




Sustainability and Responsibility

at SYNTHOPOL



SYNTHOPOL
THE RESIN COMPANY





SYNTHOPOL specialises in developing and manufacturing synthetic resins for the paint, varnish, plastics and adhesives industries. In addition to the standard binding agents, our range includes a wide variety of innovative and bespoke products.

With revenue of more than EUR 120 million, **SYNTHOPOL** is one of Europe's leading producers of synthetic resins. We owe this success to the expertise, dedication and flexibility of our approximately 190 employees, not to mention our technical facilities, which are always state-of-the-art. To ensure that we remain at the forefront of our industry, **SYNTHOPOL** invests heavily every year in production technology, research and development, IT and sustainable environmental protection measures.

SYNTHOPOL CHEMIE was founded by Dr Peter Koch and his wife Louise Koch in Hamburg in 1957. The company's rapid growth soon necessitated a move to a larger site. This was found in nearby Buxtehude, which has been **SYNTHOPOL's** home since 1966. To this day, **SYNTHOPOL** is run as a family business, independently and collaboratively, allowing us to both plan for the long term and respond flexibly, act globally and remain rooted in our local region.

Editorial



Dear Readers,

Sustainability and responsibility in economic, environmental and social matters are integral components of our corporate culture and essential for the lasting preservation of our company. More than this, they are the foundation for our long-term business operations and ultimately for SYNTHOPOL'S success.

The world community has come to realise that, in the long run, only sustainable actions and business, and respect for people and the environment, can preserve the natural and basic needs of our planet. At the Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, the United Nations resolved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Agenda comprises the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus, for the first time, there is a universal catalogue that contains all sustainability dimensions. The 17 SDGs describe far-reaching objectives and areas of work.

SYNTHOPOL strikes a balance between responsible action and sustainable business.

With this brochure, we would like to document where we currently stand and our progress towards our sustainability goals. At the same time, it provides an overview of SYNTHOPOL's strategic orientation and sustainability management. As a mid-sized chemicals company, we cannot operate in all areas of the 17 SDGs – but we are all the more committed to the handful that are relevant to us. In the report you are about to read, I am pleased to present to you with brief summaries of our sustainability activities. We have already had considerable successes in some fields of the 17 SDGs, of which we can be proud.

SYNTHOPOL strikes a balance between responsible action and sustainable business. We will therefore continue to pursue the sustainability measures that we have initiated and successfully implemented in the last few years. Every member of the SYNTHOPOL team plays an important part in this. What motivates us is striving for improvement – in many respects. Join us on this ambitious journey!

Yours,

Dr Henning Ziemer
Managing Director

Overview and key goals

We are committed to protecting the environment and using resources responsibly – for this generation and those yet to come. Our business activities are influenced by this guiding principle. The central objective of our sustainability strategy is therefore to minimise the negative impact of our business activities through-

out the value chain. This firstly includes balancing optimal and efficient environmental protection with our business goals. Secondly, our sustainability activities are built around satisfied employees, for whose protection and safety we feel responsible.

We are guided by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide an internationally recognised framework for sustainability progress for nations, organisations and businesses. The central goals for SYNTHOPOL are: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 17



Climate and environment

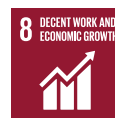
Energy and energy efficiency

The production of our binding agents requires high energy usage. As part of the energy management system certified since 2015, we therefore regularly review our energy consumption to identify ways to conserve energy, increase efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

Specifically, energy conservation measures include:

- Purchasing electricity from renewable sources.
- Using waste heat to provide thermal energy for production processes.
- Installing a supply and exhaust air control system.
- Installing electric charging stations and providing electric vehicles for our facility maintenance team.
- Converting lighting in various areas of our plants to LED lighting technology.
- Renewing the hardware in our data centre.
- Assessing the energy footprint of new buildings and conversions.

Our contribution to SDGs: 6, 8, 9, 12



Resource conservation

In addition to energy, our products also require water, solvents, alkalis and a range of raw materials. The share of renewable raw materials has been rising steadily for years.

Specific measures for the responsible use of resources include:

- Reutilising solvents and alkalis for cleaning purposes.
- Re-distilling solvents/compounds for re-use.
- Internal product recycling.
- Using rainwater from flat roofs for replenishing cooling water.
- Reducing municipal water consumption by installing new sealing technologies in agitator seals.

Our contribution to SDGs: 6, 7, 8, 9, 12



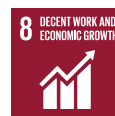
Environmental protection

We pay particular attention to avoiding and reducing the environmental impact of our production processes. We maintain open communications with locally based companies in environmental protection committees and intensive cooperation with the competent oversight authorities.

The environmental protection measures taken include:

- Extracting polluted exhaust air streams from production facilities and tank farms.
- Thermal recovery of polluted exhaust air streams.
- Returning empty raw material containers for reconditioning.
- Using reconditioned metal drums for our products, if permitted by product properties and quality requirements.
- Avoiding water pollution by using separate water systems and upstream facilities for wastewater treatment.

