

#discoverthegood

Sustainability Report 2021/2022



TARGETS AND TARGET ACHIEVEMENTS

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG understands each of its sustainability targets as a process – and hones them, sets new ones, and does everything in its power to achieve them.



Done!



Since 2018, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been sourcing **100 per cent certified, sustainable cocoa** for the entire Ritter Sport range.



Done!



As of 2022, it has been possible to fully trace the **entire cocoa supply chain** back to the individual producer organisations.



Done!



Since 2020, the chocolate manufacturer has been processing **100% sustainably grown, RSPO-certified palm fats** of higher "segregated" quality.



Getting there!



By 2025, **long-term partnerships** with cocoa producers are to have been established for the entire sourcing of cocoa.



Getting there!



Since 2020, the company has been climate neutral through offsetting. By 2025, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG, in cooperation with its raw material suppliers, will also make Scope 3 emissions on which it has direct influence **entirely climate neutral**.



Getting there!



In 2030, **up to 20 per cent** of hazelnut requirements are to be **home-grown**.



Not quite there yet!

Why this is taking
a little bit longer:
read on p. 24.



As of 2021, **compensation certificates** have been used from the company's **own farm, El Cacao**, in an effort to support the company's goal of achieving climate neutrality.

AT A GLANCE



110 years of corporate history

538 million euros in turnover in 2021

85 per cent of cocoa sourcing is supported by partnership programmes (with cocoa producer organisations)

30 years of sustainable cocoa production with the Cacao-Nica programme

90 years of square-shaped chocolate bars

10 years of cocoa from our own El Cacao farm

Exports to more than **100** countries



Certificates

ZNU standard: Driving Sustainable Change (since 2013)

International Food Standard (IFS/BRC)

1,900 employees worldwide



Waldenbuch: the home of RITTER SPORT

Founded in 1912 by Alfred Eugen Ritter and Clara Ritter, née Göttle, in Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, the premises for the chocolate and confectionery factory there quickly became too small. In 1930, the family-owned company moved its headquarters to idyllic Waldenbuch. Today, the headquarters are complemented by a second production site in Breitenbrunn, Austria, and subsidiaries in other international markets. Comprising the Ritter Sport and Amicelli brands, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is the first major chocolate manufacturer to source exclusively certified sustainable cocoa for its entire range. This complies with the company's own desire to do the right thing when making really good chocolate. The colourful Ritter Sport squares are sold in more than 100 countries around the world.

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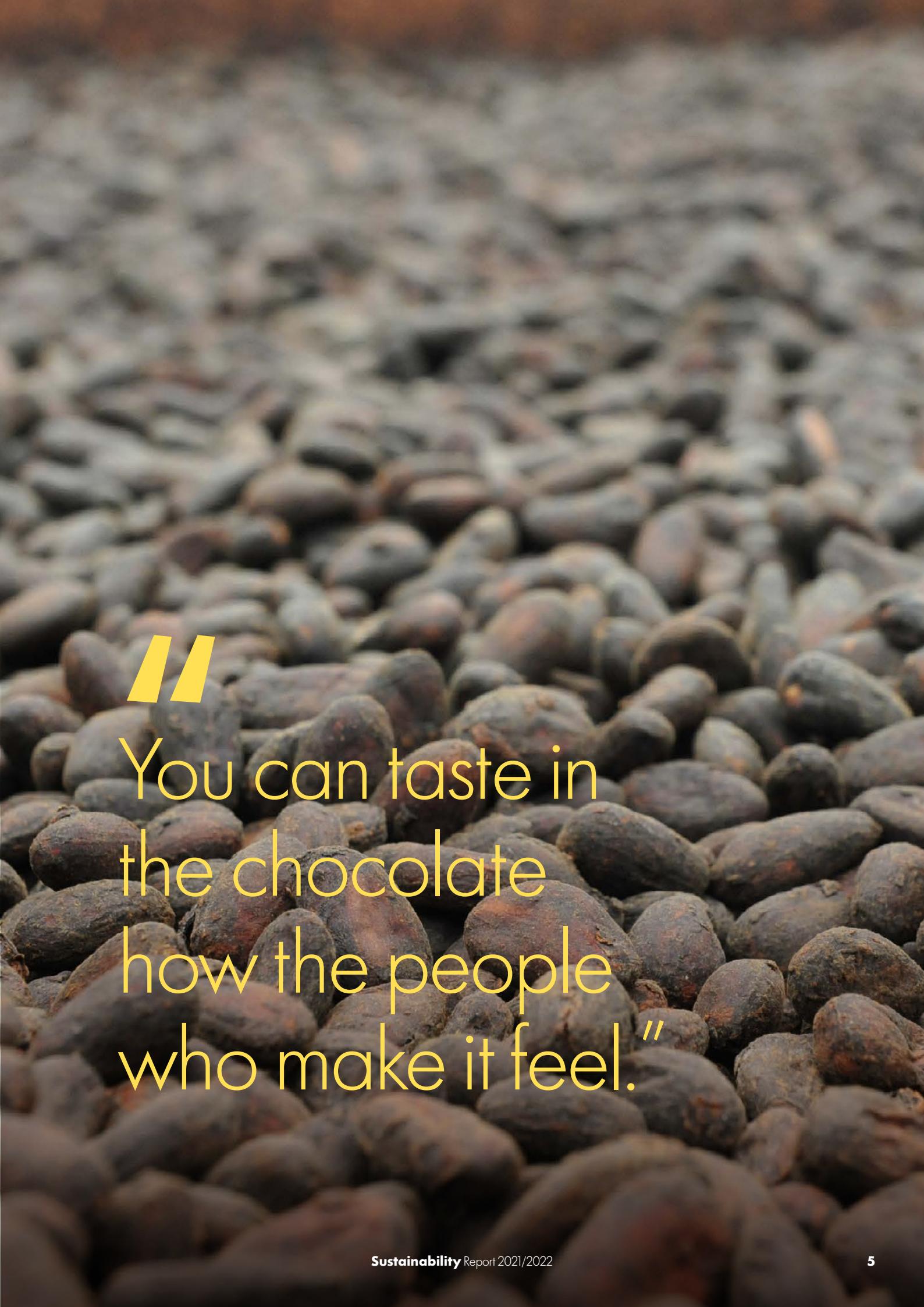
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“
You can taste in
the chocolate
how the people
who make it feel.”



From left to right:
Moritz Ritter, Marli Hoppe-Ritter, Alfred T. Ritter, Tim Hoppe



What does fit for the future at Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG mean?"

This was the headline of our first Sustainability Report in 2014. Almost ten years later, we are asking ourselves this same question. What does fit for the future mean for our company today?

Unlike the term sustainability, which always implies preservation, being fit for the future implies constant change and development. In terms of our responsibility as a company, which is what this report is about, we can clearly see how this is changing. In the times of our grandparents and great-grandparents, corporate responsibility was still focused on the immediate environment of the company. Today we know that our actions have a global impact – just think of aspects like CO₂ emissions or the sourcing of raw materials.

A company is fit for the future if it is also successful for future generations. As a family, we are convinced that this must go hand in hand with responsible, sustainable action. Those who do not act sustainably today will have no future tomorrow. At the same time, we need to recognise that reality sets limits to what we regard as ideal. As a company, we have to successfully assert ourselves on the market and generate income. Only those who participate in economic life have the chance to make a difference. That, too, means being fit for the future.

We are united in our conviction that we want to leave behind a world that is also worth living in for future generations. For the successful future of our company, however, it is imperative to take all those involved in the value chain along with us on this journey – from the cultivation of raw materials to the people who are to buy our products. This is reflected by our 70/30 marketing strategy: 70 per cent applies to the pleasure, the taste, the joy of eating chocolate, and 30 per cent relates to our sustainability activities.

In order to be fit for the future, it is necessary to find the right balance between the desire to be a driving force and a pioneer in sustainability and behaviour that is appropriate for the market. So far, we have succeeded. This report documents the progress we have made in many areas of sustainability, without losing sight of the end consumer. Our claim to sustainability and quality has an impact on our product. The same thing still applies: you can taste in the chocolate how the people who make it feel – from the cocoa farmer in West Africa to the employee in Europe.

If we continue to succeed in this, our company will continue to be fit for the future.

1

CULTIVATION AND SOURCING OF RAW MATERIALS





SUSTAINABILITY MUST NOT BE A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE

Better protection of human and children's rights along global supply chains: this is the goal of the German Supply Chain Sourcing Obligations Act, which – despite opposition from major business associations – came into force on 1 January 2023. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG publicly spoke out in favour of the law from the very beginning.

"There have long been legal standards for product quality that are monitored along the entire supply chain. Why not for human rights and environmental standards as well?" asks sustainability manager Georg Hoffmann. The new law obliges companies in particular to monitor compliance with human rights, including in upstream stages, and to set up a risk management system with regular risk analyses and preventive measures. Critical incidents, counter-measures and preventive measures must be reported to the Federal Office of Economics and Export Control (BAFA).

