

4. STAKEHOLDER AND CR MANAGEMENT

Stakeholders are individuals and institutions who, for private or professional reasons, are interested in an organization because they are affected by the organization's actions or because they can influence its development.

voestalpine's Corporate Responsibility Steering Committee and the CR Manager have identified the company's most important stakeholder

groups based on this definition. The list is reviewed at regular intervals as to its completeness and topicality.



Management has the important task of maintaining the company's relationships with its stakeholders, taking up their concerns and rec-

onciling divergent interests as best as possible. This has been and is the basis of voestalpine's successful and sustained development.

4.1 STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

voestalpine is in regular contact with the stakeholder groups through its Management Board, as well as its executive and non-executive personnel. Numerous opportunities and formats such as shop talks and expert roundtables, conferences and trade shows as well as analyst and investor meetings are used to this end.

In addition, voestalpine is not only represented on a wide variety of bodies serving advocacy groups, trade associations, and lobbying campaigns, it also presents the company's concerns to these bodies. The company also supports platforms and initiatives that promote sustain-

able development. During the reporting period, communications with individual stakeholder groups regarding the topics relevant to the given group took place in various settings.

The following capsule descriptions show how contacts and communications with the stakeholders are structured. The examples presented show the key stakeholder groups and the most frequently used formats. voestalpine's executives also engage with other groups at different locations in various ways.

4.1.1 EMPLOYEES

The voestalpine Group currently has a global workforce of about 50,000 employees. Both the annual employee performance review and the regular Group-wide employee survey are key tools for engaging in structured communications with the company's employees. Employees' feedback is analyzed by management and flows into any measures the company develops, for example, with respect to personnel development.

In many voestalpine Group companies, a works council represents employees' interests. Local works councils are superseded by a European Works Council and a Group Works Council, both of which maintain an open dialogue with management.

Through internal audits and trainings—for example, in Compliance, health & safety, IT security, or data privacy and protection—voestalpine ensures not only that its employees abide by and implement a range of requirements but also that their knowledge is current.

4.1.2 CUSTOMERS AND SUPPLIERS

voestalpine maintains very open and close-knit relationships with all its business partners. These frequently long-term relationships with customers and suppliers provide the basis for trusting and transparent cooperation. Together with these partners, the company develops processes and products that satisfy the requirements of all parties involved and ensure low-impact utilization of resources.

Issues of sustainability are increasingly moving to the center of voestalpine's communications with customers and suppliers. Besides conven-

tional supply chain management issues such as quality, costs, availability, and delivery dates, increasingly the conversations are also focused on climate action, energy and resource efficiency as well as compliance with labor and human rights in production.

The voestalpine Code of Conduct is binding on all of the Group's suppliers and business partners and forms part of its terms and conditions. For more information on this issue, please see the chapter on "Transparency in the Supply Chain."

4.1.3 ANALYSTS AND INVESTORS

Institutional investors and analysts are a key stakeholder group of voestalpine in its capacity as a listed company. The members of voestalpine's Management Board and the managers of its Investor Relations department maintain close relationships with the company's shareholder representatives and investors through investor conferences, roadshows, as well as personal visits—increasingly via online meetings and virtual

conferences—in order to discuss current developments and the market situation. As far as the topic of sustainability is concerned, climate relevant emissions and risks, human rights in both the company and the supply chain, as well as the EU Taxonomy Regulation, are the central concerns discussed with analysts and investors alike.

4.1.4 RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND UNIVERSITIES

voestalpine's collaboration with both universities and unaffiliated research institutes is indispensable and boosts the Group's research and development work. The company supports outstanding dissertations, master's theses, and research projects. It also endows professorships that can generate knowledge relevant to its core business and contribute new insights.

The members of voestalpine's Management Board personally represent the Group during special student events (some of which are also held virtually) and answer questions from the students who, in their capacity as potential future employees, are considered an important stakeholder group.

4.1.5 NGOS, SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS, AND PLATFORMS

Representatives of voestalpine belong to various working groups and committees of special interest groups and platforms. These include the World Steel Association (“worldsteel”); the Austrian Society for Metallurgy and Materials (ASMET); the European Steel Technology Platform (ESTEP); and the Austrian Financial Reporting and Auditing Committee (AFRAC). In addition, voestalpine actively engages in political debates with relevant industry associations such as the European Steel Association (EUROFER) and the European Rail Supply Industry Association (UNIFE) in order to present its views on various socially and politically relevant topics or to support a unified approach to the interpretation of particular statutory norms.

In April 2019, voestalpine became a member of ResponsibleSteel—a not-for-profit organiza-

tion and policy initiative that focuses on the sustainable production of steel and the sustainable procurement of both raw and other materials. voestalpine actively engages in the ongoing development of the standard on which these policy initiatives are based. In the Northern summer of 2021, the Group’s largest steel plant (located in Linz, Austria) submitted to an audit process aimed at obtaining the certification pursuant to the ResponsibleSteel Standard; it is one of the very first steel companies to have done so.

voestalpine also maintains good communications with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Its Management Board and experts engage in intensive and constructive exchanges of opinion with several NGOs, particularly with respect to energy and climate policies as well as other environmental topics.

