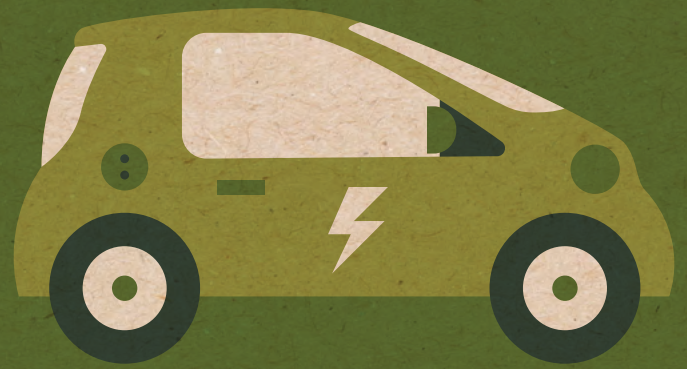


eurac
research

Eurac Research
Sustainability
Strategy 2025-2027

Eurac Research
Viale Druso/Drususallee 1
39100 Bolzano/Bozen, Italy
T +39 0471 055 055
sustainability@eurac.edu
<https://www.eurac.edu/en/mission-sustainability>

Edited by: Aureliano Piva, Sustainability Manager, Eurac Research

Content review: Sustainability Board (Head Office, HSE, Communication),
Eurac Research

Graphics: Eurac Research/ Chiara Mariz

Illustrations: Eurac Research/ Oscar Diodoro/ Silke De Vivo/ Chiara Mariz

Image editor: Eurac Research/ Annelie Bortolotti

Photos: Eurac Research/ Annelie Bortolotti

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**”
do research
for sustainable
development
in a sustainable
manner.
“**

1.

Executive summary

Eurac Research's **Sustainability Strategy 2025-2027** represents our commitment to sustainability across each of our institutional operations. As a prominent research institution in the Alpine region, Eurac Research recognizes its dual responsibility to serve as a catalyst for positive environmental and social change while demonstrating that research excellence and sustainable operations are mutually reinforcing. This Strategy positions sustainability as the framework that enhances the quality of our research through more efficient systems, interdisciplinary collaboration, and ethical practices.

With this aim we are determined to transform Eurac Research into a living laboratory for sustainability innovation, demonstrating how research institutions can lead by example while contributing to global sustainability goals. By developing sustainability, environmental responsibility, ethical integrity and scientific excellence grow together.

Our objectives

Environmental stewardship and climate action:

positioning Eurac Research as a low-carbon institution with low environmental impact

Operational efficiency and resource optimization:

create data-driven operational systems that maximize resource efficiency

Governance and strategic integration:

embed sustainability into all decision-making processes and organizational structures

Social responsibility and inclusive growth:

ensure Eurac Research operates as an inclusive, equitable organization with positive community impact

Innovation and knowledge leadership:

advance sustainability through research excellence and open science practices

Organizational culture and employee engagement:

foster a culture of sustainability where employees are active participants



Eurac Research Sustainability Strategy

THE PILLARS



PLANET

Environmental sustainability

Minimizing environmental impacts through efficient resource use, emission reduction, and renewable energy promotion



PEOPLE

Social sustainability

Creating inclusive, equitable environments that promote diversity, well-being, and community engagement



PROCESS

Governance sustainability

Ensuring ethical decision-making, transparent governance, and responsible resource allocation

GOVERNANCE

Sustainability Board
(Head Office + HSE + Communication)
Sustainability Manager
Specialized Task Forces

10 MATERIAL TOPICS

Energy
GHG emissions
Mobility
Waste

Employee health and well-being
Employment practices
Non-discrimination, diversity and equal opportunities

Sustainable management of the supply chain
Availability of research data for re-use in the future
Culture and governance

34 ACTIONS

MONITORING

Regular reporting

2.

Introduction

As a leading research institution in the heart of the Alpine region, Eurac Research recognizes both its responsibility and unique opportunity to serve as a catalyst for positive environmental and social change. The urgency of addressing global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and social inequality has never been more apparent, particularly in sensitive ecosystems like the Alps where the effects of climate warming and environmental degradation are magnified.

The development of Eurac Research's Sustainability Strategy emerged from a recognition that research institutions must lead by example, demonstrating that the pursuit of scientific excellence and sustainable operations are not only compatible but mutually reinforcing. As an organization that studies complex environmental and social systems, Eurac should align its internal practices with the sustainable solutions it develops for society.

This Strategy represents a paradigm shift from viewing sustainability as a social and environmental concept to embedding it as an organizing principle that influences our operations, research practices, and institutional culture. The approach recognizes that true sustainability requires systemic thinking which addresses the interconnections between environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and operational excellence.

