

ENA's ambition for sustainability.

Sustainability is an essential topic in the European nursery industry. Through numerous measures, the nurseries are doing everything possible to produce plants and trees in the most environmental friendly way.

Time is running out for the answers we need to find to the signals that nature, the economy and our social life send out. We can't go on the way we've set our lives up to now. This is a dead-end and puts a healthy future at risk for all. That is why sustainability is essential, not just for the nurseries but for all of us.

Sustainable development aims to meet the needs of current generations without hindering future generations from meeting their needs. A comprehensive approach is needed, in which economic, social and environmental measures mutually reinforce each other. For example, sustainability is an important issue in many tenders and candidates with a green profile quickly have an edge over polluting fellow candidates



The pursuit of sustainability is an essential topic in the European nursery industry.

Also, to balance and continuously improve the three elements of performance: People, Planet and Profit.

A green image contributes to the success of a company.

As the horticulture sector, with many small businesses, all together, we make a significant additional contribution to sustainability because there is no other product that is more sustainable as a tree, shrub or any live plant.

The products of the European nurseries make our world worthwhile and possible for living in. Green areas in our living environment benefit more than just our health and well-being. It also facilitates water management and promotes biodiversity in built-up areas, and can help reduce noise pollution. It also facilitates water management and promotes biodiversity in built-up areas, and it helps raise the property value of homes and offices.

The key to unlocking a move towards a more sustainable horticulture sector is the development of a shared vision and to create a structure where current and future sustainability issues can be tackled on a sector level.



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Presented at the ENA General Assembly in June 2019, the five Sustainable Development Goals, used for good sustainable practices in the horticultural sector, are now part of ENA's ambition for a sustainable nursery industry.

Sustainability for ENA means continuously re-thinking what we do and how we do it to expand further our contribution to a safe and liveable world.

ENA has defined five sustainability focus areas that are important for our stakeholders and ourselves. Governments and investors like to work together with environmentally conscious companies.

Affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, climate action, life on land and, of course, partnerships are the key to achieve these goals. Each member organisation of ENA wants to demonstrate how hard the horticulture sector in several countries is working to achieve sustainability. It costs a little time and trouble, but it offers excellent advantages and will be the license to produce and deliver in the near future.

The percentage of consumers paying attention to sustainability when buying products increased to 53 % in 2019 from 46% in 2018, and they are willing to pay more for sustainable products. It means the selection, development, and setting up of more sustainable practices that cost a little time and trouble. Over the long term (if properly done), it saves money and time and can avoid some problems.

The main issues for our horticulture sector are:

- Energy (SDG #7)
- Work conditions (SDG #8)
- Climate (SDG #13)
- Biodiversity (SDG #15)
- Transparency and traceability (SDG #17)

The five Sustainability Development Goals for ENA are:



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it for jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential. Working towards this goal is especially important as it interlinks with other Sustainable Development Goals. Focusing on universal access to energy, increased energy efficiency, and the increased use of renewable energy through new economic and job opportunities is crucial to creating more sustainable and inclusive communities and resilience to environmental issues like climate change.

However, the challenge is far from being solved; there needs to be more access to clean fuel and technology. More progress needs to be made to integrate renewable energy into end-use applications in buildings, transport and industry. Public and private investments in energy also need to be increased, and there needs to be more focus on regulatory frameworks and innovative business models to transform the world's energy systems.

Sustainable Development Goal 7 calls on every member of ENA to accelerate sustainable energy solutions.

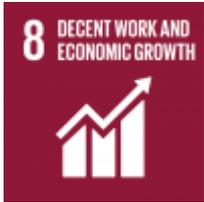
ENA members are minimising energy consumption and enhancing energy use. Greenhouses are maximally used for solar energy. Sustainable entrepreneurship means consciously dealing with energy. By investing in energy and using it sparingly, companies save a lot on their annual energy bills.

In the ongoing energy transition, all ENA members should provide innovative solutions, focus on their own carbon footprint and promote the energy efficiency of their offices and fleet of vehicles.



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Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. Job opportunities and decent working conditions are also required for the whole working-age population. There needs to be increased access to financial services to manage incomes, accumulate assets and make productive investments. Increased commitments to trade and horticulture infrastructure will help increase productivity and reduce unemployment levels.

A sustainable economy has an impact on practically all aspects of human life and well-being. The creation of such employment will remain a major challenge for all ENA members.

Nurseries make sure that both workers and owners, health and well-being, become and stay safe. Existing labour law and collective agreements are respected. The basic principle of social sustainability is the starting point for human resources policy.

