

# **KACO Group** Sustainability Report 2023

# Table of contents

1.	For	reword by the management	2
2.	Cor	mpany	
:	2.1.	Presentation of the KACO Group	
:	2.2.	KACO in figures	5
:	2.3.	Products and production	5
:	2.4.	E-mobility	6
3.	En	vironment	7
;	3.1.	Climate change	7
;	3.2.	Waste and Wastewater	
	Wa	aste	
	Wa	astewater	14
4.	Soc	cial	
4	4.1.	Health and safety at work	
	Mandatory examinations		23
	Exa	aminations offered	23
	Opt	tional examinations	23
	Oce	cupational diseases	23
	Hea	alth promotion activities	23
4	4.2.	Education and training	
4	4.3.	External and internal involvement	
4	4.4.	Suppliers and customers	25
5.	Go	vernance	
į	5.1.	Impact of the organisation on sustainability	
į	5.2.	Sustainability risks and opportunities	
6.	Cor	mpany Guidelines	
(	5.1.	Code of Conduct	
(	6.2.	Company Policy	
(	5.3.	KACO Anti-corruption guidelines	
(	5.4.	Policy Statement Human Rights Strategy	
Le	gal No	otice	

# 1. Foreword by the management

Sustainable management is an integral part of our corporate philosophy which provides for the harmonisation of economic, ecological and social responsibility.

Our employees play a central role in this synergism. We understand the full support and enhancement of their performance and motivation as the basis of our company's success.

For this reason, all our products and processes in the company are designed in such a way that they are not only highly economical, but also do not jeopardise or impair the health of our employees and protect the environment. We consistently apply this approach not only to us, but also to our supply chain and our customers.

This environmental orientation, which is derived from our guidelines such as the Company Policy or the Code of Conduct, strings through all areas of the company originating in the management team. Embodying the harmonic concept of an economical use of all operating and environmental resources while respecting the human rights on all levels in the organisation we will succeed in the realisation of our ecological, economic and social objectives.

Our fundamental and guiding tasks in this endeavour are the continuous, systematic identification of opportunities for improvement, the creation of a positive attitude towards consistent change and the systematic training and information of our employees, suppliers and customers with regard to social, environmental and occupational safety aspects.

As it is important to us to show clearly that sustainability does not automatically mean higher costs, but can also lead to sustainable savings, we in particular engage in projects that are both ecologically valuable and economically viable. Compliance of legal requirements are statutory for us and all suppliers.

# 2. Company

## 2.1. Presentation of the KACO Group

The KACO Group, with its headquarter in Kirchardt, is an independent company of the Zhongding Group with a corporate culture characterised by medium-sized companies.

We are a leading global supplier of sealing systems and an experienced rubber-to-metal processing expert with a strong presence in all relevant markets.

Our product portfolio includes sealing systems, in particular rotary shaft seals, mechanical seals and seals for pneumatics and hydraulics, shaft grounding rings and components for batteries and fuel cells. Our main customers are in the automotive, engine and pump, household goods and general industrial sectors.

Our expertise is in the development of sealing systems, electric drive and fuel cell components and materials, and their manufacture using the following main processes:

- Elastomer manufacturing (blending components into elastomer materials)
- Metal fabrication (stamping and forming)
- Component surface treatment (binder application, activation, etc.)
- Vulcanisation processes
- Assembly processes
- Production of moulds, tools and equipment for the KACO Group

We operate an integrated management system certified to ISO 9001, IATF 16949, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 and audited according to TISAX.

Our basic understanding includes sustainable management. This means balancing economic, environmental and social responsibility in all our activities, in our supply chain and with our customers.

Our values are based on national and international laws, conventions and guidelines, such as the principles of the UN Global Compact, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas.

It goes without saying that we use natural resources as sparingly and prudently as possible in our production processes, products and services, and that we respect human rights and dignity.

We recognise our responsibility for the environment, climate change and human rights through the design and ongoing development of all products and processes throughout their lifecycle.

We focus on reducing energy consumption, increasing energy efficiency and continuously increasing the use of renewable energy to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

We also aim to reduce freshwater consumption and treat wastewater to maintain water and groundwater quality.

We also manage conflict minerals and critical materials responsibly and reduce the use of materials to minimise waste and further close the value-added loop.

Our goal is to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions Scope 1 and 2 by 2039. For this purpose, environmental and climate data is collected and analysed internally and at our suppliers, for example to determine and continuously improve the carbon footprint of products.

Data is collected, calculated, analysed and reported in accordance with the applicable norms and standards of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol).

We use chemicals responsibly, in particular to protect the environment and employees, and dispose of chemical residues in a responsible manner where they cannot be avoided or recycled.

We comply with regulations on banned and declarable substances such as ELV, REACH and RoHS.

The KACO Group consists of five legally independent companies. In addition to the headquarter, KACO GmbH + Co KG, in Kirchardt, Germany, these are the companies:

- KACO Dichtungstechnik GesmbH in St. Michael/ Austria
- KACO Hungary Kft. in Enese/ Hungary
- KACO Anhui Sealing Systems Co., Ltd./ China
- KACO Wuxi Sealing Systems Co., Ltd./ China

The Executive Board is responsible for management, compliance with legal requirements and corporate guidelines. The specialist departments advise on the strategic direction of the company and the implementation of responsibilities.

We have prepared a sustainability self-assessment and a greenhouse gas emissions self-assessment, which we update on reputable platforms recognised by our customers. The platform operators review and assess the self-assessments and provide information for continuous improvement.

KACO was established in Germany in 1914. The new administration building in Heilbronn (Germany) was completed in 1966, followed by the construction of the production facility in Kirchardt (Germany) in 1976. The Austrian plant in St. Michael was established in 1983. Another milestone was the inauguration of the Talheim (Germany) subsidiary in 1991. The Hungarian plant in Enese was established in 1996. In 2008, the first Chinese KACO plant was opened in Wuxi. In 2014, 80% of KACO's shares were acquired by Zhongding and KACO opened the second production site in Ninguuo, China. In 2018, the German plants were consolidated at the Kirchardt plant and Kirchardt became the new company headquarters. Finally in 2019, the remaining 20% of KACO shares were acquired from Zhongding.

