

Sustainable. The obvious choice.
The Sustainability Programme 2021–2025

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Introduction

Sustainable. The obvious choice.

The GIZ Sustainability Programme 2021–2025

The goal of enabling future generations to live secure and dignified lives is achievable. It requires us to be aware of our social responsibility, consider the impact of our decisions on individuals and the environment, and remain economically viable at all times. As GIZ, we take our responsibilities seriously and want to make the right sustainable choices, not just in our projects but across everything we do. We have set ourselves some ambitious goals for the years ahead in our Sustainability Programme 2021–2025. They are all guided by the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and Germany’s National Sustainable Development Strategy, as well as the expectations of our workforce, our commissioning parties and our partners around the world.

The core aim of the Sustainability Programme is to mitigate climate change: by 2025, we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to a level that contributes actively to the Paris Agreement targets. From a strategic perspective, we see climate change mitigation as the

single most important issue, enabling us to build further on our pioneering role in the field of corporate sustainability management.

Our Sustainability Programme includes the company’s Environmental Programme. It is primarily aimed at GIZ’s workforce in Germany and abroad. Our work in over 120 partner countries has taught us that each country is different. To implement our programme successfully worldwide, we need to be flexible and pragmatic in how we adapt to local conditions. We are focused on the demands of the sector in which we operate, the latest scientific findings and the diverse working realities of our staff in Germany and our partner countries. Our annual participatory review process is specifically designed to identify and analyse these developments and trends.

The programme focuses on a number of broad thematic priorities: climate management and mobility; sustainable procurement; human rights; and resource efficiency and biodiversity. GIZ is also engaged in many other areas, from digitalisation to gender, that all represent important elements of our sustainability management system and are systematically addressed

through a range of strategies and policies.¹ Superordinate to them is our *Corporate Strategy 2020–2022*. Our objective is to embed corporate sustainability in our Corporate Strategy and make it an integral part of our business processes by 2025. **Our ultimate goal is for sustainable options to be not only mandatory but the obvious choice.**

1) These include the Digitalisation Strategy, the Human Resources Strategy, the Gender Strategy, the Equal Opportunities Plan, the Principles for Cooperation and Leadership and the Business Development Strategy.

1 Climate management and mobility

Ambitious climate protection is particularly important to us at GIZ. We have therefore developed our own climate management system in line with the principle of avoiding, reducing and finally – as a last resort – offsetting greenhouse gases (GHGs).

Our GHG savings are geared towards limiting global warming to less than 2°C. In order to do this on the basis of climate science facts, we are joining the international *Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi)*. We derive our specific reduction targets from the requirements stipulated by this initiative. As a result, we will also be widening our ‘system boundaries’, i.e. the GHG emissions for which we assume responsibility, e.g. to include those of our subcontractors.

By 2025, we will be introducing a **GHG budget approach**: each department will be allocated its ‘permitted’ GHG emissions with a request to reduce emissions even further, if possible. GHGs will thus become a ‘scarce resource’ that needs to be managed accordingly. In order to reduce GHGs as cost-efficiently as possible, we will be **analysing the economic aspects of the reduction potential** even more closely. This does not merely cover business costs, but also long-term costs to society and the environment.

We are particularly focusing on the area in which our carbon footprint is greatest: mobility. It accounts for almost 80 per cent of our emissions and primarily includes **international air travel**.² Our objective is to **cut our mobility-related GHG emissions by 25 per cent by 2025**. To do so, we will reduce the number of flights. For unavoidable flights we will systematically choose – wherever possible – GHG-efficient booking classes, routes and airlines. Yet, we are not only concerned with international business trips, but also with local travel. One of the key targets is therefore to

²) The second main source is energy consumption in our buildings – see the section on ‘Resource efficiency and biodiversity’.

reduce our vehicle fleet outside Germany and, where general conditions permit, to switch to **vehicles with a low climate impact**. We assume that there will be a transition to more sustainable transport systems in the next ten years in many of our partner countries too; we aim to play a pioneering role here and to work with our partners to help promote climate-friendly mobility. **Work-related mobility** is the third and final key area of mobility at GIZ. Here, too, we rely on measures to promote sustainability: we are optimising cycling infrastructure in Germany and following up on the use of and demand for e-mobility infrastructure among our employees. Outside Germany, we will encourage the use of sustainable ways of commuting, taking account of the conditions in the country concerned.