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been focusing on business integrity, fair working conditions and sustainability along the entire supply chain for many years – although in view of the number of employees, totalling 1,900, it will still take some time before it is legally obliged to do so. "We have always focused on our raw materials, long before any discussion about a supply chain law. We commit our business

partners to our environmental, compliance and social standards," claims Hoffmann. Systematic risk checks are carried out both for the prioritised raw material group A, which includes cocoa, hazelnuts, milk and packaging, and for raw material group B, consisting of almonds, raisins, soy and sugar. These two raw material groups already cover 97 per cent of all raw materials purchased by Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG. Now the formal requirements of the new law have to be met. "In many instances it is not at all clear yet how BAFA will interpret and apply the law," explains Hoffmann. "We would also have liked to see a much stronger emphasis on ecological concerns than is now in the law. Operating in harmony with people and nature must not be a competitive disadvantage."



THE GERMAN SUPPLY CHAIN SOURCING OBLIGATIONS ACT (LkSG)

- Businesses must ensure that human rights are respected throughout the supply chain.
- Among other things, they must set up grievance mechanisms and report on their activities.
- This applies from 2024 for companies with 1,000 employees or more.

LkSG specifications

Implementation by Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG

Establish risks



So-called hot spot analyses have been carried out on raw materials since 2016. This process was further optimised in 2018, whereby the company classifies the raw materials into three groups A, B and C. Particularly stringent specifications apply for the raw materials in groups A and B, which cover 97% of total raw material volumes. Contents:

- Responsibilities within the company are clearly defined and lie within the Purchasing, Sustainability and Innovation departments.
- Information is provided by a search of publicly available data and an assessment of the information on the cultivation situation in the countries of origin.
- Regular queries of the supplier companies provide information on risk assessment using defined questionnaires.
- Those responsible for purchasing travel to the countries of origin to conduct on-site audits.

Measures for risk minimisation



- Since 2016, the Supplier Code of Conduct has obligated supplier companies to comply with human rights and environmental protection requirements.
- Assessment of the risk and specific risk issues per combination of raw material origin leads to a recommendation to purchasing management. This is followed by the release, blocking and implementation of specific measures.

Facilitate complaints



A complaints procedure is to be established by the end of 2023. This is an extension of the internal whistle-blowing tool.

Accept responsibility



In its "Declaration of Principles", Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG defines its position and the requirements for due diligence with regard to human rights within the company and with its business partners. Here is an excerpt from the policy statement:



Reporting



The first report on the fulfilment of due diligence obligations according to the LkSG will be submitted to BAFA by April 2025 and published on the company website.



OUR COCOA SOURCING: 100 PER CENT CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE COCOA

Tracing the path of cocoa beans back to the producer organisation – an important step for Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG. Only in this way is it possible to understand the conditions on the ground and to support the partners in the growing countries in a meaningful way with the help of partnership programmes.

Cocoa is the most important raw material for Ritter Sport chocolate. To ensure that each individual bean is of the very best quality and the valuable raw material is cultivated in a sustainable manner, the company relies on transparency in the supply chain.

Since 2018, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been sourcing 100 per cent certified sustainable cocoa in accordance with the Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade cocoa programmes. Today, the family-owned business in Waldenbuch is one step further and can trace its entire cocoa back to the respective producer organisation. To understand why this is something special, you need

to know that cocoa supply chains are usually very complex, with a large number of people involved. It is the goal of Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG to break down this complexity and work with as few partners as possible along the supply chain. This is the only way to establish and maintain direct contact and to track exactly where the cocoa comes from. This requires a lot of effort, both in terms of personnel and administration: throughout the entire supply chain, the cocoa must now be transported and processed separately so that in the end exactly those cocoa beans from the selected producer organisations arrive in Waldenbuch.

And the next goal is already coming into focus: by 2025, the company wants to be able to trace its cocoa all the way back to the farm, i.e. to the cocoa farmers themselves. This would make the supply chain transparent all the way – from cultivation of the cocoa plant to the producer organisation, the exporters and processing to chocolate production. These are ideal prerequisites for constantly improving the conditions for all those involved in the process.

TWO QUESTIONS FOR

Giovanni Schiavo,
Head of Cocoa
Purchasing

... ?



Together with his colleagues, he is often travelling within the growing countries, where he establishes and maintains contacts with cocoa farmers and suppliers.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO TRACE THE COCOA?

We want to know exactly where our cocoa comes from, who grows it, and under what conditions. Because this is the only way we can stand up for cocoa farmers locally and create good working conditions. That is why we have been working on the traceability of our cocoa for a very long time, independently of the Supply Chain Sourcing Obligations Act.

IS THERE A GOAL THAT GOES BEYOND TRACEABILITY?

The most important thing for us is that the people who grow the cocoa for us are doing well and that we know their names and their stories. Our goal is also to streamline supply chains to have as few people involved as possible between the cocoa and us and to create even greater transparency.

THE COCOA PROGRAMMES: EQUAL PARTNERSHIPS

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG understands cocoa programmes as entering reliable partnerships. The aim of these programmes is to bring about a positive change in the social, ecological and economic conditions of cultivation through specific measures and in cooperation with the partners on the ground. In Nicaragua, Peru, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, programmes tailored to the respective

needs are developed jointly. One example is the Cacao-Nica programme in Nicaragua, which was established more than 30 years ago. Over this period, we have succeeded in improving the quality of cocoa, thereby stabilising the economic situation as well as the quality of life of the farmers. Among other things, strengthening the cooperatives and supporting and promoting diversified cocoa cultivation in the agroforestry system have contributed to this. In addition, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG provides advice and

assistance with certifications such as Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance and uses digital systems to trace the cocoa and implement precision farming. In the future, there will be a greater focus on modern technologies: for instance, by 2024, all cooperatives in the Cacao-Nica programme will have access to a digital platform that improves farm management, for example by recording climate data, i.e. the carbon footprint.

OUR PATH



Partner-producer organisation
of farmers



Selected partner



Chocolate manufacturer

"CLIMATE CHANGE IS HITTING US CLOSE TO HOME"

Setting new social and ecological standards locally with its own cocoa plantation – with this claim, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG acquired a large plot of land in eastern Nicaragua in 2012, around 350 kilometres from the capital Managua. In Nicaragua, the chocolate producer from Swabia can see for himself how urgently we all need to start working in harmony with people and nature.

Hurricane Julia swept across the country in October at speeds of up to 140 kilometres per hour, taking trees and houses with it and even taking some lives. "I am glad that no one was hurt here on El Cacao," says Hauke Will, who, as Head of Agricultural Production, has been responsible for the development of El Cacao from the very start. But the environment did suffer: the hurricane washed away valuable fertile soil. "Farming in Central America poses special challenges – that was clear from the start," claims Hauke Will. "The hurricane season in the Atlantic lasts from June to November. But climate change means that the severity of the storms is increasing enormously; it affects us directly – and is a serious threat to people, agriculture and biodiversity, which we want to protect and preserve." There has been a conscious effort not to establish a monoculture: cultivation in



the agroforestry system combines cocoa trees with other native tree and plant species and thus promotes biodiversity and the micro-climate. More than one million trees have been planted here, and El Cacao has been certified as a climate-protection project since 2016.

EL CACAO – REGENERATION OF FORMER GRAZING AREAS

INITIAL SITUATION

Grazing areas with regular fire clearance

- **Soil:** severe erosion due to fire clearance and livestock farming, mineralisation due to intensive UV radiation
- **Flora:** dominant special non-native pasture grass
- **Fauna:** hardly any native fauna
- **Forest:** continuous clearing of rainforest areas for breeding livestock



TRADITIONAL COCOA EXPERTISE MEETS SWABIAN ECONOMICS

"Swabian engineers and cocoa farmers from Nicaragua: these would appear to be two completely different cultures at first glance," says Hauke Will, and remembers the early days when his team still camped on the grounds and explored the fields on horseback. "But we are learning so much from each other. We Swabians had little experience of cocoa cultivation at the beginning. We didn't even know how to sleep in a hammock! The people here have hundreds of years of cocoa expertise, so not every great idea originating in Waldenbuch is implemented. We ask each other questions and work together to find new solutions." In the past, for example, cocoa beans and fruit shells were laboriously separated by hand – but the team was convinced that machine support could be used sensibly here and converted an unused concrete mixing machine with a sieve drum for this purpose. Grass under the cocoa trees, which previously had to be painstakingly removed with a machete, is now mown using a tractor with a special attachment and used for mulching.

