

"It's in  
our hands."



## Dear readers,

The task we are facing could not be more of a challenge. Our economy and society require ecological modernization. And time is running out. This decade will be crucial. So we have no choice: We must make the years ahead the "roaring twenties" of sustainability and transformation.

Let us be open and honest when it comes to the magnitude of this task. Cosmetic changes will not be enough to achieve systematic change – and this will be necessary. We need profound, in some cases even radical, change. The strength required for this cannot come from just a few. We are convinced that we will have to activate the ideas and motivation of all our 11,494 employees worldwide if we are to make consistent advances in sustainability at Greiner and uphold our responsibility to society. In short, rethinking the status quo will take each and every one of us.

Given this, it is only logical to place our employees at the heart of the Greiner Sustainability Report 2020. The heading of this report has very deliberately been chosen as "If not us, who?". It is clear to us that nobody can do this for us. Only we can assume our responsibility. This report illustrates what we have already achieved, without ignoring areas where we have not been as successful as we wanted. "If not us, who?" also demonstrates our ambition to be a pioneer in our industry. Leading by example!

We must follow these words with actions. And so, even though the pandemic has demanded a lot of all of us, we put our sustainability measures to the test in 2020. The result of this is a fully revised sustainability strategy called Blue Plan. Blue Plan centers around three major topics: Climate protection, the transition to a circular economy and, naturally, our employees. We have set ambitious targets for all three areas.

2020 was a tumultuous year. It was no normal twelve months, a year that will be remembered. The pandemic turned all of our lives upside-down. It stretched us to our limits and provoked social and economic upheaval, which of course did not pass our company by. In Poland, Mexico and the Czech Republic, we lost four colleagues to Covid-19. This loss is hard to put into words. We send our deepest sympathy and condolences to the families and relatives of our late colleagues.



**Axel Kühner**  
CEO Greiner AG



**Hannes Moser**  
CFO Greiner AG

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**"We must take  
action today  
to guarantee  
a future worth  
living."**

**Christina Pammer (Greiner Bio-One)**  
Apprentice Plastics Engineering

All photographs within this report feature our people. They were taken across different locations. Local Covid-19 guidelines were adhered to during the taking of these images.



# 2020 – The world has been turned upside-down

2020 was a chaotic year. It was no normal twelve months but instead a year that we will all remember and that will change the world forever. Covid-19 stretched us all to our limits and provoked social and economic upheaval that has changed us permanently and in the long term. The coronavirus pandemic has turned everything on its head: Our way of life, our work, the role of governments and even our economy. What used to be standard practice no longer applies. What comes next is uncertain.

## A pandemic gets underway

Covid-19 had killed over 2.5 million people and infected more than 110 million worldwide by the end of 2020 alone, a sad and terrifying statistic. The pandemic showed us how vulnerable our global society is. At the same time, these exceptional circumstances have also demonstrated our innovative strength and resilience. One consistent fundamental idea also dominated the many-voiced, often contradictory analyses of the crisis: Covid-19 was not generally the cause of many developments, but instead reinforced existing trends, as it continues to do. It is plain to see that Covid-19 has increased the pace and momentum of digitalization and sustainability, to name just two areas of transformation.

## No role for borders

As paradoxical as this might at first seem given the travel restrictions and border closures, Covid-19 is causing a surge in globalization: For the first time in recent history, all countries and all societies on this planet have been confronted with the exact same challenge. Regardless of how different our countries, cultures, customs or religions may be, Covid-19 has vividly demonstrated the meaning of the abstract term "humanity". The pandemic does not recognize national or regional borders, affects all countries equally and shows how quickly a virus can spread in a globalized world and how vulnerable and dependent we are. In many places, Covid-19 is fanning the flames of humanitarian crises. Like never before, the global virus has shown us that no country can solve crises of this scale alone. In light of this, we too must play our part and help develop joint solutions, an insight that is also applicable to many other crises in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## An economy in crisis

The global health crisis has also prompted societies to reflect on humanity's relationship with the environment, as well as our actions in the economy and society. It is increasingly clear that the pandemic has its roots, in part, in an unsustainable economic model. Yet the nature of our global economy is also the cause of the drastic climate crisis. So it is with good reason that global efforts to tackle the pandemic are being proposed as a good example for how to address climate change. If we succeed in drawing the right conclusions from the pandemic, Covid-19 could act as a catalyst for climate justice and sustainability on a global scale. Seizing the crisis as an opportunity is therefore the message being spread by many experts. This is an important lesson for businesses as there is evidence that sustainable companies fare better in times of crisis, something that it is important – or better – will become even more important in the future.

