



# UN Global Compact

**Fifth progress report from VS.  
March 2014.**



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Fifth progress report from VS  
(Communication on Progress / COP)

Vereinigte Spezialmöbelfabriken GmbH & Co. KG  
Tauberbischofsheim  
March 2014

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# Declaration of support for the UN Global Compact

Dear VS employees and stakeholders in  
VS Vereinigte Spezialmöbelfabriken GmbH & Co. KG,

VS presents its fifth annual Communication on Progress since it joined the United Nations Global Compact on September 22, 2008.

Even though our company has only one production site, in Tauberbischofsheim, and a high proportion of value creation within the corporation by comparison with the German manufacturing industry, and in total we record fewer supplies from abroad – especially from distant countries – we nevertheless recognize the growing importance of global corporate responsibility. This is why we take as our yardstick the ten Global Compact principles and support their implementation worldwide.

For this reason we decided last year to extend significantly the existing guidelines for our supplier companies. In essence, we now require of our suppliers that they too make Global Compact principles their standard. If this was practised by all companies all over the world, global industry would not just produce useful goods and create employment but it would also make a significant contribution to the survival of our planet for future generations, to observance of human rights everywhere, to eliminating corruption and preventing violent conflict.

The new guidelines for supplier companies are presented here in this report in their entirety. By signing the Code, our suppliers commit themselves to compliance. Our buyers are instructed to monitor compliance. As at present this is only practicable for companies with a larger scope of supply, not all suppliers are included in this process, only those companies who account for a total of 80 per cent of all supplies.

Last year we also decided to introduce an energy management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 50001. This enables us to comprehensively document the procurement, distribution and consumption of energy and create a basis for recognising and realising our potential for energy conservation.

In addition, we received an all-encompassing sustainability certificate based on the concept and standards set out by BIFMA, the trade association of US furniture manufacturers. It captures the life cycle of our products. 7 product groups of chairs, tables and carcass furniture with 52 ranges of models have been certificated according to this norm.

In implementing our climate goal we achieved onward progress in 2013. By actualising a cogeneration unit in that year by which we are able to make better use of our waste wood and decrease our consumption of oil and gas, we are confident we shall be able to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in relation to sales volume by 30% by 2015, in comparison with 2008.



VS's operating result for the reporting year has proved stable. And in view of the difficulties experienced by many schools and office furniture companies in achieving their previous year's level this is not to be taken for granted. We were able to even out the fluctuations in individual market segments and in total increase sales somewhat compared to plan.

During the reporting year, VS completed its preparations to offer customers a Collection created with internationally renowned architect, Richard J. Neutra, for the lounge areas and central zones in office furnishing. We are thereby able for the first time to tryout the household furniture market.

It is important to stress the fact that the percentage of people with disabilities employed at VS in relation to the full workforce remains unchanged. At 10 per cent it is much higher than the 4 per cent in the private business sector as a whole.

I am especially pleased that we have further increased the number and percentage of apprentices in the workforce.

Finally I would like to thank our employees who are committed to social, aid and development projects in the spirit of the Global Compact, whether it be the flood disaster over the whole of Central Europe in May/June this year, schools furniture donation for children with severe intellectual impairment in Moldova or boards for a school in Haiti rebuilt after the earthquake disaster.

VS will continue to support the principles of the UN Global Compact and implement them within its sphere of influence.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Müller  
Managing Partner





Works 1 with its characteristic shed roof

VS Personnel and sales development at a glance

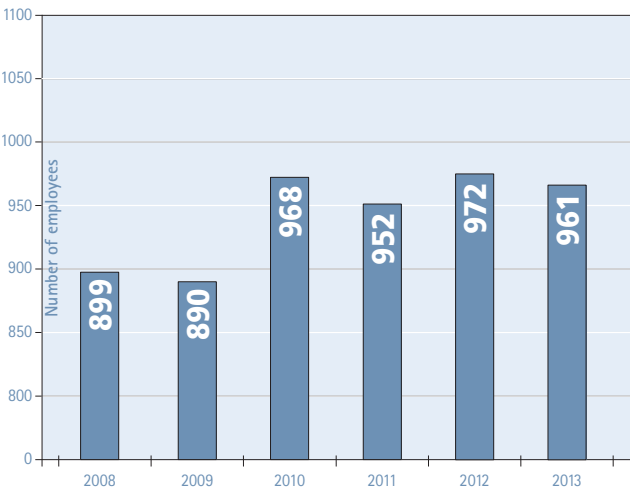


Fig. 1: Staff development at VS (parent company) as at 1.1. of this year

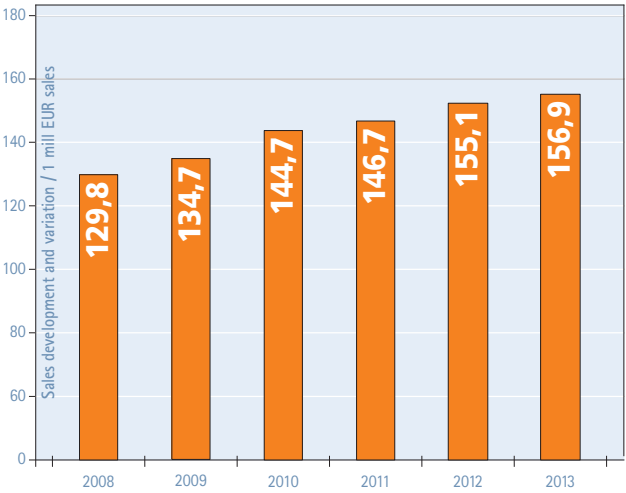


Fig. 2: Sales development at VS (parent company)





# Human rights and VS

## I.1 Goals

The protection and promotion of human rights within the framework of its sphere of influence are integral to VS's corporate strategy. We are guided by the International Human Rights Charter that comprises the 1948 "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and the International Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Covenants of 1966. These human rights standards are enshrined in German law. In accordance with the Charter, we acknowledge the universality and indivisibility of human rights. We include in our sphere of influence not just our core business at our production site in Tauberbischofsheim in Germany, our German branches and our subsidiaries in the USA, France and Sharjah (UAE) but also our supply chain. Furthermore, we refuse to be directly or indirectly complicit in any abuse of human rights at any location where we are nurturing business relationships.

### Prinzipien des UNGC

- 1. Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and
- 2. make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

## I.2 Measures and results

In the reporting year, the VS management decided on new guidelines for supplier companies. They follow the principles of the UN Global Compact. The protection of human rights is one of the requirements contained therein. The guidelines are being presented successively to old and new supplier companies for signing. VS is particularly concerned to ensure that supplier companies in countries where there is lower protection of human rights sign up to the guidelines. By signing, companies commit themselves to compliance with the code of conduct. VS's buyers are instructed to monitor compliance with the code of behaviour. These companies represent around 80% of the supply volume. No control of the standards takes place with companies with smaller supply volumes. For the time being they are exempt from signing the guidelines. You can read the guidelines in the Appendix to this report.

At VS, international discussion on human rights and companies continues to be followed with interest. In 2013, VS representatives also took part in human rights events with civil society organisations and within the framework of the German UN Global Compact network.

At VS we can proceed from the assumption that within our direct sphere of influence, human rights standards are strictly upheld. This is based on the fact that a high percentage of our entire value creation is accounted for by production at the Tauberbischofsheim site and that a large part of our supplies come from companies in Germany or Central Europe where strict statutory provisions are in place and observed.

# Social standards and VS

## II.1 Goals

It goes without saying that our business policy at VS is based on acknowledgement of employee participation in the management policies of the company. Employee participation is a prerequisite for ensuring that staff identify with the goals of the company, develop a vested interest in its success, and assume a sense of responsibility for the company in good times and bad. Codetermination does not work without freedom of association. Irrespective of the existing laws in Germany, at VS the right to bargain collectively, refusal to be associated with forced labour and child labour and conscious discrimination against employees are implicit in how we do business. VS also expects this of its supplier companies.

Even in Germany in the area of discrimination there are areas of weakness and learning processes that need to take place. VS is fundamentally receptive to and actively participates in such change. The relevant subject areas include in particular gender equality, and the elimination of discrimination based on religion, origin (migrant background employees), culture, age or sexual orientation. From the outset VS does not regard a physical or mental handicap to be a hindrance to employment. In point of fact, VS tries to integrate as many people with disabilities as possible into the company.