In line with the motto that "Everything should be recycled", the range has also been creatively expanded. The juice of the fresh cocoa fruit is now used to make various drinks: lemonade, iced tea and the company's own Secco – all under the name CacaoVida. When El Cacao is fully productive one day, up to a quarter of the company's own demand for cocoa mass will be produced there as cocoa. "We have achieved a lot in our ecology and social priorities," says Hauke Will. "Now, in harmony with people and nature, we are tackling the economy. With El Cacao, we will show that cocoa farming with these high standards can also be economically profitable."



TARGET STATE

Cocoa farming in an integrated agroforestry system

- **Soil:** erosion control through permaculture (trees and ground cover), restoration of active soil life, development of humus through organic material
- **Flora:** diversity at various levels in an agroforestry system
- **Fauna:** habitats for native fauna in and around cocoa
- **Forest:** permanent protection and connectivity of forest areas and watercourses

WHERE FOXES AND HARES LIVE SIDE BY SIDE

Walking through La Caussade, you won't experience a typical hazelnut plantation: between the rows of trees, there are corn poppies, clover and herbs in bloom. And this lovely sight is also good for nature.

"The root system protects against erosion, loosens the soil and helps to store water," explains agricultural engineer Hans Wiberg, who manages the 500-hectare farm in south-west France. Ritter Agrar has been growing hazelnuts here since 2017. By 2030, the company wants to obtain up to 20 per cent of its total requirements from its own cultivation. Using modern technology and environmentally friendly processes, this goal is to be achieved in a way that conserves resources while protecting biodiversity. For example, highly sensitive sensors in mechanical weed control and targeted drip irrigation help to protect the soil and the precious resource of water. Wiberg emphasises:

"In the long, hot and very dry summer of 2022, this technology was a blessing." A total of 360 kilometres of green strips provide a home for hares, foxes, butterflies and a wide variety of other insects, improving the micro-climate and thus making an important contribution to biodiversity. In 2021 alone, Hans Wiberg and his 3 employees planted 26,600 seedlings, including 25,000 hazelnut trees and 1600 hedge plants. 230 hectares of land have already been developed in line with the methods of integrated agriculture. "We learn something new every day," claims Wiberg. "Many agricultural production methods are viewed critically when it comes to climate change. The

scarcer the agricultural products become and the greater the challenges in cultivation, the more urgent it becomes to implement measures for alternative and sustainable practices. Agriculture will be more valued in the future than it has been in the past. More than any other sector, it will in fact be part of the solution."





VALUES INSTEAD OF PARAGRAPHS

"We want to do good business, and for us, 'good' means first and foremost in harmony with people and nature," says Georg Hoffmann, Sustainability Manager at Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG: **"Where standards are lacking or certificates do not yet meet their goal, we take action ourselves. It is not the current legal situation that is the yardstick for our actions, but what is right from our own point of view."**



PALM FAT

Creamy fillings, such as for Ritter Sport yoghurt, are currently best made with palm fat. But there is criticism of the cultivation methods associated with the high-yield oil palm tree: valuable rainforest is still being cleared to gain arable land. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG only purchases RSPO-certified palm fat of the "segregated" level and, together with around 50 other companies, has been committed to the Forum for Sustainable Palm Fat (FONAP) since 2020, for deforestation-free supply chains, stronger anchoring of labour law and human rights due diligence obligations, promotion of biodiversity and restoration of ecosystems in the cultivation regions, as well as the further development of existing RSPO standards.



MILK POWDER

Milk as a raw material shows just how complex sustainability can be: farmers have to balance sustainable operations with the environment, animal welfare and climate protection. The milk powder for Ritter Sport chocolate comes mainly from Germany, but since 2021, the company has also been sourcing milk powder produced according to the "Origin Green Standard" from pasture farming in Ireland. With high sustainability standards, the suppliers there prove to be important partners in the transfer of knowledge and contribute to a stable supply. All German suppliers have committed themselves to the "QM Sustainability Module Milk" of the Thünen Institute for Business Administration, which promotes sustainable milk production in Germany with 80 criteria and measurement factors in the areas of economy, ecology, social issues and animal welfare.



To ensure that everything runs smoothly, there are regular exchanges of information between management and sustainability management.

2

MANUFACTURING AND PRODUCTS



"GOOD RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET"

Everything is becoming more expensive. This is felt by food manufacturers and private households alike. Thanks to long-standing relationships, diversification and visionary action in the past, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is well prepared for raw material shortages and rising energy costs.

Extremely volatile energy and raw material prices are causing uncertainty. Asmus Wolff, Managing Director Supply Chain, explains how Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG cushions some of the raw material and energy shortages as well as price increases on the world market: "We are committed to long-term partnerships with our suppliers, both for raw materials and packaging. This means that we continue to receive supplies from our partners even when

the market is very tight. This shows that good relationships are more important than the world market." When it comes to raw materials, the chocolate manufacturer places high demands on quality, but also on environmental protection, fair working conditions and animal welfare, and started looking for alternative, more sustainable sources of supply at an early stage: "The milk powder for our chocolate, for example, came exclusively from Germany for a

long time. In order to support pasture farming in terms of animal welfare, we have also been working with Irish farms since 2021. At the same time, this makes us less dependent on the German market and allows us to better absorb fluctuations in price," explains Wolff.

Producing chocolate from ingredients such as cocoa, milk and sugar also requires a lot of energy. For this reason, energy has always been a high priority for the family-owned company, and Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been a climate-neutral company since 2020 (in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and Gold Standard climate certificates). An ambitious and innovative energy concept is to lead away from fossil energy sources towards more autonomy and self-sufficiency in the future. To achieve this, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG will increasingly rely on and convert to renewable energies such as solar energy and wind power. "We are not messing around with sustainability," says Wolff: "It has always been the central benchmark of our actions. The purpose of self-supply with renewable energies is first and foremost to avoid emissions and protect the climate. The fact that this means we are not completely at the mercy of current price increases underscores the value of long-term entrepreneurial action."





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At Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG, we have been relying on renewable energies for over 20 years and switched to 100 per cent green electricity from renewable sources as early as 2002. That same year, we also commissioned our first combined heat and power (CHP) plant,

which was completely overhauled in 2015. This was an unusual measure at the time, but one that enabled very good and high energy utilisation. To this day, I see the operation of a CHP plant as a practical bridging technology. Nevertheless, it must be our goal to switch completely to

regenerative energy sources in energy-intensive chocolate production as well. Therefore, we are actively working on another energy mix. Our goal is to understand energy as a raw material and use it in cycles."

"WE NEED TO SUCCEED IN SWITCHING COMPLETELY TO REGENERATIVE ENERGY SOURCES"

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG supports the UN Race to Zero initiative, which pursues the goal of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases harmful to the climate to net zero by 2050. Via the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi), the company has committed to reducing its emissions by 42 per cent by 2030. Ritter is thus working towards the 1.5-degree target of the Paris Climate Agreement. The previous goal of becoming completely climate neutral by 2025 through offsetting according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol remains in place as an interim step.

As a visionary and a "power rebel", Alfred T. Ritter has been actively promoting the use of alternative energy sources for more than 35 years. As early as 1988, in response to the Chernobyl disaster, he founded Paradigma Energie- und Umwelttechnik, which later became Ritter Energie und Umwelttechnik GmbH & Co. KG, and was to become a pioneer in ecological heating systems.

HEAT AND POWER SUPPLY IN THE FUTURE

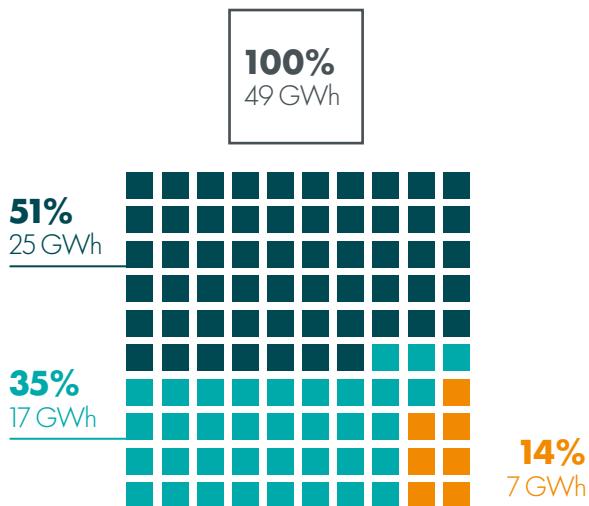
Germany's largest solar thermal roof system has been on the roof of the new raw and packaging material warehouse in Dettenhausen since May 2022. It is part of a comprehensive energy and sustainability concept that Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has implemented together with Ritter Energie- und Umwelttechnik GmbH & Co. KG and Stadtwerke Tübingen for the new warehouse and office space. 468 collectors on an area spanning 2,300 square metres generate up to 1,125 megawatt hours of heat per year from sunlight, which the company then feeds into the local Dettenhausen heating network.

