

BRITA GROUP

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2020



SHAPING
SUSTAINABLE
SOLUTIONS



Dear readers,

I am always surprised how quickly time flies between each BRITA sustainability report. But I am even more surprised and especially proud when I look at the journey we have made in these past years. What new ambitions and goals we have developed for our sustainability activities and, even more importantly, what has been implemented and achieved. It cannot be denied that the typical characteristics of a medium-sized family business shine through, no matter how large and international we become. “Just do it!”, “Yes, it’s a bit over-ambitious, but look at what we have already achieved!”, “I have an idea. What do you think, are you on board?”, “We’ll do that together!” are part of the thinking of our global BRITA family, across generations and cultures.

I think it is fair to say that we at BRITA were sustainable long before the word became a buzz term. With our recyclable cartridges we were paving the way to sustainability decades ago. Our regeneration system for ion exchange resin, one of the components of our filter materials, was a novelty. We were also ahead of the game with the use of certified green electricity in our production.

Tap water and its optimisation are clearly my deep passion. Changing the way people drink water sustainably is my personal driver and our company’s vision. And this is also the vision and focus of every BRITA employee.

As a global BRITA family, we are determined to make our world a little better in this respect, with less plastic waste from mineral water bottles, fewer emissions and simply more responsibility.



Later on, we established ourselves over the years in the minds of consumers and customers as a provider of sustainable alternatives to mineral water, much of it in plastic bottles. More than ten years ago, we calculated the impressively low first CO₂ footprint of a litre of BRITA-filtered water compared to one litre of bottled water. But a very significant impulse came on our 50th anniversary five years ago, from a study of the Ellen-MacArthur Foundation. The study came to the conclusion: if we do not change our behaviour, by 2050 there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish. This idea shocked not only me but all of us at BRITA and set us in motion, together with our partner Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC).

With our new corporate strategy “Shaping Sustainable Solutions”, we are now setting the bar even higher. We are putting sustainability at the core of all our actions. For us, this means that we are seriously mobilising to make our planet a little bit better. This certainly sounds very ambitious. But we all know that “a journey of 1,000 miles also begins with a single step.” We see our heritage as the starting point and an impulse to officially establish sustainability as being what it already is for me personally, for our management and for the global BRITA family: a matter of the heart that must also be our strategic focal point and the essence of our communication. It is incredibly motivating for all of us to work in a company that can really embrace this path and what it means. Of course, this has to do with the vital natural resource we deal with every day with great passion: water.

Just how seriously we take our path to sustainability is shown in particular by the fact that in the future, in addition to the classic business indicators of turnover and profit, we will also add, measure, and communicate our “Planet Contribution”. This indicator is about our contribution, about what we achieve with large and small measures in our company and with our range of products and solutions. The “Planet Contribution” considers, on the one hand, BRITA’s own carbon footprint, which we want to reduce even more consistently in the future. And on the other hand, it measures the amount of bottled water that is replaced by people using BRITA product solutions. This second quotient is already impressive today and it drives us to achieve even more: every year we replace more than 4 billion bottles. An incredible number. If placed end to end, these could circle the equator 35 times.



Our goal is to increase this number to 6.5 billion bottles saved per year by 2025. And to achieve this, we have set ambitious goals for ourselves. We want to show you what those goals are and what we are already working on in this report. Have fun reading!

And finally, let me end with a personal appeal: “We want to change the way people drink water sustainably.” That is our vision. We celebrate everyone who joins us on this quest and very much hope that we will succeed in this (r)evolution, not least for the generations to come.

Warm regards,

Markus Hankammer

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#01 COMPANY



WE ARE BRITA

BRITA is the world-renowned expert in the area of drinking water optimisation and customisation. With his invention of the water filter jug in 1970, Heinz Hankammer discovered a market niche and then consistently created the market for it. His son Markus Hankammer successfully shaped the medium-sized family business into a global multi-product company with financial independence and a long-term mindset. Today, from our headquarters in Taunusstein near Wiesbaden, we operate four production facilities in Germany, the UK, Italy and China, 30 national and international subsidiaries and are represented in 70 countries on all five continents.

We are a unique company, with our own DNA – our own identity. To make this visible to everyone, in 2020 we developed a BRITA identity in addition to our vision and mission and presented it to our employees.

This statement describes who we are: a German company that is internationally oriented and sees diversity as an added value. A company that has the ambition to really make a difference and that optimises drinking water at the point of use with focus and passion. A company that wants to make the world a little better – with less plastic, fewer emissions and a long-term focus.



As a family-owned business, we have always strongly and consistently championed values. Despite the company’s swift advances and strong growth, nothing has changed in this regard – and so it will remain in future. The management and all of the employees know that values are fundamental and contribute just as much to the company’s success as business strategies do.

Our values



CONTINUOUS EXPANSION OF THE PRODUCT RANGE

Our mission is “to offer everybody the best possible drinking water experience according to their individual expectations”. To this end, we have been consistently expanding our product portfolio for several years. The goal for every product is to be a leader in terms of technology, quality and design. We market our products under the brand names BRITA, VIVREAU and MAVEA.

Consumer products for at home and out of home



- Filter jugs with corresponding cartridges
- Drinking bottles and carafes with matching filters
- Kitchen taps and pipe-connected water dispensers with filter solutions
- Sparkling water maker for carbonated water at the touch of a button

Professional products



- Filter solutions for commercial use: coffee and espresso machines, vending machines, combi steamers, conventional ovens and dishwashers
- Pipe-connected water dispensers for filtered, chilled, carbonated and hot water for the target groups Corporate (e.g. offices, industry), HORECA (e.g. upscale gastronomy, hotel industry, catering) and Healthcare (e.g. hospitals, care homes, doctors' offices)

Always innovating

We continuously adapt our products and services to the expectations and needs of our customers. To this end, in recent years we have also launched new and innovative products such as the MAXTRA+ Expert cartridge for particularly hard water or the new Flow water filter



The line of pipe-connected water dispensers is growing continuously.

station with a capacity of more than eight litres and a tap spout for precise portioning. In the Professional Filter range, we have developed PROGUARD Coffee, a patented reverse osmosis system with mineralisation technology that provides customised water for great tasting coffee while guaranteeing optimal machine protection.

In recent years, we have realised the largest product development project in the company's history for our pipe-connected water dispensers. With BRITA VIVREAU Top 50/85, Extra I-Shape, Extra C-Shape and Fill, several products for the highest fresh filtered water demands and for professional applications have been launched on the market.

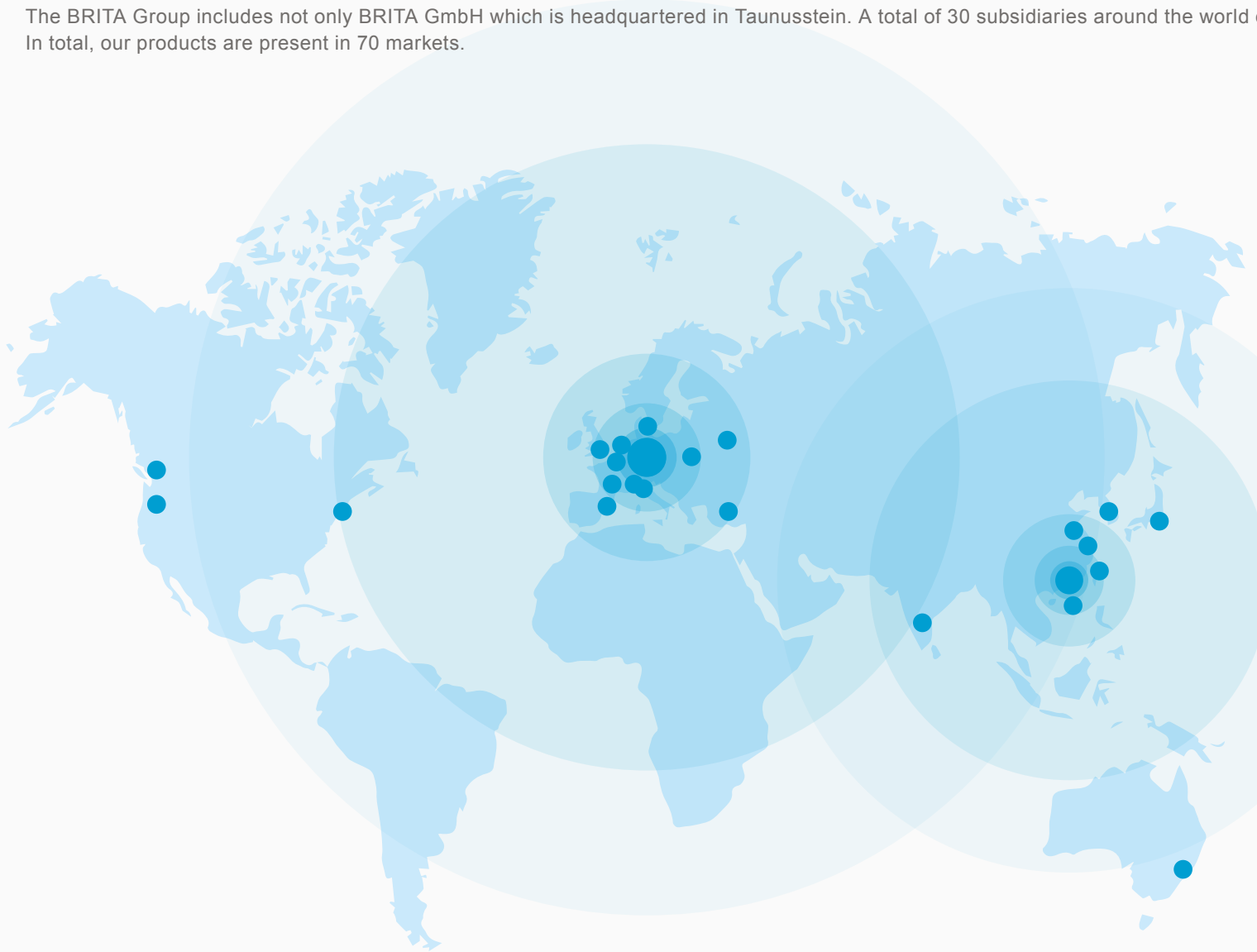
But existing products are also being further developed and optimised. For example, we have launched an improved version of the OnTap, a filter add-on system for the existing kitchen tap, as well as our optimised BRITA mypure 3-way tap, which replaces an existing kitchen tap and provides great tasting, freshly filtered water in addition to unfiltered. The product was awarded the Green Product Award Editors Choice in early 2021. In addition, our water dispensers such as the BRITA VIVREAU Aquarite and Top 15 have been equipped with a natural refrigerant, which is not only better for the environment, but also makes the water dispenser even more energy efficient.



In 2020, we also took a first step into another segment. With the acquisition of Filltech GmbH, the world's most modern company in the production and filling of CO₂ cylinders, we have not only secured the supply for our water dispensers, but are now opening up the very interesting market of sparkling water makers. Consequently, in spring 2021, we launched the first BRITA sodaONE sparkling water maker on our home market Germany.

OPERATING ON ALL FIVE CONTINENTS

The BRITA Group includes not only BRITA GmbH which is headquartered in Taunusstein. A total of 30 subsidiaries around the world equally contribute to our progress and growth. In total, our products are present in 70 markets.



- BRITA GmbH, Germany (Headquarters)
- BRITA Water Filter Systems Pty. Ltd., Australia
- BRITA China Co. Ltd., China
- BRITA China Manufacturing Ltd., China
- BRITA Hong Kong Ltd., Hong Kong
- BRITA France S.A.R.L., France
- BRITA Water Filter Systems Ltd., UK
- BRITA Italia s.r.l. Unipersonale, Italy
- BRITA Japan KK, Japan
- BRITA Korea Co. Ltd., Korea
- BRITA Polska S.p.z.o.o., Poland
- BRITA Turkey Su Çözümleri Limited Sirketi, Turkey
- BRITA OOO, Russia
- BRITA Wasser-Filter-Systeme AG, Switzerland
- BRITA Iberia S.L., Spain
- BRITA Taiwan Co. Ltd., Taiwan
- MAVEA LLC, USA
- MAVEA Canada Inc., Canada
- BRITA Italia Manufacturing Srl., Italy
- BRITA Vivreau Limited, UK
- Vivreau USA LP, USA
- Vivreau Canada Inc., Canada
- BRITA Vivreau B.V.B.A., Belgium
- BRITA Vivreau B.V., Netherlands
- BRITA Vivreau GmbH, Germany
- BRITA India Water Solutions Private Ltd., India
- BRITA Nordic A/S, Denmark
- Filltech GmbH, Germany

SUCCESSFUL THROUGH A YEAR OF CRISIS

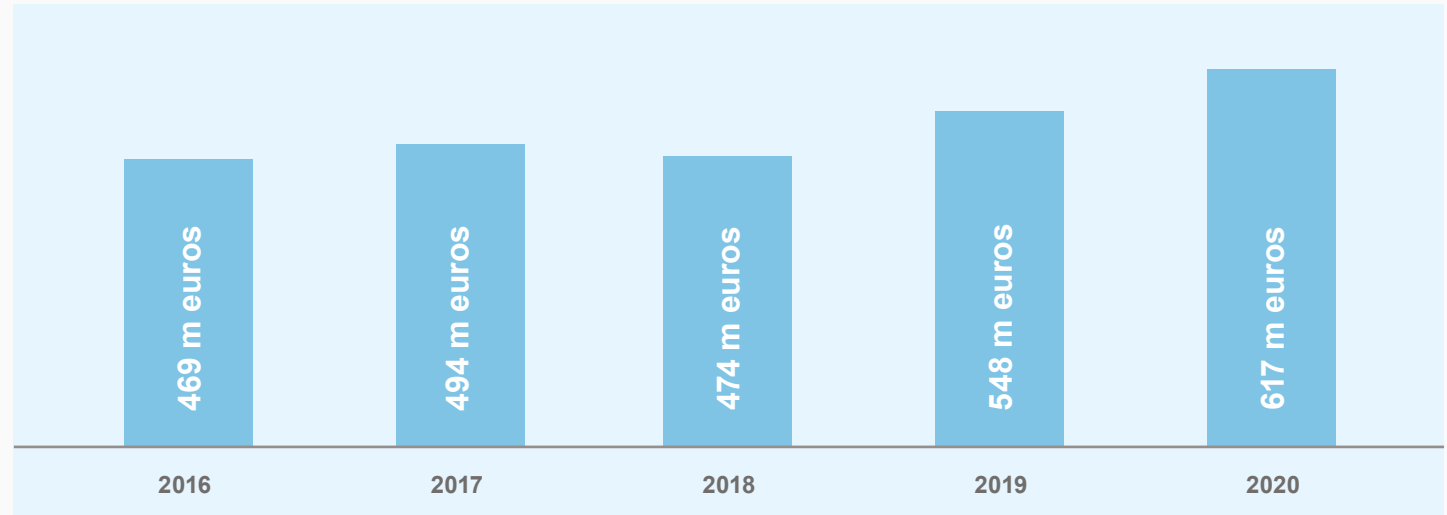
After the historic result of 2019, 2020 was another record year in our company's history. The main reasons for this continued success: a clear pandemic strategy that ensured production and logistics worldwide, an immense response from consumers who, particularly at this time, appreciate convenient, safe products that make it easy for them to have great tasting drinking water at home, and an ever stronger commitment to sustainability and against single-use plastic as a major driver of environmental pollution.

In total, the turnover of the BRITA Group in 2020 amounted to 617 million euros (after exchange-rate adjustments: 622 million euros). This represents growth of 12.6 per cent (after exchange-rate adjustments: 13.6 per cent) compared to the previous year (2019: 548 million euros). We recorded 83 per cent of total turnover outside Germany.



Impressed with the success and team spirit exhibited in the pandemic year 2020

Annual turnover of the BRITA Group



Our consumer products accounted for 462 million euros, or 75 per cent of the Group's total revenue (2019: 379 million euros, +21.5 per cent). Our three largest markets in this segment were once again China, Germany and the UK. The Professional segment with filter solutions for hotels, restaurants, catering and vending machines as well as with pipe-connected water dispensers for offices, schools, hospitals and gastronomy was impacted by the numerous lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, this business unit generated a turnover of 155 million euros (2019: 169 million euros, -7.6 per cent) and thus 25 per cent of total turnover. As in the previous year, the largest markets for these products were Germany, the UK and Switzerland.

"Our strong brand, the only truly global brand in drinking water optimisation, is simply our greatest asset. This has been proven once again, especially during the coronavirus pandemic. Understandably, the need for great tasting drinking water at home – without having to constantly go to shops to buy bottles of mineral water – increased immensely. People all over the world simply trust BRITA because they know they can expect product quality and safety as well as easy and reliable functionality," says Markus Hankammer, BRITA Group CEO and second generation at the helm of the family-owned company, explaining the success.

LONG-TERM PROSPECTS AND INVESTMENTS IN THE FUTURE

Over the past five years, we have rapidly realised our declared strategic goal of creating a “second home” for ourselves. After Japan, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and the first promising steps on the Indian subcontinent, the young BRITA team in Korea launched its first full business year in 2018. Korea is a very interesting market for BRITA. Koreans, who are particularly quality and technology conscious, are fans of a German brand product: the classic BRITA filter jug, which for the first time offers them a smart “simple way” of optimising drinking water. We will continue to build on the success of our expansion in Asia in the future.

Historic investment project for future-proof infrastructure

In 2018, we launched the largest investment project in our history with the aim of expanding the infrastructure at our headquarters. The project, with a total investment volume of at least 80 million euros, takes a holistic approach to production, logistics and administration. The expansion takes our continuous growth into account. In addition to the necessary adaptation to the currently foreseeable needs for the future, we are also looking to make our location in Hesse sustainably future-proof by being as forward-thinking as possible.

However, the first step was taken in Italy. During 2018, we built another modern and expandable manufacturing facility here in Europe. BRITA Italia Manufacturing, the production company for the product segment of the pipe-connected BRITA VIVREAU water dispensers, was relocated from Altare near Genoa and has since been based in Arsago Seprio in Lombardy. Production initially started here with four production lines and 69 employees.

In 2020, our new European distribution warehouse in Beselich near Limburg began operations. With 17,000 pallet spaces, proximity to our production site in Taunusstein and good connections to one of Europe's most important transport hubs, we can thus ensure efficient supply chains and deliveries for our customers.



Following extensive renovations, our Swiss employees were able to move into a new, modernised building.

Also in 2020, we began relocating our production facility from Taunusstein to neighbouring Bad Camberg. By the end of 2020, an ultra-modern, highly sustainable production facility was built there on the available 35,500 square metres as a timber hybrid with the necessary offices and around 100 workplaces. Thanks to this new site, the planned growth of the existing BRITA portfolio and the associated volume increases can be managed. At the same time, the production line remaining in Switzerland was relocated to Bad Camberg and the small manufacturing facility there was closed. All our Swiss production employees received alternative offers for tasks in the Swiss sales company. They, too, moved into a new, sustainable building in 2021.



Sustainable and with a view to the future: A new office building will be constructed at the BRITA Campus in Taunusstein, Germany.

In addition to logistics and production, capacities at our headquarters in Taunusstein-Neuhof are also being expanded and positioned for the future. Starting in 2021, the administrative building will be extended to the south to create space for 250 additional workplaces. Furthermore, the existing building at the same location will be completely renovated. The office concept of both buildings will be adapted to the idea of “New Work” and, again in cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institute, both buildings will be equipped with flexible, state-of-the-art workplaces that promote communication. The home office concept, which was implemented very successfully during the pandemic, will also be able to play a critical role in the future.



Groundbreaking: The energy-efficient new production site in Bad Camberg, Germany, is a timber hybrid building.