The timing of this initiative reflects both the maturation of Eurac Research as an institution and the growing expectations from stakeholders including employees, funding bodies, research partners, and the broader community for research organizations to demonstrate accountability for their environmental and social impacts. Furthermore, the Strategy positions Eurac Research as an active innovator and living laboratory where sustainable practices can be tested, refined, and shared with the global research community.



3.

Our sustainability journey

Every strategy has a story, and ours begins with a journey of reflection and transformation. Understanding where we stand is essential to shaping the path ahead. This chapter traces the steps that have defined our approach to sustainability—how we interpreted its meaning, engaged with our community, and translated ambition into a plan.

Understanding sustainability

Our Sustainability Strategy is designed to influence the modalities and practices of research. This includes for example the design of our laboratories and offices, the ways we collaborate, travel, and share knowledge.

This approach recognizes that scientific inquiry thrives when researchers have the autonomy to pursue knowledge wherever it may lead. As such, sustainability enhances research excellence by:

Creating more efficient and resilient operational systems that support long-term research continuity.

Fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and systemic thinking that can enrich research approaches.

Developing sustainable research infrastructures that can be shared with the broader scientific community.

Establishing ethical and transparent practices that strengthen the credibility and impact of our research.

Eurac Research adopts a comprehensive definition of sustainability that aligns with established scientific frameworks, particularly drawing from the principle articulated by the Brundtland Commission and reinforced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

This definition extends beyond environmental concerns to encompass a holistic view of sustainability built upon three interconnected pillars that form the foundation of our strategic approach: planet, people and process.

Defining the Sustainability Strategy

The finalization of Eurac Research's Sustainability Strategy was the result of an articulated process that involved multiple phases and extensive stakeholder engagement.

Phase 1

Context analysis and system design

Analysis and assessment of the current management of our environmental, social, and governance issues to identify existing systems and practices, the network of stakeholders, internal structure, how to evaluate the relevant commitments, and, in general, pinpoint areas that require improvement to enhance sustainability.

Impacts assessment

Conducting workshops with 35 expert employees and 6 external experts to evaluate the identified impacts. Participants assessed the scale, scope, remediability, and likelihood of impacts in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) 2021 guidelines.



MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT

This initial phase examined the operational models in place, evaluating Eurac Research's sustainability performance whilst identifying impact areas to recognize both strengths and areas for improvement, and in defining strategic sustainability macro-areas. This phase also identified the scope and boundaries of our approach, as well as singling out the material topics. We were supported by a team of consultants who assisted us in this new path and brought in their specific knowledge and skills. This phase included the following steps:

1

2

3

4

Stakeholder engagement

Engaging with stakeholders, such as employees, institutions, suppliers, academia, and shareholders, to rank and suggest sustainability topics. Our partners include the Province of Bolzano, BOKU and the University of Innsbruck.

Material topic validation

This phase involved submitting the input from stakeholder consultations to the Sustainability Board for validation and prioritization in the Sustainability Strategy.

Phase 2

Consultation with collaborators

Eight workshops in which approximately 100 collaborators were invited to provide their insights and proposals for action and aimed at gathering diverse perspectives and first-hand experiences, as well as to ensure that the Sustainability Strategy is in alignment with collaborators' insights and suggestions.

Exchanges with owners

Consultations with experts. These consultations aimed to ensure that the proposed actions were feasible and in line with policies and practices.

**STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

This part of the process was designed to define a vision through an action plan that helps identify key performance indicators (KPIs), meta-objectives, and specific targets for each strategic macro-area. It also introduced governance to monitor progress, mitigate negative impacts, and enhance positive outcomes over the medium to long term. This involved defining the Sustainability Strategy, strategic lines of action, objectives, and performance indicators, as well as establishing governance and monitoring protocols.

5

6

Draft strategy

Refining the results of the workshops to ensure they were coherent and achievable and to make the proposed actions more practical and aligned with the overall Sustainability Strategy.

7

8

Approval of the Strategy

Final adjustments and approval of the Strategy. The Sustainability Board reviewed the proposed actions and ensured they were coherent, achievable, and aligned with Eurac Research's sustainability goals, before approving and adopting the Strategy.

Identification of the indicators

We pre-selected more than 50 GRI indicators that align with our goals and provide measurable outcomes to track our progress effectively.

Phase 3**REPORTING**

The aim of this ongoing phase will be to measure and communicate the advancement of our sustainability commitments with the standard approach of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

9**10****Sustainability reporting**

By leveraging selected indicators, we will publish a comprehensive periodic sustainability report. This report will detail the status, impacts, and progress of our Sustainability Strategy.

Alignment with the UN SDGs

Eurac Research's Sustainability Strategy is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is the world's most comprehensive framework for addressing global challenges and creating a more sustainable future. Our approach demonstrates that institutional sustainability, when implemented holistically, can contribute to the achievement of most SDGs.