Last but not least, as a climate-neutral company, we offset our unavoidable GHG emissions through **high-quality reduction certificates**.

An important requirement for the ongoing avoidance, reduction and offsetting of our GHG emissions is robust, annually updated *climate and environmental data*. We aim to achieve even more in this area: by 2024, we intend to integrate our climate and environ-





1 Climate management and mobility

mental auditing for Germany and our partner countries into a professional, digital sustainability data management system. This will improve how we obtain our climate data and will enhance efficiency and quality using digital systems.

Environmental sustainability plays a key role not only in our in-company processes, but also in our service delivery: thus in future, we will record and, if possible, reduce negative effects on the climate (carbon footprint) in our **project work**.



2 Sustainable procurement

Sustainable procurement is a top priority for GIZ. As a service provider in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development, we have a long record of experience when it comes to sustainability standards and public–private responsibility for global value and supply chains. We spend half of our total turnover on procuring materials, equipment and services, including financing arrangements. That offers huge potential. Thus, we will procure our goods, services and construction work in line with the most rigorous sustainability criteria.

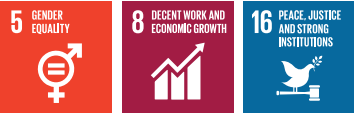
To do so, we will **refine** the *framework conditions and processes for sustainable procurement within the company* and have these processes certified externally. A key element in this context is the **Sustainable Procurement Policy**, which we will be implementing by 2025. The policy covers a wide range of areas, from the definition and integration of sustainability criteria in tender documents to their inclusion in the final version of the contract. This applies to all types of GIZ contracts relevant to procurement (procurement of services, materials and equipment, financing arrangements and construction services) that are entered into at Head Office and in the field structure.

By 2025, we intend to define **mandatory minimum standards or guidelines for 90 per cent of all materials, equipment and services and for construction services** with a high potential for sustainability. The minimum standards and guidelines – for example for refrigeration technology, motor vehicles, furniture and travel services – include the most rigorous sustainability criteria, some of which are already being applied, and are updated regularly. We are **piloting** them abroad with our country offices. We are integrating the sustainability criteria systematically into our procurement

process and measuring their application on the basis of indicators. In the annual procurement report, we provide transparent **communication** about the sustainability criteria we apply.

By doing so, we aim to **reduce social and environmental risks considerably in our supply chains** and to promote sustainable procurement. This also includes stepping up dialogue with our **suppliers**, giving them guidance and requiring evidence of their sustainability efforts.

An important milestone on the road to achieving sustainable procurement also involves **raising awareness** among our staff in Germany and abroad and **providing training** for them. We intend to actively promote global networking among procurement officers at GIZ, to develop aids in procurement processes and to hold regular sustainability training for these employees.



3 Human rights

As a federal enterprise, following up on our human rights due diligence in our own company and in our projects is part and parcel of our work. We are committed to the Ten Principles of the *UN Global Compact* and comply with the *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* and the *OECD Guidelines for Multi-national Enterprises*. When implementing measures, we are also guided by the German Government's *National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights*.

By 2023, we will increase the extent to which the *human rights complaints mechanism* meets the criteria for **effectiveness** set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. To do so, we are increasing the **protection for whistle-blowers** on the basis of a whistle-blower policy. We are making our grievance reporting channels and procedures more visible by communicating information about them both internally and externally. In addition, we aim to make our complaints mechanism **more accessible**: this particularly applies to our country offices, which we are supporting by providing guidelines and country-specific advice.

