

Röchling

Sustain- ability Report

2023



PEOPLE

Topics

- Attractive workplace and employee development
 - Occupational health and safety
 - Diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities
-

Focus

Our focus is on our more than 11,000 employees. We are continuously working to create a future-oriented, safe and diverse work environment.





PRODUCTS

Topics

- Sustainable products and innovations
 - Circular economy
 - Product quality and safety
-

Focus

Our focus is on our products and therefore on our customers. We create competitive advantages for our customers and actively support them in achieving their sustainability goals.

PLANET

Topics

- Climate change
 - Responsible use of energy and resources
-

Focus

Our focus is on our environment. We are continuously reducing our environmental footprint.



Sustainable Development Goals

In its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), the United Nations laid down the path for achieving worldwide economic progress in conjunction with social justice. The targets of this Agenda are described in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

As a plastics processor, Röchling considers all 17 SDGs to be important. In terms of our implementation priorities, we make reference to our focus topics. We refer to the associated SDGs at various points within our Sustainability Report.

Contents

02 — 03 Editorial

04 — 05 Röchling Group

06 — 13 Strategy & Governance

14 — 20 Products

21 — 27 Planet

28 — 36 People

37 — 39 Engagement

40 Röchling Foundation

41 Imprint

Note

We have taken care to use gender-neutral language in our Sustainability Report. Where this was not possible for reasons of legibility, we have not differentiated between the genders. It is to be understood that all genders are addressed equally.

Dear readers,

We are living in a time when sustainability is no longer just an option, but a necessity. Each and every one of us bears responsibility for the world in which we live and for future generations. We have a responsibility, not only for our own business processes, but also for the impact of our business activities on society and the environment. For us as an international plastics processor and as a family-owned company with a history reaching back more than 200 years, long-term thinking and action are of paramount importance. That is why we are facing up to our responsibility and have named sustainability as one of the most important strategic areas for the future of our company.

We are now experiencing the effects of the climate crisis first-hand in the form of extreme weather events or natural disasters. By using our resources more efficiently and reducing our environmental footprint, we are helping to limit the effects of climate change. At the same time, we take account of the social impact of our actions. With our business practices, we work to ensure that both our employees and the people along our supply chain are treated fairly and that the communities in which we operate are strengthened. Our goal is to actively drive forward Röchling's sustainability for future generations.

For this reason, last year we intensively addressed the question of what we can specifically do to make our company even more sustainable. To further increase the speed of implementation, we conducted a materiality analysis on sustainability at Röchling for the first time in 2022. We wanted to know specifically which topics we should address in order to achieve the greatest possible effect for more sustainability in our company. The results of our materiality analysis are presented in this report. In a systematic process, we have identified the strategic focus topics for our Group. These form the basis for the further expansion of our sustainability strategy.

Sustainable activities are not new to us. We have been setting ourselves ambitious targets for many years. Many of our locations are certified to international standards such as ISO 50001 (energy management systems), ISO 14001 (environmental management systems) and ISO 45001 (occupational health and safety). We use these structures to systematically develop our sustainability approaches.

But we have also developed organizationally. There needs to be people responsible for actively implementing sustainability measures, contributing ideas, and evaluating our activities. To this end, we established the Group-wide Röchling Board Sustainability, which deals with the most important sustainability issues and prepares strategic decisions. In terms of hierarchy, it comes directly below the Group Executive Board to ensure lean decision-making processes.



Dr. Daniel Bühler

Raphael Wolfram

Evelyn Thome

Franz Lübbers

We want to continue to create competitive advantages for our customers and support them in the successful implementation of their sustainability goals. To achieve this, we have developed two new product families for bioplastics and recycled materials, Röchling-BioBoom® and Röchling-ReLoop®. We also present these to you in this report.

We are aware that sustainable development can succeed only if we work together with our customers, employees, suppliers, and our partners. We want to report openly and transparently about our commitment and our challenges, and use this to move toward a more sustainable future. With this Sustainability Report, we present our progress and invite you to join us in developing forward-looking solutions made of plastic. True to our vision: “Technical plastic solutions for everyone, everywhere, every day”.

Raphael Wolfram

Spokesman of the Executive Board

CEO of Röchling Automotive

Dr. Daniel Bühler

Member of the Executive Board

CEO of Röchling Medical

Franz Lübbers

Member of the Executive Board

CEO of Röchling Industrial

Evelyn Thome

Member of the Executive Board

CFO of Röchling Group

Röchling Group

The Röchling Group has been shaping industry. Worldwide. For more than 200 years. Today, we use customized plastics to transform everyday life for many people, making cars lighter, medication packaging safer, and industrial applications more effective.

Our workforce of more than 11,700 people is located in the places where our customers are – in 92 locations in 25 countries. Between them, our three divisions generated annual sales of EUR 2.603 billion.

Our Vision and Mission

Our Vision

Technical plastic solutions for everyone, everywhere, every day.

Our Mission

Advanced plastics is our core. As a family-owned business, we enable modern life and deliver pioneering products and services worldwide across all industries. Today and tomorrow.

Holding Company

Röchling SE & Co. KG, the parent company of the Röchling Group with a total of around 60 employees, is based in Mannheim. Departments such as Controlling, Tax, Legal, and Communications are located there. The Executive Board and the supervisory bodies of the Röchling Group also have their offices there. Mannheim is where the threads of the family-owned company with its more than 200-year history are brought together.

2.603

billion euros
in sales

11,737

employees*

* including temporary employees

Industrial

Röchling **Industrial** offers a wide range of thermo-plastics and composites for technical applications. Our plastics are available in the form of semi-finished products such as sheets, rods, tubes, flat bars, profiles and finished castings or as precise, machined parts. They are used in almost every industry worldwide. Each industry has its own requirements for materials. That is why Röchling **Industrial** takes its customers' requirements into particular account. Its goal is to develop products that are precisely tailored to the respective application. Röchling has been involved in the processing of plastics for more than 100 years. We know what materials to recommend for your application.

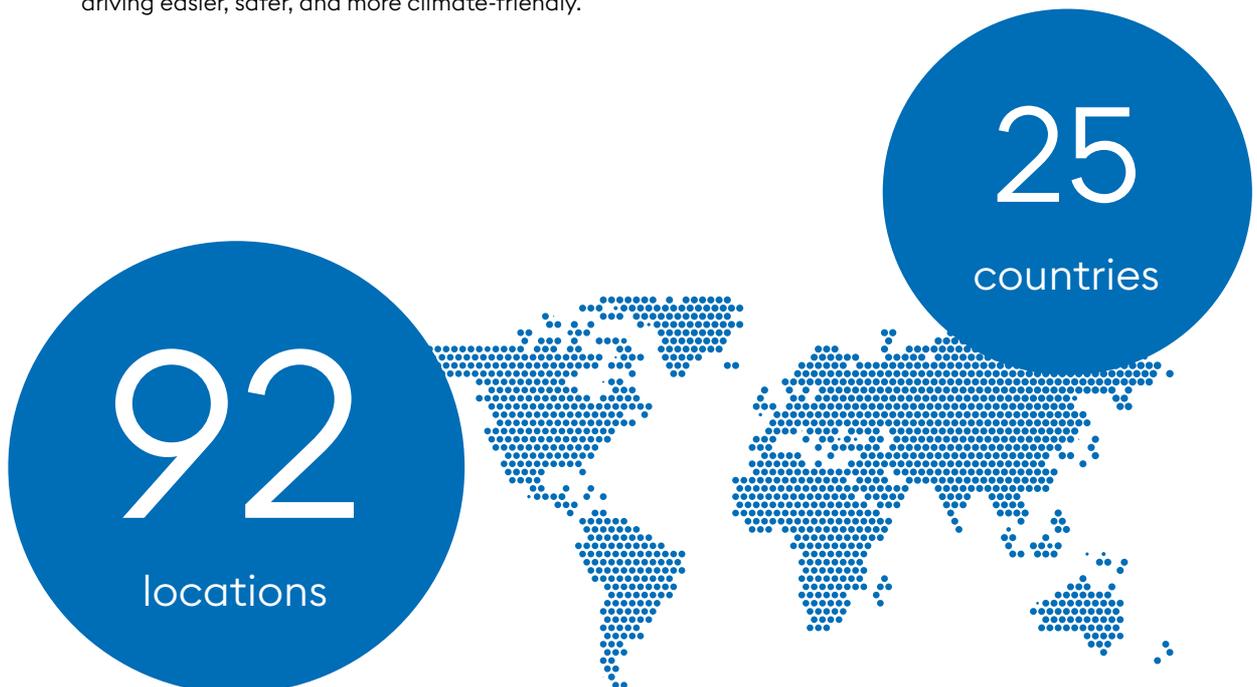
Automotive

Röchling **Automotive** works to improve sustainable mobility. It does this with product solutions made of our material: plastic. To do this, we use our expertise in the areas of Battery Solutions, Structural Lightweight, Aerodynamics, and Propulsion. This makes driving easier, safer, and more climate-friendly.

Medical

Röchling **Medical** develops innovative, reliable, and customized products, services, and platform solutions for the healthcare industry. As a trusted partner, Röchling **Medical** helps its customers achieve pioneering results in disease prevention and health restoration worldwide, offering a wide range of high-quality, customized components and assemblies through to end-packaged complex products. The product portfolio includes plastic primary packaging and delivery systems with particular expertise in diagnostics, fluid management, and pharma.

