

Partners for more
sustainability



Strategic Partnership

PROGRESS REPORT 2023–2024

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PRODUCT-RELATED COMMUNICATION

Partners for more
sustainability



CONTACT EDEKA

Corporate Communications
EDEKA ZENTRALE Stiftung & Co. KG
New-York-Ring 6
22297 Hamburg
presse@edeka.de

CONTACT Netto Marken-Discount

Corporate Communications
Netto Marken-Discount Stiftung & Co. KG
Industrial Park Ponholz 1
93142 Maxhütte-Haidhof
presse@netto-online.de

CONTACT WWF

Transformation Policy & Economy
WWF Germany
Reinhardtstrasse 18
10117 Berlin
info@wwf.de

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFI	Accountability Framework initiative (initiative to implement deforestation- and conversion-free supply chains)	IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (an institution of the United Nations)
ASC	Aquaculture Stewardship Council (certification system for farmed fish)	IT	Information technology
AWS	Alliance for Water Stewardship (certification for more sustainable water use)	LEH	Food retail trade
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan (action plan for biodiversity conservation)	LfA	Agriculture for biodiversity
BMLEH	German Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Home Affairs	MSC	Marine Stewardship Council (certification system for wildfish)
CSRD	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (European directive on sustainability reporting)	NBS	Nature-Based Solutions
DCF	Deforestation- and Conversion-Free (zero deforestation and zero conversion)	RSPO	Roundtable for Sustainable Palmoil (certification system for palm oil trade)
ESG	Environment, Social and Governance	SB	Self-service
EUDR	EU Deforestation Regulation	SBTi	Science Based Targets initiative (initiative for science-based climate target setting)
E-WRT	EDEKA Water Risk Tool	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals (goals for sustainable development specified by the United Nations)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations	SIZA	Sustainability Initiative of South Africa (certification for more sustainable cultivation in South Africa)
FONAP	Forum for Sustainable Palm Oil	UBA	[German] Federal Environment Agency
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council (certification system for responsible forest management)	White line	Dairy products such as milk, curd cheese, buttermilk, kefir, yoghurt and cream
GHG	Greenhouse gas	WRAP	The Waste and Resources Action Programme
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative (provider of guidelines for the preparation of sustainability reports)	WWF	World Wide Fund For Nature
HWG	Main product group	ZALF	Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (<i>Leibniz-Zentrum für Agrarlandschaftsforschung e. V.</i>)
		ZSVR	Central Agency Packaging Register

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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The food retailer EDEKA and the environmental protection organisation WWF have been working together since 2009. This cooperation culminated in a strategic partnership in 2012 that continues to develop steadily. Netto Marken-Discount (Netto), EDEKA's discount subsidiary, has also featured in this partnership for ten years now. The partners are working together to transform their shared vision of halting the global destruction of nature and the environment and to shape a future in which humans and nature co-exist in harmony into concrete measures. In 2022, the sustainability partners confirmed their cooperation for another ten years and at the same time decided on new ways to increase the effectiveness of sustainability in the food retail sector. The aim is also to reduce the ecological footprint of the EDEKA Group and to inspire customers to engage in more sustainable consumption.

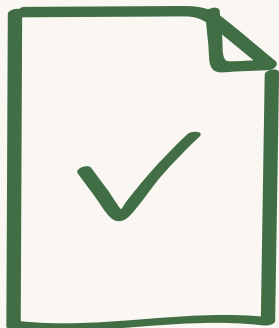
After conducting a comprehensive analysis the partnership for sustainability now focuses on four umbrella topics: climate protection, preservation and promotion of biodiversity, freshwater protection, conservation of resources and materials alongside overarching framework goals. The special feature of this new contractual period is the possibility and ability to respond flexibly to current developments in the fields of science, society and economics, as well as to regulatory adjustments. Long-term macro goals are to be achieved via targets with shorter terms and implementation periods, namely the micro targets. In this context, changing framework conditions such as the volatile global situation determined by climate, biodiversity and (socio) economic crises, can be more easily integrated into the work process. Extreme weather events or the scarcity of natural resources can have an impact on supply relationships in the food retail sector.

Furthermore, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) is also expected to be mandatory for EDEKA from the 2027 financial year. This EU directive obliges companies to provide extended sustainability reporting that includes environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspects. The aim is to increase transparency for investors and the public. As EDEKA will report its sustainability figures using this reporting format in the future, our current report represents a transitional report. For each of the 34 new macro goals the partners agreed on one key performance indicator (KPI), i.e. quantitative or narrative reporting on the respective targets. This report also covers product-related communication with the already familiar key figure for co-branding on products. Another new feature in this report is joint reporting on EDEKA and Netto. Both companies cooperate closely and systematically in the area of sustainability, particularly at product level. Unless otherwise stated, both companies are therefore reported in one key figure.

Selected quantitative and qualitative disclosures presented in the report were audited by an independent auditor with limited assurance in accordance with ISAE 3000 and are marked with a [+](see audit opinion [here](#)).



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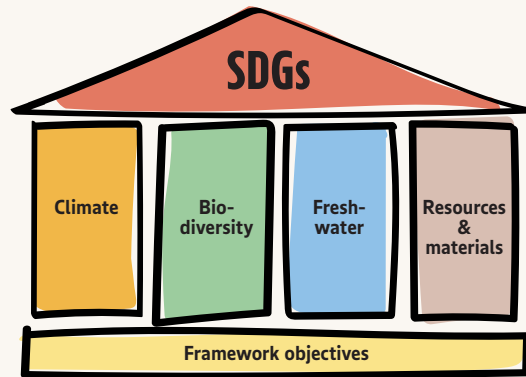


SUMMARY

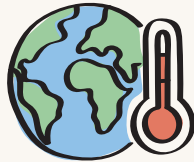


SUMMARY

The partnership between EDEKA, Netto and WWF aims at enabling business (management) within planetary boundaries and at contributing to the Sustainability Development Goals of the United Nations. The 2023–2024 progress report documents the implementation of strategic sustainability goals within the partnership in four umbrella topics and overarching framework goals.

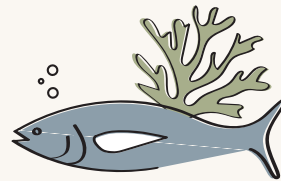


CLIMATE PROTECTION



The focus is on decarbonising supply chains and reducing company-related emissions. EDEKA and Netto work with science-based climate targets (Science Based Targets initiative, SBTi) and pursue the long-term goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2045. The identification of climate hotspots in the product range enables targeted measures to be derived in order to lower emissions. Suppliers are also involved in working towards achieving the targets.

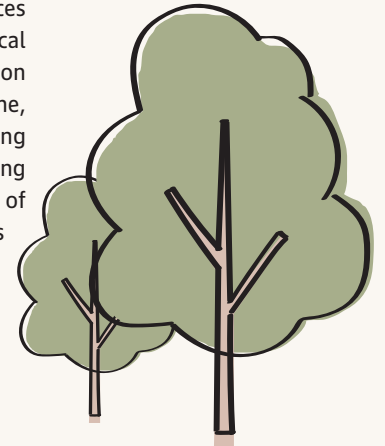
BIODIVERSITY & FRESHWATER



The preservation of biodiversity and protection of water resources are key concerns. The EDEKA Risk Tool is used to analyse location- and commodity-specific risks. Suppliers are to be gradually integrated into biodiversity-promoting measures, for example via the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). In the area of freshwater, water risks are made transparent and addressed through certifications or field projects. Five water stewardship projects show how collective action contributes to improving water quality and protecting ecosystems.

RESOURCE PRESERVATION & MATERIAL CONSERVATION

EDEKA and Netto promote the protection of natural resources by taking a holistic view of the raw materials defined as critical and by making a voluntary commitment to zero deforestation and zero conversion for critical raw materials. At the same time, a circular economy is being strategically advanced. Avoiding packaging, using certified recycled materials and promoting reusable systems are key levers. The more ecological design of private-label products is supported through product clusters in the non-food area and it is increasingly integrated into procurement processes.



FRAMEWORK GOALS

EDEKA and Netto are striving to play a pioneering role in the German food retail sector. Sustainability criteria are systematically integrated into procurement processes. Measures such as employee training, the further development of certification systems, and participation in more than 60 sustainability initiatives strengthen implementation.



IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE

Three agricultural projects and programmes show how sustainability can be implemented in agricultural practice: In the Citrus Project in Spain, conventional fruit is produced in a more environmentally friendly way. The Banana Programme will be expanded from 2025 with new suppliers and growing countries. The “Agriculture for Biodiversity” (German acronym: LfA) programme integrates nature conservation into organic farming and covers over 200 farms in Germany.

3



PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN UMBRELLA TOPICS



3.1

CLIMATE



3.1 CLIMATE

CLIMATE MACRO GOALS

INDICATORS

RESULTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

EDEKA is aware of climate hotspots in its product range

EDEKA knows all climate hotspots for its private-label range up to the end of 2024. The findings are used to develop and implement reduction measures for private labels and to encourage implementation by brand suppliers.

CO₂e¹ of the top 5 meaningfully aggregated main product category groups (German: HWG) in tonnes

The product emissions for the five HWG White Line, frozen food, stationery, fruit and vegetables and self-service cheese are shown in Figure 2. [+++]

Reduction of GHG emissions in the product range

GHG emissions from product ranges are reduced step by step in accordance with the SBTi target path.

CO₂e in tonnes (Scope 3)

The GHG emissions for Scope 3 in 2024 amounted to 74,281,132 t CO₂e. [++]

EDEKA set to reach net zero emissions by 2045

GHG emissions from Scope 1 and 2 are gradually reduced to net zero in accordance with the SBTi target path.

CO₂e in tonnes (Scope 1, 2)

GHG emissions for Scope 1 and 2 in 2024 amounted to 368,459 t CO₂e. [++]

Entrenchment of suppliers pursuing science-based climate targets

By the end of 2024, EDEKA's relevant suppliers will have science-based climate targets.

By 2032, the climate targets set by the private-label and brand suppliers will be achieved or on track.

Number of suppliers with science-based climate targets

In total, 223 suppliers have set targets validated as science-based by the SBTi, and another 112 have committed to submitting a target to the SBTi in the near future. [+

Implementation of climate protection measures

By implementing a roadmap, EDEKA achieves its SBTi targets for Scope 1 and 2. EDEKA reports publicly on the status of its carbon footprint and the implementation roadmap, and fine-tunes it where necessary.

