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Foreword

 **André Nijhof** - Professor Sustainable Business and Stewardship, Nyenrode Business University

Rebels make noise, mild rebels make music

Someone recently called me a mild rebel, a nickname I have cherished ever since. Partly because the term encapsulates two qualities crucial for demonstrating leadership in times of sustainable transition.

The first quality lies in the word 'rebel.' Can you think of individuals you'd categorize as rebels? Greta Thunberg, Freerk Vonk, Roger Cox, and David Attenborough come to mind—people with different styles but a clear mission. A rebel is a trailblazer, leading the charge, making noise to realize their ideals.

'Mild' signifies the second quality. Mild, when combined with rebel, means that you are indeed radical in what you aim to achieve but do so with consideration for the circumstances. It involves contemplating the role and contribution expected from others to fulfill the ideals you stand for. What is the desired behavior I expect from others? In sustainable transitions, we need more individuals who demonstrate leadership by thinking strategically about who should do what and are not hesitant to take the lead themselves, without knowing the exact outcome.

Leaders now face the challenge of shaping sustainable transformation of a chain towards an economy that works for us all. This requires transformation not only of organizations but also of markets, so that companies leading in sustainability are rewarded. The Sustainable Development Agenda provides guidance for this transformation.

Successfully transforming sustainably is akin to making music. We don't create music if all instruments blare and bluster at once. Music is made by agreeing on when, who, plays what, but also when parties should stop playing and be silent. It's in the coordination that noise transforms into music. In short, if we want to solve complex problems, we must be organized. There must be a plan of action with clear roles and responsibilities and coordination. Higher complexity demands a higher degree of organization. Collaboration with all partners in the chains, and aligning common goals is essential. This is behavior that naturally fits a good supply chain professional.

This is the secret to system change and market transformation. Understanding where you want to go, what needs to happen, who needs to do it, and thinking about how to convince those parties to do the right things.

If we accept that you cannot change markets and systems all at once, we accept that it happens in stages. We all know, for example, that raising children also goes through phases, and each phase is necessary for proper development.

"Leaders now face the challenge of shaping sustainable transformation"

Each phase requires a different approach. This is a crucial insight. Every stage is needed. Market transformation is like growing up and maturing. To achieve the intentions of the stages, it is essential that various stakeholders ensure that we learn, that the transition becomes market-relevant and efficient, that barriers are removed, and that the solution is ultimately institutionalized.

This prevents us from doing things just because we have to, without a real strategy.

This requires a mild form of rebellion from everyone who feels the urgency to contribute to sustainable transformations.

This way, we don't make noise, but music. 

André Nijhof has developed the "**Changing the Game**" training with Lucas Simons, where companies and change-makers learn how to understand systems and formulate market transformation strategies.

The sustainable transition of Set

A year in which the sustainable transition took center stage for the company is described by **Carola de Jong**, **Evie Jetten**, **Marielle van Gastel**, and **Ujendre Ramautarsing** in 2023. A year in which the team professionalized and formalized its sustainable DNA, including pursuing the B Corp certification. This proof of social entrepreneurship brings Set many new insights on how to contribute to a better world. Additionally, this year brought assignments from former trainees. "As an organization, we are maturing, and so is our network," says Carola.

We sat down with the quartet to discuss 2023 and look ahead to 2024. **Marielle:** "Next year, we will leverage our knowledge of a sustainable supply chain and human resource processes for clients, both for interim assignments and recruitment for permanent positions."

Impact
Carola: "Making an impact is ingrained in our employees. Everyone can come to Set with ideas for improvement. This is something we don't want to lose, although we are now documenting more. It's not one size fits all for us. If you come with an idea, we figure out how to make something

of it together. In addition to the impact individuals can make within Set, trainees work for clients aiming to improve society or focus on the circular economy."

Going for B Corp certification was a logical choice, says **Evie.** "With such a certificate, you show that you want to have a positive social and sustainable impact and be evaluated according to strict criteria. Through the assessment, we started thinking about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Of the seventeen SDGs, we chose six as a guide to assess our ambitions and make choices."

UN Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, all 193 member countries of the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are seventeen goals aimed at addressing issues such as poverty, hunger, inequality, climate change, and the biodiversity crisis. The goals were developed to build a greener, fairer, and better world by 2030. Learn more about them on the website: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Set focuses on the following six goals:



Marielle: "I love that we, as a small team, want and are able to make an impact, that everyone pursues the same goal, from intrinsic motivation. We aim to raise awareness among clients and assist them in the sustainable transition, supporting them in implementing the SDGs and adapting to changing laws and regulations. That's why, for example, we have integrated the skills required for that transition into the learning objectives within our Young Professional Program for trainees. In early 2024, we will commence training for our entire team."

Professionalization
 Set has always taken good care of its employees; now, various facilities and conditions are outlined in an employee handbook. For instance, everyone can undergo

a sports examination, and there is at least one first aid training every two years. Additionally, employees can dedicate twenty hours per year to volunteer work, and there is unlimited access to the online platform OpenUp, which focuses on mental well-being, providing easy access to a certified psychologist, for example. "Another step in professionalization is that we have further formalized the required competencies within the Young Professional Program. And from the organizational chart Carola has been added to the MT because she also coaches trainees," explains **Ujendre.** The trainees greatly appreciate the

existence of these facilities, as evidenced by a positive employee satisfaction survey conducted for the first time this year. Set employees, for instance, experience a good atmosphere among themselves during and after working hours. Moreover, they understand why Set pursues sustainability goals and support that mission."

Sustainable assignments
 The past year brought not only more transparency but also a different dynamic, as **Ujendre** points out. "Especially in the second half of the year, we faced uncertainties in

"I love that we, as a small team, want and are able to make an impact"



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the market. Due to higher capital costs, cost reduction became more critical for clients. Some planned assignments did not materialize. It's unfortunate because we can contribute to inventory optimization or a more effective sales & operations planning (S&OP) process. The market is still scarce, and our team has been in high demand. This year, several trainees joined clients as employees or pursued their international ambitions by taking jobs abroad. Due to a tight labor market and uncertainty about assignments, we couldn't attract as many new employees as we had hoped."

The decrease in assignments also brought about a positive and sustainable development, emphasizes **Marielle**. "It has always been our practice that if someone was on the bench, temporarily without an assignment from a client, we would explore whether that person could do something 'voluntarily' for another party. Last year, for example, this happened with Better Time Stories. We formalized that aspiration this year in a matrix: on one side, all charities or foundations, on the other side, the six SDGs we focus on. We linked these two aspects. We approached the parties where we could check the most boxes, asking where a potential 'bencher' could add value to that party. This led, among other things, to the collaboration with KlimaatGesprekken. Evie interviewed the director and our trainee Thomas for this magazine." See page 24.

Sharing knowledge

Evie: "Evie: "Knowledge sharing is one of our four core values. We do this with our trainees within organizations, this magazine, or, for example, the vlogs about the circular economy that we released in 2022. For this edition of the magazine, we asked all interviewees about reading, watching, and listening recommendations. This time, our magazine has the theme 'sustainable transitions towards a sustainable supply chain.' Knowledge sharing is crucial in this context. We want to inspire people on how to shape knowledge sharing. That's why we ask for tips in the interviews so that we can give each other new insights."

Carola: "Looking back on the past year and the transition we are going through, you can see that the first trainees who ever started with Set are now clients themselves. And, as Ujendre always says, it's good when people transition to clients, not only because it's the ultimate compliment but also because it is our network of the future. For example, Jip (Kelderman, former trainee, red.) who left us in 2021, now has a trainee reporting to her as a client. We also received our first international assignment for a trainee in the United States via Wijnand (Veugelers, former trainee, red.). We have developed supply chain leaders, and they are now our clients."


Ujendre: "That's why Karo Healthcare became the customer of the year. The company has two of our trainees, and Jip works there. It is a party with which we have been working for a long time, partly due to the trust and responsibility our trainees receive." See page 14.

Sustainable partner

In 2024, Set will celebrate its tenth anniversary. **Carola:** "In those ten years, we have grown and become more mature. Our network is also growing, becoming more mature. The demand is changing, and the positions we fill are becoming more senior roles."

"Additionally, due to the sustainable transition, clients

have different needs where we can assist them well," adds **Marielle**. "That opens up opportunities. For instance, we are currently in discussions with clients about roles such as a sustainability manager or a head of impact."