With the existing plastics and metal processing expertise, our customers are supported in the area of surgery and interventional. Services from development to approval of medical devices complete our portfolio.



Megatrend of Sustainability

Interview with Franz Lübbers, CEO of Röchling Industrial and responsible for the Röchling Board Sustainability, on the Röchling Group's sustainability strategy.

Mr. Lübbers, the Röchling Group celebrated its 200th anniversary last year. Since its founding, the company has undergone many changes.

One of the most important topics for current and future generations is sustainability.

Why is this also important for the Röchling Group?

The Röchling Group can indeed look back on a long corporate history. With this in mind, we want to position ourselves well for a successful future. Sustainability plays a key role in this regard – especially for us as a plastics processing company that leaves an ecological footprint through its business activities. On the one hand, our engineering plastics help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. On the other, the incorrect disposal of plastics has painted a negative picture in the public perception for many years. We have the opportunity to influence the future of tomorrow with our actions. For young, talented

people, sustainability is now a key factor in choosing their employer. We must address all of this in order to ensure the company's continued existence.

What are the next steps for the Röchling Group, and what has happened so far?

We have given ourselves a new and modern governance, or management structure. It was important to us that we create committees staffed with experts for our key future topics, which are just below the Group Executive Board in terms of hierarchy. This includes sustainability, for which we established the Röchling Board Sustainability. This board deals with all sustainability issues relevant to the company. This enables us to work on the topic of sustainability with all its opportunities and challenges across the entire Group. This allows us to create



Franz Lübbers is CEO of Röchling Industrial and responsible for the Röchling Board Sustainability.

synergies, exchange experiences, and comprehensively broaden our view. One of the most important tasks here is currently the further development of our sustainability strategy and the identification of our strategic focus topics.

How did you go about identifying the strategic focus topics?

To further strengthen our sustainability activities, we first conducted a materiality analysis. All employees were able to participate in this via a survey. The feedback, as well as the input from Executive Board members and other stakeholders, have been incorporated into the definition of the strategic focus topics. The next step involves validating these with our customers. We then develop specific targets for all strategic focus topics and formulate the path to their implementation as clearly as possible.

SUSTAINABILITY

Röchling Board Sustainability

For our key future topics, we have created committees staffed by experts. These committees fall just below the Group Executive Board in terms of hierarchy. This includes sustainability, for which we established the Röchling Board Sustainability. Sustainability experts from the three divisions are part of our Röchling Board Sustainability. The regular meetings are also attended by experts on topics such as energy and compliance, as well as Managing Directors of our three divisions. Under the leadership of Franz Lübbers, CEO of Röchling Industrial and member of the Executive Board of the Röchling Group, the Röchling Board Sustainability systematically addresses key sustainability issues and prepares strategic decisions.

The plastics processing industry

has very energy-intensive production.

What conclusions do you draw from this?

We have to look at our products, but also at our production process. Our plastics help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the automotive sector, for example, thanks to their wide range of applications and low weight. The lower the weight of a car, the lower its fuel consumption. But our plastics can also be found in wind turbines, which in turn promotes green energy. Both are good for the climate. We are also striving to use our energy even more efficiently and thus reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Given the sharp rise in energy costs, particularly in Europe, this issue will also continue to keep us busy from an economic perspective. We have therefore set up a Sustainable Energy project group to look at our energy efficiency and the expansion of our own energy generation. Following our **Industrial** plants in Oepping, Austria, and Haren, Germany, we have also installed a photovoltaic system at our **Automotive** plant in Kunshan, China, and are considering to do the same at other locations.

Plastics have come in for a lot of criticism because of the problems in disposing of them.

What approach is the company taking?

In 2021, we opened an operating facility in Geeste-Dalum, Germany, near our main **Industrial** plant in Haren, where we close the recyclables loop between ourselves and our customers. We process plastic residues from our production as well as those of our customers into granules for new semi-finished products. This helps us to strengthen the use of recycled materials at our location and also reduce our waste volume as well as that of our customers. The experience we have gained has been so positive that we intend to open additional locations for closing the recyclables loop.

“Sustainability remains a megatopic that will offer us many more opportunities.”

Franz Lübbers, CEO of Röchling Industrial and responsible for the Röchling Board Sustainability

Last year, the Röchling Group drew attention to itself with a sustainable stand at the K 2022 plastics trade fair in Düsseldorf, Germany, the leading trade fair for the plastics industry, and presented the new Röchling-BioBoom® and Röchling-ReLoop® product families.

We already said a few years ago that we wanted to offer alternatives made from bioplastics and recycled materials for each of our plastics made from virgin material in the future. Röchling-BioBoom® for bioplastics and Röchling-ReLoop® for recycled materials are an initial response to this. We are convinced that the market for alternative plastics will continue to develop rapidly. We see it as our entrepreneurial, but also sustainable obligation to be a pioneer in this regard. Change is part of the DNA of corporate history, which now spans more than 200 years. It is our aspiration to also help shape this change in the plastics processing industry.

The Röchling Group is a signatory of the UN Global Compact. With this in mind, sustainability within the company needs to be about more than just products, production processes, and energy consumption.

That's right. It goes without saying that we are just as dedicated to social issues as we are to ecological and economic ones. We set this out years ago in our

Code of Conduct, which governs our actions and is binding for every employee. It is important to us that we offer our employees good and safe working conditions and that no one within our supply chains is exposed to any human rights violations. But it is also about other relevant issues such as equal opportunities, diversity, and inclusion, and also about being an important part of society.

With all the topics you outline, sustainability will remain an ongoing issue ...

Due to the massive impact of the climate crisis, sustainability will remain a megatopic that will still present us with many challenges, but will also offer opportunities – especially since the ecological, economic and social components play an equally important role here. This makes it all the more important for us to deal with it intensively and to look for new solutions every day. At Röchling, we use the idea of sustainability for future generations to describe this. We want the descendants of our shareholders and our employees to have good prospects for the future, not only with and at Röchling.

Strategy Process

As multifaceted as sustainability is, it is essential for companies to use their own resources conservatively for the important and strategically relevant sustainability topics. For the first time, we as a Group have carried out a materiality analysis to identify the strategic focus topics.

To this end, we have systematically gone through a multi-stage process in recent months with the support of an external sustainability consultant. Two points were of particular importance: taking into account the expertise of our employees and the specific requirements of our three divisions Industrial, Automotive, and Medical.

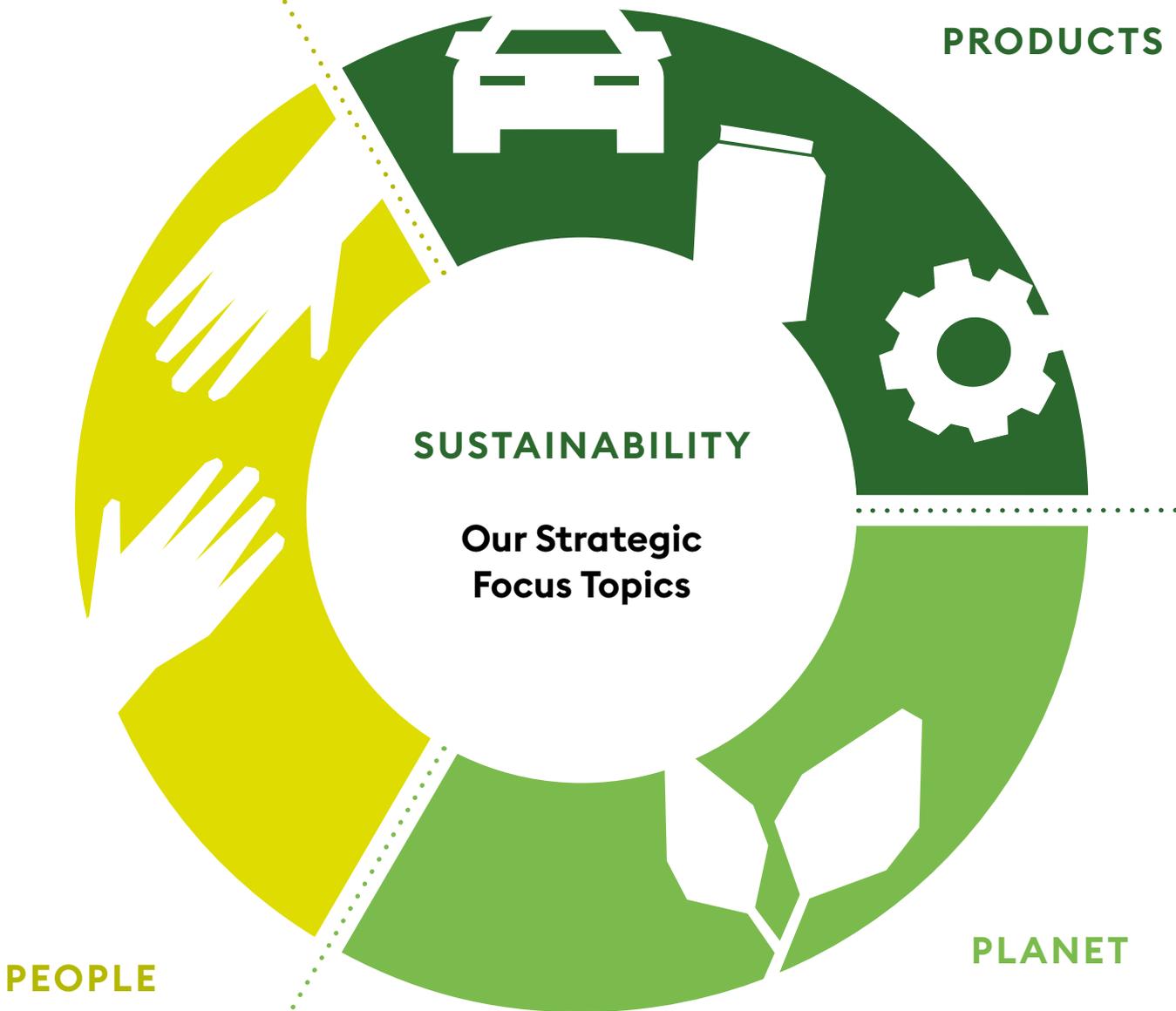
Our Strategy Process in Detail

1. Creation of a Longlist of Potential Sustainability Topics

The starting point was to identify sustainability topics that could potentially be relevant to us. To do this, we evaluated the content of various sustainability standards and analyzed the most important market competitors of our divisions. The result was a longlist of almost one hundred potential sustainability topics.

