

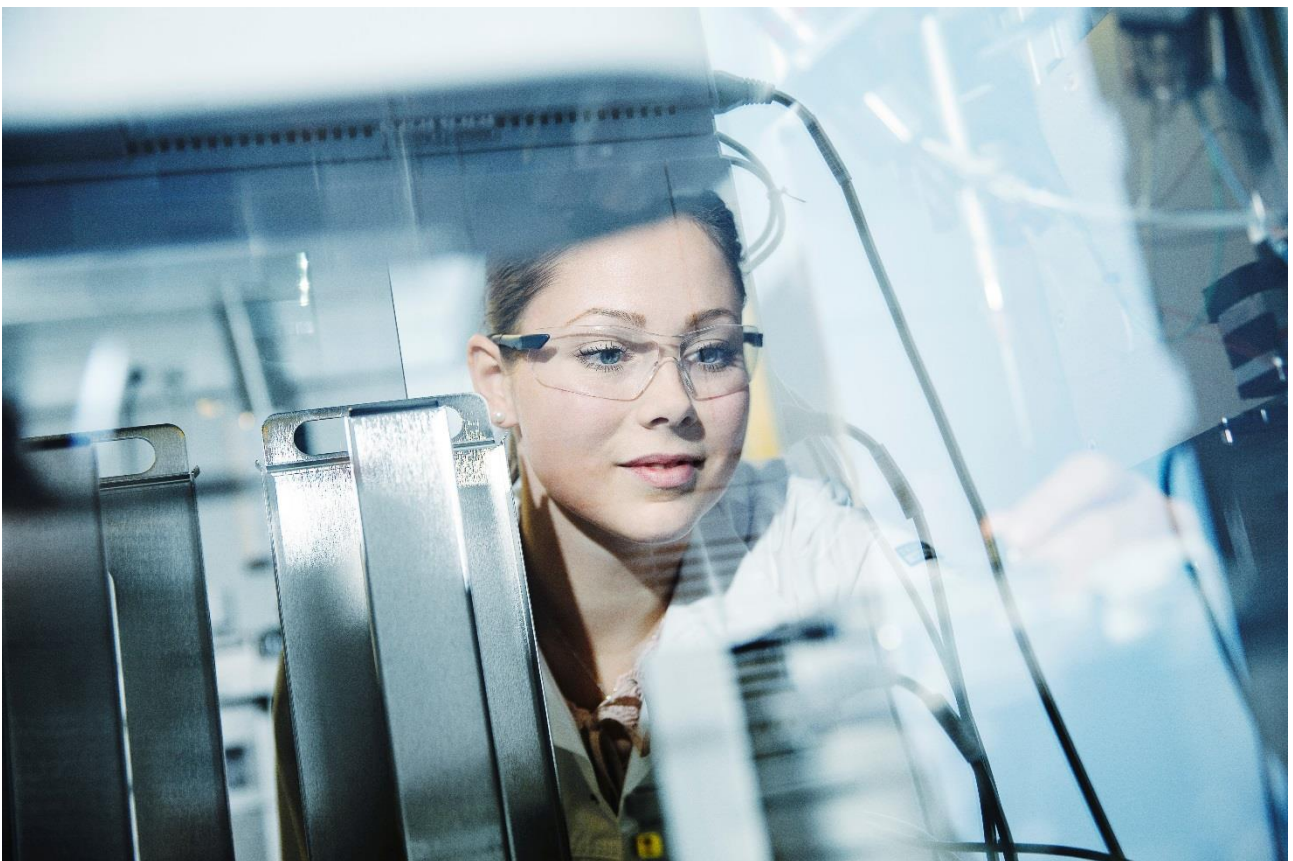
Report

Communication on progress (COP)

Annual report to United Nations Global Compact

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Preface

SINTEF became member of UN Global Compact in 2009, and this is our eight communication of progress report.

SINTEF is a private, not-for-profit research institute, which is organized as a foundation with subsidiaries. Through first-rate solution-oriented research and knowledge generation, SINTEF creates significant value for its Norwegian and international customers, the public sector and society as a whole. Our strategy lays a heavy emphasis on SINTEF's social responsibility, which is to develop society through research and innovation.

As SINTEF's direct activities by themselves is performed in accordance with the UN Global Compact principles, this COP will mainly describe the content of our research activities and how the results from this research have an impact on the global environment and society in a way that will support the Global Compact principles.