By embedding the SDGs into our institutional practice, we want to translate the global sustainability agenda into concrete, measurable actions. Achieving the SDGs is not just the responsibility of governments and large corporations but requires the active participation of research institutions that can both model sustainable practices and generate the knowledge needed to accelerate global progress toward a sustainable future.

4.

The strategic objectives

Identifying strategic objectives is crucial in ensuring a responsible and impactful approach. By defining these objectives, Eurac Research will be able to systematically address the interconnected challenges of sustainability. The importance of these objectives lies in their ability to provide a clear direction, enabling us to focus on areas that have the most significant impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CLIMATE ACTION

Objective: position Eurac Research as a low carbon, low environmental impact leader

- Improving energy efficiency through building renovations, monitoring systems, and renewable energy production
- Establishing science-based greenhouse gas reduction targets with tracking systems
- Implementing circular economy principles through waste reduction, reuse, and repair
- Transitioning to sustainable mobility practices for both business travel and daily commuting

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Objective: foster an embedded culture of sustainability where employees are active participants

- Building awareness and competency through education and training
- Creating recognition systems that reward sustainable behaviors and best practices
- Foster transparent communication channels that keep collaborators informed and engaged
- Keep developing employee well-being programs that support both personal and professional sustainability

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCE OPTIMIZATION

Objective: create data-driven operational systems that maximize resource efficiency

- Developing integrated platforms for monitoring energy consumption and emissions
- Implementing comprehensive waste management that prioritizes prevention over disposal
- Establishing green standards for events, laboratories, and procurement processes
- Creating centralized coordination mechanisms for sustainable purchasing and resource sharing

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Objective: ensure we are an inclusive, equitable organization with positive community impact

- Valuing diversity and implementing equity and inclusion frameworks with proper support structures
- Creating professional development pathways that retain talent and promote internal growth
- Creating value for the territory and the wider community
- Ensuring fair employment practices and leadership development across all levels

INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE LEADERSHIP

Objective: advance sustainability through research excellence and open science practices

- Developing methodologies and tools for sustainability measurement and management
- Creating data management systems that enable research reuse and collaboration
- Establishing Eurac Research as a living laboratory for sustainability innovations
- Sharing knowledge and best practices with the broader research and sustainability communities

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC INTEGRATION

Objective: embed sustainability into decision-making processes and organizational structures

- Creating robust governance frameworks that ensure sustainability is factored in all major decisions
- Establishing cross-functional collaboration mechanisms
- Developing stakeholder engagement strategies that include both internal and external partners

5.

Our Sustainability Strategy

To move from ambition to impact, we needed a clear roadmap. This chapter introduces the structure of our Sustainability Strategy, detailing the pillars and material topics that shape our priorities. It explains how these elements translate into concrete actions, ensuring that sustainability becomes operational across Eurac Research.

The structure of our Sustainability Strategy is designed to provide a clear and comprehensive framework. The three foundational **pillars** represent the focus for our sustainability efforts, and align with our mission and vision, guiding our overall approach to sustainability:



Planet

Environmental sustainability:

Encompasses our responsibility to minimize negative environmental impacts through efficient resource use, greenhouse gas emission reduction, waste minimization, and the promotion of renewable energy sources. This pillar recognizes that environmental health is the foundation upon which all other sustainability efforts must be built.



People

Social sustainability:

Focuses on creating an inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment for all members of our community. This includes promoting diversity and equal opportunities, ensuring employee health and well-being, fostering professional development, and maintaining positive relationships with our local and global communities.



Process

Governance sustainability:

Encompasses sustainable business practices, ethical decision-making, transparent governance, responsible procurement, and the efficient allocation of resources. This pillar ensures that our operations are ethically sound and capable of supporting long-term institutional sustainability.

In addition, we have **10 material topics**, identified based on their significance to our organization and their impact on economy, environment, and society. These topics are linked to specific strategic objectives to ensure that we can make the most significant impact and are also aligned with the SDGs. They have been defined through an inclusive materiality assessment process involving stakeholders and collaborators to identify action areas and prioritize our efforts.

The foundation of the framework consists of specific initiatives and projects to address the material topics and our strategic goals. Each action is designed to tackle a particular problem. These actions are the operative core of the Strategy.

