

## SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023



Photograph: Wohler Anzeiger

### SUSTAIN- ABILITY



«As an SME in an economically challenging environment, we want our company to have sustainable development – economically, environmentally and socially – in order to remain independent and successful in a competitive market.

Thanks to our deeply held convictions and numerous investments, we have achieved completely CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral production from the beginning of 2016. We are proud of our success and it also spurs us on towards future challenges.»

Martin Kleiner, Owner and CEO

As an independent, owner-managed SME, we have always taken care to ensure short decision-making paths. This enables us to react to new input from the economic, technological and social environment quickly and to examine, develop and implement internally generated ideas efficiently. Sustainable development of the company, not quick profit, is always the focus of our thinking.

We invest annually a substantial proportion of our total turnover in sustainable activities in all three pillars of sustainability. This is symbolised in 2022 by the launch of GENPROTECT® – «O. KLEINER AG protects future generations», an entire product family of ecological packaging films. In this way, we shall remain in the future a reliable, trustworthy partner for our customers and for future generations and for our employees a meaningful and responsible employer.



«Since installing the photovoltaic panels on the roof of our production plant, we have been able to show our commitment to green electricity. For new buildings, we have set our sights on meeting the strict guidelines of the Minergie standards.»

Our environmental strategy is one of the main pillars of our corporate strategy.

Over past years, a substantial proportion of investment has been made in production processes and product development. Thanks to these actions alone, we have been able to reduce energy consumption by 33%.

Since January 1, 2016 our production processes have been completely CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral. In a first step, 100 % green electricity and 30 % biogas are used exclusively for the entire energy consumption of the production. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the remaining 70 %

of gas were fully offset within our long-term partner's (myclimate) «Solar Energy for Education and Jobs» project. This project provided families with clean electricity in rural areas of Tanzania, through simple but efficient solar plants. The aim of the project was for it also to be implemented in other African countries like Ghana, Rwanda and Kenya, hopefully providing a solar panel on at least every second roof. As of January 1, 2023, the CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral production through 100 % green electricity and now 100 % biogas is achieved – independently of compensation projects.



«Giusi knows exactly how to explain things – especially since he was an apprentice here several years ago. He knows where the critical points lie in the individual work processes. Moreover, we both love football – just not the same club ...»

Reginold Jetson, 2nd year apprentice

«Flexo printing is an enthralling career. Ink and printing technology fascinates me – as do young people and their first steps in their working life. As in football, team spirit and fair play count! And in time I'll even spark his enthusiasm for Bella Italia!»

Giusi Mancari, flexo-printer

Training is for us an important pillar of social sustainability.

We believe we are living up to our responsibility for our employees if we show confidence in their performance, support them and help in their development. Likewise, «to pass on know-how» is one of 10 team rules which shape our corporate culture. A well-coordinated and well-functioning team can

work successfully long-term – thanks to a high level of job satisfaction and motivation.

Long-standing employees who act as trainers, enjoy credibility with apprentices and show understanding for initial and future hurdles in the work and school day. Sometimes, they even succeed in motivating apprentices to become trainers, in turn, for a new generation of apprentices.



«After parental leave for our two sons, it was important for me to return to work, but part-time. It has therefore been even more satisfying for me to be able, additionally, to undertake professional development and to take on more responsibility. I hope, with this statement, to be able to motivate more women in a similar situation.»

Ruth Huwiler, Accounting Department

Untapped potential from underutilised know-how is too great in contemporary society and is often caused by inflexible work models. We are therefore tremendously keen to win back employees, once trained by us, after a life-changing event. If this only requires adjustments to working hours, then nothing stands in the way. But there are often solutions for more complex situations, such as changes in health or special personal circumstances, which permit know-how to be preserved and the occupation to be continued.

Furthermore, models like the «career-arc» for older employees can be an optimal solution for both sides.

After parental leave, returning parents acquired a particular skill – they are generally «stressresistant». This is due to having to cope with a variety of concurrent challenges which simply crop up both in the family and at work and cannot be ignored, whether personal nor professional.





«Environmental sustainability is a major concern for me, personally. The fact that our thoughts and actions in our company exactly reflect this, also played a decisive role in my choice of job.»

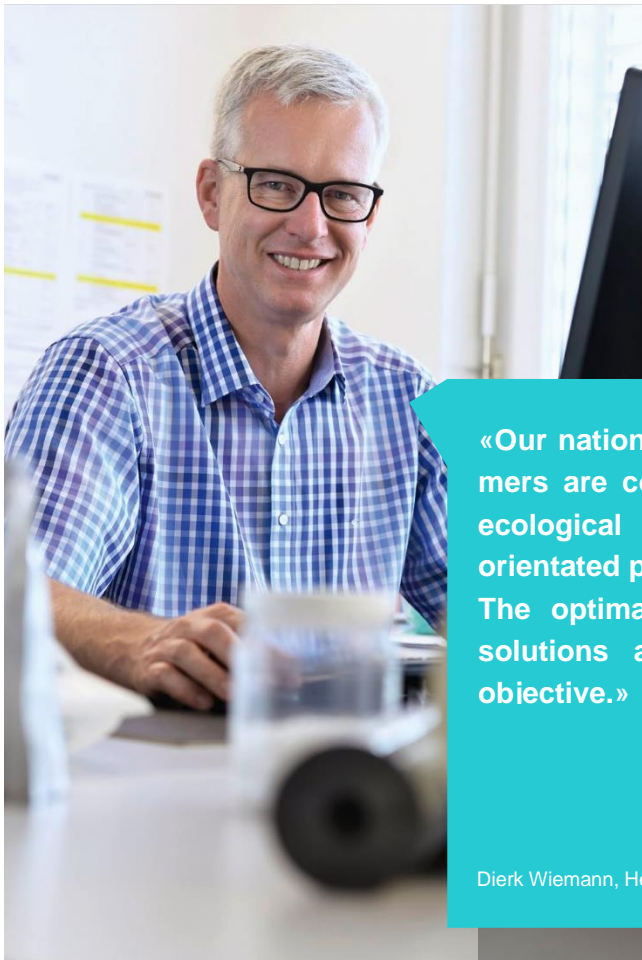
Monika Aeberli, Internal Sales Department

«Our CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral production makes me tremendously proud and, together with our GENPROTECT®-Family, meets the requirements of our customers who are concerned by environmental sustainability.»

