

# Horn & Co.

Group



## SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2025

Strength through diversity!

## Table of Contents

Foreword:	3
01. Strategy	4
02. Materiality	4
03. Objectives	5
04. Depth of the Value Chain	6
05. Responsibility	6
06. Rules and Processes	7
07. Monitoring	7
08. Incentive Systems	7
09. Stakeholder Engagement	8
10. Innovation and Product Management	8
11. Use of Natural Resources	9
12. Resource Management	9
13. Climate-Relevant Emissions	10
14. Employee Rights	10
15. Equal Opportunities	11
16. Qualification	11
17. Human Rights	12
18. Community	12
19. Political Influence	12
20. Compliance with Laws and Regulations	13

# Sustainability Report 2025

## Foreword:

The years 2024 to 2025 were characterized by change and a continued challenging economic situation. This also affected our customers. Rising personnel and investment costs, combined with weak revenue performance, made cost-saving measures unavoidable for us as well.

Our core business, the circular economy, is central to achieving climate and environmental policy goals while also offering significant opportunities for growth, employment, and competitiveness. It makes an important contribution to securing the raw material supply of our customers and increases the resilience of supply chains. In addition, the circular economy provides cost-effective opportunities for the decarbonization of industry based on technologies that are already fundamentally available today.

In 2025, we further strengthened our partnerships, created strategic new extensions of our service portfolio, and intensified our networking with stakeholders.

Together, we worked on developing sustainable solutions that are not only environmentally sound but also economically viable. This report demonstrates how we achieve our sustainability goals, which challenges we have overcome, and what ambitions drive us forward.

Argjend Kameraj (CEO)

Dr. Lars Füchtjohann (CTO)

## 01. Strategy

As a group of companies, we now operate more strongly than ever as an integrated network that consistently lives the principles of the circular economy.

Our four business areas – **Industrial Services, Minerals Recovery, Products, and Analytics** – work closely together to realize a closed material cycle and sustainably recycle valuable raw materials. This synergy enables us to offer innovative solutions that are not only economically successful but also make a decisive contribution to a resource-efficient future.

The continuous development of our portfolio and business model is at the core of our commitment to sustainability. By adding new locations (the Duisburg laboratory division of Horn & Co. Analytics GmbH) and integrating additional competencies within the group, such as PAHAGE Feuerfeste Erzeugnisse GmbH & Co. KG, we are able to continuously expand and optimize our services. This not only strengthens our position in the industry but also provides our partners and customers with sustainable and future-oriented added value.

As part of our environmental and sustainability management, the **CSR Circle**, alongside the IMS team, plays an important role as an interdisciplinary body. It advises the Executive Board and management, identifies relevant sustainability topics, and develops concrete recommendations for action. In doing so, we benefit from a broad exchange of knowledge and experience across the individual business areas and locations. [NG1.1]

The **sustainability report**, published annually, is an integral part of our transparent and constructive dialogue with all stakeholders. It demonstrates how, through our commitment, we conserve resources, sustainably reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and ensure respect for human rights throughout our entire value chain.

## 02. Materiality

The analysis of materiality is a fundamental basis of our overall sustainability strategy. It forms the foundation for identifying the topics that are of particular importance both to our company and to our stakeholders.

**External influences on the company (outside-in):** We analyze how external factors affect our business activities. The year 2025 was once again characterized by challenges such as rising energy prices, a shortage of skilled labor, economic slowdown, and significant geopolitical uncertainties.

These developments have led us to further diversify our business models and strengthen the resilience of our group of companies. By focusing on our core business—the circular economy and decarbonization—we have been able to take important steps to successfully address external risks.

**Impact of our business activities (inside-out):** Our activities have direct and indirect impacts on the environment, society, and the economy. Contributing to the European decarbonization strategy and actively promoting the circular economy are at the center of our actions. Through our approach to recycling raw materials and minimizing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, we make a significant contribution to global climate goals and offer our customers sustainable solutions with a low environmental footprint.

We provide our employees with an attractive and secure workplace where employee rights and equal opportunities (criteria 14 and 15) are actively promoted.

