

## Company Profile

Headquarters: Munich, Germany  
Major products: Publications, communications services  
Further information: [www.oekom.de](http://www.oekom.de)

oekom verlag is the leading publisher for sustainability topics in German-speaking countries. Its eight journals, its rapidly growing booklist, its numerous brochures as well as its online media bring together more than 2,500 authors, cooperation partners and promoters of all groups of society. With its unique network and its professional team the publisher concentrates specialist know-how and potential in order to realize sustainable initiatives and ideas.

## Challenges and How oekom verlag Takes Responsibility

According to its principle 'From Knowledge to Action', oekom has made it its business to lead by example with its own management practice. Its main focus lies hereby on the protection of biodiversity, supporting sustainable forest management and climate protection. As a leading innovator among publishing houses, oekom assures ecological production of all its publications. To further support its efforts in this area, oekom uses the 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative as a resource to help it audit and optimize its environmental protection activities concerning the aspect of biodiversity conservation according to the Initiative's Leadership Declaration. oekom's Sustainability Representative, working side by side with the Business Management Department, is responsible for safeguarding sustainability and is in control of the impacts the oekom's business activities have on biodiversity.

## Best Practice: Green Publishing – Use of Recycled and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-Certified Paper

### Fields of Action

- Sites and facilities
- Supply chains, commodities and materials
- Product
- Production and manufacturing processes
- Transport and logistics
- Personnel

### The Issue

As a company that relies on wood, oekom is aware of the fact that the depletion of tropical forests and climate change will irretrievably destroy the habitat of many animal and plant species. Thus, the publishing house has positioned itself in a pioneering role, stressing its concern of protecting biodiversity, not only within its own business but also by enhancing "Green Publishing" within the whole media industry.

Supply chains, commodities and materials are one important field of action. Products (e.g. e-books), production and manufacturing processes (e.g. recycling, printing processes and regional production chains) can be mentioned as another key aspect of "Green Publishing." Moreover, measures in regard to the field of personnel (e.g. office supplies, lodging and waste separation) have been established.





## The Response

With its initiative "Green Publishing – New environmental standards for the media industry" („Nachhaltig Publizieren – Neue Umweltstandards für die Verlagsbranche“) advocated by the Federal Environment Ministry, oekom examines the media industry's whole supply chain – from paper production to the printed book – in order to identify potentials for ecologically sound production. It does this in cooperation with the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research Heidelberg (ifeu), the Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW) and the Frankfurt Book Fair.

oekom regards its role in the dissemination of information as part of its sustainable management. Thus, the publisher has initiated this project to make the findings accessible to the whole publishing sector. Its focus lies hereby on the production of paper and the print processes, to find answers to the following questions: How is it possible to reduce the demand for paper? Is there any ecological alternative to paper made of virgin fiber? What are reliable labels for sustainable forest management and paper supply? Which ecological criteria should be considered for the print processes?

## The Results

Within the publishing branch, oekom helps to set universal business standards in preserving the environment. The measures arranged as practical recommendations are located in the fields of paper, print, distribution and office management. Furthermore, communication within the media industry with regard to entrepreneurial responsibility

and in terms of environmental protection is a very important approach of "Green Publishing". oekom verlag's highest priority is purchasing recycled paper (if possible Blue Angel eco-labeled) and FSC-certified paper. Its publications are all locally printed by an FSC- and ISO-certified printing press. Being Germany's first climate neutral publishing house, oekom contributes actively to climate protection and therefore to the conservation of biological diversity by avoiding, reducing and compensating for harmful emissions.

The "Green Publishing" project has been met with positive reception in the industry. During the opening event at the Frankfurt Book Fair, oekom received much positive feedback. The project was invited to introduce itself and its (previous) results at several important media industry events: Media-Mundo, drupa2012, and the venerable conference of production managers in Irsee.

The results of the project are regularly discussed within different forums with a large audience of specialists and will be published by the end of 2012. Thus, the project contributes to sensitizing a branch with crucial impacts on the preservation of (primary) forests and thereby on the sustenance of biodiversity due to its high consumption of paper. The Federal Environment Ministry is planning to extend the project, in order to evaluate environmental impacts in the fields of distribution and logistics of publications. oekom is aware of its role as a pioneer in and disseminator for sustainable management within the media industry and therefore includes these results into the continuous revision of its environmental standards.