## 2.2. KACO in figures

The majority of our revenues are generated from the development and sale of customised products. The following economic effects have been extracted from our income statement:

sales 208.000 189.000 211.000 220.000 247.000	in kEUR	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	sales	208.000	189.000	211.000	220.000	247.000
investments 22.000 10.000 11.000 11.000 15.000	investments	22.000	10.000	11.000	11.000	15.000

Table 1: financial data

## 2.3. Products and production

Higher performance, higher efficiency, better environmental compatibility, far reaching sustainability - our sealing systems fulfil a wide range of sealing tasks in international automotive engineering. With their high quality, durability and functionality, our sealing systems and components make an important contribution to the success of our customers, helping them to secure and enhance their technological and economic competitiveness. Our highly engineered sealing elements and components are used in vehicles from the engine (combustion and electric) to the powertrain and auxiliaries. With reliable functionality, high durability, wear resistance and minimal friction, they make a decisive contribution to safe, comfortable, fuel-efficient and emissions-reduced driving.





## 2.4. E-mobility

We develop solutions for present and future e-mobility challenges together with our customers. The focus is on sealing, power dissipation, friction reduction, temperature management and venting. We also develop other components for batteries and fuel cells.

Many of our solutions are already in production in today's electric and hybrid vehicles.



Source: KACO

# 3. Environment

## 3.1. Climate change

Planet earth has always been experiencing climate change. Because these warmings and cold phases have always developed very slowly, nature has always had time to prepare for the changes that were to come. At present, however, the Earth is facing human-induced global warming. This is happening very quickly compared to previous changes and could have catastrophic consequences for the environment, animals and humans. Over the past 100 years, scientists have measured an average temperature increase of about 0.8°C. By 2100, climate change is expected to have impacted an increase of up to 6.5°C, if no action is taken. In the Paris Agreement, many countries committed to limiting global warming to a maximum increase of 2°C, preferably 1.5°C, as even the temperature increase of 2°C could have serious consequences, such as centennial flooding, droughts and devastating hurricanes.

The two main causes of climate change are CO<sub>2</sub> and methane emissions.

In recognition of this serious development, we have set ourselves the goal of becoming  $CO_2$  neutral by 2039. To achieve this, we started switching to green electricity in 2014 and continue to make progress.



Figure 4: Our Path to CO<sub>2</sub> Neutrality Source: KACO

This enabled us to save around 5,000,000 kg of  $CO_2$  in 2023. With the planned measures for 2024, we will be able to increase the savings to around 6,000,000 kg of  $CO_2$ .



Figure 5: CO<sub>2</sub> Savings from 2020-2023 & Estimated CO<sub>2</sub> Savings in 2024 Source: KACO

The 'green electricity' used is made up of two components: the 'green electricity' purchased and the 'green electricity' produced by our PV systems on our roofs in Kirchardt (Germany), St. Michael (Austria) and Wuxi (China).



Figure 6: CO<sub>2</sub> Savings in 2023 Source: KACO



Figure 7: Photovoltaic system in Kirchardt Source: Picture taken by Friedrich Lösch (KACO)

Our energy consumption is broken down as shown in the table below. The energy mix at the Kirchardt and Enese sites in 2022 and 2023 was affected by restrictions on the use of gas due to the Russian embargo. These restrictions had to be compensated by using other energy sources, which had an impact on  $CO_2$  emissions.

energy consumption [kWh]	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Electricity (total purchased)	32.800.000	28.200.000	30.500.000	31.900.000	34.600.000
Electricity (own production PV)	300.000	600.000	2.400.000	2.400.000	2.300.000
Electricity (own production CHP) <sup>1</sup>	100.000	400.000	400.000	300.000	400.000
Electricity from renewable sources <sup>2</sup>	11.300.000	10.400.000	13.700.000	13.800.000	13.800.000
Heating (natural gas) St. Michael (district heating)	4.400.000	4.300.000	5.000.000	4.300.000	4.200.000
steam (Wuxi)	1.100.000	1.000.000	1.200.000	1.100.000	1.200.000
heating (fuel oil)	9.000	100.000	0	0	0
Total energy consumption <sup>3</sup>	38.700.000	34.500.000	39.400.000	40.000.000	42.700.000
CO₂ Scope 1 (to/100t.€ sales)	0,4	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
CO₂ Scope 2 (to/100t.€ sales)	6	5	5	5	5

1) CHP is operated with natural gas

2) Electricity from renewable sources according to electricity supplier

3) Total energy consumption including semi-finished products and rubber for external processing sites

Table 2: energy use

We document and maintain information on climate change, energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the Carbon Discloser Database (CDP), a non-governmental organisation. The data is analysed and assessed annually by CDP specialists.

We have significantly improved our rating from 'D-' in 2022 to 'C' in 2023.



Figure 8: Components of our rubber compounds Source: KACO

The raw materials and components listed in the table below reflect the use in the annual production of the products in our portfolio. We stamp metal parts inhouse in Kirchardt and also supply the plants in Enese and St Michael, but we also purchase finished metal parts from external suppliers. For the parts produced inhouse, the purchased strip material is taken into account. For the purchased parts, the part weight is taken into account.

In regards to our rubber, a certain proportion of the demand is produced inhouse at the Kirchardt plant where the rest is sourced externally. Some of the rubber we produce ourselves is also sold to third parties.

Secondary raw materials are only used in the manufacture of our products to the extent that they are already a part of the purchased raw material, e.g. scrap steel or stainless steel. Currently, it is not technically possible to use secondary raw materials in the rubber materials we use.

However, we have included requirements to increase the use of secondary or renewable raw materials in our supplier requirements and will continue to pursue their implementation.

mass [to]	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
steel	7.600	7.200	8.700	7.500	8.400
stainless steel	500	500	700	500	600
aluminum / other metals	43	151	230	220	210
plastic	241	223	314	292	320
rubber production	1.900	1.700	2.100	1.900	1.900
ceramics	75	64	89	68	67
operating materials	20	20	22	18	19
packaging paper / cardboard	900	800	1.100	1.000	1.200

Table 3: Material Usage from 2019

We have systematically identified and assessed the environmental impact of our products and processes. For this purpose, we have developed the Environmental Process and Product Impact Assessment policy, which is embedded in our management system. The assessment takes into account the entire product lifecycle, from raw material extraction to production, transport, use and recycling. In this way, decisions can be made at the product development stage to ensure that the supply chain, production, product use and disposal are as environmentally friendly as possible.