IMPORTANT INFRA-STRUCTURE PROJECTS



- 2018 New dispenser production in Italy
- 2020 New central warehouse in Beselich, Germany
- 2020 New filter cartridge production in Bad Camberg, Germany
- 2021 New office building in Switzerland
- 2021 Renovation and new construction of office buildings at headquarters in Taunusstein, Germany

FAMILY BUSINESS THROUGH AND THROUGH

BRITA GmbH was founded on 1 July 1966 by Heinz Hankammer. Today, we are an autonomous and financially independent family-owned business that is incorporated as a limited liability company (GmbH). The company's operating activities are pooled in BRITA GmbH. Until August 1996, the company's founder Heinz Hankammer was the sole managing director. In August 1996, Heinz Hankammer's son Markus joined the management team. On 1 January 1999, Heinz Hankammer then assigned the sole management responsibility to Markus Hankammer, who today is CEO of the BRITA Group. In addition to Markus Hankammer, Dr Rüdiger Kraege and Stefan Jonitz are registered managing directors of BRITA GmbH and also members of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board

- **Markus Hankammer**, Chief Executive Officer BRITA Group
- **Stefan Jonitz**, Chief Financial Officer BRITA Group
- **Dr Rüdiger Kraege**, Chief Sales Officer BRITA Group



The BRITA Executive Board (from left to right): Stefan Jonitz, Markus Hankammer and Dr Rüdiger Kraege

During the reporting period, the Executive Board was reduced by two positions (Chief Marketing Officer and Chief Operational Officer). The responsibilities and duties of these two positions were assumed by the other members of the Executive Board.

The Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board of Hanvest Holding GmbH, the holding company of BRITA GmbH, was established in 1999. The founding members were Heinz Hankammer, Prof Gerd Walger and Moss Kadey. Heinz Hankammer took over as chairman until December 2013. He was then appointed honorary chairman. The Supervisory Board advises and monitors the management of Hanvest Holding GmbH and, indirectly, the affiliated companies. It consists of at least three members who are appointed by the shareholders of Hanvest Holding GmbH. The current Supervisory Board members are:

- **Moss Kadey**
Chairman of the Supervisory Board, member of the Supervisory Board since 1999, President and CEO of Mossco Capital Inc., an angel investment company
- **Prof Dr Gerd Walger**
Deputy Chairman of the Supervisory Board, member of the Supervisory Board since 1999, Managing Director of the Institute for Entrepreneurial and Corporate Development (IUU), which he founded
- **Brita Hankammer**
Member of the Supervisory Board since 2002, shareholder of Hanvest Holding GmbH and Managing Partner of Golf Resort Hofgut Georgenthal
- **Andreas Land**
Member of the Supervisory Board since 2019, Managing Partner of Griesson - de Beukelaer GmbH & Co. KG)



The Supervisory Board of Hanvest Holding GmbH consists of (from left to right) Moss Kadey, Brita Hankammer, Andreas Land and Prof Gerd Walger.

The Supervisory Board meets at least three times a year to discuss business developments, to present, deliberate, discuss and adopt corporate strategies and specific topics as well as budget and investment planning.

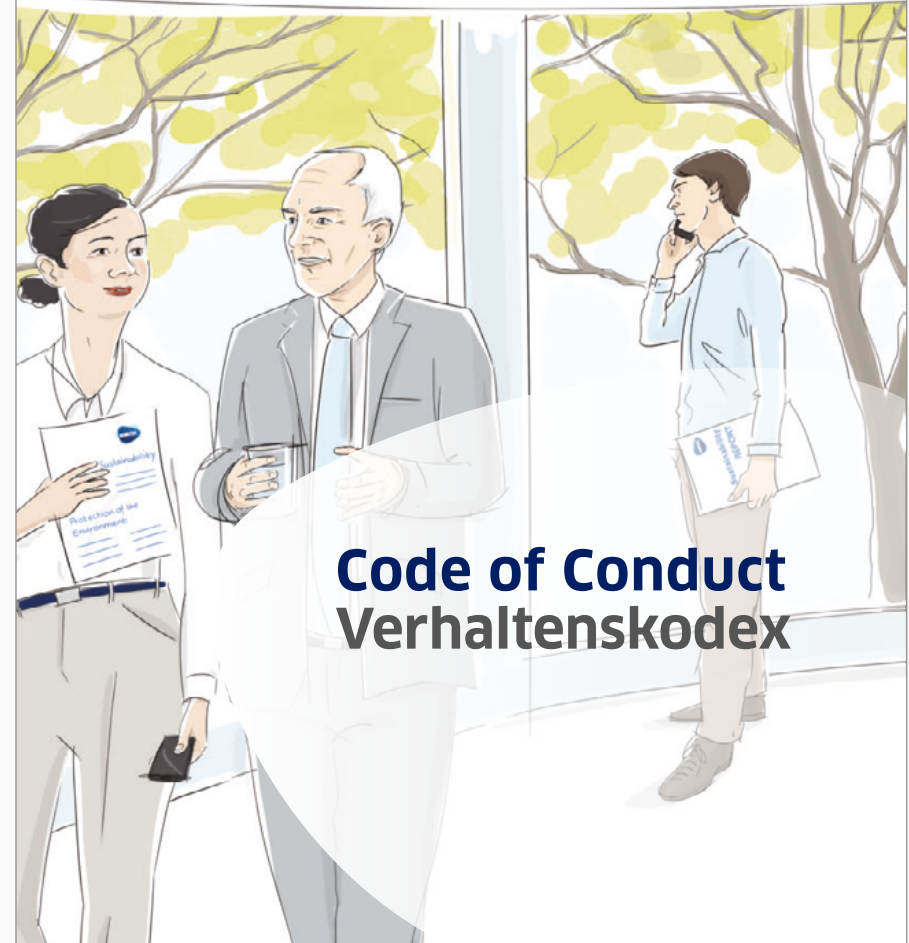
VALUE-ORIENTED BUSINESS: CORPORATE COMPLIANCE

Corporate compliance at BRITA means more than simply adhering to rules and laws. A fundamental part of the corporate culture at BRITA is responsible behaviour conducted with integrity, and it is expected equally from all employees, right up to the Executive Board. To this end, the compliance function develops and implements preventive and reactive measures as part of a risk management in order to avoid damage or detect it at an early stage. Nevertheless, the management staff have a special role: They are obligated to set an example for their employees. Violations of law, codes and standards are pursued consistently and, if necessary, through disciplinary actions.

Compliance is a central function at BRITA and is implemented locally in the different business units. The compliance function is part of the functional unit Group Legal & Compliance which is based at the Taunusstein headquarters and reports directly to the CFO. The central compliance function coordinates training sessions and seminars, monitors compliance with internal and external regulations, and supports the implementation of globally binding internal standards. If a violation of compliance rules is suspected, the function conducts an internal investigation. Our Financial Directors act as local compliance officers in the various countries and are responsible for implementation of the measures.

To make compliance comprehensible and understandable for everyone, BRITA has developed two central documents: the → [Code of Conduct](#) and the awareness brochure “Compliance – Let’s all come to the table”. The documents are currently available in twelve languages. Compliance, however, is brought to life not through documents but through the value-based actions of our employees. Internal communication and interactive workshops are designed to motivate and empower employees to conscientiously deal with compliance questions.

But good corporate governance goes beyond compliance. For BRITA, it also means making a valuable contribution to society as a company – through secure, well-paid jobs, through open and honest dialogue with financial and tax authorities, customers, suppliers, employees and partners, and through a fair, financial contribution to the regions in which we manufacture, work and live. BRITA, therefore, pursues a tax strategy geared towards sustainability and rejects pure tax optimisation based on aggressive tax planning.



A LOOK BACK: MILESTONES IN BRITA HISTORY



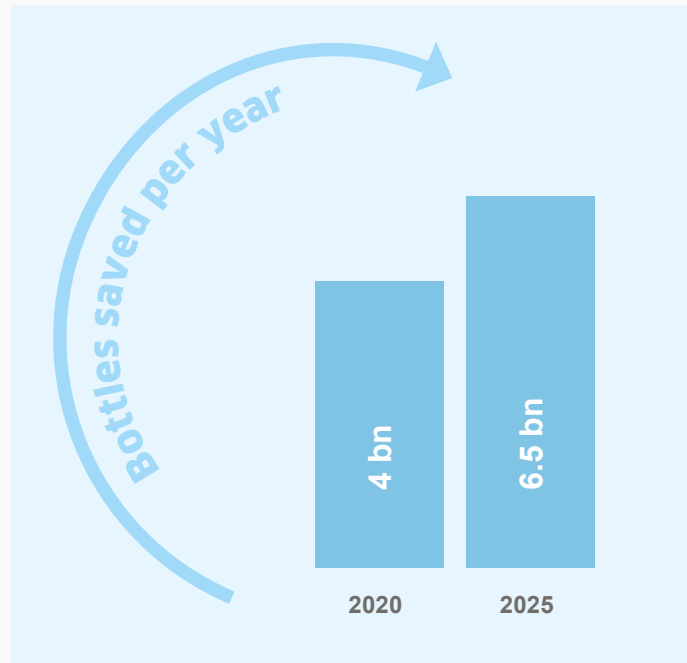
A LOOK AHEAD: SUSTAINABILITY AT THE HEART OF THE NEW STRATEGY

In the five-year strategy period up to 2020, we set ourselves the goal of growing from a Europe-centric to a global company and becoming a multi-product company beyond the classic BRITA filter jug. We achieved both. Now we are putting sustainability, once and for all, at the centre with our new strategy “Shaping Sustainable Solutions”.

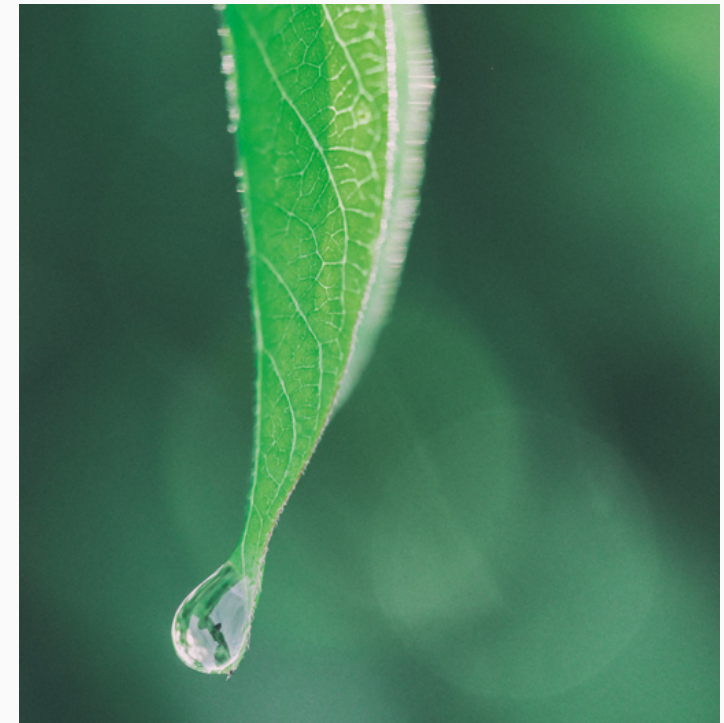
Markus Hankammer, CEO BRITA Group: “With our recyclable cartridges we were paving the way to sustainability at the beginning of the 1990s; our regeneration system for ion exchange resin, one of the components of our filter materials, was a novelty. And we established ourselves over the years in the minds of consumers and customers as a provider of sustainable alternatives to mineral water, much of it in plastic bottles. Now we are seriously mobilising to make our planet a little bit better. That certainly sounds very ambitious, but we all know: even a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.”

“Shaping Sustainable Solutions” brings with it yet another milestone. In the future, and in addition to the classic business management indicators of turnover and profit, we will use a sustainability indicator, our “Planet Contribution”, as a central management KPI. Because it is about making measurable and visible what we achieve with large and small measures in our company and beyond with our range of products and solutions.

One example: the number of bottles saved thanks to our product solutions. “The status quo is already impressive today and continues to drive us forward,” says Stefan Jonitz, our CFO. “Already well over 4 billion bottles are saved every year. Placed end to end, they would reach 35 times around the equator. Our goal is to increase this number to 6.5 billion bottles saved per year by 2025.”




The corporate strategy, which continues to focus on strong growth, relies on our excellent market position in certain product segments and pursues a consistent path to success based on a clear sustainability message. Corresponding regional, market and product-specific strategic initiatives and goals are derived from the corporate goals. By linking business management and sustainable corporate goals, “Shaping Sustainable Solutions” thus creates, for the first time, very clear incentives for the entire organisation to embed sustainability in all corporate processes and decisions, thus ensuring BRITA’s long-term success. ■



SUSTAINABILITY AT BRITA

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

- Specification and further expansion of internal reporting on sustainability
- Development of additional know-how in the entire organisation for better coordination of sustainability topics
- Stronger internal communication through new intranet presence, participation and information formats for employees
- Regular review of focus topics with the involvement of external stakeholders

We want to change the way  people drink water sustainably.

In our corporate vision, sustainability and corporate responsibility are already firmly anchored as part of who we are, our actions, and beliefs. For our CEO Markus Hankammer, this is where the values of BRITA and the self-image of his family as owners of the company converge, namely in bearing responsibility. Responsibility not only for employees, for safe and healthy jobs, for innovative and high-quality products and for the long-term success of the company. But also for the planet, the people who live on it, and a viable future for the next generations. Our definition of corporate responsibility is set out in the [BRITA Global Commitment](#).

With our product portfolio, we have an excellent starting position to fulfil our vision. We offer environmentally friendly alternatives to bottled water that are proven to protect resources and avoid waste and emissions. But our responsibility does not end there. As a company, we contribute to climate

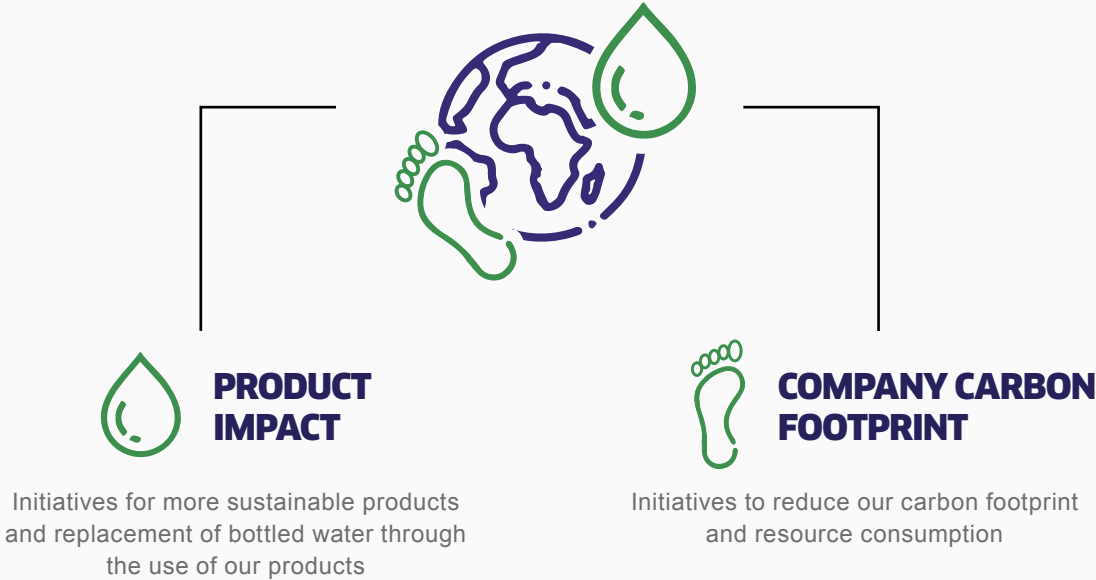
change and resource consumption through our activities – but we have started our journey to reduce or completely avoid these effects. We know that we still have a long way to go. We are motivated, though, and will get there one step at a time.



SHAPING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS – A CORPORATE STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

With our new corporate strategy “Shaping Sustainable Solutions”, introduced at the end of 2020, sustainability finally arrived at the forefront of our activities. By 2025, we want to be the provider of sustainable drinking water solutions and thus meet not only our own expectations, but also the growing demands of our customers, consumers, partners and of society at large. Concrete key initiatives and goals with which we want to pursue this path are derived from this strategy for all product segments, central functions and markets.


TURNOVER •.....• **PLANET CONTRIBUTION** •.....• **PROFIT**



In order to show how seriously we take the sustainable approach, we have created an additional key performance indicator, which functions as a control parameter along with turnover and profit – the [Planet Contribution](#). The Planet Contribution measures both the [Product Impact](#), i.e. the positive impact of our products through the avoidance of bottled water and emissions, and our [Company Carbon Footprint](#), which measures the environmental impact that we cause through our activities. Our goal is to increase the Product Impact, while reducing the Company Carbon Footprint as much as possible.

In a next step, we will specify the key indicators of the Planet Contribution and include them in our internal reporting. With regards to our company carbon footprint, we will define a long-term path to net zero emissions as well as medium-term reduction targets.

WHAT IS “NET ZERO”?



Net zero emissions means that as many emissions as possible, for which a company is responsible along the value chain, are minimised and gradually neutralised through compensation projects or carbon storage.

SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER – OUR PATH UNTIL 2025

The BRITA Sustainability Charter sets the guidelines for our journey until 2025. It defines our central fields of action and clear goals, the achievement of which we measure and manage with specific key figures. At the same time, it is intended to provide orientation and to be a guiding principle for both employees and managers.

In 2025 we will replace more than **6.5 billion water bottles** and prevent **1 million tonnes of CO₂** through our products. But we know we need to do more to protect our planet – and we are: by pursuing clear ambitions in four sustainability focus areas.

	 <h2>MATERIALS</h2> <p>Our products help prevent waste and emissions. To further improve their positive impact, we will reduce our dependency on virgin plastic and decrease the footprint of our products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce virgin plastic in our signature product portfolio by 30 % by 2025 	 <h2>PACKAGING</h2> <p>Packaging waste is a global problem. We will reduce our footprint by using less packaging, replacing virgin plastic and using more sustainable materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate 5,000 tonnes of packaging by 2025 • Eliminate virgin plastic in new packaging from 2025 on • Ensure our packaging is 100 % recyclable and supports the circular economy 	 <h2>REUSE & RECYCLING</h2> <p>We prioritise reusing materials in our products and ensuring high-quality recycling over lesser forms of disposal. We want our product materials to live a valuable second life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the share of returned ion exchange resin to 20 % by 2025 • Implement a dispenser refurbishment concept by 2023 	 <h2>EMISSIONS</h2> <p>Reducing our company carbon footprint is a key contribution to help fight climate change. We will achieve this by minimising emissions and by offsetting what we cannot avoid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make emissions from Scope 1+2 as well as logistics, fleet and travel carbon neutral from 2023 on • By 2023, define our road to net zero emissions
OUR AMBITIONS				
OUR GOALS				

The Sustainability Charter reflects the topics with the greatest strategic relevance for BRITA, which were collected and prioritised in a survey of internal stakeholders. The results of our materiality analysis from 2017 were also considered. Following this initial prioritisation, the insights were then enhanced with survey results from our market research, general trend studies on sustainability and other findings from the exchange with customers and other interest groups. In close cooperation with the Executive Board, we then set concrete targets for 2025, which are set out in the Sustainability Charter. In the future, we want to intensify the exchange with our key stakeholders and regularly obtain feedback on the focus of our activities from customers and partners.

LIVING SUSTAINABILITY AS A TEAM

As a company, we can only achieve our goals if we all pull together. In order to ensure the continuous implementation of our strategy and the Sustainability Charter, we have set up fixed structures and committees at various management levels.

All overall strategic decisions are brought together at the **Executive Board**. Together with relevant stakeholders and internal experts, it sets strategic goals, parameters and forms basic decisions. This ensures a holistic view of sustainability within the strategic and economic context of BRITA. The Executive Board, headed by CEO Markus Hankammer, also supports the continuous development of the BRITA corporate culture towards a sustainability mindset through its role model function. A particular focus here is on the integration of the new company key performance indicator Planet Contribution into critical decision-making processes at the highest level.

The **leadership** of the strategic business segments and central functions at headquarters, as well as the management teams of our subsidiaries, are responsible for the implementation of the corporate and sustainability strategy. They plan, manage and coordinate the key initiatives and report regularly to the Executive Board.

The **central function of Strategic Sustainability & Corporate Responsibility** has been part of the Corporate Development team since last year and is directly linked to the CEO Markus Hankammer and the Executive Board. From there, the implementation and further development of sustainability activities is supported and coordinated in cooperation with the specialist departments at headquarters and our local market organisations. The function also heads the BRITA Sustainability Forum and reports regularly to the Executive Board.