### Principles of the UNGC

- 3. Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- 4. the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor
- 5. the effective abolition of child labor and
- 6. the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

## II.2 Measures and results

The guidelines for supplier companies introduced in the reporting year requires them to: comply with ILO Core Labour Standards, especially with regard to child labour, free choice of occupation, freedom of association and the right of employees to form workers' representation, to carry out collective bargaining and to ban discrimination. In addition, wages and social benefits of supplier companies must enable employees to lead a life of human dignity and workplaces must comply with internationally recognized health & safety standards. People with disabilities should be particularly supported.

The principles of VS's business policy are reflected in the following social structural features:

### Participation by women

The number of employees decreased slightly in 2013 to 961. Of those 62% were industrial employees. The gender distribution amongst employees in total remained stable. The percentage of women in relation to the workforce rose by one percentage point to 12.9%. However, the number of full-time female employees rose markedly by just on 20%. The percentage of part-time female employees of the female employee total was unchanged at 42% but showed a slight decline in comparison with 47% in the year 2012.

The reasons for the structural features amongst employees have remained the same. Employees at VS come for the most part from the surrounding rural area populated mainly by families in which the women run the household and bring up the children, while the men work for wages and salaries. Accordingly, the number of male job applicants outnumbers the number of female applicants by a ratio of more than ten to one. That is why the total percentage of women employed at VS, especially those doing industrial work and working shifts, is comparatively low.



VS's industrial training centre (teamwork /wood technicians)

### Participation by people with disabilities

The percentage of staff with disabilities in relation to the entire workforce has risen significantly in past years. In 2006 the quota was still 8.3%. Since 2011 it has been more than 10%, in 2013 at 10.12%. Thus the percentage of severely disabled staff at VS in relation to the entire workforce is double the legally prescribed percentage of 5%. In comparison with the private business sector this is outstanding. Private industry employs an average of only 4% disabled people. With 6.5%, public service exceeds the obligatory quota; the percentage of disabled employees as part of the total workforce is 4.6%. (cf. Publikation Aktion Mensch – Inklusionsbarometer Arbeit 2013, page 6)

In detail and on average 98 people with disabilities and equivalent persons were employed at VS in 2013. 67 employees are severely disabled with a disability of at least 50%. Because of the severity of their disability three of those are entitled to more than that number of compulsory places. Another three do not have parity notification as they work part-time for fewer than 18 hours a week. 31 employees have parity with a disabled person, i.e. their disability is at least 30% up to a maximum of 49%. Another four employees have a disability of 30% but without parity notification (cannot be counted against the compensatory charge).

Workforce on 31.12.2011	Gender	Part-time	Full-time	Total
Office	M	2	256	258
	F	40	49	89
Total office		42	305	347
Industrial	M	10	566	576
	F	5	24	29
Total industrial		15	590	605
Total		57	895	952

Workforce on 31.12.2012	Gender	Part-time	Full-time	Total
Office	M	3	266	269
	F	41	46	87
Total office		44	312	356
Industrial	M	12	577	589
	F	4	23	27
Total industrial		16	600	616
Total		60	912	972

Workforce on 31.12.2013	Gender	Part-time	Full-time	Total
Office	M	3	267	270
	F	40	55	95
Total office		43	322	365
Industrial	M	12	555	567
	F	4	25	29
Total industrial		16	580	596
Total		59	902	961

Fig. 3: Gender distribution amongst employees at VS 2011-2013



The following measures led to this result:

- An 'Integration Agreement' was signed on 20 December 2000 between the management, the VS representative for the severely disabled, the VS appointee to represent the severely disabled and the works council.
- With regard to the filling of job vacancies, together with the employment agency or integration services VS first checks to see if these positions can be filled by persons with severe disabilities.
- All severely disabled job applicants who are qualified in their field will be invited for a job interview.
- The works council and the representative for the severely disabled are informed about job applications from persons with severe disabilities and take part in the decision process within the framework of the legal requirements.
- Since 2006 there has been only one incident where, with the approval of the Office for Integration of the Municipal Association for Youth and Social Affairs, an employee was discharged for conduct reasons.
- Prevention discussions and in-house integration management (§ 84 SGB IX) are conducted in the event of persons being absent for more than six weeks per year.
- The representative for the severely disabled and the company doctor work in close cooperation.
- VS attaches great importance to training and qualification within the company, so that employees can be deployed as flexibly as possible. This also helps to ensure the employees job security.

Workforce on 31.12.2013	Gender	Without GdB	With GdB 30%	With GdB of 50% or more	Total
Office	M	260	4	6	270
	F	91	0	4	95
Total office		351	4	10	365
Industrial	M	489	23	55	567
	F	24	2	3	29
Total industrial		513	25	58	596
Total		864	29	68	961

Fig. 4: Allocation of employed people with disabilities at VS

Employment with the company

The long average period of employment with the company rose in 2013, in comparison with 2012, to over 17 years. This underlines the high level of corporate identity that staff have at VS. Even women stay with the company for a long period although their average age is lower than that of male employees.

Year	Sales
2000	97.627 €
2007	125.036 €
2008	124.613 €
2009	168.757 €
2010	310.126 €
2011	299.390 €
2012	258.959 €
2013	282.908 €

Fig. 5: VS volume of orders to sheltered workshops

Employment with the company

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Workforce on 31.12.2012	Gender	Average age	Average period of employment
Office	M	44,24	16,70
	F	42,07	15,40
Total office		43,71	16,38
Industrial	M	44,37	17,12
	F	40,85	12,67
Total industrial		44,21	16,92
Total		44,03	16,72

Workforce on 31.12.2012	Gender	Average age	Average period of employment
Office	M	44,49	17,55
	F	41,57	15,06
Total office		43,73	16,90
Industrial	M	44,60	17,75
	F	41,31	12,28
Total industrial		44,44	17,48
Total		44,17	17,26

Fig. 6: Average age and average period of employment

Staff development – education & training

VS attaches great importance to professional development. VS's objective of "challenging and promoting" underscores the functions of training and further training within professional development.

Training is ongoing at VS in industrial, technical and commercial areas. In addition to dual vocational training, VS has also worked cooperatively and successfully with Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW) at college-level education for more than 20 years. Training is arranged according to need. The aim is to offer apprentices in dual training and graduates from the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University a workplace at the end of their training or period of study. Above and beyond industrial training, VS also enjoys educational partnerships with regional schools in the area. The aims are amongst other things, support for the transition between school and training, course of studies and employment as well as improvement in training maturity and ability of students to train and study.

At present, VS has 47 trainees and DHBW students (in 2011 and 2012 there were 42 each year). The percentage of office trainees and DHBW students in relation to the whole workforce is 4.8% (5.76% in 2012); the percentage of industrial and technical trainees is 4.1% of permanent industrial staff (4.37% in 2012). VS trains staff in the following occupations and courses of study:

Wood machining, industrial machining, warehouse logistics, industrial business management, technical product design, IT specialist, DHBW / Wood Technology, DHBW / Business I.T., DHBW / International Business, DHBW / Industry, DHBW / Mechanical Engineering. In 2013 once again a variety of training measures were carried out within the company's further training programme.



Photovoltaic system on the roofs at VS (Works 1)



Wood shavings silo at VS

## VS and environment / climate protection

### III.1 Goals

The management at VS is convinced that conservation of resources and climate protection are a part of economic activity.

#### Principles of the UNGC

- 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges**
- 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility and**
- 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environment-friendly technologies.**

The main objectives of VS's environmental policy include minimizing the environmental impact in the supply chain and at the production site in Tauberbischofsheim and being able to offer our customers products which have been made in the most environment-friendly way possible. VS also endeavours to minimize the environmental impact of waste disposal.

Environmental policy is therefore an essential element of VS's corporate strategy. In-house environment protection is thus integral to all company areas and processes. Our aim is to achieve long-term, sustainable, integrated results through individual measures – often irrational in terms of economic and business reason – and without making a great fuss about it.

Since joining the UN Global Compact, VS has set itself a climate target. By 2015 the company's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in relation to sales are to drop by 30%.