Statement of continued support – Technology for a better society

SINTEF is committed to contribute to a sustainable future, to human rights, labour rights, sound environment and anti-corruption and to comply with the ten universal principles of the UN Global Compact.

SINTEF acts in accordance with the principles by the way by the way we conduct our own operations. As an independent research institute we also contribute actively by conducting research that contribute to a better society.

We are convinced that research plays an essential role respecting both the Global Compact principles and to reach the 17 UN Sustainability development goals, set to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. As an independent research institute, SINTEF aims to contribute actively with our research. This is at the core of our business, and in line with our vision: Technology for a better society.

This Communication on progress report presents SINTEF's policies and commitments on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. We also present examples on our research activities in 2017, relevant for Global Compact issue areas. This expresses our continued support and commitment for the principles.



Alexandra Bech Gjørsvik
CEO



Sustainable development goals – 17 goals to transform our world

On September 25th 2015, a new sustainable development agenda set 17 goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all - each goal with specific targets to be achieved in 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals see environment, economy and social development as a whole.

SINTEF believes that technological development is an important basis for UN's ambitious goals. Most technologies and solutions developed by SINTEF are closely linked to the areas covered by the UN Goals and can be an important part of our future solutions for a sustainable society. Renewable energy, new and clean industry, sustainable food, clean water and a clean ocean are core topics in SINTEF.

In future reporting we will to a larger degree relate information about our research activities to the sustainable development goals, and thus share our knowledge to contribute to solve the big challenges of our time.

Human rights

All activities in SINTEF shall adhere to the principles laid down in our ethical guidelines. The documents are easily found on our [website](#). The main document, our "[Ethical compass](#)" states among other things that:

- SINTEF shall always ensure neutrality related to all political parties and political decision-making processes in their activities.
- All people are equally valued by SINTEF. No form of discrimination is acceptable, whether on the grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or age.
- SINTEF employees have the right to deny the participation in research projects if the content of the projects are in conflict with their personal religious or ethical conviction.
- Ethical Principles shall be an integrated part of SINTEF's Management Principles, and following up our ethical guidelines is a responsibility of line management.
- SINTEF expects and requires our suppliers and partners to share our ethical foundations. Suppliers and partners who are involved in our activities must accept SINTEF's ethical guidelines in writing.
- SINTEF will work to achieve a good work environment characterised by equality and opportunity.

In order to ensure that these principles are followed, management procedures in SINTEF include the following tools:

- The document "SINTEF's statement of corporate business ethics and social responsibility on entry into contracts", which is used as an addendum to all subcontracts to ensure that our subcontractors are not in direct conflict with the ten principles.
- The document "Supplier Evaluation Questionnaire", which must be submitted and accepted for all major suppliers to SINTEF before contracts of delivery may be signed.
- Participation in national Research Ethics Committees.
- SINTEF's Ethical Ombudsman, who shall be appointed directly by the SINTEF President, and whose responsibility is to investigate whether our ethical principles are followed, and to receive and handle ethical complaints from employees or clients.
- Ethics module in SINTEF's internal training courses for new employees and new managers.
- Ethics module easily available from the front page of the SINTEF intranet.

Whenever SINTEF wants to establish a new international office abroad, a risk analysis shall be performed, where ethics and CSR aspects are part of the analysis. A similar risk analysis will be performed for projects where part of the work is performed in a country outside EU, Canada or US.

SINTEF also contributes to the improvement of global human rights through our research and development work within the health research field, like research on hospital patient treatments (diagnosis and cure). Much research activities are also performed to improve the life quality of the elderly or the disabled. Examples are found in Appendix A.

Labour

SINTEF's policy on employees focuses on the following principles:

- SINTEF shall be an attractive place to work, offering unique prospects for those with the ability and drive to develop their potential.
- SINTEF shall ensure that high ethical standards and awareness of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) are applied to all its activities.
- SINTEF shall offer a work environment in which its staff are respected and appreciated, and where they are given the opportunity to develop their abilities in cooperation with their colleagues.
- SINTEF shall offer professional challenges and tasks that have a high value for its customers and society.
- SINTEF shall recruit and keep competent people in a global labour market.
- SINTEF shall encourage team spirit, creativity and initiative in its scientific groups.
- SINTEF shall develop leadership that is explicit, inclusive and inspiring.