Our contribution to SDGs: 6, 8, 9, 12



Sustainable products and production

Sustainable products

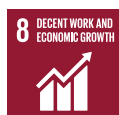
To us, sustainability means developing environmentally friendly and high-quality products that are used in paints and coatings to extend the durability of materials.

Our development projects include:

- Using environmentally friendly raw materials.
- Using and increasing the share of renewable raw materials in our binding agents.
- Developing aqueous binding agents.
- Reducing solvent emissions by developing high-solids products.
- Value-adding applications, e.g. to protect against corrosion, decay or surface contamination.

We have readings taken by third-party laboratories to determine the biogenic carbon content, which allows us to provide precise information on the share of renewable raw materials in our products.

Our contribution to SDGs: 8, 9, 12





Sustainable production

The production of our products generates waste and carbon emissions. SYNTHOPOL therefore designs its production processes for minimal environmental impact.

We have identified the following key points for sustainable production:

- Optimising the facility control system to reduce energy consumption.
- Using high-efficiency motors.
- Insulating pipes and containers.
- Load-dependent and frequency controlled compressed air generation.
- Applying KAIZEN methods in production.
- Monitoring health, safety and environmental aspects throughout production.

Our contribution to SDGs: 6, 8, 9, 12



Sustainability in transport and the supply chain

Every year, our products leave our plant in Buxtehude and go out all over the world – by road, rail or sea. To ease the traffic situation and thereby reduce our environmental impact, we have set the following priorities in our logistics:

- Combining deliveries of small quantities to reduce journeys.
- Combining modes of transport to reduce carbon emissions.
- Avoiding unladen journeys.
- Substituting electric forklifts for diesel forklifts.

Our contribution to SDGs: 9, 17



Employees and society

Employees and employee development

SYNTHOPOL counts on a strong team. Our employees, their expertise and commitment are the bedrock of our success.

The way we interact is characterised by appreciation, tolerance and respect in a trusting work environment free from prejudice – regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation and identity, ethnic origin or ideology. Equal opportunities is our credo!

At SYNTHOPOL, a family company in its second generation, we are used to taking responsibility. Our employees are our most important resource. We support their training so that they can improve and increase their expertise, on sustainability issues, for instance. Continuous advancement through training and upskilling, e.g. in conjunction with master craftsman training and studying while working, go without saying for us. We also see the training of young people as part of this responsibility and we counteract demographic change by recruiting from among our own trainees where possible.

Our company is notable for the long service of its employees (17 years on average). This makes us enormously happy, and we see it as proof that our efforts towards fairness and team spirit are bearing fruit.

We enhance employee satisfaction with:

- Attractive and safe working conditions.
- Healthcare measures.
- Rewarding suggestions for improvements.
- Modern workspaces and ergonomically designed offices.
- Online training system.
- Events (e.g. Christmas parties, Christmas parties for children, summer barbecue).

We strive to achieve work-life balance by using flexible working time models, options for remote working or working from home and support for women and families.

Fair remuneration is the basis for a trusting and appreciative work relationship. In addition to being paid at above union rates, benefits for our employees include:

- Subsidised lunches.
- Holiday and Christmas bonuses.
- Company pension.
- Subsidised teaching materials for our trainees.

SYNTHOPOL also provides support for employees in hardship through an association created by the company's founder.

Our contribution to SDGs: 4, 5, 8



Work safety

Ensuring and constantly improving employees' safety as they perform their duties is one of our most important tasks at SYNTHOPOL. All employees are provided with personal protective equipment. Costs are covered for safety goggles and workplace eyewear.

Our occupational health and safety specialist routinely conducts risks assessments together with the division managers in charge and our company doctor. Work safety measures are evaluated and planned at quarterly occupational health and safety meetings.

To us, work safety means minimising work-related accidents through prevention.

Our contribution to SDGs: 3, 8, 12



Health protection

Health is a person's most valuable asset. Our occupational health management system serves to protect the health of our employees. Whether during the pandemic or at normal times, it is extremely important to us to make our contribution towards the physical and mental health of our employees. In conjunction with occupational healthcare, they are regularly examined by the company doctor to prevent work-related illnesses. The goal of our occupational integration management is to get employees back into the work process. In cooperation with experts, we regularly offer seminars and presentations on various healthcare issues, such as healthy eating, resilience or ortho-

paedic matters. We also have a range of other measures such as:

- Sports courses.
- Regular "Health Group" meetings on health issues.
- Entering running teams at sports events.
- Offering computer-assisted spine measurement or providing height-adjustable desks.
- Ergonomic seating.

