Vetter Pharma – CO_2-compensation through certificates | Corporate Clients

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CO_2 neutrality through compensation with the help of certificates1

Saving lives, while protecting the climate: Vetter achieves CO_2 neutrality

Vetter is one of the world's leading service providers for the pharmaceutical industry, specialising in the aseptic production and packaging of prefilled syringes and other injection systems for the treatment of multiple sclerosis, severe rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, and other illnesses. The contract development and manufacturing organisation (CDMO) supports drug manufacturers worldwide, from the early-stage development of new medicines to their global distribution. Vetter owns three production sites in and around Ravensburg/Germany, along with development sites in Austria and the US, together with sales offices in Singapore, Japan, South Korea and China. The family-owned CDMO currently employs around 5,700 staff, who actively contribute to the company's sustainable future. Vetter generated annual sales of 840 million euros in 2021.

CO_2 emissions – successfully combining reduction and offset

Vetter is a strong partner for global pharmaceutical and biotech companies, supporting them with the production of vital medicines. This production takes place in clean rooms, which require constant temperatures, humidity and positive pressure. However, balancing heating, cooling and pressure consumes a lot of energy – and leads to a large carbon footprint. Vetter therefore decided to make targeted investments in energy-efficient and environmentally friendly technologies, including solar, geothermal and biogas installations next to a combined heat and power (CHP) unit. These technologies have allowed Vetter to reduce emissions by more than 15,000 tonnes of CO_2 since 2014.

Although all measures to reduce emissions have been exhausted, they have not been enough to reach zero emissions in the energy-intensive pharmaceutical industry, which is strongly regulated for good reason. Vetter nevertheless reached climate neutrality – in close consultation with its core bank Commerzbank – by offsetting the remaining emissions with CO_2 certificates.

CO_2 certificates under recognised standards CDM and Verra

The majority of the certificates used have been of the CER (Certified Emission Reductions) type and issued under the UN-regulated Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Projects and certificates under the Verra Verified Carbon Standard have been used as well. Both standards ensure that compensation projects in fact work towards permanent CO_2 reduction that would otherwise not have been achieved. This is checked by independent third parties.

The projects behind the certificates usually also imply social benefits, for example, by creating new jobs or improving energy supply. The CDM, for example, targets emerging countries and supports them in their sustainable development.

Vetter's first compensation project, which the company has supported since 2020, is Guanacaste Wind Farm in Costa Rica. The wind farm consists of 55 wind turbines and contributes to a more climate-friendly energy supply in Costa Rica, whilst creating jobs. This project alone allowed Vetter to offset more than 15,000 tonnes of CO_2 emissions. Other certificates pertain to a wind farm in Mexico, a micro-hydropower plant in Nepal and solar power plants in Namibia.

The result

Offsetting CO_2 emissions through CO_2 certificates helped Vetter to achieve CO_2 neutrality at its German sites in 2020, and at all international sites and offices in 2021.

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