To increase our focus on these themes, to exchange experience with other research institutions about HR-strategies, and to further commit ourselves to these principles, SINTEF has signed the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers. We are also participating in the common development of HR strategy for researchers.

SINTEF involves their trade union organizations in all discussions regarding issues involving employees and organizational changes. Our employees are organized within 6 different organizations, and SINTEF maintains a more or less identical collective agreement with all of them. In addition to questions of remuneration, the collective agreement regulates issues like

- Equal rights policy
- Recruitment policy
- Advancement policy
- Family policy
- Collective bargaining
- Employee representation in the SINTEF Council and the SINTEF Board
- Paid time to work as an employee representative
- Cooperation between SINTEF and the union.

Membership in trade unions is voluntary and member lists are confidential. However, the number of members in each of the six trade union organizations in SINTEF is public and shows that two thirds of our employees have chosen to become a trade union member.

In the UNIVERSUM evaluation of attractive working sites, the Norwegian university students within technology ranks SINTEF among the most attractive employers in Norway, and in the Karrierebarometeret evaluation of attractive working sites, SINTEF ranked no. 1 for 2018.

SINTEF employees are strongly involved in the development and implementation of [HSE policies](#). This happens both through their elected HSE representatives, but also through strong awareness and considerations in their research activities.

Every second year SINTEF issues a major anonymous inquiry among all employees, in order to evaluate the state of the working conditions and working environment. The result of this inquiry is distributed to all managers in our organizations, and their management performance is subsequently measured by how well they manage to improve conditions based on the inquiry.

SINTEF has also entered into a framework agreement with Norwegian State authorities: “Cooperation Agreement on a More Inclusive Working Life” (the “IA treaty”). The main goal of the IA agreement is to *“improve the working environment, enhance presence at work, prevent and reduce sick leave and prevent exclusion and withdrawal from working life”*. The secondary goals of the agreement are:

- Reduction in sick leave.
- Prevent withdrawal and increase employment of people with impaired functional ability.
- Stimulate older employees to continue working.

All SINTEF employees work in our research facilities in Norway and Denmark. However, SINTEF recruits scientific personnel of all nationalities, and presently persons from 75 different countries work in our organizations. 23 per cent of our employees were born and raised in other countries than Norway. SINTEF has set up an integration programme for new employees from other countries and their families. The programme offers expatriate services, free Norwegian classes and teaching in English in the SINTEF School. Diversity management is one of the topics. The Work Environment Survey has documented that our colleagues from other countries are pleased with working in SINTEF.

One of the aims of SINTEF is to raise the proportion of female research staff and managers. As of May 2018, 34% of our staff were females, and 33% of our managers were women. The President of the SINTEF Group is a woman. SINTEF attempts to recruit women to new positions and to promote female managers from its own ranks. In 2014, a project co-funded by the Research Council of Norway, was launched to encourage the development of a better gender balance in top-level academic positions and research management. This project is expected to provide SINTEF and other Norwegian research institutions with useful knowledge, and to increase the proportion of female management staff in SINTEF.

Several of SINTEF’s research projects are aimed at improvement of working conditions, in particular improving the safety of employees in high-risk occupations. Examples may be found in Appendix A.

Environment

SINTEF's [environmental policy](#) was revised in 2016 and states that *"On the background of our vision of "Technology for a better society", all aspects of SINTEF's activities will be based on our concern for the external environment. SINTEF's environmental policy aims to ensure that both our research itself, and the manner in which we operate, reflect considerations for the external environment. It also intends to ensure that our own environmental performance is upgraded on a continuing basis."*

SINTEF is committed to:

- work for establishment of national and international R&D programs aimed at development of environmental-friendly technologies
- contribute to the research and development of environmentally friendly solutions through our projects
- emphasize environmental issues in our investments in knowledge development and laboratory facilities
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions, choose energy friendly solutions and avoid harmful emissions to land, air and water
- communicate knowledge, develop solutions and provide research-based knowledge as a basis for environmental-political public debate
- satisfy applicable legal requirements and other requirements we impose on us regarding our environmental aspects

SINTEF has established a common environmental action plan whose significant aspects include energy-efficient operation and the responsible treatment of waste. All of SINTEF's eight institutes have drawn up their own local environment action plans, and the SINTEF Group is also certified in accordance with ISO 14001. In 2016, there were no reported major incidents that affected the physical environment.