As part of the process evaluation of our processes, environmental risks have been identified and assessed on a site-specific basis. The aim is to minimise potential risks as far as possible, taking into account the prevailing conditions (technical, economic, etc.).

These assessments and the presentation of the results also serve to promote environmental awareness among employees.

These assessments and the presentation of the results also help to promote environmental awareness among employees and help to identify easily possible potential for improvement in order to continuously improve environmental performance.



Figure 9: Life path observation Source: IMOA Automotive Case Study, page 3

## 3.2. Waste and Wastewater

## Waste

Reducing the amount of waste, particularly hazardous waste, is another area in which we are active. We have three approaches

- 1.) Economical use of raw materials by reducing input weights
- 2.) Circular economy
- 3.) Substitution of hazardous materials

The total amount of waste generated in 2023 is shown in the following table

	to
total amount of waste	4.150
total amount of hazardous waste	630
total amount of non-hazardous waste	3.520

Table 4: overview of total waste quantities



Diagram 1: Waste Quantities Subdivided in Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste

	to	
recycled	3.640	
incinerated	505	
landfilled	5	

Table 5: Types of Disposal

As shown in the diagram below, over 87% of materials are recycled.



Diagram 2: Waste Disposal

The development of waste in recent years could not be shown due to differences in data collection between the companys' sites. Data collection will be standardised group-wide from 2023.

Waste disposal is carried out at all our sites by authorised companies in accordance with local laws and regulations. No incidents (spills, leaks, etc.) were recorded or reported by third parties in connection with the collection, storage and transportation of waste that had an impact on the environment, occupational safety or legal or regulatory requirements.

## Wastewater

In order to maintain the quality of water bodies and groundwater, we reduce our fresh water consumption and treat waste water to comply with legal, regulatory or waterworks limits.

There are two types of water consumption at KACO

<u>Process water</u> - used mainly for surface treatment of metal parts (phosphating), cleaning of vulcanisation moulds and lapping.

Sanitary water - fresh water used for sanitary purposes.

plant	usage of water in m <sup>3</sup>
Kirchardt (Germany)	5.200
St. Michael (Austria)	2.200
Enese (Hungary)	3.200
Wuxi (China)	43.500
Anhui (China)	46.300

Table 6: Usage of Water

In the Chinese plants we operate phosphating plants, which are responsible for significantly higher water consumption than in the European plants.

In our European plants, process water is treated internally in treatment plants so that it can be discharged into the public sewerage system and fed into municipal treatment plants for final purification. Process water from the Chinese plants is transferred to authorised disposal companies and treated under official supervision.



Figure 10: Waste water treatment Source: Picture taken by Friedrich Lösch (KACO)

Compliance with effluent limits (e.g. pH, suspended solids, etc.) is monitored by internal and external controls. Waste water is discharged into the local sewerage system.

Surface water either seeps into the ground or is discharged to the public sewer. The staff car park at the Kirchardt site is largely gravelled to further infiltrate rainwater.

Neither our wastewater nor surface water has had a negative impact on water bodies or groundwater.

Detailed recording of wastewater volumes will be implemented at all our sites by 2024.

# 4. Social

The KACO Group employs around 1800 people at five locations worldwide.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total workforce	1833	1701	1730	1686	1800
blue collar workers	1321	1202	1206	1191	1160
female	61%	60%	59%	58%	60%
male	39%	40%	41%	42%	40%
white collar workers	455	434	439	429	449
female	38%	37%	39%	39%	39%
male	62%	63%	61%	61%	61%
with disability	31	34	32	31	29
Additional leased workers	249	230	217	214	259

Table 7: Breakdown of employees



Diagram 3 & 4: Blue and White Collar Workers

KACO GmbH + Co KG and KACO Dichtungstechnik GesmbH are companies subject to collective bargaining agreements and pay their employees in accordance with the agreements negotiated between the employer and the trade unions (collective bargaining agreement or tariff agreement), in individual special cases in accordance with the relevant minimum wage legislation. Compliance with contractual agreements is monitored by the local works councils.

KACO Hungary Kft. pays the statutory minimum wage with additional regional bonuses. Here, too, the works council monitors compliance with the agreements.

The Chinese plants pay at least the legal minimum wage. Employee interests are also represented by employee representatives at the two Chinese sites.

There are no differences in benefits for full-time, part-time or temporary employees. All are treated equally.

The KACO Code of Conduct pledges all KACO suppliers to comply with the law including minimum wage requirements.

Most of the KACO department heads can look back on a long history in the company and many have gained their management skills here, within the company. They therefore come from within the organisation and have not had to be recruited externally.

The turnover rate is highly dependent on the location and is significantly influenced by the economic performance of the country, the local wage level and the location of the site (e.g. proximity to the border).

entrances 2023		leavers 2023	
female	172	female	135
male	165	male	147
under 30 years old	130	under 30 years old	85
30-50 years old	188	30-50 years old	161
over 50 years old	19	over 50 years old	32

Table 8: Admissions and Fluctuation by Age and Gender



Figure 11: Parental leave Source: Adobe iStock (Data No.: 330865762)

The parental leave programme is used by employees groupwide. The numbers are shown in the table below.

	KACO Group
parental leave entitlement	yes
parental leave taken in 2023	43
return after parental leave in 2023	36

Table 9: Return and Retention Rate after Parental Leave

KACO is committed to the inclusion of people with disabilities in the world of work.



Figure 12: Make Things Happen Source: kvhs-wesermarsch.de

In Germany, private and public employers with more than 20 places of employment are legally obliged to fill at least 5% of their positions with severely disabled or other eligible people. KACO GmbH + Co. KG exceeds this legal requirement with a disability quota of 5,8%. The cooperation with the sheltered

workshop in Heilbronn, the sheltered workshop in Lichtenstein and the Krautheimer Werkstätten gGmbH as well as the cooperation between KACO Dichtungstechnik GesmbH and the sheltered workshop in St. Margarethen is a manifestation of the integration of disabled people.



