:** Companies will support climate stabilization at a level below a 2°C Celsius increase and will contribute to the additional $1 trillion per year needed in clean energy investment globally—what Ceres calls the Clean Trillion. Companies will establish comprehensive strategies to address carbon and non-carbon GHG emissions, as well as the resulting impacts of climate change, across the entire value chain.

**Natural Resources:** Companies will protect, conserve and replenish natural resources—including water, forests, plants and minerals—across their global operations and supply chains. Companies will establish policies, programs and commitments that safeguard the health of broader ecosystems, and give priority to operations in high-risk regions.

**Fair, Safe and Equitable Workplaces:** Companies will protect the human rights of employees thereby creating fairer, safer and more equitable workplaces across operations and global supply chains. Companies will align policies and market systems with universal standards, and disclose performance in both direct and indirect operations.

**Vision:** Companies will invest the necessary resources to achieve environmental neutrality and to demonstrate impact for human rights in their operations. Companies will measure and improve performance related to GHG emissions, energy efficiency, facilities and buildings, water, waste and human rights.

**Products & Services:** Companies will design and deliver products and services aligned with sustainability goals by innovating business models, allocating R&D spending, designing for sustainability, communicating the impacts of products and services, reviewing marketing practices and advancing strategic collaborations.

**Business Model Innovation:** Companies will innovate business models to reduce material inputs and prioritize a transition to sustainable products and services.

**R&D & Capital Investment:** Companies will use sustainability as an equally weighted filter through which all R&D and capital investments are made.

**Design for Sustainability:** Companies will approach all product development and product management decisions with full consideration of the social and environmental impacts of the product throughout its lifecycle. Companies will design products and services that not only minimize negative environmental and social impacts, but also serve as solutions to key sustainability challenges and accelerate the transition towards a circular economy.

**Marketing & Consumer Engagement:** Companies will align their marketing practices and product revenue targets with their sustainability goals and will engage consumers to educate and build awareness on sustainability issues to influence consumer behavior change.

**Performance:** Performance is about achieving on-the-ground results, reducing carbon emissions, conserving water and other natural resources, protecting human rights, building a supply chain that meets high environmental and social standards, designing products that not only minimize sustainability impacts throughout their lifecycle, but also serve as solutions to key sustainability challenges, and proactively engaging a diverse workforce.

**Policies & Codes:** Companies will set supply chain policies and codes aligned with their own social and environmental standards, as well as universal standards including the ILO Core Conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Procurement Practices:** Companies will have in place comprehensive procurement and sourcing strategies that include both social and environmental criteria in procurement and contracting.

**Supplier Engagement:** Companies will have in place comprehensive capacity building programs for suppliers to ensure alignment with social and environmental expectations and will incentivize supplier goal setting and performance improvements. Companies will also have in place strategies to ensure suppliers beyond Tier 1 are meeting sustainability expectations.

**Measurement & Disclosure:** Companies will measure and disclose supplier social and environmental performance data and will set targets for improved supplier performance in line with the companies’ own operational targets.

**Transportation & Logistics:** Companies will systematically minimize their environmental impact by enhancing the efficiency of their logistics systems and minimizing associated GHG emissions. Companies can improve low-carbon transportation systems and modes, and minimize the carbon footprint of company business travel and commuting.

**Transportation Management & Modes:** Companies will develop transportation strategies to reduce the impact of logistics and freight operations. Companies will design logistics systems towards efficiency and low carbon transportation modes and low emission fuel options, especially freight electrification through facilitation.

**Business Travel & Commuting:** Companies will decrease the impact of business travel and employee commuting through incentives that reduce travel and promote the use of low carbon transportation options. Companies will provide workplace commuting infrastructure for employees to facilitate other low-carbon commuting options.

**Vision:** Companies will foster a diverse, inclusive and engaged work environment that builds sustainability consideration as a core part of recruitment, training and benefits.

**Recruitment:** Companies will incorporate sustainability criteria into recruitment protocols for all new hires.

**Training & Development:** Companies will develop and implement formal, and job-specific, training on key sustainability issues targeted at employees and other facilitators, coaching and mentoring and networks for sustainability knowledge sharing.

**Diversity:** Companies will build a diverse and inclusive board and workforce. Companies will provide formal diversity training, employee resource groups and advancement opportunities, and will identify a senior executive or executive committee to formally oversee diversity and inclusion.

**Sustainable Lifestyles:** Companies will promote sustainable lifestyle choices across their employees through education and innovative employee benefit options.