There is also a photovoltaic system with 1,244 modules across 4,820 square metres on the roof of the neighbouring hall. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has invested around 300,000 euros in the system. Just as much money was spent on the electricity storage system, which has a capacity of 300 kWh. Among other things, the electricity generated here charges the e-trucks that commute between the warehouses in Dettenhausen, Reichenbach and production in Waldenbuch.

But that's not all: Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is thinking ahead to the future and is already working intensively on further projects as part of the UN Race to Zero initiative, which sees the company pledging to reduce emissions of climate-damaging greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050.

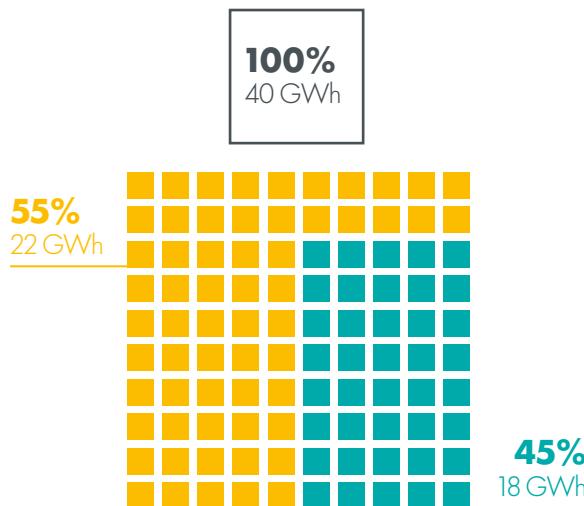


2002



■ Natural gas ■ CHP (power generation) ■ Acquisition of renewable energy sources ■ Own systems

Vision



DECARBONISATION AT ALFRED RITTER GMBH & CO. KG

Decarbonisation entails turning away from fossil fuels in favour of carbon-free, renewable energy sources. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has committed to decarbonisation as part of the Race to Zero initiative supported by the United Nations. It has been calculating its own carbon footprint since 2016 and is working along the entire supply chain to reduce emissions wherever possible. The company will continue to offset remaining emissions through Gold Standard certificates.



Dettenhausen is an impressive example of what is possible when companies cooperatively and constructively focus on the future of energy supplies within a community. Companies with a similar understanding of a climate-friendly future have joined forces and invested here, despite their very different industries, in an ultra-modern heat supply that uses state-of-the-art supply technology to show how obvious and successful such synergies can be."

Ortwin Wiebecke,
Managing Director Stadtwerke
Tübingen



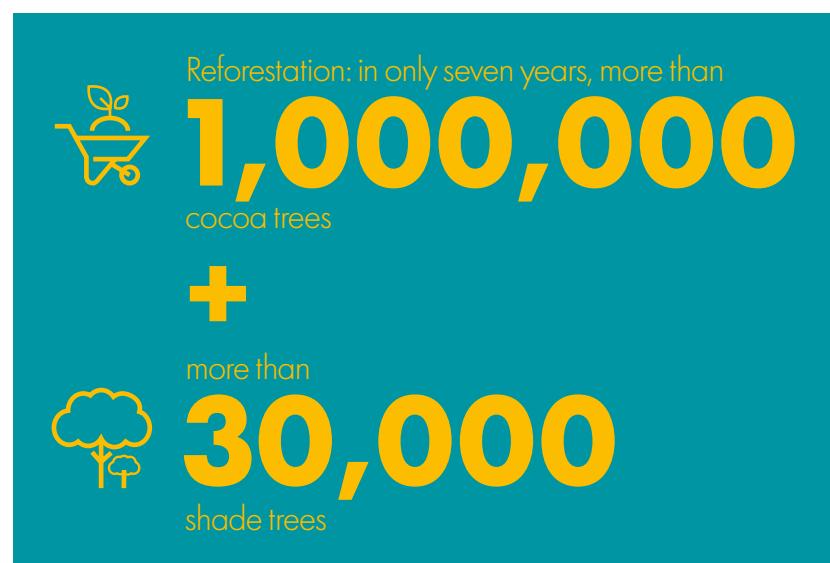
“EL CACAO” AS A CLIMATE PROTECTION PROJECT

Really good chocolate starts with high-quality cocoa. However, extreme weather events such as drought or storms caused by climate change are increasingly endangering crop yields worldwide. Man-made emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere play a significant role in this. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG wants to reduce its emissions and is implementing its own climate protection project on the “El Cacao” plantation – not an easy undertaking.

In order to become climate neutral, companies should continuously reduce their greenhouse gas emissions – for the sake of the environment and because emissions that are not reduced have to be compensated for at high cost. Compensation usually takes place in the form of certificates from international climate protection projects. This was also the case at Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG – until CEO Andreas Ronken suggested becoming active within the company’s own value chain and having the establishment (and the accompanying reforestation) of the company’s own “El Cacao” plantation recognised as a climate protection project. “This idea, which was actually logical, was visionary at the time,” says sustainability manager Georg Hoffmann. “But it was immediately clear that we would try it.”

Within seven years, the company reforested “El Cacao” with more than one million cocoa trees and over 30,000 shade trees. Biomass is also composted there, mineral fertilisers are used con-

sciously, and CO₂ is stored in the soil. Certification is carried out in line with the renowned Gold Standard. However, in order to generate certificates, the project must first be recognised as



a climate protection project. There is no comparable project in the Gold Standard to date. New processes and framework data need to be designed – a lengthy process in which Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has to demonstrate perseverance. “It takes patience, more time than expected, and a grey hair or two to work this out,” says Georg Hoffmann. “But it has been worth it; we will soon be able to use certificates that we generated ourselves – albeit a few years later than originally planned.”

REDUCING, COMPENSATING, AVOIDING

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG had already calculated the carbon footprint for individual varieties in 2012. “It soon became clear that a holistic approach was required,” explains Georg Hoffmann. “Hence the idea of setting up our own climate protection project.” It is important to him to note that certificates are at the end of the process, which has climate protection as its goal: “Offsetting does not relieve us of our actual task. We must consistently continue to reduce greenhouse gases and avoid them wherever possible – no matter how climate neutral we are on paper as a result of offsetting. As industrialised nations, we have a particular respon-

sibility. The fact that certificates are required is, after all, the result of our actions in the past.” By 2025, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is aiming for climate neutrality through offsetting along the entire value chain and is working closely with its raw material suppliers to achieve this. “More and more companies are realising that we have to reduce greenhouse gases – in order to continue producing really good chocolate and also to leave a world worth living in for future generations.”





DESIGNED FOR RECYCLING

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG works together with long-standing partner companies on ever-new packaging concepts. Focus: the continuous reduction of packaging material, gradual substitution with renewable raw materials, and the circularity and recyclability of the products.

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG strives towards only circulating packaging that can be kept in cycles as a recyclable material. Special attention is paid to reducing packaging to the essentials. Renewable raw materials should be used wherever possible in terms of product safety and product protection and wherever it makes sense. The focus here is primarily on the further development of paper-based packaging – among other things because disposal and recycling systems for paper are widespread, especially with regard to international markets. Some important development steps have already been taken, but the greatest challenge is currently presented by primary paper packaging. “Using paper as a packaging material for our entire range is our top priority, which we are working hard on. But the changeover is not easy, because product safety and quality always come first,” explains Katja Binder, Head of Packaging Development. For example, paper packaging is not suitable for every type of chocolate, especially when it involves direct contact with the product. Further development work is necessary here – but our packaging experts are working tirelessly to find the best solution.

PACKAGING PREREQUISITES

Packaging must protect the product and provide customers with important information, and in the case of a confectionery product such as chocolate, its design must make them want to buy it. To achieve this, a great deal of resources are invested in developing alternative packaging concepts. Now more than ever, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is reliant on the recyclability of materials. Paper, cardboard and polypropylene wrappers are fully recyclable for all products of the Ritter Sport brand. The fibres are FSC-certified, and the wrapper is “Cradle to Cradle” certified (Material Health Standard, Bronze Level) through regular testing by recognised, independent institutes.



LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS WITH SUPPLIERS

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG also maintains long-term business relationships with its packaging suppliers. Especially when it comes to the development and certification of materials, a bond based on trust makes cooperation much easier. "We attach great importance to good relationships with our business partners. They are a key factor for further developing our goals in collaboration with our suppliers. Accordingly, we are delighted that some of our suppliers have even undergone FSC certification specially for us. And in difficult times, they facilitate the sourcing of materials," explains Katja Binder.



We attach great importance to good relationships with our business partners."

COOPERATION BASED ON TRUST

A good example of long-standing cooperation based on trust is the relationship with Koehler Paper – a supplier that itself attaches great importance to conserving resources in the manufacture of its products and develops flexible packaging papers with the aim of reducing the use of plastic as a packaging solution. Since the beginning of 2021, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co KG has been using Koehler NexPlus® Seal on paper as secondary packaging for its Ritter Sport Mini Colourful Bag product, making it a pioneer in the chocolate market.