Ujendre: "Looking back, I see that professionals continue to seek us out throughout their entire careers for feedback or to think with them about choices in their career or education. That makes us a sustainable partner." 



"We have developed supply chain leaders who are now our customers"

 **Koen Hogenboom** – MR MARVIS
Marielle van Gastel – Set
Koen Masselink – Set

 6 minutes

 Sustainability

Making the biggest impact with slow fashion


The critique of the polluting fashion industry is escalating, prompting an increasing number of brands and fashion companies to adopt a sustainable image. However, the genuine problem persists as long as nothing is done about the rapidly changing collections and often mediocre quality. To explore alternatives, **Koen** and **Marielle** journeyed to the headquarters of **MR MARVIS** in Amsterdam.

This men's fashion brand, recently certified as a B Corp, opts for stable, high-quality collections that remain unchanged. What is the impact of this decision on sustainability? And what additional measures does MR MARVIS take to reduce their impact on people, the environment, and the climate?

Wearing the same clothes for years

Supply Chain Director Koen Hogenboom explains that MR MARVIS was founded seven years ago out of frustration by its founders who couldn't find the perfect pair of shorts. Their response was to create it themselves, prioritizing

sustainability by opting for designs that are not fashion-sensitive and ensuring a quality that allows for years of wear. This approach eliminates the need for MR MARVIS to discount or dispose of collections at the end of each season. Consumers can wear their pants for many years, avoiding the need to search for the perfect pair of shorts every year.

To encourage extended wear of clothing, MR MARVIS offers a repair service. If a button or stitch comes loose, customers can send the pants to the head office in Amsterdam, where it will be repaired free of charge, 



MR MARVIS recently achieved its B Corp certification



"Repairing clothing locally is preferred over unnecessary shipping"

Koen explains. "Of course, it is even more sustainable for the customer to take the garment to a local tailor. The customer only needs to keep the receipt and send it to us. MR MARVIS then covers the costs. This method is preferred over unnecessary shipping. We want to encourage our customers to repair clothing that has a defect instead of discarding it," says Koen.

The company employs 90 people and has gained a substantial market share in men's fashion in the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, Belgium, and France. Denmark, Spain, and Italy are growing markets for MR MARVIS. The range now consists of 35 styles, including various shorts and trousers, polo shirts, and sweaters, in nearly every imaginable color. There are almost 5,000 SKUs.

Upstream supply chain

MR MARVIS's supply chain begins with sourcing the right fabrics. Various certifications are considered to guarantee the brand's high standards, such as Oeko-Tex (tested for harmful substances), GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard), and European Flax (sustainable European linen).

The dye houses collaborating with MR MARVIS comply with EU regulations on conscious chemical use. All harmful substances are filtered from the used water, allowing it to flow back into the adjacent river after use. MR MARVIS calculates the environmental impact per product.

This information is used to set reduction goals and offset emissions through greening projects in Tanzania. "We know how much water is used to make and dye fabrics, how much CO2 is emitted in this process, and so on," says Koen.

Several clothing manufacturers, mostly family businesses located in the Porto region, work for MR MARVIS. "They are often family businesses with which we have built a good relationship, sometimes since our founding in 2016. Thanks to the close relationships we maintain with all our Portuguese partners, it is possible for us to collaborate on sustainability. The good relationship with producers makes it much easier to make adjustments and engage in a dialogue about it. Additionally, since Portugal is part of the EU, all partners must already comply with relatively high standards regarding labor conditions and the environment. However, where possible,

we try to motivate our partners to go the extra mile."

Logistics

Warehousing and transportation are fully outsourced to a partner, with sustainability being a crucial selection criterion. The logistics sector is at the forefront of sustainability and efficiency, as sustainability and efficiency often go hand in hand, according to Koen. "Every logistics service provider is aware of its own emissions and takes measures to reduce them, for example, by cleverly combining loads." MR MARVIS has also developed sustainable packaging for delivery to consumers, consisting of less cardboard. "Each box is 20 percent lighter. It may not seem like much, but it saves us thousands of kilograms of cardboard and CO2 per year," says Koen. In the warehouse, the clothing is wrapped in plastic to prevent items from getting dirty due to dust, for example. This plastic is removed when the pants are sent to the consumer. "This way, we ensure that we can recycle the plastic and that it does not end up in the consumer's gray container at home."

As a men's fashion brand, they have much fewer returns than most women's fashion brands. However, Koen attaches importance to raising consumer awareness of their impact on climate and the environment. Good size charts help, but consumers must understand that 'free returns' are not free for our planet.

Supply chain planning

It has a significant impact on sustainability if you don't produce clothing that you don't sell. While this may seem logical, it is far from reality in the fast fashion industry. At MR MARVIS, every produced item is sold, possibly remaining in stock for a while.



"Don't aim for a fast career but make sure you get to know as many sides of the supply chain as possible"

Because managing the supply chain planning of 5,000 SKUs in Excel is no longer feasible, the Amsterdam-based company is in the process of implementing an ERP system. Koen states, "We urgently need this ERP system now because our collection has grown rapidly. Additionally, we are expanding the number of inventory locations due to the increase in physical stores. Therefore, an ERP system is key."

Tips

When asked if he has tips for young supply chain professionals, Koen answers after a brief pause: "Don't strive to advance your career too quickly; instead, aim to learn as much as possible about various aspects of the supply chain. Ensure comprehensive training in the breadth of the field. I often see that young people are very impatient, aspiring to immediate management positions, for example. I recognize this from the time when I first graduated. Now, with more experience, I think: take it easy, those opportunities will come. You become a better manager when you have done the work yourself, understanding how processes run on the shop floor."

Koen also has a book recommendation: "Supply Chain Triangle" by Bram Desmet. The book delves into how to align your company's strategy with your supply chain. If you aim for customer service, it automatically entails slightly higher inventory levels to avoid running out of stock. The book helps supply chain professionals explain to the CFO and CEO why they make certain choices.



Stijn Fischer - Dik & Schil
Koen Masselink - Set
Anne Yntema - Set



5 minutes



Interview



Koen: How did the idea for Dik & Schil come about?

"About four years ago, I took the Entrepreneurship minor at the University of Amsterdam. For a project, I had to establish a company with two other guys, Branco and Luc, with the goal of generating revenue by selling a product to someone. Currently, Branco and I run Dik & Schil. All three of us wanted to do something related to sustainability at that time. During our studies, we learned that we shouldn't start by looking for solutions but rather identify problems. If the problem is significant enough, you immediately have a target audience, and you can essentially start a business with minimal risk. We were all working in the hospitality industry at that time, and we looked for opportunities to make something more sustainable. That's when we identified coffee and orange peel waste streams. We can produce coffee liqueur from coffee grounds and orange liqueur from orange peels. Hence, the name Dik & Schil."

Anne: What are the biggest challenges you face?

"For the production of the liqueurs, it's crucial that the ingredients are fresh. Initially, it was challenging to receive coffee grounds and orange peels that were well-separated and clean. For example, coffee grounds sometimes contained traces of tea or milk. If the coffee isn't brewed in the right conditions or if the coffee grounds aren't stored in the right conditions, we can't use them anymore. Coffee grounds from brewed coffee, for instance on a Saturday, must be in a refrigerated cell by Saturday night."

Koen: What is your role in the sustainability transition?

"We are exploring ways to help the hospitality industry become more sustainable. One way is by sharing knowledge on more efficient handling of ingredients for cocktails. There's a technique where you can extract five hundred milliliters of citric acid from a lemon instead of the usual hundred milliliters. With this technique, you can use rejected lemons, thus saving the fresh ones. We plan to share this knowledge with about ten cocktail bars in the form of a pilot. If bartenders can successfully use this technique, around two thousand lemons per month will be saved. Ultimately, we want to offer solutions for sustainability in every hospitality segment. Together with our network of sustainable companies, we aim to bundle everything we make into packages so that we're not all working separately."

Anne: How will you maintain the focus on sustainability as you grow?

