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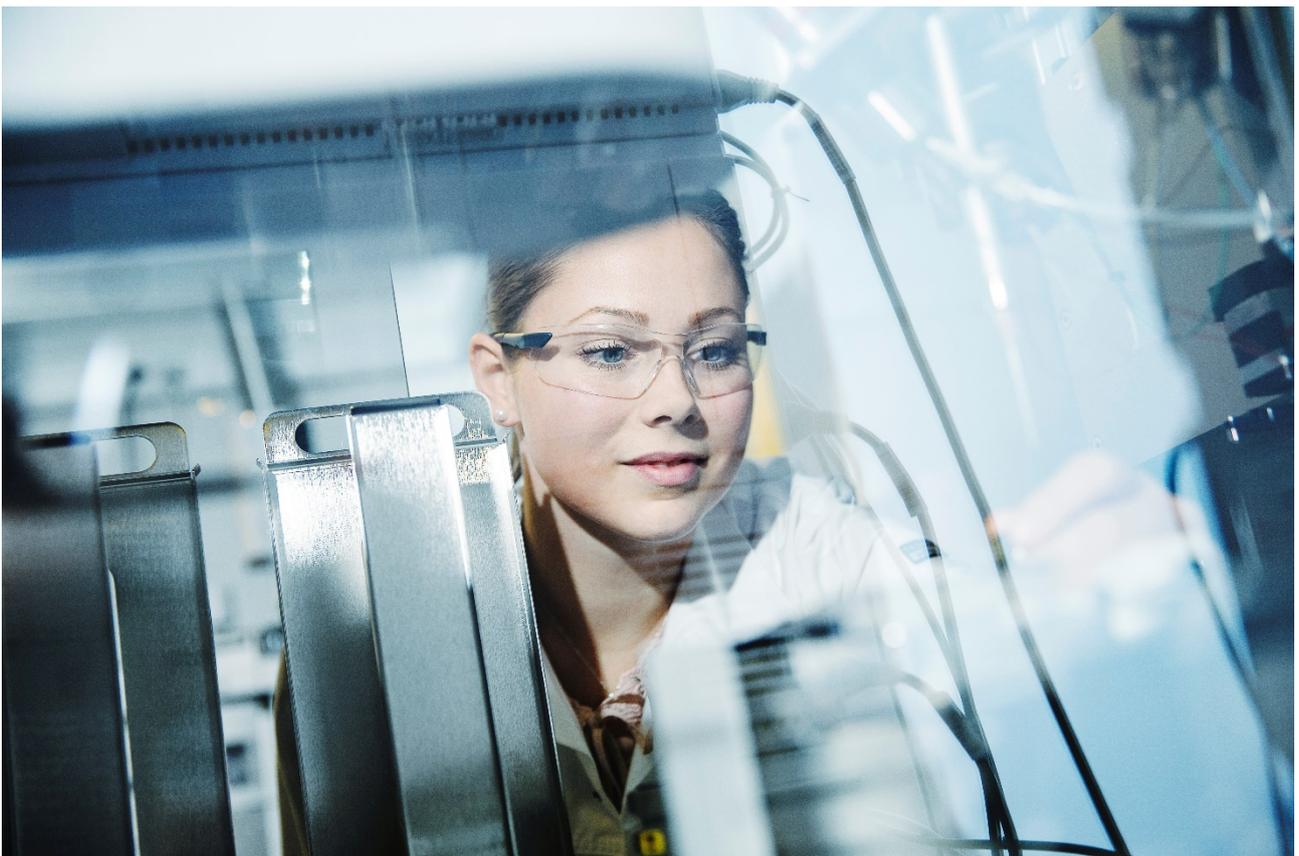
Report

Communication on progress (COP)

