

Änderungsprotokoll:

Date	Version	Author	Change
17.07.2023	2	MKB	Various paragraphs added
10.12.2025	3	AW	Fundamental revision in connection with ISO 14001

1. General

Sustainability is a topic on everyone’s lips. But what does sustainability actually mean for us? What does it mean for a company in our industry to act sustainably? We have asked ourselves these questions and established guidelines for Heck & Becker GmbH & Co. KG according to which we align our daily actions and thinking as well as our production processes and supply chains.

This policy for business partners formulates minimum standards and defines minimum requirements for our business partners. These include, in particular: compliance with internationally recognized human and labor rights, the rejection of child labor and forced labor, compliance with applicable legal requirements as well as other binding obligations, the protection of health and the environment, preventive environmental protection, and compliance with and promotion of ethical business conduct.

Environmental and climate protection are an integral part of our entrepreneurial activities. Heck & Becker has established an integrated management system that systematically takes environmental aspects into account in addition to quality. We expect our business partners to avoid or reduce environmental impacts, use resources efficiently, and continuously improve their environmental performance within the scope of their capabilities.

We also expect our direct and indirect suppliers to ensure compliance with this policy by their subcontractors and suppliers. Business partners are requested to pass on the contents of this policy to all parties in their supply chain and to actively promote compliance with it. Furthermore, all business activities within the supply chain must comply with local laws. If national legal regulations, international legal provisions, industry standards, and this policy address the same topic, the stricter provisions shall always apply.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a common performance standard, raise awareness, and demonstrate commitment to responsible business operations.

Upon request, the business partner shall provide Heck & Becker GmbH & Co. KG with all necessary information for an initial assessment correctly and comprehensively within the framework of a self-assessment and shall furthermore provide other information demonstrating compliance with the policy. Heck & Becker reserves the right to appropriately review the implementation of this policy. The business partner shall inform Heck & Becker of events that conflict with the principles of this policy or that pose significant risks to compliance with it.

Heck & Becker GmbH & Co. KG
 – CEO –

Andre Weißbenner

2 Corporate Ethics

2.1 Compliance with Employee Rights, Laws and Regulations

For our business partners, it is of outstanding importance that all entrepreneurial activities are characterized by social responsibility toward employees and society as a whole. Business partners respect the personal rights of their employees, provide them with good and safe working conditions and a stable environment in which they can develop their talents. National and international legal requirements as well as other binding obligations must be complied with.

2.2 Human Rights, Health, Environment

Business partners respect the dignity and personal rights of their employees as well as third parties with whom they are in business contact. Compliance with internationally recognized human rights must be observed, respected, and actively supported. Respect for human rights is an integral part of corporate responsibility.

The protection of health and the environment is an integral part of responsible conduct. Business partners undertake to comply with all relevant environmental legal requirements as well as other binding obligations.

Business partners pursue the goal of systematically identifying, assessing, and—where possible—avoiding or minimizing the environmental impacts of their activities, products, and services. This includes, in particular, the responsible use of energy, water, and raw materials, the reduction of waste and emissions, and the safe handling of environmentally relevant substances.

The continuous improvement of environmental performance is a central objective. Business partners promote suitable measures to improve their environmental behavior and to avoid environmental impacts.

2.3 Rejection of Forced Labor, Child Labor, Human Trafficking

Any form of forced labor and child labor is rejected. Participation in human trafficking, the use of violence, and the use of involuntary labor are not to be tolerated. The principle of freely chosen employment must be accepted. Child labor and the exploitation of children or support for child labor are not tolerated.

2.4 Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

Discrimination against employees on the basis of skin color, ethnic or social origin, gender, age, nationality, marital status, disability, political inclination, sexual orientation, as well as religious affiliation or ideology is not tolerated.

2.5 Anti-Corruption

The company, in particular its governing bodies and employees, undertakes not to commit any acts that may lead to criminal liability for a property-related offense, in particular fraud or breach of trust, theft or embezzlement, insolvency offenses, offenses against competition, the granting of advantages, the acceptance of advantages, bribery, corruption, or comparable offenses.