"Currently, we are still entirely independent, and we always consciously consider sustainability in our choices. Many things we do cost more because we opt for sustainable labels or boxes. We don't want a shareholder to suggest cutting costs on packaging material, for example. On some points, you can't go further than looking at how to transport our products as sustainably as possible from the Netherlands to Germany. That's relatively easy. However, what will be a bit more challenging and costly for us is accurately documenting our scope 1, 2, 3 emissions, used to quantify CO2 emissions. This applies particularly to scope 2 and 3. For instance, we still can't fully map where our liqueurs go in Germany and how the intricate transport is arranged there."

Koen: What are the challenges within your supply chain for the coming years?

"Better mapping of when and where the waste streams are available. There are overseas and European seasons for oranges, with a gap of one to two months. In that period, there are far fewer oranges available for production. It will be quite a puzzle to better map when we need to produce

in collaboration with our suppliers and contacts."


Anne: What are your short and long-term goals?

"We want to offer a sustainable alternative for all distilled beverages that exist. Currently, you can often choose a 0% alcohol variant as an alternative for your cocktail. In addition, we want to offer a fully sustainable variant. We are investigating which waste products are needed for a particular cocktail and how we can obtain them. At the same time, we want to provide a place where people can bring their waste products. This way, we adapt to the seasons. During the strawberry season, for example, we may temporarily offer a strawberry liqueur."

Koen: Do you have any tips for young professionals?

"My general tip for everyone is to consider starting your own business. In the early stages of your career, you often aren't tied down to things like a family or a mortgage. Then you have the time to focus on this, and you'll learn a lot from it. Additionally, I would say: work for a company that you find cooler than a company where you might earn a bit more. Ultimately, you'll enjoy working at the cooler company much more."

Anne: Do you have any reading, watching, or listening recommendations?

"Yes, two reading recommendations. The first book is 'Designing Your Life' by Dave Evans. It's about actively shaping your life in line with your values and goals on a personal and professional level. The second book is 'Purple Cow' by Seth Godin. In it, Godin describes how you can incorporate certain elements into your company that will make people talk about your company. This way, you spend less on marketing because your story captures the imagination, just like with Dik & Schil." 



"We aim to offer a sustainable alternative for all existing distilled beverages"

How circularity can lead to fantastic products

Coffee grounds and orange peels as raw materials for a new product. Two young psychology students showcase that it's possible with their start-up **Dik & Schil**. **Anne** and **Koen** engaged in a conversation with **Stijn Fischer**, one of the founders. With his experience in the hospitality industry, he knows that a significant amount of food and drinks in the hospitality sector turns into waste, or a residual stream, while it still contains valuable nutrients and flavor. This realization led to the vision of a circular production chain where a byproduct becomes a raw material.



Iris van Donschot - Set
Nora El Arnouki - Set
Anne Yntema - Set

5 minutes

Young Professional Program

Anne Yntema on the added value of the Young Professional Program at Set

Anne started as a trainee in the Young Professional Program at Set in 2021. During this program, her preference for working with people and her passion for numbers and analytical thinking were confirmed. This led to her choice of pursuing a career in Supply Chain Management, where these two worlds converge.

Anne explains, "My third-year internship confirmed my interest in the supply chain. I worked with a small FMCG organization where I experienced the entire chain: production, warehousing, quality issues, planning, forecasting, and customer needs. This made me appreciate the versatility and practical navigation within the supply chain."

Iris: How did you end up at Set after your master's?
"Through the university, I was in contact with various companies, and through a guest lecture by Set, I connected with Ujendre. The concept of a traineeship, like the Young Professional Program, appealed to me because of the opportunity to explore various supply chain roles across different companies and industries. This, combined with the focus on my personal development and being seen as an individual, ultimately led me to choose Set.

These expectations have been confirmed throughout the assignments. I find that the focus is on personal development with good guidance and interesting projects, supported by the offered training sessions. In a short period, I gained a lot of experience and valuable insights. After 1.5 years, I was recognized as someone with substantial supply chain knowledge during one of my assignments. This confirms the value of what I do and learn."

Nora: What have you learned so far from the assignments you have undertaken?
"What I find especially enjoyable and educational is that I see all aspects of the chain. When you tweak something at the beginning of the chain, you increasingly understand the effects on a component at the end of the chain and vice versa. Within the supply chain, you never make a choice that only affects your own work."

I also found out that I value the company's culture more than the industry it operates in. I enjoy being close to operations and making long-term strategic plans. I also like to take initiative; I want to make a positive impact and not wait too much. I value the freedom to act."

Iris: How do you evaluate Set's training, and do you experience added value during your assignments?
"The training sessions and interventions provide a valuable mix of practical guidance and theoretical

concepts. They offer the opportunity to discuss concrete problems and receive practical advice.

Ujendre is always open to providing extra support during assignments, which is super valuable. During the first year, the training focuses on fundamental elements such as effectiveness and leadership models, establishing a strong foundation. The second year focuses more on interaction with others, communication, and personal reflection. This approach allowed me to understand my personal perspective on situations, my responses in stressful situations, and how I act under pressure.

Now, in the third year, we delve deeper into leadership. With growing insights into my personal development, I can ultimately increase my impact in my work."

Iris: How do you contribute to sustainability?
"In my first years, I must admit that sustainability did not have my full attention. As Set's focus on sustainability increased, I began to look at it differently. What intrigues me is the impact on sustainability within the supply chain, especially in manufacturing companies. The core of such a company is production, which has an impact on both the environment and internal relationships. I believe that the supply chain is the ideal place to make sustainable changes. You can choose to steer suppliers, external partners, and the production process based on sustainability."

Nora: What are your plans for the future?
"I'm not sure exactly what I'll do next. Through the Young Professional Program, I have been able to form a better picture of what I want to focus on in the future, in terms of the type of work that appeals to me or the organizational culture. I want to delve further into effective leadership within an organization. I want to further develop my skills in leading people and teams and unleash their full potential. I also want to focus on effective communication. The ability to communicate well is crucial, and I am convinced that you always have to keep investing in it. My passion lies in leading and collaborating with people while utilizing my analytical and strategic skills. I strive to have a positive impact on my surroundings through meaningful work."

"The sustainability of a product depends on the sustainability of the process that produces it"



Anne Yntema
Age: 26 years
Education: Bachelor of Business Administration, Erasmus University, Rotterdam.
Master Supply Chain Management, Tilburg University, Tilburg.

October 2023 – Present: Demand Planner at Haribo
As a Demand Planner at Haribo, Anne optimizes demand forecasting and assists in improving and robustly developing the Sales & Operations Planning (S&OP) process.

December 2022 – September 2023: Senior Scheduler at AkzoNobel
As a Senior Scheduler, Anne was responsible for the planning of a product family. She worked closely with the production department and was a key user involved in the implementation of a new planning system.