2. Condensing the Longlist Into a Shortlist

We condensed the longlist into a shortlist and reflected on it with the help of individual interviews. The shortlist comprises a total of 15 sustainability topics. Taking part in the interview were the Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Röchling Group, the members of the Executive Board of the Röchling Group and our three divisions, the members of the Röchling Board Sustainability, representatives of the Röchling Foundation, and external experts from industry associations.



3. Employee Survey

In an online survey, we asked all of our more than 11,700 employees worldwide for their feedback on the shortlist. It was important for us to find out which of the potential sustainability topics are particularly important to Röchling from their perspective.

4. Expert Survey

In another online survey, internal specialists and managers evaluated each topic on the shortlist. For each topic, we asked what positive or negative impact Röchling has on it and how it can positively or negatively affect the company's success.

5.

Executive Board Workshops

In the next step, the Executive Board members of our divisions reflected on the results of the interviews and surveys in workshops. The resulting conclusions were then discussed by the members of our Group Executive Board in a workshop.

Our Areas of Action and Focus Topics

The results of this process are strategic focus areas that can be divided into three fields of action:

PRODUCTS, **PEOPLE** and **PLANET**.

The areas of action reflect three fundamental areas for our Group: **PRODUCTS** focuses on our products and therefore our customers, **PEOPLE** focuses on our employees worldwide, and **PLANET** focuses on the continuous reduction of our environmental footprint. The next step will be to validate the focus topics in an analysis process with some of our customers and to expand them where necessary.

In addition to the focus topics, the aspects of corporate governance and compliance and responsible corporate management were also rated as particularly important in the analysis. Both these points have been important management topics for us for a long time in order to ensure the continuous development of our company.

Our Next Step: Validation and Target Setting

For the next step in developing our sustainability strategy, the commitment of our employees is crucial. After the validation process with our customers, we develop our targets for the strategic focus topics and a roadmap on how to achieve them. Particularly in the **Medical** and pharmaceutical environment, the evaluation of regulatory requirements combined with customer expectations is of key importance and is therefore analyzed in detail in the next step. In the target achievement process, we draw on many existing processes and pool our expertise in the specialist areas. We will complete this process in the third quarter of 2023 and the results will be published in the fall of 2023.

REVIEW

Employee Survey

The high level of employee participation in the online survey is particularly noteworthy. In total, more than 2,000 employees took advantage of this opportunity to participate, representing a rate of more than 17 percent. According to industry experts, the usual response rate for such online surveys is between five and ten percent. "I am proud of the great interest shown by our employees," emphasizes Franz Lübbers, CEO of Röchling Industrial and responsible for the Röchling Board Sustainability. "This is an excellent basis for the joint and continuous optimization of our sustainability activities."

FOCUS

Materiality Analysis

In sustainability management, materiality analysis is a standard process for identifying the sustainability issues that are significant to a company. Röchling's materiality analysis focuses on two questions:

- **IMPACT:** On which environmental and social issues does the company have a positive or negative impact through its business activities?
- **CORPORATE SUCCESS:** To what extent can sustainability issues positively or negatively influence a company's success?



Traceable Data

Sustainable corporate development requires a comprehensive approach. Digitalization plays an important role here, as it helps to identify new ways and solutions to manage the complex interplay between ecology, economy, and social issues. For example, it can help to collect and analyze data transparently and comprehensibly. The insights gained can be used to conserve resources and reduce environmental impact.

A key challenge for sustainable corporate development is the consistent collection and analysis of sustainability data, such as in the areas of greenhouse gas emissions, the environment (such as waste indicators), occupational safety or diversity. Regulatory requirements such as the European Union's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), but also the requirements of our customers and the management of our self-imposed sustainability targets are the fundamental drivers here.

Our Approach

To meet these requirements, we launched a selection process for suitable sustainability management software, which was completed in 2022. In the future, we will use this software at our 92 locations worldwide and across all divisions in Asia, the Americas and Europe. A project group launched in February 2023 is overseeing its implementation, which is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2023. The software will then act as the central core for data collection and analysis.

Another requirement faced by customers, particularly in our **Automotive** and **Industrial** divisions, is the reporting of the environmental impact of the

respective products during their service life. The focus here is primarily on greenhouse gas emissions, commonly known as the carbon footprint. To be able to report this, it is necessary to model the individual production steps and calculate the associated emissions. Röchling has also completed a software selection process for this and started implementation in 2023.

With the help of these software solutions, we are not only increasing the transparency of all sustainability-relevant data, but we also create more efficiency in internal processes.

PRODUCTS

Sustainable Plastics



The plastics industry, like other industries, has a key role to play in the transformation to sustainability. It is essential to close loops, develop new and effective recycling methods, and rely on bio-based raw materials for the manufacture of plastic products. To this end, in 2022 we presented our new Röchling-ReLoop® and Röchling-BioBoom® sustainable product families at the K plastics trade fair in Düsseldorf, Germany, the world's largest trade fair for the plastics and rubber industry.

With these two product families, we are further expanding our share of sustainable products. Our goal here is to save resources, reduce our ecological footprint, and make our own processes and activities more sustainable.

In doing so, we always keep our customers in mind. We want our sustainability activities to create competitive advantages for them and actively support them in successfully achieving their sustainability goals.



Our Product Family for Bioplastics:

Röchling BioBOOM®

Reducing fossil raw materials and using bio-based materials is what we intend to achieve with our products in the Röchling-BioBoom® family. We include both bio-based materials and mass-balanced bioplastics in this.

Our **Automotive** division was the first company in the world to offer a patented polylactide (PLA)-based biopolymer consisting of at least 90 percent renewable raw materials. In 2021, Röchling **Automotive** thus won the “Sustainability Award in Automotive” in the “Complete Vehicle” category, among others, which is jointly awarded by the ATZ/MTZ Group and the consulting firm Roland Berger. The award honors products, processes, and initiatives that have a lasting impact on sustainability in the industry.

Since the availability of bioplastics is currently still limited and their technical properties do not always meet the requirements of demanding technical applications, the mass balance approach plays an important role in expanding the use of bio-based raw materials. With mass-balanced bioplastics, we promote the use of bio-based raw materials while maintaining the tried-and-tested property profile of our products. To this end, all three German locations of our **Medical** division and twelve of our global **Industrial** locations are already certified in accordance with ISCC PLUS (International Sustainability & Carbon Certification). This international standard is one of the world's leading certification systems for the use of bio-based and recycled raw materials. Companies around the world obtain ISCC PLUS certification for the use of bio-based raw materials. This enables transparent traceability along the entire supply chain.



 REVIEW

K 2022 in Düsseldorf

Sustainability in focus: At the K 2022 plastics trade fair in Düsseldorf, Germany, we presented our new Röchling-BioBoom® and Röchling-ReLoop® sustainable product families in October 2022. Visitors to our booth found themselves in the middle of a jungle with real plants, authentic-looking animals, and a special soundscape.



 RECYCLING

PCR and PIR

Post-consumer recycling (PCR) includes materials that are generated in households and in public, commercial and industrial facilities after use and can no longer be used for their intended purpose.

Post-industrial recycling (PIR) uses material that is generated as waste for recycling during the manufacturing process and can be reprocessed through recycling processes and reused as raw material for the production of other plastic products.

Our Product Family for High-Quality Recycled Materials:


With our Röchling-ReLoop® product family for high-quality recycled materials, we conserve valuable resources and complete material cycles. Strengthening the circular economy is one of the most important tasks of the plastics industry. To this end, we have different approaches for the individual requirements of our three divisions.

In the **Industrial** division, we opened a location for recycling plastics in Geeste-Dalum, Germany. Together with our customers, we want to make our material flows even more efficient and establish customized recycling cycles. We are continuously working to increase the proportion of our products accounted for by recycled materials. Part of the Röchling-ReLoop® product family is residual plastics from our customers and from our production as well as post-consumer waste. Post-consumer recycled products (PCR) and post-industrial recycled products (PIR) are available. Depending on the product, the proportion of recycled material can be up to one hundred percent.