2.6 Remuneration, Working Hours and Social Benefits

Business partners undertake to ensure that remuneration and social benefits comply with legal requirements with regard to minimum wages, overtime, and legally mandated social benefits. Legal requirements regarding working hours and vacation must be complied with. If no national laws exist on working hours, the labor and social standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO) shall apply.

2.7 Occupational Safety, Fire Protection and Health Protection

With regard to occupational safety, fire protection, and health protection, at a minimum compliance with national legislation and regulations for a safe, ergonomic, healthy, and hygienic working environment must be ensured.

In addition, where applicable, environmentally relevant risks in the working environment must also be taken into account in order to identify risks to people and the environment at an early stage and implement suitable protective measures.

2.8 Education and Training

Knowledge and skills mean opportunities in modern society. Business partners recognize the importance of employee qualifications as a value for the company and understand commitment to professional education and training as an investment in the future.

Through targeted information and training measures, business partners also promote their employees' awareness with regard to environmentally relevant requirements, environmentally responsible behavior, and their respective role in complying with this policy.

2.9 Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining

Business partners respect employees' rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, membership in trade unions, the formation of employee representatives, and membership in works councils. Employees and their representatives must be enabled to communicate with company management without fear of reprisals, intimidation, or harassment.

2.10 Open Communication

Open communication of concerns makes a decisive contribution to making misconduct less likely or to ensuring that it is recognized and corrected at an early stage. Business partners value an open climate in which employees can approach their supervisors or company management without concern and in confidence, even with critical matters.

2.11 Whistleblowing and Protection Against Retaliation

In cases of ethically incorrect behavior or violations of national laws, it must be possible to seek advice and assistance and to raise concerns or suspected violations through defined communication channels without fear of retaliation. Whistleblowers must be protected against disadvantage or retaliation.

2.12 Conflict of Interest / Sponsoring Activities

In day-to-day business, decision-making situations may arise in which company interests conflict with personal interests. Conflicts of interest may lead to decisions no longer being made impartially in the interests of the company. Employees affected by a potential or actual conflict of interest are obliged to inform their supervisors or management promptly in order to bring about a rapid clarification.

2.13 Ethical Recruitment

Respect, fairness, and equal opportunity are fundamental principles that business partners must observe in recruitment. Discrimination based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics is prohibited. Transparency, honesty, and data protection in the handling of applicant data are essential. Decisions are to be made on the basis of qualifications, and diversity is to be promoted.

2.14 Women's Rights

Business partners are obliged to respect and promote women's rights. Discrimination, harassment, and violence against women are unacceptable. Equal opportunity, equality, and a safe working environment for women are of the utmost importance. Decisions should be made solely on the basis of qualifications, regardless of gender.

2.15 Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

Business partners are obliged to promote diversity, equality, and inclusion. This includes recognizing and valuing diversity with regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, and other characteristics. Discrimination and prejudice are prohibited. Business partners create working environments that ensure equal opportunities for all.

2.16 Rights of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples

Business partners are obliged to respect and protect the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples. Discrimination, exclusion, and oppression based on ethnic affiliation or cultural background are unacceptable. Cultural diversity must be respected. Decisions should be made on the basis of qualifications, regardless of ethnic affiliation or cultural background.

2.17 Land, Forest and Water Rights as well as Forced Eviction

Business partners are obliged to respect and protect land, forest, and water rights. Any form of forced eviction is unacceptable. The use and preservation of natural resources should take place in accordance with the rights of affected communities. Business partners appropriately consult local communities and obtain required consents.

2.18 Use of Private and Public Security Forces

Business partners are obliged to handle the use of private and public security forces responsibly and ethically. Security forces should adhere to human rights standards and must not use excessive force. The selection and training of security forces must be carried out carefully. Data protection and confidentiality must be ensured. Appropriate measures must be taken in the event of violations.

3 Compliance

3.1 Relationships with Business Partners

Our business partners expect that they can rely on Heck + Becker as a legally compliant business partner. As our business partner, you act conscientiously with the understanding that national and international laws must be complied with.

We also expect business partners to comply with applicable legal requirements, particularly in the areas of environmental protection and occupational safety, and to handle natural resources responsibly. Environmental aspects may be taken into account when selecting and evaluating subcontractors and suppliers.