In the newly created **BRITA Sustainability Forum**, so-called **Sustainability Ambassadors** come together from all departments and subsidiaries to ensure the efficient coordination of activities at the operational level. Along with the Sustainability Ambassadors, there are **sustainability experts**, for example, from the Health, Safety & Environment department, who are operationally responsible for certain topics and thus support the central function. The Sustainability Ambassadors are also the central points of contact for questions about sustainability in their departments. They support the implementation of the

strategic initiatives and help to build the sustainability mindset throughout the company.

All **BRITA employees** play a central role in achieving our company goals. Through their behaviour, ideas and expertise, they contribute to making us a little better every day. In order to ensure that they can also have even better ownership in our success, we will organise further participation formats and events in the future and regularly communicate information about our progress internally. ■



EXCHANGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Regular exchange with our various stakeholders is an important part of our success. Especially when it comes to sustainability, this is the best way to stay on top and to be able to identify expectations and requirements at an early stage. With customers, business partners and suppliers, for example, we use annual review meetings or customer appointments to stay informed about relevant developments and discuss opportunities for cooperation. We also work closely with them on projects, for example, in the further development of sustainability requirements for products, materials and packaging.

Consumers can contact us directly via social media or our hotline. We collect and discuss answers to consumer or customer-specific questions in consumer surveys and market research. At conferences, trade fairs and other events, we seek exchange with customers and suppliers, but also with public authorities, non-profit organisations and other stakeholders. We maintain a professional and trusting relationship with local authorities, administrations and the press.

In many places, sustainability issues are already an integral part of our stakeholder dialogue, for example, in market research or supplier surveys. In future, we want to organise the exchange with relevant stakeholders on these topics in an even more structured way. Internal communication on sustainability will also be expanded, with the help of an information hub on the intranet.

BRITA is active in various national and international networks, associations and organisations related to our core business. This both helps the exchange with important stakeholders and also serves to expand our expertise, for example, through participation in expert bodies and committees. ■

BRITA MEMBERSHIPS (EXCERPT)



Aqua España
British Home Enhancement Trade Association (BHETA)
Federal Association for the German Vending Industry (BDV)
German Association of Companies in the Gas and Water Sector (figawa)
European Drinking Water
European Tea Association
European Vending & Coffee Service Association (EVA)
Foodservice Equipment Association UK
Forum del Café
Forum Trinkwasser e.V. (Drinking Water Forum)
German Watercooler Association (GWCA)
Industrial Association of House, Heating and Kitchen Technology (HKI)
Japan Water Purifier Association
German Federation for Food Law and Food Science
Markenverband e.V. (The German Brands Association)
NSF International – The Public Health and Safety Organization
Society for Hospitality and Foodservice Management (SHFM)
Speciality Coffee Association (SCA)
Union des professionnels du traitement de l'eau (UAE)
Watercoolers Europe (EWCA)
Water Quality Association USA (WQA)
German Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers' Association (ZVEI)

#02 PRODUCT



IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE: THE LONG ROAD TO SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

“What is the carbon footprint of your products?” “Why is the filter jug packed in more than one box when I order it online?” “Do you recycle your products?” More and more consumers, retailers and distributors want to make more sustainable choices – and they want to know about a company’s environmental policy. At BRITA, we have been involved with sustainability and the responsible use of resources for many years now. Specifically, this means: we develop strategies and solutions for more sustainable products. While some of our measures and innovations are effective, in other cases regulatory hurdles or hygiene requirements make implementation difficult, or they require long-term, intensive research and development efforts. In conclusion: it is not always easy, but every improvement is meaningful. That is why we are consistently pursuing alternative approaches. But what does that look like in practice?

More sustainable without shipping boxes

As an internationally operating company, we distribute our products almost everywhere in the world, in-store and online. Our online business in particular is growing steadily: “To give you an example, 80 per cent of our business in China, our largest and fastest-growing market, is now online,” explains Pauline Swaagman, Product Manager for Consumer Marketing. “It’s similar in Europe, where the online share of business now accounts for more than 50 per cent of our total volume.” Driven by the coronavirus pandemic, overall global e-commerce grew once again at a staggering rate in 2020.

An online purchase has many advantages for the customer: convenient ordering, delivery at home, round-the-clock availability. But it also involves more transportation and packaging than purchases from your local retailer. Last year, we stepped up our efforts to reduce our packaging. A filter jug which is ordered on a platform such as Amazon, for example, is packed by BRITA in a typical carton box and subsequently packed in an additional shipping carton by the



online seller. But there is a better way: instead of two boxes, only one will be used in future. This “Ships in Own Container” principle (SIOC) was initially developed with online retailer Amazon in Europe and launched in 2021. To do this, we developed new SIOC packaging for one of our promotion

bundles, which offers a specific set of products for a limited time. The carton box interior was specifically designed to fit these products exactly. “These cartons have to pass extensive transportation tests to ensure the products arrive undamaged at the consumer,” explains Isabel Gorges, Product Manager for Classic Filtration. To meet the standards of the internationally respected ISTA test procedure (International Safe Transit Association), the packaging was thoroughly tested – including treatment on conveyor belts, transportation by truck and also using drop tests.

Alternative packaging materials – no progress without setbacks

To safely protect them from any contamination or damage, filter jug, lid and funnel are all packed in a carton box and wrapped in airtight, ultra-thin polypropylene bags. We are also exploring the use of alternative materials in this area to gradually reduce plastic in our packaging. “We have experimented with fleece, soft paper, cartons coated with an anti-scouring agent, cotton, waxed paper and even fruit netting, but none of the materials we have tested come close to being as sustainable in their production and as protective as the plastic bags we use today,” says Isabel Gorges, who is intensively searching for alternatives with her colleagues in the packaging team.

One option under consideration was a carton box coated on the inside with soft cellulose fleece, “but it couldn’t even pass the vibrating table test without causing scratches on the jug.



Viewed under the microscope, the seemingly soft, smooth surface showed fine fibers sticking out, which caused the damage.” A key problem: as of today, recycled plastic materials from traditional recycling systems still do not meet the required standards. This is because the filter jug comes in contact with drinking water and, therefore, food hygiene requirements apply – finding recycled plastics that meet them is a challenge. Yet even though the search for sustainable alternatives does meet with setbacks, giving up is not an option. Technical innovation in the area of sustainable packaging is moving at a rapid pace, and potential new solutions are continually becoming available for our evaluation. That is why we are optimistic about reaching our goal to eliminate fossil fuel-based virgin plastic from our packaging step by step.

Packaging avoids returns and a waste of resources

By the way, the polypropylene we currently use is not all bad. The main advantage: it can be recycled, re-integrated into the material value stream and used in other products. Not only that, the products get optimum protection and arrive undamaged at the consumer. This avoids product returns, which saves unnecessary transport emissions and prevents the potentially necessary disposal of returned items and thus a waste of resources. “The only major disadvantage with plastics is that they are made from fossil fuels, so they do not decompose if they aren't recycled,” Birgit Degeler-Weitbrecht, Senior Manager in the Industrial Engineering Packaging department, acknowledges without hesitation. “At the end of the day, our goal is to package our products entirely without fossil-based virgin plastic, using only materials such as recycled cardboard or bio-based materials.”

We still have a long way to go, but even small steps will ultimately lead us to our goal. And every small victory counts. One example is our successful introduction of a packaging material made from recycled corrugated board to replace Styrofoam as a stabiliser for the filter jug during transportation.

The challenging search for a plastic substitute

In addition to packaging, our in-house experts are also searching for alternative, more sustainable materials for our products. The PURITY and PURITY C filter cartridges are a good example, since they represent approx. 90 per cent of the cartridges for our hospitality and large customer business. PURITY, which is used for the filtration of large quantities of drinking water, and PURITY C, launched in 2008, have different operating concepts, but are made using mostly identical materials – plastics such as polypropylene (PP) and polyethylene terephthalate (PET), glass fibre, ion exchange resin and activated carbon.

We use plastics in professional filter cartridges, for example, to ensure the pressure stability of the cartridge housing, because materials used must be certified for drinking water applications and because they need to be light-weight. The cartridges must also comply with regulatory requirements which vary from country to country. “PURITY C cartridges, for example, require between five and ten certifications in Europe alone,” explains Dr Sabine Lang-Dreß, Senior Manager Research & Development Filter Media & Cartridges. Conclusion: “The search for an alternative PP material is a real challenge, because we have to create a standardised product that is identical all over the world and meets all the requirements in all the countries where we are on the market.”



Strategic partnerships for sustainable filter media

Filtration technology is at the heart of our products. An important filter medium for this, the ion exchange resin, is currently still fossil-based. We have now launched a promising research project with a specific goal: a shift from fossil-based to renewable resources. The first phase of the project is starting as a collaboration with selected partners such as suppliers or universities, where the use of alternative materials is investigated in research and doctoral theses. “One example of what we are looking at is whether basic chemicals



for ion exchange resin can be produced from biomass, waste fats or other waste materials. It is a complex project, so at the moment we are in the early stages,” Dr Lang-Dreß stated. “But if we want our products to be truly sustainable, we must be willing to tackle challenging projects like these.”

The same is true for the activated carbon, which we have been using as a filter medium for more than 50 years. Unlike the ion exchange resin, our activated carbon is per se an

environmentally friendly material, because it is produced from coconut shells that are accrued as a by-product in the coconut harvest. But we still see opportunities for more sustainability. “One of the things we want to make sure is that our activated carbon comes from a sustainable and responsible source,” explains Meike Rapp, responsible for Strategic Sustainability at BRITA. “Today this is ensured through our supplier management. But true transparency, all the way back to the coconut plantation is difficult to obtain, especially for a medium-sized company like ours.” At the same time, our customers and consumers are becoming more curious. They

want to know where our materials are coming from and what the production conditions are like. One potential solution could be to cooperate with our supply chain partners in developing a sustainability certification, similar to what already exists for paper or chocolate. Existing certification schemes currently do not apply to activated carbon. Of course, we still need to evaluate if such a plan is possible, but what is certain is that we have many ideas on how to make our products more sustainable.

Identify sustainability potential with the product carbon footprint

Since 2015, we have been measuring our annual company carbon footprint, in other words, the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we generate through our business operations. We use the information collected in this process to identify additional potential emissions savings in our business activities. Last year, we launched a similar project to identify potential savings in our products as well by calculating the product carbon footprint (PCF) for a number of our commercial products. “We took a two-pronged approach there,” explains Nina Steimmel, Senior Product Manager for Marketing Dispenser. “Initially, we focused our efforts on two filter cartridges – PURITY C1000AC and CLARITY Protect 100 – which are both installed in vending machines and water dispensers. The PCF values determined in this way will now be adapted and calculated for other filters, with the ultimate goal of obtaining the PCF for nine BRITA filters. In mid-2020, we also started to calculate the carbon footprint for a BRITA VIVREAU Top 50 Hygiene-Plus water dispenser.”

Our goal was to use this detailed emissions analysis throughout the entire product life cycle to determine how sustainable our dispensers already are compared to bottled water and how to make them even more sustainable in the future. Some of the results are definitely surprising. For a water dispenser, the production, transportation, packaging and disposal only amount to approx. 6 per cent of the total emissions over the entire life cycle. Close to 60 per cent of the emissions occur at the customer, where the appliance is connected to the electricity supply for long periods – even though the electricity consumption of the water dispenser is similar to that of comparable appliances. As is typical for electronic devices, the manufacturing of the materials and purchased components contribute close to 35 per cent of total emissions, despite over 70 per cent of our materials being purchased in Europe.



using green electricity to operate the dispensers.”

With regard to the cartridges used in the water dispensers, the solution is already clear. “We know from the PCF study that a recycling of the carbon block cartridges makes a lot of sense ecologically. But we are also thinking about a fundamental improvement of the products themselves,” Ms. Steimmel related. “On the one hand, this means that we have to design the components of the cartridges in such a way that they are easier to separate from one another. On the other hand, it means developing new products from more environmentally friendly materials.”

We want to be the provider of sustainable drinking water solutions. And even if our products already make an important contribution to a more livable planet today, we will make our own offerings more sustainable, climate-friendly and ecological. This is our clear goal, our aspiration and is at the heart of our corporate strategy. We have already started this journey in many areas of our business and will

As a result, there are several issues we need to address. “On the one hand, we can help reduce the environmental impact of the upstream processes – for example, by utilising components made from more sustainable materials, by making refurbishment concepts a higher priority, or by persuading our

suppliers to switch their production to green electricity,” Nina Steimmel says. “On the other hand, we can also make our customers more aware of the role they can play in product life cycles and develop ideas together for how they can contribute toward more sustainable water dispensers, for example, by

successfully reach a number of milestones in the coming years. It might not be possible for us to achieve everything we envision. Still, we are convinced that we are on the right path with determination, commitment and working together with our partners, customers and suppliers. ■



GOOD PARTNERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

Business customers around the world use our filter cartridges and water dispensers to perfectly complement or optimise their goods or services, for example, by using our products to help refine the taste of their coffee. We have been working with many partners for a very long time and have built trust-based relationships with many. But it is not only the quality and performance of our products that impress – we often make an important contribution in terms of sustainability too.



The Dutch coffee supplier **Fortune Coffee** emphasises the advantages of our water filters in two ways: “It’s fantastic to see that recyclable water filters make sure that the lifespan of a Fortune Coffee machine gets prolonged. This way we’re twice as sustainable and every cup of coffee tastes great. We collaborate to be ready for the future: sustainable and environmentally conscious in coffee and coffee machines.”

Many of our filters reliably eliminate limescale from the water and thus also ensure an extended service life for equipment. For partners like Fortune Coffee, this has the advantage of minimising machine downtime and reducing the need to purchase new equipment, which in turn saves resources. Secondly, the softer water improves the taste of the coffee, which means satisfied customers. Our products also offer this advantage to the French company Maison Lyovel, a service provider for professional beverage distributors.

Marie Larguier, Corporate Responsibility Officer at **Maison Lyovel**, also praises BRITA’s sustainable products and our resource-conserving mindset: “At Maison Lyovel, we’ve always developed our activities in a sustainable way. This is particularly important when we select our partners. Our longstanding filter supplier BRITA has always had sustainability in its DNA: since the beginning of our partnership 15 years ago, BRITA recycles the cartridges that we use, which is a great support to limit the environmental impact of our operations.”



B/S/H/

Our long-standing partner **BSH Hausgeräte GmbH** also thinks that our commitment to sustainability has a positive effect on our cooperation. BSH uses BRITA filter cartridges in its fully automatic coffee machines. “Transparency and reliability are the basis for the trustful cooperation between BRITA and BSH. BSH greatly appreciates BRITA’s efforts to take responsibility for the environment, e.g. in terms of reducing carbon emissions.”

This positive feedback from our partners not only makes us proud, but also motivates us to continue giving our all for our customers, our products and our planet. ■

SMART MARKETING – ENCOURAGING A GLOBAL RETHINK

For some years now, we have been trying to make the switch from bottled water to sustainable tap water more attractive with various marketing campaigns. To support this, we want to provide consumers with tips and tricks on how to achieve optimal water enjoyment with their domestic tap water. Our message is very clear: every individual can make their everyday life more sustainable by paying attention to a few simple things. A good first step is to reduce your own plastic consumption by switching to BRITA-filtered tap water.



Our local markets use different approaches in their marketing campaigns to send this message. A good example is the large-scale #hahntrinker (“tap drinker”) campaign played out in Germany. It illustrates how useful it is to switch from bottled water to water from the tap, filtered with a BRITA filter. Not only for the “tap drinker” himself or herself, but also for the environment.

At hahntrinker.de consumers can tell others why they have become tap drinkers. We thus offer an active platform for people who want to show their enthusiasm for the sustainable consumption of water. On the website you can also find out more about our current sustainability

initiatives and BRITA’s corporate responsibility in general.

Our Polish marketing campaign “**BRITA. Lubię ją**”, or “BRITA. I like it” is somewhat different. We received some well-known support to get the message out. Olga Frycz, brand ambassador for BRITA Poland, promoted BRITA water filters as a sustainable lifestyle product in the campaign, which was broadcast on TV and online. In the commercial, the self-confident young mother advocates filtered water from the tap at home. What is obvious: our water filters make the

everyday life of the young family easier in a sustainable way and give them optimal support in their individual water consumption.

BRITA UK has had **Joanna Lumley**, a well-known actress and passionate environmental ambassador, on board for some time. Together with former rugby player and presenter Gethin Jones, she spoke out against the problem of rising plastic consumption in the “Just Tap” campaign of 2020. This year we continued to work with Joanna in the UK as an environmental ambassador. This time she talks about “green guilt” – the feeling of guilt for not doing as much for the environment as you could. It is important for us to raise awareness that even small steps can make a big difference, which we did in our Greening Good Guide: with 10 simple tips on how everyone can make their everyday life more sustainable in order to actively combat “green guilt”. ■



Campaign image featuring Joanna Lumley

THE BRITA BRAND AS PERCEIVED BY CONSUMERS

In 2020, we conducted a representative Usage & Image (U&I for short) consumer survey in 30 countries in cooperation with the market research institute Ipsos. The aim of the study was to collect the essential key figures for the “water filtration” category, but, of course, also for BRITA and our competitors. In addition, the study provides an insight into consumer behaviour not only with regard to water consumption, but also the use of BRITA products.

From the point of view of our consumers, BRITA stands first and foremost for trust, but also for quality and reliable performance. These criteria play a central role for consumers when they make a purchase decision for water filtration products. The particularly high importance of trust is due to the fact that although consumers are generally satisfied with the quality of their tap water, they are still uncertain or have concerns about possible contamination.

These concerns are often triggered by rumours or media reports that repeatedly address the content of pesticides, microplastics, drug residues or other contaminants. Consumers, on the other hand, can often only be really sure about lime, chlorine and metals because they can see or taste them. This makes it all the more important for them to be able to rely on a strong brand that offers optimum product quality and reliable filtration performance.

BRITA is the No. 1 filter brand and I trust that they'd do a good job.

BRITA 'filters' all worries and gives us peace of mind.

BRITA stands for filtration. If the filter disc would not work well, they would not have developed it.

BRITA knows what they do – they have been producing water filters for many decades. If anyone can do it, then BRITA can.

BRITA speaks for itself! BRITA would no longer exist if they developed bad products.

I would buy BRITA because I'm assured that it's a good product since it's made by BRITA.¹



¹ "Bottle Study", qualitative study in UK, JP, CN, 2018
² "MiDi Empowerment", ethnographic study in D, 2020

Sustainability more often a focus topic for consumers

In addition to trust and quality, sustainability has been an important user demand for some time and increasingly so. BRITA is already perceived as a sustainable brand because consumers have recognised our products as an ecological – and economical – alternative to bottled water. This change in water consumption, our stated vision, can curb the rapidly growing plastic waste problem worldwide, caused among other things by single-use plastic bottles.

Furthermore, consumers pay attention to product characteristics such as the use of sustainable materials or the reduction of plastic packaging material. The consumer is, therefore, first of all in favour of measures that support him or her as an individual in reducing plastic consumption. Here, too, we want to stand by our users and are working on this complex issue, as we point out in several articles in this report.

Only in a second step, according to the findings of the U&I, do the majority of consumers also take the common good into account in their considerations: measures to protect the climate, the oceans, rivers and inland waters, or our planet itself. It is striking that in countries where sustainability has been part of the public discussion for a longer time, there is a broader understanding of these issues. In these countries, consumers often expect more and their



demands on companies go beyond mere plastic avoidance. Rather, they want companies to act sustainably in their actions as well, for example, by reducing their own carbon footprint.

In 2021, the Usage & Image study will be conducted for the second time for 15 countries to determine the change in metrics over time and the impact of COVID-19 on consumer behaviour. ■

INFINITELY VALUABLE RESOURCES – RECYCLING AT BRITA PROFESSIONAL

We want to give the materials in our products a valuable second life. That is why there is always a new beginning at the end of the life cycle of a BRITA Professional filter cartridge. Exhausted cartridges can be collected on site after use and then returned to us. In the next step, we separate the different components of

the filter cartridge. The ion exchange resin is regenerated and used as an admixture in new filter cartridges. So 100 per cent of it goes back into the cartridge cycle. Every year, almost 2,000 cubic metres of ion exchange resin and activated carbon are recovered from used cartridges.

