

Leadership Declaration oekom verlag GmbH

2017/2018

Leadership Declaration of the 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative

All signatory companies acknowledge and support the three objectives of the international "Convention on Biological Diversity":

- Conservation of biological diversity
- Sustainable use of its components
- Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits that arise out of the utilization of genetic resources

and commit themselves to:

1. Analyzing corporate activities with regard to their impacts on biological diversity;
2. Including the protection of biological diversity within their environmental management system;
3. Appointing a responsible individual within the company to steer all activities in the biodiversity sector and report to the Management Board;
4. Defining realistic, measurable objectives that are monitored and adjusted every two to three years;
5. Publishing activities and achievements in the biodiversity sector in the company's annual, environmental, and/or corporate social responsibility report;
6. Informing suppliers about the company's biodiversity objectives and integrating suppliers accordingly and step by step;
7. Exploring the potential for cooperation with scientific institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and/ or governmental institutions with the aim of deepening dialogue and continuously improving the corporate management system vis-à-vis the biodiversity domain.

1. Analyzing corporate activities with regard to their impacts on biological diversity:

oekom had already carried out substantial analyses in previous years. Thus, further analyses have not been necessary. Consequently, there is no progress at this point to report on. Still communicating environment and sustainability is the core business of oekom verlag. By way of various communication media oekom procures society divers access to global issues like climate change or biodiversity.

2. Including the protection of biological diversity within their environmental management system:

Protection of the environment and sustainability are not only the focus of oekom's publications but also form the basis of production and management. oekom verlag is committed to contributing to sustainable development not only through its but also in its role as a company. Apart from protection of forest and climate, the safeguard of biodiversity is top priority. It is regarded as iron law in all management decisions.

As a company that depends on the raw material wood for paper production oekom verlag is aware of the fact that the depletion of tropical forests will destroy irretrievably the habitat of many animal and plant species. Therefore the publishing house's highest priority is to use recycled paper. Recycled paper not only helps to protect the natural environment - its production also requires less water, chemicals and energy. Additionally, most of the paper used in the office as well as for publications is certified with the eco-label Blue Angel or FSC-Recycled.

However, there are also other fields of production and distribution of publications with high ecological relevance. During the printing process climate-damaging emissions emerge, particularly due to its high energy consumption and the use of inks and dissolvent. Printing ink containing mineral oil may cause cancer or may have a mutagenic effect. Distribution as well causes climate-damaging emissions through transportation. In order to minimize the negative effects on biodiversity and climate oekom mainly cooperates with FSC- and ISO-certified printing companies and regional sales partners.

In general, decisions on the features and production processes of our publications are all based on the criteria of the eco-label "Blue Angel for eco-friendly printed products" (RAL-UZ 195) as a guideline - the eco-label is the result of two projects that oekom not only initiated but in whose realization the publishing house was significantly involved (for more information see www.nachhaltig-publizieren.de). In order to

avoid plastic waste, we refrained shrink-wrapping in May 2017 - unfortunately still a common practice in the book industry.

By organizing the daily business life in an eco-friendly way further emissions and polluting substances are reduced. The employees regularly exchange information e. g. in the weekly *Jour Fixe*, in the regular meetings of the area managers or during oekom's semi-annual workshops. Amongst other topics processes with regard to the environment are specified and responsibilities are allocated.

Only one employee relies on the car for his travel to work, all the other employees use their bikes or public transport. For business trips all staff consistently use trains. Furthermore, oekom verlag exclusively obtains its office supplies, most of them eco-labelled, from a certified ecological mail order firm. By using green electricity and energy-efficient office machines oekom verlag additionally cuts down on emissions. Its electricity provider is awarded with the *Green energy* label. The certification provides electricity from 100 per cent renewable energy. Additionally, new eco-plants are promoted with a fixed amount. Due to the careful design and production the greenhouse gas emissions of our publications are about 25 per cent below those of other publishing houses. The company compensates for unavoidable CO₂-emissions by investing in a CER-Project with Gold Standard for the protection of biodiversity and the climate in India.

According to its goals regarding environmental management oekom continuously records its data of its consumption in order to identify further potentials of reduction and in a next step to carry out measures of conservation. The goals are part of oekom's internal environment programme.

Since 2018 oekom has been supporting a rural family business from the region in setting up a biodiversity conservation project: planting a highly structured orchard obtaining indigenous species, deadwood hedges and a wildflower meadow. Insects and birds in particular find food and shelter here. In addition, oekom obtains a veggie box from the farm every week for its employees. Thus, the publishing house not only contributes to the preservation of biodiversity but also to the preservation of rural social structures, which are of great importance for the care and preservation of nature.