3.2 Interaction with Political Institutions and Authorities

In dealings with governments and authorities, business partners act honestly and transparently and in accordance with applicable law. This applies, for example, to contacts with authorities in day-to-day business (for necessary licenses, permits or contract conclusions), in political advocacy or in response to official inquiries (requests for information, official investigations, court proceedings).

3.3 Protection Against Corruption and Bribery

Benefits, for example in the context of invitations or in connection with promotional activities intended to promote business relationships or present products or services, are permissible – provided they are reasonable. In all cases, compliance with the relevant legal provisions must be ensured. Such benefits may only be accepted or granted if they serve a legitimate business purpose and are not accepted or granted as consideration for an unlawful advantage.

3.4 Fair Competition

Relationships and agreements with competitors, suppliers, sales companies and dealers that harm fair competition are prohibited. Business partners comply with the rules of fair competition in all countries.

3.5 Product Safety

Business partners see themselves as partners of customers. Long-term customer relationships contribute to business success. Therefore, the aim is to supply Heck & Becker GmbH & Co. KG with safe, flawless and high-quality products and services while also considering relevant environmental aspects within the scope of possibilities.

3.6 Disclosure of Information

Business partners are obliged to disclose transparent and honest information. Information must be provided in a timely, accurate and complete manner. Confidential information must be protected and may only be disclosed with appropriate consent. Violations must be reported.

3.7 Financial Responsibility

Business partners are obliged to maintain accurate and reliable financial records. All financial transactions must be documented correctly and completely. Applicable accounting standards and guidelines must be complied with. Fraudulent activities are not tolerated; suspected cases must be appropriately reviewed and reported.

3.8 Export Controls and Economic Sanctions

Business partners are obliged to comply with applicable export controls and economic sanctions. This includes compliance with all relevant laws and regulations regarding the export of goods, technologies and services. Transactions must be appropriately reviewed; suspected cases must be reported.

3.9 Protection of Intellectual Property

Business partners are obliged to protect the intellectual property of others and to respect copyrights, trademark rights, patents and other intellectual property rights. Unauthorized use, reproduction or distribution of protected works must be avoided. Violations must be reported.

3.10 Plagiarism

Business partners are obliged to avoid plagiarism and to safeguard the protection of intellectual property. Content, ideas or products of others must not be used or reproduced without appropriate authorization. Suspected cases must be reported and appropriate measures taken.

3.11 Money Laundering

Business partners are obliged to prevent money laundering and to protect the integrity of the financial system. All applicable laws and regulations on combating money laundering and terrorist financing must be complied with. Suspicious transactions must be reported; appropriate control mechanisms must be established.

3.12 Data Protection

Business partners are obliged to ensure data protection and to treat personal data confidentially. Applicable data protection laws must be complied with and appropriate security measures must be ensured to protect the data. Data breaches must be reported and appropriate measures taken.

3.13 Information on Products and Services

Business partners always provide truthful information regarding products and services. This also applies to environmental claims. False or misleading information may harm both Heck & Becker and the business partner and is not permitted.

3.14 Use and Security of IT Systems

IT systems are regularly used and data is processed in day-to-day business. Appropriate security precautions (passwords, approved technologies and licensed software) are required to ensure the protection of intellectual property and personal data. The contents of emails, attachments, downloaded files and stored voice messages must be handled with due care.

3.15 Confidentiality and Public Relations

Confidential information is intended only for designated recipients and must not be distributed internally without authorization or published externally. Discussing confidential information in public or unauthorized disclosure of information about Heck & Becker or its customers to third parties constitutes a breach of confidentiality.

4 Environmental Standards

4.1 Environmental Responsibility

Business partners must, in accordance with the precautionary principle, take initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility and encourage the development and dissemination of environmentally friendly technologies.

Business partners undertake to comply with all relevant environmental legal requirements as well as other binding obligations and to implement appropriate measures to prevent or reduce environmental impacts. Continuous improvement of environmental performance should be pursued.

4.2 Environmentally Friendly Production

Business partners are obliged to promote environmentally friendly production practices. This includes reducing environmental impacts and promoting sustainability throughout the entire production process. Resource efficiency must be increased, waste minimized, and – where appropriate – renewable energy and environmentally friendly materials should be used. Compliance with environmental standards and regulations must be ensured. Business partners continuously seek opportunities to improve environmental performance.