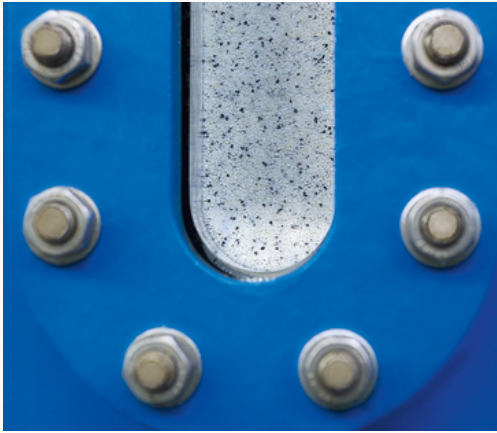
The plastics and fibreglass mixtures of the cartridge housing are 100 per cent recyclable. “They are processed into granules, turned into new products and used, for example, for parts in the automotive industry,” says Marc Pagenkopf, who knows the Professional filter recycling inside out and wants to keep



The used cartridges come back in different ways and are collected and broken up in the separation plant.



The returned cartridges are opened and emptied manually and the filter material is prepared for the regeneration process.



The recovered ion exchange resin undergoes a complex regeneration process in which it regains its original material properties.

improving it. Only in the small head part of the cartridge are various plastic parts inseparably welded together. They must be disposed of thermally.

Since 2016, we have increased the amount of recycled cartridge mixture by almost 20 per cent. A trend that will only increase in the future. "However, different legal requirements and restrictions make it difficult to return exhausted filter cartridges. One example is Italy, where only authorised service providers are allowed to send the waste back to us." At some subsidiaries, things are simpler. The cartridges can be handed in at a parcel shop or – even more practical and convenient – collected in special BRITA recycling boxes and picked up directly on site by haulage companies.

But this recycling-oriented approach does not only offer us considerable advantages.

Our customers and partners also benefit: waste disposal is eliminated and "they gain green credentials," adds Marc Pagenkopf. "They can also communicate that to their customers, the end consumers." In the future, we want to offer further incentives to encourage the return of even more cartridges. For example, we are currently exploring the possibilities of an incentive programme to motivate our partners to return cartridges to us. A great commitment to recycling can, for example, be rewarded with a certificate, which can then be used by our customers for PR purposes.

With this approach, we want to take another step towards our major goal: to keep the impact of BRITA products on the environment as low as possible and to reuse as many resources as possible through the circular economy.

NOT JUST FOR PROFESSIONALS



Exhausted household cartridges can also be collected and returned directly to us for recycling. Many countries where BRITA products are sold already offer a recycling programme, and more will follow. Additional information about the collection process can be found on BRITA's country websites.



At the end of the recycling process, the filter material has the same quality as new material. By using it in new cartridges we close the material cycle and save valuable resources.

BRITA WINS THE 2021 GERMAN INNOVATION AWARD

The ↪ [German Innovation Award](#) is an international prize for solutions or products that distinguish themselves by adding user centricity and higher value compared to existing solutions. Supporting BRITA's way to innovative solutions, the innovation lab BRITA X is working with the design thinking approach, putting the user first.



BRITA was honored as winner in the Household Appliances and Design Thinking categories for its HEIMATWASSER project. This is because the business model and brand of the HEIMATWASSER project were developed in a user-centered design thinking and lean start-up approach. We discussed the project with Thomas Hörning, intrapreneur in the BRITA X innovation lab until June 2021 and now Director Strategic Marketing Professional Filter.

Thomas, since the innovation lab was first established, you have been working on projects and innovative ideas for the development of new business models. Everybody is talking about innovation, but when is something truly innovative?

Innovation exists when three elements come together: desirability on the part of the user, technical feasibility, and cost-effectiveness. Let's take a look at streaming services.

They are a great example of a tangible innovation used by millions of people on a daily basis. The desirability of films and series on demand clearly exists and the growth of broadband connectivity makes this technically feasible. Last but not least, you can make good money in that business. This would also cover cost-effectiveness. At BRITA X, we work on developing new business models with a user-centric, exploratory approach. To reach this goal, we apply the design thinking process to our work. And that is also why we won the prize in the "Design Thinking" category.

What exactly is design thinking?

Design thinking is a method or a process for developing new products, services or business ideas and is driven by a customer-centric approach. This means we don't start with ideas for solutions, but always with user needs and problems, then flexibly adapt the solution to reflect the new insights.

What is your award-winning HEIMATWASSER project all about?

HEIMATWASSER is a subscription-based drinking water concept for multi-unit apartment buildings. It features a centrally-located water dispenser in the building that can be used by the subscribers around the clock. As part of our design thinking process, we tested the subscription in real time and we verified that there is a demand for this solution and it is technically feasible. However, real-time testing could not guarantee long-term cost-effectiveness, which is why we eventually shut down the project.



Thomas Hörning was one of the founding members of the innovation lab BRITA X in early 2020. In June 2021, he became Director Strategic Marketing Professional Filter within Group Strategic Marketing.

What were your key takeaways from this project?

All the needs and problems that we were able to either validate or refute in the course of this project can be applied to our future projects. Specifically: projects related to the consumption of beverages. ■

FACTS AND FIGURES

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

- Building new skills and resources to achieve our sustainability goals and support digital products
- Strengthening operational excellence: development of the Bad Camberg plant into a global flagship plant with a focus on effective organisation and efficient value streams
- ISO certification of water dispenser production in Italy
- Ensuring compliance with the requirements of new supply chain legislation and further expansion of sustainability aspects in supplier management

PRODUCT QUALITY IN FOCUS

The high quality of our products, for which our company is known throughout the world, does not happen by chance. A comprehensive quality system guarantees the monitoring process, from raw materials all the way to the finished end product.

Continuous, optimum quality and safety are the most important criteria in the selection of our raw materials, which ultimately form the basis for our high-quality products. Especially with the suppliers of our most important raw materials, we rely on long-term cooperation and detailed contracts to ensure our

quality standards. Each of our suppliers guarantees in writing that their goods conform to our strict specifications for raw materials as well as the applicable legal requirements.

Incoming raw materials pass through the incoming goods laboratory and are, among other things, subjected to microbiological testing through random sampling. A similarly comprehensive test is also carried out on the share of our ion exchange resin, which is recovered as part of the cartridge recycling process in the in-house regeneration plant. Anything that does not pass this test is excluded from further processing. High quality and especially hygiene regulations also apply in production. Adherence to these is ensured through detailed process documentation as well as inspections at appropriate checkpoints. Traceability is guaranteed even after delivery.

We ensure comprehensive quality standards not only for our materials, but also for our end products. Finished products are regularly tested in our own test laboratory. For additional quality and approval tests, we work together with various renowned, independent institutes and laboratories that enjoy a very good reputation in their respective countries.

Our comprehensive quality assurance programme is continuously refined and improved. Worldwide, a wide range of product certifications also strengthen consumer confidence in BRITA.

Selected product certifications¹ (as of December 2020)

TÜV Octagon	TÜV SÜD – Test mark for food safety (Germany)
KTW - Valuation Basis	Plastics in contact with drinking water (Germany)
ACS	Attestation de conformité sanitaire (France)
ICIM	Certifichiamo oggi per il domani (Italy)
WQA	Water Quality Association (USA)
NSF	National Sanitation Foundation (USA)
WRAS	Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (United Kingdom)
KC	Korean Product Safety Requirements (Korea)
WaterMark	WaterMark Certification Scheme (Australia, New Zealand)
HSO/NHFPC	Hygiene Certificate for Water Filtration Devices (China)
PZH	Narodowy Instytut Zdrowia Publicznego (Poland)
DIN Certo	Certification for bio-based products (Germany)

AN OPEN EAR FOR THE CONSUMER

The ambitious standards we set for our products are also reflected in the way we communicate with our consumers. They can contact us via the service area on the website, through our social media pages on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube, as well as on the hotline to receive reliable answers to their questions about our products and their use.

¹ Not all certifications apply to all products.

WATERPROOF COMPETENCE

Water is simply our passion. As a globally renowned expert for drinking water optimisation and individualisation, we have extensive and in-depth knowledge in this field. Thus, among other things, we operate a modern laboratory with 12 employees, which resembles that of a waterworks. Our chemistry laboratory analyses which substances (such as copper, lead or chlorine) are reduced by our filters. The filter life cycles are also determined based on this analysis. In addition, local or regional drinking waters from across the world are tested in order to achieve an optimal composition of the filter mixture for the respective regions. Our microbiology laboratory works to the same hygiene standards as the food industry. Here, for example, the appropriate cartridge exchange frequency for reasons of hygiene is examined. Furthermore, the microbiology laboratory ensures that all raw materials meet our ambitious hygiene requirements.

Testing technology as a further, separate field of expertise is currently staffed with eight employees. Here, materials, components and finished products are tested for, among other things, stability, leakage, function during continuous operation and contact with cleaning materials. This ensures that the products reliably meet our standards with regard to filtration properties, mechanical strength and durability.

In-house sensory laboratory

Since 2015 we have had our own sensory laboratory under the leadership of a trained water sommelière. Here, taste research for water, coffee and tea takes place alongside the sensory analysis by several trained test panels. In a highly professionally equipped tasting room with space for twelve testers, up to 15,000 glasses of water and other water-based drinks are tasted each year, among other things. The results feed into the further development and improvement of our product range and support the continuous strengthening of our expertise.

BRITA is a member of the German as well as the European Sensory Science Society in order to keep pace with the latest scientific trends. Its own research activities also ensure a knowledge advantage. Currently, CO₂ perception in sparkling water is an important topic for our staff in the sensory lab. We want to understand to what extent the amount of CO₂ in mineral water, the bubble size of the fizz and the sensory perception of the water are connected. The water sommeliers also look at the influence of water composition on the taste of coffee and gather insights gained in the process.

WE PASS ON KNOWLEDGE



Together with the UK Tea Academy (UKTA), we have developed recommendations for optimal tea water. During a joint workshop, different types of water were boiled and the tea prepared afterwards was tasted. Clear result: tea tastes best with filtered water because it allows it to unfold its full flavour undisturbed.

Sensor technology also plays an important role in quality control. Specially trained employees carry out a sensory evaluation of the incoming materials and thus ensure that the BRITA quality standard is achieved with regard to taste. To ensure that these incoming goods inspections take place with identical quality standards, independent incoming goods control panels are being established at our plants in Germany, the UK and China under the guidance of the sensor technology department since September 2017.

BEST: OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Our guiding principle in production: it can always get better. This is why we take the subject of operational excellence very seriously. In 2009, we introduced the BRITA Excellence System, or BEST, in production and logistics. Since then, improvement teams in all production areas have been working to avoid waste and increase added value. Together with colleagues from Plant Engineering, who are responsible for equipment technology, they are developing devices to make workplaces and processes more efficient, more ergonomic and safer. In doing so, we consciously involve the employees and sometimes pursue very creative paths: for example, employees in Italy hold a weekly competition in which the aim is to beat the assembly time of the previous week in a playful way and thus eliminate weak points in the process together.

However, BEST not only helps us achieve sustainable improvements, it also contributes significantly to employee satisfaction. With BEST, our employees are involved in the improvement process from the outset and develop solutions in such a way that they meet the requirements of the company and employees alike.

Since 2019, they have been supported in this regard by factory-specific improvement plans. BEST's aspiration is that every employee knows the vision and goals of production and what personal contribution they can make. In future, employees will also be more involved in the preparation of the improvement plans.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

To maintain our edge as one of the leading experts in drinking water optimisation and customisation, we invest four per cent of our turnover in research and development every year. Over 100 employees work continuously on new product and water filtration technologies, on new applications and on potential uses of new materials. More than 550 granted patents worldwide prove our innovative lead.

FULL OF IDEAS



Regular idea workshops on various issues are held, in which employees from different departments, but also suppliers and customers, participate. From 2018 to 2020, more than 500 ideas were documented and evaluated, even if not every idea makes the long journey to the retail shelf.

When designing new products, our customers' needs are paramount. Innovative approaches such as the BRITA X innovation lab and an agile and resource-efficient innovation front-end process help us to discuss ideas in a non-bureaucratic way and to evaluate and develop them iteratively. When these ideas then move into the actual product development process, many fundamental questions have already been clarified and the project can be implemented in a targeted manner.

Already today, sustainability aspects are taken into account during product development, for example, by defining specific requirements for the product in the specifications. With the clear objectives of our new Sustainability Charter, we will anchor sustainability even more firmly in the product development process, for example, in the form of clearly defined design and material requirements.

CERTIFIED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

We have introduced systems for quality, environmental and occupational health and safety management that help us to control and continuously improve our procedures and processes. Alongside quality, our customers and business partners also place increasing value on environmental protection, a more efficient use of energy and on concern for employee welfare through certified management systems.

The production sites for our filter cartridges in Germany, the UK and China are certified according to the recognised

ISO 9001 quality management standard. They also meet the requirements of ISO 14001 for environmental management and ISO 45001 for occupational health and safety. As the last of our production sites, the water dispenser production in Arsago Seprio (Italy) is also to be certified according to these three standards in the near future.

The subsidiary Filltech GmbH, acquired in 2020, which fills CO₂ cartridges for carbonator systems, also has an ISO 9001 certification. Here as well we are examining whether it makes sense to expand the management systems as part of the ongoing integration into the BRITA Group. Regardless of certifications, uniform requirements for quality, occupational safety and environmental protection apply at all our locations.

To ensure that we meet further customer requirements, the filter cartridge production facilities in Germany and the UK also undergo annual external audits in accordance with the BRC (British Retail Consortium) Global Standard for Consumer Products and the SMETA Standard for Sustainable and Ethical Business Conduct.

Overview of certifications at production sites (as of December 2020)

	Filter cartridges			Water dispensers	CO ₂ cylinders
	BRITA (DE)	BRITA (UK)	BRITA (CN)	BRITA (IT)	Filltech (DE)
ISO 9001	•	•	•	(•)	•
ISO 14001	•	•	•	(•)	
ISO 45001	•	•	•	(•)	
BRC	•	•			
SMETA	•	•	•		

(*) planned

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SUPPLY CHAIN

As a producing company, we obtain important raw materials and components such as technical water filtration and electrical parts from a global supplier network. We foster cooperative and often long-term business relationships with our suppliers. The suppliers of production-related raw materials and important product components are, for the most part, based in Europe and Asia.

Our suppliers are selected on the basis of strict criteria. In addition to quality and process requirements, there are also requirements for hygiene, environmental protection, occupational safety, working conditions and social compliance. Suppliers of production-relevant materials who exceed a certain purchase volume are obligated to provide us with regular information about their activities in these areas. Selected suppliers are additionally audited on site by qualified BRITA employees to check compliance with our requirements. If we identify deviations from our minimum standards, we work together with our suppliers to find a long-term solution. Audit activities, which were severely curtailed last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will be resumed with a special focus in the future.

Our international growth and the continuing development of the product portfolio, particularly in the area of pipe-connected water dispensers, means that our supply chains are becoming more complex and diverse. At the same time, the due diligence of companies is coming more into the focus of customers, legislators and the public. We stand by our re-

sponsibility for the effects of our business activities throughout the supply chain. The central principles formulated in the [BRITA Code of Conduct](#) with regard to internationally recognised human rights, dignified working conditions and compliance are elementary components of our corporate culture and our identity. Only suppliers who comply with our requirements in this respect can and will work with us in the long term.

Through a risk-based, structured approach, we aim to prevent any form of modern slavery and human rights violations in our value chain and identify any risks at an early stage. We summarise our activities in our annually published [Modern Slavery Statement](#). Employees who suspect or identify a violation of our Code of Conduct at the company or by a supplier can report this anonymously and without any fear of consequences. ■

OBJECTIVE 2018	ACHIEVED	STATUS
Consideration of sustainability in product design and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of a sustainability checklist in the product development process • Sensitising project and product managers to sustainability aspects 	● ● ○
Standardisation and further development of shopfloor management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardised control loops introduced at the DE plant • Pilots for digitally supported shopfloor management introduced 	● ● ●
Certification of the new Chinese production site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 certification successfully completed in 2019 • First review audit passed 	● ● ●
Stronger integration of sustainability issues in supplier management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the supplier selection process • Integration of supplier self-assessments into the selection process • Annual audit plan revised • No audits due to COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 	● ● ○

● ● ● Objective achieved ● ● ○ Objective partially achieved

#03 PEOPLE



“NEW WORK” AT BRITA: THE WOW! EFFECT

“New Work” is now becoming a central concept in the life of companies. New environments, new instruments and new methods in professional life are the main things that initially spring to mind here. However, the term actually implies so much more. And at BRITA, we have been looking into this very intensively and have drawn our own specific conclusions. There is a good reason why we have assigned this topic under the slogan “WOW! – Way of Working at BRITA”. We are convinced that our individual, BRITA-specific and new strategic directions will once again raise the team spirit of the BRITA family, the enthusiasm for our work and thus also the success of our company to a whole new level.



BRITA employees during a video conference

What is “New Work” really?

Ultimately, “New Work” is the collective term for a novel, forward-looking, agile and at the same time meaningful way of working, for which an innovative, values-based environment needs to be created. It is about combining life and work, and also about a new culture of work.

It means replacing conventional concepts, e.g. in terms of place, time and organisation to create a combination of mobile and office working with flexible workplaces – with many advantages. Mobile working from home, or potentially any possible location outside the company, makes it easier to work in a particularly concentrated way, but also at the same time to integrate personal and family needs into the daily routine. In contrast, the office will in future be the place for cooperation, collaborative creativity, real interpersonal relationships and lived corporate culture. All of this goes hand in hand with a correspondingly modern understanding of leadership, which is characterised by equality, appreciation, more coaching and less instructing.

Our path to “New Work”

Looking back, we started early on the path to the new world of work at BRITA. We already set an example with the design of our headquarters at the BRITA Campus in Taunusstein in 2009/2010. Back then, in collaboration with the Fraunhofer

Institute, which is again playing a major role in the current redesign, we systematically developed a so-called “open space office landscape”. The main idea was that it should enable openness, communication and shared innovation. At the same time, it should be oriented towards the specific needs of employees with different areas of responsibility: for example, concentrated work, or a separate room for “frequent callers” in our Silent Boxes, individual offices for colleagues dealing with particularly confidential content, such as in human resources, the legal department or accounting, high tables and kitchen lounges for spontaneous or informal exchanges and a wide range of meeting rooms in different sizes for meetings and project groups.

The first spaces in which we deliberately tried out creative and innovative approaches and methods as part of our BRITA X innovation lab added further building blocks for a new type of collaboration. We also report on our innovation lab in this publication. Our early entry into networked, digital working supported that development further.

With the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this was the only reason we were able to send our office and field staff to work from home almost overnight and successfully maintain operations at the same time.

Pandemic conditions as amplifiers and accelerators

Numerous offices in Germany have been largely deserted since the coronavirus pandemic began in March 2020. The BRITA offices in Wiesbaden and Taunusstein have not been used since then either, or only under strict occupancy restrictions with hygiene and distancing precautions. Meetings, workshops and even the announcement of the new corporate strategy were held in digital form, informally, but extremely effectively and successfully – a development that would certainly have taken a little longer under regular circumstances.

Stefan Jonitz, Chief Financial Officer of the BRITA Group and as such responsible, among other things, for IT, human resources and our major infrastructure activities, i. e. new construction and conversion projects, is certain: “Despite the coronavirus-induced trend towards mobile working, the office as such will not disappear in the long run. However, office working environments will change once and for all. The workplace of the future – a mixture of mobile working and office time spent in flexible office space – will become more variable and thus meet the increasing demands for an adaptable, modern workplace and agile working. This is also our concept for the future – and as always, we are implementing it consistently and early.”

This means that the need for the continuous use of an office workplace decreases accordingly. Therefore, our management has decided to implement this new office use concept not only for the campus extension in Taunusstein that has just begun, but also as part of the construction and modernisation measures planned for this year in the existing main building.

Our CEO Markus Hankammer underlines the incredibly positive experiences with this new way of working, for which there was no alternative under pandemic conditions: “We have had simply fantastic experiences with our culture of trust, which has now grown even stronger. The entire BRITA family has been pulling together from the very first day, really going



Our office in Shanghai already implemented the principle of “New Work” in the last renovation.

Sample pictures

DESIGN AND LAYOUT USING BUILT-IN ELEMENTS



Different workplace concepts are combined in the design of the new, modern offices.

far above and beyond expectations once again for our company and its success, in difficult and complicated times. The result: 2020 was a record year, with many obstacles and difficulties which we overcame together. It's simply a special team, it was a unique experience."