In our **Automotive** division, we use residual materials from our production to process high-quality plastic products. Röchling-ReLoop® is available as a PIR product. Twenty-five percent of Röchling **Automotive's** global production consists of recycled materials. Depending on customer requirements, the proportion of recycled material in the products is between 30 and 100 percent.

In the **Medical** division, the use of recycled materials is only possible to a very limited extent due to regulatory requirements. As far as possible for the specific product and if approved by our customers, we recycle plastic residues in extrusion blow molding that cannot be avoided for technological



Number of Certified Production Locations in the Röchling Group

from 2020 to 2022

	2020	2021	2022
ISCC Plus	1	7	11
ISO 13485	10	10	10
ISO 15378	2	2	2
ISO 9001	42	42	42
IATF 16949	29	29	29

reasons directly into ongoing production in a closed loop. Production waste that cannot be used for our own products is, where possible, supplied to our **Industrial** division for reuse or otherwise fed into the recycling loop.

We know that both we as a company and our customers have a responsibility for our environment and our society. The already great importance of sustainable business, the conservation of resources, and a conscious approach to nature will continue to grow for us and our customers in the years to come. With our new product families Röchling-ReLoop® and Röchling-BioBoom®, we are jointly taking an important step in this direction.

PRODUCTION

Mass Balancing

Mass balancing is a calculative approach. In the production of plastics, a proportion of bio-based or recycled raw materials is added to the process at the beginning and an equal proportion is imputed to the end products at the end of the process. This promotes the use of bio-based or recycled materials, similar to the green electricity principle.

The advantages at a glance:

- Conservation of fossil resources
- Promotion of bio-based or recycled raw materials
- Identical product properties as fossil-based materials
- No adaptation of processing plants or processes necessary



Design for Sustainability

In our innovation process, we evaluate ideas for new products according to various criteria. Sustainability is an integral part of this. There are many starting points along the product life cycle, starting with the raw material and continuing through the use phase to disposal.

Our Approach

The decisions made during the development process have a decisive influence on the sustainability of a product. By integrating various Ecodesign and Design for Sustainability (DfS) principles, sustainability can be incorporated into the product from the very beginning. This enables us to design products in such a way that their environmental impact is reduced during their life cycle by conserving natural resources and continuously reducing the ecological footprint.

It is particularly important to note that products from our three divisions are used in demanding technical applications. They must therefore meet the respective high mechanical, thermal or chemical requirements. We consistently combine the principles for a sustainable product development process with the technical and economic requirements placed on the product.

Our Principles

Depending on the division, the following principles are applied to varying degrees:

- **Material origin:** For us, addressing the opportunities offered by bioplastics and recycled materials plays a decisive role. Depending on the division, we systematically evaluate new opportunities for their use in our customers' applications.
- **Material efficiency:** Depending on the division, computer-aided engineering (CAE) can be used to optimize material efficiency – such as the finite element method (FEM) and material flow analyses.
- **Design for Recycling:** We contribute to Design for Recycling through approaches such as the use of recyclable materials, the reduction of material diversity in products and material labeling on the product (recycling code). To support the circular economy, we also rely on Design for Disassembly for simple and sorted disassembly of multi-part products (e.g. plastics, metals, and electronics).

“The decisions we make together with our customers in the design and development phase have a decisive impact on the sustainability of the product.”



Erika Unjaev, Senior Specialist Research & Development, Röchling Medical

- **SmartMarker:** Our SmartMarker technology opens up completely new possibilities for building recycling loops. With tracer-based sorting, plastic waste can be efficiently and reliably sorted for recycling. This creates transparency, and dedicated take-back loops can be initiated with customers.

- **Optimization of our plants and machinery:** In addition to reducing energy requirements, we are continuously developing our machinery and equipment such as with optimized cooling concepts and the automation of processes.

- **Product packaging:** We are examining ways to reduce the weight of our products' packaging and paying attention to the possibility of recycling when selecting materials.

Our customers' applications always play a central role in the individual use of these approaches for the different requirements of our divisions. In many industries and areas of application, our products offer the opportunity to actively shape sustainable development.



Sustainable Applications With Conventional Plastics

In many cases, our plastics help to increase sustainability in applications. The global population is growing. What will individual mobility look like in the future? How will people receive medical care? Where and how will our food be produced and processed? How will energy needs be met? Together with our customers, we see this as an opportunity to develop new solutions. Our plastics improve industrial applications, increase their efficiency, or make new developments possible in the first place.

Our Approach

Together with our customers, we see this as an opportunity to develop new, innovative products that promote sustainability. In this respect, even plastics from fossil fuels have always provided the ideal conditions for a sustainable contribution due to their durability and low density. Saving weight is a key factor in increasing sustainability in automotive construction. At Röchling **Automotive**, solutions are developed in the Structural Lightweight product line that significantly reduce the weight of structural components through the use of high-performance plastics and functional integrations. This increases the range of the vehicles and thus simultaneously reduces emissions through lower fuel consumption.

Plastic injection bottles from Röchling **Medical** require significantly lower processing temperatures than conventional glass injection bottles, thus sav-

ing energy. Depending on the plastic, the required processing temperature is between 200 and 300 degrees Celsius. By comparison, it is many times higher for glass at 1,300 degrees Celsius.

At Röchling **Industrial**, sliding components made of LubX® are used primarily in conveyor systems. These have excellent lubrication properties, enabling users to reduce their energy requirements and increase the efficiency of their systems. Pultruded Pulcaps® provide stability in the blades of wind turbines and thus support the energy transition. We are also addressing the current megatopic of fuel cell technology with our latest development of a high-pressure hydrogen tank based on carbon fiber-reinforced plastics.

PLANET



Responsible Use of Energy

As a family-owned company, the sustainable use of energy is an integral part of our strategy. We actively address this issue with systematic measures to increase efficiency, procurement and self-supply, and by balancing our greenhouse gases. In the current energy policy situation, climate protection and economic efficiency play an equally important role. After all, our business activities result in emissions. We are aware of this fact and act accordingly.



Our Approach

For our international group of companies, we have carried out a balance of our greenhouse gas emissions in Scope 1 and Scope 2 based on the international Greenhouse Gas Protocol standard for the first time. We are aware that Scope 1 and Scope 2 can only be the starting point of this assessment and that Scope 3 will be the next step for a comprehensive sustainable approach.

The initial balance of greenhouse gas emissions for Scope 1 and Scope 2 was carried out in cooperation with Limón GmbH, a service provider for energy management that advises medium-sized companies and international corporations. We deliberately chose 2019 as the year for the initial balance in order to rule out any possible impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our greenhouse gas emissions.

We used a standardized data collection format to record emissions-related consumption in our Group worldwide at our locations in Europe, the Americas, and Asia. The data was then checked for plausibility, for example, by comparing it with available data from other data collection processes. Limón then linked the consumption data to the emission factors

and calculated the Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. Proven databases such as Ecoinvent, ProBas, and GEMIS were used to select emission factors.

Limón checked the data quality for 2019 as the year of first collection and rated it as good. The data check considered factors such as the accuracy and plausibility of reporting consumption, such as through supporting documents or direct measurement results, and emission factors.

For data points where primary data is not yet available, our experts at the locations made qualified estimates to get as full a greenhouse gas footprint as possible. In the coming years, we will work to continuously increase the proportion of primary data. The data check carried out provides a good basis for further refining our collection processes in the future.

The result gives us an overview of where greenhouse gas emissions occur in our processes, how high they are, and where we have the greatest potential to reduce them as quickly and efficiently as possible. The further optimization of our energy efficiency plays a key role in this.

EMISSIONS

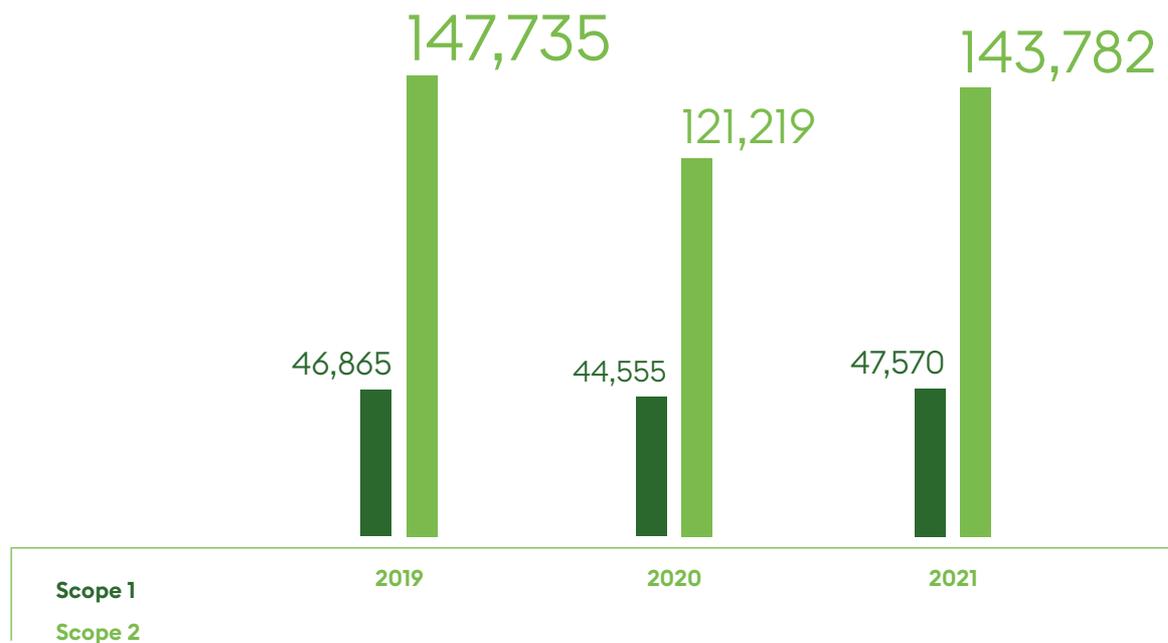
Scope 1 to 3

- **Scope 1** are direct emissions resulting from processes within the company itself, such as through the consumption of fuels from company cars, the combustion of natural gas, or the use of refrigerants.
- **Scope 2** are indirect emissions resulting from the procurement of energy, such as from the procurement of electricity, district heating, and district cooling.
- **Scope 3** are indirect emissions arising along the value chain, such as from purchased goods and services, transportation, and business travel.