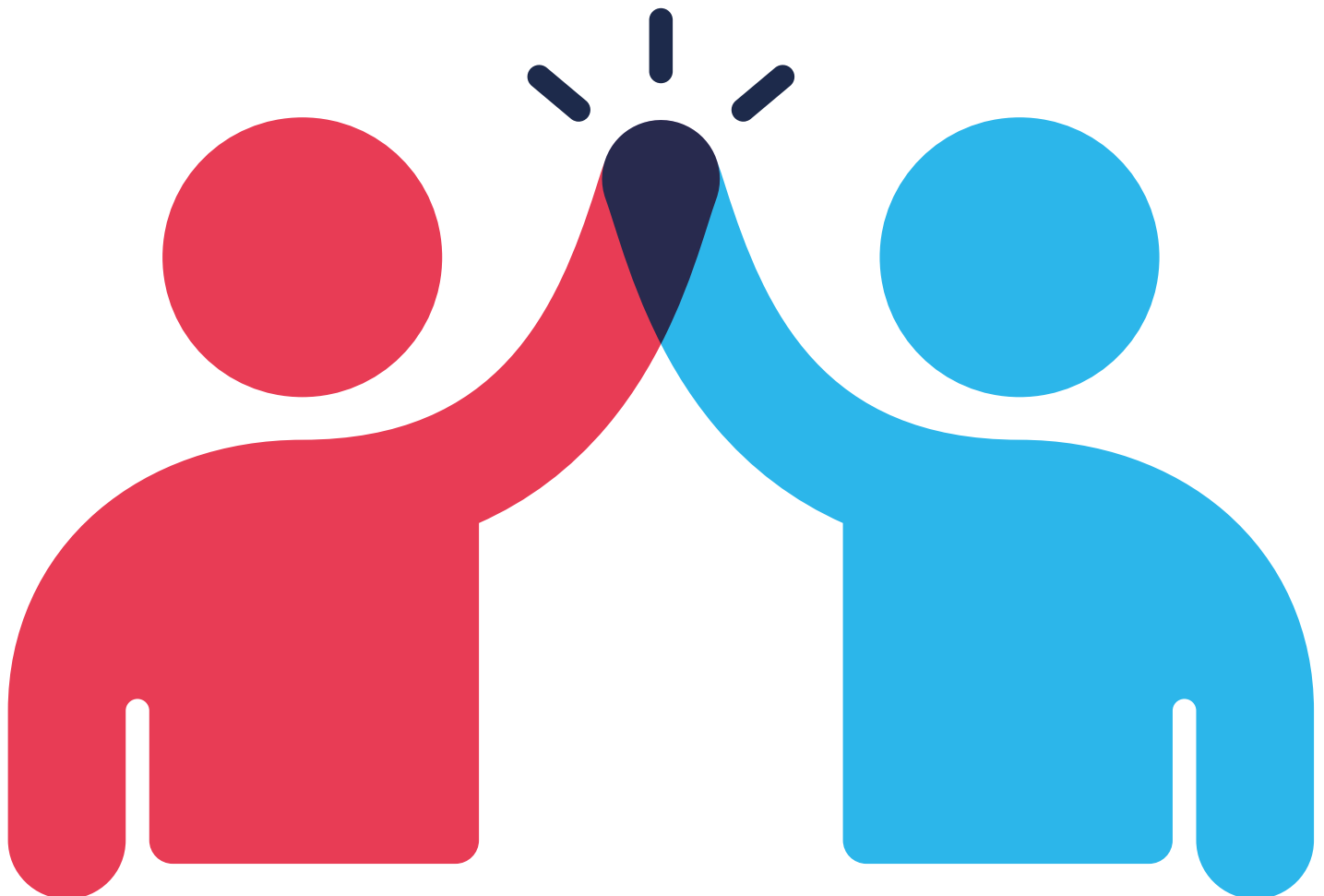
Our contribution to SDG: 3



Social commitment

SYNTHOPOL is one of the biggest employers at the Buxtehude location. We not only support local sport (Frauen-Handball-Bundesligamannschaft Buxtehuder SV) and clubs where our employees are active members, but also Lebenshilfe Buxtehude, who we have hired to take care of our garden areas. We also support cultural organisations and schools in Buxtehude.

Our contribution to SDG: 17



Communications/ stakeholders

We design our corporate communications in different ways to maintain contact with our stakeholder groups: with our website www.synthopol.com, with product presentations at trade fairs, with articles in specialist journals, with presentations to associations and trade fairs and on-site customer care by our technical field team around the world. Regular communications with municipal bodies and local institutions are just as much a part of this as an open attitude to our employees, their wishes and ideas.

SYNTHOPOL maintains an open relationship with its neighbourhood. To achieve as much transparency as possible, we regularly open our doors and welcome visitors from the press, politics, authorities, associations, schools and the interested public to our plant.

It is also very important to us to share information with companies in our region and our industry. We are therefore involved in various regional environmental protection committees and expert working groups.

Our contribution to SDG: 5



Compliance

Compliance with the law, generally applicable rules and voluntary commitments are a fixed component of our corporate culture. SYNTHOPOL acts responsibly – that is our claim and it is how we measure ourselves. This applies to our employees and especially to the company's management.

We promote compliance with the law and the company's policies, and we take suitable measures to prevent misconduct. We therefore feel that it is especially important to maintain a constant dialogue and to provide all employees with support in the form of discussion and reflection.

Our contribution to SDG: 16



ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

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The Blue Angel is an eco-label awarded in Germany for products and services that are particularly environmentally friendly.



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