A first look behind the scenes – not yet definitive, but an impression

The flexible office workplaces currently being created allow agile working in an attractive environment. The office space is divided up in such a way that each department has its own "home base". Existing team structures are thus preserved.

The work options offered in the flexibly usable areas are then assigned for concentrated individual work at shared workstations, for creative work in a project team or for spontaneous, informal exchange, to name but a few. A key factor in the new concept is also the use of sustainable or recycled materials, true to our strategic focus on sustainability.

Professional, standardised IT equipment in the office or for mobile working rounds off the concept. For example, each employee will receive noise-reducing headphones and their own keyboard and mouse. Lockable storage compartments will provide space for personal belongings.

Absolutely essential: staff involvement and lots of communication

For any change that has such a major impact on employees, their involvement or participation is an indispensable prerequisite for the acceptance of the new concept. The new workplace model at BRITA first incorporated the knowledge gained so far from the coronavirus pandemic and also from an employee satisfaction survey related to working from home. In addition, the cross-functional project team held workshops with representatives of the individual departments. The department-specific requirements and occupancy planning were developed here.

Angela Heese, Senior Manager HR Business Partners and responsible for change management in connection with "New Work", clarifies: "Of course, the transformation towards New Work → which is indeed a gradual, sensitive change – is accompanied by an ambitious change management process and appropriate communication."

Regular verification of the concept or its individual elements, and making any necessary adjustments, are part of the implementation. Firstly, the new workplace equipment is tested in the form of a proof-of-concept (PoC for short) with eight hybrid workplaces in Taunusstein. Employees can already use these test workplaces today and give direct feedback via a questionnaire. This allows us at this early stage to give employees an initial vivid insight into the technical possibilities of the future "Way of Working at BRITA", and to find out together which hardware components are optimally suited to make daily work at BRITA even easier in the future. This is then followed by a test run of the hybrid workspaces.

Working with a WOW! effect – we are really looking forward to it! ■



BRITA VITAL: HEALTH AS A TOP PRIORITY

Our employees are the most important foundation for our success. This means that their health is our top priority and a central aspect of our corporate responsibility. Occupational health management, therefore, supports and encourages our employees to maintain their physical and mental wellbeing. Since 2018, all topics related to employee health and wellbeing have been bundled under the umbrella of BRITA Vital. Different departments, such as human resources,

BRITA KEEPS YOU MOVING



BRITA GmbH employees can lease their personal bicycle of choice conveniently and inexpensively with JobRad – whether they prefer a city or mountain bike, an e-bike or even a cargo bike. The benefit for BRITA? Healthier, active and happy employees! Since August 2019, almost 200 bicycles have already been on the roads.

occupational health and safety and also the works council work closely together on this and offer a wide range of support services. At the first BRITA Health Day in November 2019, employees of BRITA GmbH at headquarters



Leg power for a healthy snack: a BRITA employee cycles on a smoothie bike at the first BRITA Vital Health Day.

in Taunusstein were able to find out about a wide range of health topics in presentations and workshops. Concrete preventive check-ups, such as a cardio-stress index measurement, were supplemented by counselling offers on topics related to nutrition or stress management as well as sports and yoga exercises. The participants' response to the health day was very positive.

BRITA Vital also offers a wide range of products to promote and maintain wellbeing. For example, a confidential and free counselling hotline is available to our staff, offering support for everyday questions or serious crises – whether health or family concerns, stress or legal issues. Health protection in the form of free flu vaccinations or preventive check-ups is just as much a part of this as a monthly newsletter that provides employees with information and tips.

Holistic support – even in pandemic times

The pandemic year 2020 posed previously unknown and very unique problems for BRITA Vital. Preventive care services could not take place as usual, and lockdowns, school closures and home schooling, as well as working from home, placed an additional and novel burden on many employees. BRITA Vital also provided support here. A total of

seven webinars were offered on topics such as “Staying Healthy while Working from Home” or “Long Distance Leadership”. Active lunch breaks motivated employees to exercise. The kilometres run were converted into donations for BRITaid and a blood donation campaign raised 500 euros for the local food banks. Together with yoga during lunch break or online cooking sessions – even in times of the pandemic, BRITA Vital tried to set health incentives, which the employees accepted enthusiastically. And even if the coronavirus-related restrictions will hopefully be lifted soon: the health of our employees will remain the focus of BRITA Vital. ■

BRITA REMAINS VITAL IN THE FUTURE



We have more activities planned:

- Specialist lectures on topics such as resilience or caring for relatives
- Initiatives for more activity and better ergonomics in the home office
- A wide range of preventive examinations such as skin cancer screenings
- Training of production workers on nutrition or healthy sleep when working shifts

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC: A SEVERE TEST FOR THE GLOBAL BRITA FAMILY

“In a crisis you see what people are made of.” This quote from former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt proved to be particularly true during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like all other companies, we were initially surprised by the extent of the pandemic and were not quite prepared for all the sudden changes. Nevertheless, in January 2020, we established an interdisciplinary pandemic team with colleagues from health and safety, human resources, the works council and corporate communications. This cross-departmental cooperation is one of the main reasons for BRITA’s successful management of the pandemic.

All the members of the pandemic management team looked at the issues from different perspectives to find the best possible solution for the employees and the company. The trusting and constructive cooperation between human resources and the works council should be particularly emphasised. It ensured a high level of acceptance of the measures decided on by our employees and always took into account the concerns of employees and especially the production workers.

The development of the pandemic was characterised by a high dynamic, which finally led to the transfer of all office jobs to the home in our domestic market of Germany within one day on 16 March 2020. Thanks to the enormous commitment of our IT department, the transition from office to working from home was carried out smoothly. This is especially noteworthy, because network capacity had to be increased, additional software and licences had to be procured and regulations



Contact tracing, hygiene rules and no visitors: the deserted lobby of the headquarters in Taunusstein during the pandemic

agreed, so that employees could take screens and desk chairs home, for example. The rapid transition to working from home also presented new challenges to our company management

and demanded a consistent culture of trust. This again demonstrated the strong sense of cohesion that makes BRITA stand out, particularly in difficult situations.

Communication strengthens cohesion

In close coordination with the Executive Board, the following principles were adopted and consistently applied at the beginning of the pandemic: protecting the health of our employees is our top priority, and maintaining operations is our second priority. For employees who worked on site, a



Masking up with a statement: before medical masks were legally required, employees were able to purchase these cloth masks to show support for our NGO partner Whale & Dolphin Conservation (WDC). CEO Markus Hankammer set a good example.

comprehensive hygiene concept was developed. Measures such as safety distances and masking requirements were continuously adapted to the respective state of the pandemic. Special precautionary and protective measures as well as a comprehensive hygiene and safety concept were introduced for the employees in production and logistics.

Communication to the national and international workforce played a major role from the beginning. Our aim was to reduce fears, to provide clarity, to give support and also to address the specific concerns and needs of the BRITA family as far as possible. For this purpose, a separate email account was set up, via which everyone could contact the pandemic team directly with all questions and problems. Almost all of the nearly one thousand enquiries received to this address between March 2020 and the end of May 2021 were answered by the pandemic team within one day. All employees were kept informed through a continuously updated Corona information hub on the intranet. Emails were also sent to all employees in the event of important and urgent changes. In addition, the pandemic team informed the managers in the weekly BRITA Leadership Forum about new developments.

Particularly the videos by CEO Markus Hankammer, who talked about the situation in a calm and inspiring way, had a strong effect, gave orientation and above all conveyed confidence to employees.

Cohesion and mutual support across continents

How strongly our corporate identity “Wir sind BRITA. A global family” is felt by all, is demonstrated most specifically by the example of the masks that suddenly became so highly sought after: when masks were urgently needed at the beginning of the pandemic in our Chinese subsidiaries, the German



Chinese colleagues prepare a delivery of protective masks for BRITA employees in Germany.

headquarters quickly and without bureaucracy sent more than 3,000 masks to our Chinese colleagues. As masks became increasingly scarce in Germany at a later stage of the pandemic, the Chinese BRITA employees sent masks to Germany to help their colleagues.

The international cohesion of the BRITA family was also demonstrated in a video campaign with the hashtag #WESTANDTOGETHER: video messages from subsidiaries and various headquarter divisions about the pandemic and how we were dealing with it were published on the intranet. They served to maintain contact to colleagues, to give courage and thus to promote team spirit in a moving way.

So, despite the fact that the pandemic has presented us with unforeseen challenges, it has definitely strengthened the cohesion of the BRITA family. ■

VISIT TO BRITA X: AN INSIGHT INTO THE INNOVATION LAB

At BRITA, many different personalities together make up a strong team that upholds shared values. Whether at the headquarters in Taunusstein, Germany, a newly-founded subsidiary in India, or production facilities in northern Italy – the BRITA identity is a recurring theme throughout the entire company. This is true at BRITA X, since although the stated goal is to bring together as many different personalities, skills and perspectives as possible in the cross-functional team, the motto is still: we are BRITA. A global family.



They develop and test new business ideas in a start-up like environment: the team of the BRITA X innovation lab.

BRITA X was launched at the start of 2020 as an innovation lab, taking an agile approach to the development of user-centric business models for BRITA. Our corporate values of latitude, personal responsibility, team spirit, respect, openness and trust are ideal prerequisites for such a self-organised team. Timo Kreuzsaler has experienced first-hand why having a strong identity is crucial when forming teams. Having worked in production at BRITA since 2005, most recently as an assistant team leader, he moved to the innovation lab for the launch of BRITA X. “BRITA is BRITA, whether we are talking in a production environment or right now in a context similar to a start-up,” says Timo. “The biggest difference is how and what we are working on. That feeling of family and the values are, however, the same.” So, how does a modern innovation lab work?

Having an identity creates meaningful work

“We have seriously grappled with BRITA’s vision and mission. We have specified the mission in terms of our role,” explains Timo. “For us, it is like a compass that guides us when we tap into new business ideas.” As a result, the team has questioned the why and the purpose behind the work. “Clarifying the ‘why’ has given us an emotional investment in the achievement of our goals. It has generated for us a sense of feeling and acting responsibly.”

BRITA X has developed a shared understanding and guidelines relating to how the team works together. In this way, the rules are clear, such as making decisions jointly, for example. In addition, responsibilities are independently distributed via roles in the team, like finance and budget management, or procurement of working materials.



The big think tank wall in the team room is one of the many creative tools and agile work methods used by BRITA X.

Working in a user-centric way means testing, testing, testing – and sometimes also failing

Developing new, user-centric business models entails researching human needs and issues, developing new ideas for solutions, testing and further development. “Shortly after the launch of our team, we spoke with people outside supermarkets and beverage outlets to identify their needs. A few weeks later, we were out in the pedestrian zone with a prototype water dispenser which we had put together using cardboard boxes. We tested out a first idea – a water dispenser shared by consumers in their personal environment,” explains Timo.

This process runs through a number of iterations until the goal is achieved: a solution users want so much that they are willing to pay for it. It also has to be technically feasible and economically viable. Just six months after the initial surveys at beverage outlets, actual water dispensers were in place in large residential complexes in Frankfurt. Customers took out a subscription to use the water dispenser. “Ultimately, the initial business model we developed was not sufficiently scalable and economically viable. Still, we take on board all of the knowledge gained to work on other solutions,” says Timo.

Essential for an agile approach to work: focus

BRITA X is aligning its approach with varying management methods. “Initially, we develop quarterly goals – known as objectives and key results (OKRs). You have to think of them as an overarching force that gives us increased focus over this period,” explains Timo.

SECRET INGREDIENT OKR



Objectives and key results (OKRs) are a management method consisting of two components: firstly, objectives, meaning the motivating goals that are usually very ambitious, and secondly, key results. The key results are used to drive success and, compared to the objectives, they form the measurable and highly specific part of the OKRs. They link the corporate goals to those of the team and are used as a basis for weekly targets. Every three months, new OKRs are drafted and implemented.

The OKRs provide the framework for the goal over the next three months. Yet, success also depends on how the team organises itself from week to week. “So we can focus on the key issues, we set ourselves weekly targets every Monday and then plan what we need to do during the week to achieve them,” says Timo. “We connect with each other every day and frequently work collaboratively. This can also sometimes become very fragmented.”



Craftsmanship also comes in handy when BRITA X implements product ideas: Timo Kreuzaler builds a prototype.

ALTERNATING ROLES FOR WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS



Responsibilities for certain roles change on a daily basis. This creates new challenges and helps with personal development. Overall, there are six roles that are re-assigned via an online random generator.

Moderators lead the discussion to ensure the course of the discussion is conducive to achieving the goals. Hand in hand with the moderator, the **visualiser** is responsible for creating an appropriate visualization for the online session. **Goalkeepers** intervene if the team strays from the actual topic. The **timekeeper** makes sure we stay on schedule. A **documenter** records the visualisations. **Cheerleaders** provide the emotional element.

Digital or analogue work? The activity decides.

The innovation lab is activity-based. This means that the tasks determine how we work. Planning the week on Monday morning was initially done in a team room using a whiteboard. At the start of the coronavirus pandemic, the weekly planning switched to an online whiteboard. “We realised that some tasks work even better online, like planning, for example. Some work can be switched to online, such as brainstorming sessions, but are simply better done all together in the team room. Others cannot be switched to online at all, such as assembling water dispenser prototypes,” according to Timo.

The great advantage of an agile approach to work is very clear for the BRITA X team. “We can work together in a way that is overall more autonomous, more efficient and that saves resources, plus we can design everything ourselves. This gives us the opportunity to achieve optimal results for BRITA,” says Timo. “This latitude is incredibly meaningful.” ■

#BRITaid – WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Since our early beginnings as a company, we have supported various charitable organisations through monetary or in-kind donations. However, since the #BRITaid initiative was launched by our up-and-coming generation of managers in 2018, we have also relied on the commitment of our employees. #BRITaid has taken up the cause of generating financial support for the [Franciscan nuns from Salzkotten](#) in the Romanian region of Banat. Romania is still one of the poorest countries in Europe, where older people and disadvantaged children in rural areas often do not even have the basic necessities. Since 1991, the Franciscan sisters have been looking after, feeding and supporting children and older people from particularly vulnerable families, for example, through educational care offers and a mobile social service.

For three years now, #BRITaid has been organising various fundraising events where BRITA employees can get involved. The funds collected then directly benefit the Franciscan nuns' projects. As far as possible, members of the #BRITaid team visit the project, so they can get first-hand information on the current situation and to identify additional ways to help.

During the coronavirus pandemic, supporting the Franciscan sisters in the Banat region

became more important than ever. As schools and kindergartens were closed down, more than 50 schoolchildren and kindergarten kids were still able to be provided with regular meals and care facilities through our donations. The sisters also organised the required online schooling for children from socially disadvantaged families, who often have no internet access or laptops.



At the kindergarten in Caransebes, Franciscan nuns offer educational care, warm meals and other support for roughly 30 children.

In 2020, many thousands of euros were raised once again together. During a campaign initiated by #BRITaid and BRITA Vital, our occupational health management scheme, an active lunch break was organised in September, where employees were encouraged to go for a walk or run. For each of the 770 kilometres completed, BRITA Vital donated two euros to #BRITaid. Furthermore, at a garage sale held at the headquarters in

Taunusstein, employees could make a donation and in exchange receive BRITA products otherwise earmarked for disposal. This activity alone generated donations of more than 10,000 euros, which meant that in 2020, we were able to provide a record amount to implement social projects in Romania. Looking to the future, we will continue to ensure together that aid reaches those places where it is needed most. ■



The sisters support the Caritas social service in caring for the sick and elderly, who often have no support system.

WE GIVE BACK

Our subsidiaries around the world support local or regional charitable organisations in the most diverse ways – financially, through personal commitment or other donations in kind. Below is a selection of the organisations supported over the past two years:

BRITA Gruppe	Whale & Dolphin Conservation
BRITA Germany	Arche Frankfurt AWO Taunusstein Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe Jugendfeuerwehr Taunusstein SOS Kinderdorf Frankfurt
BRITA Australia	Clean Up Australia
BRITA France	No Plastic In My Sea Whale & Dolphin Conservation
BRITA Hong Kong	Salvation Army
BRITA India	Shanti Bhavan
BRITA Japan	Kameoka City, Kyoto NPO Acorn Club WWF Japan
BRITA Poland	Domydziecka.org Ronald McDonald Charity Houses
BRITA UK	Keep Britain Tidy Whale & Dolphin Conservation
Vivreau USA	Charity Water Ocean Wise

LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL FROM OUR OWN RANKS



We owe BRITA's long-term success primarily to our employees. Their commitment, skills and motivation to implement our vision and mission are the most important reason for our phenomenal development in recent years. In addition to great employees, a strong leadership team is also essential. Here, above all, we rely on young talent from our own ranks.

Our goal is to fill as many leadership positions as possible internally and thereby provide our employees with real opportunities for promotion and further training. Over the last few years, we have managed to fill around 60 per cent of vacant management positions with internal applicants – a strong signal, especially in times of consistent growth. There are various reasons for this encouraging development. Firstly, we promote a continuous and productive exchange between specialist departments and human resources, particularly the business partners, the recruiting team and personnel development. In this way, we can identify at an early stage which employees are ready to take on a leadership role.

Secondly, we directly approach suitable employees when it comes to upcoming recruiting processes for management positions. If internal candidates have the necessary background and potential for the new role, they are preferred over external applicants. This includes promoting and supporting our internal candidates so that they can settle into their new position early on, even if there are external candidates available who are potentially better qualified.

In addition to focusing on the promotion of suitable candidates, we also rely on the consistent development of specialists and

managers. By offering a dual study programme at BRITA, we secure specialist expertise that is difficult to find on the job market. Our BOLD programme for high potentials specifically develops up-and-coming managers who have already internalised the BRITA culture through their work with us. Our new tool, Success Factors, will support the human resources department in future when it comes to a better recognition of employee potential, or identifying in advance where we run the risk of losing a well-qualified employee.

Appointing leadership positions internally has many benefits for us as a company. Ambitious employees with a desire for advancement are

motivated and rewarded for their dedication. As a result, employees with potential are mostly retained for a long time, because we can show them a specific career perspective and development opportunities. This keeps turnover low over the long term, facilitates sustainable staff recruitment and also promotes employee satisfaction. Motivated and satisfied employees are also the greatest advocates for our company.

Employee loyalty and long-term employment relationships make us attractive to external candidates in the job market and also strengthen the BRITA brand as an employer. It's a real win-win situation for both parties! ■



FACTS AND FIGURES

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

- Ensuring the social, mental and physical well-being of our employees through appropriate services and the BRITA Vital health management system
- Developing the skills and abilities of our employees through structured competency models
- Further development of the mindset necessary for “New Work” among employees and managers
- Further implementation of the OneHR programme for the digitalisation of recruitment, talent management and employee data, including the international rollout of the corresponding IT modules.

PEOPLE AS THE MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE

The basis for our success is not only innovative, high-quality products, but also our enthusiastic, well-trained employees, who significantly shape our company and its development with their commitment and ideas. We want to preserve this very special success factor. That is why we are always working to create an inspiring, stimulating and pleasant working environment. The BRITA values – freedom, personal responsibility, trust, team spirit, respect and openness – form the guidelines and basis for cooperation among employees as well as between employees and managers.

Generous benefits and appreciation

We expect a lot from our employees and require them to behave responsibly towards consumers, customers, colleagues, society, and the environment. In return, we want to create a working environment in which a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and appreciation are the determining factors. In carrying out their duties and responsibilities, our employees are given the freedom and opportunities they require in order to work productively. Wherever possible, we offer development perspectives that fit their individual ideas.

Worldwide, we pay fair salaries that are competitive in the local market. Performance assessments are carried out regularly and on the basis of job-specific requirements, in a process that is objective and without the influence of diversity factors.

In addition to financial remuneration, we offer many voluntary benefits, which may vary depending on the country and the respective local conditions. Flexible working hours that can be adapted to the employee’s personal life situations, generous arrangements for working from home, extensive health care offers, modern workplaces, and free hot and cold drinks are examples of how we create an appealing working environment. In this way, each subsidiary finds its own ways of appreciating, motivating and retaining its employees.