Commitment to the natural environment at VS means:

- Protecting the environment, our employees and our customers by avoiding harmful effects in the production, use and disposal of our products
- Eliminating or minimizing emissions and waste
- Using the smallest amounts possible of the natural resources of water, soil and air
- Using energy and materials in an economical way in all areas of production (recycling)
- Promoting the use of regenerative energy
- Exceptionally long-lasting VS products, an environment oriented choice of materials and recyclable, modular designs for VS products

In line with the aforementioned principles, VS operates an environment management system that is integrated into its business activity. In 2013 VS maintained the introduction of a comprehensive sustainability certificate based on the concept and standards set up by BIFMA, the U.S. "Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association". In the reporting year it was also decided to introduce an energy management system. By these means we can ensure a continuous improvement process for environment protection.

Our environment protection system performance is documented by certification in accordance with the provisions of DIN EN ISO 14001 and since October 2013 most VS products have received certification in accordance with BIFMA sustainability standards. Certification for the energy management system is scheduled for 2015.

### VS's climate goal.

**VS has set itself the goal of reducing the company's CO<sub>2</sub> consumption in relation to revenues by 30% in the period from 2008 (VS became a signatory of the UNGC) to 2015. This goal will be achieved primarily through the use of renewable energies generated by VS itself: the burning of wood shavings and the deployment of photovoltaic system on VS rooftops. Should revenues drop off markedly during this time, the goal might not be achieved due to a core amount of CO<sub>2</sub> consumption which is independent of revenues.**

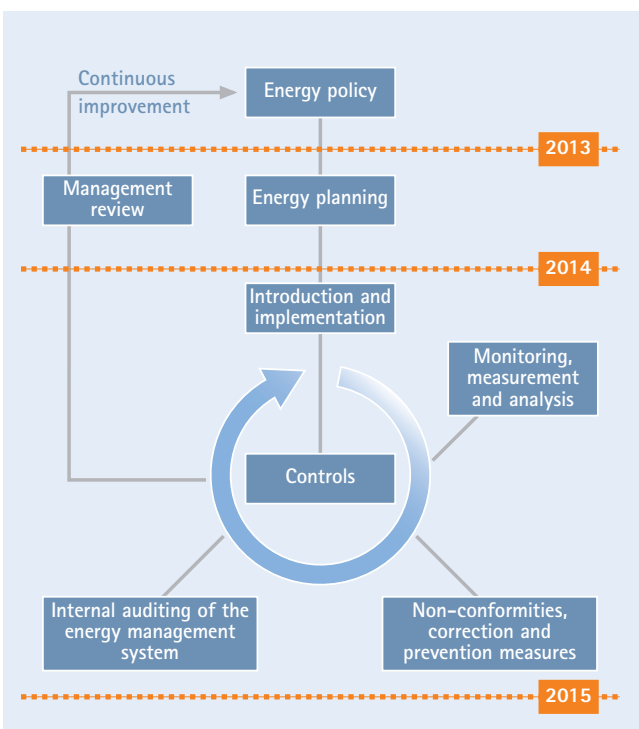


Fig. 7: The model used for the norm of an energy management system

### III.2 Measures and results

#### III.2.1 Introduction of an energy management system

In the reporting year VS was resolved to introduce an energy management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 50001. By this means we want to document fully the production, distribution and consumption of energies and to pinpoint energy improvement potential.

With the aid of this management system energy-related performance can be improved by:

- maximizing the supply and production of energy
- taking into account the energy efficiency of production sites in provisioning and in operation
- using energy economically in all manufacturing areas
- promoting the use of regenerative energies
- reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

Moreover VS can also demonstrate its competitiveness from this point of view.

The introduction is taking place in a number of steps. The aim is certification in 2015. See Fig. 7 for the schedule for implementation in the existing management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 9001 and DIN EN ISO 14001.



**III.2.2 BIFMA sustainability standard for furniture**

In 2008, the trade association of American furniture manufacturers, BIFMA (Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association) introduced guidelines for the sustainability of office furniture. This standard takes into account choice of materials, effects on the environment, harm to man and the environment and also social responsibility:

- **Materials:** Choice of materials is already taken into account in the company environment policy and includes sustainability aspects such as climate neutrality, recyclability, recycling percentage, efficiency of material use and the lifecycle of the material.
- **Energy and atmosphere:** The environmental impact of processes and products is calculated according to consumption of grey energy, greenhouse gas emissions and transport volume.
- **Human health and the eco-system:** All the chemicals supplied for materials, processes and products are listed. These are compared to appendices of standards that include risky chemicals. Dangerous waste products and emissions in the air and in water are also taken into account.
- **Social responsibility:** Industrial safety and human rights, company safety and health management as well as inclusion and local social engagement are aspects of corporate responsibility and are also appraised along the supply chain.

VS has implemented these guidelines for seven product groups with 52 ranges of models of chairs, tables and carcass furniture. In October 2013 VS received a gold BIFMA certificate for these products.

**III.2.3 European Timber Regulation (EUTR)**

The European Timber Regulation (EUTR) based on EU Timber Regulation Nr. 995/2010 has applied since March 2013. The aim of the regulation is to ensure that only timber from secure sources is circulating within Europe. Placing illegally harvested timber on the market is prohibited. Importers of timber and timber products must exercise due diligence and register with the Federal Office for Agriculture & Food (BLE). VS has established due diligence by means of operating instructions (see wording in the Appendix to this report) and registered at the BLE on 28. 8. 2013.

**III.2.4 Guidelines for supplier companies**

The recently introduced guidelines for suppliers (see Sections I, II and Appendix) in respect of environment protection include: maintaining nationally valid guidelines and laws, definition of their own environment goals as part of their business principles, the introduction of an environment management system, if not already in place, and environment friendly production and environment friendly products including eco-friendly packaging. The products supplied must be free from harmful substances.

III.2.5 Energy consumption

Apart from its own production of renewable energy, VS sets great store by energy savings and increasing energy efficiency. In previous annual reports (COP), we reported the introduction of energy-saving lighting concepts, energy savings on colour powder-coating for manufactured furniture, energy-efficient furniture and production of table tops made from LIGNOdur, a recycled material. The result of all these measures was that relative energy consumption in relation to production volumes and sales was significantly reduced.

In comparison with previous years the percentage of gas as an energy source decreased by an average of 20%. This is due in particular to the installation in 2012 of a long-distance heating pipe that came into operation in 2013, the heat for which is produced by incinerating wood shavings. This means that the percentage of energy produced by shavings incineration has risen. This helps with VS's CO<sub>2</sub> balance as shavings show a significantly more favourable CO<sub>2</sub> conversion factor than gas (see also III. 2.2. Renewable energy waste wood).

In 2013 there was a slight rise in energy consumption (cf. the following illustrations). This was due to the erection of a highly automated carcass furniture final assembly unit with attached shipping hall.

