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AirForestry

Press Kit

Key Facts and Figures

Quick Facts

Founders	Olle Gelin (CEO), Dr Mauritz Andersson (CTO), and Caroline Walerud (Executive Chair).
Location	Sweden, Uppsala
Employees	33
Year founded	2020
Sponsors & Collaborators	Sveaskog, Tele2, Vattenfall, Vinnova, SkogForsk, The Swedish Energy Agency, Holmen, Hargs bruk, CDL, Norrsken, etc.
Investors	Northzone, Walerud Ventures, CapitalT, Kiko VC, Sveaskog, SEB Greentech VC, etc.
Technology	We electrify forestry

What we do...

We harvest trees from above with electric drones to create more productive, resilient, and healthy forests.

...What we're up against

Most of Sweden's commercial thinning operation is done with ground-based forestry machines. They weigh up to 30 tons without load, damage the ground, require five meter wide logging trails to even reach the trees that are to be thinned, provide a poor work environment, and burn more than 200 liters of diesel per day (3.5 billion liters of diesel globally per year).

Why thinning?

Commercial thinning is one of the core practices of forestry today. It aims to harvest and remove sick and/or weak trees to give the rest of the trees the best conditions to grow into a flourishing, resilient, and healthy forest. A healthy forest is furthermore considerably better at carbon sequestration.

Milestones

- ✓ We have the **world's lightest harvesting tool**, which hangs from the drone and trims and saws the tree.
- ✓ Proprietary drone optimized to **lift 200 kg** (trees in commercial thinning weigh 40-140 kg).
- ✓ **Flight permit** from the Swedish Transport Agency.
- ✓ Approved for running a **drone school**.

Awards

World Economic Forum Top Innovator

NyTeknik 33-listan

Techarenan Business Award

Norrsken Impact/100 (2024)

Norrsken Impact/100, winner of Public Vote (2023)

Positive Climate Impact

The calculations below are based on an average forest's rotation period of 100 years with only one thinning, where AirForestry's initial product for commercial thinning is compared to traditional forestry.

Additionally, these numbers are only adresssing harvested trees, not including avoided ground and vegetation damage, effects of pests, wildfires, storms, root rot, etc.

Can save 500 megatonnes per year

Impact Type	CO ₂ /hectare/year
Reduced emissions*	0.0031 tonnes
Gentle thinning**	0.8 tonnes
No logging trails	0.7 tonnes

Resulting in more than **500 megatonnes globally** per year!

*Based on a LCA, including production and usage.

**Simulations in HEUREKA.



Olle Gelin | CEO & Cofounder

I grew up in the forest and have deep domain knowledge in forestry and in mechanical engineering, mechatronics and automation. I worked with product development of hybrid trucks at Scania and with new concepts and machines for forestry at the Forestry Research Institute of Sweden.

Sustainable forestry is my passion. By using new technology and challenging old truths, we can reach fossil fuel independence and increase growth in the forest.

Background

System Developer for Rechargeable Energy Storage System at Scania
then 8 years leading forestry machine automation at SkogForsk.
M.Sc Mechanical Engineering



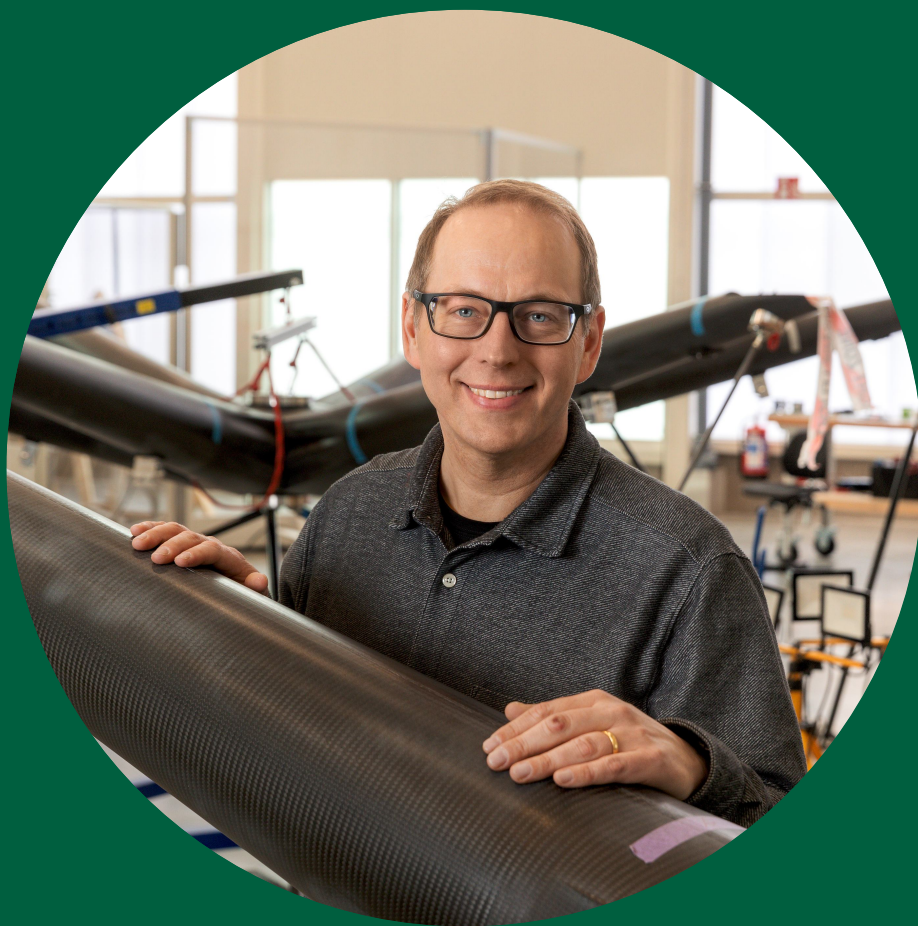
Caroline Walerud | Exec Chair & Cofounder