Percentage GHG reduction compared to the SBTi base year (Scope 1, 2)

Compared to the SBTi base year 2022, GHG emissions declined by 13.61 per cent by 2024. [+++]

EDEKA makes an active contribution to the energy transition

Until 2030, EDEKA used up to 100 per cent (energy transition-friendly) renewable energy sources.

Percentage of electricity consumption accounted for by renewable energy (green electricity)²

The share of electricity consumption attributable to renewable (green) electricity came to 49.07 per cent in 2024. [+++]

Financing climate and environmental protection within and outside the value chains

EDEKA and WWF are developing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), which will be piloted by EDEKA together with a supplier in early 2024. If successful, a gradual rollout will follow. EDEKA implements environmental protection measures within the EDEKA Group, across the supply chain and beyond ('Beyond Value Chain Mitigation').

Number of all sustainability projects

Ten sustainability projects were funded and implemented in 2023 and 2024. [+

¹ CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e) express the climate impact of the various greenhouse gases in comparison to carbon dioxide in order to facilitate comparability.

² The macro target addresses the energy transition holistically. However, the indicator used is currently confined to electricity consumption.

[++] For the 2022 greenhouse gas balances (reporting period 1 January 2022–31 December 2022) and 2024 (reporting period 1 January 2024–31 December 2024), DEKRA Assurance Services GmbH verified that the requirements of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol – a corporate accounting and reporting standard for the Company's greenhouse gas balance – were met. These indicators are not part of the audit opinion in accordance with ISAE 3000.

[+++] The calculation of the indicators is based on the greenhouse gas balance verified by DEKRA Assurance Services GmbH. No external review has taken place. These indicators are not part of the audit opinion in accordance with ISAE 3000.



The scientific evidence is clear and alarming: If global warming is to be limited to 1.5 degrees, global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be reduced from now, halved by 2030 and lowered to net zero by 2050 at the latest. Only then will it be possible for climate change and its effects on nature, society and the economy to be contained. The agricultural and land sector accounts for almost a quarter of global GHG emissions.³ Food retailers such as EDEKA and Netto can therefore make a difference and contribute to the 1.5-degree target if they successfully decarbonise their businesses and their supply chains. Against this backdrop, climate is one of the key issues in the partnership.

SCOPES OF GHG EMISSIONS

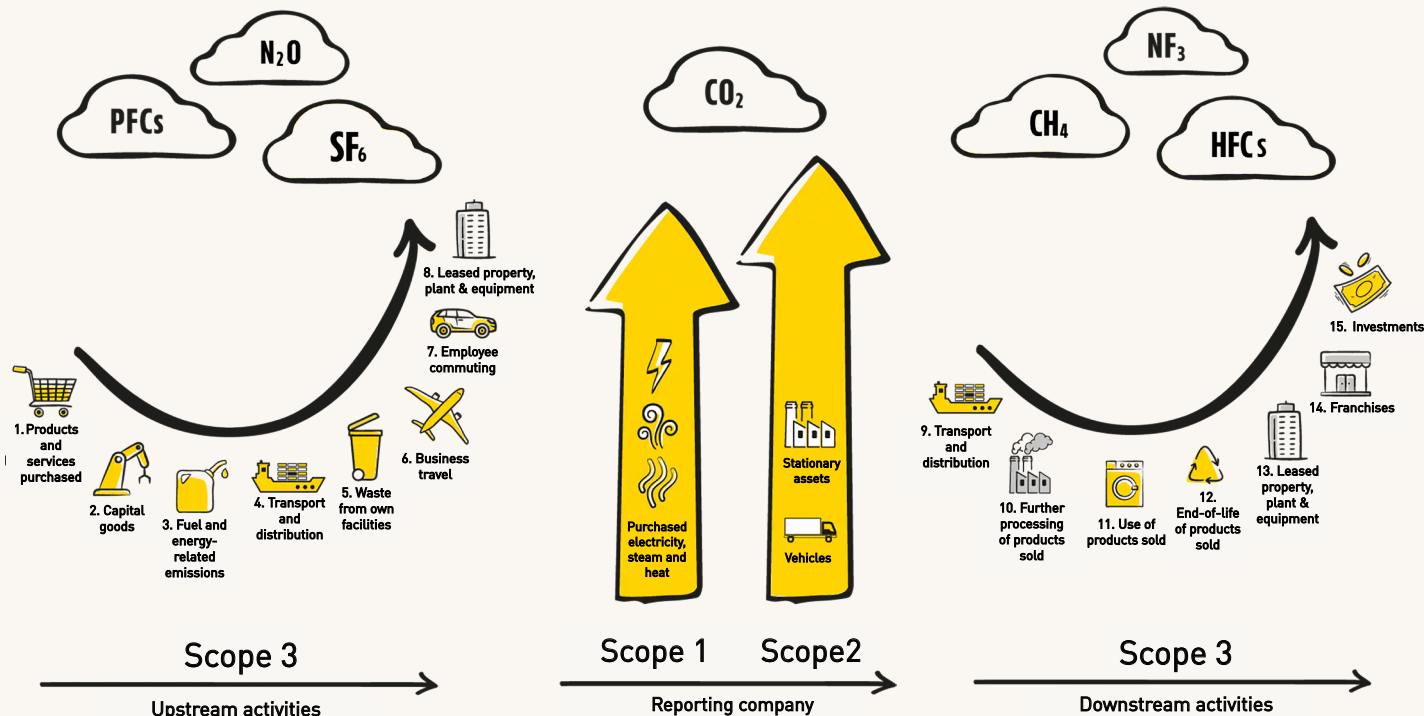


Fig. 1: Presentation of the 3 scopes

SCOPES 1 AND 2

EDEKA and Netto have set themselves ambitious, science-based climate targets to achieve net zero emissions in Scope 1 and 2 by 2045. These were successfully validated by the SBTi in mid-2024. To this end, and to find a basis for implementing climate protection measures, EDEKA and Netto analysed and published their GHG emissions (see [Climate footprint](#)). Corporate emissions for Scope 1 and 2 were 368,459 tonnes of CO₂e in 2024. A reduction of 13.61 per cent compared to 2022 was achieved. Based on these results,

areas for action were identified. A roadmap for implementing measures to reduce GHG emissions along the reduction path was planned by the end of 2024 and is currently still being developed.

SCIENCE BASED TARGETS INITIATIVE

The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is an institution that translates climate science findings into credible medium and long-term decarbonisation pathways and validates corporate climate targets. The targets of EDEKA and Netto can be tracked in the so-called "Target Dashboard". Further information can be found [here](#).



The active contribution of EDEKA and Netto to the energy transition is another goal of the partnership. The aim is to use 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030. In 2024, the share of renewable electricity was 49 per cent. A procurement requirement to purchase 80 per cent green electricity based on the criteria of the [WWF Next Generation Green Electricity Guidelines](#) will be implemented from 2025.

³ Source: IPCC, 2023 : Sections. in: [Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report](#). Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 35-115.

SCOPE 3

However, the majority of emissions, around 99 per cent, do not occur in the company's own operations but rather within its supply chains, i.e., in Scope 3 (see Figure 1). EDEKA and Netto have also set themselves ambitious climate targets validated by SBTi to reduce GHG emissions in this area. By 2045, Scope 3 GHG emissions are also to be reduced to net zero, in line with the goal of the German federal government.

In order to implement targeted measures, the GHG emissions occurring in the supply chains and identified hotspots in the product range are analysed to determine the largest and most important fields of action. GHG in Scope 3 amount to 74,281,132 t CO₂e. This is an increase of 8.25 per cent compared to the base year 2022. Figure 2 shows which product groups represent hotspots. In addition, EDEKA and Netto request climate footprints (Product Carbon Footprints) for their private-label products from suppliers in order to improve the data basis and thus enable more targeted measures. Solutions for the entire product range are being developed.

PRODUCT EMISSIONS IN TONNES OF CO₂e

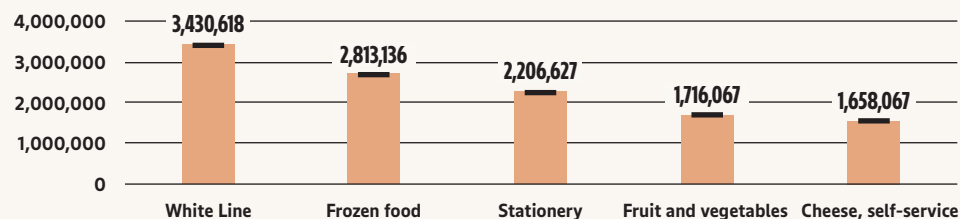


Fig. 2: GHG emissions in tonnes of CO₂e of the top 5 main commodity groups (HWG) in 2024

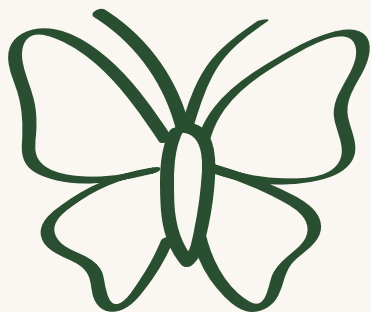
In order to achieve the ambitious targets, the plan was to set up procurement requirements to fulfil the short-term goals. This project has not yet been fully implemented but is to be finalised in the near future. In the coming years, EDEKA and Netto will tackle one of the major drivers of climate change in order to achieve the target: Supply chains that drive deforestation (see [Chapter 3.4](#)). In addition, action plans to reduce emissions in the agricultural sector are to be drawn up and implemented accordingly. It is essential that suppliers also take responsibility and set themselves 1.5-degree-compatible climate targets. The number of suppliers with science-based climate targets validated by the SBTi is currently 223. A further 112 suppliers have committed to setting such a climate target in the near future.

FINANCING CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WITHIN AND OUTSIDE VALUE CHAINS

In order to achieve the climate targets and also to promote sustainability in other areas, EDEKA and Netto have also committed to financing climate and environmental protection within and outside the value chain. In 2023 and 2024, the company promoted and implemented ten sustainability projects (see [Chapter 4](#)). To further reduce emissions, a project was planned to implement nature-based solutions (NBS) for climate protection in agricultural supply chains. Piloting and subsequent scaling will be driven forward from the beginning of 2025. WWF has advised EDEKA on financing climate and environmental protection outside the supply chain ('Beyond Value Chain Mitigation'). Further planning and subsequent implementation steps are scheduled as of 2026.