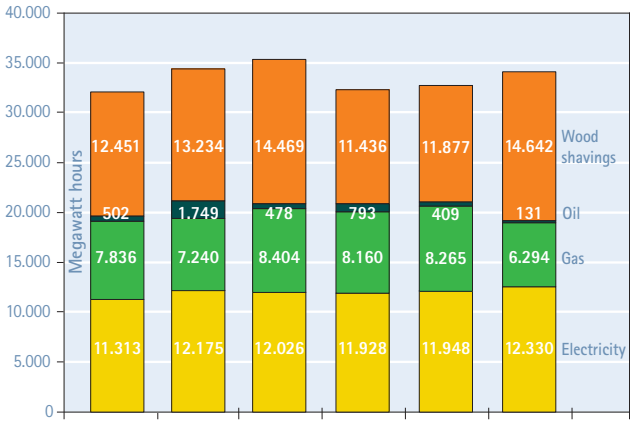


Fig. 8: Total consumption by energy type

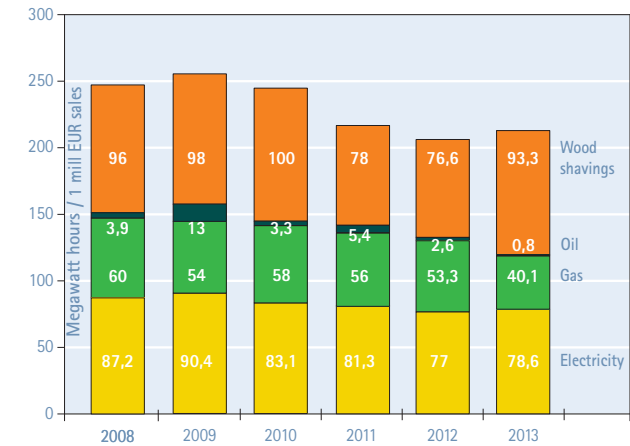
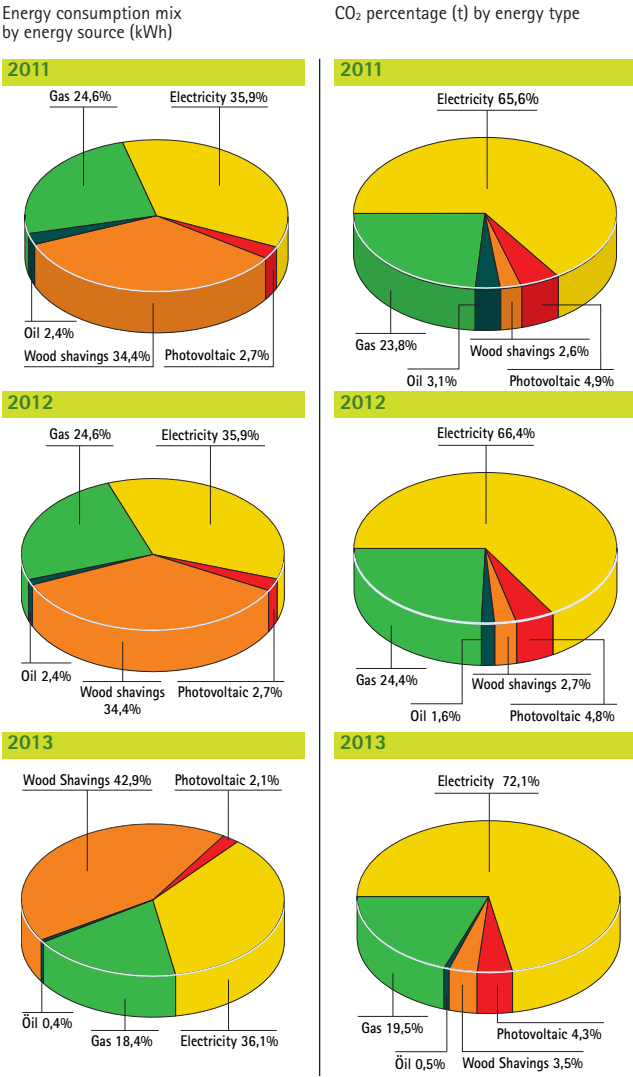


Fig. 9: Relative energy consumption at VS by energy type

Fig. 10: Development of percentages of the energy sources consumed at VS 2011-2013



**Conversions in CO<sub>2</sub> values:**  
For the Fig. 9 CO<sub>2</sub> values the same conversion factors (CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents) have been used for every energy source so that values can be compared. The high CO<sub>2</sub> efficiency of wood shavings shown there is significant.

**Commentary on 2011:**  
The extremely hot period in 2011 compared with 2010 resulted in a lower heat requirement, which became noticeable above all from the reduced consumption of energy generated from shavings. (Monthly comparison Jan. 2011 4°C, May 2011 3°C & Dec. 2011 7°C warmer than 2010.)

**Commentary on 2012:**  
No tangible changes in comparison with 2011. We had plenty of wood shavings available so relative to 2011 about 400,000 kWh of energy was produced by using wood shavings instead of heating oil.

**Commentary on 2013:**  
By installing a long-distance heating pipe the production of heat by means of wood shavings incineration was boosted further and our gas consumption reduced by about 2,000 MWh. The average outdoor temperature in the hot period was only 0.5°C below the value of 2012 and thus had hardly any influence on heat energy consumption.

**Prognosis for the following years**  
In the year 2014 there will be significant changes at VS which allow to only a limited degree the kinds of comparisons listed so far. First, in respect of energy production, a cogeneration unit is to be installed in the fourth quarter of 2014 which will enable VS to produce its own electricity. It will be powered by gas. This will bring about an increase in gas consumption. With a cogeneration unit we shall achieve improved efficiency in comparison with procuring electricity externally because waste heat can be used for production. Also the CO<sub>2</sub> output will be reduced in comparison with an external electricity supply. Second, in respect of consumption, a new assembly plant is to be erected that will contribute to a rise in our total energy consumption as this implies a heat increase in the converted space.



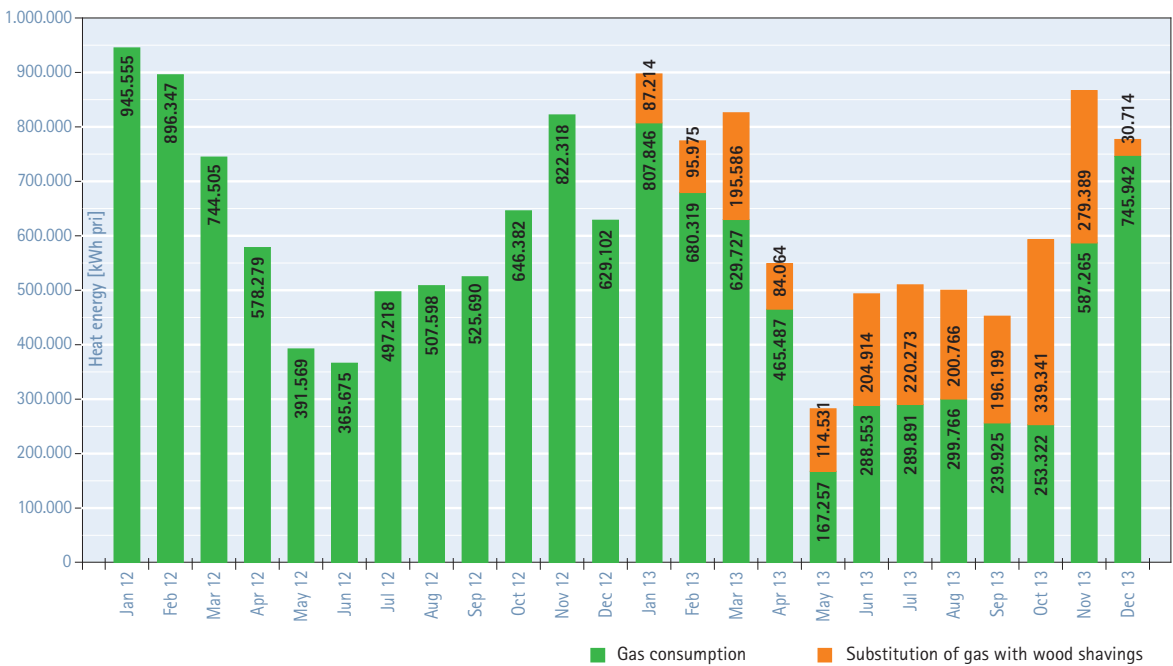


Fig. 13: Substitution of gas with wood shavings

III.2.6 Renewable energies

Photovoltaic

Since 2001 electricity has been generated by photovoltaic installations on the works roofs. Compared to 2012 the annual yield from the photovoltaic system of 872 MWh was not achieved. This is because in 2013 the hours of sunshine were significantly fewer than in previous years.

Year	System size summation	Annual yield summation	Hours of sunshine	CO <sub>2</sub> savings
2001	486 KWp	416 MWh	1.672 h	181 t/a
2010	935 KWp	515 MWh	1.551 h	225 t/a
2011	935 KWp	881 MWh	1.926 h	385 t/a
2012	935 KWp	872 MWh	1.874 h	381 t/a
2013	935 KWp	730 MWh	1.511 h	319 t/a

Fig. 11: Photovoltaic system on the roofs at VS and CO<sub>2</sub> savings

Waste wood

The largest percentage of renewable energy produced by VS comes from utilizing waste wood, especially wood shavings, for general heating and hot water.

CO<sub>2</sub> savings from using wood shavings are shown in the following table.

Year	Year	CO <sub>2</sub> savings [t/a]
1. Savings on heating oil by using wood shavings	up till 2012	3.120
2. Savings on gas by using wood shavings	from 2013	438
Total of 1 + 2 Savings by using wood shavings	from 2013	3.558

Fig. 12: CO<sub>2</sub> savings in tons per year at VS by using wood shavings instead of heating oil or gas.

In determining CO<sub>2</sub> savings we had to take into account the fact that wood shavings demonstrate a far more favourable CO<sub>2</sub> balance than oil or natural gas. By installing a long-distance pipe for producing heat from wood shavings in 2012 which came into operation in 2013, gas consumption for heat production was even further reduced. Energy from the long-distance heating pipe is sourced from incineration of wood shavings.