**PLANET**

Energy



GHG emissions



Mobility



Waste

PEOPLEEmployee health
and well-beingEmployment
practicesNon-discrimination,
diversity and equal
opportunities**PROCESS**Sustainable management
of the supply chainAvailability
of research data
for re-use in the futureCulture
and governance



Planet



1. Energy

An efficient and sustainable use of energy at every Eurac Research site through initiatives that improve and accelerate the transition to more efficient technologies aimed at reducing energy consumption and promoting renewable sources

INTELLIGENT ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Establish a digital hub that provides detailed energy consumption data and interactive dashboards. Use this platform and data to define energy management strategies to optimize the use of resources based on occupancy patterns, weather forecasts, and usage predictions. This could include automated controls, scheduling adjustments, or equipment optimization. Establish energy performance benchmarking or set efficiency targets.

BUILDING RETROFIT PROGRAM

Evaluate a retrofit program of the headquarters, which could include high-performance heating and cooling systems, ventilation and climate control infrastructure, room controllers, smart building integration, efficient lighting and renewable energy integration, ensuring optimal long-term performance.

SOLAR GREEN ROOF

Plan a solar green roof for our headquarters. This roof would ensure the optimization of energy production, create more insulation for the building as well as foster biodiversity. In addition, evaluate the possibility to integrate it with innovative solutions, like smart grid connectivity.





2. GHG emissions

Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions we create with our activities as well as those indirectly related to them such as emissions from our buildings, mobility, printing, ICT tools and commuting

CARBON MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

Complete and improve the development of a comprehensive carbon accounting platform. This will include a thorough methodology, data collection systems and a standardized database, as well as a tool to perform calculations, statistics and visualizations.

SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Implement a sustainable event management system covering catering, materials, waste, mobility, resources. Identify the events to start as pilot projects and possibilities for the application of external certifications.

SCIENCE-BASED

DECARBONIZATION PATHWAY

Develop and commit to validated 1.5°C-aligned science-based targets, establishing a comprehensive framework to reduce our carbon footprint across all institutes. This commitment could be undertaken through decarbonization roadmaps, specific emission reduction opportunities, implementation timelines, and investment requirements.

SUSTAINABLE LABS

Implement green standards for laboratories such as selecting energy-efficient equipment, sustainable laboratory practice training, waste minimization protocols, and green chemistry adoption. Other possibilities could be to establish: a lab sustainability champions network, equipment sharing platforms, performance monitoring dashboards and best practices.

F-GAS MANAGEMENT

Lay the foundation for improved management of F-gases by promoting consistent measurement practices, such as maintaining detailed inventories and tracking emissions. Evaluate options for suppliers to meet environmental expectations and service standards. Strengthen maintenance to support early detection and prevention of leaks. These efforts may support the development of practical guidelines and more effective long-term strategies.





3. Mobility

Encouraging the use of public and non-motorized transport and the avoidance of unnecessary journeys

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS TRIP PRIZE

Establish a reward system that incentivizes low-carbon business travel choices. Sustainable travel decisions, like choosing rail over short-haul flights, public transportation for long trips and meeting specific criteria could be converted into rewards.

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS TRAVEL GUIDELINES

Draft a set of business trip guidelines. Communicate them to promote change. Monitor how business trips are carried out. Evaluate additional possibilities for implementation of the guidelines.

INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Keep developing the mobility infrastructure: electrify fleet vehicles with smart charging infrastructure, expand bike-sharing program, install more EV charging stations for employee use, create multimodal transportation hubs, and develop mobility-as-a-service partnerships for occasional vehicle needs.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUTING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Evaluate the feasibility of developing and implementing a commuter benefit program that provides financial incentives for employees choosing sustainable transportation options or partial reimbursements for sustainable commuting expenses.

CAR-POOLING PLATFORM

Facilitate carpooling among staff enabling users to easily coordinate rides, share schedules, and communicate with each other. The goal is to enhance convenience as well as community, reduce transportation costs, and promote environmentally friendly commuting practices.





4. Waste

Ensuring responsible handling and proper disposal of waste, particularly unwanted and non-re-usable materials

ZERO WASTE PILOT PROGRAM

Implement comprehensive waste prevention strategies such as packaging-free products, reusable alternatives, digital-first documentation to build a replicable model for broader organizational adoption. Include a sensibilization campaign on waste impacts, reduction and reuse.

REPAIR CAFÉ

Organize tool libraries, skill-sharing workshops, partnerships with local repair specialists, and integration with educational programs. Consider services like electronics repair station or textile mending.

SHARING CORNER

Create digital or physical platform for products and material sharing or surplus exchange.





People





5. Employee health and well-being

Preventing physical and mental harm and promoting health and safety

REMOTE WORK WELLNESS

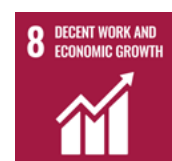
Develop comprehensive remote work support to include ergonomic assessments, mental health resources, digital wellness training, energy-efficient home office guidelines.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Evaluate the feasibility of introducing a leave permit allowing employees to dedicate volunteering time to recognized associations. This could establish partnerships with local environmental and social organizations, create team volunteer opportunities, provide skills-based volunteer matching, and track collective community impacts.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Design a communication strategy to improve the flow of information across Eurac Research. This includes both institutional communication such as operational updates, administrative notices, and housekeeping messages as well as more peer-to-peer exchanges that connect collaborators across departments. The goal is to ensure timely, accessible, and transparent communication and a centralized hub, enabling all staff to stay informed and engaged. Strengthening internal communication supports transparency, participation, and collaboration.