3.2



BIODIVERSITY

AND

3.3



FRESHWATER



Photo: Francesco Gallarotti / Unsplash



Photo: Q / Adobe Stock

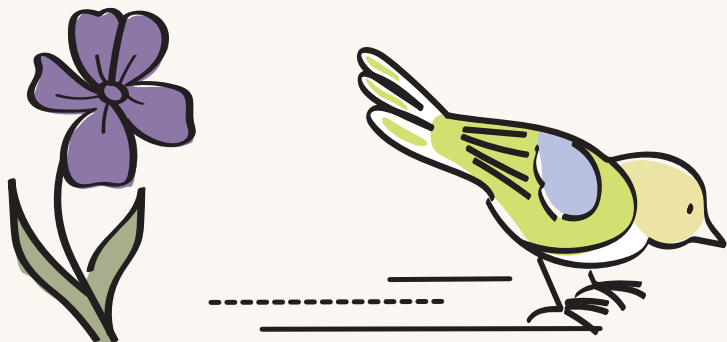


Photo: Aaron Burden / Unsplash

3.2 BIODIVERSITY

MACRO GOALS FOR BIODIVERSITY

EDEKA is aware of biodiversity risks and opportunities in its private-label product range
WWF will provide EDEKA with a holistic biodiversity risk tool by mid-2023. Based on this tool, risks and opportunities will be identified within three years and a biodiversity supplier requirement will be developed and introduced for new contracts by the end of 2026.

Initial risk-reduction measures based on current scientific findings will be implemented by the end of 2026.
By 2032, corresponding measures, including projects, will be rolled out to additional relevant private-label suppliers.

Positive impacts of turnover/products
EDEKA remains market leader for organic foods in the food retail sector.

INDICATORS

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EDEKA's and Netto's share of the total organic market

RESULTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

A methodology has been developed to enable raw material- and location-specific freshwater and biodiversity risks to be analysed in the supply chains. This methodology has been embedded in a tool – the EDEKA Risk Tool – which is still under development. [+]

A biodiversity action plan (BAP) has been developed that includes measures for suppliers and cultivation areas to make them more biodiversity-friendly. A pilot project of the BAP was prepared in 2024. [+]

According to the Nielsen retail panel, EDEKA (including Netto) has a 22.9 per cent share of organic turnover in the overall market. According to the Nielsen retail panel, the EDEKA Group will therefore remain the market leader for organic food in the food retail sector in 2024 with 22.9 per cent. [+]

3.3 FRESHWATER

MACRO GOALS FOR FRESHWATER

INDICATORS

RESULTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

EDEKA is aware of freshwater risks and opportunities in its private-label product range

By the end of 2025, EDEKA will be aware of the freshwater risks and opportunities in the river basins affected by its private-label supply chains and will gradually extend the contractually stipulated use of the EDEKA Water Risk Tool (E-WRT) to include all private-label product suppliers.

Percentage of turnover volumes recorded in the E-WRT (fruit and vegetables)

A methodology has been developed to enable raw material and location-specific freshwater and biodiversity risks to be analysed in the supply chains. This methodology was embedded in a tool – the EDEKA Risk Tool – which is still under development. The risk transparency for fruit and vegetables is 84 per cent. [+]

EDEKA's private label suppliers continually implement relevant measures

By the end of 2025, a contractual basis for private-label suppliers will be created for risk minimisation measures based on the latest scientific findings. These will be implemented step by step with private-label suppliers.

Percentage of turnover volumes from private-label suppliers with full evidence of mitigation measures (fruit and vegetables)

Risk reduction stands at 47 per cent. Identified water risks can be mitigated by certification systems such as GLOBALG.A.P. SPRING, Rainforest Alliance, SIZA (for high risks) or AWS (for very high risks). Participation in projects is also recognised as a mitigation measure. [+]

Stewardship projects in water risk hotspots

EDEKA and WWF jointly implement water stewardship projects in water risk hotspots.

Number of water stewardship projects

Measures are being implemented in five water stewardship projects. These projects include the citrus project in Spain, an AWS Collective Action in the Huelva region of Spain, a water stewardship platform in Colombia (Santa Marta) and two WRAP projects in southern Spain and South Africa. [+]

* The documentation is confined to all commodities covered by the Commodity Risk Assessment in the E-WRT system.

Freshwater and biodiversity are key topics in sustainable development: Around 70 per cent of global biodiversity loss and water extraction is due to agriculture, which uses over a third of the earth's habitable land.⁴ Freshwater habitats are particularly affected with biodiversity declining by 83 per cent since 1970.⁵ These habitats are not only crucial for drinking water supplies, but are also biodiversity hotspots that are of great importance for agricultural production and the global economy. In view of the increasing scarcity of water and the threat to natural habitats, the protection and restoration of ecosystems such as rivers, lakes and groundwater sources is more urgent than ever.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDEKA RISK TOOL FOR ANALYSING FRESHWATER AND BIODIVERSITY RISKS

To identify and analyze freshwater and biodiversity risks, an online tool for suppliers was developed. For this purpose, a new methodology was created for the originally water-focused tool—the EDEKA Water Risk Tool (E-WRT). This methodology is not only site-specific but also commodity-specific. The E-WRT currently covers 84 per cent of the sales volumes of private-label suppliers for fresh fruit and vegetables, including their farm locations and cultivated commodities. To increase supply chain transparency, improve risk assessments, and raise supplier awareness, more than 120 suppliers from the product categories canned goods and dried fruits, non-alcoholic beverages, and frozen foods have also been included with their farm locations. In future, the EDEKA Risk Tool will also make it possible to analyse composite products such as frozen pizza or baked rolls based on the list of ingredients and the possible countries of origin.

⁴ Source: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation), 2020. The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture, FAO, Rome.

⁵ Source: Zoological Society of London, 2018. The freshwater biodiversity crisis, Convention on Biological Diversity, Montreal.



RISK REDUCTION IN COOPERATION WITH PRIVATE LABEL SUPPLIERS

The risk analyses enable the partners to identify risks such as drought, flooding or water pollution and to formulate and implement measures to reduce them. To make the range more biodiversity-friendly and contribute to the protection and conservation of freshwater ecosystems, products can be certified with robust standards such as [GLOBAL G.A.P.](#), including the SPRING and/or Biodiversity add-ons, or [Rainforest Alliance](#), which apply stricter biodiversity or water criteria. These certifications mitigate risks by, for example, regulating the use of pesticides and fertilisers, ensuring the protection of ecosystems and specifying measures to promote soil fertility and pollinator diversity.

BIODIVERSITY RISK MITIGATION

In addition to certifications, EDEKA also works together with private-label suppliers on measures at farm level to protect and preserve biodiversity. To support this, WWF and EDEKA have developed a BAP that compiles measures in the area of biodiversity that EDEKA and Netto can implement with their suppliers. It also contains a five-step guide to help farmers create their own BAP.



RISK REDUCTION FOR FRESHWATER

To make the product range of EDEKA and Netto more resilient to water-related risks, the company expanded its requirements for private-label products at the beginning of 2024. It now demands [GLOBAL G.A.P. and the additional SPRING module or equivalent](#) not only for fresh fruit and vegetables but for all fruit and vegetables — including canned goods, frozen products, and juices. These certification systems call for strict water criteria that must be implemented on agricultural land. This contributes to the protection of water bodies and ecosystems.

The standard of the [Alliance for Water Stewardship \(AWS\)](#) goes beyond the aforementioned standards with its level of ambition. While AWS implements water management practices on the farms, it also demands that farms are aware of the water risks in their region and the stakeholder groups surrounding them. Plans for risk minimisation are then developed in close cooperation. In addition to irrigation, topics such as water quality, freshwater ecosystems, drinking water and sanitation supply as well as water management in the region are also considered. Not only did the partners certify the first orange farm in Spain with AWS Gold status in 2018; EDEKA and Netto have also been participating with suppliers — including for strawberries and blueberries — in a so-called [Collective Action Accelerator Programme](#) in Huelva, Spain. Here, a community-based, site-specific approach to water utilisation is pursued that brings multiple users together.

In addition to Spain, the partners have also been instrumental in initiating similar agricultural programmes with AWS in other regions, such as South Africa and Italy.

The pursued certifications are tracked using the indicator for risk reduction. In cases of high risk, certifications such as GLOBAL G.A.P. SPRING, Rainforest Alliance and/or [Sustainability Initiative of South Africa \(SIZA\)](#) are recognized as risk mitigation measures. For very high risk, AWS certification or participation in projects is accepted. As a result, 47 per cent of the private-label suppliers' sales volumes come from farms that have provided full evidence of mitigation measures.

FRESHWATER MONITORING IN PER CENT

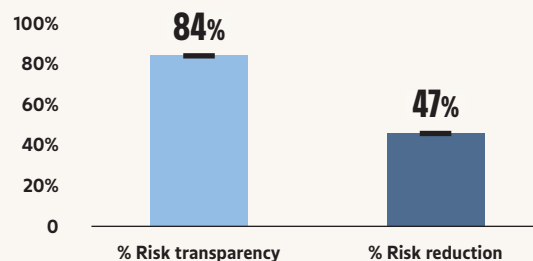


Fig. 3: Results from freshwater monitoring as of 31 December 2024

Risk transparency Percentage share of sales volumes recorded in the E-WRT (fruit and vegetables)

Risk reduction: Percentage of turnover volumes from private-label suppliers with full evidence of mitigation measures (fruit and vegetables)



WATER STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS

Water stewardship means that companies manage water responsibly in their own operations and in the entire river catchment area – in dialogue with other water users. To this end, partners are implementing projects in Colombia, Spain and South Africa.

In Spain, the citrus project (see [Chapter 4.1](#)) is implementing collective measures in line with the water stewardship approach. There is also an AWS Collective Action in the Huelva region of Spain. In Colombia, local stakeholders are networked along the water catchment area - from coffee cultivation in the highlands to the wetlands in the lowlands. The aim is to improve water quality and availability through collective action. In addition, the first AWS group certification in banana cultivation was tested and successfully implemented (see [Chapter 4.2](#)).

In Spain, in addition to the citrus project, EDEKA and Netto are also promoting [the Waste and Resources Action Programme \(WRAP\)](#)⁶, an initiative aimed at reducing water risks in growing regions such as Andalusia, Murcia and Valencia. The programme brings together companies, farmers and other relevant interest groups such as certification bodies and joint interest groups to improve water management in order to work together for water protection purposes. EDEKA and Netto are also involved in a WRAP project in South Africa to protect the ecosystems in three central fruit-growing regions. The aim of the project is sustainable water use and the preservation of biodiversity in agriculture. Another water stewardship project in Peru will be supported from 2025.

⁶ WRAP (The Waste and Resources Action Programme) is a British NGO that implements various water stewardship projects based on a British action plan.