Fig. 13 shows the heat energy requirement in boiler house 3 was still completely covered by gas as its energy source (orange bar) until 2012. From 2013 heat energy from the long-distance heating pipe was fed in (green bar). In total around 2,000 MWh of gas could be replaced with regenerative energy sources.

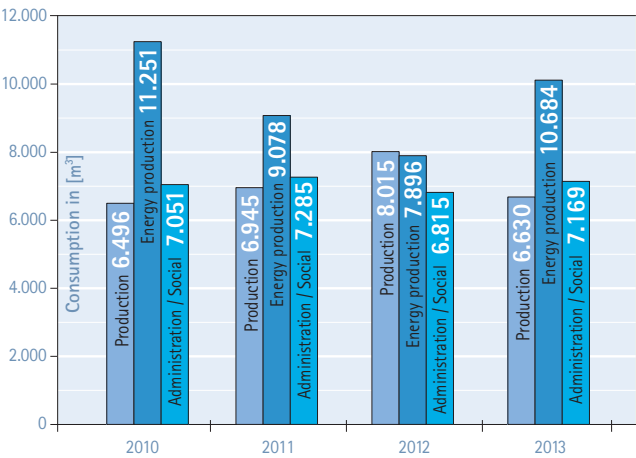


Fig. 15: Water consumption

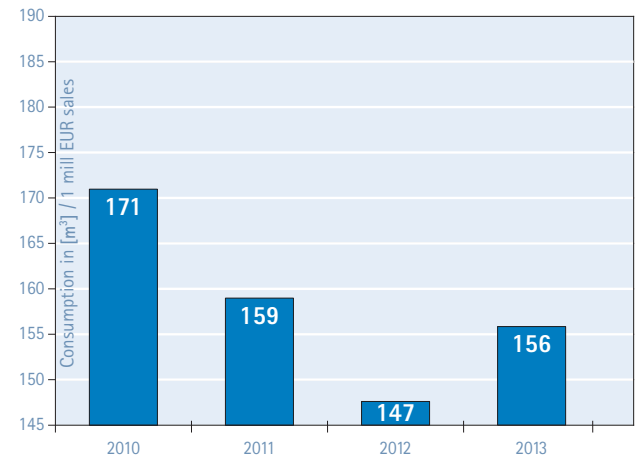


Fig. 16: Relative water consumption

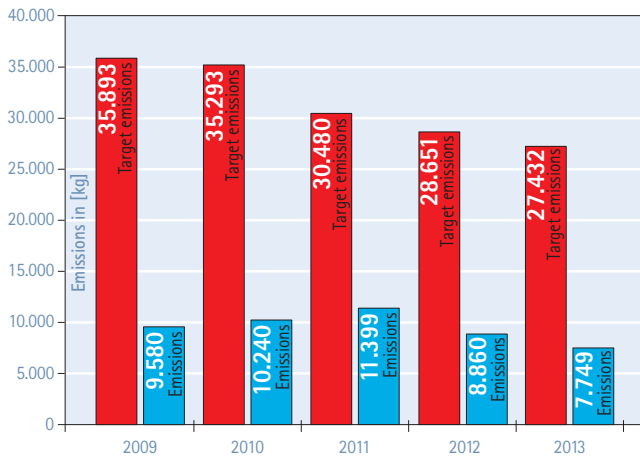


Fig. 17: Lösemittelanteil bei den Holzlacken

### III.2.7 Realisierung des Klimaziels von VS

Um die Klimawirkungen der Energiemaßnahmen zu verdeutlichen und vergleichbar zu machen, eignet sich die Kennzahl CO<sub>2</sub> Emissionen im Verhältnis zum Produktionsvolumen bzw. Umsatz. Die CO<sub>2</sub>-Emissionen bei VS konnten von 54 t pro eine Million Euro Umsatz im Jahr 2008 (Jahr der Teilnahme am UNGC) auf 44 t im vergangenen Jahr reduziert werden (siehe nachstehende Tabelle).

Year	T CO <sub>2</sub> per 1 mill EUR sales	Reduction in % taking 2008 as the base year
2008	54	
2009	56	+4%
2010	51	-6%
2011	49	-9%
2012	46	-15%
2013	44	-19%

Fig. 14: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in relation to sales

### III.2.8 Water consumption

Water consumption, which rose over a number of years up to 2009 in line with sales volumes, decreased between 2009 and 2012 by 20%. This is because of savings measures and the use of rainwater as service water for cleaning purposes and flushing toilets. A further saving in the paint shop was reported in the 2011 COP. On the whole consumption data in production and administration / social areas have remained more or less the same. Last year there was a significant increase in water consumption for energy production in the form of hot water vapour. This correlates with usage rate of LIGNOdur table top production and the recently installed long-distance heating pipe, the main consumers of hot water vapour. (Number of LIGNOdur tops manufactured: 2010: 268,000, 2011: 227,000, 2012: 163,000, 2013: 205,100.)

### III.2.9 Solvents consumption and VOC percentage

VS uses environment-friendly, water-based lacquer systems. VS's lacquer systems are subject to the 31st Federal Emission Control Act (Solvents Regulation). The aim of this regulation is to limit the use of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VS has used water-based lacquer systems for 15 years now and was one of the first furniture companies to do so. These contain only 6% of volatile solvents (VOCs) compared with 70% in traditional systems (containing solvents). VS products fall well short of the prescribed limits.

In the following figure the red bar shows the emission for solvents calculated for each year using traditional systems based on the total amount of lacquer consumption. The actual solvents emission at VS (blue bar) is much smaller. It decreased in the reporting year by 13% compared with 2012 and by 32% as opposed to 2011.

### Prognosis

The climate target that VS set itself for 2015, to emit 30% less CO<sub>2</sub> in relation to volume of production (sales) has not yet been achieved. However, by installing a cogeneration unit, VS will be in the future in a position to produce a considerable percentage of the electricity it needs itself and use the heat thus obtained for the required process energy. By this means it is certain that VS can reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the future. On the other hand, because of the new building (Works 6, Assembly unit) VS's total energy consumption will rise. To what extent the targeted CO<sub>2</sub> reduction can be achieved cannot be gauged at present.





Fig. 18: BIFMA certificate



Fig. 19: PEFC certificate

# Certificates

## IV.1 BIFMA certificate

The certificates are the result of extensive data gathering that, as examples, are included in our environment product information (31400 PantoSwing-LuPo in the appendix to this report). For more information about our BIFMA level certified products please go to [www.levelcertified.org](http://www.levelcertified.org).

## IV.2 PEFC wood certificate

Forests are crucial for life and survival on our planet. They are the lungs of the earth, vital carbon dioxide sinks and therefore of great significance for climate protection. At the same time they are also energy reservoirs as CO<sub>2</sub> is photosynthesized and stored as carbon in wood. Forests offer the largest possible variety of resources for bio-diversity but also not least wood for furniture-making. Thus to a great and increasing degree our forests are in need of protection. While most industrial countries recognize the need to preserve our forests and manage them sustainably, in the developing world forests are often under threat.

Overexploitation and above all the destruction of rain forests continue apace. Furniture manufacturers are therefore required to make their contribution to preservation of the forests tangible: we have to provide evidence for the sustainability of our products. That means we have to ensure our timber and timber-based materials come from sustainably managed forest lands.

VS decided on the PEFC certificate. It stands for "Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes". PEFC is the largest global organisation for timber certification. Its guidelines are:

- Mixed plantings of local types of trees are to be maintained and developed,
- Clear cutting must be avoided,
- An optimum deadwood supply is to be maintained,
- When using machines it is very important to conserve the forest floor.
- The use of pesticides is to be avoided (a certificate is required),
- It is of vital importance to respect protected biotopes and protect endangered animal and plant species.

VS advises its suppliers of wood and wood-based materials to adopt PEFC certification. The rival certificate, the FSC, is also acceptable. In the meantime, to a large extent our purchasing parts are verified by the PEFC standard.

In the year 2013/2014 VS has made provision for its own products to acquire PEFC certification. Through chain of custody certification it will be possible to follow the timber flow throughout the entire production process from the certified forest through to timber processing and manufacturing right down to the finished product. This ensures that the timber flow in the manufacturing chain can be verified in its entirety.