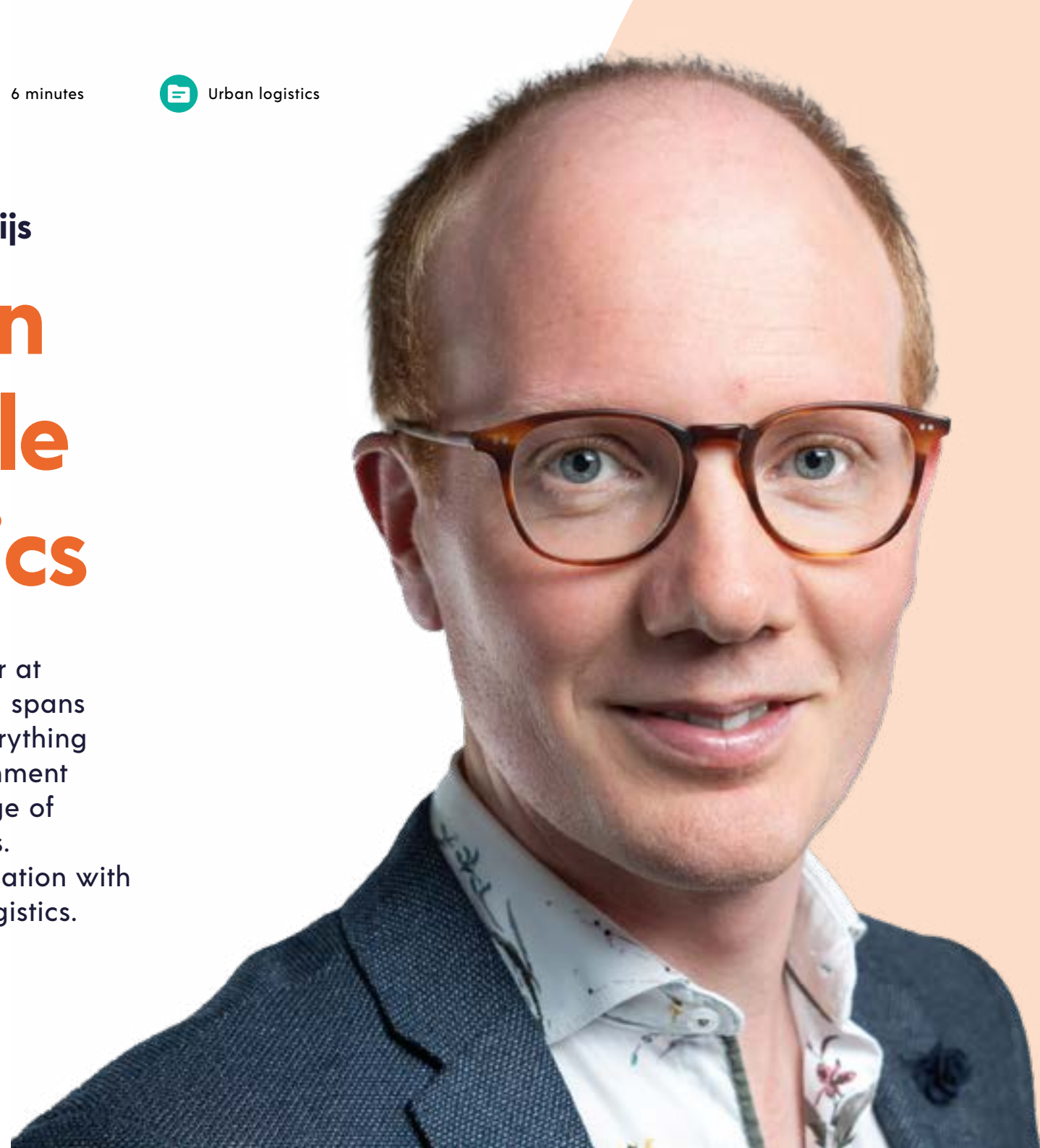
April 2022 – September 2022: Supply planner at Biscuit International
Anne oversaw the 2-13 week planning for 2 factories and played a key role in communication with markets, Demand Planning, co-packing, purchasing from sister companies, and process optimization for two markets. New planning and optimization tools were implemented in collaboration with Capgemini.

May 2021 – March 2022: Specialist S&OP at Celanese
Due to supply shortages during COVID-19, Anne was asked to help establish the escalation process and allocate allocations. She was also responsible for production planning and led a change management project within allocation management.

In conversation with Dr. Ir. Paul Buijs

The transition to sustainable urban logistics

Dr. Ir. Paul Buijs is an associate professor at the University of Groningen. His research spans logistics and sustainability, covering everything from new vehicle technologies to government policies. A key focus area is the challenge of zero-emission zones and related matters. Ujendre and Koen engaged in a conversation with him about the sustainability of urban logistics.



What do you see as concrete solutions for the sustainability of urban logistics?

"For the sustainability of urban logistics, we face two primary challenges. Firstly, there are still many vehicles emitting pollutants, and secondly, there is an excessive number of vehicles on the road. Concrete solutions center around vehicle technologies aimed at reducing exhaust emissions and other pollutants or optimizing a vehicle's cargo space for better capacity utilization. On the emissions prevention side, solutions are straightforward, moving towards electric vehicle technology, resulting in emissions only during the production of those vehicles. On the other hand, there are more complex solutions focused on optimizing available capacity. I've conducted extensive research on hubs, which have the potential to significantly reduce the number of empty trucks on the road and contribute to better capacity utilization. However, progress in this area is not progressing smoothly."

How do you explain that?

"That's because many cities lack regulations preventing someone with a half-empty diesel truck from entering the city. These regulations are starting to emerge, creating a need for solutions. Additionally, a completely new company that functions as a hub could be a potential solution. However, historical data has shown that most of their predecessors have failed."

What do you see as the biggest challenge(s) in the sustainability of urban logistics?

"When transitioning from a diesel vehicle to an electric one, several things change. Firstly, the purchase is more expensive, requiring sufficient capital. Even if the total costs of ownership¹ are positive, having enough capital remains the biggest challenge for small businesses. Additionally, there's a likelihood of operational changes with electric transport, such as reduced loading weight or range. Some companies are using the current situation to experiment and gain a head start, but this requires a significant investment in human capital. Most leaders are companies with substantial financial and human capital, allowing

them to invest now. Once legal rules are in place, they will have a significant advantage over their competition."

Who are the other players that also need to prepare?

"When thinking about urban logistics, we often consider package delivery services. Those delving deeper also consider retail replenishment, catering deliveries, construction materials, and waste disposal. However, many vehicle movements in the city are associated with services like plumbers, window cleaners, and service technicians. This broader urban logistics sector is primarily composed of self-employed individuals or small businesses, which face a challenging situation. A significant challenge will be whether enough companies can comply with the new regulations from 2025. It also raises the question of whether we find it acceptable that, for example, a self-employed window cleaner can no longer provide services in the city center because he lacks the capital to purchase an electric vehicle."

Does the same apply to last mile within this urban logistics, or are there different challenges here?

"No, there is a difference. E-commerce logistics are conducted by a few large companies with substantial human and financial capital. These companies are at the forefront of the sustainable transition, despite the lack of regulations at the moment. If you look around the city center of Groningen now, you have to make an effort to see a diesel bus from a major postal or package delivery provider, even though it is currently allowed. Perhaps these companies are ahead due to public attention."

"Do we find it acceptable that an independent window cleaner can no longer provide services in the city center because he lacks the capital to purchase an electric vehicle?"

What transition model(s) do you use in your courses for the sustainability of urban logistics?

"That question has made me think, but the short answer is that I have not used such models in my courses so far. Through this interview, I started delving into them."

In which phase are we, considering the 'Changing the game' transition model?

"I am closely associated with the municipality of Groningen, and I was there in 2016 when they declared: 'From 2025, it's done with diesel,' within the Green Deal Zero-emission City Logistics covenant. All stakeholder organizations were present, and they all signed. Later in this process, the so-called window time area was expanded. Initially, freight traffic was not allowed in the pedestrian area after 12:00; now, it applies to the entire city center. In 2016, it was already agreed that different rules would apply from 2025. However, in conversations with stakeholders, I notice that many are totally surprised by this. I think the transition model provides room to gain control of this situation. We are currently in a phase where a small number of companies are beyond the learning phase and are rolling out their sustainable transition. This applies, for example, to PostNL and DHL and some other major logistics service providers. You also see cameras in city centers, and logistics service providers that drive there after 12:00 now receive a warning letter. This will be a fine later on. We are certainly not yet heading towards 'synergy & integration and institutionalization.'

However, you can see that the laws and regulations are already prepared. They have gone through many stages of the transition model. I would say we are in between the inception and the competition phase. ▶

Total cost of ownership refers to the total costs associated with owning, using and maintaining a particular product, system or service throughout its life cycle.

The logistics movements associated with services are still in the learning phase. They usually have less capacity to follow the news and keep track of all laws and regulations."

What role do you think supply chain professionals should take more actively in this?

"I believe supply chain professionals should understand the prerequisites they can impose on their logistics service provider to better utilize their assets. Many companies unintentionally include conditions in their contracts that limit logistics service providers from optimizing their assets. For example, if a company requires a certain delivery by 10:00, and the travel distance is one hour, a truck that normally departs at 06:00 might be out of operation until 10:00 due to strict time delivery. In practice, this inadvertently sidelines the truck for hours. Therefore, supply chain professionals have a role to play in understanding how they can ultimately empower their logistics service provider."

Do you have any tips for young supply chain professionals?

"If you are at the beginning of your career, you often have more time to learn things. It's good to think about what energizes you a lot and then become very good at it. You need a lot of energy to learn something new, especially at the beginning of your career. However, it doesn't necessarily have to be related to the work you do."

Do you have any reading, watching or listening recommendations?