Figure 13: Diversity Source: Adobe iStock (Data No.: 429382284)

With five locations in four countries, KACO is an international company. Diversity is an important aspect of KACO's philosophy and is reflected in our workforce.

plant	number of nations
Kirchardt (Germany)	23
St. Michael (Austria)	6
Enese (Hungary)	3
Wuxi (China)	1
Anhui (China)	1

Table 10: nations

KACO is committed to the principle of equal opportunity and rejects any form of discrimination.

In particular, employees may not be discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnic or cultural origin, religion or ideology, sexual orientation or trade union membership. Unacceptable treatment of employees, such as psychological distress or personal harassment, is strictly rejected by KACO, both in its own companies and in the KACO supply chains.

Violations can be reported through the whistleblower system.

No incidents were reported in fiscal year 2023.

## 4.1. Health and safety at work

The health and safety of all employees is a top priority at KACO.

All KACO employees are called upon to maintain and improve occupational health and safety. Employee representatives are involved in various committees, such as the "Health Circle", "Improvement Suggestion Scheme", etc., as well as in occupational safety inspections. We also cooperate with the supervisory authorities and public bodies (Employer's Liability Insurance Association (BG), General Accident Insurance Institution (AUVA), etc.) in a trusting and results-oriented manner.

Occupational, commuting and leased workers' accidents in 2023		
total number of accidents 64		
of which reportable	18	
of which reportable (leased workers)	4	
of which reportable (commuting)	1	
of which non-reportable	29	
of which non-reportable (leased workers)	6	
of which non-reportable (commuting)	6	
near-miss accidents	7	
days lost total 460		
of which lost by leased workers	38	

Table 11: Overview accidents



Diagram 5: Reportable and non-reportable accidents



Diagram 6: Days lost



**Diagram 7: Classification of accidents** 

Risk assessments are carried out and work instructions drawn up to identify hazards in the workplace and to introduce improvements where necessary. If hazardous substances are handled at work, the occupational physician must be involved in the assessment and approval of the workplace. In addition to specialists, employees or their representatives are also involved in these processes.



Figure 14: Workplace Wellness Source: Adobe iStock: (Data No.: 405252041)

#### Mandatory examinations

All examinations required by law or by accident insurance companies are carried out either by KACO's company physicians or by authorised medical services.

During the pre-employment medical examinations, 5 people were found to have health problems that prevented them from working at KACO.

No abnormalities were found during the regular mandatory examinations, ranging from vision and hearing tests to toluene tests.

## Examinations offered

In addition to the mandatory examinations, KACO is required by law or accident insurance companies to offer certain examinations to its employees, such as eye examinations for those who work with computer screens. In contrast to the mandatory examinations, employees can, but are not obliged to, make use of these examinations.

No abnormalities have been found in the examinations offered.

## **Optional examinations**

Employees may have medical examinations that are directly related to their employment, e.g. shift work, carried out by KACO's company physicians or by authorised medical services. No abnormalities have been found.

## **Occupational diseases**

No work-related illnesses were recorded in 2023.

## Health promotion activities

A wide range of health promotion activities have been carried out at each KACO site. These include general measures such as nutritional advice, vaccination programmes against influenza, TBE, tetanus or Covid, eye tests, discounts on the purchase of glasses, discounts for stays at health resorts, and workrelated measures such as the correct way of lifting and carrying loads, design of computer workstations, etc.



# Mit Betrieblicher Gesundheitsförderung **auf Montag freuen**



Figure 15: Austrian Health Insurance Source: Österreichische Gesundheitskasse

The KACO plant in St. Michael is taking part in a campaign organised by the Austrian Health Insurance Fund to establish and sustainably increase workplace health promotion.

## 4.2. Education and training

Training and further education is a strategic topic at KACO. In 2023, a total of 16 people (of which four are female and twelve are male) began an apprenticeship and three male students started a dual study programme at the KACO sites in Kirchardt, St. Michael and Enese. In addition to initial training, advanced professional training also plays an important role at KACO. In the year under review, a total of 1,041 days of seven hours each were spent on training and further education. This breaks down to a total of 7,287 hours and an average training time of 4.05 hours per employee.

A wide range of training courses, from occupational safety, environmental protection, equal treatment and the KACO Principles to energy scouts or sustainability managers, are organised internally or externally to further qualify employees, using all training formats, online, classroom, e-learning, etc. Annual discussions are held with employees about their training needs.

Employees are interviewed annually about their operational performance, planned development and planned training and development activities. The effectiveness of the training provided is evaluated at these meetings at the latest. Skills levels and the effectiveness of training are monitored using appropri-ate KPIs.

## 4.3. External and internal involvement

In addition to supporting its own employees, KACO also supports various clubs, associations and private individuals. For example, the Kirchardt plant supported the Kirchardt kindergarten with a donation, the St. Michael plant launched a fundraising campaign for a colleague who had suffered a house fire, the Enese plant donated to the Audi Hungaria School - dual commercial training and the Ninguuo plant made a donation to an orphan for his school education.

KACO also supports various associations and organisations such as the Wirtschaftsvereinigung der deutschen Kautschukindustrie (wdk), the Verband der Automobilindustrie (VDA), the Hohenloher Modell etc. through membership fees.

## 4.4. Suppliers and customers

The entire KACO Group has more than 10,000 registered suppliers. More than 450 suppliers are essential to the product development process and are located around the world as shown in the following diagram.



**Diagram 8: Regional Distribution of Key Suppliers** 

Sustainability along the entire supply chain can only be achieved if we constantly work on communicating this issue. Since 2017, KACO has sent a supplier self-assessment questionnaire to all key suppliers to assess sustainability aspects. From 2021, suppliers will be asked to complete a self-assessment on a recognised platform (NQC), which will be professionally analysed and evaluated by the platform operator and will show the supplier's potential for improvement. In 2023, suppliers will receive general (Scope 1 and 2) and material-specific targets for greenhouse gas reduction and the use of secondary raw materials. Suppliers are also asked to provide their CO2 footprint when submitting a quotation. The KACO Code of Conduct and the KACO Corporate Policy (see appendix), in which suppliers are obliged to comply with human rights, environmental laws, sustainability requirements, etc., are an integral part of the contract.