## IV.3 Other certificates

- VS's environment management system is certified in accordance with DIN EN ISO 14001. Certification is monitored regularly.
- Since July 2011 VS has been an "Authorized Economic Operator" (AEO). A company is awarded this status if it fulfils certain requirements as a world trader. VS has fulfilled all requirements especially in customs simplification and is thus entitled to use the AEO C designation. The C stands for customs simplification.
- All materials used by VS are subject to LGA (Bavarian State Trade Agency) **pollutant-testing certification**. The requirements are essentially the same as those for the "Blue Angel" system (RAL-ZU 38).

The following points show that our requirements exceed those stipulated by the certification process:

- Once a year we monitor our manufacturing site,
- There are regular product controls within the framework of a monitoring agreement,
- For example, our threshold limit value for formaldehyde emission is 0.05 ppm (the legal limit for formaldehyde release is 0.1 ppm).
- All VS furniture carries the Greenguard – Indoor Air Quality certificate.



This means customers are supported in attaining LEED certification for their buildings.



Fig. 20: Nest-box production



Fig. 21: VS's market garden

# Zero tolerance of corruption at VS

## V.1 Goals

At VS anti-corruption is standard and binding in accordance with the requirements laid down by the UN Convention against Corruption, the Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development's (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery and by "Transparency International", a non-government organization.

### Principles of the UNGC

**10: Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.**

## V.2 Measures and results

In 2004 the VS management agreed on a ruling according to which employees in sales can only claim small amounts as expenses for customer support. Independent distributors of VS furniture are also required not to acquire orders and contacts through bribery. VS cannot, however, monitor whether distributors in individual instances are involved in bribery in the course of their business transactions. If such instances become known, there will be a dialogue to review the business relationship with the aim of eliminating such practices. There have not been any complaints within the period under review. The recently introduced guidelines for supplier companies require them not to tolerate corruption. Suppliers must ensure that VS employees are not offered any advantages aimed at gaining orders or any other type of business preferences. Accordingly invitations and gifts for VS employees may only be warranted if the occasion and scale are appropriate, i.e. they are inexpensive and considered compatible with general local business practices.

VS also expects its suppliers to behave fairly towards its competitors and observe the prevailing anti-trust laws. They must not take part in agreements in violation of anti-trust laws nor abuse any market dominant position that may exist.

VS also expects its suppliers to observe the applicable statutory regulations on money laundering prevention and not to participate in financial transactions that support money laundering either directly or indirectly.

# CSR Engagement

## VI.1 VS school boards to Haiti

On January 12, 2010 an earthquake hit Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world. Large areas of the country collapsed, hundreds of thousands of people had to leave their lives under the rubble of the disaster. In Carrefour, one of the most badly affected suburbs of the capital, Port au Prince, "Taubertäler Hilfsgemeinschaft e.V.", a humanitarian organisation, carried out the rebuilding of a school that had been completely destroyed. By October 2011 the new "Luzia Academy" was ready to be officially opened. About 400 children now go to the "Luzia Academy" for their lessons every day.

VS took part in this aid project with a donation of school boards. Eight high-quality boards made their way by shipping container to the Haitian capital. According to Jürgen Schmitt, the chairman of the Taubertäler Hilfsgemeinschaft e.V. the gift was spot-on: "Up till that point because there were no boards, they were writing on the wall or on to a simple piece of board. Lessons at the 'Luzia Academy' were of a completely different quality once the VS boards were in place."

## VI.2 School furniture donation in Moldova

The many-times Olympic champion and world champion in fencing from Tauberbischofsheim, Alexander Pusch, and VS employee, Hermann Braun, started a collaboration with the "Foundation UNESCO Education for Children in Need", to donate VS school furniture for 300 children with severe intellectual impairments in the Moldovian city of Orhei. Since the end of October 2013 the new school furniture has contributed to improvements in classroom conditions and to integrating children with impairments into their social environment.

## VI.3 Foundation of the VS market garden

In 2012 VS acquired a former market garden next to its administration building and another plot of land and has set up a market garden based on ecological and "Bioland" principles. It delivers a variety of salads and vegetables to the VS-Casino for staff lunches.

## VI.4 Nest boxes and insect hotels

The apprenticeship workshop at VS made around 50 nest boxes and an insect hotel in 2013. While the insect hotel has its place on the site of the new market garden, the nest boxes have been distributed around the entire VS site. Every nest box has its own number so that it will be possible to ascertain which kind of birds, if any, have adopted a box for hatching their young.



# Appendices

## VII.1 Supplier guidelines – Code of Conduct

Sustainable development is an important company goal for the VS Vereinigten Spezialmöbelfabriken GmbH & Co. KG. We are implementing this aim through our certified environment management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 14001:2009 and participation in the UN Global Compact. It is within this framework that we place practical requirements on our suppliers to adopt sustainable business conduct. The following section sets out the most important and relevant requirements, the observance of which we request you confirm to us in writing.

## Human rights and working conditions

- No child labour**  
Adherence to ILO Core Labour Standards is stipulated, whereby the general minimum age is fixed at 15 years, in the case of underdeveloped countries 14 years.
- Free choice of occupation**  
Employees may not be forced or compelled to work.
- Freedom of association**  
VS expects its suppliers to respect the rights of employees to form workers' representation and carry out collective bargaining in accordance with their own national legislation.

- Wages and social benefits**  
Wages should be paid at least at national minimum or standard wage levels. Wages must enable the employee to lead a life of human dignity. Working hours and recreation times must at least comply with national laws or standards.
- Health & Safety**  
Workplaces must be in accordance with internationally recognised health & safety standards. Supplier companies must carry out measures to avoid frequencies of accidents and occurrence of health risks. Workers must receive appropriate training and be equipped with safety clothing if required. If the supplier company provides accommodation this must be decent living conditions. If it provides food and drink these must comply with recognised health & hygiene conditions.

- Integration of people with disabilities**  
People with disabilities must be particularly well supported in the company. The appointment and training of people with disabilities is to be promoted.
- Ban on discrimination**  
VS suppliers should promote equality of opportunity and equality of treatment and prevent discrimination when appointing employees as well as in the advancement or granting of training and further training measures.
- No employee may be disadvantaged on account of his/her gender, age, skin colour, culture, ethnic background, sexual identity, a disability, religious affiliation or world view.

Environment standards

**Responsibility**  
Nationally applicable environment relevant guidelines and laws must be observed. VS suppliers should have established their environment principles in their company policy. The introduction of an environment management system should be aspired to, if it is not already in place.

**Environment friendly production**  
For us the important points in environment friendly production are:

- economic use of energy and materials in all manufacturing areas (recycling)
- promotion of use of regenerative energies
- the smallest use possible of natural resources: water, land and air
- avoidance or minimisation of emissions and waste
- dealing with harmful substances must be regulated to protect people and the environment
- production sites and plants should be appraised at regular intervals in respect of the relevant environmental factors

**Environment friendly products**  
Materials and products that are supplied to VS must fulfil certain criteria:

**Packaging**  
Goods must be adequately protected against damage; unnecessary packaging is to be avoided. Likewise, packaging materials should be recyclable and where possible produced from recycled substances. Where possible reusable packaging is to be preferred.

**Harmful contents**

- CMR substances (carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic for reproduction), categories 1 and 2, must not be used as content.
- In addition the requirements of the Chemicals Prohibition Order must be observed.
- Substances that fall within the REACH Regulation must be registered.

Business ethics

**Anti-corruption measures**  
Corruption should never be tolerated. The United Nations Convention against Corruption and the Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development's (OECD) Convention on Combating Bribery must be observed. It is important to ensure that VS employees are not offered any advantages intended to obtain orders or any other business preference.

**Gifts**  
Accordingly invitations and gifts for VS employees may only be warranted if the occasion and scale are appropriate, i.e. they are inexpensive and considered compatible with general local business practices.

**Free competition**  
VS expects its suppliers to behave fairly towards its competitors and to observe VS also expects its suppliers to behave fairly with its competitors and observe the prevailing anti-trust laws. They must not take part in agreements in violation of anti-trust laws nor abuse any market dominant position that may exist.

**Money laundering**  
VS also expects its suppliers to observe the applicable statutory regulations on money laundering prevention and not to participate in financial transactions that support money laundering either directly or indirectly.

Observance of supplier guidelines

Infringements relating to the aforementioned principles and requirements will be viewed as significantly damaging to the contractual relationship on the part of the supplier. If non-observance of the principles and requirements are suspected VS reserves the right to demand information about the issue. Furthermore, VS has the right to terminate the contractual relationship exceptionally and without notice, after it has set a reasonable period of time, if single or all contractual relationships with suppliers are proved to have not been fulfilled, or measures for improvement have been neither aimed at nor implemented.