VOLUNTARY FRINGE BENEFITS



- Company pension scheme
- Voluntary health insurance
- Working-life time accounts
- Study while working options
- Free healthcare
- Subsidised public transport tickets
- Subsidised canteen or meals
- Allowance for sports and fitness activities
- Christmas or holiday bonus
- Birthday and anniversary gifts
- Staff discount

Not all services listed apply at all locations.

Partnership-based human resources management

Many of the comprehensive employee benefits are the result of the close and constructive collaboration between management, the human resources department and the works council, which has been committed to the interests of the employees since 1999 and today represents the employees at

the headquarters in Taunusstein, as well as at the sites in Bad Camberg, Beselich and Wiesbaden. The collaboration is characterised by respectful conduct and appreciative and fair interactions, in which all parties place an appreciative culture of discussion and goal-oriented solutions above all else.

Due to the growth in the number of our employees and the increasing challenges placed on the responsibilities of the works council in recent years, from autumn 2018, not only the works council chairwoman but also the deputy chairwoman have for the first time been released from their professional activities.

TALENT MANAGEMENT

Our talent management involves the systematic hiring, promotion, retention, and deployment of employees in the company. To support talent management, a uniform process for employee assessment and development has been used at all BRITA sites since 2016. With the introduction of the SuccessFactors software in 2020, the process has become even more transparent and targeted. The focus is now on regular feedback and close interaction between the employee and manager throughout the year, offering the employee more opportunities for self-evaluation and personal development planning.

In 2017, we developed the BOLD programme, which is now implemented globally, specifically for the advancement of employees with special potential to take on leadership roles. The aim of the three-year modular programme is to quickly and purposefully develop employees into leaders through workshops, mentoring and solving specific business-related tasks within the framework of a project. Participants are nominated by our Executive Board based on several criteria.

BOLD



BOLD stands for “BRITA Opportunities for Leadership Development”. This refers to the BRITA programme for the promotion of the next generation of managers. The name is not only an acronym, but also describes the participants of the programme – “bold” and “courageous”.

For the training and development of our employees, we offer external, on-the-job training, as well as a wide range of internal training opportunities, which are grouped together under the umbrella of the BRITA Academy. In addition to internal learning opportunities such as soft skills training, language courses or management seminars, the Academy also offers learning opportunities specifically designed for certain specialist areas, such as the Sales Academy. In various modules, for example, employees around the world benefit from sales-specific training and refresh and expand their knowledge of our product range with the help of e-learning courses.

General training for employees, such as product-related, IT or compliance training is also offered through the BRITA Academy. Since November 2020, the course offering has been supplemented by virtual courses, to enable extensive further training opportunities even during the coronavirus pandemic.

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

For a globally active company like BRITA, an intensive exchange and close cooperation between our German headquarters and the national and international subsidiaries are important prerequisites for continued success. At the same time, it is important to communicate BRITA’s corporate culture and values internationally and to breathe life into them. To facilitate this process, employees from headquarters regularly assist in setting up structures, systems or even production facilities at new subsidiaries.

But employees from the international branches also come to our headquarters in Taunusstein to share experiences from their markets, learn about processes and build their expertise together with their colleagues from Germany. Although this trend slowed down since 2020 due to travel restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic, this development will continue as soon as it is possible again.

Overseas postings and short-term secondments are regulated by a posting guideline that applies a uniform standard internationally and ensures that both transparency and security for the employees are guaranteed. To guarantee that employees receive optimal support, a cross-functional team of HR and tax experts accompanies the process. Ultimately, the ongoing digitalisation of instruments and processes has also led to much closer cooperation across countries without employees having to leave their local offices.

BRITA’s uninterrupted internationalisation is also reflected in the BOLD programme for future managers. With this programme, we are working towards promoting diversity and strengthening international networking. This also opens up attractive international career opportunities for the participants.

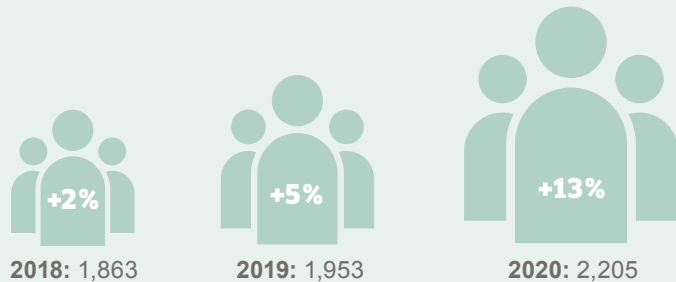
A GROWING, GLOBAL AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE

BRITA's ongoing economic success and growth are also reflected in the number of employees. In the past three years, employee numbers have increased by almost 20 per cent to 2,205, as of December 2020. This strong growth – especially last year, with a 13 per cent increase compared to the previous year – was driven by organic growth within the BRITA Group, but also by the acquisition of Filltech GmbH with more than 120 employees at the end of last year.

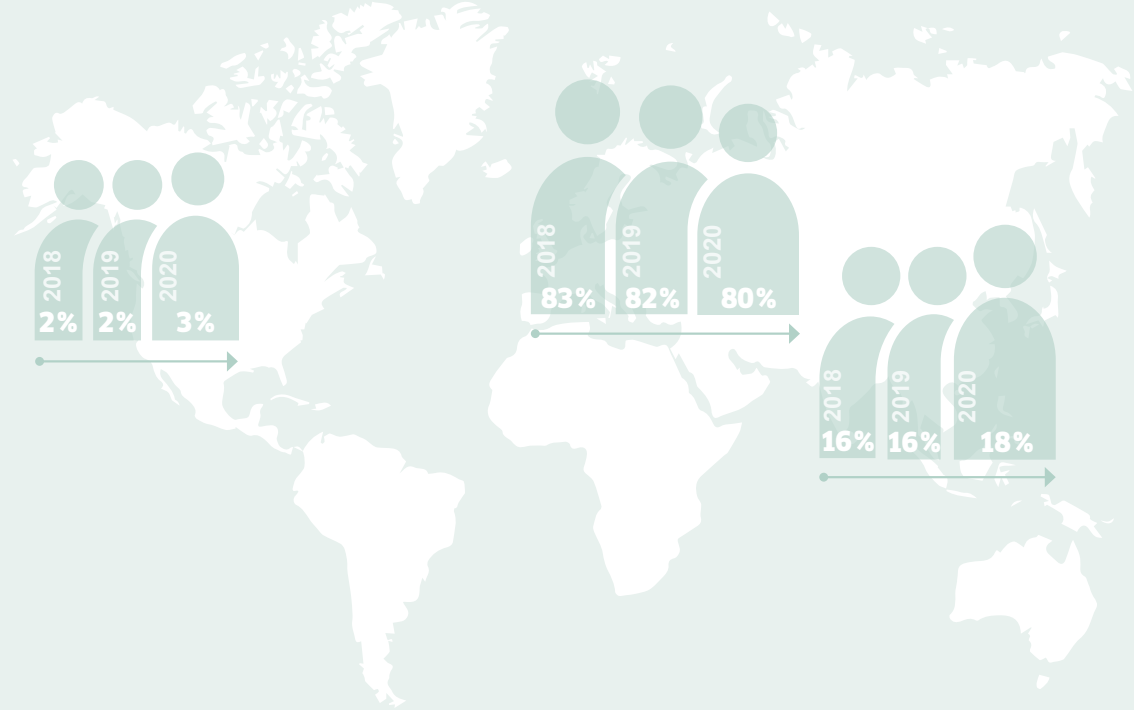
Particularly pleasing: from 2018 to 2020, we were able to continuously reduce the rate of turnover within the BRITA Group by almost half to below 10 per cent, and even significantly below that in Europe. In addition, we succeeded in filling more than 60 per cent of the vacant management positions at our headquarters from our own ranks during the aforementioned period. This shows that we are on the right track – with attractive jobs, long-term development prospects and a positively regarded working environment. It also proves that we can attract the right people.

Unless otherwise indicated, the following indicators refer to the entire BRITA Group.

Development of employee numbers



Distribution of employees worldwide ¹



The healthy growth of our workforce is spread across all divisions and regions. Today, 80 per cent of employees still work at our European locations, a large proportion of them at the production sites, but also many at the headquarters in Taunusstein, in central functions such as purchasing or product development. However, the Asia-Pacific region is a defined growth market for us. In recent years, for example, we have set up new subsidiaries in India and Korea and started up our own filter cartridge production in China. Due to the steady increase in skills and personnel in the region, the proportion of employees there has doubled in the last five years to 20 per cent of the total workforce today. In

North America, we are present with smaller sales companies, but have continuously invested in a solid personnel structure there as well. We are planning to expand this structure in the future, to further exploit market potentials.

All in all, people representing more than 50 nationalities work at our company. This cultural diversity shapes the way we interact with each other and offers us all new opportunities to take advantage of different perspectives and valuable ideas. This really helps us advance. At the same time, however, the demands on managers and employees are also changing. Cross-cultural collaboration is becoming part of daily life.

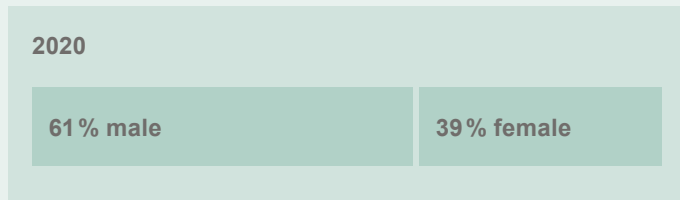
¹ All employees with active contracts; excluding Filltech GmbH

We support this development through language courses or cross-cultural training, so that our employees get the best preparation to master these challenges.

We offer models for flexible working hours so that our employees can balance their work and private lives in the best possible way. Overall, around 12 per cent of our employees worldwide work part-time, although such working hour models are not equally popular in all countries and regions. At 23 per cent, significantly more female employees take advantage of the part-time option than male employees (6 per cent worldwide). At the same time, almost 20 per cent of employees over 60 have opted for reduced working hours, while only 9 per cent of younger employees (31-50 years) have done so.

Like other companies, we must also be in a position to react flexibly to certain developments and situations. Nevertheless, 84 per cent of our employees worldwide have permanent contracts, while 16 per cent have fixed-term contracts. Among other things, this is due to regional differences in employment practices. For example, the rate of fixed-term contracts in China is significantly higher than in Europe. However, our goal is always to offer our employees long-term career prospects. At 54 per cent, just over half of BRITA GmbH employees are remunerated with a collective wage agreement.

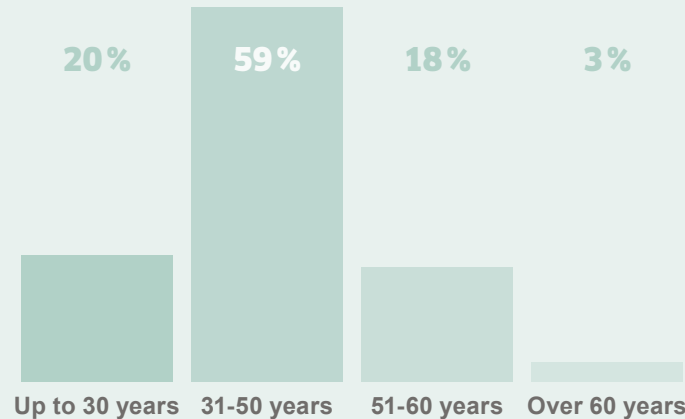
Workforce distribution by gender



As in the previous reporting period, the proportion of female employees remained constant from 2018 to 2020 at around 40 per cent, which is quite high overall for a manufacturing, technology-driven company. However, we also note regional differences. While 37 per cent of employees in Europe are female, the share of women in the Asia-Pacific region is 45 per cent, and in China it is almost 60 per cent.

The age structure of BRITA employees is similarly stable. Since 2017, the proportion of employees aged between 31 and 50 has remained constant at around 60 per cent, with just under 20 per cent of employees older than 51. Here, too, the picture varies somewhat from region to region, influenced by the demographics of individual countries and the labour markets, some of which are very dynamic. While in Europe about 55 per cent of employees are between 31 and 50 years old, this age group accounts for over 70 per cent in Asia. On the other hand, the proportion of employees over 60 in Europe is almost 20 per cent – a clear sign that we value the experience and knowledge of older employees. Mentoring within the BOLD programme also ensures that a knowledge transfer takes place within the company and that younger staff members can benefit from the knowledge of experienced colleagues.

Employee age structure 2020



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

We care about the health and safety of our employees. Our goal is to prevent injuries and illnesses and to continuously improve occupational safety. At a minimum, this means compliance with legal obligations and other occupational health and safety management requirements, as well as following additional guidelines that apply to all BRITA sites worldwide. In the manufacturing industry, occupational safety is an extremely important issue. That is why, for example, our filter cartridge production sites in Germany, the UK and China are certified according to the international standard for occupational safety ISO 45001.

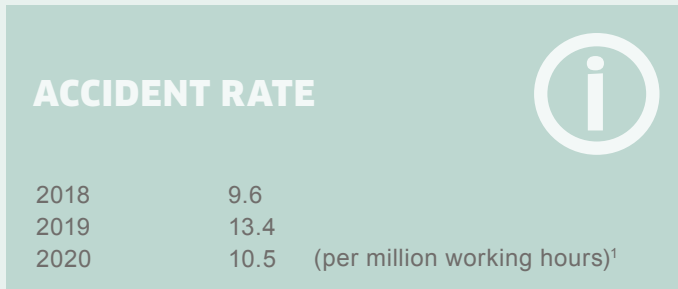
Using risk assessments, we check workplaces and new or changed processes for potential risks, with the aim of ensuring the protection of our employees. Potential hazard sources are also identified and appropriate measures are initiated in the planning as well as the lawful operation of new production lines or equipment. Within the organisational structure, the Health, Safety & Environment department manages BRITA's occupational health and safety. It organises and participates in regular inspections of the work areas, evaluates them and, if necessary, initiates appropriate steps together with those responsible. Occupational health and safety also reports regularly to management, advises on further improvement opportunities and defines global occupational health and safety standards for the Group.

All of our employees receive regular training on health and safety matters. Depending on the location, either online trainings or seminars are provided for this purpose. Employees are required to consistently comply with occupational safety regulations, to inform their superiors about defects and are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement.

Workplace accidents

Despite extensive occupational safety measures, there were 30 workplace accidents in the entire BRITA Group in 2020, with a total of 449 working days lost. This equates to an accident rate per one million working hours of 8.3.3 The majority of these accidents occurred in production, logistics and during service activities. As in previous years, carelessness was the most common cause of accidents. We will continue to raise awareness for occupational safety through appropriate measures in all areas of the company.

Fortunately, there were no occupational accidents with serious consequences and no fatalities during the reporting period. In all reported accidents, the necessary immediate measures were initiated and appropriate remedial action was taken afterwards in cooperation with those responsible. Where relevant, we have provided additional safety briefings.



¹ Reportable accidents in the course of business activities with down time ≥ 1 day; basis of calculation: 1,840 hours per year per full-time employee

Healthcare

Healthy and productive employees are the basic prerequisite for us to be able to continue to operate successfully and achieve our business goals. Beyond our general understanding of employee care, this is another reason why we treat the health of our employees responsibly. At the headquarters in Taunusstein, but also in many subsidiaries, preventive health measures are provided that go beyond the legal require-

ments. As part of BRITA Vital, our health management programme, BRITA GmbH offers, for example, flu vaccinations, general vaccination consultations and various rotating health services such as skin cancer screenings, heart checks or blood glucose monitoring free of charge for all employees. Other BRITA Vital offers include a counselling hotline for employees, a monthly newsletter on various health topics, as well as courses and information on sport, nutrition, resilience and a healthy work-life balance. ■

OBJECTIVE 2018	ACHIEVED	STATUS
Expansion of the BRITA Academy with further content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a marketing academy Expansion of training elements for managers (Leadership Toolbox) Self-learning opportunities for all employees 	● ● ●
Introduction of a BRITA-specific concept for overall cooperation within the company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of HPO (High Performance Organisation) training and courses Piloting of a regular and standardised employee survey in APAC and China 	● ● ○
Continued standardisation and internationalisation of BRITA occupational health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Globally uniform processes and definitions in occupational health and safety introduced Use of Quentic software extended to further locations and processes 	● ● ●
Internationalisation of human resources management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardisation of relevant processes and software solutions achieved at HQ Global rollout started Uniform posting directive 	● ● ○

● ● ● Objective achieved ● ● ○ Objective partially achieved

#04 PLANET



NEW BRITA PRODUCTION BUILDING IN BAD CAMBERG: EVERYTHING UNDER ONE SUSTAINABLE ROOF

Those who build today, build for tomorrow. Modern industrial buildings should not only be stable, safe and functional for a long period of time, but sustainable, too. This also applies in particular to our new production facility in Bad Camberg, which was built according to the latest energy efficiency and sustainability standards. But for us, sustainability goes one step further: with the new building, we want to offer our employees an attractive working environment that optimises work processes and procedures. And an environment where, above all, they feel comfortable.

The site in Bad Camberg's "Im Gründchen II" industrial estate covers 35,500 square metres. A state-of-the-art production facility including laboratories, logistics, technology and canteen has been built over 12,500 square metres. All BRITA cartridges from MAXTRA to PURITY C and CLARITY are produced here under one roof by around 130 employees. The successive relocation of the production lines, which started in January 2021, will be completed over the course of the year.

"Of course, we initially considered modernising the two existing production facilities in Taunusstein or building a new one here," says Daniela Crean, Manager Construction Real Estate, looking back. "But firstly, there was no space for expansion at the previous location, and secondly the high renovation and modernisation requirements made a new building ecologically and economically more sensible." The good motorway access to the A3 as well as proximity to headquarters and the central warehouse in Beselich finally tipped the scales in favour of Bad Camberg.



Environmentally-friendly timber hybrid building

“The new production building is by far the largest BRITA plant in the world. And the first building in the company’s history to be built with such a considerable proportion of wood,” Stefan Jonitz proudly sums up. As Chief Financial Officer of the BRITA Group, he has, among other things, overall responsibility for the numerous new buildings currently under construction. The new building can already be recognised from afar. Not only because of its size, but above all because of its design. Its unique feature is the special timber hybrid construction method, in which the load-bearing elements and the majority of the building are made of certified European softwoods such as pine and larch, which come from sustainably managed forests. In timber hybrid construction, wood and concrete materials are used according to their respective strengths: wood or glue-laminated timber as a sustainable, fully recyclable building material and load-bearing element for the building envelope, concrete as a structural element for foundations, stairways and ceilings, for example.

Behind the concept and design is the Bochum-based architectural firm Banz + Riecks, which is known for its energy-saving, environmentally friendly industrial buildings made of timber, and has won a number of international awards for this in recent years. As sustainability and environmental protection are deeply rooted in our corporate principles, the choice of wood as a building material was obvious – and so was the choice of architect.



THE ADVANTAGES OF THE TIMBER HYBRID CONSTRUCTION METHOD



Small environmental footprint

Wood grows back without fossil energy consumption, is sustainable and fully recyclable. At the same time, the energy required for the production of timber, for example, is much lower compared to steel or brick. Furthermore, wood permanently removes CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Thermal insulation, energy efficiency and a good indoor climate

Wood is a poor conductor of heat – precisely for this reason it provides perfect thermal insulation in summer and winter, thereby increasing energy efficiency. In addition, as a natural building material, wood ensures a healthy indoor climate, optimum humidity levels and a high feel-good factor.

Flexible and faster building

Although wood is a lightweight building material, it can absorb very heavy loads. Therefore, wood can be used quite flexibly. In addition, building with wood is enormously time-saving due to the option of prefabricating certain elements.

Intensive communication process

The planning meetings and workshops lasted a good year before the groundbreaking ceremony took place in November 2018. “For our style of building, intensive cooperation and an ongoing exchange with the client and all those involved in the project are absolutely essential,” says Dietmar Riecks, the architect in charge. “After all, we don’t just build a simple hall which is then filled with production equipment, but a production facility customised for a specific use, precisely tailored to the client’s requirements.”



One of the requirements was to achieve the KfW 55 standard, which was possible through sustainable planning and a focus on energy efficiency. “This standard actually resulted from the way it was constructed, which is similar to a half-timbered house,” explains Dietmar Riecks. “The only difference is that here we have 24 centimetres of thermal insulation instead of the compartments plastered with mud bricks, and this almost fulfils the criteria of an energy-efficient passive house.”