4.3 Environmentally Friendly Products

All products manufactured along the supply chain must meet the environmental protection standards of their respective market segment. This includes all materials and substances used in production. Chemicals and other substances that pose a hazard when released into the environment must be identified. A hazardous substance management system must be established for them to ensure safe handling, transport, storage, recycling or reuse, and disposal through appropriate procedures.

4.4 Energy Consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Business partners should aim to reduce energy consumption in order to conserve climate and resources. At the same time, a continuous reduction of greenhouse gas emissions should be pursued, for example through efficiency measures, process optimization, use of suitable technologies and – where possible – the use of low-CO₂ or renewable energy.

4.5 Water Quality and Use

In all phases of production and the supply chain, circular systems should be used in the use of water in order to increase water recycling rates, protect the environment and sustainably reduce freshwater consumption. Discharges into water bodies must be avoided; applicable limits and requirements must be complied with.

4.6 Improving Air Quality

Business partners are obliged to take measures to improve air quality. This includes reducing emissions and pollutants through the use of appropriate technologies and practices. Applicable environmental standards and laws must be complied with. Where appropriate, environmental reports or evidence should be prepared to document progress.

4.7 Responsible Sourcing of Raw Materials

Business partners support activities that ensure responsible sourcing of raw materials. The procurement and use of raw materials obtained unlawfully or through ethically unacceptable or unreasonable measures must be avoided. The use of raw materials such as conflict minerals affected by embargoes or import restrictions must be excluded. Business partners identify such raw materials in the supply chain and disclose origin and sources where applicable.

4.8 Responsible Chemical Management

Business partners practice responsible chemical management that ensures the safety and health of all involved. Applicable laws and regulations must be complied with. Substances with relevant environmental hazards must be identified; safe storage, labeling, transport, use and disposal must be ensured. Measures to reduce environmental impacts should be pursued.

4.9 Sustainable Resource Management

Business partners use natural resources responsibly and efficiently. This means minimizing the consumption of water, energy and raw materials, reducing waste and emissions, and continuously improving the environmental impacts of their activities.

4.10 Waste Prevention

Business partners adhere to the principles of waste prevention. Unnecessary packaging, waste of resources and environmental pollution must be avoided. Waste must be separated, recycled or disposed of properly in accordance with applicable regulations.

4.11 Renewable Energy

Business partners promote – where economically and technically feasible – the use of renewable energy. This includes switching to suitable energy sources and reducing the consumption of non-renewable energy. Applicable laws and regulations in the field of energy must be complied with.

4.12 Decarbonization

Business partners are encouraged to contribute to decarbonization by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting low-carbon technologies. Efficiency measures, process optimization and – where possible – the use of renewable energy are suitable means. Emission standards and environmental requirements must be complied with.

4.13 Animal Welfare

Where relevant to business activities, business partners respect and promote animal welfare. Animals must be kept in a species-appropriate manner; abuse, neglect or exploitation must be excluded. Applicable animal welfare standards and laws must be complied with.

4.14 Biodiversity, Land Use and Deforestation

Business partners contribute – where relevant – to the preservation of biodiversity, sustainable land use and protection against deforestation. Natural resources and ecosystems must be treated with respect. Applicable environmental standards and laws must be complied with.

4.15 Soil Quality

Business partners protect and preserve – where relevant – soil quality. Soil contamination must be minimized; appropriate measures to prevent contamination and ensure safe handling of environmentally relevant substances must be implemented. Applicable requirements must be complied with.

4.16 Noise Emissions

Business partners reduce – where relevant – noise emissions through appropriate technical and organizational measures. Noise protection standards and regulations must be complied with in order to minimize impacts on the environment and local residents.

4.17 Binding Requirements for Tier-1 Suppliers to Pass on Standards Along the Supply Chain

Business partners define binding requirements for their Tier-1 suppliers in order to pass on standards throughout the entire supply chain. This includes the communication of quality standards, ethical principles, environmental compatibility and social responsibility. Business partners ensure that these standards are complied with and appropriately monitored. In the event of deviations, appropriate corrective measures must be initiated.