3.4



RESOURCE PROTECTION



3.4 RESOURCE PROTECTION

MACRO GOALS OF RESOURCE CONSERVATION

INDICATORS

RESULTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

Sustainable design, procurement and production of the private-label product ranges by 2032

From mid-2022, EDEKA and WWF will identify opportunities to mitigate risks and reduce the ecological footprint for key raw materials from relevant private-label product suppliers. From 2024, measures aligned with the Science Based Targets for Nature, among others, are being gradually implemented.

Number of certified articles according to organic (incl. farming associations), Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel, Fairtrade, MSC, ASC, Rainforest Alliance, RSPO, FSC

A total of 1,670 articles are certified according to organic, Blue Angel, EU Ecolabel, Fairtrade, MSC or ASC, Rainforest Alliance, RSPO, or FSC certified. [+]

Deforestation- and Conversion-Free Sourcing

By mid-2022, EDEKA is committed to ensuring deforestation- and conversion-free sourcing for private-label products containing raw materials with a high deforestation risk, based on the Accountability Framework initiative (AFI) or similar standards. Jointly developed measures will implement the commitment by 2025.

Publication of a voluntary commitment to Deforestation- and Conversion-Free (DCF) by mid-2022 for critical raw materials

A DCF commitment was published at the end of 2022, and initial measures have been initiated. [+]

Promotion of sustainable dietary habits

Since mid-2022, EDEKA and WWF have been promoting more sustainable dietary habits, for example by designing a climate-friendly product range aligned, among other things, with the recommendations of the EAT-Lancet Commission. To this end, action plans are developed and continuously refined.

Number of private-label products designated as vegan, excluding fruit and vegetables

971 articles in the private-label range (excluding fruit and vegetables) are labelled as vegan as of the reporting date. [+]

Knowledge of food waste in private label supply chains

EDEKA and WWF will identify the private label supply chains with high levels of food waste by the end of 2023.

Breakdown of food waste according to the Thünen Institute's product group categories for the pact against food waste in per cent

See Figures 4 and 5 for a breakdown of food waste. [+]

Reduction of food waste in the supply chains of private label ranges

Based on the findings of the hotspots of food waste within the supply chains, measures to reduce waste along the private label supply chains are developed and implemented, guided in part by the "National Strategy for Reducing Food Waste." Public relations work and consumer awareness are also carried out as part of partnership communication.

Number of communication activities and marketing campaigns on food waste in 2024

57 communication activities and marketing campaigns on food waste were carried out in 2024. The communication activities managed by the EDEKA Group Head Office are largely on a campaign that utilised various channels. [+]



SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, PROCUREMENT AND PRODUCTION OF PRIVATE-LABEL RANGES BY 2032

The protection of natural resources and reduction of ecological risks are crucial for a sustainable future. EDEKA, Netto and WWF want to make an important contribution to the transformation of global supply chains through the targeted identification and realisation of potential for risk mitigation and reducing the ecological footprint. A hotspot analysis of the entire product range was carried out to identify the product groups with the greatest impact on the environment and climate. Based on this, measures are implemented to promote more sustainable production practices and raw material procurement. Organic labels such as the EU Organic Certification — and especially certifications from organic farming associations — play an important role because they require binding environmental and social standards. Among other things, they promote the renunciation of chemical-synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, the preservation of soil fertility, the protection of biodiversity and animal welfare-friendly husbandry conditions. In addition to organic labels, other certifications are also key to more sustainable procurement of private-label products. In the EDEKA and Netto private-label range, 1,670 articles are certified according to at least one of the following standards: [EU Organic Seal](#) (including farming associations), [Blue Angel](#), [EU Ecolabel](#), [Fairtrade](#), [Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\)](#), [Aquaculture Stewardship Council \(ASC\)](#), [Rainforest Alliance](#), [Roundtable for Sustainable Palmoil \(RSPO\)](#) and [Forest Stewardship Council \(FSC\)](#). In addition, the mandatory requirements for the purchase of critical raw materials are supplemented by holistic procurement requirements that specifically aim to minimise the greatest ecological risks.

Certifications such as the EU organic label, [Naturland](#), ASC and MSC also play an important role in the purchasing process for fish and seafood. EDEKA and Netto also use the [WWF Fish Guide](#) to assess the ecological impact of fish products. Using a method developed by WWF, raw fish products are rated based on their origin and production method or the fishing gear used for wild fish and categorised using a traffic light system. The products with the greatest ecological impact are rated “red” and will no longer be used by EDEKA and Netto in the future. This two-stage approach means that the EDEKA Group has particularly strict sustainability requirements for fish products.

The Seafood Assessment Tool was developed to make the WWF assessments more accessible internally and to better integrate them into the purchasing process in the future. It enables suppliers to evaluate their raw fish products and offer more sustainable alternatives. The Seafood Assessment Tool goes into trial operation at EDEKA and Netto in 2025.





DEFORESTATION- AND CONVERSION-FREE SUPPLY CHAINS

At a global level, the commodities coffee, cocoa, palm oil, soya, wood (or pulp and paper) and beef are among the biggest drivers of deforestation. At EDEKA and Netto, the greatest deforestation risk in the national private-label range was identified for the raw material soya in animal feed, followed by coffee, cocoa and palm oil. A deforestation risk was also identified for the wood, paper and pulp range. Beef from overseas, on the other hand, which is significantly associated with a high risk of deforestation on a global level, plays only a minor role at EDEKA and Netto. However, the company is also aware of its responsibility in this regard.

As part of the Sustainability Partnership, EDEKA and Netto committed to publicly declaring their pledge to deforestation- and conversion-free (DCF) sourcing by no later than mid-2022. Jointly developed measures will implement the commitment by 2025. The commitment to this is based on the [Accountability Framework initiative \(AFi\)](#). The AFi contains guidelines for the protection and conservation of forests and other natural ecosystems, but also for ensuring respect for human rights.

At the end of 2022, EDEKA and Netto took an important first step toward achieving their goal by publishing the DCF (Deforestation- and Conversion-Free) commitment with a target date of 2025 and a cut-off date of January 1, 2020. The cut-off date refers to the point in time after which no deforestation or conversion of forests or natural ecosystems into other land uses, such as agricultural land, may have occurred. In 2025, the cut-off date was adjusted to 31 December 2020 in order to ensure consistency with the requirements of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and to avoid internal double standards. The scope covers private-label products containing raw materials such as coffee, cocoa, palm oil, soya, timber (or pulp and paper) and beef. In April 2024, the publication of a DCF guideline and the development of an internal DCF strategy further defined the path toward fulfilling this commitment. Planned measures in this context include:

- establishing regular surveys of supplier and supply-chain data,
- the formulation and forwarding of specific requirements to suppliers,
- the development of a risk assessment mechanism to focus on the prioritisation of the DCF commitment,
- increasing traceability,
- expanding certification levels, particularly with physically separate trading models,
- cooperating with suppliers,
- monitoring and public reporting of the achievement of the voluntary commitment.

While publishing the commitment and the DCF guideline laid important foundations for achieving the goal, the implementation of the other measures has proven to be significantly more complex. For example, it was only recently possible to establish an annually recurring data survey, on the basis of which specific targets and measures will be derived in the future. Direct dialogue with suppliers to actually achieve improvements began in summer 2025.

PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE DIETARY HABITS

The way we produce and consume food has an impact on the state of the planet. Our food system accounts for around a third of global GHG emissions and without a change in nutrition towards a much more plant-based diet, it will be almost impossible to meet the climate targets that have been set. In order to ensure that a growing world population is fed within planetary boundaries (based on the Planetary Health Diet of the EAT-Lancet Commission⁷), the Partnership for Sustainability is working both to promote sustainable eating habits and to reduce food waste.

EDEKA and Netto have implemented various communication measures to raise consumer awareness of the differences between dietary styles, supported by targeted marketing activities and an expanding vegan product range. Analysing the Company's private-label product range, broken down into products of plant and animal origin, is a further step towards deriving even more effective measures from this status quo.

FOOD WASTE IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

In order to reduce food waste, EDEKA and Netto have implemented broad-based communication measures to raise consumer awareness. The Company is aware of its own responsibility to reduce food waste along the entire value chain. Questionnaires on food waste are sent to the most relevant suppliers in order to improve the data basis along the upstream value chain and to derive appropriate measures. EDEKA and Netto also signed the pact against food waste in 2023.

This pact between the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Home Affairs (BMLEH) and 14 companies in the German food retail sector aims to reduce food waste by 30 per cent by 2025 and by 50 per cent by 2030. For the reporting year 2023, reporting was carried out for the first time using the standardized 2024 template. The breakdown of food losses according to the product group categories defined by the Thünen Institute for the "Pact Against Food Waste" for the year 2024 is shown in Figures 4 and 5.

⁷ The Planetary Health Diet is a flexible diet designed to protect the health of both people and the planet. The recommended diet consists mainly of fruit and vegetables, wholemeal products, pulses, nuts and unsaturated fats.

PERCENTAGE OF WRITE-OFFS EDEKA

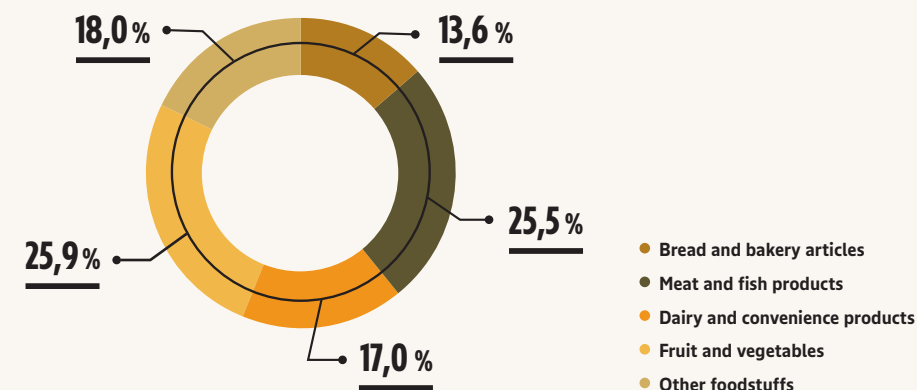


Fig. 4: Breakdown of food waste according to product group categories of the Thünen Institute for the Pact against Food Waste in per cent for EDEKA in 2024 [+]

PERCENTAGE OF WRITE-OFFS NETTO

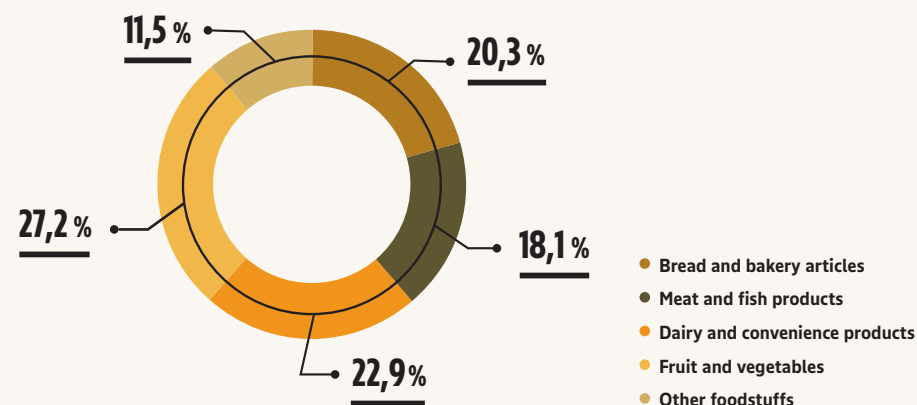


Fig. 5: Breakdown of food waste according to product group categories of the Thünen Institute for the Pact against Food Waste in per cent for NETTO in 2024 [+]

3.5



CONSERVATION OF MATERIALS



3.5 CONSERVATION OF MATERIALS

MACRO GOALS OF MATERIAL CONSERVATION

INDICATORS

RESULTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

Approaches to the circular economy

EDEKA and WWF promote a resource-conserving circular economy. EDEKA implements these approaches in priority action areas, supported by information on the materials and packaging as well as product design criteria used.