Energy that has already been generated is used wisely, such as the warm exhaust air from the machines to heat the rooms. In addition, the structural suspension was moved to the outside, which lowers the building height and reduces the volume of space to be heated. A special feature compared to conventional industrial construction is the photovoltaic system currently being installed on the building’s roof.

WHAT IS KfW 55?



Dietmar Riecks, Banz + Riecks Architekten BDA: “Planning a building poses a variety of challenges. Sustainability in the use of resources is a very important one. Given the longevity of buildings, construction is a process that has extremely long-term consequences for the environment.”

A KfW Efficiency House 55¹ is a building with particularly low energy consumption. This German building and renovation standard was defined by German state-owned investment and development bank Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and is linked to subsidies for new construction and renovation. Standards range from 40 to 115; the lower the number, the higher the energy efficiency.

In principle, a KfW 55 house requires only 55 per cent of the energy of a building that meets today’s minimum requirements for new construction. A reference building that meets the requirements of the Building Energy Act (GEG) serves as a comparison. In addition, the transmission heat loss, i. e. the amount of heat that a building loses through walls, windows, doors and roof, is only 70 per cent of the conventionally built reference building. The structural thermal insulation is therefore 30 per cent better.

¹ kfw.de

Attractive working environment

Another requirement for the design was the sophisticated hygiene concept at BRITA, something that was already established even before the coronavirus pandemic. “From air exchange rates to the supply of compressed air, steam and other media to production, the building must meet the needs and the safety requirements of production,” explains Daniela Crean. Decentralised ventilation systems, which can be individually controlled, were installed in all areas. In this way, an air conditioning system was provided that did not previously exist in the almost 50-year-old production buildings in Taunusstein.

A healthy indoor climate, plenty of light and an open atmosphere with a view of meadows and fields outside are also criteria that increase the attractiveness of the new working environment. After all, it is not only in Silicon Valley or in major cities like Berlin that employees want forward-looking working environments with a feel-good factor. It does not necessarily have to be the gym and the



Aycihan Celik, Senior Manager Raw Materials & Production Planning, likes his new workplace in Bad Camberg.

daycare centre on the office premises. At the end of the day, a large proportion of employees rate the attractiveness of the employer according to the attractiveness of the working environment.

Accessibility between production and administration

“We initially considered structurally separating the administration wing from production,” says Lukas Platz, Group Director Manufacturing, “but in the end we didn’t want to put up barriers. On the contrary, we wanted to break them down.” By integrating the glass-walled offices in the middle of production, transparency and short distances were created. In addition, interactions among the employees are facilitated via team areas, coffee bars and the canteen. “Ultimately, it is about encouraging and living the typical BRITA team spirit,” sums up Dietmar Riecks. Lukas Platz adds: “When planning the work processes, the employees were involved accordingly – from taking stock of the current state of affairs to their wishes and needs.”

Building for the future

“Anyone planning a house these days should not ask themselves ‘how do I build it today?’ but ‘how would I build it in 20 or 30 years?’” says Dietmar Riecks. “Sustainable foresight, in other words.” This is also how we approached the new building: there is still an undeveloped area on the site where, if necessary, a second production building can be built onto the existing one, thanks to the modular construction style, thus doubling the size of the structure. Planning and building permission for this second construction phase have already been obtained. We are, therefore well, prepared for future developments.

Three Questions for Lukas Platz, our Group Director Manufacturing

What was particularly important to consider when moving the individual production lines?

Firstly, we used the move to optimise material flow, accessibility and operation, and secondly, we checked which plant components had to be replaced due to their age. The scheduling was also challenging, as we have never carried out a move on this scale before. The dismantling and assembly of a production line takes between four and ten weeks. That depends on whether it is an inter-linked system, whether parts need to be renewed or whether it has been relocated from one of our other sites, such

as Switzerland. In addition, it was also necessary to factor in time for any unforeseen events that might occur, such as a cable breakage. It then takes another eight to ten weeks until the equipment runs as smoothly as before.

What are the material quantities involved in moving a production line?

To give you a vivid idea of the scale of our move: the relocation of a MAXTRA+ production line from Taunusstein to Bad Camberg, for example, required 12 trucks. In terms of the entire plant machinery, that's a total of 160 truckloads.

From a production point of view, what was the biggest challenge in planning the new building?

The planning of a modern production facility that works with the future in mind. This means thinking and planning exactly how to get the raw materials to the production line in the best possible way – so that employees can concentrate on their work and don't have to go looking for materials – and how to get the finished product back out of the production hall again. At the same time, of course, how we can offer our employees a friendly and bright environment where they feel comfortable and communication between all workers is optimised. ■



LESS IS MORE: OUR CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE PROTECTION

Acting sustainably means preserving the planet so that future generations can have a life worth living on it. As a company, we can support this in many ways, for example, by using fewer fossil resources, promoting more recycling and less waste, and using sustainable materials in our products. In order to make further progress along this path, we have set goals in our Sustainability Charter that we want to achieve in the coming years. But our responsibility does not end there. One of the greatest challenges of our time is the advancing climate change, which not only endangers animal habitats, but also increasingly affects the lives of people in all regions of the world.

With conviction for fewer emissions

Just like every individual, we as a company can also make decisions in such a way that they have the least possible negative impact on the climate. For many years, we have been doing just that. Our filter cartridge production facilities in Germany and the UK, as well as some office locations, have been using certified green electricity for many years. Around 50 per cent of the BRITA Group's total electricity requirements came from renewable sources in 2020.

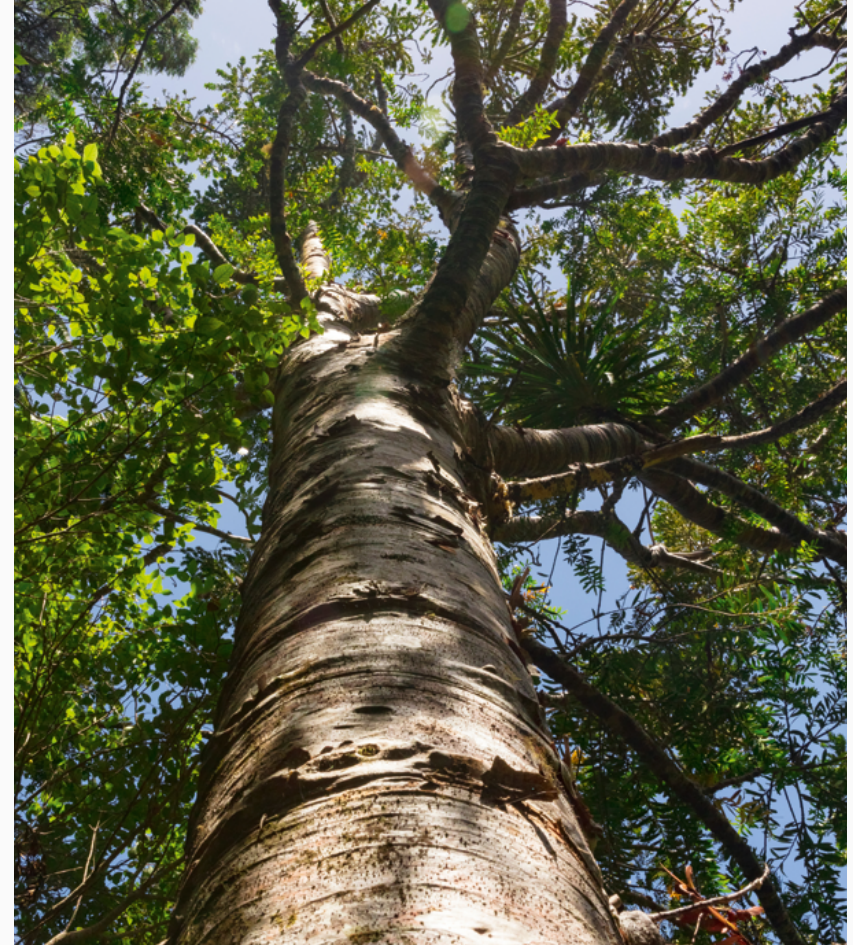
Since 2015, we have had a company car policy that promotes the use of low-emission and electrified vehicles through additional subsidies. More than 40 free charging stations are available to employees on the company premises of BRITA GmbH – and many subsidiaries have now also set up charging stations or are planning to do so. At our new plant in Bad

Camberg, during the renovation of the BRITA site in Switzerland, and during the current conversion and expansion of our company headquarters, we are consciously using energy-efficient and thus climate-efficient construction methods and technologies to significantly reduce the footprint of the buildings.

The long road to climate neutrality

With our current strategy “Shaping Sustainable Solutions”, we are now taking another step. For the first time, we are setting concrete climate protection targets. From 2023, we want to operate in a climate-neutral manner. What does that mean specifically? We will “neutralise” emissions generated by our business activities with the help of carefully selected offsetting projects.

Our target includes all emissions from Scope 1 and 2 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. These are emissions that result from the direct consumption of energy such as natural gas or fuel for company cars (Scope 1) or in the production of the electricity we use (Scope 2). In addition, we will also offset unavoidable emissions from business trips and the transport of our goods. Our ambition is to reduce emissions wherever possible, but climate neutrality is currently not yet possible without compensatory measures.





However, to prevent the greatest consequences of climate change and excessive heating of the planet, measures that go beyond this are necessary. The Paris Climate Agreement, which 194 countries and the European Union have signed so far, stipulates that global warming should be limited to below 2 degrees. This goal can only be achieved if governments, business and consumers work together and companies think outside the box. At BRITA, we want to do our part and make our value chain more climate-friendly and climate-neutral (net zero emissions) in the long term.

“Of course, at first glance this is a Herculean task. How, for example, do we as a medium-sized company dictate to our often very large suppliers that they should use green electricity?” Meike Rapp, Manager Strategic Sustainability & Corporate Responsibility, explains the complexity of the ambition. “Nevertheless, there are also opportunities for BRITA. Climate-neutral supply chains can only be realised in partnership, through even closer and more long-term relationships with suppliers and customers. Most of our business partners are still at the beginning of their own climate journey – there are many opportunities for collaboration. And because we are proactive about the issue, we can determine our own path and set the priorities that make sense for us and take us forward as a company.”

But it takes time: to understand what approaches we can take, what partners we need and what milestones we want to set. By the end of 2023, we will therefore first define a roadmap to net zero emissions.

Where we stand today: the BRITA company carbon footprint

We have been recording the BRITA company carbon footprint annually since 2015. By doing so, we are creating more transparency about our energy and resource consumption at its various sites and can identify where improvements are possible and sensible. In addition to Scope 1 and 2 emissions, we currently record emissions from business trips, the production of important purchased raw materials and the upstream chains of energy generation. In 2020, a total of 31 of our properties were covered by the company carbon footprint.

GHG PROTOCOL STANDARD



For the assessment of our emissions, we use the internationally recognised Greenhouse Gas Protocol standard for the recording of corporate emissions.

It defines three so-called emission scopes.

Scope 1: all direct emissions generated by the company, e.g. energy consumption for heating, cooling, vehicle fleet

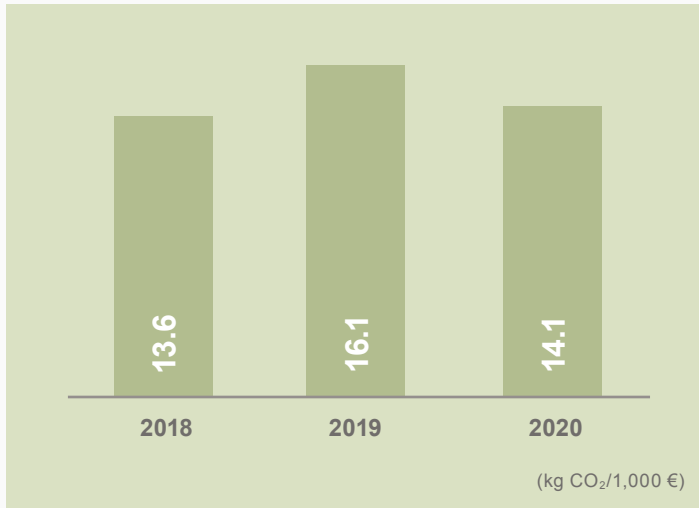
Scope 2: all indirect emissions from externally generated and purchased electricity, steam, heating and cooling

Scope 3: all other indirect emissions, such as from business travel, as well as the production, transport, use and disposal of materials and products

Our absolute emissions in Scope 1 and 2 increased by about one third from 2018 to 2020. About half of this increase can be attributed to emissions from company cars, which are listed in Scope 1 instead of Scope 3 from 2019 following a reassessment by external experts. Furthermore, higher energy consumption in production due to our very strong economic growth and the strong increase in demand over the last two years is a reason behind the increase in Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

Although we also saw strong economic growth from 2019 to 2020, the increased energy consumption of manufacturing was offset by reduced consumption of sales and administrative sites, where many offices only saw light use due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In total, direct and indirect energy consumption resulted in emissions of 8,712 tonnes of CO₂ in 2020, which represents a slight reduction compared to 2019.

Emission intensity (Scope 1+2)



BRITA company carbon footprint (in t CO₂)

	2018	2019	2020
Scope 1: direct emissions	4,750	5,836	5,642
Scope 2: direct emissions	1,710	2,969	3,070
Total emissions Scope 1+2	6,460	8,805	8,712
Scope 3: other emissions	45,641	52,269	61,563
Total carbon footprint	52,102	61,074	70,275

We recorded an increase in so-called Scope 3 emissions. Here, a total of 61,563 tonnes of CO₂ were produced in 2020 – an increase of around 18 per cent compared to 2019, which can also be explained by rising production figures. Overall, emissions from our most important raw materials, ion exchange resin and activated carbon, account for over 95 per cent of Scope 3 emissions and almost 85 per cent of BRITA's total carbon footprint. This share is even larger than in other years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as emissions from business travel, otherwise also a relevant source, expectedly fell by almost 90 per cent in 2020 to only 228 tonnes of CO₂. In total, CO₂ emissions in 2020 amounted to 70,275 tonnes and about 114 tonnes of CO₂ per one million euros of sales – an increase of about 2 per cent on 2019. ■



WDC AND BRITA: WHALES, WATER, WORLDWIDE EFFECT



Bianca König,
Head of Communications at WDC

BRITA has been supporting the organisation Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) since 2016. Since then, whales and dolphins have become an integral part of BRITA and BRITA has become an integral part of WDC.

“Less Plastic is More”

Time is short. If we do not manage to stop the flood of plastic, there will be more plastic than fish in the oceans by 2050. Plastic has devastating consequences for marine life. Whales and dolphins mistake it for food and starve to death when their stomachs are full of indigestible plastic. That is why WDC and BRITA launched the JA(HR) ZU WENIGER PLASTIK (A year for less plastic) challenge. With a questionnaire, we make it easier for participating companies to take stock of their plastic consumption, helping them to identify potential savings and set targets. After twelve months, the results are impressive: In 2019 alone, 26 tonnes of plastic were saved as part of the challenge.

A BRITA product promotion in spring 2020 enabled WDC to organise ten clean-ups on rivers across Germany. This is because 80 per cent of the waste in the sea comes from the land, including through rivers. At the clean-up in Wiesbaden, BRITA CEO Markus Hankammer, Ralf Schodlok, CEO of ESWE Versorgungs AG, and Wiesbaden's Mayor Gert-Uwe Mende set an example. Together with a total of 50 participants they cleaned the banks of the Rhine in

Wiesbaden of rubbish – including a whole rubbish bag full of cigarette butts. A frightening amount, considering that a single butt can contaminate up to 40 litres of groundwater.

BRITA and WDC documented the waste collection campaign in short video statements and called for participation via social media platforms and on their websites. Another nine joint clean-ups took place on the Rhine, the Main, the Spree, the Elbe, the North Sea coast, the Pegnitz and the Isar. The results were impressive: 311 participants collected an incredible total of 201 bags full of rubbish – including a very high percentage of plastic – which will now no longer end up in rivers or the sea.

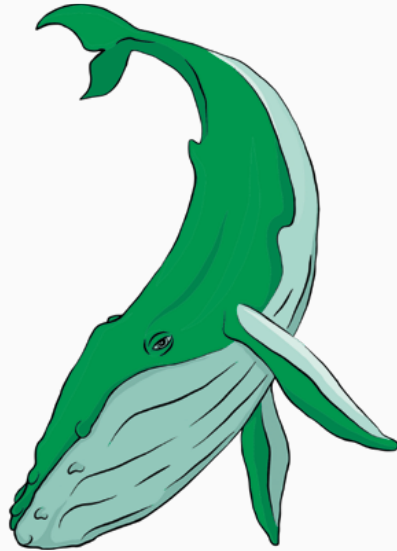
With BRITA's support, WDC 2021 was also able to produce a plastic report that reveals startling new findings on the global plastic problem and also calls for action.



The Plastic Report can be requested free of charge from WDC at kontakt@whales.org.

Save whales, protect our climate

Since the beginning of 2021, BRITA has been supporting the current WDC campaign THE GREEN WHALE. Because whales are fantastic climate protectors. With their excretions, they fertilise the plankton in the oceans, which produces vast amounts of oxygen and absorbs CO₂. In addition, whales mix the nutrients in the different water layers as they ascend and descend in the ocean. When a whale dies, its body usually sinks to the bottom of the sea, where deep-sea organisms feed on it for years. The carbon stored in the whale carcass thus remains in the deep sea for many decades and can no longer combine to form CO₂ in the atmosphere. This is how whales help protect the climate. Whale and climate protection go hand in hand – WDC is making this clear, including at the UN Climate Change Conference in November 2021. Thanks to BRITA, WDC will be there for the first time as a participant, with a presentation on the role of whales in the climate system.



Successful start of the joint clean-up activities by BRITA and WDC

BRITA's international commitment to WDC and its conservation projects

BRITA and WDC also intensified their cooperation on an international level. In addition to BRITA DACH (Germany, Austria and Switzerland), BRITA subsidiaries in China, France, Italy and the Benelux countries have adopted WDC dolphins and whales. BRITA Benelux employees visited the Dolphin Centre in Scotland in 2019, where WDC protects bottlenose dolphins. BRITA UK and WDC UK also cooperate closely and in May 2021 they presented the GREEN WHALE campaign to the general public in the UK in an online fundraising gala supported by celebrities.

“Together we have achieved a lot. On behalf of the whales and dolphins, we would like to thank BRITA for their generous and active support and look forward to further cooperation,” says WDC Executive Director Franziska Walter. ■

REUSE MEANS ADDED VALUE

It is really quite simple: the best way to reduce packaging waste is not to produce it in the first place. This sounds logical and simple, but it is difficult to implement for the transport and sale of many goods. The solution: reusable instead of disposable packaging. In the future, we will be focusing on this for the PURITY C cartridges and have found the ideal partner in one of our component suppliers.

One idea to solve several problems at once

Within ten years, total packaging waste in Germany has increased by 2.7 million tonnes to 18.9 million tonnes¹. This corresponds to a per capita consumption of more than 227 kilograms per year. Almost half of this is paper and cardboard packaging. At BRITA, too, the production of PURITY C cartridges alone generates a lot of packaging material year after year. Over 2.5 million cups and lids were delivered for production in Taunusstein in 2020. Protectively wrapped in polyethylene plastic bags and packed in cardboard boxes that are disposed of after the parts have been removed. “Just throwing away almost new cardboard boxes has been breaking our hearts for some time now,” says Robert Wrobel, team leader of PURITY C production. That is why, at the end of 2019, he and his colleague Silke Leiacker really pushed everyone to think specifically about a new packaging system.

In addition, the delivered cartons have to be taken individually from the pallet, cut open and taken to the next production step. This not only takes time, but also carries the risk of cuts. With our new production facility in Bad Camberg, the packaging issue took on a new urgency, as the production lines there are no longer located in separate clean rooms. “This made it necessary for us to rethink the handling of the cardboard boxes as well as production waste,” says Brigit Degeler-Weitbrecht, Senior Manager in the Industrial Engineering Packaging department. Together with Robert Wrobel, Silke Leiacker and Narek Vardanyan, who is leading the project, different systems were considered and evaluated. The comprehensive analyses finally led to a solution: reusable cardboard boxes.



Delivered cartridge parts must be removed individually. The new solution makes handling easier.