In 2023, the KACO Group operated in a total of 40 countries, with the majority of customers being suppliers to the automotive and commercial vehicle industries. The regional distribution is shown in the following diagram.



Diagram 9: Regional Distribution of Key Customers

In order to reduce downstream greenhouse gas emissions, KACO has started to identify the energy requirements of our products over their entire life cycle and to incorporate the results into future developments.

Although the German Supply Chain Protection Act (LkSG) is not relevant to KACO, KACO has started to implement the requirements in the KACO management system.

## 5. Governance

## 5.1. Impact of the organisation on sustainability

KACO is a reliable partner in the automotive supply industry and for all stakeholders.

We act in accordance with the ethical principles formulated in our Code of Conduct and the KACO Corporate Policy. KACO strictly rejects corruption and unfair competition. The rules of conduct are set out in our anti-corruption guidelines. We implement the legal requirements for data protection. We have also appointed an external data protection officer to support us in this. We have also implemented customer requirements for information security in our management system and completed the TISAX (Trusted Information Security Assessment Exchange) audit of the KACO factories in the year under review. KACO was not notified of any breaches of the corporate principles listed for the year under review.



The ENX Association supports with TISAX (Trusted Information Security Assessment Exchange) on behalf of VDA the common acceptance of Information Security Assessments in the automotive industry. The TISAX Assessments are conducted by audit providers that demonstrate their qualification at regular intervals. TISAX and TISAX results are not intended for general public.

For the KACO GmbH + Co. KG confidentiality, availability and integrity of information have great value. We have taken extensive measures on protection of sensitive and/or confidential information. Therefore, we follow the question catalogue of information security of the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA ISA). The Assessment was conducted by an audit provider, in this case the TISAX audit provider DEKRA Certification GmbH. The result is exclusively retrievable over the ENX portal:

Scope ID:	SYX5CX
Assessment ID:	L4VCV9
https://portal.enx.com	/en-US/TISAX/tisaxassessmentresults

Figure 16: TISAX Results Source: KACO

Sustainability self-assessments have been created and maintained on the NQC platform for all KACO sites. The platform operators review and evaluate the information and uploaded documents from a sustainability perspective in the following areas

• Corporate governance

- Human Rights and Working Conditions
- Occupational health and safety
- Business ethics
- the environment
- Responsible Supply Chain Management
- Responsible sourcing of raw materials

and provide KACO with feedback for improvement. We have achieved a B "Green" rating for all KACO plants in 2023.



Source: KACO

## 5.2. Sustainability risks and opportunities

Our employees are mentioned in the first introductory words of the management as the foundation of our company. Maintaining, protecting and strengthening this base prevents the loss of qualified employees and thus the loss of know-how. We see the creation and safeguarding of attractive and secure jobs and apprenticeships as an opportunity to develop ourselves and our employees.

In recent years, sustainability has come to the forefront of politics, which is changing our environment by directly influencing KACO, for example in the form of targets for CO2 neutrality, or indirectly by steering financial flows. We see these new circumstances as an opportunity to expand KACO's market position through our innovative strength, for example by developing e-mobility as a new market for KACO. Examples from our product portfolio are listed in section 2.4.

With the conversion of our plant in St. Michael to 100% green electricity and sustainably produced district heating, KACO has already taken the first steps on the long road to CO2 neutrality in 2014. KACO is continuing on this path. At our plant in Wuxi, we produce green electricity with the PV system we use in production, and at the Kirchardt site we will use 100% green electricity from 2024. As these examples show, KACO is also taking up this challenge and sees it as an opportunity to strengthen its position by improving its environmental performance and positioning KACO as an attractive employer.

The changes in the environment, some of which are listed above, are constantly and systematically monitored and evaluated by KACO using the PESTEL method (Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technological, Ecological, Legal with the additional topics of Industry and Digitalisation) and listed in the context of the organisation. Measures are defined for all issues that have a high priority following the opportunity and risk assessment, and their implementation and effectiveness is monitored by management.

## 6. Company Guidelines

## 6.1. Code of Conduct



Code of Conduct	RD_F110_08 Edition 7
行为准则	22.03.2023
Magatartáskódex	page 6 of 18

#### Introduction

KACO sees itself as a company with a culture shaped by medium-sized businesses. Our goal is to be a global leader with a strong presence in all relevant markets. Our basic understanding includes sustainable management. By this we mean the harmony between economic, ecological and social responsibility in all our activities as well as in the entire supply chain.

Our values are based on national and international laws, conventions and guidelines, such as the principles of the UN Global Compact, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the relevant conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas.

This Code of Conduct defines our minimum requirements with regard to human rights, labor standards, occupational safety, health protection, sustainability, climate and environmental protection and business ethics. KACO and every employee (f/m/d) of KACO are obligated to comply with all legal and official regulations as well as the requirements stated herein.

KACO suppliers and contractors (hereinafter referred to as "Suppliers") are obliged to recognize this Code of Conduct and to define corresponding principles within their company and towards their suppliers and to pass them on in the supply chain.

#### 1. human rights

Internationally recognized human rights, such as the "UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights", the principles of the "UN Global Compact" and the internationally recognized standards of the ILO, are respected and compliance with them is required at KACO and throughout the entire supply chain. Furthermore, we require our suppliers to actively cooperate and support us in identifying and classifying potential risks, for example through self-disclosure, on-site assessments or, if necessary, through commissioned third parties, in order to actively prevent the impairment of human rights and to eliminate known impairments within the scope of due diligence. KACO reserves the right to review the implementation and effectiveness of these measures.

KACO recognizes the special rights of minorities and indigenous peoples as well as women's rights.

Ensuring public safety and order is a task of the state security authorities. Insofar as the use of private security forces can lead to human rights violations, private security forces are not to be used for this purpose.

#### 2. compliance with laws

Compliance with applicable laws, regulations, equivalent rules and contractual agreements as well as with the values and principles of conduct additionally defined herein are mandatory requirements for KACO and all KACO employees (f/m/d) as well as for all suppliers. This also includes the respect of property, land, forest and water rights as well as the refusal of forced evictions. Violations can lead to considerable damage and result in serious consequences for all stakeholders. Therefore, they will not be tolerated by KACO.

