

## Press release

18 June 2021

### **Pia Heidenmark Cook becomes trustee of the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance**

The Chief Sustainability Officer of the world's leading home furnishing retailer, Ingka Group (IKEA), has become the latest trustee to join the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. Pia Heidenmark Cook brings 25 years' experience in the sustainability space, across academia, business and consultancy. Her expertise complements the experience of the existing trustees, which include leading sustainability consultants and industry executives from IHG Hotels & Resorts, Marriott International and Radisson Hotels Group.

Heidenmark Cook has worked at IKEA for over 13 years, leading and developing their sustainability agenda and led the development of the very first IKEA People and Planet Positive Strategy. She also brings experience of the hospitality sector having worked as Vice President for Responsible Business at the Rezidor Hotel Group, operator of the hotel brands Radisson Blu and Park Inn which included over 300 hotels in over 50 countries at the time. From autumn, Pia will become a senior advisor for IKEA, in addition to taking on non-executive director positions in boards across Europe and the US.

The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance welcomes Heidenmark Cook back to the hospitality industry. During her time at the Rezidor Hotel Group, Pia chaired the tourism branch of the Prince of Wales's International Business Leader's Forum, which was the forerunner to the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance.

With an increasing momentum for sustainability coming from consumers, public and private sectors and governments, the role of the Alliance remains as relevant today as when it formed almost 30 years ago. The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance brings together engaged hospitality companies and uses the collective power of the industry to deliver impact locally and on a global scale. The charity works with leading hospitality companies and strategic partners to address key challenges affecting the planet and its people. Their members make up 25% of the global hotel industry by rooms and include 13 world-leading hotel companies.

Heidenmark Cook says: "Collaboration is a crucial element to achieve the scale of change that's still required globally to tackle the challenges that our world and our societies face. This is fundamental to the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. I am looking forward to sharing learnings from across sectors to drive the hospitality industry, and their value chains, to operate responsibly."

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Wolfgang M. Neumann, Senior Non-Exec Director in Hospitality, welcomes Heidenmark Cook to the Board: "When the United Nations launched the Sustainable Development Goals, they brought to focus the urgency for action, and this is no less critical today. The Alliance uniquely represents how the hospitality industry is taking collective responsibility to ensure that destinations and communities are being supported and protected now and for future generations. We welcome the broad experience that Pia brings to our governance and look forward to what we will achieve with her on board."

Sustainable Hospitality Alliance CEO, Madhu Rajesh, says: "There is a need for more collaboration between sectors on shared sustainability challenges to accelerate the pace of action. Pia's multi-

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sector experience will bring learnings on key issues such as ethical recruitment and climate action that are not just applicable to hospitality, but to all sectors. This insight from beyond the hospitality industry will be a valuable addition to our Board.”

Heidenmark Cook was officially appointed as a trustee at the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance Board meeting on 17 June 2021.

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**Notes to editor**

The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance brings together engaged hospitality companies and uses the collective power of the industry to deliver impact locally and on a global scale. They work with leading hospitality companies and strategic partners to address key challenges affecting our planet and its people, and develop practical resources and programmes to enable the wider industry to operate responsibly and grow sustainably.

Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), they commit to drive continued action on human rights, youth employment, climate action and water stewardship. Their members make up 25% of the global hotel industry by rooms and include 13 world-leading hotel companies including Marriott International, Hilton, IHG, Hyatt and Radisson Hotels Group as well as regional brands. For further information, visit [www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org](http://www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org).