Last year once again showed us that we have no time to waste. 2020 was one of the three warmest years since climate records began. The lesson we must learn from this? The pace at which Covid-19 vaccinations were developed must be extended to other areas that will be relevant to the world in the future, such as renewable energy, environmental and species protection and implementing the Paris Agreement and the UN *Sustainable Development Goals*. Radical change and transformation is required at an unprecedented pace. Force, determination and above all courage will determine whether we succeed in safeguarding the future.

There will be no vaccine for climate change. Change will be required at many different levels and in a wide range of areas. What has to be done is obvious and no longer a secret. We understand the actions and frameworks that are needed to tackle global warming and other environmental pandemics that destroy global habitats. The global economy has an obligation to implement and develop these. If we had needed any real-world proof that this sense of responsibility is felt in the upper echelons of global politics, the fact that rejoining the Paris Agreement was one of US President Joe Biden's first acts in office would have provided this. The United States rejoining the Paris Agreement reflects the realization that the climate crisis will determine the fate of humanity as a whole.

This decision by what is still the world's largest economy is the much needed good news that must now be continued and supported by actions. The expectations of revitalized international collaboration to address global challenges that came with the election of a new president in the US have been met. Yet this will not be enough. What we need is a global effort. The fact that China – the country that emits the most greenhouse gases worldwide – has also made

moves towards environmental protection makes us optimistic. Although China expands its renewable energy capacities each year more than any other nation, the country as a whole is still too reliant on harmful energy sources. Its announcement that it intends to be carbon neutral "before 2060" is another good signal in the right direction. The European Union has also set ambitious goals: By 2050, Europe wants to be the first carbon neutral continent to remove more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than it produces. In December 2020, EU member states agreed to reduce their net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 percent of 1990 levels by 2030. This marked a breakthrough that had seemed impossible until only recently. This was further evidence of our insight: The only way to overcome global challenges is together. No one is safe until everyone is safe. This applies to the climate crisis and to the pandemic alike.

### The crisis as an opportunity

Times of turbulence and upheaval are always interesting, challenging and rewarding periods. For the scientific and economic community, times of change open up great opportunities to do things differently and better, to abandon old approaches and aim for new and improved goals. Taking a crisis as an opportunity must not be merely hot air. The chance to take a crisis as an opportunity must not be missed. It goes without saying that, as a global company, Greiner has also been affected by the shock waves of the pandemic in a number of ways. Thanks to our diversity, the diversification of our products and markets, our love of development and innovative strength, however, we have several company mainstays that provide us with ample support even in tough times. This support allows us to direct all of our efforts towards the vital global transformation towards sustainable business practices.



"Only together can we overcome global challenges."

**Stefanie Painsith**  
(Greiner Technology & Innovation)  
Corporate Engineering

# Our Highlights



1

## Green electricity

We have used exclusively renewable electricity in our Austrian domestic market since 2020.

[Read more on page 124](#)