#### 3. data and information protection, intellectual property

We protect and respect the personal data and privacy of our employees (f/m/d) just as conscientiously as the personal data of our business partners. We are equally conscientious in protecting confidential information of our customers, suppliers and our company. KACO complies with all applicable laws regarding the protection of personal data and trade secrets in all countries where business activities are conducted. All KACO employees (f/m/d) are required to observe trade secrets, respect intellectual property and protect personal data. We also require this from all suppliers in the supply chain.

MK/A/C/0

#### 4. counterfeit parts

KACO requires its suppliers to establish and maintain effective methods and processes to identify and minimize the risk of introducing counterfeit parts and materials into the supply chain. When counterfeit parts or materials are identified, they must be reliably secured and removed from the supply chain. The recipients of counterfeit parts or materials must be informed immediately.

#### 5. working conditions, equal opportunities, and diversity

Recruitment of employees (f/m/d) is carried out according to ethical principles, i.e. lawfully in compliance with international labor standards and in a fair and transparent manner, respecting human rights.

Any form of child labor is rejected. The local legal regulations, but at least the regulations of ILO Convention 138 on the minimum age for employment and on the prohibition of child labor, must be observed. The stricter regulations are to be applied. It is of highest priority to protect children from being forced to do harmful work. No overtime or night work may be required of juvenile workers (f/m/d).

Forced and compulsory labor, debt bondage, human trafficking and modern slavery are rejected. No one is employed or forced to work against their will. The withholding of identity documents or entry papers from workers (w/m/d) or involvement in this is prohibited.

Only workers (f/m/d) who are legally allowed to work in the country may be employed. Freedom of movement in the workplace when entering or leaving the facilities provided by the company must not be unreasonably restricted.

All employees (f/m/d) may terminate their employment contracts at any time in compliance with the contractual, collectively agreed or statutory notice periods.

Recruitment fees shall not be charged to employees (f/m/d) in any manner.

In employment, the principle of equal opportunity must be upheld and any discrimination must be refrained from.

Employees (f/m/d) shall not be discriminated against on the basis of gender, race, marital status, color, national origin, nationality, disability, ethnic or cultural origin, religion or belief, union membership, age or sexual orientation. Unacceptable treatment of employees (f/m/d), such as psychological hardship or sexual and personal harassment, is rejected.

We are committed to diversity, equality and inclusion and promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workforce. Employees (f/m/d) have the right to fair remuneration. The applicable regulations on minimum wages must be observed and wages must be paid on time. Wage deductions may not be used as a disciplinary measure. Working hours and non-working hours must at least comply with the laws applicable in the respective country. Employment contract regulations must be in writing and must be available in an understandable form or language to the employees (f/m/d) as well as the future employees (f/m/d).

KACO requires its suppliers to comply with these requirements, to pass them on in the supply chain and to verify their implementation.

#### 6. occupational safety and health protection

Safety and health protection in the workplace are ensured at least within the framework of the applicable national regulations. The aim is to create and continuously improve a safe working environment in order to prevent accidents and health impairments arising from, connected with or occurring in the course of work. Employees (f/m/d) have the right to refuse unsafe work and to report working conditions that are hazardous to health. Hazards in the workplace must be analyzed and minimized as far as possible through a prioritized process of substituting technical protective measures, organizational protective measures and personal protective measures (STOP).

In occupational health and safety, prevention takes precedence over damage limitation. In case of a serious health hazard, such as a pandemic, all measures are taken to protect employees.

The facilities and accommodations for on-site employees must ensure the dignity, hygiene and safety of the individual. Their conditions must comply with national laws.



KACO complies with all legal and official regulations on occupational health and safety and also requires its suppliers to do the same.

#### 7. sustainable resource management

Sustainable value creation is based on the three pillars of economic, ecological and social responsibility in all KACO business activities.

It is our task to use natural resources for our production processes, products and services as carefully and prudently as possible. One focus here is on energy conservation and the use of renewable energies, the responsible handling of so-called conflict minerals and generally critical materials such as Mica-Minerals The use of raw materials from deep-sea mining is prohibited. Furthermore, the focus is on the economical use of fresh water and the minimization of pollution and waste. To this end, all processes are constantly optimized. We dispose of residual materials that we cannot avoid or recycle in a responsible manner and in compliance with all legal regulations. We protect soil quality, refrain from overexploitation and deforestation, and thereby

contribute to the preservation of biodiversity, species diversity, and wildlife habitats.

#### 8. environmental and climate protection

We are aware of our responsibility to protect the environment and climate, people, animals and plants. To this end, we design all processes of the product life cycle of our products, from the design of the products, production and use to disposal at the end of the cycle, to be as environmentally and health compatible as possible and continuously develop them further. We reduce energy consumption, increase energy efficiency and steadily increase the use of renewable energy to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. We ensure that no harmful noise emissions are caused by us. We reduce material use to reduce waste generation and continue to strive to close the value-added circular economy.

We comply with all legal and regulatory requirements for environmental and climate protection.

We require our suppliers to actively promote climate and environmental protection. To demonstrate and further develop the activities, we recommend the suppliers to join corresponding initiatives.

Upon request, KACO shall require its Suppliers to provide environmental and climate data such as the CO2 footprint (Scope 1-3), waste generation, water consumption, etc., including the basis of calculation for the products and services delivered to KACO. Furthermore, KACO may require Suppliers to provide the data on platforms specified by KACO.

The collection, calculation, evaluation and communication of data shall be in accordance with the applicable Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHS Protocol) norms and standards, unless other methods are specified by KACO in individual cases.

#### 9. responsible handling of chemicals

We use chemicals responsibly to protect the environment and employees (f/m/d) in particular and dispose of chemical residues that we cannot avoid or recycle in a responsible manner. We comply with regulations on banned and declarable substances such as ELV, REACH and RoHS. Our suppliers are also obliged to comply with these regulations and to provide KACO with qualified proof of this.

#### 10. social responsibility

We make an appropriate contribution to training and employment.

We encourage our employees (f/m/d) to participate in institutions and associations that serve the good of the community.