6. Employment practices

Creating and maintaining safe and inclusive employment by seeking top talents and retaining our current staff. Promoting a healthy work – life balance and new ways of smart working. Promoting of agile and goal-oriented approaches to work, enabling career development and training opportunities

REVIEW OF STAFF FRAMEWORK

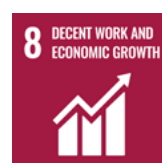
Redefine our staff framework to align it with evolving organizational needs and according to European standards to foster professional development pathways and create foundations for rethinking the current pay system. The framework revision aims to increase talent retention, employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

INTERNAL MOBILITY

Expand and actively communicate career advancement options, encompassing both vertical and horizontal mobility opportunities to increase talent retention, reduce turnover costs, and preserve institutional knowledge by making existing and new development options visible and accessible. This could include job rotation opportunities and mentorship programs. Regular talent reviews and personalized development planning are important aspects of this approach.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Implement development program for management that defines clear leadership expectations and cultivates essential competencies in interpersonal awareness, organizational effectiveness, and strategic communication to enhance management capabilities, establish well-defined accountability frameworks, and equip leaders to successfully develop, mentor, and empower their teams while advancing organizational sustainability objectives.





7. Non-discrimination, diversity and equal opportunities

Promoting diversity and equality by supporting equal opportunities and the fair treatment of everyone

CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT SERVICE

Evaluate the needs, the user groups and the possible modalities for improving and extending our confidential support services. These are aimed at offering a secure, accessible, and psychologically safe environment for all personnel, providing personalized guidance, safe reporting, mediation services, multilingual materials, and both physical and digital access points. This evaluation would help us reinforce inclusive organizational culture, proactively address systemic barriers, and enhance conflict resolution mechanisms.

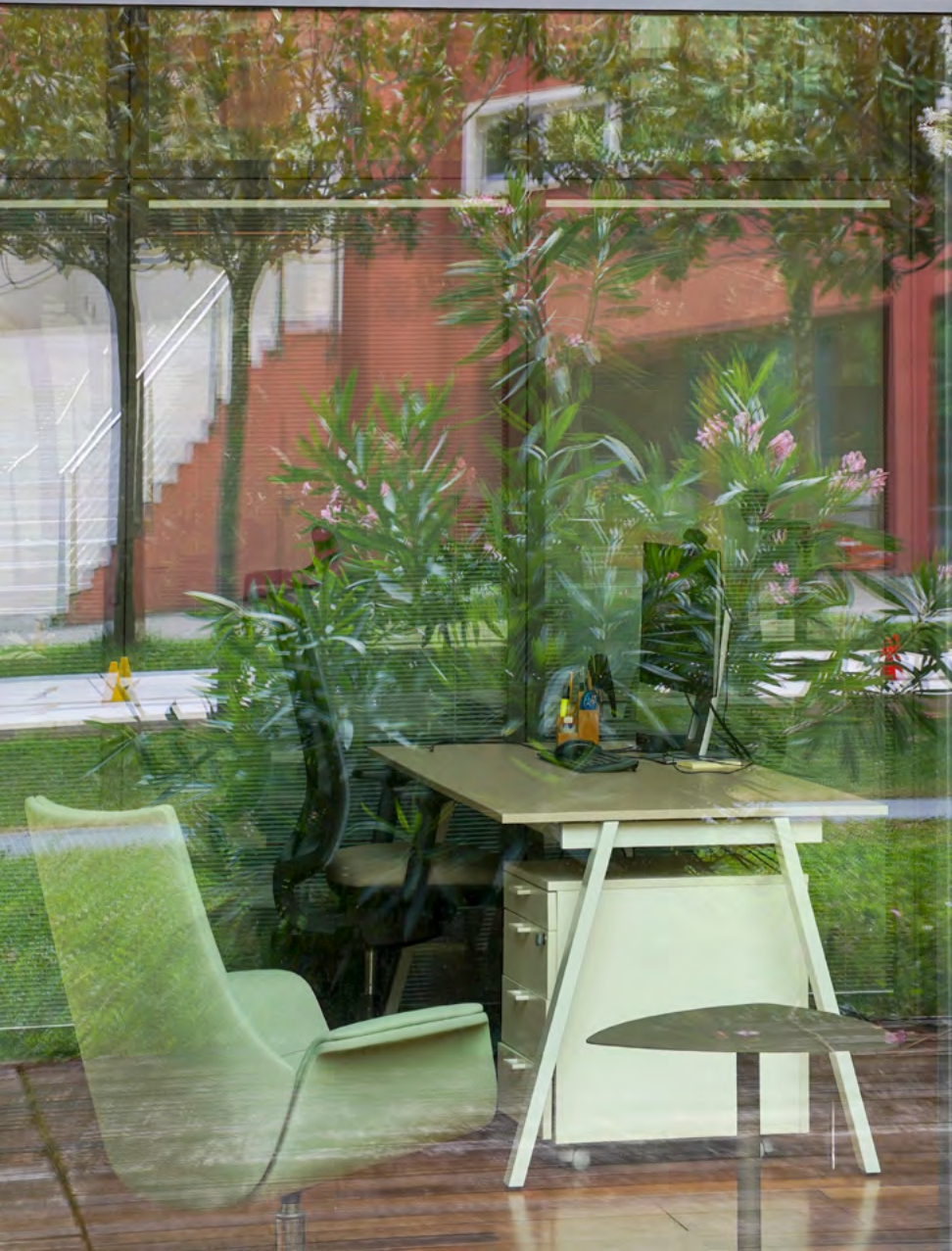
DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Implement a diversity curriculum designed to increase diversity awareness while equipping participants with practical management tools for creating inclusive environments. This training will target management personnel, outward-facing staff, and project leaders through learning tracks that address Eurac Research's multicultural research context. The curriculum could incorporate international research organization case studies, interactive workshops on bias mitigation, cross-cultural communication strategies, and inclusion metrics development.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