Circular economy strategy published

The publication of the ambitious guideline is still pending and will take place in 2025. [+]

Material deployed for private-label packaging

EDEKA and WWF will identify and prioritise primary areas of action by mid-2024 and develop an action plan for avoiding private-label packaging, which will be implemented step by step. In principle, the use of materials for private label packaging should be avoided as a matter of priority and, where this is not possible, reduced to an optimal minimum.

Total packaging consumption in the private-label range in tonnes

Total packaging consumption in the private-label range was 438,984 tonnes in 2024. [+]

Use of raw materials from sustainable sources and recycled materials for private-label packaging

By mid-2023, EDEKA and WWF will identify, develop and prioritise fields of action and measures in order to use raw materials from sustainable sources and post-consumer recycled material. These measures are being implemented step by step.

Amount of recycled material in product and packaging together, based on the private-label range, in tonnes

The amount of recycled material used in products and packaging across all materials was 53,183 tonnes in 2024. [+]

Reusable systems as part of a resource-conserving circular economy

By the end of 2023, EDEKA and WWF will identify fields of action and implement a jointly developed action plan on reuse and reusable programmes/systems.

Volume of reusable packaging in the private-label food range

As of 31 December 2024, 25 types of reusable packaging were used in the food sector, e.g. for beverage products or yoghurt in jars. [+]

Efficient and effective material flow management

By 2025, all private-label sales packaging will be designed to be recyclable in accordance with the minimum standard of the Central Agency Packaging Register (ZSVR) and will facilitate proper disposal.

Percentage of private-label packaging with information labels on separating waste

In order to sensitise consumers to the correct separation of packaging during disposal, 32 per cent of private label packaging was provided with the relevant waste separation information labels by 31 December 2024. [+]

EDEKA actively avoids material-intensive private-label products

EDEKA and WWF are to develop a definition for material-intensive private-label products by the end of 2024. The private-label ranges are being examined for more environmentally friendly alternatives and implementation measures.

Number of articles with reusable logo

65 articles are labelled with a reusable logo. [+]

Ecological design of private-label products

EDEKA and WWF are working together until 2024 to develop basic principles for a more environmentally friendly design of selected non-food private-label products. Where appropriate, these are integrated into private-label purchasing processes and measures for ecological product optimisation are developed and implemented step by step.

Number of article clusters with criteria for an ecological product design

Criteria for a more environmentally friendly design were developed for a total of five article clusters. These are now being implemented step by step. [+]



Photo: Daniel Peters / Unsplash

APPROACHES TO CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The long-term goal of the umbrella topic of material conservation is to transform the linear economic logic into an end-to-end circular economy. At the beginning of 2024, EDEKA was the first food retailer to use the WWF Circular Business Assessment tool to determine where the various areas of the company stand with regard to circular economy. Based on a comprehensive analysis and interviews with decision-makers from relevant business areas, priority areas of action were proposed for the development of a dedicated circular economy strategy. The publication of the ambitious guideline is still pending and will take place in 2025.

USE OF MATERIALS FOR PRIVATE-LABEL PACKAGING

Packaging will also be part of the circular economy strategy. Packaging plays an important role – in Germany, for instance, around 19 million tonnes of packaging waste were collected in 2022.⁸ The aim of the EDEKA Group's packaging strategy is therefore to avoid and reduce the materials and quantities used, to continuously increase the amount of recycled material in packaging, to switch to reusable systems and, last but not least, to ensure complete recyclability. In this way, a circular economy can be promoted and the use of primary raw materials reduced – always taking into account adequate product protection in order to guarantee food safety and quality and avoid food waste.

⁸ Source: Cayé et al, 2024. [Packaging waste generation and recycling in Germany in 2022](#), Federal Environment Agency, Dessau-Rosslau.

USE OF RAW MATERIALS FROM SUSTAINABLE SOURCES AND RECYCLED MATERIALS FOR PRIVATE-LABEL PACKAGING

The use of recycled materials is being promoted in order to conserve primary resources and close raw material cycles. In addition to plastics, this applies in particular to recycled fibres made from wood and paper. The responsible use of wood as a primary resource is more important today than ever before because the increasing demand from various sectors already exceeds what our forests can sustainably supply. The use of recycled material also has energy and water-saving advantages in production compared to the virgin fibre variant.

While the focus in the area of wood and paper has previously been on certifying the wood and paper product range as well as fibre-based packaging in general, EDEKA and Netto are placing greater emphasis on the use of certified recycled material in the new partnership phase. To further expand this approach in fiber-based packaging (with a focus on primary packaging in the non-food and personal care segments) as well as in the wood and paper product range, EDEKA and Netto have committed within the partnership to work on developing target values for the share of recycled material and, where possible, to set long-term goals.

ECOLOGICAL DESIGN OF PRIVATE-LABEL PRODUCTS

In the wood and paper product area, an increase in the proportion of products made from FSC-certified recycled material is also to be achieved under the macro target for the more ecological design of private-label products. As of 31 December 2024, a total of 53,183 tonnes of recycled material was reported in the product and packaging range across all material types.

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MATERIAL FLOW MANAGEMENT

The recyclability of packaging is also an important aspect. It is continuously improved for private labels and further developed through product range analyses. At present, a statement on the recyclability of packaging is only possible for individual products (e.g. according to the minimum standard of the Central Agency Packaging Register (ZSVR)). The correct separation of packaging materials by end users can improve subsequent recycling. Currently, 32 per cent of private label packaging is labelled with a separation notice for proper disposal.



REUSABLE SYSTEMS AS PART OF A RESOURCE-CONSERVING CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Another resource-saving measure is the identification and use of reusable alternatives. The advantage of reusable systems is that they keep the packaging in the cycle. For instance, reusable yoghurt jars and bottles can be collected as part of a deposit system, picked up, rinsed, cleaned and refilled for resale. These include EDEKA organic yoghurt and Belsina apple juice from Netto.

In order to make the EDEKA Group's private-label products more environmentally friendly, the entire non-food range, excluding promotional items, was analysed in accordance with the established recycling criteria for products, such as recyclability, separability, material efficiency, etc. Suggestions for improvement were communicated to the procurement department for selected product groups such as absorbent hygiene products. Generally, in order to actually reduce the use of limited resources, disposable products should be replaced by reusable alternatives.



3.6



FRAMEWORK GOALS



3.6 FRAMEWORK GOALS

MACRO GOALS OF FRAMEWORK GOALS

INDICATORS

RESULTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2024

Pioneering role

EDEKA strives to play a pioneering role in the German food retail sector based on the goals in all four umbrella topics. WWF continuously analyzes the competitive landscape to align joint actions and close any gaps.

Results from EDEKA and Netto in the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) study "How sustainable are German supermarkets?" (2025) in relation to the environment (all relevant fields of action)

EDEKA and Netto achieve ratings in most action areas within the low to medium range, with a higher score of 4.0 in two areas. For a detailed explanation of the action areas, see the main text and Figure 6. The study covers the calendar year 2023. [+]

IT system for recording sustainability criteria

By the end of 2023, EDEKA will implement an IT-supported data management system that records the sustainability criteria for its private labels and makes suppliers comparable in this respect.

IT system is available

The IT system was not available by the end of the period under review. [-]

Traceability & supply-chain transparency

By the end of 2027, EDEKA will achieve supply chain transparency across all supply chains.

Number of articles with traceability according to mynetfair and ftrace

At EDEKA and Netto, 1,552 items are currently traceable using ftrace or mynetfair. [+]

Consideration of sustainability criteria in the purchasing process

EDEKA takes sustainability criteria into account step by step with the umbrella topics, placing them as far as possible on an equal footing with commercial criteria in purchasing decisions for private labels. The suppliers of private labels should continue to develop demonstrably.

Number of sub-items anchored in the product requirement for sustainability

By 31 December 2024, seven criteria identified by the WWF have been included in the sustainability product requirements. [+]

Improving certification schemes and other market-based solutions

The WWF identifies the need for further development of certification systems and other market-based solutions, such as initiatives or round tables. EDEKA supports WWF's commitment.

Number of needs identified by WWF for further development of certification systems and other market-based solutions

WWF created an interactive dashboard to compare the strengths and weaknesses of the certification systems by the end of 2024. Further development needs are identified continuously and as required. An action plan to identify the need for further development is in progress. To date, no requirements have been communicated to EDEKA and Netto. [-]

Precompetitive engagement

WWF continuously identifies relevant initiatives relating to the four umbrella topics. EDEKA is actively involved in these initiatives and drives them forward.

Number of initiatives and committees with EDEKA participation

As of 31 December 2024, EDEKA participated in 63 initiatives and committees such as the Food for Biodiversity initiative and the Forum for Sustainable Palm Oil (FONAP). [-]

Training for all employees on partnership topics

EDEKA is developing a comprehensive and continuous training programme on sustainability topics for employees and its private-label suppliers. WWF continuously trains its employees in order to keep up to date professionally and with regard to the EDEKA structures, special features and market-relevant information in the food sector and in the supply chains.