In order to be aware of and assess our **human rights risks**, we are developing more extensive, in-depth **knowledge** about these risks: thus by 2023, all of GIZ's employee groups will have **access to information and training** on human rights due diligence. Steps taken to achieve this include updating mandatory onboarding courses for all employees in Germany and abroad and implementing additional awareness-raising measures for key positions in at least 25 country offices. Professional risk management also requires the compilation of **adequate data** on the corporate processes in which human rights risks may arise and on how we can deal with these risks. We are increasing this data accordingly by 2023.



4 Resource efficiency and biodiversity

Responsible management of the environment and natural resources is a fundamental requirement for sustainable development. GIZ has adopted its own guiding principles on the environment and has specified its environmental targets on this basis.³ Since 2013, we have been using the EU Eco Management and Audit Scheme (*EMAS*) at our German sites. GIZ already uses its resources very sparingly and sustainably at its German sites, so we are focusing more heavily on GIZ's work abroad.

We will **reduce our energy consumption in Germany and abroad considerably by 2025**: by 10 per cent per employee in Germany, and by 20 per cent in other countries. In order to achieve these targets, we are

launching information campaigns and implementing specific energy-saving measures. In addition, we are analysing our energy consumption; this also includes our digitalisation processes – from smartphones to computing centres.

At the same time, we will **use renewable energies** to a greater extent in future: for example, we are examining to what extent photovoltaic systems with a solar battery can be installed to replace conventional power supply or even generators in future.

Resource efficiency also requires the **sustainable use of consumables and devices**: by 2025, we aim to reduce our consumption of printer paper by 30 per cent in Germany and by 40 per cent outside Germany. We will also considerably reduce the use of **coolants** with a particularly high global warming potential (by 60 per cent outside Germany, and by 30 per cent in Germany). In future, we aim to use our IT devices for longer, to carry out repairs and to recycle equipment.

A further aspect of a sustainable working environment is the standard of our buildings: **for our new buildings, we comply with the highest sustainability standards** of the German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB) in Germany and with similar sustainability standards in other countries.

In order to help **safeguard biodiversity at our sites across the globe**, we are promoting measures to raise awareness and encourage knowledge-sharing among our employees, and we support the various voluntary employee-led initiatives. We will develop and implement biodiversity strategies at our own properties in Germany and abroad by 2025 and will examine similar options for our rented premises.

3) All environmental goals in this Sustainability Programme are also part of the Environmental Programme.



5 Other issues

Consolidating the role of the CSH as a sustainability management tool

We require **precise data and ambitious goals** to make our sustainability management system in the field structure even more effective. To do so, we are continuously optimising our principal sustainability management tool outside Germany, the *Corporate Sustainability Handprint (CSH)*. By 2023, we will be standardising the tasks inherent to the CSH/Sustainability Officer function and be integrating these into job advertisements. We are gearing the mandatory target categories and indicators for the CSH towards the new programme so that our country offices can make a targeted contribution to the Sustainability Programme, too.

Responsible use of financial resources

To meet our own sustainability goals, we also need to ensure that **all monies in the company's securities-based funds are invested responsibly**. We are therefore already investing our long-term financial assets in line with comprehensive sustainability criteria (ESG criteria), which we regularly review and make even more ambitious. We make transparent information about these investments available to our employees.

Gender and diversity

We promote gender equality and the elimination of disadvantage and discrimination both within the company and in our service delivery. The *GIZ Gender Strategy* is a binding framework for all GIZ managers, staff and other members of our workforce. In 2019, GIZ also signed the *Diversity Charter*. **With respect to diversity, we intend to establish the individual diversity dimensions as an integral part of our corporate culture.** We encourage managerial and non-managerial staff to value and harness diversity within the company and protect against discrimination.

Stakeholder involvement

By 2025, we will boost employee participation in sustainability management. To do so, we are holding a regular in-house sustainability contest and expanding our exchange formats. We are also promoting initiatives by our employees through a sustainability fund.

To involve our **political partners** to a greater degree too, at least 15 country offices will discuss key sustainability topics with their political partners.

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