Implement a strategy across the entire communications ecosystem with clear standards for representing diversity in gender, age, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, and disciplinary perspectives. This would improve our digital presence, visual identity, institutional communications, research dissemination, as well as contribute to the implementation of our Gender Equality Plan.





Process





8. Sustainable management of the supply chain

Ensuring that sustainability is not limited to Eurac Research but is extended to suppliers by assessing the quality of their service, costs, technical support and social as well as environmental impacts

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES

Enhance our procurement guidelines with environmental and ethical criteria, incorporating practical examples, best practices, and step-by-step implementation of Minimum Environmental Criteria (CAMs). This framework will provide clear decision-making tools for procurement staff, highlight sustainable alternatives, take into consideration the lifecycle impacts of common purchases, and establish monitoring mechanisms to track sustainability performance across all procurement categories.

PROCUREMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Provide specialized training on sustainable procurement practices, life-cycle assessment tools, supplier evaluation methods, and circular economy principles. This could include certification programs, regular updates on emerging practices, and peer learning networks across departments.

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT NETWORK

To foster greater coordination across departments, a forum focused on embedding sustainability into procurement activities will be established. This initiative would raise awareness of the environmental and ethical implications of purchasing decisions, promote the exchange of experiences and best practices, and support the documentation and sharing of institutional know-how. This could include the identification of product categories and specific items that are well-suited for testing shared purchasing procedures, revealing practical and technical challenges as well as best practices.





9. Availability of research data for re-use in the future

Supporting the preservation of all research data to accelerate the development of existing as well as new solutions and to facilitate discovery and dissemination of research data with Open Science

OPEN RESEARCH AWARD

Continue and strengthen the biennial Open Research Award with a renewed focus on excellence in data management. The award celebrates individuals or teams at Eurac Research who demonstrate outstanding practices in making research data FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable). By recognizing these efforts, the initiative aims to raise awareness of the value of open data, encourage transparent and responsible data handling, and promote a culture of participation and knowledge sharing across the organization. It would also create awareness of the value of our data and the importance of proper management to ensure long-term data use. The award could also serve as a platform to surface and disseminate best practices and inspire others.

RESOURCE DATA AND SOURCE CODE MANAGEMENT

In alignment with the Eurac Research Data and Source Code Management Policy, each Institute and Center would develop a tailored policy to ensure consistent, transparent, and responsible handling of research data and source code, in line with FAIR principles. This individualized yet coordinated approach would allow for flexibility based on disciplinary needs, approaches and standards, while fostering internal alignment and interoperability. The process encourages institutes with similar data types and practices to co-develop shared frameworks. The goal is to promote a culture of openness, ensure long-term data reusability, avoid data loss and guarantee high quality research data, source code and research software.

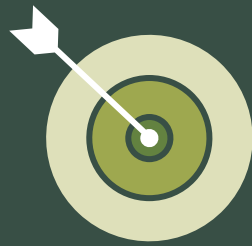
TRAINING AND AWARENESS ON RESEARCH DATA AND SOURCE CODE MANAGEMENT

Offer targeted tutoring in research data and source code management to strengthen internal competencies and foster a culture of responsible data handling. Inform researchers on training opportunities and the latest developments in research data and source code management. By promoting continuous learning and peer exchange, the aim is to ensure that all of our researchers develop a solid and consistent level of knowledge in data and code management to ensure long-term use of Eurac Research data.