"Jazeker. Ik heb recent het boek 'Yes, I recently read the book 'The End of the World is Just the Beginning' by Peter Zeihan. It's a very provocative book about the mechanisms behind global supply chains. I often listen to the Postal Hub podcast, which focuses on the last mile. For a viewing tip, I would recommend the film 'Sorry We Missed You,' which depicts the struggles of a delivery courier." ◻

"We are currently in a phase where a small number of companies have moved beyond the learning stage"



Customer of the Year Award for Karo Healthcare



In 2018, the collaboration with Karo Healthcare began with a project for Jip Kelderman. Since then, the partnership has been strong, and several trainees have found their way to Karo. Jip Kelderman now works at the headquarters in Stockholm. **Magnus Bruhn** (in the photo) has been closely involved in the collaboration from the start. Magnus expressed his honor and delight, praising Set for its talent recognition and the added value that trainees bring to the organization from day one. Set is a key partner in the transformation of Karo Healthcare, according to Magnus.



● Training Personal Effectivity



● Stand University of Groningen



● Guest lecture Star Management Week Rotterdam



● Harvesting seaweed at The Seaweed Company



● Overcoming obstacles at the Harbour Run



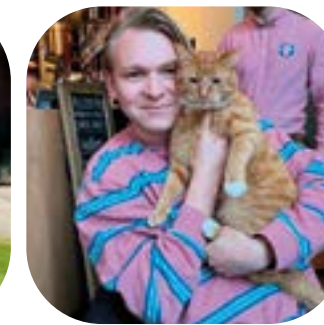
● Set team at Kamperland



● Team meeting with lunch



● Anne excels during the Golfclinic



● Koen welcomes a new team member



● Set in action at the Harbour Run



● Thomas at the Community Day of KlimaatGesprekken



● Team activity in Dongen



Thomas and Koen engage in a discussion with **Ward Mosmuller** and **Pim Jansen**. Ward serves as the Director of Partnerships & Alliances at Niaga, a sustainable company specializing in designing products for reuse. In the early stages of his career at Niaga, he played a key role in combining Niaga's technology with Auping's to create a circular mattress. Pim Jansen is the Manager of International Business Development at Auping, overseeing sales and market development in countries outside Auping's home regions of Benelux, Denmark, and Germany. Since 2021, he has collaborated with Ward on the commercial aspects of the circular transition in the mattress industry.

A collaboration that led to the world's first circular mattress

Thomas: From what perspective did Auping start the sustainable transition?

Pim: "It started from the conviction that it is necessary and possible. Auping has been making sustainable products for 135 years; it's in our DNA. You can also see this in our vision: we want to equip the world, both literally and figuratively. Being a family business helps us take this step. We built a green factory 10 years ago, but if you produce gray products there, how green is your factory? Based on that conviction, we initiated the sustainable transition. With Niaga and our other partners in the chain, we developed the right proposition. For us, it's second nature. It's ingrained in our thinking."

Koen: How did the collaboration between Auping and Niaga come about?

Pim: "We started about twelve years ago looking for a solution to the massive mattress waste problem we create: in Europe alone, we discard over 35 million mattresses per year. Most of them are incinerated, some end up in landfills, and a very small portion is processed into a lower-value product like insulation material, which is then incinerated."

Ward: "Hence, it's crucial to make a product reusable. It must be disassembleable and modular. The different modules, layers, and materials should be reusable. In these mattresses, for example, we have polyester and steel. We only work with materials that can be used in the same application (from mattress to mattress) or in an application of the same value. This way, the product retains its value. Then you can keep recycling from an old product to a new product. That is circularity."

Thomas: What were the biggest challenges during this collaboration?

Ward: "The overall challenge is to develop a system in which we retrieve the right materials to make the right products again. It starts with finding partners willing to join you in this."

Additionally, it's crucial that each party clearly understands its role and executes it well. This way, the loop can be closed.

Starting small is also a challenge. Due to the small volumes, everything is expensive, ranging from transportation to materials or recycling possibilities. We could only offer recyclers one percent of their average intake volume. This is just incredibly expensive. You need to find partners willing to start small, like us. The scale is a problem in the beginning."

Pim: "In the Netherlands, there is an extensive Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for mattresses. Every producer bringing a mattress to the market is responsible

for taking that mattress back at the end of its lifespan. As the Dutch mattress industry, we pay a fee to a foundation, which ensures the loop is closed. We are proud that we, together with our partners in the chain, have arranged this because it closes the loop. This success serves as an example for other industries, so we play a pioneering role in the circular transition."

Koen: How do you ensure that the mattress stays in the loop?

Ward: "The QR code on the mattress plays a significant role in this. When you scan it, you go to a landing page with information about the product, and there's a product passport behind it. This is similar to food products that have a list of ingredients on the packaging. This product passport is very useful for a recycler. They have a certain recycling infrastructure, where various materials come through. All materials have different values. This way, you can separate based on value."

Additionally, this landing page also explains how to bring the product back. Does it need to go to the recycling center, should it be put in a specific bin there? Will the store take it back, as Auping does? Or is it the recycler filtering the products and ensuring they go back to the right place?"

Thomas: Do you have any tips for young professionals?

Pim: "Always ask about sustainability during a job interview. What is a company doing about it? If companies realize that sustainability is an essential criterion in people's job choices, then the company must address it."

Ward: "Be critical and keep asking questions to different parties within a supply chain. What exactly are you supplying? What is your footprint? Keep checking, checking, checking."

Koen: Any reading, watching, or listening recommendations?

Pim: "I was intrigued by the book 'Healthusiasm' by Christophe Jauquet. It covers everything contributing to a healthy life, including the role of rest in it. We always say: if everyone slept well, the world would look much better. A good night's sleep is the foundation for everything else you want to undertake."

Ward: "The Ministry for the Future' by Kim Stanley Robinson. It's a futuristic novel that makes you think about how the sustainable transition on a global scale should happen and what individuals can contribute. We often focus on the micro-level; this book shows the macro side. Another recommendation is 'The Theory of Constraints' by Eliyahu Goldratt. I've learned a lot from that. It's a really interesting book that makes you peel off the layers and search for the real bottleneck."

"Be critical and keep asking questions to different parties within a supply chain"





Thijs: "I have been working at Set to establish collaborations with various charities"

Sustainability within Set



Annelotte Vroon - Set
Jojan Heinen - Set
Thijs Koster - Set



5 minutes



Sustainability



Annelotte: "For me it's a requirement that the company I work for is consciously engaged in sustainability and critically assesses its role in it"

sustainability' since this year. Every week, I receive a sustainable challenge, such as decluttering my wardrobe to be aware of its contents before buying new clothes. Before acquiring new items, I check if I can find them secondhand and take my old items to the thrift store. Additionally, I try to minimize food waste. I live next to the Blaak market in Rotterdam, and I aim to go there every week for my groceries, which I could also find in a supermarket. This is cheaper, and I bring bags to reduce packaging and waste."

think about my purchases, and try to make thoughtful choices. Examples include consuming almost no meat, avoiding the use of single-use plastics, minimizing product and clothing purchases, and opting for sustainable travel as much as possible."

Jojan: "I have been participating in '52 weeks of

With this text in mind, we engaged in a conversation with **Annelotte**, **Jojan**, and **Thijs**, employees of **Set**, to discuss how sustainability is interwoven into their lives.

What do you do to engage with sustainability in your personal lives?

Annelotte: "I handle resources responsibly, consciously

As Jan Rotmans describes in his book 'Embracing Chaos,' many people suffer from the illusion of powerlessness when it comes to sustainability. He writes that individuals often struggle to grasp the impact they can make individually and come up with various excuses to avoid personal change, believing it wouldn't make a significant difference. If everyone adopts such thinking, fundamental change will never occur. The moment people realize that every change matters and that every individual matters, they recognize their role in the sustainability transition and value it.

Thijs: "Sustainability manifests in a few conscious choices I make. I choose vacation destinations that don't require flying. Moreover, I don't eat meat, purchase sustainable products in the supermarket, and opt for secondhand clothing as much as possible."

Are you involved in environmental organizations or charities?

Thijs: "Officially, I'm not a member of any, but I have demonstrated several times on the highway A12. The large number of people of different ages present there gave hope and a great sense of belonging."

Annelotte: "I am a donor to Plan International. This foundation strives for a world in which children can fully develop, and boys and girls have equal opportunities." "I am a donor to Plan International. This foundation strives for a world in which children can fully develop, and boys and girls have equal opportunities."