4.2 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY MANAGEMENT

Corporate Responsibility Management (CRM) and the identification of topics relevant to CR, as well as assessments regarding their materiality, are first and foremost the responsibility of the Corporate Responsibility Steering Committee and the CR Manager. The CR Manager is responsible for coordinating within voestalpine and represents the company at numerous events and initiatives related to corporate responsibility and sustainability.

The company’s CEO chairs the Corporate Responsibility Steering Committee. It comprises the heads of the following Group departments: Compliance, Legal, Environment, Research,

Communications, Human Resources, health & safety, Investor Relations, General Procurement and Raw Materials Procurement as well as International Business Relations.

This corporate body discusses issues that stakeholders bring to the attention of voestalpine in connection with particular events or that are becoming increasingly important in the ongoing sustainability debate. These discussions also involve exploring the direct and indirect ramifications of the company’s business activities in connection with these topics, and adopting measures as necessary to mitigate adverse effects.

4.3 MATERIAL TOPICS

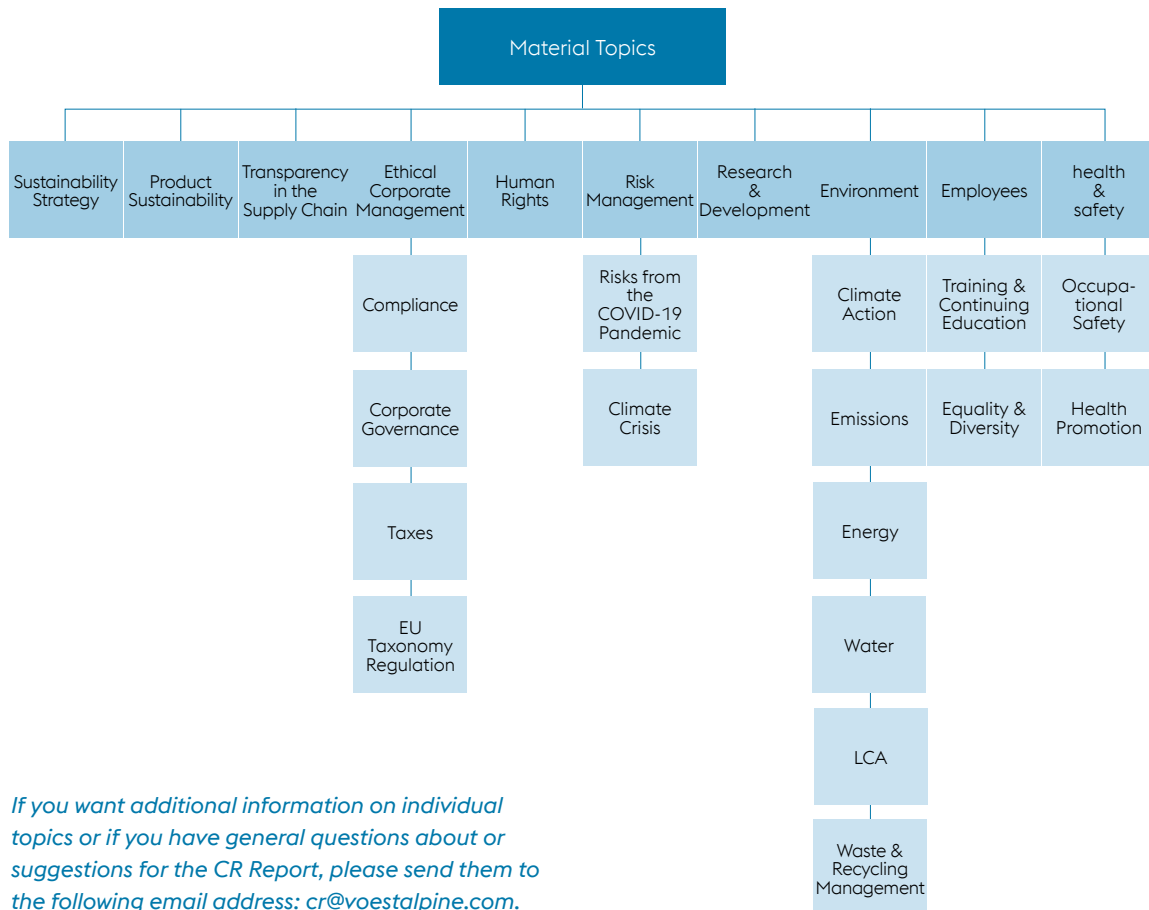
voestalpine uses its ongoing communications with internal and external stakeholder groups to identify those topics that are key to CR Management and the relevant reporting.

Prior to the preparation of the annual CR Report, the members of the Corporate Responsibility Steering Committee draw up a list of the topics considered most important by the stakeholder groups. The list is supplemented by those topics that have been identified in connection with the company's work in relevant bodies as

well as through analyses of trade publications and benchmark analyses of select competitors, suppliers, and customers.

A subsequent step involves assigning a materiality rating to all those topics that have or could potentially have positive or negative effects on voestalpine's business activities. Information on voestalpine's management approach, performance, and goals with respect to all material topics is published in the CR Report.

The following topics were identified as central to the present CR Report:



If you want additional information on individual topics or if you have general questions about or suggestions for the CR Report, please send them to the following email address: cr@voestalpine.com.

