

Biodiversity Commitment

Overview

GEA, as a global leader in supplying systems and components for the food, beverage, and pharmaceutical industries, recognizes the integral role biodiversity plays in maintaining the resilience of ecosystems and ensuring a sustainable future.

GEA's purpose "Engineering for a better world" is grounded in understanding and respecting the delicate balance of nature. Recognizing the critical role of biodiversity in maintaining the planet's equilibrium, GEA is committed to taking a responsible and considered approach to its impact and dependency on nature's resources and services. While GEA has long been contributing to the reduction of GHG emissions, water consumption, and food waste, this commitment seeks to outline GEA's pledge towards the conservation of biodiversity and the eradication of deforestation.

GEA acknowledges the weight of its responsibility in setting an example of commitment to biodiversity. This commitment, therefore, encapsulates the collective values and actions that GEA has adopted in response to the growing global demand for a more sustainable and environmentally conscious industrial sector.

Analysis across Operational Activities & Supply Chain

GEA recognizes that its activities can directly and indirectly impact biodiversity along its product and value chains. GEA, thus, commits to the permanent preservation of biodiversity and strives to minimize its impact on the environment. GEA already identifies sites in regions short of water using the "Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas" tool, as recommended by both the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) and the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN). Further, impact assessments or equivalent evaluations aimed at conserving natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (considering Natura 2000 network of protected areas, UNESCO World Heritage sites) have already been and will further be undertaken, especially in or near areas of sensitive biodiversity.

GEA has conducted a high-level biodiversity risk assessment to identify key areas of concern, determine suitable mitigation strategies, and define preliminary biodiversity-related targets. This assessment incorporates all GEA sites regardless of their type of use (i.e. production, office, R&D) and is conducted based on the eight main pressures and eight 'state of nature variables' identified by SBTN. In applying a combination of predominant, market standard tools including IBAT, ENCORE, and the WWF Biodiversity Risk Filter, as well as the tools provided by SBTN in its guidance released at the end of May 2023, GEA sets the ground for a reliable, thorough, and comprehensive assessment.

While GEA may not currently have the in-depth knowledge or tools for a comprehensive biodiversity risk assessment, the company is eager to learn, adopt best practices, and conduct the necessary data analysis to ensure suitable and effective measures are implemented. This commitment extends across GEA's operations and includes its suppliers and partners, reflecting GEA's understanding that biodiversity preservation is a shared responsibility. GEA's plan will include setting time-bound targets and developing monitoring systems to ensure compliance with regulations and mandatory standards.

Stakeholder Engagement

Moreover, GEA acknowledges the importance of stakeholder engagement in biodiversity preservation. It commits to work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders, including its Executive Board and suppliers, to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach to biodiversity conservation across its operations. GEA is proud of the steps taken to uphold its environmental responsibility, evident in its public disclosure of the Environmental Responsibility Policy, which includes clauses related to biodiversity and deforestation. GEA also values its innovative technical solutions, such as rotary and group milking parlors, which contribute to biodiversity enhancement.

Deforestation

GEA is aware of the threat posed by deforestation and forest degradation to our global climate. Although GEA, being one of the largest system providers for the food processing and related industries, focuses on machinery and equipment as well as process technology and components, GEA hereby expressly confirms that it does not produce any raw materials such as soy, beef, palm oil, wood, cocoa and coffee and thus does not engage in deforestation. GEA therefore unequivocally pursues to a no-deforestation commitment. The reforestation efforts by GEA in Mexico are an example of this commitment to a proactive approach in restoring biodiversity.

Despite current gaps in its knowledge and tools about deforestation, GEA intends to learn, adapt, and respond with an appropriate data analysis to ensure thorough and effective measures are put in place. This no deforestation commitment extends to GEA's supply chain, reinforcing the company's dedication to maintain a responsible and sustainable operation. Establishing time-bound targets and monitoring systems will help GEA wherever necessary to comply with forest regulations and mandatory standards.

Governance

This Biodiversity Commitment has been endorsed by GEA's Executive Board and is a testament to the company's commitment to a sustainable future. The commitment's measures will be implemented under the guidance of the Executive Board, which has the responsibility for running the international company's operations around the globe. With the integration of this commitment into GEA's operations and interlinking it with GEA's overarching Environmental Responsibility Policy, GEA embarks on a path towards responsible stewardship of our planet's biodiversity. This commitment will be transparently communicated to our stakeholders, promoting a culture of shared accountability, responsibility and collaboration, where every individual's roles and responsibilities contribute to the successful execution of sustainable initiatives.

Next Steps

As GEA moves forward, it will continue to review and update this commitment as needed, seeking continuous improvement in its commitment to biodiversity conservation and a deforestation-free operation. The implementation process will be a journey of learning and growth, with GEA striving to deepen its understanding of biodiversity, develop appropriate measures and targets, and foster collaboration with its stakeholders. Through these efforts, GEA aims to make a meaningful contribution to preserving the world's biodiversity for future generations.