Jojan: "Yes, with Better Time Stories, an initiative to reunite families separated by war through interactive books. I support this initiative together with Tim (Stormmesand, from Set). We supported them from Set last year and continued our involvement. We assist in the logistical part of the operation, and we are currently exploring how to expand the concept to multiple European countries. Additionally, I volunteer in the summer at the Neighborhood Camping in Rotterdam, a nationwide initiative for neighborhoods where residents may not always afford a vacation."

Are there specific projects or initiatives focused on sustainability in your assignments?

Jojan: "Through efficiency in my projects at AkzoNobel, I contribute to a lower carbon footprint for the company. By providing data for a sustainable project, they assess whether certain environmentally harmful materials no longer need to be used in the production process. I also enhance the transportation flow by reducing air transport and increasing maritime transport."

Thijs: "Not during an assignment. However, within Set, I have been involved in establishing collaborations with various charities. One outcome is the partnership with Carbon Conversations."

Annelotte: "At my previous assignment, at Mars, there was a sustainability policy. Employees could, for instance, spend an afternoon cleaning up litter in the neighborhood. Additionally, there were activities more business-focused, such as making the packaging more sustainable."

How do you see the role of sustainability evolving in your future career and personal life?

Thijs: "At the moment, I try to develop myself as broadly as possible within my sustainable limits. It's not that I want to focus solely on sustainability, but I also don't want to work for initiatives that contradict it. Furthermore, I aim to enhance my skills by taking sustainability training organized within Set. The knowledge I gain here, I would like to apply in sustainable companies or assignments. After completing the Young Professional Program, I hope to work for a company with a fully sustainable mission. Looking a bit further into the future, I hope to establish my own care farm with my girlfriend. With this, we aim to help people with job market distance find a suitable work environment, enabling them to develop and derive satisfaction from their work."

Annelotte: "It is a must for me that the company where I work is consciously engaged in sustainability and critically examines its role in it. Regarding sustainability in our assignments as trainees, I think supply chain management itself focuses on this, as we are always dealing with efficiency. As Jojan mentioned earlier, if you have an efficient supply chain, you are automatically engaged in sustainability. Additionally, I would like to inspire my environment to engage more with sustainability and contribute to greater equality in society through volunteering."

Jojan: "My goal is to work as a project manager

in the future, helping companies in the sustainable transition. We will receive more sustainability training from Set in 2024, so I am looking forward to that!"



Jojan: "Through efficiency in my projects at AkzoNobel, I contribute to reducing the company's carbon footprint"

Joost Wouters – The Seaweed Company
Willemijn Potjer – The Seaweed Company
Laura van Doorne – The Seaweed Company

Jojan Heinen – Set
Marielle van Gastel – Set

5 minutes
Interview



The Seaweed Company: Towards a healthy food chain

Seaweed is one of the fastest-growing organisms in the world. It can absorb substances like CO₂ from seawater and, moreover, it grows without the need for land, fresh water, fertilizers, or pesticides. Additionally, seaweed can seamlessly replace a quarter of the meat in a hamburger without altering its taste. Intrigued by the potential of seaweed, Jojan and Marielle delved deeper into the world of this industry. They visited the office of **The Seaweed Company** in Schiedam to sit down with the founder and SeaEO, **Joost Wouters**, along with **Willemijn Potjer**, Head of Supply Chain, and **Laura van Doorne**, Quality Control & Supply Chain Support.

Jojan: Joost, I'm really curious about how you started **The Seaweed Company** five years ago.

Joost: "I worked in marketing roles at PepsiCo and Procter & Gamble for many years. When I was working on a marketing plan to encourage children to drink more cola at one point, I thought to myself: Is this what I should be doing with my skills? That's when I came across someone working with seaweed, and it resonated with me. I dedicated a year and a half to delving into the world of seaweed. I was certain that starting a seaweed company would be successful. During that time, I met Stefan and Edwin. Together, we founded the company five years ago."

Marielle: Willemijn, when you started working here, there was nothing set up in terms of supply chain. What does it take to establish a sustainable supply chain, and what does it look like?

Willemijn: "Our supply chain is concise. We acquire seaweed seeds from Hortimare, which we use for our seaweed farms in the Netherlands and Ireland. Additionally, we have farms in India and Morocco, and a small test site in Greenland. This geographical diversity is crucial because not every type of seaweed (there are 12,000 species) grows in every climate. The farms are run by local fishing families, offering them a new source of income alongside traditional fishing, where earnings are declining. The seaweed is locally dried and then shipped to the Netherlands in full container loads. A contract manufacturer processes our dried seaweed into flakes or powder and blends it into the final product."

Joost: "In Ireland, we recently achieved a significant milestone. We established our own factory for the seaweed grown there. This facility handles all stages of the production process: washing, drying, and cutting. If we can combine production and processing into the final product at one geographical location, we can reduce the number of transportation movements."

Jojan: You supply dried seaweed as an ingredient to other companies and partners.

What products do they make from it?

Joost: "In 2023, we focused on two categories: 'Agri' and 'Food TopHealth Plants.' The first product group consists of biostimulants for agriculture, a substance used to make soil and crops more resilient to extreme weather conditions and improve nutrient absorption by the crops. The second focus category is food. One of our customers is a hamburger manufacturer replacing part of the meat with our seaweed. As a result, a hamburger contains only three-quarters of the meat it used to have, without altering the taste. Seaweed contains a rich blend of organic proteins, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals."

Marielle: When I arranged this meeting with Willemijn, she mentioned that she learns new things every day. Can you provide examples of this?

Willemijn: "I had to discover and figure out almost everything myself, from planning, logistics, the order process, quality, to ERP. What requirements apply, for instance, to international shipments, and what documents need to be included? If a recall is necessary, how do we handle that? At Danone, we had done these things thousands of times, but here, I have to figure everything out."

Jojan: Does starting from scratch make it easier to make choices for sustainable partners or processes?

Willemijn: "Our focus is on quality and sustainability throughout the entire chain, from the seaweed farm to the end user. Therefore, our partners must also be sustainable. It's not as simple as it sounds, especially as the market is growing. There is a lot of regulations to comply with, and we set our own quality standards, such as requiring our products to be certified and organic, with suppliers located in Europe. Flexibility is crucial at this stage, where we need to respond quickly to customer needs and market demands. For example, we adjust the size of our seaweed particles based on customer feedback."

Jojan: We read that you apply life cycle analysis (LCA) to seaweed. Can you tell us more about that?

Willemijn: "LCA is a powerful tool to identify gaps or strengths in your process. We now have someone conducting the LCA for us, providing a full calculation so we can see our impact immediately. We discovered that replacing 25 percent of beef with seaweed per hamburger can offset 8 kilograms of CO₂ emissions and save nearly 1,800 liters of water."

Marielle: How do you match supply and demand in a new chain where there is little data available?

Willemijn: "The challenging part of this process is that we have to collect and analyze data ourselves. We don't have a dedicated data scientist, so there's room for improvement. It's a significant contrast to my previous job at Danone, where we knew exactly how many babies were born, and we could align our production accordingly. Now, we often have too much or too little inventory."

Laura: "We are in constant dialogue with new customers and find that each customer has different expectations and requirements. That's why we work with scenarios to be prepared for everything and identify risks. Working with nature, sometimes a harvest may fall short. Our Irish colleagues also notice a growing interest in seaweed in Ireland, both from suppliers and potential customers. While the focus is currently

on Europe, we are open to potential customers worldwide."

Jojan: You are growing rapidly, and seaweed seems to be gaining traction in the market.


What are the current biggest challenges?

Joost: "Seaweed farmers are currently facing challenging regulations, which vary in each country. Finding fishermen willing to transition to seaweed production is a challenge as they face financial risks. We need to eliminate these uncertainties for our farmers. If we succeed, we can genuinely scale up production. We are constantly looking for financiers willing to cover this financial risk for our farmers."

Jojan: Do you have tips for companies looking to transition to a sustainable supply chain?

Willemijn: "Don't stay behind your desk; engage with sustainable parties looking to innovate. This way, you can discover the essential skills and characteristics needed for establishing sustainable initiatives and connect with inspiring people. And above all, don't overthink it; just do it!"

Marielle: Lastly, what is your dream for the future?