EURAC RESEARCH METADATA CATALOGUE

Develop a shared metadata catalogue as a step toward integrated data management across all Institutes and Centers. This centralized catalogue would collect metadata from local repositories, enabling better documentation, discoverability, and reuse of research outputs. This increases the visibility of all data produced at Eurac Research, favoring sharing and collaboration between institutes and centers. The initiative would lay the groundwork for a more connected, durable/sustainable and accessible research data ecosystem at Eurac Research whilst taking into account interoperable metadata standards, automated harvesting systems, unified search capabilities, and data preservation protocols.





10. Culture and governance

Enabling our employees to act responsibly, think systemically and behave mindfully while committing to the shared goal of strengthening a culture of sustainability. Building effective governance processes, that allow us to steer the activities, involving relevant actors and quickly responding to risks and opportunities

STEERING SUSTAINABILITY: ESTABLISH A GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Effectively guide all sustainability initiatives with a governance structure which includes task forces with clear tasks and responsibilities. Foster ownership of sustainability practices among staff by highlighting their positive impact on work life and organizational culture. Ensure sustainability considerations are integrated into decision-making processes at all levels. Actively engage across institutes and cultivate relationships with external stakeholders. Internally, nurture a sustainability-focused culture that reinforces governance principles and practices. Externally, develop a network of strategic partners and stakeholders who provide critical feedback and support ongoing efforts. Establish procedures for periodic strategy reviews and updates to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABILITY

Develop a user-friendly sustainability section on our website that serves as both an informational resource and a transparency tool. This digital hub will showcase current sustainability initiatives, highlight ongoing activities, and document our progress journey. The platform will feature interactive elements to engage visitors, including data visualizations of key performance indicators, downloadable sustainability reports, and regularly updated metrics on environmental, social, and governance impacts. The hub structure could serve multiple stakeholders – providing technical data for partners and regulators, educational content for the general public, and inspiration for other organizations and would include success stories, challenges, and lessons learned. Regular content updates ensure the hub remains current, relevant, and effectively communicates our evolving Sustainability Strategy.





6.

Governance **and monitoring**

Effective governance and monitoring are fundamental to the success of our Sustainability Strategy. Governance is necessary to ensure that our sustainability initiatives are aligned with our organizational goals and values. This means refining policies, procedures, and roles that guide our actions. Effective governance structures promote transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in our sustainability efforts. This includes engaging with stakeholders, setting clear objectives, and defining mechanisms for reporting and evaluation. Governance ensures that sustainability is integrated into every aspect of our operations, fostering a culture of ethical practices.

Monitoring and evaluation are equally critical components. They enable us to track our progress, measure the impact of initiatives, and identify areas for improvement. Through systematic monitoring, we can ensure that we are on track to achieve our sustainability goals and make data-driven decisions. This process involves the collection and analysis of relevant data, the use of key performance indicators (KPIs), and regular reporting.

Sustainability governance framework

The governance structure for sustainability at Eurac Research continues to evolve to meet emerging needs and challenges thanks to our Sustainability Board, which was established as part of our initial governance framework. This Board brings together the director, vice-director, and president of Eurac Research who provide strategic oversight and institutional commitment, the Communication Department who ensures alignment with the communication activities as well as the Health, Safety, and Environment Department (HSE), which houses the sustainability management function, to ensure operational integration.

The Sustainability Board serves as the primary decision-making body for sustainability matters, providing strategic direction and validating key initiatives throughout the implementation process. The Board actively supports the sustainability management team in their operational activities.

The sustainability management team operates with autonomy in executing day-to-day sustainability operations and making routine decisions. However, regular communication with the Sustainability Board is maintained through reporting sessions at least three times per year, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives.

As our Sustainability Strategy increases in complexity and scope of actions, the governance framework will expand to include dedicated task forces responsible for delivering specific sustainability initiatives. These specialized groups will be composed of different Eurac Research experts, ensuring diverse perspectives and cross-departmental knowledge sharing.

Each task force will have:

- **Clear mandates defining their specific responsibilities and deliverables**
- **Regular meeting schedules to maintain momentum and coordination**
- **Sustainability Board reporting mechanisms for communicating progress and strategic alignment**

This expanded structure will provide several operational advantages, including greater involvement and participation, enhanced awareness of sustainability initiatives throughout different departments, more efficient feedback mechanisms between operational levels and strategic leadership, and improved understanding of department-specific functions and their sustainability implications. Additionally, the task forces would foster increased coordination within Eurac Research, cultivating a greater sense of belonging and participation in the life and decisions of the organization. This governance structure remains deliberately flexible, allowing for adjustments and refinements and as new challenges and opportunities emerge in the sustainability landscape. The long-term purpose is to integrate sustainability concerns at all levels of decision-making.