The greenhouse gas emissions were determined in cooperation with Limón GmbH. Based on a data check, the data quality of the initial survey was rated as good by the service provider. The consolidated value for 2022 will appear during 2023 and will be published on our website after the publication of this Sustainability Report.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions of the Röchling Group

Scope 1 and Scope 2 according to Greenhouse Gas Protocol,
market-based, t CO₂e



Number of Certified ISO 50001 Production Locations in the Röchling Group

	2020	2021	2022
	20	20	20

Increasing Our Energy Efficiency

We continuously record, analyze and optimize our energy flows. At many locations, we are already certified to ISO 50001, the internationally recognized standard for energy management systems. We are improving our energy efficiency with various measures. These are as diverse as our processes and include investing in new technologies, optimizing existing processes, and training our employees.

In our **Medical** division, for example, a cold storage system is being used for the construction of a new production hall for cleanrooms at the site in Neuhaus am Rennweg, Germany, in order to sustainably save energy resources and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Under this concept, the firefighting water tank in place for the sprinkler system, which has a volume of around 2,000 cubic meters, is reduced to a low temperature overnight as a cold storage system. This supports cooling and saves energy.

A battery storage system was also installed in Neuhaus. This stores energy at times of surplus and makes it available when demand increases, thus relieving the power grid and ensuring more efficient energy use by avoiding power losses.

When replacing filter fans, our **Medical** site in Lancaster, USA, relies on a significantly lower wattage of the devices. As a result, the new fans in the cleanrooms consume a total of 20 percent less energy than the previous ones. Last year, 130 of the 334 filters that have to run around the clock were replaced in an initial phase.

Our Self-Supply

We systematically examine opportunities to invest in renewable energy sources in order to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels as well as on market mechanisms. In 2022, we commissioned a photovoltaic system at our **Automotive** location in Kunshan, China. Further implementations to generate our own electricity with photovoltaic systems at our **Automotive** locations are being considered.

A photovoltaic system supplies our **Industrial** recycling location in Geeste-Dalum, Germany, with electricity. At full capacity, it can cover a large part of the demand in summer. Photovoltaic systems are also in operation at the **Industrial** locations in Haren, Germany, Oepping, Austria, and Vadodara, India.

At our German **Medical** locations in Brensbach, Neuhaus am Rennweg and Waldachtal, process-related waste heat is used via heat recovery to supply the administrative buildings and other adjacent areas.

Our Procurement

With the changing conditions on the energy market, procurement in particular is playing a decisive role. To this end we are systematically analyzing options such as the purchase of green electricity and power purchase agreements for renewable energies, i.e. long-term agreements between electricity buyers and producers. At the same time, however, our aim is to reduce procurement on the energy market through systematic efficiency measures and the expansion of our own generation.

Our Objective

As already mentioned, climate is one of the strategic focus topics for our company, one for which we need to develop targets and a roadmap on how to achieve them. In terms of climate, we are able to draw on our already extensive activities in energy efficiency enhancement, self-supply and procurement. With these pillars, we are systematically developing our corporate activities.

PLANET



Conservative Use of Resources

Environmental protection and the conservative use of resources are a matter of course for us as a plastics processing company. We strive to use all resources as efficiently as possible and to handle them responsibly. To this end, we have developed a variety of approaches in our three divisions.

Our Approach

We continuously analyze our material flows and develop measures to reduce waste and waste water in addition to our emissions. Many of our locations are certified in accordance with ISO 14001 for this purpose. This international standard for environmental management specifies requirements for the environmentally friendly alignment of operational processes, for example to reduce the use of hazardous substances.

One of the most important areas of action for us as plastics processors is the conservative use of our resources in the manufacturing process. This especially includes the proactive handling of plastic residues so that they can be avoided or returned to the value chain via a recycling process.

To this end, our **Industrial** division opened its own plastics recycling location in Geeste-Dalum, Germany, in spring 2021. Here, residual plastics from our own production and also from our cus-

tomers are processed into high-quality plastics that can be returned to production. Customers thus have the opportunity to reduce their waste volume, return unused residual plastics from their own production processes and in turn obtain new semi-finished products from these scraps. Product residues from our other locations are also processed in Geeste-Dalum.

As previously mentioned, the use of recycled materials in our **Medical** division is still almost impossible due to regulatory reasons. This makes the responsible use of plastics through optimized product design and the avoidance of plastic residues all the more important. The German **Medical** locations in Neuhaus am Rennweg and Brensbach are part of the Zero Granulate Loss initiative of the German Association for Plastics Packaging and Films (Industrievereinigung Kunststoffverpackungen e.V.). The members of this initiative take proactive measures to continuously minimize the loss of plastic granulates in production processes.

In the **Automotive** division, projects are underway to optimize waste avoidance and increase the recycling rate. With this in mind, new processes and ways of completely reintroducing the plastic waste generated during the production process into the production cycle are being tested. Saving weight and also material to reduce the consumption of resources already plays a major role when developing components. Röchling **Automotive** develops structural components that achieve the required strength through their design, but consume significantly less material than conventional components.

Our Responsible Selection of Raw Materials

We use various raw materials to manufacture our plastic products. These are primarily plastic pellets as well as materials such as wood, glass or resins, depending on the division. The selection of our raw materials is of key importance for sustainable handling.

For example, our **Industrial** division exclusively sources red beech veneer for the production of Lignostone® from suppliers certified in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) product chain. We ensure that no palm oil is used for mass-balanced bioplastics in our Röchling-BioBoom® product family and, when procuring bio-based raw materials for mass-balanced products, favor biocircular raw materials – i.e. raw materials that, like used cooking oil, for example, already have a life cycle behind them.

As part of our Röchling-BioBoom® product family, the PLA BIO bioplastic from our **Automotive** division consists of at least 90 percent ingredients obtained from sugar cane and sugar beets, for example. In the future, we may even use cellulose for this purpose. The ingredients are renewable and at the same time available in abundance. There is no effect on the food chain, because most of the raw materials come from production for industrial purposes. That makes the product sustainable and guarantees reliable availability in almost any quantity.

When selecting raw materials, the main focus in our **Medical** area is on the regulatory aspect to ensure the performance of the products and packaged material as well as patient safety. As part of the ISSC Plus certification held by all German **Medical** locations, we offer mass-balanced, sustainable plastics that are suitable for medical and pharmaceutical applications and that do not compete with food production. However, as already mentioned, in the **Medical** division other focal points such as the design of products and resource-conserving processes for cleanroom production are currently still the better levers for sustainable development.

Number of Certified ISO 14001 Production Locations in the Röchling Group

	2020	2021	2022
	42	42	42



“A central aspect of our responsibility as a family-owned company is the continuous reduction of our ecological footprint. This is why we analyze our material flows and develop measures to reduce waste, emissions, and waste water.”

Marco Sala, EHS Manager Europe Plant Network, Laives, Italy,
& Araia, Spain, Röchling Automotive

Notifiable Environmental Incidents
Within the Röchling Group

from 2020 to 2022

0

PEOPLE



Promoting Corporate Culture

Motivated, qualified, and curious employees are of fundamental importance in securing the future of our company. Recognizing our employees' potential, encouraging them, and helping to develop them is highly important to us. As an international company, we focus on diversity, equal opportunities, and a good work-life balance. This is reflected in a wide range of measures in our three divisions.



Our Approach

Virtual work experience: To get young women interested in technical professions, the HR team at the **Industrial** location in Haren, Germany, has developed a strategy to give them an initial insight into production areas while they are still in school. In addition to STEM clubs and practical projects in production, this includes operating a machine with the help of VR glasses. Under guidance, school children are able to virtually operate an extruder in three-dimensional space. With this virtual work experience, we make plastics processing tangible at any location. For this idea and its implementation, the HR team received the Röchling Group's "Enkel Award". This is awarded every two years to projects within our company that make Röchling more sustainable for future generations. Getting young people interested in technical professions has also been offered for years at many German locations through Girls' and Boys' Day.