Acknowledgement of "Supplier Guidelines – Code of Conduct"

The information content "Supplier Guidelines – Code of Conduct" is an integral part of the assignment of an order.

We herewith acknowledge the guidelines and undertake to observe them.

Date: ..... Company stamp: .....

Name: ..... Signature: .....



VII.2 Due diligence in accordance with the EU timber regulations

VS's operating instructions

Aim / Purpose


These operating instructions document the duty of care regulations and risk assessment in accordance with the European Timber Regulations (EUTR). The purpose of such regulation is so that by means of observance of different bases of assessment market participants are sure that the timber in question or timber products in question have not been sourced from illegal logging operations.

Definitions / Clarification

- **Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index**  
The index indicates perceived levels of corruption. It lists countries according to the degree to which there is perceived to be corruption amongst officials and politicians. It is a compiled index, supported by different surveys and investigations carried out by more than ten independent institutions. Surveys are conducted amongst business people and country analysts and questionnaires with polls of experts at home and abroad included. The index goes from 0 to 10 whereby 10 signifies the least perception of corruption and is thus the best possible result.

- **CITES, Washingtonian protection of endangered species**  
The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES for short) is both a treaty and an international organisation whose aim is to control international trade in wild animals and plants to ensure that the survival of animals and plants in the wild is not endangered. The CITES convention text was named after the city where it was first signed on March 3, 1973 in Washington D.C. and is thus also referred to as the Washington Convention.
- **FLEGT, Forest Law Enforcement Government and Trade**  
The action plan describes a series of measures to combat illegal logging. It was largely inspired by the Rio + 10 Conference in Johannesburg in 2002 and is based on the principles of Eastern Asia's FLEG. The FLEGT plan encompasses a number of areas including improvement in policy design. It also includes capacity development in partner countries, especially the development of systems for monitoring the legality of logging and enforcing the applicable laws, as well as promotion of political reforms.
- **EUTR, European Timber Regulation**  
The EU Timber Regulation (EUTR Regulation (EU) Nr. 995/2010[1]) is a European Union regulation from October 20, 2010 that excludes trade with timber and timber products from illegal logging operations. Accordingly placing timber and timber products from illegal logging operations on the internal market is prohibited. In addition, the regulation includes obligations on the market participant. The regulation came into force on March 3, 2013 in all EU member states.

- **BLE, Federal Office for Agriculture and Food**  
The BLE is a service agency with a wide variety of tasks in the areas of agriculture, food and consumer protection. As an importer of timber products from a non-EU country you need to be registered at BLE. A market participant in accordance with EUTR is a person responsible for timber products reaching the EU markets, e.g. forestry owners, importers based in the EU, purchasers based in the EU.
- **Placing on the market**  
Once timber is available in the EU because of commercial activity for sale to third parties or for use in one's own company.

	Arbeitsanweisung Sorgfaltspflichtregelung nach Holzhandelsverordnung	A23-0105 Seite 2 von 4
1. Ziel / Zweck		
Diese Arbeitsanweisung dokumentiert die Sorgfaltspflichtregelung und Risikoabschätzung nach der europäischen Holzhandelsverordnung (EUTR). Zweck einer solchen Regelung ist es, dass sich Marktteilnehmer durch Beachtung verschiedener Bewertungsgrundlagen davon überzeugen, dass das betreffende Holz oder die betreffenden Holzzerzeugnisse nicht aus illegalem Einschlag stammen.		
2. Definitionen / Erläuterungen		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Korruptionswahrnehmungsindex nach Transparency International</b> Der Index gibt dabei die Wahrnehmung von Korruption an. Er listet Länder nach dem Grad auf, in dem dort Korruption bei Amtsträgern und Politikern wahrgenommen wird. Es ist ein zusammengesetzter Index, der sich auf verschiedene Umfragen und Untersuchungen stützt, die von mehr als zehn unabhängigen Institutionen durchgeführt wurden. Es wurden Geschäftsleute sowie Länderanalysten befragt und Umfragen mit Experten im In- und Ausland miteinbezogen. Der Index geht von 0 bis 10, wobei 10 die geringste Wahrnehmung von Korruption anzeigt und somit das bestmögliche Ergebnis ist.</li><li>• <b>CITES, Washingtoner Artenschutzabkommen</b> Die Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (kurz CITES, deutsch Übereinkommen über den internationalen Handel mit gefährdeten Arten freilebender Tiere und Pflanzen) ist gleichermaßen ein Abkommen und eine internationale Organisation, die zum Ziel hat, internationalen Handel mit Wildtieren und Pflanzen soweit zu kontrollieren, dass das Überleben von wildlebenden Tier- und Pflanzenarten nicht gefährdet wird. Der Konventionstext der CITES wird nach dem Ort seiner Erstunterzeichnung am 3. März 1973 in Washington, D.C. auch Washingtoner Artenschutzübereinkommen (WA) genannt.</li><li>• <b>FLEGT, Fores Law Enforcement Government and Trade</b> Der Aktionsplan beschreibt eine Reihe von Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung illegalen Holzeinschlags. Er wurde maßgeblich durch die Rio +10-Konferenz in Johannesburg im Jahre 2002 inspiriert und fußt auf den Prinzipien des Ostasien-FLEG. Die Maßnahmen des FLEGT-Planes umfassen mehrere Bereiche, darunter eine Verbesserung der Politikgestaltung. Dazu zählt der Kapazitätsaufbau bei den Partnerländern, insbesondere beim Aufbau von Systemen zur Überprüfung der Legalität des Holzeinschlags und zur Durchsetzung geltenden Rechts, sowie die Förderung politischer Reformen</li><li>• <b>EUTR, European Timber Regulation</b> Die EU-Holzhandelsverordnung (EUTR – Verordnung (EU) Nr. 995/2010[1]) ist eine Verordnung der Europäischen Union vom 20. Oktober 2010, die den Handel mit Holz und Holzzerzeugnissen aus illegalem Einschlag in der EU unterbinden soll. Demgemäß ist es verboten, Holz und Holzzerzeugnisse aus illegalem Einschlag auf dem Binnenmarkt in Verkehr zu bringen. Außerdem enthält die Verordnung die Pflichten der Marktteilnehmer. Die Verordnung trat am 3. März 2013 in allen EU-Mitgliedstaaten in Kraft.</li><li>• <b>BLE, Bundesanstalt für Landwirtschaft u. Ernährung</b> Die BLE ist eine Dienstleistungsbehörde mit vielfältigen Aufgaben auf den Gebieten Landwirtschaft, Ernährung und Verbraucherschutz. Als Importeur von Holzprodukten aus einem Nicht-EU-Land muß man sich beim BLE registrieren lassen.</li></ul>		



### VII.3 BIFMA level:

### Example for an environment product information

Umweltproduktinformation

002

VS

VS - als Familienunternehmen - hat sich bewusst für nur einen Fertigungsstandort in Tauberbischofen entschieden. Auf dem Betriebsgelände können die Prozesse und Materialien optimal aufeinander abgestimmt werden. Die Qualitätspraktiken, die VS an seine Produkte stellt, und die Umwelterfordernisse werden durch das Qualitätsmanagement nach DIN EN ISO 9001 und des Umweltmanagements nach DIN EN ISO 14001 gewährleistet. Seit 2008 ist das Unternehmen auch Mitglied im UN Global Compact. VS verpflichtet sich die zehn Prinzipien der Bereiche Menschenrechte, soziale Standards, Umwelt- und Klimaschutz und Korruptionsprävention - in eigenen Unternehmen und innerhalb seiner Lieferkette - einzuschärfen.

## Lebenszyklus des Produkts

Der Lebenszyklus unserer Produkte wird anhand der Symbole aufgeführt. Angaben zu den eingesetzten Materialien, den Prozessen am Standort Tauberbischofen, zu den Verpackungen und zum Transport, sowie zur Nutzung und zur Entsorgung befinden sich auf der folgenden Seite.

## Materialzusammensetzung und Recyclinganteil

Der Anteil der eingesetzten Materialien in Stahl, die bereits recycelt sind, beträgt ca. 27%. (siehe Tabelle 1) Die Materialien in unseren Endprodukten sind vollständig zu 100% recycelbar.