In the Declaration of Conformity with regard to the Sustainability Code developed by the Council for Sustainable Development. oekom reports on 20 non-financial criteria related to sustainability as for example on its use of natural resources, resource management and climate-relevant emissions. Quantifiable performance indicators support these data making oekom's sustainability performance comparable and transparent. The

publisher's Declaration of Conformity has been published under <http://datenbank2.deutscher-nachhaltigkeitskodex.de/Profile/CompanyProfile/9023/de/2015/dnk>.

3. Appointing a responsible individual within the company to steer all activities in the biodiversity sector and report to the Management Board:

This aim had already been achieved. The state of affairs corresponds to that one specified in the last Report of Progress. Already existing since 2011 a specialist department for sustainability works closely with the executive board. It provides professional advice to the company concerning a climate and resource friendly production and counsels the executive board regarding sustainable management with a particular focus on biodiversity. Its duties also include development of further management strategies in cooperation with partners from the branch and with scientific institutions and, finally, to pass on this knowledge as a multiplier.

oekom's Sustainability Representative is responsible for safeguarding the environmental objectives of the company by regularly examining the internal processes with regard to environmental compliance, notably with regard to compatibility concerning biodiversity. Apart from that she is responsible for compensating oekom's CO₂-emissions. For this purpose she annually collects all relevant data, defining the system boundaries preferably ambitious. Hereby, she also identifies possibilities to avoid or reduce emissions and discusses these with the executive board and the specialist team. Where appropriate she initiates modifications and supervises their operative implementation.

4. Defining realistic, measurable objectives that are monitored and adjusted every two to three years:

The use of ink free of mineral oil is by now a standard feature of all the publishing house's publications. In order to avoid ecological damage elsewhere, oekom takes care that ink based on plant oil is obtained from certified sources to prevent deforestation for one thing and for another thing to prevent the utilization of genetically modified crops (GM crops). Thus, oekom supports the claim of the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) and Federal Institute for Risk Assessment to use alternative ink.

Likewise, the use of paper certified with the eco-label Blue Angel or to a much lesser extent with the eco-label FSC-Recycled is standard for all nine journals and brochures. The books are also, where possible, printed domestically and on recycling paper certified with the Blue Angel. The

use of recycling paper without this certification is mainly restricted to very few publications and to some book covers. Exceptionally, if the requested paper quality is not available, FSC-certified fresh-fibre paper is used instead. But: "A higher proportion of recycling paper means more protection of the environment." (UBA 2000). For this reason, oekom will gradually increase the proportion of its publications printed on recycled paper, if technically and economically possible. Since 2016, the proportion of the total volume printed on recycled paper with Blue Angel is around 95 percent.

In the last two years, oekom has fulfilled its goal of having at least one annual publication certified with the eco-label "Blue Angel for eco-friendly printed products" (RAL-UZ 195). Among them are the three books "Der Baum. Eine Lebensgeschichte" (2018) by David Suzuki and Wayne Grady, the reprint "Holz" (Volume 3 from the series Stoffgeschichten, 2018) by Joachim Radkau and "Das Klimasparbuch Zwickau" (2018) as well as all company's brochures and the journals "Ökologisches Wirtschaften" and "Der Umweltbeauftragte", which have been certified with RAL-UZ 195 since September 2018. Further journals with corresponding certification are already in the planning stage.

oekom is also going to change its internet host in the following year, in order to make further progress with regard to "Green IT".

Furthermore, in the next reporting period, oekom will demand a declaration of obligation by its suppliers and partners committing themselves to the protection of biodiversity.

5. Publishing activities and achievements in the biodiversity sector in the company's annual, environmental, and/or corporate social responsibility report:

oekom does not publish an environmental or sustainability report in written form. However, the publisher explicitly informs about its activities regarding the protection of climate and biodiversity on its homepage under the column "Nachhaltiger Verlag" (means: Sustainable Publisher).

Internally all the business activities and success with regard to biodiversity as well as to other sections concerning the protection of the environment are presented to the staff in the biennial business workshop.

In every publication there is a QR-code providing information especially referring to the business activities regarding the compensation of CO₂ emissions.

By publishing the Declaration of Conformity to the Sustainability Code oekom not only makes its sustainability performance more transparent. Indicators of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) make the ecological and social sustainability performance quantifiable and thus comparable.