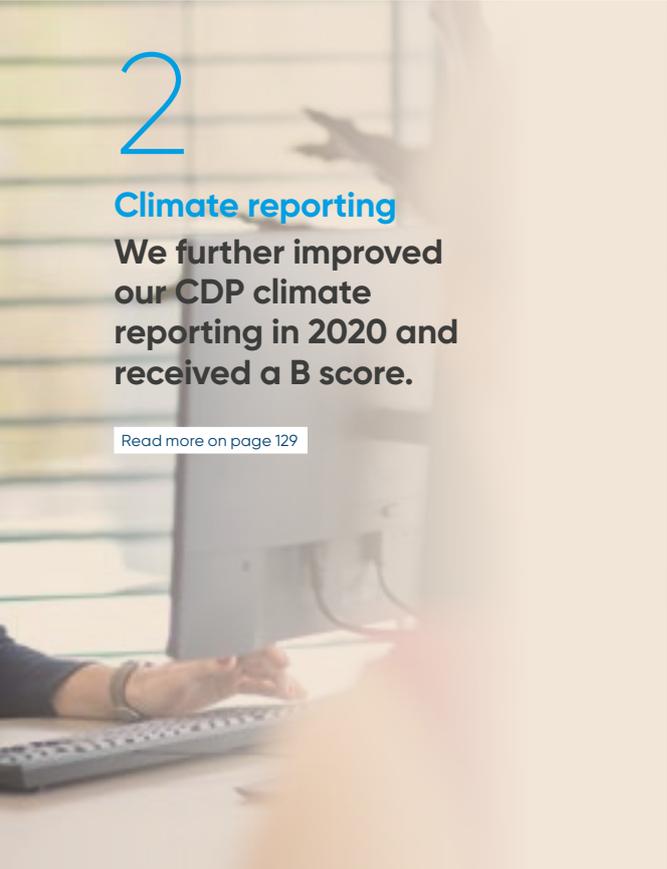


3

## Science Based Targets

We are committed to introducing *Science Based Targets* no later than 2023, allowing us to step up our climate protection efforts.

[Read more on page 128](#)

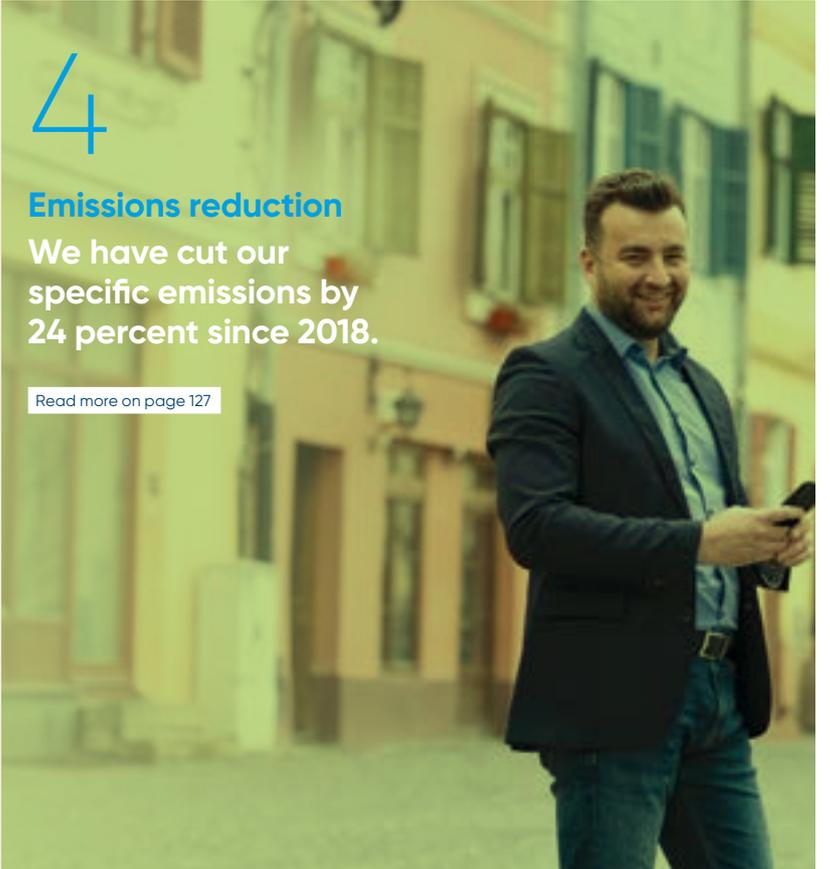


# 2

## Climate reporting

We further improved our CDP climate reporting in 2020 and received a B score.

[Read more on page 129](#)



# 4

## Emissions reduction

We have cut our specific emissions by 24 percent since 2018.

[Read more on page 127](#)



# 5

## Recyclability

We developed *Design-Guidelines* to ensure that our packaging can be recycled.