Joost: "Our dream is to truly impact the food value chain with our products. This chain needs healing, and we can't do it alone. We hope that, in five years, it will be normal to eat a hybrid hamburger consisting of a quarter seaweed. Not only in the Netherlands but worldwide. If that happens, the market will be too vast for us to serve alone, so I hope we can share our knowledge with many companies to meet the demand together." 

"Our focus is on quality and sustainability throughout the entire chain"



An interview with Bart Schoonderwoerd

Guiding people through change is crucial

As the largest Dutch wholesaler for the installation industry, **Technische Unie** plays a key role in the sustainability of buildings and homes. Technical Union supplies to over 50,000 professional clients. Among its approximately 600 suppliers are major companies such as Prysmian, Signify, ABB, and Hager, as well as relatively smaller manufacturers. This results in an extensive product range of over 2 million items. Approximately 2,300 employees work across various locations. **Annelotte** and **Ujendre** engaged in a conversation with **Bart Schoonderwoerd**, Director of Logistics, who has been overseeing logistics and the supply chain for over 20 years. Ujendre and Bart have known each other since 2002 when Ujendre worked at Philips and began collaborating with Technische Unie.

Ujendre: Can you briefly explain your responsibilities at Technische Unie?

"In the Netherlands, I am responsible for the logistics operation. We have two distribution centers (DCs), one in Alphen aan de Rijn and another in Strijen, and transfer points (cross dock locations) at the branches. I am also responsible for the team that manages inventory. The majority of the inventory is in the DCs, with a limited assortment in the branches. Additionally, coordinating with customers and suppliers for planning and logistics falls under my responsibility. We are part of the French family-owned company Sonepar, and I am part of a group with experience and knowledge about setting up warehouses, so I often assist colleagues in other countries."

"Make sure you don't only address matters from behind your desk"

Annelotte: What are the current main challenges for Technische Unie?

"In terms of customer demand, we were used to having a stable rhythm. If something changed, we had time to adjust in our internally developed systems. Nowadays, customer needs are highly differentiated. This development significantly increases complexity in processes, creating a strong demand for a new contemporary system to handle this complexity. A crucial aspect here is change management. It is necessary to steer the entire change process effectively and get the entire company on board with the new direction. The ability to communicate well with people and collaborate with them is crucial in this regard. The second point is the challenge in sustainability. We are all in search mode, both us and the suppliers; what exactly is required of us? There is a significant need for dashboards to capture data, but the standard is still unclear. For example, how detailed should we go in scope 3 reporting. Sustainability is one of the three key elements between Technical Union and its customers. The other two aspects are hygiene and S&OP. Hygiene refers to the easy exchange of information and goods, while S&OP revolves around better alignment between market demands, what suppliers can deliver, and how Technical Union adapts to that. These three elements collectively address the future supply chain challenges and are also a crucial part of our overall

strategy. Sustainability is ingrained in our DNA."

Ujendre: Technische Unie is often in the news as one of the pioneers in zero-emission zones in city distribution. What obstacles do you see in implementing this in the 18 municipalities planning for it in the Netherlands?
"Technische Unie delivers in these cities, forcing us to think about it. As a solution, we are building transfer points on the outskirts of cities. There, we are transitioning to an electric transport fleet of cars, bicycles, and trucks, or we entrust our products to a third party that transports them in an electric manner. However, there are more challenges externally. There is an extremely long lead time for electric vans and trucks. Additionally, the Dutch network has limited charging capacity. Both require a lot of improvisation from companies like ours and also from our customers. Planning charging capacity is challenging when you don't know when your electric trucks will be delivered, and the network is full."

Ujendre: Does that make you pessimistic?

"I remember when you arrived here ten years ago with your electric car. Looking at what has changed in recent years is incredible. Therefore, I am not pessimistic that it won't work, but there are challenges. There are also internal challenges that we are working on. For example, the high demand for heat pumps and solar panels combined with their sporadic delivery. Additionally, the transportation of these large products is not straightforward. Another example is the market trend where construction projects are increasingly happening in the city centers rather than on the outskirts, as was often the case before."

Annelotte: Are there recent developments in your field that you find very interesting?

"Robotization. The aging population presents us with a challenge. Robots can replace repetitive work in a DC, allowing people freed up by this to take on roles in trucks or other modes of transportation. I also mentioned S&OP. Improving planning with our suppliers is fascinating because we need to collaborate


differently with many suppliers than we were used to."

Ujendre: Do you have any tips for young professionals?
"The aspect of collaboration is a crucial part of supply chain management and becomes crucial for those aspiring to a career in it. Additionally, you must be able to explain complex matters simply and have an affinity for technology. Supply chain and logistics are tangible, so make sure you don't only address matters from behind your desk. And think long term. Changes in processes and human behavior take time. They are not easily achieved. Long-term thinking is crucial, like an oil tanker cannot quickly change direction but achieves its goal with timely adjustments."

Annelotte: Finally: do you have any reading, watching, or listening recommendations?

"Just out, a real gem: 'A Swim in a Pond in the Rain,' which explains why Russian stories are so good."

Ujendre: You gave me Machiavelli's book, 'The Prince,' in 2006.

"Yes, that is, of course, an uncrowned classic. It deals with manipulation and divide-and-conquer, essentially political games. Definitely mention it because these games are still being played. You only see it when you understand it." 



"It is our mission to achieve a social tipping point by breaking norms"

Thomas and Evie talking to Alina Salomon of Carbon Conversations

Take the step from knowing to doing

In 2016, **Stichting KlimaatGesprekken**, known as **Carbon Conversations** in England, was brought to the Netherlands. The team trains climate coaches who, leveraging the power of climate psychology, employ practical methodologies and approaches to inspire lasting behavioral change at home and in the workplace. Their goal is to motivate and inspire people to move from 'knowing' to 'doing' based on intrinsic motivation because knowledge alone often does not lead to behavioral change. In 2022, the foundation won the Sustainable Tuesday Prize, and in 2023, they are featured for the fourth consecutive year in Trouw's Sustainable 100 list.

The foundation comprises a mix of volunteers and professional climate coaches. At Set, we value using our expertise and time voluntarily for organizations making

a positive contribution to society, aligning with our philosophy of sharing knowledge and creating a sustainable impact. Therefore,

Thomas has been given two months to contribute to KlimaatGesprekken, collaborating closely with Alina Salomon, the General Director. Evie speaks with Thomas and Alina about the foundation's work, the valuable contributions of volunteers, and the challenges it faces.

Alina, with a background in climate science, communication, and climate education, how do these aspects come together in your current role, and what are you currently focused on?

Alina: "I spent the first ten years of my career at IVN Nature Education, where I was responsible for climate and sustainability projects. I attended an organizer training at the Lowlander Project, learning a lot about engaging volunteers and mobilizing people. I now bring this experience to my role as director, which I'd describe as a road builder. You need to get people moving and acknowledging. After the initial six months of exploration and planning, I am now focusing on climate coaches. These volunteers are trained and work in their residential areas or workplaces for their employers or networks as

freelancers. However, just training is not enough. You need to provide attention and frameworks so that they know what to expect and what they can contribute."

What does the role of a climate coach entail?

Alina: "It starts with the climate coach training, three full days focusing on climate psychology, behavior change, and our methodology. During these days, participants practice as coaches in a safe environment to apply the methodology. If someone wants to become a coach in the residential area, they will then organize the living room series where neighbors can sign up."

The coach's methodology consists of six sessions and six interconnected themes: You and climate change, Consumption, Mobility, Nutrition, Home energy use. The sixth session explicitly deals with leading the climate conversation in their own environment, providing participants with guidance to take action and increase their ecological handprint.

A climate coach can also work in the workplace. These conversations are interesting due to different dynamics involving hierarchy, corporate culture, and prevailing norms. We aim to break down these norms, and coaches learn to deal with them. We also train employees to become ambassadors who then spread it further within the organization."

What do you mean by increasing your ecological handprint?

Alina: "We are shifting the focus from reducing the ecological footprint to increasing the ecological handprint. While reducing the footprint remains crucial, it may feel unattainable individually. The ecological handprint offers more hope and actionable perspectives. It represents the indirect positive ecological impact one makes on their surroundings, for instance, inspiring others to change their behavior. By engaging in handprint conversations, there is a shift in norms, creating more pressure on politics and the business world. Our mission

is to reach a social tipping point, making actions like flying within Europe for vacations less automatic."

The foundation has been growing and professionalizing in recent years. That sounds like a challenging task.