#### 11. freedom of association

The right of employees (f/m/d) to associate, join a trade union, appoint representation and be elected to such representation shall be respected. KACO grants employees (f/m/d) the



right to engage in collective bargaining to regulate working conditions and to voice their concerns.

#### 12. prohibition of corruption and bribery

The applicable anti-corruption laws must be strictly observed. No bribes or other illegal payments or monetary benefits may be offered, made or accepted. In dealings with business partners and government institutions, the interests of the company and the private interests of employees (f/m/d) on both sides are strictly separated. Actions and decisions are made free of extraneous considerations and personal interests.

#### 13. prevention against money laundering

KACO complies with legal obligations to combat money laundering and terrorist financing and also requires its suppliers to do the same.

#### 14. export control

National and international laws and regulations govern the import and export of goods and the provision of services. KACO's processes ensure that export control and sanctions laws are not violated and KACO requires the same from its suppliers.

#### 15. competition and antitrust law

We require all managers (f/m/d), employees (f/m/d) and suppliers to comply in all respects with all competition and antitrust laws that ensure the functioning of a market and thus prevent undue restrictions of competition. We require our suppliers to carry forward and ensure these expectations in the supply chain as well.

#### 16. financial responsibility and transparency

At KACO, key business processes are properly documented and relevant financial information is recorded to faithfully reflect business operations with complete reports. Employees (f/m/d) who, in the course of their work, collect or transmit accounting or financial data, calculate and transmit indicators, or manage and disseminate other types of information must ensure that such data, indicators and information are accurate, reliable and honest. KACO complies with its statutory disclosure and reporting obligations in full and on time.

#### 17. audits at suppliers

KACO and KACO's customers are generally entitled to conduct audits of suppliers and subcontractors upon prior notice and within regular working hours.

Furthermore, Suppliers are obliged to participate in self-assessments on the topics listed in the Code of Conduct on platforms specified by KACO upon request.

Suppliers are obliged to define and implement improvement measures in case of nonachievement of the targets and to check the effectiveness. KACO may verify this on site if necessary.

#### 18. handling of violations / complaints

Violations of these standards will not be tolerated. All KACO employees (f/m/d) and external stakeholders are encouraged to report any violations in KACO's business units as well as in the supply chain. Reports can be made through various channels, such as the whistleblowing system on the KACO website, confidentially to the Works Council, or to the General Manager. KACO will not tolerate any form of discrimination against anyone who makes such a report.



We also expect our suppliers to establish an appropriate complaints management system. By putting the Code of Conduct into effect, KACO's management confirms compliance with the requirements described herein.

In the event of non-compliance with any obligation under this Code of Conduct, including the withholding of audit rights, KACO reserves the right to terminate the business relationship in whole or in part with immediate effect.

#### Consent of the supplier

As a supplier to KACO, we recognize this Code of Conduct and act in accordance with the requirements set forth herein. We pass on these requirements to our suppliers in the form of this Code of Conduct or through our own equivalent code and ensure compliance through appropriate measures.

.....

Date / Signature / Company stamp

## 6.2. Company Policy



Unternehmenspolitik Company Policy 企业政策 Vállalati politika

RD\_F110\_07 Editon 11 27.07.2022 page 3 of 8

#### 1. Profitable growth Strong market position

KACO is representing a medium-sized company business culture, aiming for a global leading role with strong presence in all relevant markets. Financial success as well as economic independence are gained and ensured by sustainable growth and profit.

#### 2. Management system And continuous improvement

KACO is maintaining a management system, supporting continuous improvement of the organization, comprising quality, environment, resources, health and safety, fire and explosion protection, as well as privacy and information security. The management system is certified according to IATF 16949 and ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 and TISAX and is continuously being improved in its efficiency. Considering and implementing requirements of interested parties is mandatory to KACO. Main strate-

gic objectives in context of a successful management system are:

- Good customer relationship
- Sustainable growth
- High efficiency
- Strong team/organization
- Sustainability

Within the scope of our KACO management system we identify and implement objectives and measures which are being monitored and evaluated using key performance indicators. This approach is intended to visualize the system to our employees.

#### 3. Our demand Highest satisfaction

Highest customer satisfaction is the major guideline for KACO's activities, as well as compliant behaviour in line with all relevant legal regulations, agreements, instructions, requirements, binding commitments and operational regulations.

#### 4. Prevention of errors And protection of the environment

KACO's zero-defect policy leads to highest efficiency and standards in processes, products and services. The use of additional applications and methods for prevention of defects contributes to the success of KACO's zero-defect policy.

We are constantly improving our environmental performance and energy efficiency in order to sustainably reduce or avoid environmental pollution. We are committed to using raw materials responsibly and using energy efficiently throughout the entire product lifecycle – from design, procurement, production and use to disposal and recycling.



Unternehmenspolitik Company Policy 企业政策 Vállalati politika

RD\_F110\_07 Editon 11 27.07.2022 page 4 of 8

Information processing significantly supports all relevant strategic and operational functions and is key impact factor in KACO's task fulfilment. KACO's management system thereby ensures the confidentiality, integrity, traceability and availability of data, information and information security. Requirements of customers, suppliers, employees and their representatives, authorities and public corporations, as well as other interested parties is taken into account and included in KACO's management system. Providing interested parties with information about KACO's activities is done regularly.

KACO provides safe and healthy working conditions. By constantly improving our health and safety standards, we reduce the risk of injuries and improve illness prevention. We prefer proactive preventions than limiting damage.

#### 5. Cooperative partnership and a climate of mutual trust

KACO embodies an atmosphere of mutual trust. Our employees are recruited and trained based on their function, specific qualifications and skills. By improving our employee's qualifications we promote a high performance level and high quality results.

#### 6. KACO commits To comply with the company policy

KACO management is committed to maintain the management system, provide the necessary resources and information to achieve the goals and to review the KACO company policy regularly. Management and all employees of KACO group are obligated to follow these guidelines.

