

Strong inner drive for sustainability

Sustainability is part of Coop's corporate DNA and imbues all its relevant strategies. The focus is on sustainable products, environment and climate protection as well as commitment to employees and society. Coop's approach to sustainability management is key to a sustainably successful future.

Strong awareness of sustainability

After 30 years of strong commitment to sustainability, it has become a major part of Coop's corporate DNA. The Coop Group has enshrined sustainability in its Articles of Association, its Corporate Profile and its missions and integrated it into all relevant strategies and processes. To give one example, sustainability targets are systematically incorporated in the comprehensive target-setting process, the training of employees and in operating processes and procedures.

Through its comprehensive approach to sustainability, the Coop Group seeks to set itself apart by delivering added value in the various markets, securing access to resources and making sustainability a shared value throughout the Coop Group. By doing this, Coop also ensures that the growing demands made by society and politicians are implemented efficiently and credibly throughout its business activities, thus making a contribution to the wider public interest.

Coop's main reporting channels for its numerous sustainability-related measures are the Coop Member Press, the new 'Coopzeitung Weekend' member press, the Internet platform actions-not-words.ch and the integrated Annual Report of the Coop Group. A Sustainability Progress Report is published annually. Sharing specific information, the report provides a detailed insight into Coop's commitment to sustainability and the percentage of attainment of its multi-year sustainability targets.

Holistic and highly relevant

Coop's sustainability efforts are concentrated on areas in which Coop can achieve significant leverage. These areas are determined by internal analyses and have high social, environmental or economic relevance. When setting priorities, Coop draws on many different tools such as range screening, life assessment cycles, risk monitors and stakeholder dialogue. Societal expectations and political demands are also major factors when choosing priorities.

The key areas are reflected in Coop's Sustainability strategy concept, which describes how the issue of sustainability is managed at Coop and how sustainability is holistically integrated within the existing management system. The strategy concept is based on three pillars (Sustainable Products, Environment and Climate Protection, and Employees and Social Commitment), which in turn build on the foundation, the strategic basis. The three pillars represent the starting points that the companies of the Coop Group integrate into their business activities. All these elements come together to enable us to successfully implement the sustainability targets, yielding success for the company and benefiting the common good.



The strategic basis

Coop is a cooperative and promotes the economic and social interests of its members and its consumers. Economic, environmental and ethical principles secure the cooperative's competitiveness and continued existence. Sustainability is also pivotal to our Vision 2025+, in which Coop sets itself apart from its competitors through sustainable products and its commitment to sustainability projects. The guiding principles of sustainability also contribute to this distinctiveness: they determine which principles apply to the implementation of overarching objectives and are used for internal communication throughout the Coop Group.

Pillar 1: Sustainable products

Coop is committed to observing ambitious minimum requirements along the whole value chain, in all product ranges. In addition, Coop is involved in pioneering sourcing projects and long-term partnerships to promote organic farming, fair trade, animal welfare and biodiversity. The own-label sustainability brands and quality seals play an important role here, being the medium through which Coop sets itself apart with the most stringent standards in Swiss retail. Coop promotes sustainable consumption, with conscious range selection, targeted customer information and a variety of advertising activities.

Pillar 2: Environment and climate protection

The efficient use of resources and energy also contributes to cutting costs. Coop's efforts focus on reducing energy consumption and making increased use of renewable energy, as well as the consistent implementation of the "CO₂-neutral by 2023" vision, which was adopted back in 2008. Coop has defined a reduction schedule, and the implementation is still on track thanks to its own defined measures and targets. Other important topics are packaging optimization, waste avoidance and recycling, logistics and goods transport, and water management, hydrogen technology and sustainable construction. Coop is making special efforts to optimize packaging, an area in which it is committed to the responsible use of plastics.

Pillar 3: Employees and social commitment

Pillar 3 covers Coop's commitment to employees and social projects with relevance to society. As an employer, Coop provides training for apprentices, a standardized, progressive collective employment agreement for the whole of Switzerland, and a generous pension scheme. By supporting the organizations "Schweizer Tafel" (Swiss Table) and "Tischlein deck dich" (Table Be Set), Coop makes a substantial contribution to the responsible use of foodstuffs. Another key aspect is our commitment to Coop Aid for Mountain Regions and our collaboration with strategic partners such as the Swiss Red Cross (SRC).