### 03. Objectives

Our quantitative and qualitative quality and sustainability goals are reflected in our “Vision 2025.” Our objectives are aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) as well as current German and European climate targets. For the coming years, we plan – within the bounds of technical and economic feasibility – to further reduce emissions, expand and utilize renewable energy sources (see Criterion 13), equip our construction machinery with alternative drive systems as soon as market availability allows, and develop a new “Vision 2028+.”

Through additional certifications and innovative energy management, we look ahead with confidence and anticipation to the European targets for 2030 and 2045 – especially as there have been several – in some cases unexpected – changes in recent months (e.g. the Omnibus reform package for reducing bureaucracy or the withdrawal of the short-term ban on combustion engines).

The Horn & Co. Group pursues the shared goal of taking ecological, social, and economic responsibility as a regionally rooted group of companies. Sustainability is not only part of our business model and a key component of our entrepreneurial success, but also a central element of modern business practices and responsible corporate conduct.

**Environmental responsibility:** We promote circular economy solutions in resource- and energy-intensive industries and improve our production and recycling processes through innovation and strong partnerships.

**Fair business practices and supply chain:** We focus on long-term, trust-based partnerships, support our customers in reducing their environmental footprint, and develop concepts and processes that enable industrial by-products to be optimally processed and reintegrated into material and economic cycles.

**Local social engagement:** We support sports, cultural, and educational institutions in the region to provide opportunities for young people and actively counteract the shortage of skilled workers.

**Future-oriented corporate development:** We leverage our four business areas (Industrial Services, Minerals Recovery, Products, and Analytics) as an innovation-driven network to advance ecological and economic optimization in industry and to develop new business fields.

## 04. Depth of the Value Chain

In the implementation of circular economy concepts, the depth of the value chain plays a decisive role. Our value chain covers various stages of the circular economy and thus supports our customers in improving their environmental performance as well.

Thanks to the breadth of our group of companies and the individual stages of the value chain, we are able to offer a wide range of services. Horn & Co. relies on responsible and sustainable resource management along the value chain, innovative approaches, and strong partnerships and networks.

## 05. Responsibility

The **Horn & Co. CSR Circle** is an interdisciplinary body designed to support the internal promotion of sustainability and corporate responsibility. It consists of members from the departments of Human Resources, Marketing, Sales, Quality Management, Environment, Occupational Safety, and Sustainability, and has been active at Horn & Co. since 2022. In addition, representatives from various operations, locations, and the works council are involved as needed to ensure the broadest possible perspective.

The objective is to develop recommendations for action and to identify projects in the areas of CSR and sustainability.

Structurally, sustainability management is established as a staff unit reporting directly to the Executive Board, ensuring high visibility and priority of sustainability topics. This enables the cross-functional implementation of measures and a closer integration of strategic planning and operational execution.

## 06. Rules and Processes

The **Horn & Co. Code of Conduct** defines the ethical principles governing interactions with colleagues, suppliers, customers, resources, the environment, whistleblowers, and other stakeholders. We are committed to the values set out in the Code of Conduct, such as mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. The contents of the Code of Conduct are regularly communicated through training.

The Corporate Security Policy (CSP), implemented in 2025, will also be continuously trained and its compliance monitored from 2026 onwards.

In the areas of environmental protection, energy management, quality assurance, and occupational health and safety, we are certified in accordance with DIN ISO 14001/50001/9001/45001.

The foundations for energy management in accordance with ISO 50001 were laid in 2024, and in 2025 the relevant scope of application for Horn & Co. Industrial Services GmbH was audited and certified.

Horn & Co. Analytics GmbH and Trittech Oberflächentechnik GmbH were also accredited by the German Accreditation Body (DAkkS) in accordance with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17025 (2018). In addition, the laboratory was certified according to NADCAP. DIN ISO 17025 was also confirmed for our company Horn & Co. Analytics SHPK in Kosovo by the DAK (Kosovo Accreditation Directorate).

The cross-site digital storage of relevant documentation and information is carried out via our intranet, "HorNet."

As part of the upcoming ERP transition, the integration of a dedicated sustainability tool will be evaluated in 2026.