However, the major contribution from SINTEF to the fulfillment of the UN Global Compact principles is our extensive research activity within energy and environmental research for our clients. When our clients apply new environmental-friendly technology developed by SINTEF, the global ecological footprint is reduced far more than what is possible by implementation of improved environmental performances within our own activities.

Creating new knowledge contributing to the development of new medicines, health technologies, securing safe supply of food and water are also prioritized areas.

Part of the research related to environmental improvement concerns the research on energy efficiency, transport and infrastructure, renewable energy production, carbon capture and storage (CCS) and better and more environmental-friendly food production technologies. Similarly, our research on noise reduction in populated areas should be included here. More details on our research activities may be found in Appendix A.

Anti-corruption

SINTEF executes a strict policy regarding corruption in all its forms. Our [ethical guidelines](#) document states that “...*Corruption undermines confidence in a state governed by law and democratic institutions, weakens ethical and moral values, hinders rationalization and efficiency and undermines all forms of business activity and free competition. The SINTEF Group distances itself from all forms of corruption and will make active efforts to ensure that it does not occur in our commercial activity.*”

The document also states that SINTEF will work to prevent practices of minor payment and that SINTEF will compete on a fair and ethical basis within the framework of current rules of competition and will not prevent others from competing with us. The ban on bribery in SINTEF includes all kinds of improper benefits, not only money, and applies both to the private and public sectors.

The anti-corruption ideas are mandatory topics in internal training courses for new employees and new managers and are also regularly discussion topics on larger management meetings.

In order to further support this policy, SINTEF has since 2007 been a member of the international anti-corruption organization Transparency International.

To make sure that corruption practices are not developed in any parts of the organization, SINTEF encourages whistle-blowing and has established confidential reporting channels to the ethical ombudsman in SINTEF.

Appendix A

In this appendix we present some examples on our research activities in 2017, relevant for Global Compact issue areas. The descriptions have previously been published on SINTEF's web during 2017, and are linked to the web-site:

Researchers working on a green solution to emissions from industrial regions

Proposals for technological solutions that will result in significant CO₂ emissions reductions in six industrial regions in Europe, are now being drawn up as part of a recently launched joint European research project. [*Read more*](#)

Helping vulnerable young people

According to new research, the recipe for success relies on three ingredients being permanently in place. [*Read more*](#)

A SINTEF-coordinated EU project. An important step towards renewable hydrogen

Technology tailored to convert solar and wind energy into zero-emissions hydrogen fuel is about to be tested at larger scales than ever before as part of a SINTEF-coordinated EU project. [*Read more*](#)

Living with zero-emission technology

How does technology change people, and how do people change in response to technology? Sixteen people volunteered to live in a high-tech, zero-emission house to help researchers answer those exact questions. [*Read more*](#)

Super microscopes help make greener batteries

Researchers rely on super microscopes to develop more efficient next-generation batteries. [*Read more*](#)

Norwegian superfluid is now helping brain surgeons

The fluid, which resembles brain tissue, makes ultrasound images easier to interpret during an operation. This will make it easier for surgeons to remove brain tumours more accurately. [*Read more*](#)

A future for skiing in a warmer world

As the world struggles to make progress to limit climate change, researchers are finding ways to adapt to warmer winter temperatures — by developing environmentally friendly ways of producing artificial snow. [Read more](#)

Testing under way for the world's first autonomous container vessel

Model tests of the world's first battery-driven, autonomous container vessel are under way, tested in SINTEF's Ship Model Tank. [Read more](#)

A “health center” for juvenile salmon

The condition of the water in salmon hatcheries can tell us a great deal about when and why outbreaks of disease occur. Now, SINTEF researchers are about to expose the water's secrets, both to prevent suffering in fish and to save the aquaculture industry a great deal of money. [Read more](#)

Research into 200-metre-high turbines

Research scientists are collaborating with industry to find ways of building wind turbines up to 200 metres high. [Read more](#)

Hoping to treat osteoarthritis using artificial cartilage tissue

A Norwegian-Swiss research team has succeeded in growing cartilage tissue cells using algae. Moreover, the new cells can reduce joint inflammation. This news gives hope for people suffering from arthrosis, also known as osteoarthritis. [Read more](#)