Number of participants in [online] training courses held at EDEKA Next⁹ and in physical attendance

In 2024, a total of 1,843 people took part in [online] training courses at EDEKA Next and in physical attendance [+]

Willingness to invest

EDEKA provides (financial) resources and capacities for the implementation of measures in the four umbrella topics. EDEKA creates effective structures and processes for implementation purposes.

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To meet its sustainability commitments, EDEKA invests in sustainable projects along the value chain – from resource-efficient production to sustainable product ranges. These investments are an expression of EDEKA's commitment to actively contribute to the transformation towards a future-oriented economy. [-]

Company-wide sustainability strategy

EDEKA has a company-wide sustainability strategy based on operating within planetary boundaries. Measures are derived from this strategy and implemented accordingly.

Published sustainability strategy

The strategy is available in the form of fields of action and is to be further developed in the future. [-]

⁹ EDEKA Next is the EDEKA HQ's digital learning platform that supports employees in their professional training.

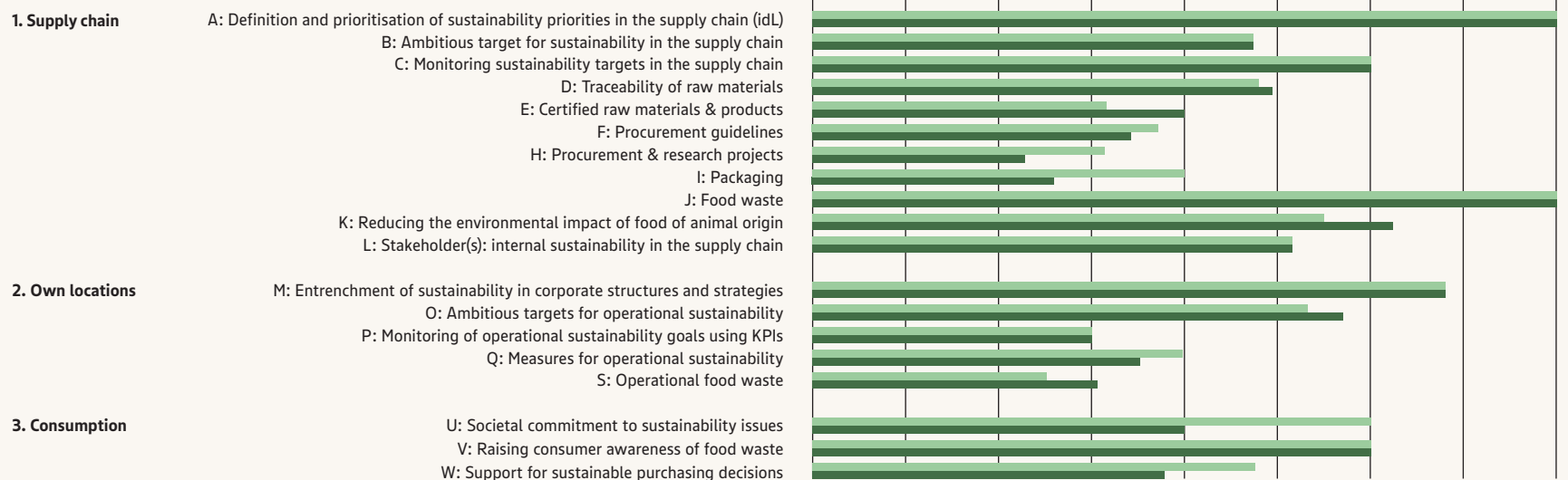
PIONEERING ROLE

The framework objectives include positioning the company as a pioneer in the German food retail sector with regard to the four key themes of the partnership. This includes WWF continuously analyzing the competition through benchmarking in order to coordinate the joint approach and close any gaps. As an independent analysis, the study published by the German Environment Agency (UBA) titled *“Wie nachhaltig sind die deutschen Supermärkte?”* (How sustainable are German supermarkets?) (2025), which refers to the period from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, was used as an independent analysis as an indicator for this goal. It assesses the retail companies using a comprehensive system of indicators. For the area of environment, the result of the UBA study was replicated across all indicators of the fields of action, with the exception of the topics on which the partners do not work within the partnership.¹⁰ Figure 6 shows the positioning of EDEKA and Netto in the individual fields of action, with the sustainability category “Environment” being broken down in the study by scope: supply chain, own sites, and consumption. The scale is mapped from 1 (“no practice”) to 5 (“best practice”).

For example, both companies achieved a good rating of 4.0 in the action areas *Definition and prioritisation of sustainability priorities in the supply chain* and *Food waste*. In terms of *anchoring sustainability in corporate structures and strategies*, *monitoring sustainability targets in the supply chain* and *raising consumer awareness of food waste*, EDEKA and Netto achieve ratings in the upper middle range. EDEKA also achieved such a rating in the area of *social commitment to sustainability issues*. There is need for improvement in the supply chain in the areas of *certified raw materials and products*, *procurement and research projects*, *packaging and procurement guidelines* as well as *company food waste*. EDEKA and Netto therefore still have room for improvement in several areas. To support the process, an internal analysis grid was additionally developed in 2023 to enable continuous benchmarking of the eight major food retailers in Germany. The results of this benchmarking support the EDEKA Group and WWF in developing targets and measures that are as focussed and needs-based as possible.

In addition to the macro goals in the four umbrella topics, namely climate protection, conservation and promotion of biodiversity, freshwater protection as well as resource and material conservation, the partners have agreed on overarching goals. These goals influence all umbrella topics and thus form a framework around the ecological goals of the Partnership for Sustainability.

RESULTS OF EDEKA AND NETTO IN THE AREA OF ENVIRONMENT



● EDEKA
● Netto

Fig. 6: Results of EDEKA and Netto in the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) study “How sustainable are German supermarkets?” (2025) in relation to the sustainability area of the environment (own diagram) For the environmental indicators, the result was modelled across all indicators of the fields of action with the exception of the topics on which the partners are not working within the partnership¹¹ [±]

¹⁰ These fields of action are: *Definition and prioritisation of sustainability priorities in the company*, *Sustainable investment strategies in occupational pensions*, *Stakeholder dialogue on corporate sustainability* and *Sustainability of external brands*.

¹¹ Source: Own report, based on Sander et al., 2025. How sustainable are German supermarkets? Federal Environment Agency, Dessau-Rosslau. The chart shows the results of EDEKA and Netto for the indicators in the “Environment” category. The EDEKA-WWF partnership does not work on all fields of action. The topics *Definition and prioritisation of sustainability priorities in the company*, *Sustainable investment strategies in occupational pensions*, *Stakeholder dialogue on corporate sustainability* and *Sustainability of external brands* are not part of the co-operative venture.

TRACEABILITY AND SUPPLY CHAIN TRANSPARENCY

In order to reduce the ecological footprint along the entire value chain of the private-label range and promote sustainable consumption, knowledge is needed about the path of a raw material or product across all production and processing stages (traceability) and about the sustainability conditions (transparency) at each stage. The framework objective of Traceability and supply chain transparency therefore stipulates that EDEKA and Netto will achieve supply chain transparency in all private-label supply chains by the end of 2027 in order to provide all relevant information to all key stakeholder groups, both internally and externally.

Meanwhile, selected products have already been implemented. Traceability plays an extremely important role for fish products, as fish supply chains are particularly complex and controls are not always possible, especially on the high seas. Complete traceability ensures that the fish really comes from the specified fishery or farm and makes it possible to analyse the ecological conditions. EDEKA and Netto have set themselves the goal of labelling the fish species, the fishing gear and the exact origin, right down to the fishing vessel or farm, on their products or making them available via a QR code. In addition, the partners provide information on the importance these factors (can) have for sustainability so that consumers, among others, can make informed purchasing decisions.

However, it is not just the fish supply chains that are important. Traceability is also fundamental to the work on critical raw materials (see [Chapter 3.4](#)). A total of 1,552 items in the EDEKA and Netto private-label range are now traceable via ftrace or mynetfair.

CONSIDERATION OF SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA IN THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

A central component of the joint work is to embed sustainability criteria in the procurement process. In purchasing decisions concerning private-label products, EDEKA and Netto gradually take sustainability criteria into account, giving them as much weight as commercial criteria wherever possible. The declared goal: Private-label suppliers should demonstrably develop in line with the partnership's umbrella topics. By the deadline of 31 December 2024, the already extensive sustainability product requirements were supplemented by seven pioneering criteria developed together with the WWF – a further step towards future-oriented product design. The sustainability product requirements, which are attached to all to all contracts with private label suppliers, describe binding specifications or criteria that all products with corresponding attributes must fulfil. For example, all products with palm oil components must have RSPO certification.

IMPROVEMENT OF CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS AND OTHER MARKET-BASED SOLUTIONS

Standards and certifications are an important tool for promoting sustainability in the food retail sector because they create transparency, encourage more environmentally friendly practices and support consumers in making conscious purchasing decisions. However, standards and certification systems have different strengths and weaknesses. In order to identify these, the partners conducted analyses of more than 70 standards using WWF's own methodology and summarised and visualised these analyses in an interactive dashboard. This allows strengths and weaknesses to be compared and enables more targeted, sustainable purchasing decisions. In addition, these analyses can form a basis for addressing weaknesses in certification systems and developing suggestions for improvement and further development. The next step is to develop an action plan that summarises the need for further development. The partners are thus working together to improve certification systems and other market-based solutions.



PRE-COMPETITIVE ENGAGEMENT

This is the title of the sixth framework objective of the Partnership for Sustainability. WWF continuously identifies relevant initiatives relating to the four umbrella topics. EDEKA is actively involved in these initiatives and drives them forward, because joint action across individual companies can solve complex challenges, especially social and environmental ones, more efficiently. In 2024, EDEKA was involved in 63 committees and industry initiatives, such as the industry initiative [Food for Biodiversity](#).

TRAINING FOR ALL EMPLOYEES ON THE TOPICS PURSUED IN THE PARTNERSHIP

Together with the WWF, EDEKA and Netto are working to create a more sustainable company with sustainable supply chains. By involving employees, sustainability is embedded as an integral element.

The company therefore offers various training courses on the topic of sustainability via the digital EDEKA training programme. In the period under review, a total of 1,843 people took part in digital [online] training courses at EDEKA Next and in physical attendance.

In addition, a special training course for procurement was organised in 2023 to promote sustainable procurement practices. This training course was aimed at sensitising procurement departments to the importance of sustainable supply chains and providing them with the tools and knowledge they need to make even more environmentally friendly decisions.