## 07. Monitoring

Sustainability controlling represents a central component of our sustainability strategy. Social, environmental, and economic KPIs are intended to support and drive our objectives forward.

## 08. Incentive Systems

In addition to adjusting performance-based compensation structures, we offer our employees the opportunity to lease an e-bike through a job bike program. Furthermore, by providing generous

subsidies for a digital fitness membership platform, we promote health and physical activity close to our employees' place of residence.

## 09. Stakeholder Engagement

As part of the double materiality analysis, our stakeholders, their needs, and relevant topics were carefully identified.

With our diverse stakeholder groups, we strive for an exchange characterized by transparency and mutual respect, actively engaging in dialogue. Topics of particular importance to our stakeholders include sustainable corporate management, the quality of products and services, liquidity, fair compensation, and secure employment relationships.

## 10. Innovation and Product Management

The expansion of our value chain has been further advanced, for example through new locations (Duisburg at Horn & Co. Analytics GmbH) and new business units such as the workshop company IR Services GmbH and PAHAGE Feuerfeste Erzeugnisse GmbH & Co. KG.

As an experienced refractory manufacturer and competent recycler, our goal is to realize and responsibly implement a closed material cycle.

As early as 2024, our highly modern, **mobile**, **automated**, and **efficient sorting technology** for **recycling processes** – MAESTRO – was completed and is currently being continuously optimized. With MAESTRO, we not only sort materials, but also enable a fundamentally smarter and more sustainable future for recycling.

With the establishment of the new brand alliance INDUSTRIAL LAB, the presentation of our new value concept has been further expanded and improved externally – to the benefit of our customers.

Through the acquisition of a new production facility in Hünsborn, the area for sample preparation has more than doubled. In addition to separating the processing of different sample types into two lines and providing a larger archive, the new space also offers the advantage of creating new office and break areas for employees in sample preparation.

## 11. Use of Natural Resources

For Horn & Co.'s business activities, the use of natural resources is currently still essential. This applies both to our services – where we use electricity, fuels, gas, water, and heating oil – and to our products, which contain both primary and processed secondary raw materials.

Our fundamental strategic focus on the circular economy and the consistent zero-waste concept of MIRECO make a significant contribution to increasing recycling rates and maximizing value creation from raw materials. Thanks to the increased use of secondary raw materials, we have not only improved resource efficiency but also made significant contributions to reducing environmental impact. Our recycling approaches enable us to recover valuable materials and return them to the production cycle.

With these measures and the consistent implementation of our sustainable business model, we underline our commitment to minimizing the use of natural resources and sustainably reducing our ecological footprint.

## 12. Resource Management

For the planning and further development of our resource management, we systematically analyze and take into account key aspects such as

- the sustainability of our sites,
- energy efficiency,
- landfill management,
- the ecological optimization of our product portfolio,
- resource efficiency,
- waste management, as well as
- more efficient new construction or modernization projects.

This holistic approach aims to consistently embed sustainability across all business areas. In line with the requirements of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the Voluntary Sustainability Reporting Standard (VSME), we will in the future provide transparent reporting on our resource use and efficiency.

This includes detailed information on climate-relevant emissions, resource usage, and their reduction along the entire value chain. By promoting digital tools and data analysis, we enhance

the transparency and efficiency of our resource management and are therefore able to derive targeted measures to reduce our ecological footprint.

### 13. Climate-Relevant Emissions

Since 2023, we have been able – particularly at the sites of Horn & Co. RHIM Minerals Recovery GmbH – to utilize green electricity as well as power generated from photovoltaic systems to further advance our path toward reducing climate-relevant emissions.

In 2025, a further reduction in climate-relevant emissions was achieved – more than ten new electric vehicles were acquired, thereby expanding the electric vehicle fleet. In addition, further photovoltaic systems were installed, generating a total of 253,000 kWh of electricity. Moreover, all of our sites have been converted to a supply of green electricity, which will take effect from January 1, 2026.

Furthermore, a large proportion of newly delivered construction machinery can, with a view to future readiness, also be operated with alternative drive systems.