Annual report to United Nations Global Compact

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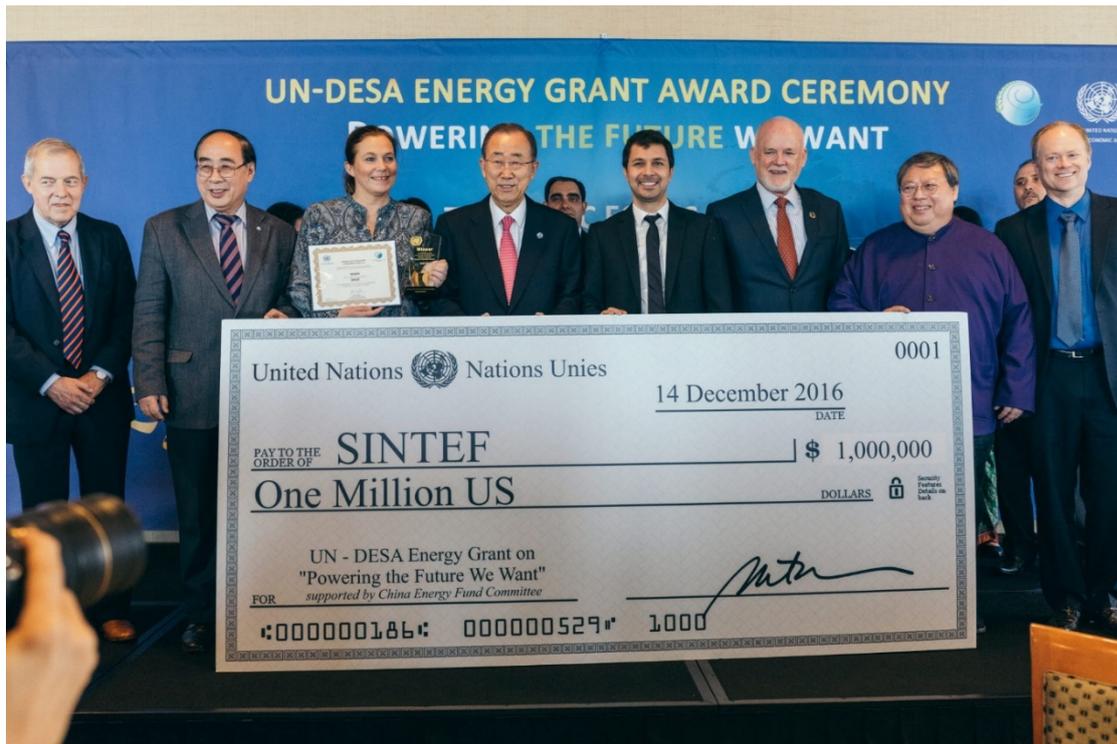
Preface

SINTEF became member of UN Global Compact in 2009, and this is our seventh 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



(Photo: Johannes Berg, NTB Production)

On December 14, 2016, I had the honour of receiving a [UN sustainability award](#) on behalf of SINTEF. The award was handed over by the UN Secretary General, honouring "past and current leadership and innovative practises in advancing energy for sustainable development".

The award gives us great pride and inspiration in our daily work. We are convinced that research plays an essential role in the work 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 by doing research that contributes to a better society. This is at the core of our business, and in line with our vision: Technology for a better society.

We are committed to contribute to a sustainable future, to human rights, labour rights, sound environment and anti-corruption to comply with the ten universal principles of the UN Global Compact. This Communication on progress report demonstrates some of our efforts during 2016. This expresses our continued support and commitment for the principles.

This report presents SINTEF's policies and commitments on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. We also present examples on our research activities in 2016, relevant for Global Compact issue areas.



Alexandra Bech Gjørsvik

President

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](#)" was revised in 2014, and 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 refuse the participation in research projects if the content of the projects is 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 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, is 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.

Risk analysis shall be performed, where ethics and CSR aspects are part of the analysis, for establishment of international offices and projects.

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 may be 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 of 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.

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. 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 6 trade union organizations in SINTEF is public, and shows that two thirds of our employees have chosen to become a trade union member.

SINTEF participate in different evaluations of working sites, among others the Universum-evaluation. The surveys document that SINTEF ranks among the most attractive employers in Norway, for students and employees within technology.