I have built and led a bunch of organisations, from co-founding a youth organization when I was 16 to being Captain and President of the Cambridge University Women’s Basketball Club. I’ve built several companies, such as Volumental, Walerud Ventures, and now AirForestry.

I mentor the next generation of deep-tech entrepreneurs through Sting, Prince Daniel's Fellowship, and Creative Destruction Lab. I work with Swedish politicians, EU officials, and the Swedish Royal Family to strengthen Sweden and Europe’s competitiveness in the tech area.

Background

An entrepreneur and investor scaling deep tech for the living planet. Studied natural sciences at Cambridge University.
Selection of Awards: Forbes 30 under 30, European Young Leader under 40, Supertalent of the Year, etc.



Dr Mauritz Andersson | CTO & Cofounder

I have a lifelong curiosity on the workings of the universe - theory and practise. Enabling solutions to the climate crisis through innovative technology and purpose driven people and organisations is my passion.

I want to make a positive impact and I choose to explore options for this by taking part-time off for building ideas and network, including getting funding and starting up research on electric aircraft at Uppsala University and being coordinator for ELISE and an electric aircraft evangelist in Sweden. Meeting Olle and seeing his expertise and background, made it obvious that forestry is ripe for innovation - and we founded AirForestry!

Background

PhD, Quantum Physics UU, Assistant Professor at KTH, Pilot and researcher of electric aircraft, coordinator of ELISE, Industrial development of LiDAR-systems for cars.



Gösta Forsén | CCO

I was raised on a farm and in forestry. From a young age I witnessed the hard work involved in farm and forest management. This experience shaped my motivation to use innovation to improve the living conditions and the economy of the farm. Therefore, my first job was to lead the technological shift to milking with robots. Now, at AirForestry, I have the opportunity to change the way we conduct forestry.

I recognize a pivotal opportunity at AirForestry to initiate a disruptive technological shift in forestry management. My current goal is to commercialize the potential within AirForestry, transforming it from an innovative concept into a globally leading enterprise.

Background

Comprehensive expertise spanning multiple roles within high-tech industries, from startups to multinational corporations. My positions have ranged from Research & Development to Commercial functions, including a role as a co-founder and CEO.
M.Sc Mechanical Engineering, MBA



Paul Carbonnier | COO & Head of Flight Operations

Focus as COO & Head of Flight Operations align in the same paradigm - to create a very safe and structured organisation with high psychological safety and deliver unassailable efficiency. Being a small part of something that actually makes a difference for people and the planet is my why.

I'm humble after 15+ years in different leadership roles and a true interest in organisation development from both the soft and structural perspective, AirForestry connected the dots and I am very grateful to be able to be a part of this extraordinary journey.

Background

Pilot on Helicopter & Airplane. with a nose for organisational journeys.
Using curiosity and questions as one of the strongest tools in my executive positions.

Our Core Insight & Vision

Our Core Insight

Our core insight is that electric aerial drones are uniquely energy efficient, straightforward to make autonomous using vision sensors with modern algorithms, while being very safe, robust, low cost and of low complexity.

The forest is the key regulatory sweet spot for scaling development and operations of aerial drone technology. Harvesting is the key vertical - the only major offroad service used globally and all year long. We begin with addressing commercial tree thinning, a widely spread practice that could potentially save the planet many gigatons of carbon dioxide with the AirForestry technology in place.

Our Vision

We Reinvent Forestry to be within the planetary boundaries, using aerial drones as a forestry stewardship platform to create a more resilient, more productive and more beautiful forest for everyone.

We enable new forest management principles to take a gigantic chunk out of the world's carbon footprint and improve biodiversity, preserve healthy soil, adapt forests to mitigate wildfires and tree epidemics. Our aim is to enable truly sustainable and ethically responsible management of the forest around the world, for renewable wood materials to replace fossil fuels and for stable carbon storage in buildings and structures.

The best way to bring new, green technology and impact to scale is to provide a better product - and that is what we aim for, creating a much better product for forest owners and managers around the world while also being more gentle to the forest.



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