Dr Stefan Karrer, Chief Technology Officer, Koehler Group:

"There is a clear trend in the choice of packaging, because there are some extremely strong arguments in favour of paper. It is based on renewable raw materials and, after use as waste paper, it is a sought-after secondary raw material with a much better carbon footprint. Thus, we offer our customers a solution with which they can participate in a 'circular economy'. Our flexible paper packaging solutions can replace plastic in many applications, making the world a bit more sustainable."



Our versatile packaging solutions make the world that bit more sustainable."



NEW ADDITION TO THE FAMILY: AMICELLI NOW BELONGS TO RITTER

Takeovers often raise questions among brand fans: will there be changes to the recipe and taste? In 2021, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG acquired the Amicelli brand and its production facility, a former Mars Austria OG plant in Breitenbrunn, Austria. Together with our new colleagues in Austria, production was adapted to the new, more sustainable recipe within about seven weeks.

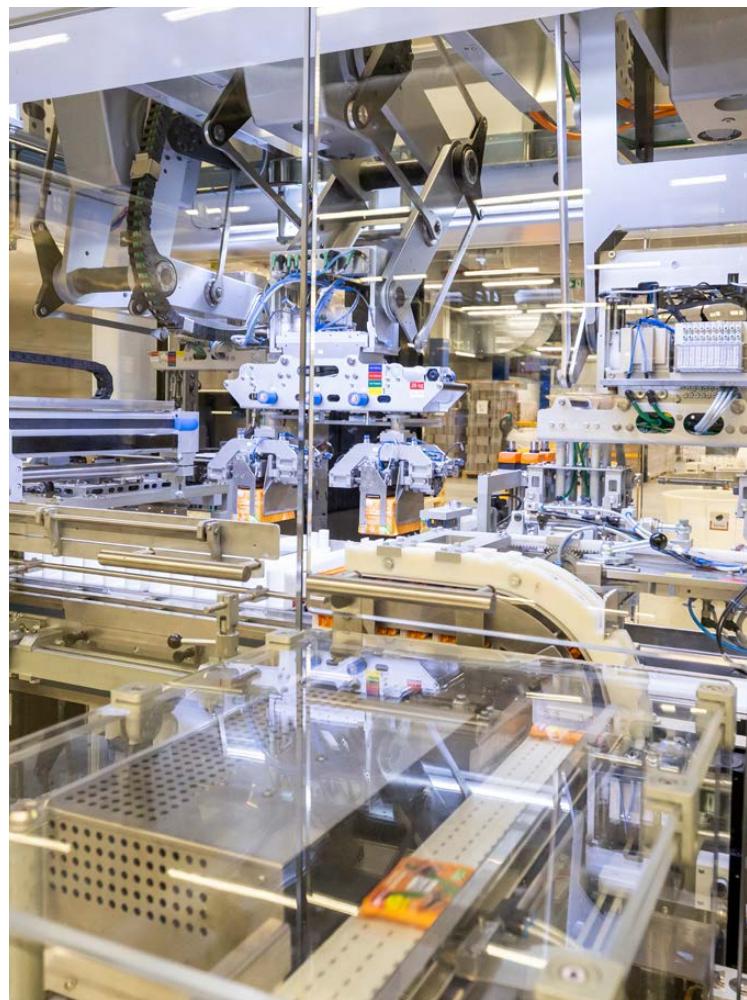
Established in 1912, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been growing steadily for years. "It was clear to us that we would have to expand our production capacities at some stage. The Mars plant in Breitenbrunn came at exactly the right time for us," says CEO Andreas Ronken. "In the current market environment, the opportunity to take over an existing plant should be seized." Around 85 employees are now employed in Burgenland by Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG – many of whom previously worked for Mars. In addition to Amicelli, the Ritter Sport Rum bars and the 5 varieties of our vegan chocolate range are also produced there. "We may be 700 kilometres apart, but we are ONE company. The values we stand for as a producer and employer apply equally in Breitenbrunn and in Waldenbuch," states Andreas Ronken.

The acquisition of "Amicelli" is the first brand addition in the company's more than 100-year history. "We wanted to authentically integrate a new product into our brand claim – high-quality chocolate products made in harmony with people and nature," says Malte Dammann, Managing Director Marketing at

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG. Amicelli is therefore now produced with 100 per cent certified sustainable cocoa according to the Rainforest Alliance or Fairtrade cocoa programmes and with RSPO-certified palm fat of the "segregated" level. As with all Ritter products, no flavourings are added. The Waldenbuch chocolate experts have already developed a first limited edition for Amicelli with a cocoa cream filling. It was so well received that it is to be permanently added to the range, says Malte Dammann: "We are pleased that 'our' Amicelli tastes good to many former fans and is also convincing new ones. With Amicelli, we were able to integrate a brand into our portfolio that has strong growth potential at home and abroad. It was a great joint achievement of the colleagues from

Waldenbuch and Breitenbrunn to convert production to the changed Ritter recipe within a very short time, to set up and commission new equipment, and now to produce in our famous Ritter quality. And all of this in times of COVID-19, when direct contact had to be reduced. But thanks to committed employees on both sides, integration into the Ritter culture was possible despite such challenges."





USING VALUABLE RESOURCES SUSTAINABLY

FULL USE OF THE COCOA FRUIT: REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT

There have been even more additions to the brand family. With its internal CacaoVida start-up, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has found an innovative and sustainable "upcycling" approach. Since cocoa juice was recognised by the EU as a foodstuff in 2020, three new products have been developed from the previously unused cocoa fruit pulp: fruity and tangy CacaoVida Cocoa Fruit Lemonade, CacaoVida Cocoa Fruit Iced Tea with tea infusion made from the dried cocoa fruit pulp, and CacaoVida Secco – a so far unique Secco made from the juice of the fresh cocoa fruit.



UPCYCLING REDUCES WASTE

Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG processes up to 350 tonnes of high-quality raw materials into chocolate every day. Unfortunately, waste cannot be completely avoided in the production of new varieties. However, through data collection and analysis, these rejects – also known as rework – have been reduced by around 35% over the past ten years. Adjustments to minimum lot sizes and product sequences as well as technical optimisations help to maximise use of equipment and resources.

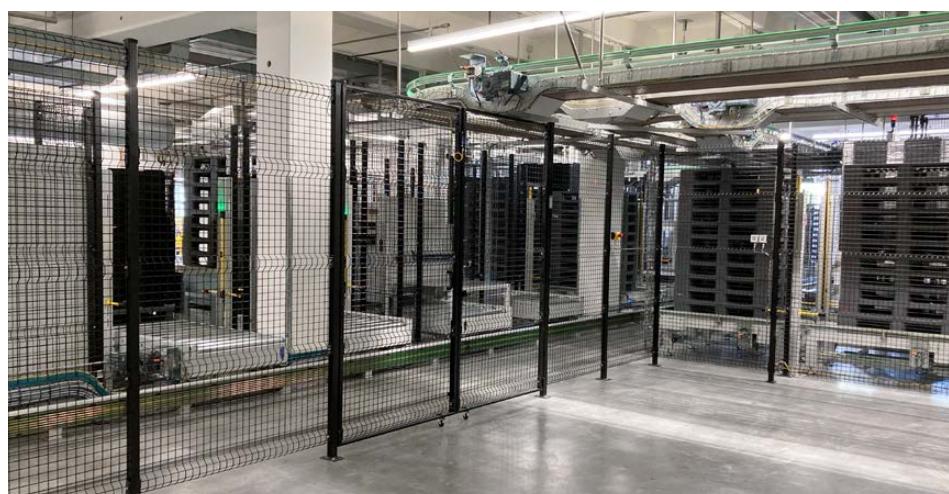
Rework often involves chocolate squares that do not meet the strict visual quality requirements and are merely sorted out due to process-related blemishes. These production quantities with perfect content, for example chocolate biscuit chunks, are combined with other ingredients and given a new life in various popular upcycling editions such as the "Biscuits & Flakes" variety. Mostly in small editions, the new varieties are marketed as special editions in the company's own shops. "With valuable raw materials that we used to have to give away, we can now avoid food waste – and it tastes good, too," production manager Markus Maurer is happy to add.



AN IMPORTANT BUILDING BLOCK AT THE HEART OF THE FACTORY

At the production site in Waldenbuch, a new palletising plant with state-of-the-art technology was put into operation in August 2022. After a complex ten-week conversion and installation period, during which the palletiser had to be connected to the production facilities, it now ensures significantly better utilisation and shorter down-times. However, the new investment was made not only for economic reasons, but above all for safety considerations – the new palletiser complies with the latest industrial safety standards, improves workplace ergonomics, and ensures a reduction in forklift traffic through optimised intralogistics processes.

