

Sustainability is in our genes



If you trace Vontobel's history back to when it was founded, you can see that responsible entrepreneurship – i.e. a sustainable approach to business – has always been an inherent part of its corporate culture in different respects. The company's economic sustainability has always provided it with solid foundations.

Today, our competencies and our offering in the area of sustainable investing are a strategic area of focus in Vontobel's growth strategy. In terms of environmental sustainability, we want to take targeted measures when conducting our operations to achieve a significant reduction in CO2 emissions and other factors that are harmful to the environment. Vontobel has been carbon neutral since 1 January 2009 and ranks among the most climate-friendly financial institutions according to CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project).

Based on our strong commitment to supporting communities, we invest in topics and projects to promote social sustainability. Vontobel defined its commitment to sustainability in exact terms in 2007 in the form of its 10 sustainability principles. Based on these principles, the Sustainability Committee formulates our sustainability strategy with specific targets. Vontobel's sustainability performance has been recognized by various external organizations.

Vontobel has proven expertise in the field of sustainable investing

As a pioneer in the field, we have offered you a wide range of sustainable investment solutions since the 1990s. As an institutional investor, you can obtain the entire range of

sustainable solutions from us. These include various equity funds in which sustainability aspects form an important criterion for the valuation and selection of companies.

Various theme funds focus on trends such as changes in the energy supply, scarce resources and new technologies. Investors can also participate in sustainability themes in the form of structured products. In addition, Vontobel manages individual, sustainable mandates. We offer modern pension solutions for private individuals and entrepreneurs, combining the advantages of pension instruments with modern and professional wealth management.



Vontobel actively supports sustainable development in its role as an asset manager

Vontobel signed up to the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) in 2010, committing itself to incorporate sustainability principles into the investment process and to encourage other market participants to comply with them. Since 2012, a Group-wide guideline has prohibited investments in companies that manufacture controversial arms. Vontobel is a founding member of Swiss Sustainable Finance (SSF) – an association that aims to strengthen Switzerland's position in the global marketplace for sustainable investing.

Social commitments are part of Vontobel's identity

Since 2005, Vontobel has been a member of the Corporate Support Group, established by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and selected Swiss companies. Thanks to this innovative, long-term partnership, we will be able to provide continuous and efficient humanitarian aid worldwide over the coming years. As part of this partnership, we are launching an internal fundraising initiative for the benefit of the ICRC both in November and December. In addition, Vontobel is one of the supporters of the internationally renowned Munich Security Conference (MSC).

Vontobel has been awarding a prize for young contemporary photography since 2017. "A New Gaze" is open to artists from all over the world who are at the beginning of their careers. Our focus will change from one continent to the next, enabling the winner to implement a new project. The resulting work will be presented in an exhibition in Zurich, accompanied by a catalog.



In addition to the ongoing expansion of our own art collection, we are committed to top institutions of modern art at selected locations. Vontobel is one of the sponsors of PIN – the Association of the Friends of the 'Pinakothek der Moderne' modern art museum in Munich.

Leading external rating agencies have assessed the sustainability of our company and concluded that Vontobel achieves an above-average performance in the area of sustainability. This means that once again in the successful history of the company, external bodies have confirmed that Vontobel has more than met the sustainability requirements that apply at that time.

Looking back in time: The founding generation with Jakob Vontobel

Much of what is key to Vontobel today was already visible in the early years of the company. Vontobel's history dates back to 1924. Even in those difficult years, the founding generation led by Jakob Vontobel was committed to implementing a sound business policy and conservative capital position and thus laid the foundations for the system of values that Vontobel still upholds today.

Vontobel always behaved correctly – both during the ethically difficult National Socialist era and also in respect of the highly sensitive issue of dormant bank accounts held by Jewish clients that arose in the 1990s. These were the findings of independent expert reviews, including an assessment by the Volcker Commission.

Vontobel's sound business policy also proved effective in the case of the US tax dispute with Switzerland: At the end of 2016, Vontobel was able to conclude discussions with the US Department of Justice without paying a financial penalty. Vontobel even emerged from the 2007/2008 financial crisis largely unscathed.

A moderate approach: The second generation led by Dr Hans Vontobel

The closest equivalent to the term sustainability may well be 'moderation'. The original definition of sustainability is: To only harvest as much wood from the forest as can be regenerated naturally within a foreseeable period of time.

Dr Hans Vontobel was committed to the principle of moderation throughout his life. He was the son of Jakob Vontobel and, from 1943 onwards, spent decades working tirelessly for the company as a member of the second generation. He also brought an entirely new dimension to Vontobel's system of values – that of social commitment.

The third generation: Dr. Hans-Dieter Vontobel creates a modern form of corporate governance

When the topic of sustainability gained a further dimension – corporate governance – in the 1990s, the third generation with Dr. Hans-Dieter Vontobel already had very sustainable foundations on which to build. Vontobel adopted the legal form of a corporation ahead of other banks and established a management board to create a broader basis for decision-making. In addition, Vontobel implemented a modern employee share-based benefit programme in 2005 to enable all employees to systematically participate in the success of the company. Furthermore, Dr Hans-Dieter Vontobel decided to cease proprietary trading activities at Vontobel as early as 1987.

The fourth generation: Dr. Maja Baumann and Björn Wettergren carry Vontobel's values into the future

At the General Meeting of Shareholders 2016, Dr Maja Baumann, granddaughter of Dr Hans Vontobel, and Björn Wettergren, his great-nephew, were elected as members of the Board of Directors of Vontobel Holding AG representing the founding families. They are the fourth generation of the families to assume a position of responsibility within the company. They both feel committed to upholding the values of previous generations and ensure that Vontobel continues to write its corporate history in terms of sustainability over the coming decades.