6. Informing suppliers about the company's biodiversity objectives and integrating suppliers accordingly and step by step:

oekom is constantly aiming to optimize the publication's production and distribution considering all possible aspects relevant to the environment. Therefore, oekom communicates actively with its printing companies and its distributors in order to stimulate their offer for ecological alternatives and improve the terms of use. This includes ink free of mineral oil as well as water-saving and low-emission printing processes. Since the implementation of the eco-label "Blue Angel for eco-friendly printed products" (RAL-UZ 195) oekom explicitly and repeatedly encourages printing companies to become certified with this label.

In the last year oekom managed to convince a printing house, with which the publishing house has been cooperating for a long time, of the certification. As a result, oekom will soon be printing its first consumer publication (number of copies 70,000) with the Blue Angel (RAL-UZ 195).

During our search for a sustainable host for our website, we conducted an extensive survey among various providers. By doing so it was also our aim to draw attention on the issue of "Green IT". Our decision is still pending.

7. Exploring the potential for cooperation with scientific institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and/ or governmental institutions with the aim of deepening dialogue and continuously improving the corporate management system vis-à-vis the biodiversity domain:

After the project "Development of an eco-label Blue Angel for eco-friendly printed products" (Funding Code 3712 95 338 3) led by oekom in cooperation with the scientific institutes IFEU and Ökopol and promoted by the Federal Environment Agency came to an end in April 2015 and since the introduction of the new eco-label "Blue Angel for printing products" (RAL-UZ 195) more than 250 German printing companies have been certified and obtained permissions for various printing products. Printing products with this eco-label save resources due to the use of a high percentage of recycling paper as well as inks, varnish and adhesives,

that do not interfere with high-quality recycling of the paper on behalf of conservation. Furthermore, these products have to avoid substances and materials that are harmful to the health and the environment. During the printing process among others the use of energy and emissions harmful to health have to be reduced. With this new eco-label oekom has established a high ecological standard in the publishing sector and has made an important contribution to the protection of the environment and the preservation of biodiversity.

oekom's reputation as a pioneer for sustainable publishing has already become known among scientific institutions. Thus, the publisher continually receives inquiries on this topic for scientific dissertations. oekom uses these inquiries as a possibility of exchange in order to spread its knowledge and experience as well as to advertise the eco-label "Blue Angel for printing products" (RAL-UZ 195). In addition, over the past two years, oekom has been involved in events of various universities as organizer as well as referee to discuss with students - the future decision-makers and multipliers - about sustainable corporate governance and eco-friendly printing products.

Since 2017 oekom participates in the mentor program of the German Council for Sustainable Development in order to make the German Sustainability Code even more established, and thus, stimulating the competition on the market.

In cooperation with scientific, political or non-governmental key players oekom edits substantially complex causalities in a competent and coherent way and, thus, conveys the public issues concerning the environment and sustainability. A study about "Non-academic communication of research" by the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin published in December 2016 demonstrated how important non-academic publication organs as for example journals and non-fiction books are to communicate complex issues.

Among others, oekom has published the following list of books regarding biodiversity:

2018

Michael Rosenberger, Norbert Weigl (Hrsg.): Forstwirtschaft und Biodiversität. Interdisziplinäre Zugänge zu einem Brennpunkt nachhaltiger Entwicklung.

Andreas H. Segerer, Eva Rosenkranz: Das große Insektensterben. Was es bedeutet und was wir jetzt tun müssen.

Ute Scheub, Haiko Pieplow, Hans-Peter Schmidt, Stiftungsgemeinschaft anstiftung & ertomis (Hrsg.): Terra Preta. Die schwarze Revolution aus

dem Regenwald. Mit Klimagärtnern die Welt retten und gesunde Lebensmittel produzieren. (Erweiterte Neuauflage)

Ewald Weber: Die Pflanze, die gern Purzelbäume schlägt ... und andere Geschichten von Seidelbast, Walnuss & Co.

Slow Food Genussführer 2019/20: Unsere besten Restaurants und Gasthäuser in Deutschland.

2017

Ute Scheub, Stefan Schwarzer: Die Humusrevolution. Wie wir den Boden heilen, das Klima retten und die Ernährungswende schaffen.

Esther Gonstalla: Das Ozeanbuch. Über die Bedrohung der Meere.

Bernd Reuter: Bäume in der Kulturlandschaft. Ein Handbuch zur Erhaltung und Gestaltung von Flurgehölzen.

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