COMPANY-WIDE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND WILLINGNESS TO INVEST

EDEKA and Netto are aware of their responsibility towards the environment, society and future generations. Responsible behaviour at EDEKA encompasses the areas of regionality, product range, environment, employees and society. Various fields of action are also strategically anchored at Netto: Customers and products, environment, employees, region and society. Within the WWF partnership, the focus is particularly on the environmental aspect. The plan for the future is to further specify and expand the sustainability strategy in terms of socio-ecological management within the planetary boundaries. The relevant requirements from various pieces of legislation on sustainability and sustainability reporting will also be incorporated.

In order to fulfil its sustainability requirements, EDEKA also invests in sustainable projects along the value chain – from resource-saving production all the way to sustainable product ranges. These investments are an expression of our commitment to actively contribute to the transformation towards a future-oriented economy.

4



AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES



4.1

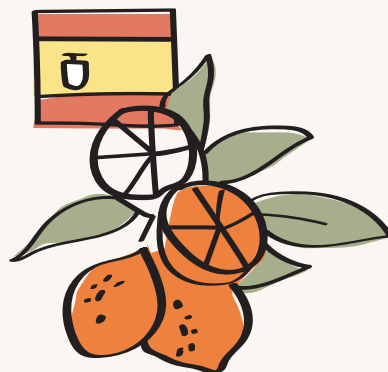


JOINT PROJECT FOR BETTER ORANGES, MANDARINS AND CLEMENTINES



JOINT PROJECT FOR BETTER ORANGES, MANDARINS AND CLEMENTINES

Oranges, mandarins and clementines are among the most popular types of fruit, especially in the winter months. A substantial share of these citrus fruits is derived from conventional cultivation. However, conventional farming poses numerous ecological challenges. This is precisely where the citrus project comes in. The aim is to make the conventional cultivation of oranges, mandarins and clementines in Spain more environmentally friendly. On the project sites, efforts focus on improving irrigation efficiency, reducing the use of agrochemicals, implementing measures to enhance soil fertility, and strengthening biodiversity through targeted actions. As a result, the fruits grow under conventional methods but are produced in a more environmentally responsible way than usual.



GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION (as of 31 December 2024)

Project	Joint project for better oranges, mandarins and clementines
Growing regions	Baseline 2016: Andalusia 2024: Andalusia, Valencia and Catalonia
Project targets	Improvement of agricultural practices in the following focus areas: 1) More responsible water use on the farms and in the river basin 2) Preserving and fostering biological diversity and ecosystems 3) More sustainable crop protection measures 4) More sustainable use of fertilisers and promotion of soil fertility
Number of project farms	Baseline 2016: 1 (one supplier) 2024: 27 (six suppliers)
Area under cultivation	Baseline 2016: 167 hectares 2024: 1,550 hectares
Marketing	Regional pilot in 2017, since 2018 oranges and mandarins nationwide at EDEKA and Netto, since 2021 extension to include clementines throughout Germany at EDEKA and Netto



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Spain was specifically chosen as the project location because the country is the largest exporter of fruit and vegetables in the EU and the high water requirements of agricultural production are leading to intensifying water shortages in many regions of Spain. The citrus project was launched in 2015 with a pilot farm in Andalusia and will be extended to include 27 farms in the regions of Valencia and Catalonia by 2024. In 2024, two larger fincas left the project, while three smaller fincas were added to the project at the same time.

PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN 2024

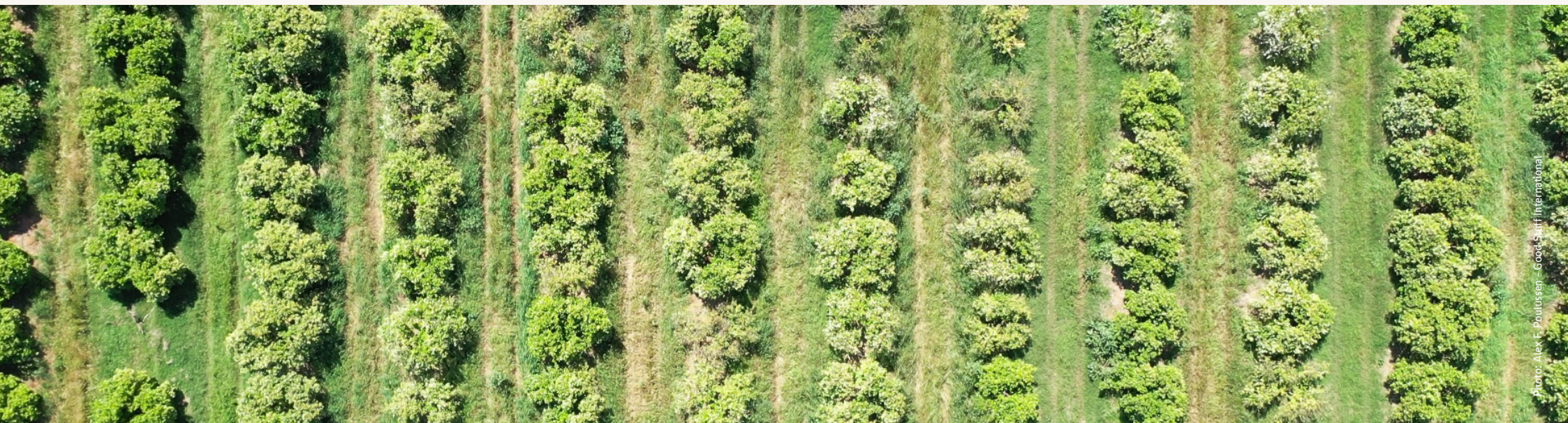
The extension of the project also led to savings in water consumption and the use of agrochemicals on new project farms. The measures to protect and promote biodiversity also show visible success as the project progresses: Nature is recovering, beneficial organisms are spreading and endangered species are returning.

Following the integration of new farms, the continuous development of the project measures becomes more important as each farm works under different conditions. At the same time, the producers' existing project knowledge is consolidated in a targeted manner in order to reduce the consulting effort and cost per farm, as the producers can implement the project measures independently.



MORE RESPONSIBLE USE OF WATER

In the project regions, the impacts of [climate change](#) can already be seen and felt quite clearly. More sustainable water use on the farms and in the local river basin is therefore a key focus of the citrus project. All farms record their water consumption on a daily basis to ensure that they do not use more water than permitted by law. Additional savings are achieved through more efficient irrigation, involving measures such as carrying out regular maintenance work, improving irrigation systems and deploying soil moisture probes.



REDUCTION OF PESTICIDES

All project farms follow an application plan for pesticides, which was drawn up as part of the project and is reviewed annually. This involves replacing particularly hazardous pesticides with less critical substances. In addition, pesticides should only be used if absolutely necessary, e.g. because the existing beneficial organisms cannot control the pests. This is particularly challenging when new pests emerge, which is why farmers receive specific training in this area.

PROMOTION OF BIODIVERSITY

The project measures aim to at least maintain and, if possible, increase [biodiversity](#) on the farms. For example, the natural vegetation between the trees and along the paths, which was previously removed with herbicides, is left in place. This allows beneficial insects to thrive and other animals to move around unhindered. Hedges are also being planted, nesting boxes installed and perches set up for birds of prey.

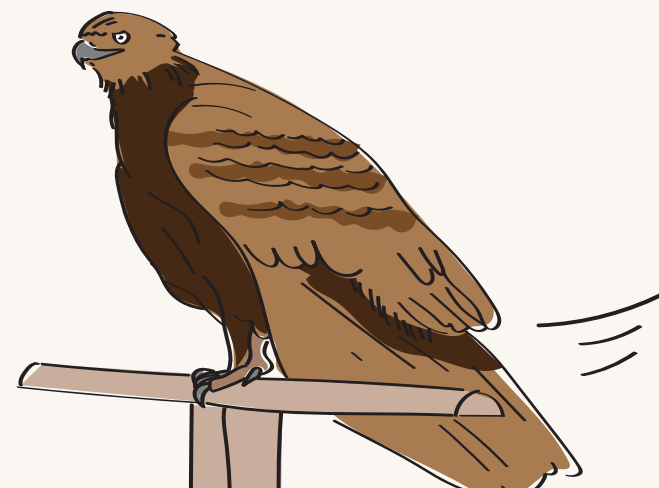
MORE SUSTAINABLE USE OF FERTILISERS AND PROMOTION OF SOIL FERTILITY

Leaf, soil and water analyses can be used to adapt the application of fertilisers to the trees' nutrient requirements. Mineral fertilisers are reduced as far as possible. The soils are additionally enriched with organic matter to increase their fertility and thus the natural nutrient availability and water storage capacity.

OUTLOOK

The project celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2025! The EDEKA Group and WWF will continue their successful collaboration in the future to make the conventional cultivation of oranges, mandarins and clementines in Spain more sustainable. The increasing drought in the growing regions remains a key challenge, therefore efficient irrigation remains a top priority. An important task for the future is to spread the measures of good agricultural practice beyond the project farms. The aim is to share the experience from the project to the sector and also to convince suppliers and producers outside the project to adopt more sustainable practices.

A detailed project report with key figures on the progress made over the last ten years will be published in Q1 2026 at the latest.



4.2



JOINT PROJECT FOR A BETTER BANANA



JOINT PROJECT FOR A BETTER BANANA

The joint banana project was launched in Ecuador and Colombia in 2014 with the vision of making conventional banana cultivation more sustainable and bringing about a rethink in the banana sector. In 2022, the project was successfully extended to include Costa Rica. By the end of 2024, seven farms in Ecuador, eleven in Colombia and one in Costa Rica will be part of the project. The project is now being expanded in Latin America and also to West Africa – scaling up the project will turn it into a programme. The fruit will also be sold at Netto from 2025.



GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION (as of 31 December 2024)

Project	Joint project for a better banana
Growing regions	Ecuador (Guayas and Los Ríos provinces), Colombia (Magdalena State, Northern Colombia) and Costa Rica (Limón province)
Project targets	• protecting ecosystems and biodiversity • protecting freshwater from contamination, and conserving water • conserving soils and optimising the use of pesticides • identifying sources of GHG and reducing emissions • improving waste disposal and assisting with the establishment of a waste management system • assuming social responsibility for health protection and job security for the workforce
Number of project farms	19 project farms — 12 in Colombia, 7 in Ecuador and 1 in Costa Rica
Farming area	around 4,500 hectares
Marketing	The project bananas have been available in EDEKA supermarkets since 2014 and since 2015 also in supermarkets of the Swiss chain Migros. The fruit will also be sold at Netto from 2025.

The project aims to improve conventional banana cultivation practices in the areas of natural ecosystems, water resources, integrated pest management, climate protection, waste management and social responsibility. A catalogue of measures is being implemented on the farms, comprising around 80 measures in the topic areas mentioned. The lion's share of this is being implemented at farm level. Yet the influence of the project extends beyond the farm boundaries. For instance, measures to protect the river catchment area are implemented together with other stakeholders in the region.