Monitoring and evaluation

Effective measurement and evaluation are fundamental to the success of our Sustainability Strategy. Eurac Research is developing a monitoring system based on internationally recognized standards to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability

Our monitoring approach is based on a pre-selection of more than 50 indicators proposed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) indicators, chosen to reflect our specific sustainability priorities and organizational context (see Appendix 1). These indicators provide a structured framework for data collection, analysis, and reporting across all sustainability dimensions.

To ensure transparency and stakeholder engagement, we will publish sustainability reports on a regular basis, aligned with our Sustainability Strategy. These reports will serve also as a communication tool, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability both within the organization and to external stakeholders, including the broader research community, funding bodies, and the public.

The monitoring system is complemented by a continuous feedback mechanism embedded within our governance structure. Regular reports from the sustainability manager to the Sustainability Board provide ongoing assessment of strategy implementation, highlighting successful initiatives and identifying areas where adjustments may be needed, allowing the Board to understand what approaches are working effectively and which require modification or strategic realignment.

This will ensure that our Sustainability Strategy remains dynamic and responsive to both internal developments and external changes in the sustainability landscape. Through systematic evaluation, we can continuously refine our approaches and enhance the effectiveness of our sustainability initiatives for continuous improvement and organizational learning.

Appendix 1: Preliminary indicators

The following list presents the outcome of the initial selection of indicators for Eurac Research's sustainability reporting. These indicators are intended to reflect all material topics identified in our strategy. Based on data availability and other relevant considerations, we provisionally plan to gather information for each indicator.

GRI disclosure	Title
Disclosure 2-1	Organizational details
Disclosure 2-2	Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting
Disclosure 2-3	Reporting period, frequency and contact point
Disclosure 2-4	Restatements of information
Disclosure 2-5	External assurance
Disclosure 2-6	Activities, value chain and other business relationships
Disclosure 2-7	Employees
Disclosure 2-8	Workers who are not employees
Disclosure 2-9	Governance structure and composition
Disclosure 2-10	Nomination and selection of the highest governance body
Disclosure 2-11	Chair of the highest governance body
Disclosure 2-12	Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts
Disclosure 2-13	Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts
Disclosure 2-14	Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting
Disclosure 2-15	Conflicts of interest
Disclosure 2-16	Communication of critical concerns
Disclosure 2-17	Collective knowledge of the highest governance body
Disclosure 2-18	Evaluation of the performance of the highest governance body
Disclosure 2-19	Remuneration policies
Disclosure 2-20	Process to determine remuneration
Disclosure 2-21	Annual total compensation ratio
Disclosure 2-22	Statement on sustainable development strategy

Disclosure 2-23	Policy commitments
Disclosure 2-24	Embedding policy commitments
Disclosure 2-25	Processes to remediate negative impacts
Disclosure 2-26	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns
Disclosure 2-27	Compliance with laws and regulations
Disclosure 2-28	Membership associations
Disclosure 2-29	Approach to stakeholder engagement
Disclosure 2-30	Collective bargaining agreements
Disclosure 3-1	Process to determine material topics
Disclosure 3-2	List of material topics
Disclosure 3-3	Management of material topics
Disclosure 305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions
Disclosure 305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions
Disclosure 305-3	Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions
Disclosure 302-1	Energy consumption within the organization
Disclosure 302-3	Energy intensity
Disclosure 302-4	Reduction of energy consumption
Disclosure 306-3	Waste generated
Disclosure 306-4	Waste diverted from disposal
Disclosure 306-5	Waste directed to disposal
Disclosure 401-1	New employee hires and employee turnover
Disclosure 401-2	List of benefits
Disclosure 404-1	Average hours of training per year per employee
Disclosure 404-3	Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews
Disclosure 405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees
Disclosure 405-2	Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men
Disclosure 406-1	Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken
Disclosure 403-9	Work-related injuries
Disclosure 403-10	Work-related ill health
Disclosure 308-1	New suppliers that were screened using environmental criteria
Disclosure 414-1	New suppliers that were screened using social criteria
Disclosure 205-3	Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken
Disclosure 304-1	Operational sites owned, leased, managed in, or adjacent to, protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value outside protected areas
Disclosure 413-1	Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs

Eurac Research
Viale Druso/Drususallee 1
39100 Bolzano/Bozen, Italy
T +39 0471 055 055
info@eurac.edu
www.eurac.edu