Another advantage: improved traceability of the goods cartons through state-of-the-art RFID technology. RFID trackers on the cartons are inscribed with data, which in turn can be read directly in Waldenbuch and in the future also in the finished goods warehouse in Reichenbach. They contain information on the plant the chocolate comes from and where it is to go – this ensures perfect order separation.



3 RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYER





Since COVID-19, many professionals have been asking themselves some existential questions: "Does my employer create added value for society? Can I contribute my skills here in a meaningful way?" CEO Andreas Ronken answers these questions with a resounding yes – and is committed to ensuring that the 1,900 employees can do the same.

"Operating in harmony with humankind and nature is intrinsic to us," says Ronken. "I don't have to overcome a lot of resistance so that we can do the right thing. The people who produce our raw materials should be able to live well on what they earn. The environment should be protected. This is part of the DNA of this company and is also tangible for everyone in their working lives. You can't buy conviction from outside."

The leadership style practised in-house is a cooperative one. "As management, we provide a framework, but the managers and their teams enjoy a lot of responsibility in making their own decisions," says Ronken. "We left working-from-home arrangements during the pandemic to the teams themselves."

And the canteen remained open throughout the entire period: "Despite all the caution, it was important to us that the company remained a social place. I am proud of our managers and all our employees. And we got through the pandemic period well, not least thanks to their common sense and sense of proportion."

DOING THE RIGHT THING BEYOND PUNCH LINES AND SHITSTORMS

Making responsible decisions is also an inherent part of our DNA: when the war of aggression began in Ukraine, a dilemma presented itself between responsibility and attitude. For the entrepreneurial family and management, careful consideration was re-

quired. As the second largest sales market, Russia also plays a supporting role in the long-standing contracts for sustainable cocoa purchases. "Like any reasonable person, we condemn this war of aggression," says Ronken. "But to risk the livelihoods of our partners, the results of decades of striving towards sustainability, and our own existence as a company and employer in order to avoid bad PR? We decided to do what we believe is morally right in the current situation: we have given a higher priority to responsibility and are putting our money where our mouth is by donating the profits. At the same time, we will continue to diversify our sales markets."

 Around **15,000**
antigen tests on site

 **650**
COVID-19 vaccinations by the
company doctor

WORKING AT RITTER: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY

Diversity in terms of age, professional experience, gender, origin and personality makes life more colourful and teams more successful. That is why Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG not only considers professional qualifications. Cooperative study programmes, mentoring programmes, job rotation and annual staff appraisals promote lifelong learning and personal

development. Time off from work does not stand in the way of a career in our family-friendly company; flexible part-time models, the option of working from home and the availability of childcare services make it easier for parents to return to the workforce. The proportion of women in middle and upper management is systematically promoted and is constantly on the rise. Regardless of the company hierarchy, we attach great importance to respect and appreciation in cooperation. "It is

important to us that everyone feels at home and can be themselves," states CEO Andreas Ronken. "I want a workforce that is as colourful and diverse as our Ritter Sport chocolate." In July 2022, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG joined Generation Rainbow's #ForEqualityForLGBTIQ initiative. In doing so, it is using its social media reach to help educate and raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues – and to assert its position in this regard.

“

I want a workforce that is as colourful and diverse as our Ritter Sport chocolate."



KNOWLEDGE CREATES (SELF-) CONFIDENCE

Communication is the key for passing on knowledge. This is equally true for the topic of safety as for the professional development of our employees.

Personal interactions are important. That is why visitors from all over the world come to Waldenbuch on a regular basis, experienced employees support young talent in their professional development, and when it comes to topics such as industrial safety, through the communication of ideas within the company, we are moving ever-closer to achieving our vision of "zero accidents" is increasingly pervasive through exchanges within the company.

PREVENTION THROUGH COMMUNICATION

Zero accidents: Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG turns this vision into a concrete goal through a comprehensive employee survey and an interdepartmental working group.

Technical solutions such as safety light barriers in production, regular instruction for everyone and corresponding documentation had long been in place, but now the topic of industrial safety was to be anchored even more firmly in people's minds and in everyday working practices. "Knowledge and communication are the best prevention," says Thomas Roh, industrial safety specialist. "This includes unambiguous procedures, knowledge of technology, an awareness of hazards, regular communication and respectful interaction." In the canteen, a huge poster reminds us of the "Vision of Zero Accidents", which is already within reach: the accident figures, which have been falling for years, were most recently reduced to a thousand-man rate of 6.33 in 2022. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG was one of six companies in Germany to receive the BGN Prevention Award from the Berufsgenossenschaft für Nahrungsmittel und Gastgewerbe (BGN).

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Knowledge and communication are the best prevention."





INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES: A VISITOR FROM SINGAPORE

Corporate values are best communicated through personal exchange. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been cultivating this with its employees at two production sites and at companies in Nicaragua, Italy, Austria, Russia, the Netherlands, the UK, Singapore, China, Denmark and the USA for a long time. Every year, the company invites new employees from all over the world to Waldenbuch. Edwin Tay Ee Koon, Country Manager South East Asia, came all the way from Singapore in July 2022 with the aim of experiencing Ritter Sport in Waldenbuch up close for 23 days, from the Ritter Info Day – an annual employee event with colleagues from all over the world – through joint workshops and expert exchanges to actually trying his hand at making chocolate. "My visit was perfectly organised, and I felt very welcome and well taken care of. Not only was I able to meet many colleagues in person, but I also had the opportunity to gain some valuable new perspectives. Apart from many wonderful memories, I was also able to leave with a better understanding of the company and its values."

“

I was able to acquire valuable new perspectives.”



COLOURFUL VARIETY FOR TALENTED EMPLOYEES

From Quality Assurance employee to Head of Local Quality Management Waldenbuch in one year – that's what Sandra Ketterl, one of twelve participants in the "Colourful Variety for Talented Employees" junior staff development programme offered for the first time in 2021, managed to do. In numerous training sessions, over the course of a year promising young professionals learn techniques for moderation and interviewing, presentation, project management and leadership, and many other skills for their personal success story in addition to their actual chosen profession.

“

I found it very useful to exchange information and experience with colleagues outside the everyday interactions of the departments.”

And in the future, about twelve talented employees from different company divisions and with different backgrounds will go on their personal learning journey each year, accompanied by their personal "buddy". In Sandra Ketterl's case, this was Jessica Uetz, team leader for conception and marketing of the Colourful ChocoWorlds in Berlin and Waldenbuch. "I found it very useful to exchange information and experience with colleagues outside the everyday interactions of the interface departments," says Sandra Ketterl. "The communication exercises and feedback from the group enabled me to learn new techniques for confidently dealing with challenging situations. I think it's great to be given the opportunity to develop personally in a targeted way away from my areas of professional focus."

“LIFE HAS CHANGED FOR PEOPLE HERE”

Since Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG moved into the site spanning approximately 2,500 hectares in 2012, not only have jobs been created on the cocoa plantation, but settlements have also gradually evolved around El Cacao. For Ritter Sport, the aim of its own cocoa farm is to combine traditional methods of cocoa farming with modern expertise in order to produce excellent cocoa and create a place offering a high quality of life for employees and their families.

In the past ten years, entire villages have sprung up around El Cacao. “El Cacao is making a difference for local people,” says Hauke Will, Head of Agricultural Production: “By growing high-quality cocoa in Nicaragua, we have been able to create secure jobs, which gives our employees a better income and facilitates access to both education and medical care. Life has changed for people here.”

A GOOD PLACE FOR COCOA, PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In addition to producing excellent cocoa, El Cacao creates a better quality of life for employees and their families in the form of fair wages and health and pension insurance. Those who are planning a major purchase or need a significant amount of money at short notice can rely on a micro-loan from their employer. Thanks to the in-house medical centre and regular visits by specialists to the plantation, the approx. 400 employees receive good medical and preventive care, such as glasses or ergonomic aids.





ISMAEL CELESTINO BLANCO JARQUIN, 30, FROM CHALMECA

Ismael Celestino Blanco Jarquin started off as a farm labourer in 2015. With the support of his employer, he completed training as an agronomist. By 2019, he was already responsible for ten or more farm labourers in his capacity as an agricultural foreman. Then he started to study engineering. He is currently in his final year of studies and is responsible for an area of 200 hectares of cocoa on El Cacao.



VICENTE VALLE BRAVO, 32, FROM LA FONSECA

Vicente Valle Bravo joined us in 2012, handling land surveying, soil testing and the nursery as a foreman. Three years later, he became head of the planting department. Since 2017, he has been the zone manager and head of the cocoa nursery. While working, he completed his studies to become an agroforestry engineer and attended further training courses at "La Academia" on the subjects of occupational safety, staff management and English. During a one-month practical placement, he familiarised himself with the La Caussade hazelnut plantation in France.

OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION

In the company's own educational institution "La Academia", employees can learn reading, writing, arithmetic, how to drive a tractor, foreign languages or how to work with a computer, depending on their previous knowledge. "From

a simple farm labourer to an agricultural specialist or manager – this is possible here thanks to flexible working hours, study leave and financial support from the employer," says Hauke Will. "At El Cacao, we apply and practice the same values as in Waldenbuch and Breitenbrunn. We promote talent and support valued employees in their

personal goals wherever we can. El Cacao is more than a plantation. We see a real community growing here." In the future, "La Academia" will become a training centre for sustainable cocoa cultivation, for example for cooperatives in the country.



158
trained
employees (2021)

35
trained
employees (2022)

Damage to the farm caused by devastating storms has severely limited the operations of Academia 2022. After extensive repair work, training courses are now taking place again on the usual scale.



THINKING GLOBALLY, ACTING LOCALLY

Natural habitats for plants and animals are not only endangered outside Europe: in Germany, Sweden and Austria, numerous insects and thus flowering plants, bird and other animal species are also threatened with extinction. Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG contributes to the preservation of natural habitats for plants and animals at its sites. For example, insects and birds benefit from the wildflower meadow in Breitenbrunn, Austria, and the "Rittercoin" project ensures less waste in the environment.

RITTER COINS FOR LESS WASTE IN THE ENVIRON- MENT

Although Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG does not have its own production facility in Sweden, the contemporary Swedish tradition of "plogging" – picking up rubbish while jogging (the

Swedish word plocka means collect) – inspired the "Ritter Coin" social media campaign. Here, Fans documented and shared their collected rubbish finds social networks and received digital "Ritter Coins", i.e. credit for the Ritter Sport online shop, as a reward. Thousands shared their photos of rubbish gleaned from the environment and

returned to recycling under the hashtag #rittercoin, thus contributing to raising awareness of the value of a pristine environment. The campaign was very well received: more than 25,000 digital coins were given away – and often invested directly in chocolate.

#rittercoin



MORE WILD FLOWERS, BIRDS AND INSECTS – IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

In 1979, the Thenau pasture near Breitenbrunn on Lake Neusiedl was declared a nature reserve. This pasture land covers an area of 50 hectares of limestone and is one of the largest dry grassland areas in Burgenland. In 2021, Alfred Ritter GmbH moved into a loca-

tion with its production plant in Breitenbrunn in the direct vicinity of thistle finches and butterflies, thistle weevils and many other fascinating creatures – and took the Thenau pasture directly as its model. Together with the Department of Botany and Biodiversity Research at the University of Vienna, regional wildflowers were planted on more than 6,000 square metres of green space on the company premises. In addition, natural insect and bird feeding sites

are to be installed in the first quarter of 2023 to protect the local insect fauna, wild plants and birds, which are under threat. Success stories will be documented and analysed for further effective measures to preserve and promote biodiversity in the region.



4 ORGANISATION AND VALUES



ENJOYMENT AND CONSCIOUS CONSUMPTION ARE NOT A CONTRADICTION FOR US

Quality. Chocolate. Squared. – this slogan has become iconic since it was first marketed in the 1970s. These three words still best sum up what makes the Ritter Sport brand so special. Then as now, it was about high-quality square-shaped chocolate in practical packaging. And because today's consumers want to know exactly how and under what conditions products are created, the #discoverthegood campaign shows what is behind these "good goods".

"In the past, the main promise a brand made to consumers was to always deliver consistently good quality. But in recent years, a new dimension has been added: is it ethical to consume this product?" is how Malte Dammann summarises it. As Managing Director Marketing, he knows that, unlike food-stuffs such as milk, bread and pasta, customers do not usually reach for confectionery in the supermarket because it is on their shopping list – chocolate is an impulse purchase. While the pleasure of indulgence remains undiminished, at the same time the issues of sustainability, naturalness and responsibility on the part of companies are becoming more and more relevant in purchasing decisions. Consumers want to be able to trust that the manufacturers of the products they put on the checkout conveyor belt are acting responsibly. For Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG, indulgence and conscious consumption have never been a contradiction in terms. In 2021, the company sought a way to emphasise this even more, says Malte Dammann: "The #discoverthegood campaign shifts the focus to our long-standing vision of 'operating in

harmony with humankind and nature' by reinterpreting the 'Quality. Chocolate. Squared.' slogan and sums up our brand claim in three words. If consumers are to include a company's commitment to sustainability in their purchasing decisions, such information needs to reach them before they are in the shop." Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has launched a high-reach campaign called #discoverthegood in Germany and is once again relying on





familiar posters in major railway stations and TV commercials. Those whose curiosity has been whetted by the campaign can discover the "good" with the help of information on the website, on the blog and in the sustainability reports.



Since 2018, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG has been sourcing 100 per cent certified sustainable cocoa, 90 per cent in accordance with the Rainforest Alliance and 10 per cent in accordance with the Fairtrade cocoa programme. Since 2022, no chocolate bar has been sold without the company's own label.



WHY IS RITTER SPORT CHOCOLATE NOT CLIMATE NEUTRAL?

We asked Raphael Rozsa, legal advisor and Compliance Officer:

"There are numerous examples of products which are declared to be 'climate neutral'. Why has Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG decided against this?

The term climate neutral generates a great deal of uncertainty among consumers, and case law is not yet clear either. For us, it is first and foremost about the matter in hand, which is why we tend to be cautious when it comes to the claim, and we do not want to promote individual varieties or products as climate neutral – as we think that would be confusing. As a company, our goal is to operate in a climate-neutral manner from 2025 onwards, along all scopes and in cooperation with our raw material suppliers, through offsetting, whereby reduction is our top priority. We compensate for all emissions that cannot be reduced with Gold Standard climate certificates."



#discoverthegood

ALWAYS READY TO LISTEN: THE CONSUMER SERVICE

The consumer service is the central contact point for consumers. Whether it is a general enquiry or a product complaint – the staff at the head office of Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG are highly trained for this and have an open ear for all concerns.

Every complaint is recorded and evaluated. Once the cause has been found, the plant quality assurance department issues an internal statement, which is the basis for a well-founded response to consumers. Regular internal monitoring of consumer feedback ensures that other departments also have an overview of the trends concerning consumers.



We take our customers' needs seriously and do everything we can to satisfy them."



"We take our customers' needs seriously and respond to their increasing demand for advice with the very best customer service. After all, we not only place high quality demands on our products, but also do everything we can to satisfy our customers," explains Melanie Dürrich, Head of Food Law and Consumer Service.

In some cases, the subsidiaries in the respective countries handle end consumer communication in order to better overcome any language barriers and cultural obstacles. A concept that is already being successfully implemented in Italy, Great Britain and Russia, for example.



For product safety in everyday operations

Contaminants in confectionery – a worrying topic for consumers. To minimise impurities in the products as much as possible, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG relies on extensive quality controls and defined target values.

... ?

TWO QUESTIONS FOR

Katrin Sinderhauf-Gacioch,
Head of Analytics and Raw Material Safety

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONTAMINANTS WE ARE TALKING ABOUT?

Apart from aluminium, we are mainly talking about saturated and aromatic mineral oil hydrocarbons – also known as MOSH, short for mineral oil Saturated hydrocarbons, and MOAH, short for mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons. Basically, they can arise anywhere along the production chain where lubricating oil is used – from harvesting through to packaging.

WHAT DOES ALFRED RITTER GMBH & CO. KG DO IN TERMS OF AVOIDANCE OR MINIMISATION?

There is currently a guideline value for MOSH/MOAH in confectionery, but unfortunately there are no legally regulated limits for these contaminants. That is why we have defined our own target values and are intensively researching possible sources along the supply chain. Here, the clear identification of origin all the way back to the cooperative plays into our hands. The traceability of cocoa has decisive advantages in terms of ensuring the best product quality. In addition, from 2019 to 2022, we conducted a study together with the internationally active cocoa processor Olam and the Federal Association



of the German Confectionery Industry (BDSI) as the overarching association to find the origin of such harmful substances. The published part of the study entitled "Toolbox for the Minimisation of Aluminium in Cocoa and Chocolate Products" shows for aluminium that much can be achieved in a transparent supply chain with targeted measures, such as the use of fermentation boxes and drying tables. These results have now been shared across the industry within the BDSI to allow all cocoa and chocolate companies to benefit from the potential for improvement.



OUTSTANDING: "BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE"

In 2021, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG was ranked the best in the confectionery and snacks sector by WirtschaftsWoche in cooperation with the ServiceValue market research institute.

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5

INTERESTING FACTS



ABOUT THIS REPORT

With this report, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG is presenting for the fifth time an overview of its strategies, processes and measures within the framework of sustainability management. For the purpose of a progress report, the focus is on informing all stakeholders of the sustainable development of the company as well as offering an approximation of its short-, medium- and long-term goals and plans.

By publishing this report, the company is underlining its express desire and willingness to communicate transparently with all of the relevant stakeholders and to enter an open dialogue based on partnership. Accordingly, the report – along with the company and brand website (www.ritter-sport.com), activities on social media, other publications and other measures of external and internal communication – is an essential component of the integrated communication concept of Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG.