Produktzuammensetzung	Gewichtanteil (%)	Recyclinganteil (Material-bezogen %)	Recyclinganteil (Produkt-bezogen %)	"Recycling"-fähigkeit (%)
Stahl	53,4	50	26,7	100
aufpolster-sitzschalen	45,2	0	0	100
Kunststoff-Kleinteile	1,4	0	0	100
Möbel gesamt	100	=	26,7	100

Tabelle 1

Modellnummer: 31400  
Gestell aus gebogenem, pulverbeschichtetem  
Stahlrohr mit einer Sitzschale aus  
doppelwandigem, strukturiertem Polypropylen  
(LuPO)

### Produktzusammensetzung

Material	Gewichtanteil (%)
Stahl	54%
aufpolster-sitzschale	45%
Kunststoff Kleinteile	1%

<sup>1</sup>Recyclinganteil eingesetzter Material-Produkt-bezogen = Gewichtanteil x Recyclinganteil  
eingesetzter Material-Produkt-bezogen

<sup>2</sup>Recyclingfähigkeit = Möglichkeit zur Wiederverwertung

## Umweltauswirkungen als CO<sub>2</sub>-Emissionen

Die CO<sub>2</sub> Emissionen ergeben sich aus der Bewertung der eingesetzten Materialien, ab der Rohstoffgewinnung und vorgelagerter Prozesse, über die bis VS durchgeführte Prozesse und des Transportaufkommens. (siehe Tabelle 2)

Bewertungs-kategorien für CO <sub>2</sub> -Emissionen	CO <sub>2</sub> -Emissionen Anteil in [%]
Material	75,6
Prozess	19,2
Transport	4,9

Tabelle 2

Kategorie	Anteil (%)
Material	75%
Prozess	19%
Transport	5%

## Produktverantwortung

Unser Produkt- und Kundenverantwortung testen wir - für die Produktverantwortung durch das GS-Zeichen für die Verwendung emissionsarmer Materialien durch die Kennzeichnung USA schadstoffgeprüfterUrengard - für die Nachhaltigkeit durch die Kennzeichnung mit dem BIFMA Level Standard

level™ 2 - gold  
The BIFMA  
sustainability  
Standard

simon – gmbh  
die BIFMA  
unabhängig  
Standard

## Materialauswahl bei VS

### Polypypropylen als Rohstoff für die Luftpolsterziste

Beim Einsatz der Luftpolsterziste entsteht neben der leichten Verarbeitbarkeit des Polypypropylen vor allem die gute Verformbarkeit und Flexibilität im Vordergrund. Die beachtliche Kratz- und Stoßfestigkeit der Oberfläche führen zu einer hohen Langlebigkeit der Produkte. Reines Polypypropylen kann nach der Nutzungsdauer des Produkts zu 100% recycelt werden.

### Bucheholz als Rohstoff für die Spezialholzteile

Das Buchenholz ist für die Herstellung der Spezialholzteile stammt, aus zerforstetem Holzmaterial und unterstützt somit die nachhaltige Forstwirtschaft. Der Vorteil des Spezialholzes liegt in der guten Verformbarkeit und Formstabilität. Spezialholz kann trotz des geringen Querschnitts hoch belastet werden. Zur Verbesserung der Eigenschaften erhält man Lacke auf Wasserbasis eingesetzt. Als nachwachsender Rohstoff ist es zu 100% recycelbar.

### Spanplatten als Rohstoff für die Tischplatten und Kapselumbel

Spanplatten sind das wichtigste Ausgangsprodukt für die Kapselumbel und die Tischplatten. Spanplatten werden meistens mit Dekorapapierbeschichtung eingesetzt. Alle bei VS verarbeiteten Spanplatten entsprechen mindestens der gesetzlich vorgeschriebenen emissionsfreien E1. Durch das Belichten im eigenen Werk können die Emissionen der Spanplatten noch weiter verringert werden, so dass bei der Möbelfertigung Ergebnisse erzielt werden, die noch unterhalb des Grenzwerts von 0,05 ppm (LGA-schadstoffgehalt) für Formaldehyd liegen. Spanplatten sind ein natürlicher Werkstoff mit einem hohen Recyclinganteil von bis zu 50%, auch durch Verwendung von Sägespätholz. Das Holz für die Spanplattenherstellung stammt aus nachhaltig betriebener Forstwirtschaft.

### Bucheholz als Rohstoff für die Schürhakenplatten

Das Buchenholz für die Herstellung der Schürhakenplatte stammt aus Sägeerzeugnissen und Durchforstungsabfällen aus der Region. Die Tischplatte wird nach einem durch VS entwickelten Verfahren aus Buchenplatten hergestellt. Im Gegensatz zur Spanplatte besteht die Lignurplatte einer wesentlich höheren Dichte, die größer als 1g/cm³ ist. Dadurch ist die Tischplatte sehr strapazierfähig und langlebig (bis zu über 30 Jahre) und wird wegen der stabilsten Oberfläche besonders im Schwebstuhl eingesetzt. Als natürlicher Rohstoff sind die Platten recycelbar.

### Massivholz

Für die Herstellung der Profile und Möbel aus Vollholz wird oft Buchen- oder Eichenholz verwendet, das aus nachhaltig bewirtschafteten Wäldern stammt. Als nachwachsender Rohstoff ist es zu 100 Prozent recycelbar.

### Stahl als Rohstoff für die Tisch- und Schürhakenplatte

Die eingesetzte Stahlplatte wird einen Recyclinganteil von ca. 50% auf und kann sehr flexibel mit hoher Präzision zu den verschiedenen Gestellen verarbeitet werden. Das Stahlrohgewicht ist einer der Pulverlackbeschichtung versehen, die ohne den Einsatz von Lösungsmitteln auskommt. Die Stahlrohgewicht sind außen lackiert und können nach ihrer Nutzungsdauer zu 100% recycelt werden.

### Aluminium als Rohstoff für Profile und Druckgussteile

Aluminiumdruckgussteile stehen variabel formen, gegossen und sind deutlich leichter als Stahlrohgewicht. Die bei VS eingesetzten Druckgussteile bestehen aus einer Aluminiumlegierung mit einem Recyclinganteil von ca. 90%. Da die Aluminium-umgebung sehr energieaufwendig ist, ist ein hohes Recyclinganteil eine hohe Bedeutung. Stichtelle werden in der Regel mit einer Pulverlackbeschichtung versehen, die ohne den Einsatz von Lösungsmitteln auskommt. Nach der Nutzungsdauer wird Aluminium zu 100% recycelt.

## Prozesse bei VS am Standort Tauberbischofsheim

Die Reduzierung der Umweltbelastung der Produkte bedarf für VS eine ressourcenschonende Entwicklung und Herstellung der Produkte. Die Kernkompetenzen der Herstellungsprozesse bei VS sind die Spanplatten- und die Stahlrohranfertigung, sowie die Endmontage unserer Möbel. VS investiert regelmäßig in die Optimierung dieser Prozesse mit neuester Anlagentechnologie. Dabei werden die Materialeffizienz gesteuert und Umweltverschmutzung wie Energie- und Abwasserbelastung stark verbessert. Die eigenen Holzabfälle werden vermehrt zur Erzeugung erneuerbarer Energien im Hause eingesetzt.

Auf Folienverpackungen wird weitestgehend verzichtet, die fertig montierten Möbelstücke werden durch Decken und Schutzmatten für transportierfähige verpackt. Die Transportkosten betragen zu 80% aus Recyclingmaterial und werden als Mehrwegsystem immer wieder eingesetzt.

Die Tourenplanung wird wöchentlich nach Transportvolumen und geographischer Lage optimal zusammengefasst. Speditionen, die ihre Mitarbeiter auf sparsame Fahrweisen schulen, werden bevorzugt.

Während der ausgedehnten Gebrauchsdauer des Möbels können keine Energieaufwendungen mehr dazu, durch Reparatur beziehungsweise durch Austausch einzelner Bauteile kann die Nutzungsdauer verlängert werden. Bei Bedarf sind die Ersatzteile servicebar zur Verfügung.

Bei der Produktentwicklung wird bereits durch die Auswahl von weniger, dafür hochwertigen Komponenten, auf Umweltspekte wie Recyclingfähigkeit, geachtet. Alle eingesetzten Teile können nach der Demontage in den Stoffkreislauf zurückgeführt werden. Hierzu hat VS ein Entsorgungsanpassungs für Altmöbel vor. Verbundwerkstoffe werden vermieden.

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