Core Talent Program: The internationally-aligned development program in our **Automotive** division has been in place since 2017. Around 60 talented individuals have since been supported in their specialist or management careers. Shared developments are also among the success stories. The focus of this one-and-a-half-year program is on further developing the strengths and development areas of the participants. Support is also provided to encourage their networking with each other and with other specialist departments and other locations. Participants can share best practices and

work together on automotive topics. The division is also pursuing the goal of establishing structured succession planning with the program. Candidates from the talent pool can be proposed and used for internal vacancies worldwide.

Career changers at Röchling Medical: Our **Medical** location in Neuhaus am Rennweg, Germany, offers people looking to change careers with individually tailored concepts. Almost 40 motivated employees have already found their way to Röchling **Medical** in this way. The opportunity to use the in-house training center with its two fully functional extrusion blow molding machines has already helped former bakers, hairdressers, truck drivers, or industrial tailors find their way into the production environment as machine and plant operators. Theoretical training also makes it easier for them to get started.

Parents' afternoons: At our German **Industrial** locations in Lahnstein and Nentershausen, parents' afternoons help to support the work-life balance. This gives the parents of apprentices the opportunity to get to know the company and the trainers who are working with their children during their vocational training. Particularly in the technical area, parents are provided with opportunity to understand a bit more of the apprenticeship content, for example, what the term "extrusion" means. Measures like these are part of the close support provided to apprentices for successful training. This is also reflected in figures. At both locations, more than 20 percent of current employees have successfully completed their training there.

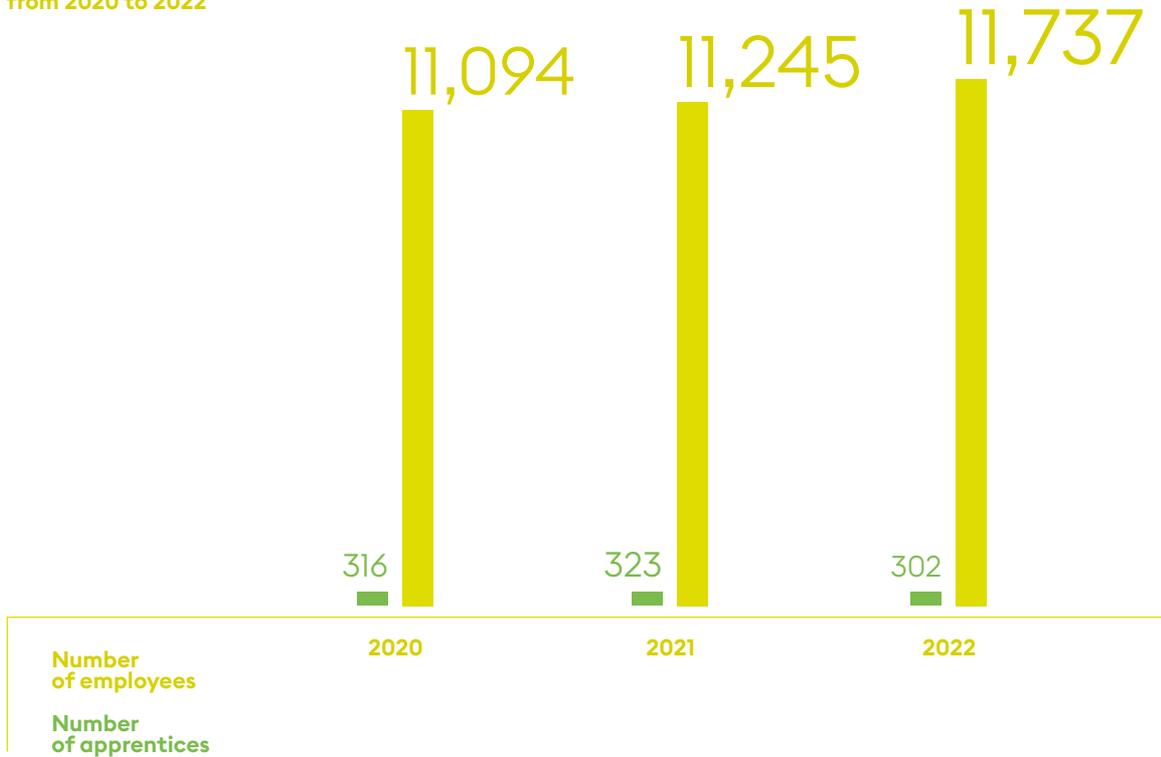
"Promoting and developing the potential of our motivated and qualified employees is highly important to us, and this is key for securing the future of our company."



Pia Palmu, Senior Director HR Global, Röchling Automotive

Number of Employees in the Röchling Group

from 2020 to 2022



Röchling Automotive School: The Röchling **Automotive** School (RAS) offers internal specialist training and thus contributes to high-quality technical training and further education. This involves training in the fundamentals of materials science for plastics or production processes such as welding, injection molding, or additive manufacturing. New learning modules include topics relating to battery solutions or the thermal management of electric vehicles. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, all internal trainers have been qualified to teach their sessions virtually. All RAS modules can therefore be offered in digital form worldwide. Through virtual elements such as plant tours or machine visits, the modules are designed innovatively and convey specialist knowledge accessible from anywhere in the world.

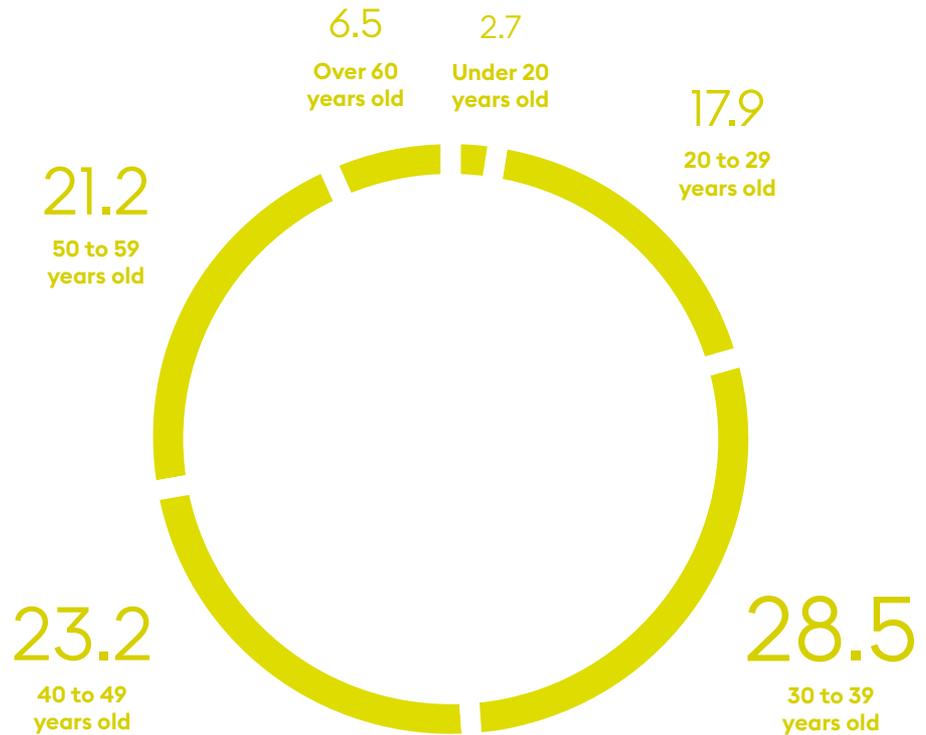
TECHNOLino Plus: Our **Medical** location in Waldachtal, Germany, works closely with an elementary school to give children an insight into the company on two dates during the school year. The apprentices organize the day and also run it. During a tour

of the company on the first date, the students are given a fun insight into the processes of a plastics processing company. At the second event, they are given free rein to use their imagination and make musical instruments with products from the location under slogans such as “Create, build, experience your creativity”.

Work-life balance: As a family-owned company, work-life balance is very important to us. At our locations, we support the work-life balance through various measures that take into account the requirements and circumstances in each place. For example, these include working time models such as flexitime and part-time models or mobile working. Our **Industrial** site in Haren, Germany, has set up a parent-child office. For parents who do not have a childcare option for their children up to the age of twelve due to daycare or school closures, the parent-child office is available. If necessary, they can book the room and bring their child to work with them. The room is equipped with a changing table, a painting table, and a bed for the children. There is also a PC workstation. In this way, Röchling is further improving the work-life balance of its employees.

Age Structure of the Röchling Group Workforce

in percent,
as of September 2022



Pulse survey: To keep its finger on the pulse of the organization, our **Automotive** division has been conducting short annual employee surveys since 2021. With just a few questions, employees provide anonymous feedback on topics such as strategy or sustainability in the company. Both global and local measures are derived from the survey results. In this way, we ensure that our **Automotive** division is continuously improving with the interests of our employees in mind. The new cultural development tool has been well received by the workforce, with around 4,000 employees taking part in each survey. The survey is completely paperless, as employees are invited to participate using a QR code.

Odenwald Career Information Days: Our **Medical** location in Brensbach, Germany, also participates in the Odenwald Career Information Days. Here, companies have the opportunity to present their apprenticeships to schools directly in the classroom. Interested young people can register in advance for the companies and workshops on offer that are of interest to them. The workshops are run jointly by trainers and apprentices.