REPORT PARAMETERS

The core of the report is formed by the topics identified as essential by the "Sustainable Management" ZNU standard within the business activities of Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG. Furthermore, the contents of this report are oriented towards the recommendations of the Global Reporting Initiative, without fully implementing this standard.

There are plans to continue reporting on sustainability as well as developing this topic both practically and pragmatically. Publication of the next comprehensive Sustainability Report is planned for 2025.

REPORT FRAMEWORK

In 2013, Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG was certified for the first time by TÜV Rheinland for successful introduction of the "Sustainable Management" standard. This standard was developed by the Zentrum für Nachhaltige Unternehmensführung (Centre for Sustainable Corporate Leadership (ZNU)) at the University of Witten / Herdecke. It serves towards the introduction of integrated sustainability management. As a result, the following three areas of action were defined which cover the economic, ecological and social pillars

of sustainability: sourcing of raw materials, ecological efficiency and social impacts. The company will concentrate on these topics, further develop them systematically, and set itself specific and measurable goals for the near and distant future.

REPORT PERIOD

The contents, facts and figures presented in this report primarily refer to the calendar years 2021/2022. Relevant information from the previous years was also taken into consideration. The editorial deadline for this report was 31 July 2023.

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ZNU STANDARD AND SDGs



The following table shows which requirements of the ZNU standard are considered in this report. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN are also listed, as companies are explicitly called to participate in implementing them.

TARGETS	DESCRIPTION OF THE SDGs AND THE SUB-GOAL	ZNU STANDARD REQUIREMENT	CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (SECTION)
1 NO POVERTY 	Ending all kinds of poverty everywhere	II.10 Innovation II.14 Fair competition II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing II.21 Human rights	2.1; 2.3; 3.3 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2 1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5
2 ZERO HUNGER 	Ending hunger, achieving food security and better nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture	I.2 Philosophy/Values II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing II.20 Health	1.1; 4.1; 4.2 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 1.1 to 1.5 3.1; 4.1
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	Ensuring a healthy life for people of all ages and promoting their well-being	II.16 Sourcing II.19 Industrial safety II.20 Health II.21 Human rights II.22 Culture of variety II.23 Demographics	1.1 to 1.5 4.1 4.1 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 4.1 3.1 to 3.3; 4.1 3.1 to 3.3; 4.1
4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	Guaranteeing inclusive, equal and high-quality education and promoting opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone	II.16 Sourcing II.21 Human rights	1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 4.1
5 GENDER EQUALITY 	Achieving gender equality and empowering self-determination by all women and girls	II.16 Sourcing II.21 Human rights II.22 Culture of variety	1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 4.1 3.1 to 3.3; 4.1
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	Ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitary supplies for everyone	II.15 Regional commitment II.20 Health II.21 Human rights	1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 4.1 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 4.1

TARGETS	DESCRIPTION OF THE SDGs AND THE SUB-GOAL	ZNU STANDARD REQUIREMENT	CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (SECTION)
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	Safeguarding access to affordable, reliable and modern energy for everyone	II.10 Innovation II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing II.21 Human rights	2.1; 2.3; 3.3 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 4.1
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	Promoting permanent, widespread and sustainable economic growth, productive full-time employment, and decent work for everyone	II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing II.17 Fair pay	1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	Developing a robust infrastructure, promoting widespread and sustainable industrialisation, and supporting innovations	II.10 Innovation II.16 Sourcing	2.1; 2.3; 3.3 1.1 to 1.5
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	Reducing inequality in and between countries	II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing II.18 Fair added value	1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 1.1 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	Designing towns and settlements to be inclusive, safe, robust and sustainable	II.10 Innovation II.15 Regional commitment	2.1; 2.3; 3.3 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	Safeguarding sustainable consumption and production patterns	All of the requirements of the Sustainable Management ZNU standard	
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	Taking urgent measures to fight climate change and its impacts	II.1 Climate II.2 Energy II.8 Biodiversity II.9 Animal welfare II.10 Innovation II.16 Sourcing	2.2; 2.3 2.2; 2.3 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 4.3 4.3 2.1; 2.3; 3.3 1.1 to 1.5
14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	Protecting the oceans, seas and maritime resources in the spirit of sustainable development and utilising them sustainably	II.2 Energy II.8 Biodiversity II.16 Sourcing	2.2; 2.3 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 4.3 1.1 to 1.5
15 LIFE ON LAND 	Protecting and restoring land ecosystems and promoting sustainable utilisation thereof, managing forests sustainably, ending and reversing soil degradation, and ending the loss of biodiversity	II.2 Energy II.3 Packaging II.4 Waste II.8 Biodiversity II.16 Sourcing	2.2; 2.3 1.2; 2.1 1.2 to 1.5 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 4.3 1.1 to 1.5

TARGETS	DESCRIPTION OF THE SDGs AND THE SUB-GOAL	ZNU STANDARD REQUIREMENT	CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORT (SECTION)
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, enabling access to justice for all people, and developing efficient, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing	1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 1.1 to 1.5
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	Reinforcing means of implementation and filling the global partnership for sustainable development with new life	II.14 Fair competition II.15 Regional commitment II.16 Sourcing II.18 Fair added value	Editorial; 1.1 to 1.5; 2.2 Editorial; 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2 Editorial; 1.1 to 1.5 Editorial; 1.1 to 1.5; 2.1; 2.2



GLOSSARY

BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is regarded as the variety of the entire range of life on earth. It comprises three levels: the variety of ecosystems, which includes cohabitation, habitats and landscapes, the variety of species, and the genetic variety within a species.

COMPENSATION

Serves to mathematically offset greenhouse gases such as CO₂. For this purpose, the emissions of a product or company or even a state are first calculated. CO₂ credits from climate protection projects that avoid or bind emissions are then acquired as compensation. The following always applies: offsetting is only at the end of this process; priority is given to reducing and avoiding emissions in the company.

FAIR TRADE COCOA PROGRAMME

This programme links small farmers with companies to enable the latter to purchase large quantities of fairly traded cocoa from certified producers. Therefore, unlike in the past, Fairtrade now focuses on sourcing raw materials instead of certification of end products such as bars of chocolate. As they can sell more cocoa at fair and stable prices, small farmers can invest more in their farms and the region. Fairtrade also finances further training which is specially tailored to the needs of small farmers.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable action and management consider the following three pillars: economy, society and environment. At the same time, economic, social and ecological aspects stand in equal measure for sustainable development which meets intergenerational needs.

RAINFOREST ALLIANCE (PREVIOUSLY: UTZ-CERTIFIED)

A programme and quality mark for the sustainable cultivation of cocoa, coffee and tea. In order to receive this certification, farmers must adhere to a code of practice which specifies social criteria as well as taking consideration of environmental compatibility and efficient management.

RSPO

In 2004, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil was founded at the initiative of the WWF. Its goal is to promote sustainable cultivation methods for palm oil, thereby limiting environmental damage. Members include environmental protection associations and other non-government organisations (NGOs) as well as companies and institutions from the palm oil value-added chain, such as plantation owners, dealers and industries.

STAKEHOLDERS

Groups which are influenced by corporate activities and which, in turn, exert an influence on the company – for both economic and social reasons. Stakeholders include employees, suppliers, customers and trading partners but also scientific facilities, governments and NGOs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

These goals for sustainable development involve political goals of the United Nations (UN) at an economic, social and ecological level. Five core messages are indicated – people, earth, prosperity, peace and partnerships – from which 17 global goals and 169 sub-goals can be derived. Industrial nations and developing and threshold countries alike should contribute towards achieving these

goals. Furthermore, many of the goals are directed towards non-state players and companies in particular.

ESSENTIALITY

The basic principle of essentiality applies for a company's sustainability report. This means that the report should cover all areas depicting the essential impacts of the company on the environment, economy and society, and/or which are of importance for the stakeholders.

VALUE-ADDED CHAIN

This comprises the entire life cycle of a product: in the case of food, for example, this means the route from cultivation through processing and production levels at suppliers or the actual company and via trade and interim trade to the private consumer. Reuse or disposal are also often included in calculations.

ZNU

The Centre for Sustainable Corporate Leadership (ZNU) at the University of Witten / Herdecke is an independent platform for sustainability. It was founded as a cooperation between research institutions and companies to show entrepreneurs the opportunities and risks associated with the topic of sustainability. The ZNU serves as a platform for exchanging information between research institutions, industry and trade, and it has developed the "Sustainable Management" ZNU standard.

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DISCLAIMER

All information in the Sustainability Report 2021/2022 was collated and processed with great care. Nevertheless, errors cannot be excluded in full. Any forward-looking statements were made on the basis of current assumptions and estimates at the time of publication.

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Take care!