Alina: "That's correct. Professionalization never ends, ranging from data security to creating an email signature. Due to my experience in managing large projects, I can estimate what is achievable within a certain time. It is essential to get people on board with the change and protect them from over-enthusiasm and a sense of urgency. While enthusiasm is great, it can lead to burnout. We need to be cautious about this."

Another challenge is that the foundation relies mostly on volunteers. That's why we decided to work with a paid core team. Together with the board and the core team, I shape professionalization, including guaranteed financial support, stable clients, increasing our visibility, and forming meaningful connections with other organizations."


Thomas, you contributed to the foundation for two months. What does this collaboration between Set and Carbon Conversations entail?

Thomas: "It's not an obvious collaboration since the foundation doesn't focus on supply chain management. However, I have knowledge and experience in working with data. I optimized several databases and delved into working with a CRM system. KlimaatGesprekken eventually wants to fully transition to this. Achieving this in two months is not feasible, and it also needs robust IT support."

Alina: "This is also due to our pace. As we all work part-time and have various ongoing matters, we don't get enough time for this. Nevertheless, the groundwork you provided, Thomas, has given us an understanding of what is feasible."

Thomas: "One of the learning aspects for me was that communication is slower than in a corporate environment because fewer people are full-time. This creates a

different pace. I had to efficiently use the moments when someone is available and adapt to achieve goals."

Alina: "I appreciate that you discovered the human side of the organization by calling volunteers and contributing to our community day. You gained a varied perspective on our organization, and you picked up a lot that would have otherwise been left unattended." 

Do you also want to contribute to this wonderful organization?

Get in touch:
info@klimaatgesprekken.nl

You can also make a donation via the QR code below



Reading, listening, and viewing tips for a deeper understanding of sustainable transitions

There is an increasing discourse on sustainable transitions, with more discussions and writings emerging. With our team, we've curated a diverse selection to provide substantive insights with theory and examples. Our suggestions can guide you as an individual to gain a better understanding of sustainable transformations and as a professional to enhance your insight into sustainable supply chains. If you have suggestions you'd like to share, please send an email to evie@setsupplychain.com.



Postal Hub Podcast

Ian Kerr

Paul Buijs, a lecturer at the University of Groningen recommends the Postal Hub podcast in our interview with him. This podcast sheds light on issues in the world of mail, parcels, and express deliveries every week. Host Ian Kerr discusses the latest developments and innovations affecting delivery in interviews with leaders and influencers.



De Positieve Impact Podcast: 52 Tips for a More Sustainable Life

Nick Moerkerk and Thijs van Lindhout

Nick Moerkerk and Thijs van Lindhout started this podcast to inspire people and encourage action in the realm of sustainability. They engage in conversations with experts on various topics, ranging from broader societal issues to what individuals can do for sustainability. In the featured episode, Serge Calon from 52 Weeks Sustainable is a guest, discussing how individuals and communities can lead more sustainable lives by taking on a new challenge every week.



Rethinking resources: Circular economy in a nutshell

Österreichische Mineralölverwaltung
Aktiengesellschaft (OMV)

The 'Rethinking Resources' podcast focuses on exploring climate-related challenges related to energy and resource usage, as well as the technological innovations that can contribute to their sustainability in the future. In this episode, the spotlight is on the circular economy, emphasizing the pursuit of a sustainable economic system where resources are reused, and products are recycled or reintegrated into the economy at the end of their lifecycle. Francesca Stevens discusses whether reducing, reusing, and recycling can bring about a change in our behavior. Will this genuinely lead to a global transformation? And when will we know if the implementation of this circular economy has been successful?

Francesca Stevens discusses how reducing, reusing, and recycling leads to a change in our behavior



Het Uur, with economist and sociologist Sandra Phlippen

Pieter van der Wielen

Another recommendation for listening is the episode of the podcast series 'Het Uur,' featuring Sandra Phlippen. The chief economist at ABN AMRO and sociologist discusses surprising parallels between the energy transition and the mining transition. Phlippen shares insights on the looming drought and its impact on the housing market, addressing the consequences for the financial sector. She also sheds light on the crucial role of the government in times of adversity. How can we support citizens in the future? Perhaps the solution lies in pricing emissions.



Shortdoc: Duurzame mobiliteit

Talitha Muusse, part 1 & 2

Part 1 of Sustainable Mobility focuses on sustainable transportation options to relieve congested road networks. Part 2 centers on the question of why behavioral change regarding the use of sustainable modes of transportation is challenging.



Nederland voedselparadijs

Barbara Baarsma

'Nederland Voedselparadijs' provides insight into the Dutch food industry and raises questions about how we produce, distribute, and consume food, and how these processes can be improved to have a more positive impact on both society and the environment. Barbara Baarsma, an economist at Rabobank and professor of applied economics at the University of Amsterdam, discusses how the Netherlands, despite its relatively small size, has become a key player in the international food market. The book encourages the reader to reflect on their own role in the food system and how they can make more conscious choices regarding food.



We the Power: The Future of Energy is Community-Owned

Patagonia Films

The documentary 'We the Power' takes a look at the visionary transition from centralized energy production to decentralized energy production. With various citizen initiatives aiming to bring energy production and management back to the local community, local economies are stimulated, and communities become more resilient.



Changing the Game

Lucas Simons & André Nijhof

This book provides insights and strategies for making a positive impact on the environment and society. Topics such as sustainable entrepreneurship, corporate social responsibility, and the role of companies in addressing global environmental issues are covered. It emphasizes the importance of changing business models and strategies to integrate sustainability, which is beneficial not only for the environment but also for the company itself. 'Changing the Game' offers practical examples and case studies of companies that successfully innovate and integrate sustainability into their operations. The authors explain various phases of a transition in their book and describe the changing role of collaboration within the sector between companies and the role of stakeholders such as banks, NGO's, the government, research institutions, and the media in each phase of the transition. Thus, it provides very concrete tools to recognize where you stand in the transition and what you can do to progress further in the transition.

This book emphasizes the importance of changing business models and strategies to integrate sustainability.

We are Set

Supply chain professionals who make a difference

In the dynamic realm of business, it transcends individual companies competing; instead, it's supply chains vying against supply chains. People, undeniably, remain the key differentiator, and the influence of outstanding individuals continues to shape success.

At Set, we specialize in aiding companies in the attraction and development of exceptional talent, spanning from junior professionals to senior management.

Our fervor for supply chain management, coupled with our proficiency in cultivating future leaders, has paved the way for remarkable experiences and collaborations. The result is individuals contributing significantly to their company's triumphs at various career stages.

In 2014, we launched the Young Professional Program. Our master's degree recruits undergo three years of diverse assignments with different clients, delving into various roles in the supply chain, often involving planning and process improvement. Over time, we have augmented our team with seasoned project managers. Through collaboration with clients, we establish elevated standards to amplify customer results, and our track record attests to the impact we make. Leveraging our market knowledge and experience, we excel in advising clients on potential solutions to achieve optimal staffing and form well-balanced teams. Therefore, recruitment, selection, and interim assignments are vital activities where we offer expertise, ensuring we can always provide fitting solutions.



We operate according to our four core values



Exceeding customers expectations

From project initiation to completion, we uphold constant communication with customers, ensuring expectations are clear and translating them into achievable objectives.



Increasing knowledge

As avid learners, we actively seek new knowledge and experiences, embracing alternative approaches. By sharing our ideas, we show that we are an innovative partner.



Taking self-leadership

Making conscious choices aligned with our values and motivations, we remain open to feedback, take responsibility, and foster accelerated development for a positive impact.



Showing commitment

Our strength lies in building meaningful relationships, driven by a genuine desire to understand and assist others. This results in enduring partnerships with our clients, contributing to positive team development both within the client's organization and within our own team of trainees.

Our expertise: The SCOR Model*

The foundation of our subject matter expertise lies in the Supply Chain Operations Reference (SCOR) Model*. This model serves as our framework and delineates four pivotal supply chain processes: planning, manufacturing, procurement, and logistics. Recognizing the growing significance of data science and analytics in the realm of supply chains, Set advocates for the inclusion of a fifth key element in the SCOR model: data science and analytics.



* Source: Supply Chain Council



Ready,
set,
go!



A talent doesn't develop on its own



Together, we
develop the supply
chain leaders of the
future