SINTEF employees are actively 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 offices and research facilities in Norway, Denmark and Belgium. However, SINTEF recruits scientific personnel of all nationalities, and presently persons from 74 different countries work in our organizations. 22 per cent of our employees were born and raised in other countries than Norway. SINTEF has set up an integration program for new employees from other countries and their families. The program 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. In 2016 35% of our staff were females, and 37% 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 2015 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 standards 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 SINTEF's seven 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.

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

Part of the research related to environmental improvement concerns the research on energy efficiency, renewable energy production, carbon capture and storage (CCS) and better and more environmental-friendly food production technologies.

Thus, the major contribution from SINTEF to the fulfillment of the UN Global Compact principles is the results from our research activities. When new environmental-friendly technology developed by SINTEF is taken into use, the environmental impact is far more significant than what is possible by implementation of improved environmental performances within SINTEF's own activities.

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, but 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 2016, relevant for Global Compact issue areas. The descriptions have previously been published on SINTEF's web during 2016, and are linked to the web-site:

SINTEF receives UN award for green leadership

After winning first prize in a UN competition, SINTEF will be leading a project to promote solar-powered electric vessels in North Africa and the Middle East. [Read more](#)

Working to reduce waste from fisheries

Every year 340,000 tonnes of usable whitefish by-product are discarded into the sea. With the help of research from SINTEF, the fisheries industry is identifying ways of halting this practice. [Read more](#)

Energy saving in shopping malls

Shopping centres are major energy consumers with significant opportunities for savings. Researchers are currently checking the impact of savings made on lighting and air-conditioning at a shopping mall in Trondheim. [Read more](#)

Research to reduce climate change risks

The research centre Klima2050 will reduce the societal risks associated with climate changes and enhanced precipitation and flood water exposure within the built environment. [Read more](#)

Microscopic sensor for more precise radiology treatments

A team of Norwegian, French and Australian researchers is the first in the world to succeed in quantifying the effects of radiation on individual cancer cells. This means that radiation therapies can be tailored to individual tumors and thus be more effective. [Read more](#)

Researching the dark side of microplastics

Minute particles of plastic, called microplastics, are everywhere. An international research team is investigating how toxic microplastics are to marine animals such as plankton, crabs and fish, and to find out if such plastics accumulate in the food chain. [Read more](#)

Ultrasound detects high cranial pressure

An anatomical discovery, combined with Norwegian ultrasound technology, is about to save lives and prevent brain damage. [Read more](#)

[Rare disease challenges ICT researchers](#)

People with cystic fibrosis (CF) need help to ensure they are getting correct nutrition and the right amount of enzymes. They also need constant reminders. Researchers are now developing a digital support device to promote autonomy, but are finding that this is no easy task. [Read more](#)

[Scandinavian experiment receives prestigious sustainable energy award](#)

The EcoGrid EU project, an energy-market concept empowering households to manage renewables, wins one of the EU Sustainable Energy Awards 2016. [Read more](#)

[Commercializing gas bubbles for cancer drug delivery](#)

Researchers are now working to design stable micro-bubbles which, combined with ultrasound, can deliver cancer drugs straight to the target tumor. [Read more](#)

[Eco-cement from Norwegian clay](#)

Blue clay from Norway is emerging as a climate-friendly alternative to cements used to make concrete – turning a waste material into a resource. [Read more](#)

[Even greener solar power on the way](#)

Europe wants to reduce its needs for raw materials and raise the level of recycling of resources in the solar power industry. If this project is successful, greenhouse gas emissions from solar panel manufacture will fall by 25 to 30 per cent. [Read more](#)

[New sensor will make life safer for elderly](#)

Pressure measurements enable a newly developed fall detector to “observe” falls that current sensors do not register, thus improving safety for older people who live at home. [Read more](#)

[Developing modern buildings from wood](#)

Research project Woodsol develops industrialized structural solutions based on rigid wooden frames for use in urban buildings with five to ten stories and open architecture. [Read more](#)