Michael Wettstein, Packaging Consultant

Internal communication is important for us – and not just for the optimal functioning of internal processes and to ensure order-related information is complete for each order. Cooperation within and between the teams is of equal importance. It is this cooperation that assures a successful product at the end of the production line.

Equally important is internal know-how. Anyone who is perceived internally as an expert and as a committed project partner has reached a high level of job satisfaction. In addition, if personal convictions – in this case of an ecological nature – coincide with company objectives, we are close to achieving the optimum.



«Our national and international customers are constantly looking for both ecological and economical, future-orientated packaging solutions. The optimal matching of packaging solutions and -machines is a key objective.»

Dierk Wiemann, Head of Development

A high-standard quality laboratory and a high level of technical know-how allow us to solve demanding packaging problems in terms of barrier, aroma protection, optimum running properties during packaging and ecology.

Committed contacts with all parties involved, such as film producers and machine manufacturers, form the basis for an optimal result and thus the reduction of waste. It is our concern to continuously reduce the footprint of packaging and thus make an important contribution to CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.



# OUR PATH TO CO<sub>2</sub>-NEUTRAL PRODUCTION

## OR: PACKAGING – A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO AN OPTIMISED CARBON FOOTPRINT!

Our mission statement describes our principles and constitutes the basis of our sustainability strategy. One of its tenets says, «We are building our future – we act responsibly towards society and the environment» constitutes the basis of our sustainability strategy.

In 1999, in collaboration with various specialists, amongst others a team from the University of Stuttgart, we installed a Biofilter on our factory roof. Natural materials such as bark and wood shavings are used in biologically decomposing solvent-laden process emissions and permitting their ecological disposal.

Soon after, we installed a regenerative incineration plant («Regenerative Thermal Oxidiser»), with a volume of 25,000 m<sup>3</sup> to complement the Biofilter. The printing presses are programmed to ensure that the RTO has precedence over the Biofilter. The reclaimed heat is channelled back via a heat exchanger into the existing thermal oil network.

These two systems are supported by a previously commissioned closed heating/cooling circuit, which minimises water consumption and optimises energy consumption through heat exchangers as well as by a detailed sorting and disposal system for all industrial waste materials.

A 277 m<sup>2</sup> photovoltaic solar panel system on the roof of the production department followed in 2009, covering approx. 6 % of the electricity needs of the company.

Two years later, we launched our environmental programme «Packaging and the Environment», in which we drew together all the strands of our prior ecological endeavours and investments. Around CHF 5 million of investments in recent years have reduced energy consumption per produced unit by 33 %. This striking development has only been made possible through rigorous implementation of environmentally sustainable measures in production processes



O. KLEINER AG production facility



Regenerative Thermal Oxidation



Photovoltaic solar panels



Biofilter plant on the factory roof

and in product development.

Our objective of product development is to optimise products in such a way that all avoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be prevented or, where not entirely possible, can at least be reduced. All unavoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from every production process were offset in co-operation with our long-standing partner myclimate in certified international projects – international projects because climate change is a global problem.

Issuing from the above mentioned process, the innovation «Carbon Neutral Packaging» was launched in 2011. The product also won over the jury of the Zürcher Kantonalbank (ZKB) who, in January 2012, conferred on us their Sustainability Award.

Since January 1, 2016, our production processes have been completely CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral.

Until December 31, 2022, we utilised exclusively 100 % green electricity and 30 % of our gas requirements were biogas. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the remaining gas consumption and other unavoidable CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were offset in a myclimate project. At the 2016 climate summit in Paris, UN-Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon referred to this project, chosen by us, as a «game changing global climate activity» and bestowed on it the «Momentum for Change Award». It provided families in rural areas of Tanzania with clean electricity from simple, efficient solar systems.



Since January 1, 2023, the next important step in our environmental strategy was taken – since then, 100 % biogas has been used in addition to the previous 100 % green electricity. For our customers, this means that we can completely dispense with carbon offsetting – we cover our entire CO<sub>2</sub> requirements with renewable energies.

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**KEYFIGURES OVERVIEW 2023:**

<b>Employees:</b>	82	<b>female:</b>	21	<b>male:</b>	61
<b>Age pattern:</b>		<b>21 – 30 years:</b>	10 %	<b>31 – 64 years:</b>	90 %
<b>Average:</b>	47.1 years				
<b>Part-time:</b>	13 (agreements with 50 % - 95 %)				
<b>Total years of service:</b>	929 years	<b>average:</b>	11.3 years		
<b>Total nations:</b>	13				
<b>Total energy demand (consumption):</b>		2,657,612 kWh			
- thereof produced solar-energy:		47,827 kWh			
- thereof purchased:					
- eco-power:		2,004,080 kWh			
- bio-gas:		605,705 kWh			
<b>Recovered energy from sustainable measures:</b>				<b>35 %</b>	
<b>Process-related waste material to total:</b>		429,240 kg			
<b>Total CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions non-compensated in the company:</b>				<b>0 %</b>	