[Read more on page 153](#)

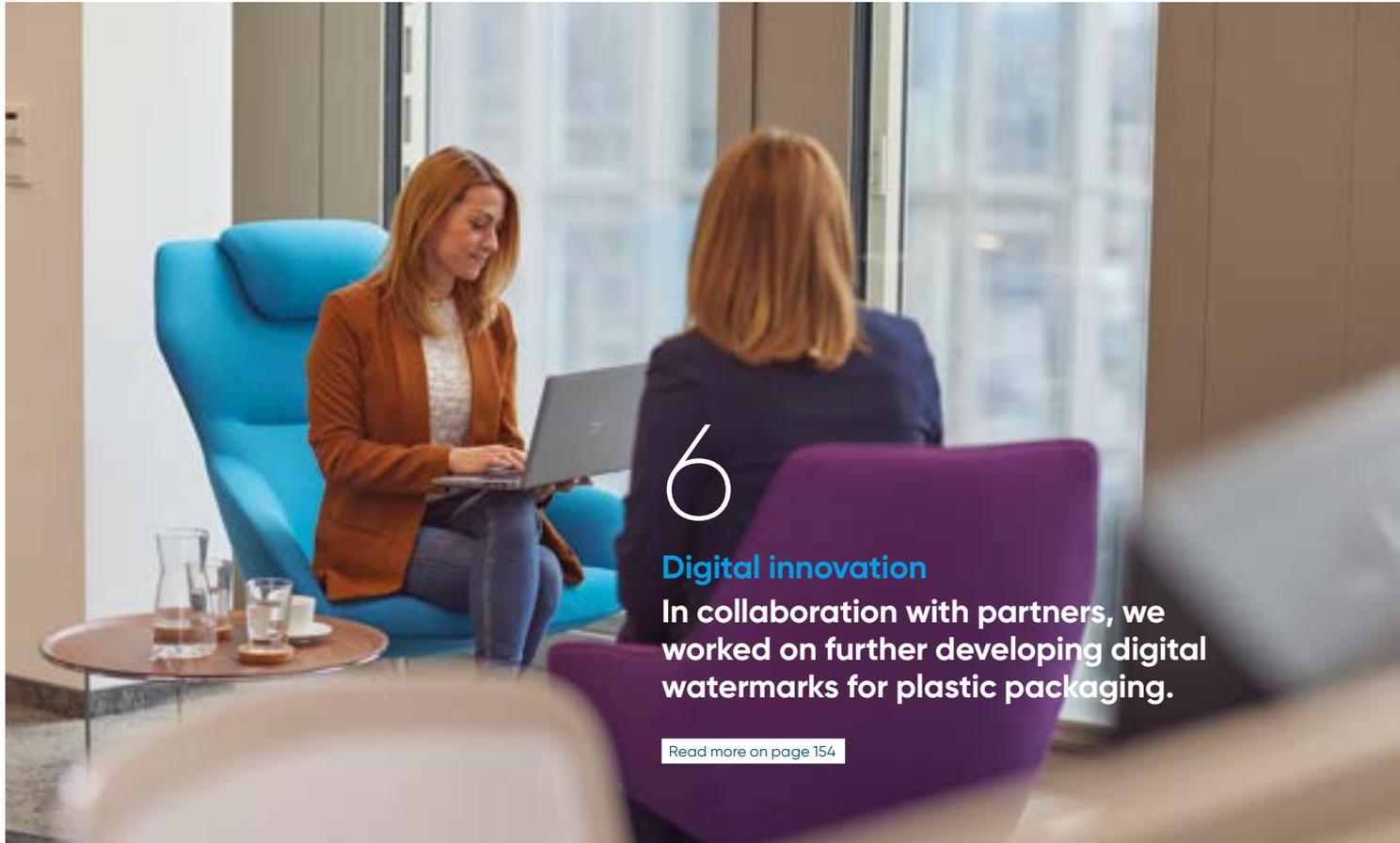


# 5

## Recyclability

We developed *Design-Guidelines* to ensure that our packaging can be recycled.

[Read more on page 153](#)



# 6

## Digital innovation

In collaboration with partners, we worked on further developing digital watermarks for plastic packaging.

[Read more on page 154](#)



# 7

## Product developments

We launched a range of innovative, refillable and reusable packaging solutions.

[Read more on pages 146 & 147](#)



# 9

## Social commitment

We established a partnership with the NGO *Viva con Agua* to improve the lives of people in southern Africa.

[Read more on page 113](#)



# 8

## Equality

We signed the *UN Women's Empowerment Principles* in 2020, a move that is intended to send out a message.

[Read more on page 100](#)



# 10

## New partnerships

We joined the *Alliance to End Plastic Waste* and are stepping up our efforts in the campaign against plastic in the environment.

[Read more on page 158](#)