Women in leadership positions: Women already hold 30 percent of leadership positions throughout the **Medical** division. In particular, our US location in Rochester, the largest in terms of employee numbers, is a pioneer in the medical sector, with 50 percent of leadership positions held by women. We are also promoting this development for the other locations with activities such as INDUSTRIE INTOUCH in South Thuringia. Our **Medical** location in Neuhaus, Germany, regularly opens its doors to present itself as a sustainable company and attractive employer and to take advantage of the opportunity to recruit specialists and managers.



Safe Workplaces

The health of our employees is a top priority for us. Occupational safety, health protection and prevention are firmly anchored in our corporate guidelines. Within our three divisions, we systematically take a wide range of measures to continuously optimize workplace safety and promote the health of our more than 11,700 employees worldwide.

Our Approach

We continuously monitor our work processes for potential hazards. To this end, the occupational safety professionals in our three divisions work together with executives and employees to develop concepts for preventing workplace accidents. In this way, we aim to identify sources of danger at an early stage and avoid risks.

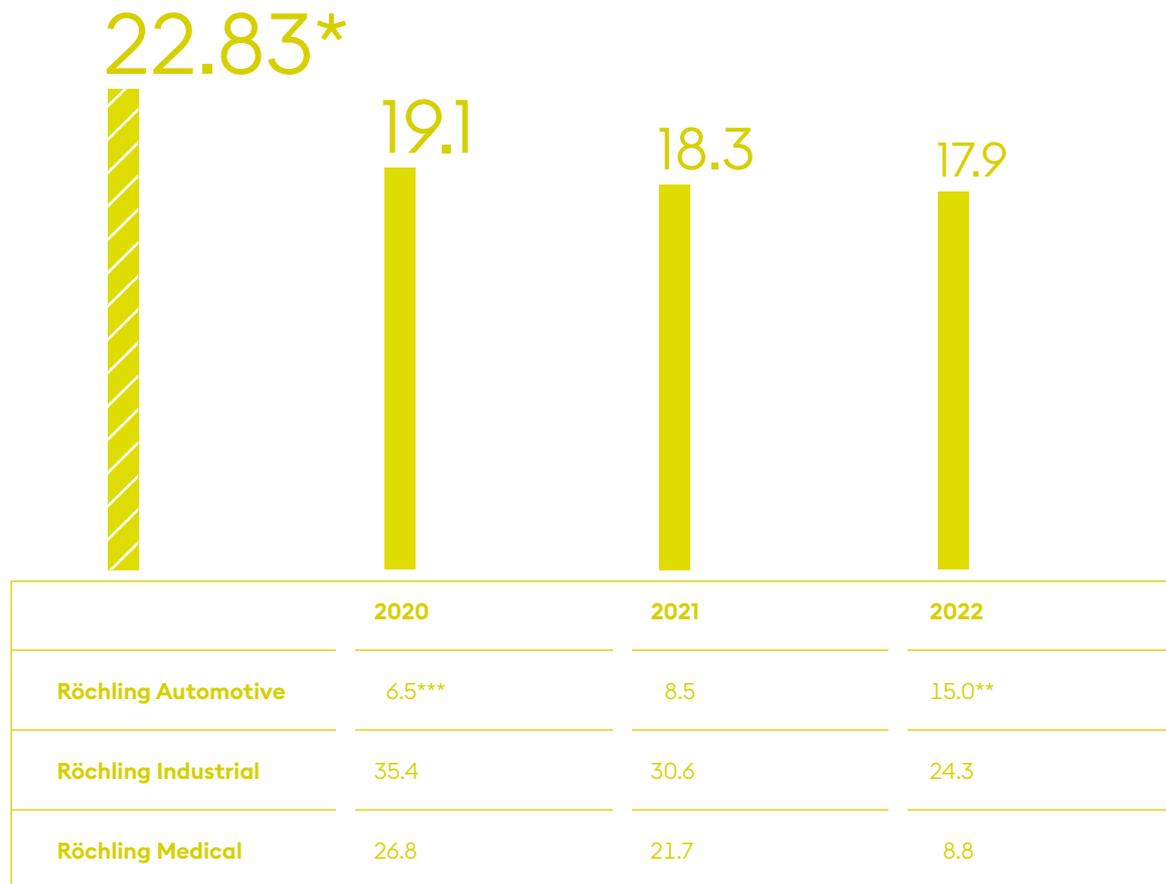
Many of our sites are certified in accordance with ISO 45001, the management system for occupational safety and health. Implementation of this standard supports the systematic integration of occupational health and safety into all business processes and creates an even greater awareness of occupational safety and ergonomics at all levels. We also implement health protection measures at many locations with the help of Responsible Care, a worldwide voluntary initiative within the chemical industry. This initiative aims to improve the health, safety and environmental situation within the companies.

The active involvement of our employees has a key role in all measures. For example, we hold an annual Global Safety Week in the **Automotive** sector. During these safety days, employees are surveyed on occupational safety. The focus is on identifying potential hazards and stressors at the workplace. The feedback is evaluated by safety professionals to identify potential hazards. At the same time, this approach motivates our employees to address the issue of occupational safety.

In our **Medical** division, safety officers in Germany regularly meet to exchange best practices on minimizing risk. This also includes activities to illustrate occupational health and safety issues as part of the annual Sustainability Days held in Brensbach and Neuhaus am Rennweg in Germany, such as on fields of vision when using forklifts or on working while injured. In relation to this, an ideas competition on health and safety was held in 2022, resulting in many ideas for improvement. There is a whole range of other campaigns such as health and safety days, making use of company bike opportunities and joint sports activities.

1,000-People Rate of Reportable Work-Related Accidents in the Röchling Group

converted to the number of 1,000 full-time employees



* Reference value from Federal Statistical Office: commercial economy 2021, source: www.dguv.de

** Data included only for Q3 and Q4 2022 for Röchling Precision Components.

*** In the 2020 Sustainability Report, the value was 7.8.

The introduction of ISO 45001 at the German **Medical** locations in Neuhaus am Rennweg and Brensbach has further successfully sharpened the existing focus on employee health and safety. The trend towards reducing the number of accidents has once again been significantly accelerated.

Training and awareness campaigns also play an important role in promoting sensitivity to workplace hazards. At our **Industrial** location in Haren, Germany, a campaign calls for a vigilant return to work each summer after the plant closure. At the US locations in Cleveland, Gastonia, Ontario and Mount Pleasant, as well as Orangeville in Canada, safety

notices on monitors in the plant and in the offices remind people how to behave safely in the workplace. In Nancy, France, an annual safety campaign raises awareness of the use of appropriate personal protective equipment, while annual fire drills promote safety awareness in Suzhou and Kunshan in China. Vadodara, India, gives special support to employees' health with each employee receiving free vegetables from a company vegetable garden.

Number of Certified ISO 45001 Production Locations in the Röchling Group

	2020	2021	2022
	31	32	33

Our Measures

Depending on the workplace, there are different approaches to promoting employee health and safety. In production, for example, we ensure that suitable personal protective equipment – such as hearing protection, safety gloves or safety goggles – is provided, and that it is appropriate for the requirements of the employees and the working environment. However, many of our employees also have predominantly sedentary jobs. Depending on the location, we support our employees' health with ergonomic office furniture and height-adjustable desks.

An important preventive measure is to promote sporting activities among our employees. Many of our locations also support running events by paying

the entry fees and providing running shirts. We also actively promote sports events organized by employees as well as offer programs such as bike leasing depending on the location. At various locations, our employees are given access to various sports facilities such as gyms, swimming pools, and wellness facilities.

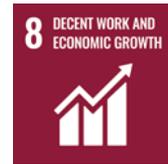
In addition to physical activities, we also promote mental health. For example, at the **Industrial** location in Haren, Germany, there is a counseling service called "RedeZEIT" ("Time to Talk") for employees who are stressed in both their private and professional lives and it aims at reducing their burden while actively influencing their health.

“We are continuously working on improving the safety and health of our employees as well as the people who are actively working on our plant premises. Another important step is to optimize the quality of our processes.”



Johannes Mohs, General Manager Quality, Röchling Industrial

PEOPLE



Humane Behavior

As a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact, we demonstrate that respect for human rights is a key concern for our company. This applies to both our own business operations and our supply chains. In our Code of Conduct, we describe our self-image and our expectations of all employees and business partners. In addition to compliance with human rights, the focus is also on labor and social standards as well as environmental protection, health and safety.

In June 2021, the German Government passed the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act. The aim of the act is to better protect human rights and the environment in the global economy. We are gradually implementing the requirements of the act in a cross-divisional project and are also continuously adapting our sustainability approach.

Our Approach

As a result of the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, we have also appointed our Chief Compliance Officer as Human Rights Officer. Our locations are set up in such a way that potential violations are identified and dealt with together with the Human Rights Officer.

In the 2023 financial year, we also plan to adapt our whistleblower tool to better record information on compliance violations globally and initiate appropriate countermeasures. This platform is also ac-

cessible to external persons and explicitly includes information on potential violations of human rights and environmental standards, both in our business operations and in our supply chain. The information received is systematically processed in a defined manner. If necessary, further measures are taken and the information is taken into account in the risk analysis.

The risk analysis is at the heart of the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act. Its result is the Group-wide identification of global human rights as well as

“Compliance with human rights due diligence and environmental standards in our own business operations as well as in the supply chain forms the basis for Röchling’s actions.”