ENA members treat people with dignity and respect and offer equal opportunities for all, based on performance and development, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or status.

Responsible pest and disease control is critical to the safety and health of people working with plants to minimise the environmental impact and ensure good agricultural practices.

The cultivation is favoured by varieties that are resistant as possible to plant diseases and pests. Only approved plant protection products are used to keep the plants healthy.

Because the nursery industry is a labour-intensive sector, we must achieve a higher level of economic productivity. The benefits of shifting one's business model towards more diversification, technological upgrading and innovation could be clearly presented (e.g. minimising risk of loss, preserving capital, generating returns, automation, productivity and communication).



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Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities continue to rise and accelerate climate change. Global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions have increased by almost 50 per cent since 1990 and are now at their highest levels in history. Continuing with 'business as usual' is not a feasible option.

Climate change is now affecting every country. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives today and even more tomorrow. Weather patterns are changing, sea levels are rising, and weather events are becoming more extreme. Without action, the world's average surface temperature is likely to surpass 3 degrees centigrade this century.

Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable companies to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economies. The pace of change is quickening as more companies turn to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emissions and increase adaptation efforts.

The products of our nurseries store CO₂ and also make climate change manageable. Climate change, however, is a global challenge that does not respect national borders. It is an issue that requires solutions that need to be coordinated at an international level to move toward a low-carbon economy. ENA members are keen to act in a climate-friendly manner. For instance, by sustainably using peat or buy sustainable alternatives.

Plastic has its place, and that place is not in the environment. We want to keep this valuable material where it should be in the circular economy, where it can be reused, recycled or composted.

We aim to choose packaging materials that are recycled or recovered in the countries where we sell our products through our target to ensure that all our plastic packaging is reusable, recyclable, or compostable.

A more circular approach is needed, where we not only use less packaging but design the packaging we do use so it can be reused, recycled or composted. More circular use of materials means lower costs and less waste. It means new sources of value for our customers and consumers, better risk management of raw materials, and improved approaches to the supply chain.



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Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

In the past 50 years, changes in biodiversity have occurred more rapidly than at any other time in human history. Habitat change from harvesting natural resources for industrial production and urbanisation is one of the most important causes of biodiversity loss,

Forests cover 30.7 per cent of the Earth's surface. Besides providing food security and shelter, they are key to combating climate change, and protecting biodiversity and the indigenous population's homes. By protecting forests, we will also be able to strengthen natural resource management and increase land productivity.

Deforestation and desertification, caused by human activities and climate change, pose major challenges to sustainable development and have affected the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the fight against poverty.

The term biodiversity refers to the variety of life on Earth and all its levels and can encompass the evolutionary, ecological and cultural processes that sustain life. Biodiversity is vital to most aspects of our lives. We value biodiversity for what it provides to humans and for the value it has on our production.

Healthy and fertile soil is the basis for all plant growth. Already today, the nurseries are characterised by high biological diversity. Healthy plants can only grow on healthy soil. The soil, and its good structure, is the fundamental prerequisite for nursery production. Fertilisation is carried out precisely and in optimal quantities.

The production limits the spread of Invasive Alien Species through the product mix and culture observation. In Europe, the identification of IAS and quarantine pests and their removal and destruction is made in such a way that they cannot spread to the environment.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

Cross-cutting sustainable development issues require solutions that work across different sectors and levels of governance. Sustainable development Goal 17 ensures that individual actors and institutions are not left alone to deal with environmental degradation.

A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These partnerships, built upon principles and values, a shared vision and shared goals that place people and the planet at the centre, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level.

Nurseries are mainly located in small localities, and they support local communities economically and socially. They employ local subcontractors, professionals and students.

Long-term investments are needed in our horticulture sector. These include sustainable energy, infrastructure and transport, as well as biodiversity, information and communications technologies.

Revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development. Most of the challenges demand an international approach. SDG 17 focuses on creating a future perspective for all, in which today's young people will get their place. That is why we must take today's young people into this process and play a clear and recognisable role.

One of the ENA's strength lies its network, and that one end of its network (the nurseries) are major actors in communities. That is why it is important that the ENA and all its network work together towards sustainability and align their vision for a more sustainable tomorrow in the sector. Therefore, ENA must seek collaboration between the several organisations of the member states.

Building on our Sustainable Development Goals, these targets put us on a path to achieve carbon neutrality, eliminate plastic waste in our environment, and increase our positive impacts on society, our customers and also our business.

ENA Sustainability Working Group, chaired by Mr Harm Horlings.
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