Additional medium- and long-term goals include increasing energy efficiency and establishing a comprehensive overview of Scope 3 emissions – those arising along the upstream and downstream value chain.

### 14. Employee Rights

Our values-based corporate culture aims to support and challenge employees beyond legal requirements.

We are committed to recognized standards of employee rights – promoting freedom of assembly, fair compensation, a culture of dialogue, employee participation in the future of the company, and respectful interaction. In our Code of Conduct, we commit to combating corruption and prohibiting discrimination. This also applies to our European locations.

In the past year, the works council conducted a comprehensive employee satisfaction survey, which yielded largely positive results. Topics identified as needing improvement were already discussed at management level and divided into specific action packages.

## 15. Equal Opportunities

Our guiding principle “Strength through diversity” stands not only for our broad-based business model, but also for equal opportunities and diversity, co-determination, the integration of migrants, fair compensation, protection against discrimination, and the compatibility of work and family life for all our employees.

Beyond the legal requirements of the General Equal Treatment Act, we are committed to promoting our diverse workforce and aim to provide our employees with a safe and attractive workplace. We support skilled workers from abroad and seek to further assist their integration through language courses, housing support, and advisory services.

We focus on developing leadership talent from within our own companies and support our employees through a training committee and a targeted leadership development program – providing knowledge, values, and a clear understanding of roles through expert guidance (Criterion 16).

## 16. Qualification

The commitment and qualifications of our employees form the foundation of our sustainable business success.

A total of 60 participants have taken part in 13 modules of our comprehensive leadership development program to date. Each module consists of five sessions. In 2025, the training committee conducted eight training sessions – including project management, training on our digital offerings, our products and services, as well as a workshop on corporate philosophy and culture. In total, more than 60 employees participated in the training programs. [NG1.1]

To actively address the shortage of skilled workers in the industry, meet our demand for qualified professionals, and support young people in their career paths, we rely on vocational training as a central component of our corporate strategy. In 2025, 12 trainees began their training across the various companies. Parts of the training programs mentioned above – such as the anti-discrimination workshop – are an integral component of the annual trainee days.

## 17. Human Rights

Our commitment to conducting all business activities in an ethical and legally compliant manner is closely linked to our dedication to respecting human rights.

Compliance with human rights is a core component of the Horn & Co. Code of Conduct and is actively practiced in all areas of our company. We strictly reject any form of child labor, forced labor, and discrimination and expect the same standards from our customers, suppliers, and business partners. Measures to promote human rights include raising employee awareness through anti-discrimination workshops and providing an anonymous whistleblowing system as a central point of contact.

As part of the supply chain due diligence working group, an initial risk analysis of the supply chain was conducted, which did not identify any critical suppliers.

## 18. Community

Through regular contributions to the community, we aim to support future viability through social engagement. Projects at our locations as well as initiatives led by our employees are a particular focus.

In 2025, we donated nearly €23,000 to sponsor and support schools and sports clubs.

## 19. Political Influence

Participation in regional and national associations enables us to actively exchange ideas with representatives from various industries.

Through our involvement in the working group of the Dialogue Platform for Recyclable Raw Materials (DPR), we aim to actively contribute to the development of new recycling approaches within the industry. By engaging in industry bodies such as FEhS or BDSV, we seek to actively influence the development of the sector and maintain dialogue with stakeholders.

Furthermore, the company refrains from political donations and similar contributions.

## 20. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

As early as 2024, a comprehensive compliance risk analysis was conducted, which did not identify any critical issues.

Recommendations for improvement and corresponding measures have now been defined and are being implemented by the respective departments. Beyond compliance with laws and regulations, we require transparency, integrity, and responsible adherence to the standards set out in our Code of Conduct from all employees – especially from our management. [NG1.1]

In this context, the Corporate Security Policy (CSP) was implemented in 2025. It is intended to ensure that, as a group of companies, we work closely together in an integrated manner to realize a closed material cycle. In addition, the CSP establishes a framework that managing directors must adhere to.

In response to current developments, an AI policy has also been developed to ensure the responsible and legally compliant use of artificial intelligence within the company.