Coop Sustainability Fund

Coop finances projects from all three pillars through the Coop Sustainability Fund. Customers experience the result of these projects, not just in Coop's range but when doing their daily shopping. Promotions and events for employees and the public are a direct expression of the Fund's innovative solutions to key social and environmental issues. Through pioneering work in the area of sustainability, Coop raises public awareness of sustainable consumption. The Coop Sustainability Fund currently has access to funds of at least 16.5 million francs a year to implement such projects.

For information about projects run by the Coop Sustainability Fund, visit:
www.actions-not-words.ch/fund.

Strategic anchoring in wholesale and production

All companies of the Transgourmet Group as well as the main Coop manufacturing companies have their own sustainability strategies. The strategies are geared towards Coop's Sustainability strategy concept and each take account of the specific concerns as well as the realities of the relevant markets.

Overarching topics in the area of sustainability

The companies of the Coop Group continued their impressive track record on sustainability in the year under review. Below, we discuss selected sustainability projects. News on sustainable projects from the individual business areas is assigned to the respective chapters.

New "Inner Drive" sustainability campaign

In October, Coop launched the new "Inner Drive" campaign, which expresses Coop's dynamic approach to sustainability and places the focus on Coop's 390-plus sustainable actions which lie at the heart of sustainability communication. The campaign is being publicized throughout Switzerland, via the digital and print channels used for marketing and corporate communication. Coop's "Actions, not words" sustainability initiative, with the eponymous platform www.actions-not-words.ch, also relays our diverse commitment to sustainability along with all the background on the subject of sustainability.

Coop redoubles efforts to reduce plastic in packaging

Coop has been committed to reducing plastic since 2012 and, step by step, is implementing alternatives. In 2020, Coop achieved two more key milestones. Each year, around 182 tonnes of plastic are saved by no longer providing the plastic disposable cutlery that was routinely included with take-away salads, muesli and bowls, and no longer giving out free plastic disposable cutlery at the checkouts. Having abandoned plastic disposable cutlery, we have been able to optimize the packaging of take-away salads and muesli, enabling Coop to save a further 14 tonnes of plastic. Greater use of recycled materials is another major milestone. All PET bottles for Swiss Alpina mineral water (1 L, 1.5 L, 50 cl) are made entirely from recycled Swiss PET bottles. This totals 24.5 million bottles each year, and means that Coop is closing the bottle loop in Switzerland and saving around 450 tonnes of plastic. For more information about reducing plastic at Coop, visit: www.actions-not-words.ch/packaging.

Best Swiss retailer in the WWF Palm Oil Scorecard

Coop emerged as the best Swiss retailer in the WWF's Palm Oil Scorecard. Its Vision for Palm Oil, which it adopted in 2018, marks a huge stride forward and Coop now exclusively uses Bio Suisse-certified palm oil from rigorously sustainable production in its own-label foods. Where it makes sense to do so, palm oil is replaced with other oils and fats, with preference given to products from Switzerland such as rapeseed or sunflower oil. If other tropical oils or fats such as coconut oil are used, they must come from Fairtrade, Bio-Suisse or Rainforest Alliance-certified production. At present Coop uses palm oil in around 1 000 own-label foods. In principle, Coop's Vision for Palm Oil is to be implemented by the end of 2021. This is unique in global retail and further underscores Coop's pioneering status in sustainability. Transgourmet is also taking responsibility and, in future, will no longer use palm oil in selected products.

Innovative hydrogen-powered trucks and transporting goods by rail

Sustainability in logistics is, and will remain important to Coop. In 2020, Coop added the first seven mass-produced hydrogen-powered trucks to its fleet. Coop.ch also uses environmentally-friendly trucks as its delivery vehicles. Furthermore, over 45% of Coop's fleet of trucks are fuelled by biodiesel from organic waste, such as used cooking oil, from Switzerland. With its subsidiary Railcare, Coop is successfully rolling out the concept of unaccompanied combined transport (UCT) which, since 2011, has enabled more and more goods to be transported by rail. This involves transporting the goods to the nearest rail hub in swap bodies and transferring them to trains. The freight containers are transported from the destination rail hub to the points of sale by road. There was another sharp increase in rail freight in 2020. Overall, over five times more goods were carried by Railcare than in 2010, saving 66 600 tonnes of CO₂.

Transgourmet Österreich becomes CO₂-neutral

Guided by the motto "Avoid, Minimize, Offset", Transgourmet Österreich rounded off its wide-ranging sustainability drive and offset currently unavoidable CO₂ emissions of 12 629 tonnes of CO₂ in 2020 through a climate protection project. Transgourmet Österreich selected the following project for this purpose: the gold standard Godawari Power climate project project, which supplies biomass from rice husks for electricity generation, as a substitute for fossil fuels..