SUCCESS STORIES

The expansion of the protection zones between the cultivated area and natural ecosystems is an important part of the project in order to protect the ecosystems on the farms.

The protection zone between the cultivated area and aquatic ecosystems prevents pesticides or fertilisers from entering the water. Not only is this beneficial to aquatic organisms, but also to the people who use the water downstream. The protected zones also provide a habitat for native plants and animals.

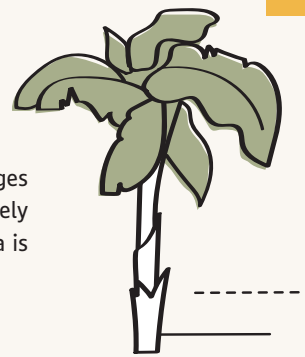
All participating farms bordering natural areas further extended the conservation zones on their farms until 2023. The EARTH University farm in Costa Rica already had a large protected zone before the project started in 2022, which contributes to a significant increase in the total number of hectares of protected zones as part of the project. At the same time, however, two farms with protected zones have left the project.

The project continues to work on optimising the use of pesticides and fertilisers. Drones are increasingly being used to apply crop protection products more precisely in sensitive zones (around ecosystems or infrastructure). Farms that have been in the project for more than three years do not use herbicides. Instead, they work with ground-covering plants. However, in 2023, four of the existing farms had to use small, targeted amounts of herbicides to prevent the spread of two diseases. The farms that have been in the project for less than three years are working towards the goal of being herbicide-free.

Preparing the fruit for transport is a water-intensive process. They are washed in the packing stations. The bananas' washing water consumption was significantly reduced in 2023 compared to the reference year 2020 thanks to water treatment plants and optimised water use.

CHALLENGES

External factors, such as changing climate as well as safety and security conditions, pose challenges for the project. There have been increased periods of drought and flooding, which have negatively affected banana production. At the same time, the security situation in Ecuador and Colombia is becoming increasingly tense, making work in the field more difficult for everyone involved.



OUTLOOK

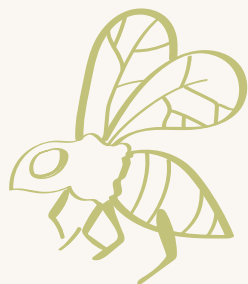
After just over ten years of project work, the partners aim to expand the project in order to utilise the experience and findings and increase their influence in the banana sector.

To this end, EDEKA, Netto and WWF Germany have developed a new strategy to transform the banana sector. Starting mid-2025, all entry-level bananas sold at EDEKA and Netto will come from the banana program. To achieve this, the program will expand to new suppliers and new sourcing countries. Initially, a mass balance approach will be used to gradually integrate new farms, with the goal that by 2030 all bananas are produced according to the program's criteria.

Mass balance in this context means that, at the beginning, not all participating farms will implement the program measures yet. However, the total number of more sustainably produced bananas grown on program farms will match the quantity purchased by EDEKA and Netto from suppliers. All other farms belonging to the same suppliers but not yet implementing all additional program measures are at least Rainforest Alliance-certified.

As part of this restructuring, the catalogue of measures was revised and adapted to the new challenges. It now includes around 80 measures.

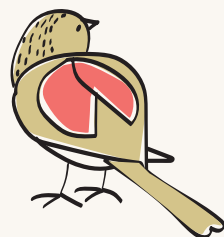
4.3



AGRICULTURE FOR BIODIVERSITY



AGRICULTURE FOR BIODIVERSITY



For 13 years now, the partners in the “Agriculture for Biodiversity” (LfA) programme have been integrating nature conservation work into the agricultural practices of organic farms in order to preserve the diversity of animal and plant species in Germany. With 217 farms and around 60,000 hectares of farmland, it is one of the largest non-state-funded programmes in Germany for promoting biodiversity in agricultural landscapes.

In agriculturally dominated habitats, the decline in species has been particularly dramatic. This is why the farmers participating in the programme implement nature conservation measures on their organic farms that have demonstrably been able to boost

biodiversity. The basis for this is a catalogue of measures consisting of over 100 nature conservation modules - scientifically designed and developed by the Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) e. V. One of the nature conservation measures that can be applied throughout Germany is the omission of partial areas of clover grass during mowing. For insects, farmland birds, hares and amphibians, these unmown areas in the fields are important refuges during and after mowing. Partridges and other field birds in turn find good breeding sites following the implementation of the “Strips of wildflowers and other flowering plants” module. The strips of land left unmown also provide food and a refuge for hares and insects.

GENERAL PROGRAMME INFORMATION (as of 31 December 2024)

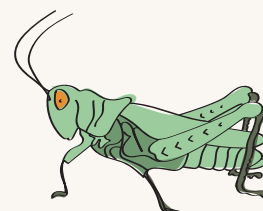
Programme name	Agriculture for Biodiversity
Growing region	Germany
Programme objectives	• Conservation and enhancement of ecosystems and biodiversity • Establishing the nature conservation module on organic farming land • Long-term cooperation between nature conservation, agriculture and trade • Raising consumer awareness of the relevance of biodiversity conservation in the agricultural landscape
Number of operations in the programme	• Northern and Eastern Germany: 122 • Western Germany: 22 • Southern Germany: 73 Total number: 217 farming operations
Total area under cultivation	• Northern and Eastern Germany: 46,169 hectares • Western Germany: 8,493 hectares • Southern Germany: 5,667 hectares Total area: 60,329 hectares
Marketing	• Meat and sausage products and potatoes in the EDEKA North region • Beef in EDEKA stores in the EDEKA South-West region • Apple juice as the first nationally listed product • Vegetables and apples in all EDEKA regions • The apples and apple juice are additionally available at Netto



The participating farmers work with nature conservation advisors to select the most suitable and effective measures for their farms and implement them on their grassland, arable land and other farmland. EDEKA and Netto market the products of participating farms as private-label products and honour the implementation of biodiversity-promoting measures. Products from the “Agriculture for Biodiversity” (LfA) programme are offered for sale in EDEKA and Netto stores: They are labelled on the packaging with the WWF logo and the programme seal – an origami bird. Consumers can find out more about the programme and the participating companies via a QR code or web link. By purchasing products from the programme, consumers also contribute to promoting local biodiversity.

With the addition of new farms, LfA has continued to grow in recent years. For example, 73 farms are now participating in the program’s Apple Initiative, which was launched in 2022. Thanks to the expansion to new farm groups and product ranges, LfA is now represented with its farms in 12 of the 13 federal states!

Yet more and more products are also available in more and more regions: In 2023, a vegetable supplier was added, whose roughly 20 different organic vegetable varieties are available in almost all EDEKA regions. In the same year, the EDEKA Nord region expanded its range to include chicken and turkey breast products under its “Natur Pur” private label. This was possible because poultry farms are now also participating in the LfA programme for the first time. Dairy farms are also currently being advised, which means that in future, the range will be extended to include milk and yoghurt products available at EDEKA and Netto.



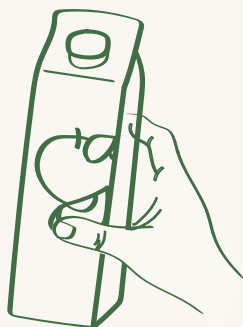
The successes on the shelves are also evident in the fields. The measure “unmown strips in grassland,” which is frequently implemented on LfA farms, was evaluated through a monitoring process with impressive results: Over the three-year observation period from 2021 to 2023, some farms recorded significantly more grasshoppers, butterflies, and a notable increase in wild bees on the unmown areas compared to the mown ones.

As part of the table fruit initiative, participating farms promote biodiversity primarily through alternating mulching—leaving wild herbs standing in the driving lanes between tree rows—and by sowing flower strips in these lanes. EDEKA and Netto support these financially demanding and labor-intensive conservation measures, for example, by paying premiums on purchased goods and by specifically funding seeds for flower strips.

Many insects such as wild bees, butterflies and grasshoppers benefit from these ecologically valuable measures, which also act as beneficial insects that pollinate the flowers or eliminate pests. This promotes harmony between agriculture and biodiversity in particular – a key objective of the programme.



5



PRODUCT-RELATED COMMUNICATIONS



CO-BRANDING [+]

Since the start of the Partnership for Sustainability, the partners have been working together to inspire consumers to make more sustainable purchasing decisions. One way to achieve this goal is by labeling private-label products with the WWF logo. When a private-label product also carries the WWF logo, this is called co-branding. The panda, WWF's trademark, is applied to products that meet a WWF-recognized top standard and can prove this through independent certifications. These standards define requirements for a food or other product to be produced in a more environmentally compatible way and cover different aspects of environmental protection.

CO-BRANDING IN THE PRIVATE-LABEL PRODUCT RANGE OF EDEKA AND NETTO [+]

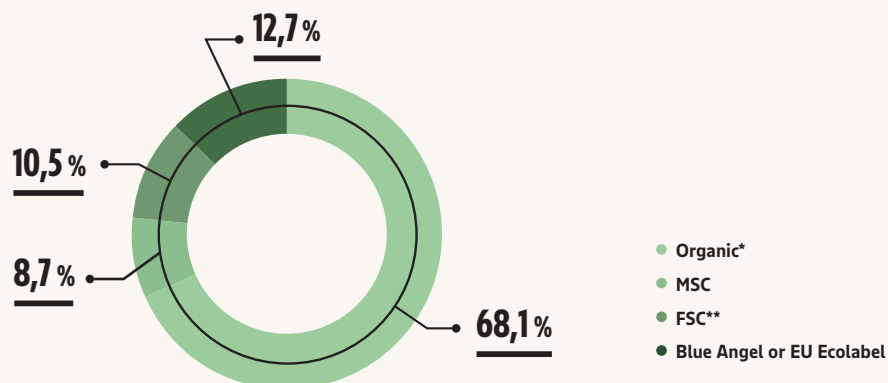


Fig. 7: Proportion of all EDEKA private-label products with co-branding, broken down by sustainability standards recognised by the WWF (status 31/12/2024).

*organic standards recognised by the WWF for co-branding. These include EU Organic Regulation, Naturland, Bioland and comparable organic associations

**FSC 100 per cent for wood products; FSC Recycled for tissue and paper products



As of December 31, 2024, 1,037 products carried a so-called co-branding. Of these, 706 are organic, 90 MSC-certified, 109 FSC-certified, and 132 labeled with the Blue Angel or EU Ecolabel. The percentage distribution is shown in Figure 7.