¹ German Federal Environment Agency (2018)

A positive start

With perfect timing, it turned out that the main supplier of the cartridge parts was already working on a returnable cardboard solution at the same time. Together, prototypes for all PURITY C products have been developed and tested since June 2020. At the moment, the cardboard boxes are in their sixth rotation – the aim is to have a shelf life of at least 10 rotations. “The boxes still look like new, despite the high stress caused by all the loading and unloading,” the project team is pleased to confirm, “so, they definitely meet the requirements.”

Instead of, for example, 23 cups per carton for the PURITY cartridge C150, there will in future be 275, in correspondingly larger and more robust cartons. The cartons can be opened by hand, without the use of safety knives, and are easily folded and stacked to be returned to the supplier to save space. In addition, larger, reusable plastic bags will be used. As well as cost savings in packaging materials estimated at around 80,000 euros per year, we achieve a significant CO₂ reduction of over 22 per cent based on previous delivery quantities. And we are also reducing the quantity of packaging cardboard by more than 65 tonnes annually. Since we are making work easier and saving costs, the project thus makes a direct contribution to our corporate goal of eliminating 5,000 tonnes of packaging material by 2025.



The reusable cardboard boxes are folded to save space and returned to the supplier. They can be reused up to 10 times. The plastic bags are also used several times.



Stacked to save space, the reusable cardboard boxes are loaded for return transport to the supplier. Similar solutions for other production components are already being worked on.

Success makes you want more

The rapid implementation from the idea to the prototype within a few weeks, the high level of acceptance by supervisors, and the successful test phase are paving the way for further projects. For example, with our BRITA core product, the MAXTRA cartridge. The manufacturing plant in China is also currently working on introducing reusable cardboard boxes for MAXTRA components. When implemented, almost 70 per cent of the emissions and almost 80 tonnes of materials can be saved per year. And in Germany, using reusable packaging for the MAXTRA cartridge components is now also under consideration.

What Birgit Degeler-Weitbrecht particularly likes about the current project is “the alertness and sensitivity of the employees for innovative, sustainable ideas, having a competent supplier at our side and the short chain of command to the Operations department and the management above us”. Robert Wrobel especially cares about his colleagues, for whom he sees the enormous reduction in workload as the greatest advantage. Plus, it is an active contribution to environmental protection. So, reuse clearly creates added value – for the environment, for employees and for BRITA. ■

GLOBAL PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

At BRITA, sustainability is not just something that concerns the headquarters in Germany. We want every one of our employees to share with us the passion for preserving our planet. Our subsidiaries all around the world are already doing a great deal towards this goal, as the following examples illustrate.

The “Caring Team” in Hong Kong

BRITA Hong Kong runs an ambitious sustainability programme. In 2020, the team started a partnership with the Green Council, a local not-for-profit environmental organisation. Employees learnt more about various approaches to sustainability in several seminars, and then also put specific activities into practice themselves. As a result, the recycling concept in the office, for example, was expanded and improved and employees were encouraged to try reusable lunchboxes. Another element of the programme is a collaboration with the local Salvation Army, which gave employees an insight into the everyday lives of lower-income families. As part of a home-visit programme, BRITA was able to distribute filter jugs and a year’s supply of MAXTRA+ cartridges to 500 families.



The BRITA Hong Kong Caring Committee (from left to right): Angela Wong, Shelene Wong, Larry Qi, Karin Chow, Angelo Di Fraia, Olivia Chan, Katherine Lau and Kiko Tso

of Social Service as a “Caring Company” – great motivation for the team to continue promoting sustainability. Further activities and measures are already planned for 2021, such as a partnership with the Green Earth Organisation, various seminars on sustainability and workshops to strengthen the resilience and health of employees.

To support the sustainability programme, a so-called “Caring Team” was also set up, which is made up of employees and is now forging ahead with activities in three core areas: environmental protection, social responsibility and employee welfare. Then in February 2021, BRITA Hong Kong was also officially recognised by the Hong Kong Council

Together against plastic bottles in China

Colleagues from BRITA China Trading are also very committed when it comes to sustainability matters. That is why the team set up a cartridge recycling programme for consumers. Since 2017, our colleagues have also already been actively out and about on so-called Green Saturdays, where they talk directly to their local communities about the negative impact of single-use plastic bottles. Anyone bringing 30 single-use plastic bottles for recycling can exchange them for one BRITA product. Sustainability has also been made a reality in our own offices. There is now a waste sorting facility to separate and recycle the waste that accumulates in the Shanghai office as well as possible. Furthermore, BRITA China Trading adopted “Happy” the dolphin as its sponsored animal at our long-time partner, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, and through this is also doing its part in the fight against single-use plastics and the resulting environmental pollution.

“Make life better with BRITA” in the UK

It is not just our Asian subsidiaries, our European offices are also driving sustainability forward. BRITA in the UK is deploying an environmentally friendly fleet of vehicles, among other things. At the start of 2019, BRITA Vivreau UK purchased five new electric transport vehicles which are used in the London area for service calls. The environmentally friendly vans not only contribute to a lower carbon footprint, but also help to reduce air pollution in the city. However, the BRITA UK team is going one step further. As part of the internal initiative, “Make life better with BRITA”, employees first gathered ideas for fostering sustainability. From these ideas, specific projects are currently being developed that will then also be incorporated into the annual employee goals.

These and numerous other campaigns show what is extremely important to us at BRITA: committed, motivated employees and responsible management, so we can jointly achieve our sustainability goals. ■



FACTS AND FIGURES

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON

- Further reduction of our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions as part of the goals of our Sustainability Charter
- Expansion of the company carbon footprint to include further Scope 3 emissions and continuous optimisation of data collection
- Creating additional transparency on environmental impacts through optimised and target group-oriented reporting
- Stronger involvement of the subsidiaries in achieving our sustainability goals and regular communication on success and progress

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We have been using certified environmental management systems to demonstrate our environmental protection measures for almost 10 years. Our production sites for filter cartridges in Germany, the UK and China are certified according to the ISO 14001 standard for environmental management. Especially in production, where small measures can bring about a big ecological improvement, our management systems help to make organisational and technical processes more efficient and uniform. In this way, they contribute significantly to systematically implementing environmental protection throughout our entire company.

Using an assessment of environmental aspects, we have determined energy, water, waste, chemicals and noise as our priorities. In these areas, we are working particularly hard to continuously reduce our environmental impact and shrink our footprint. The goals set out in our Sustainability Charter support us in achieving this. By collecting consumption and key figures from our worldwide operations, we can monitor developments, check progress and – if necessary – define additional measures.

The implementation of ISO 14001 requirements is checked annually by external auditors. In addition, our Health, Safety & Environment department accompanies the annual review process through internal audits and steers the continued development of the management system. To this end, the department maintains a regular exchange with top management, the sustainability manager, the coordinator of the BEST programme for continuous improvement in production and logistics, as well as with other internal experts and HSE officers at the international sites. Our corporate goals in environmental protection are set by management.

Energy management

Responsibility for maintaining the energy management system and metering infrastructure at BRITA GmbH lies with the energy manager in our Group Real Estate division. He or she ensures that legal requirements such as regular energy audits in accordance with DIN 16247 are carried out properly – for example, most recently a few months ago at our German BRITA GmbH sites in Bad Camberg (production), Beselich (logistics centre), Taunusstein (company head-

quarters), and at Filltech GmbH in Warburg. Together with colleagues from the operational areas, he or she identifies potential for improvement in ongoing operations and in new construction and renovation projects.

In 2015, we also achieved certification of the energy management system in accordance with ISO 50001 at the production sites in Taunusstein (Germany) and Bicester (UK). This helped us improve our energy efficiency by about 20 per cent by 2019. After extensive consideration, we have, nevertheless, decided not to renew this certification. Of course, we will continue to maintain an effective system to support and ensure the achievement of our emissions targets. The move to a new production building and a new central warehouse, as well as the further modernisation measures at the BRITA Campus, are an excellent starting point for a new phase of our energy management efforts.

10 YEARS OF ISO 14001



We have been committed to environmental protection from an early stage. Back in 2011, BRITA GmbH passed the first ISO 14001 certification audit at the Taunusstein site. Since then, other sites and certifications have been added. And more will follow.

VARIOUS MEASURES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental protection has not just become a focus for us with our current strategy. While our production sites, due to their larger environmental footprint, are very systematically committed to resource conservation and against waste with the help of management systems, the subsidiaries also make an important contribution through very different measures. In doing so, we go above and beyond the legal requirements and do a lot to inspire our employees to be more sustainable.

With our Sustainability Charter, we are now addressing the issues in an even more focused way and are also working together regionally. For example, the subsidiaries in the Asia-Pacific region are considering which sustainability initiatives they can implement across their national borders. In Europe, our colleagues are working together on new ideas for our cartridge recycling. And in day-to-day operations, since 2018, many effective measures have already been implemented or are planned, as the following examples show.

SELECTED ACTIVITIES SINCE 2018	SITE	ESTIMATED SAVING (PER YEAR)
Energy		
New Bad Camberg building according to KfW 55 standard	DE	1,100,000 kWh
Renovation and new construction of office building	DE (ongoing)	
Move to a LEED-certified building	US	
Continuous conversion to LED lighting	JP FR UK ES	55,000 kWh 1,500 kWh
Optimisation of the compressed air system	UK	5.5 t CO ₂
Installation of a PV system	UK	15,000 kWh
Conversion to green electricity	DK	
Mobility		
Electric service fleet	UK US (planned)	
Charging stations for electric vehicles	DE UK FR	
Ecological company car policy	BE FR ES (planned)	

SELECTED ACTIVITIES SINCE 2018	SITE	ESTIMATED SAVING (PER YEAR)
Resources		
Conversion to paperless office	PL AU DE JP ES	95% paper
Conversion to recycled paper	IT	
Waste separation and recycling	BE CN FR	
Plastic-free office	DK US ES	1,500 bottles 190 kg disposable cups 12,000 coffee capsules
Reusable cups at trade fair stands	FR	10,000 disposable cups
Reuse of packaging material	PL KR	
Other activities		
Planting 600 Oxy trees	PL	600 trees
Recycling of waste electrical equipment by an integrative provider (DEFABNORD)	FR	
Collecting discarded plastic bottles	IN	3,300 bottles

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL KEY FIGURES

The focus on sustainability in our corporate strategy also results in new requirements for the collection of key figures and reporting. We will make further optimisations across the company in this area in order to achieve even better transparency regarding our environmental performance.

Energy

We get a large part of our direct energy, for example, for heating or the operation of plants and equipment, from natural gas. Among other things, gas is primarily used in production for the generation of steam and refrigeration. Increasing production figures, therefore, also initially mean increased consumption, which we are trying to compensate for through a variety of measures to better control consumption.

In 2019, we recorded a strong increase in direct energy consumption in the form of fuels. This is due to the fact that, following a reassessment by external experts, the consumption of company cars has been listed since 2019 as a direct energy consumption. In 2020, the pandemic was noticeable in the total consumption of fuels, which fell by about 20 per cent compared to 2019.

SAVING RESOURCES WITH DIGITALISATION



In 2020, 90 per cent of incoming and 79 per cent of outgoing invoices were paperless. With this and many other measures, we are driving forward the avoidance of paper, waste and emissions together with suppliers and customers.

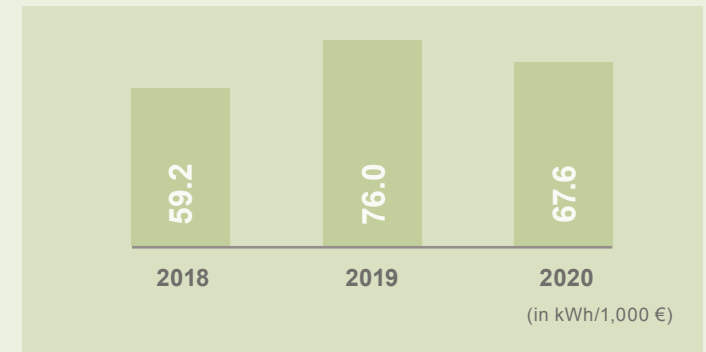
Energy consumption (in MWh)¹

	2018	2019	2020
Direct energy consumption	16,672	26,245	26,202
Stationary fuels (natural gas, heating oil)	13,335	14,264	16,513
Fuel for vehicles	3,337	11,981	9,688
Indirect energy consumption	11,378	15,427	15,528
Conventional electricity	2,642	8,041	7,744
Renewable electricity	8,510	7,256	7,614
District heating	226	130	171
Direct and indirect energy consumption	28,050	41,672	41,730

In 2020, 50 per cent of our electricity needs were covered by certified green electricity. Among other things, our filter cartridge production facilities in Germany and the UK, which are among the largest consumers of electricity in the BRITA Group, use electricity from renewable sources. In line with our emissions target, we will continue to push ahead with the switch to certified electricity. In 2018 to 2020, major remodelling and relocation projects, in addition to our strong economic growth, contributed to increased electricity demand with an increase in consumption of about one third.

The increased demand for direct and indirect energy led to an increase in energy intensity to 76 kWh per 1,000 euros of turnover in 2019. Despite further strong growth, we were able to keep energy consumption stable in 2020 and thus achieve significantly improved energy efficiency (67.6 kWh/€ 1,000 turnover). The increased energy demand for production was largely offset by lower energy consumption at the office locations, which were sparsely occupied or temporarily closed altogether due to the pandemic. With the move to more efficient buildings and additional efficiency measures, we expect to further improve our energy performance in the coming years.

Energy intensity²

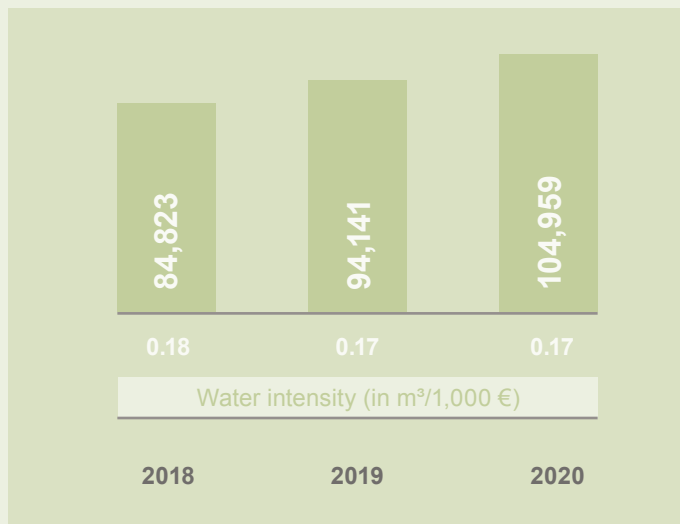


¹ Energy data is based on the reported energy consumption of the individual sites and some estimates.
² Energy intensity means the ratio of the total direct and indirect energy consumption to group turnover.

Water

We obtain our water worldwide from local drinking water supplies. The largest consumption is in steam generation for the sterilisation of our filter cartridges and through office operations. The largest consumer within the BRITA Group is the filter cartridge production in Germany, where the re-generation plant for recovered ion exchange resin obtained from recycled cartridges is operated. Since 2018, overall water consumption has increased by around 24 per cent, a development that is in line with our strong economic growth. Water consumption has remained constant in relation to turnover.

Water consumption (in m³)



Waste and wastewater

Most of our waste is generated during production in the form of paper and board, residual waste or plastic films. We are, therefore, developing new ways to reduce this resource consumption, for example, by using reusable cardboard boxes for delivered materials. In the event that goods that have already been packaged need to be disposed of, we ensure that materials are separated according to type. This helps achieve a higher recycling rate and disposal costs are reduced. The little hazardous waste that is generated at BRITA mainly consists of production residues from the regeneration plant and operating materials for equipment and machines.

A total of 3,659 tonnes of waste was generated in 2020, about 2 per cent less than in 2018. The interim increase in 2019 can be explained by the various new construction and renovation projects and the preparations for the relocation of production to Bad Camberg. More than 80 per cent of the waste generated was recycled in 2020 or, such as with pallets and cardboard boxes, given to third parties for further use. Nevertheless, there are still opportunities to reduce the amount of waste through creative measures. For example, we are currently examining the use of reusable cardboard packaging for additional purchased products.

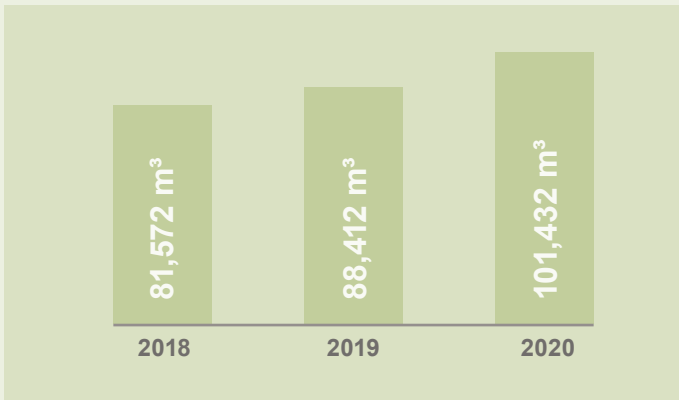
Amount of waste by disposal method (in tonnes)

	2018	2019	2020
Non-hazardous waste total	3,734	4,221	3,659
Recycling	3,287	3,519	2,422
Incineration (with energy recovery)	300	422	456
Incineration	2	2	2
Landfill	40	48	54
Reuse	106	230	634
Other/unknown	-	-	91
Hazardous waste total	55	82	70
Recycling	19	10	30
Incineration (with energy recovery)	0	37	31
Incineration	33	33	8
Other/unknown	2	2	1
Grand total	3,789	4,303	3,729

Responsibility for waste management lies with the waste management officer at our Health, Safety & Environment department at BRITA GmbH. He collaborates closely with Production, Group Real Estate and other departments to coordinate waste management. There is an officer at each of the other production sites, who in turn exchanges ideas with the waste management officer at headquarters on topics relating to the optimisation of waste management.

In 2020, 101,432 m³ of wastewater was generated worldwide and sent to municipal wastewater treatment plants. The water used in the regeneration plant at the Taunusstein site is treated in an internal treatment plant before it is discharged into the sewage system. We ensure permanent monitoring and strict controls of the limit values of the water. In addition, an external and independent test institute checks compliance with the values several times a year. Thus far, there has been no incident where a body of water has become contaminated.

Wastewater discharges to municipal wastewater treatment (in m³)



NETWORKING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Since 2013, we have been participating with BRITA GmbH in ÖKOPROFIT, a voluntary consulting programme funded by municipalities that works with and supports companies in the effective implementation of corporate environmental protection. Since 2014, we have been a member of the ÖKOPROFIT Club for participants with a certified environmental management system. The regular exchange with our fellow participants under the leadership of the City of Wiesbaden gives us important inspiration and suggestions for new environmental protection measures. ■

OBJECTIVE 2018	ACHIEVED	STATUS
Achieving the BRITA energy target: -20 per cent by 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of various efficiency measures within the framework of energy management Reduction of energy intensity by 20% achieved in 2019 	● ● ●
Regular calculation of the BRITA company carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual evaluation of Scope 1+2 and selected Scope 3 emissions Setting a climate target as part of the Corporate Strategy 2025 	● ● ●
Expansion and standardisation of environmental indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of further locations into the sustainability indicator system Need for further optimisation identified 	● ● ○
Specification of group-wide objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating sustainability into the corporate strategy Setting sustainability goals in the Sustainability Charter 	● ● ●

● ● ● Objective achieved ● ● ○ Objective partially achieved

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report documents the activities of the BRITA Group as part of its corporate responsibility (CR) and presents approaches, objectives and actions. Our target audiences are BRITA customers, as well as employees, suppliers, business partners and interested members of the general public. The last Sustainability Report of the BRITA Group was published in October 2018. The current report covers the years 2018 to 2020.

The Sustainability Report is published on a regular basis; the next issue is set for publication for the financial year 2022. The report's content is based on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standard, but we do not claim to fulfil its requirements at this time. BRITA strives to consistently and meaningfully improve its sustainability reporting.

In this current report, which applies to the entire BRITA corporation, we use the term "BRITA Group". This does not denote a legally binding corporate entity but brings together BRITA GmbH and all of the subsidiaries for better clarity. Unless otherwise stated, the key figures in this report apply to the BRITA Group.

We ask for your understanding that, for reasons of legibility, no consistent reference to male, female and various gender designations has been made. Of course, all texts refer in the same way to all gender identities. ■

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