Richard Ongherth CEO Yanfang Sun CFO Gernot-Alois Feiel COO

## 6.3. KACO Anti-corruption guidelines



RD\_F110\_06 edition 3 22.02.2018 page 3 <u>of</u> 6

## KACO Anti-corruption guidelines

#### KACO Code of conduct in cases of corruption, bribery, restriction of competition and how to deal with infringements

#### Preamble

As one of the world's leading developers and manufacturers of high-precision, applicationoriented sealing solutions for the automotive and mechanical engineering industries, KACO excels through its pronounced capabilities in respect of materials and systems and its high level of innovation. For KACO, integrity in its dealings with all customers, suppliers, staff, authorities, public bodies and other interest groups is just as important.

This requirement is stated in KACO'S corporate mission statement and social standards, and it constitutes the basis for the commercial activities of the Board, management and staff.

Implementation of this standard and the conduct expected from KACO's management and staff are clarified and set out in more detail in these guidelines.

In particular, account must be taken of the following:

#### Bribery / Corruption

Bribes or other illegal payments may not be offered, made or accepted.

The granting of personal benefits (in particular those of a monetary nature such as payments and loans, including the giving of small gifts over a long period of time) to persons holding office (such as civil servants or those in public service) by KACO or its staff in order to acquire some advantage for KACO, oneself or a third party is forbidden.

Personal monetary benefits to employees of other companies in return for gaining an advantage over the competition and in commercial transactions may not be offered, promised, granted or approved. Likewise, in dealing with business partners, personal benefits of value may neither be demanded nor accepted. KACO requires of its staff that they do not accept promises of any such benefits.

The management and staff of KACO may neither offer, promise, demand, grant nor accept any gifts, payments, invitations or services in the course of business transactions which are given with the intention of influencing a business decision in an improper manner or which may give rise to a risk of the professional independence of the business partner being compromised.



RD\_F110\_06 edition 3 22.02.2018 page 4 <u>gf</u> 6

This is generally not the case in respect of gifts and invitations which are offered and received within the bounds of normal business hospitality, custom and courtesy. KACO can issue binding guidelines on the acceptance and giving of gifts and invitations to meals and events. In these, exceptions in respect of appropriate low-value and symbolic gifts, appropriate business meals and suitable events on the part of our company and business partners (customers, suppliers) can be regulated.

#### Competition law (behaviour to competitors)

KACO abides by fair competition. We comply with the applicable laws which protect and encourage competition, in particular the applicable competition laws and other laws which regulate competition.

In dealing with our competitors, these regulations particularly forbid agreements and other activities which influence prices or conditions, allocate sales areas or customers or which hinder free and open competition in an improper manner. Further, these regulations forbid agreements between customers and suppliers which are intended to limit the customer's freedom to set prices and other conditions independently (price and condition setting) when selling items on.

Examples of infringements against competition laws:

- Price/quantity/condition agreements
- Exchanging confidential market information
- Calling for a boycott of other market players

Behaviour towards market players/authorities/courts and other government and public institutions

#### What this means for our staff

Implementation of these guidelines is very important to KACO, which is why any failure to meet these obligations will be taken seriously and punished accordingly. Any infringements will result in disciplinary measures. These will depend upon the severity of the infringement and can, in extreme cases, result in extraordinary termination of your employment.

In order to ensure that these ethical guidelines on conduct are put into practice, every member of staff is required to <u>familiarise</u> him/herself with the standards and to actively put them into practice.

All KACO staff are required to report information on any offences, abuses or particular risks. In the European KACO plants, the Works Council will receive reports from staff confidentially. In the KACO plants in China, this will be dealt with by the General Manager. KACO will not tolerate any person who makes such a report being disadvantaged in any way.

#### 6.4. Policy Statement Human Rights Strategy





Policy Statement Human Rights Strategy RD\_F110\_10 Edition 1 22.06.2022 page 2 of 4

KACO is a company with a medium-sized culture that is aware of its responsibility towards respecting human rights and protecting the climate and the environment. Our values are based, among other things, on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP). We have set out these Guiding Principles and other principles in our Code of Conduct, which KACO and its suppliers and contractors (hereinafter referred to as "Suppliers") in the KACO supply chain are committed to upholding and implementing, and which guides their business activities.

KACO's management oversees the implementation of and compliance with this "Statement of Principles on Respect for Human Rights".

KACO meets its responsibility for people and the environment through appropriate and effective risk management for the above-mentioned protected goods by taking the following measures:

- The preparation of a risk analysis is a natural part of management. The identified risks are minimised through preventive measures that cover the entire company as well as our direct suppliers to a reasonable extent and after prioritisation has been carried out.
- Immediate risks to people and the environment in the direct supply chain are addressed through measures implemented without delay. In the case of serious and immediate hazards to people and the environment, we work with the direct supplier to develop an action plan to reduce and, if necessary, eliminate the hazard.
- If the action plans are not implemented or do not lead to the defined goal, we reserve the right to terminate the business relationship with the direct supplier as a last resort.
- Our suppliers are carefully selected, also on the basis of their preventive measures for the protection of human rights and the environment.
- · Our expectations of our employees (f/m/d) and our suppliers are set out in our Code of Conduct. Our employees (f/m/d) are regularly trained on the contents. The Code of Conduct is communicated to our suppliers and is also available to them on the KACO homepage.
- Complaints about human rights violations or disregard for the environmental standards of our organisation can be forwarded to KACO at any time. The whistleblower system is accessible to KACO employees (f/m/d) as well as to all suppliers in our supply chain and all business partners via the KACO website www.kaco.de.
- If we receive information about violations of our guidelines through this whistleblower system, these are examined and evaluated in accordance with internal regulations and, if necessary, measures are worked out together with the corresponding supplier.
- A report is communicated annually to the management, in which the risks, the measures introduced, the effectiveness of the measures and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the system are presented. This report is archived for at least 7 years.
- · All the measures described are additionally checked once a year and on an ad-hoc basis for their appropriateness and are constantly developed further.

# Legal Notice

## Editors

KACO GmbH + Co. KG Department Corporate Management System: Friedrich-Michael Lösch, Eftichia Katsigiannopoulou, Stephanie Schappes

## Contact

KACO GmbH + Co. KG Industriestraße 19 74912 Kirchardt

Phone: +49 (0)7266 9130 0 E-Mail: info@kaco.de www.kaco.de

YOUR RELIABLE PARTNER FOR SEALING SOLUTIONS