Holger Funk, Chief Compliance Officer & Human Rights Officer, Röchling Group

environmental risks. The next step is to prioritize the risks and define steps to minimize them in the future. Findings obtained as part of the compliance risk analysis, which takes place regularly, are also incorporated into the analysis of human rights and environmental risks.

As one of the key industries in the German economy with its global production locations and networks of supplier companies, the automotive industry is aware of its great responsibility. The German Government adopted the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP) in December 2016 and industry dialogs were initiated as part of this. Röchling **Automotive** has been involved in this from the outset alongside other companies, as well as associations, trade unions, and civil society organizations, working together with the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) to address the human rights risks in the extensive international supply and value chains of the automotive industry. In the course of this dialog, action guidelines have been developed to enable companies to practically address the challenges of human rights risks and violations with less financial and personnel effort.

We use various software-based systems in our divisions to support compliance with legal requirements. For example, these enable a legal register adapted to the respective location, which covers the areas of individual processes, substances and regulations of the European Union, the respective national laws and even local legislation. These systems allow us to access current laws, directives, and regulations. They also provide assistance on how to implement these in a country- and process-specific manner so that the respective location is able to act in compliance with the law.

ENGAGEMENT



Promoting Work in Associations

Through our work in associations and initiatives, we actively promote sustainable development in the plastics processing industry. The focus is on topics with social and ecological priorities at various levels. The following are some examples of how we use our expertise to promote sustainable development.

Our Approach

We are a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact. This is the world's largest and most important responsible corporate governance initiative. Based on ten universal principles, the UN Global Compact pursues the vision of an inclusive and sustainable global economy for the benefit of all people, communities, and markets. We fully recognize these principles.



Our **Medical** location in Neuhaus am Rennweg, Germany, has been a member of NATHüringen for several years. The sustainability agreement is a voluntary agreement between the state government and the business community in the state of Thuringia and brings together policymakers, administration and companies, in particular regarding topics such as protecting the climate and environment, resource conservation, energy efficiency, and social sustainability.

Our **Automotive** division is involved in the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA), which has set itself the goal of climate-neutral mobility through the use of new technologies. With the VDA, we are part of the "Sustainability in the

Supply Chain" working group. Our **Automotive** CEO Raphael Wolfram also serves on the advisory board of Manufacturer Group III.

As part of the automotive industry dialog, our **Automotive** division is involved in the development of management approaches for implementing human rights due diligence (see p. 35 f.). Our **Automotive** division is also active within the Drive+ platform, which promotes dialog between OEMs and the industry in order to jointly find solutions on the topic of sustainability.

In addition to memberships in associations and initiatives, an important aspect of our commitment is our involvement in standards committees. Our **Industrial** location in Haren, Germany, is part of the Circular Economy standardization roadmap of the German Institute for Standardization (DIN). Its aim is to provide an overview of the status quo of standardization in the context of the circular economy, to identify requirements and challenges, and to derive fields of action for future standards. As part of this standardization roadmap, we are actively involved in shaping the circular economy and thus supporting the responsible use of resources.

ENGAGEMENT



Effective Commitment

Our employees are active at our sites. They promote sustainability locally in a variety of ways and are thus working toward a better world. Below are some examples.

Röchling Celebration Wall

Our **Automotive** plant in Duncan, USA, recently introduced the Röchling Celebration Wall. This is located in the main cafeteria area and serves a unique purpose. By signing this wall, employees commit to serving our customers by maintaining a safe work environment and delivering the best quality parts on time.



Employees at the Duncan, USA, location in front of the Celebration Wall.

Energy Scouts 2022

Every year, apprentices at our **Automotive** location in Worms, Germany, join forces for the Energy Scouts project and conduct a project to save energy at the plant. In 2022, a group of three apprentices addressed the question of how we can achieve energy

savings through efficient temperature control. In practical implementation, the team replaced old temperature control units with more efficient and economical models. As a result, the location not only saves around 145 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually, but also around EUR 43,000 in energy costs per year.

Further Training for Production Employees

At our **Automotive** location in Laives, Italy, we are promoting the further education of our production employees with our own training project, which also gives us the opportunity to counteract the shortage of skilled workers such as millers and toolmakers. For the project, ten volunteers from our production department, who go through a short, unbureaucratic selection process, are trained at a vocational school over a period of around three months. The training content is tailored precisely to our needs as an employer. After successful completion of the 60-hour training program, the participants are taken on as millers or toolmakers.

Climate Pilots

At our **Industrial** location in Haren, Germany, 18 apprentices successfully completed the “Apprentices as Climate Pilots” training program. They learned where and how they can make a contribu-

tion to climate protection in their day-to-day work and personal lives. Using an independently conducted carbon footprint, the apprentices determined their current carbon dioxide emissions in tons per year. They also developed specific project ideas for our **Industrial** division to further promote climate protection and sustainability.



Apprentices at the Haren, Germany, location were trained as climate pilots.

Bees

At our **Industrial** location in Haren, Germany, apprentices are involved with a wildflower project. Honey bees are also established on a wildflower area of around 25,000 square meters. Emsland district is subsidizing the project in an effort to preserve native flora and fauna.



Apprentices look after bees on the company location in Haren, Germany.

Recreational Fun and Professional Care for Children of Employees

Horseback riding, camping, experiencing, discovering – and having fun at the same time! This is what our **Medical** location in Neuhaus am Rennweg, Germany, has been offering school-age children of employees for almost ten years now. Year after year, new activities are put together during the summer

and fall vacations. The five-day adventure camps in the Thuringian Forest are very well received and the feedback from the children is consistently positive.

SIA Project

The Student Engineer Academy (SIA) is a seminar course run by the Technical High School in Nagold, Germany, in cooperation with our **Medical** location in Waldachtal to link school and business. The aim is to combine theory and practice and to promote interest. The students receive an additional practical qualification that gives them an understanding of the professional world. They work closely with our contacts in the company on existing projects and present them to the teachers involved, their parents and company representatives at a graduation ceremony.

Company Bike Initiative (Sponsorship Local Heroes)

Responsible, oriented for the long-term and sustainable. These are the characteristics that distinguish our **Medical** location in Brensbach, Germany. We care deeply about the health of our employees and the Odenwald region. As at many of our locations, employees in Brensbach also have the option of leasing a company bike. As an employee retention measure, a bike tour in the Odenwald region took place last year. The location is also now a sponsor of the “Cycle paths and history around Rodenstein Castle” report by the “My Odenwald” platform.

Volunteer Day in the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan Region

Employees at our location in Mannheim, Germany, take part in the “Wir schaffen was” (“We are getting things done”) volunteer day in the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region. In 2022, they painted two rooms of a residential home for men and women who are temporarily or permanently unable to live alone. By taking part in the Volunteer Day, employees are assuming responsibility for society as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR).



Partner for Ecological and Social Progress

Between 15 and 20 million tons of plastic waste end up uncontrolled in the oceans every year. The vast majority of this waste consists of disposable products and packaging. And even the plastic waste that is properly collected is recycled back into production only to a limited extent. Of the approximately 400 million tons of plastic processed worldwide, less than 10 percent comes from recycling.

This has not only resulted in one of the greatest ecological challenges of our time, but economically, too, it seems urgently necessary to close material cycles much more consistently than in the past.

The non-profit Röchling Foundation is working on this. This supports civil society initiatives and scientific research projects that develop and implement solutions for avoiding and reducing plastic waste. One focus of funding is the development of waste management systems in emerging and developing countries in the global south.

The Sundarbans, an ecologically highly sensitive region on the border with Bangladesh, are located in the Indian state of West Bengal. Here, the non-profit organization **SOCEO**, with financial support from the Röchling Foundation, has worked with municipalities, the local recycling industry, and civil society organizations to establish a system that enables the nationwide collection and sorting of waste and, at the same time, provides the private waste collectors, most of whom live under precarious conditions, with a better social status and a secure income.

In Nepal, the Röchling Foundation is supporting the establishment and operation of recycling centers by the non-profit organization **NIDISI**, while just off the coast of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, the NGO **One Earth – One Ocean** is testing a system for processing plastic waste salvaged from the sea as efficiently as possible with financial assistance from the Röchling Foundation.

In addition, the Röchling Foundation is committed to improving the circular economy at the interface of companies, consumers, and politics. One example of this is **Circular Futures**, a novel collaboration platform that supports sustainable startups in developing their innovations and builds bridges for them with large companies. The Röchling Foundation is one of the first supporters of this ecosystem.

With its own publications and events, the Röchling Foundation is also itself driving the change toward a more sustainable approach to plastics. For example, two more **POLYPROBLEM Reports** were published in 2022. The most recent issue, entitled "Kauf Dich frei" ("Buy yourself free") takes a close look at the opportunities and limits of compensation measures. And the **POLYPROBLEM Stakeholder Dialogue** again brought together leading minds from business, science, politics, and civil society in 2022 – this time in Cologne, Germany.

However, 2022 was a year in which other needs arose for the non-profit foundation of the Röchling family of entrepreneurs in addition to the focus on plastics and the environment. The Röchling Foundation promoted **humanitarian aid for war victims** in Ukraine and for Ukrainian war refugees in Germany.

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