



Seeing beyond

# Thinking and acting sustainably

## **ZEISS German Supply Chain Act Statement**

on respecting and promoting human rights  
and environmental protection

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## **Foreword**

"Seeing beyond" – this claim by ZEISS applies not only in scientific and technological terms, but also with regard to any opportunities to contribute to strengthening human rights and protecting the environment worldwide.

More than 125 years ago, the Statute of the Carl Zeiss Foundation established the commitment to responsible corporate governance in a visionary manner. Since then, the ZEISS foundation company has grown to become a leading global technology company. ZEISS is aware of the responsibility this entails and is committed to respecting human rights and promoting environmental and climate protection as an integral part of its business activities, both in its own business and in its supply chains.

ZEISS firmly believes that economic success and innovation are inextricably linked with sustainable value creation and respect for human rights. This German Supply Chain Act Statement reflects this belief and complements the Group-wide ZEISS Code of Conduct, which has been an integral part of the corporate culture at ZEISS since 2007.

This German Supply Chain Act Statement applies to Carl Zeiss AG, Carl Zeiss SMT GmbH, Carl Zeiss Jena GmbH, Carl Zeiss Industrielle Messtechnik GmbH, Carl Zeiss Meditec AG, Carl Zeiss Vision GmbH and Carl Zeiss Microscopy GmbH, their respective subsidiaries and all Group companies under decisive influence (Group companies). It was adopted by the Executive Board of Carl Zeiss AG in September 2023 and last updated in November 2025.

Executive Board of the ZEISS Group

Andreas Pecher | Stefan Müller | Maximilian Foerst  
Sven Hermann | Dr. Frank Rohmund | Dr. Marc Wawerla

## Commitment to respect and promote human rights and environmental protection

As an internationally active company with global supply and value chains, ZEISS takes its responsibility to people and the environment seriously.

ZEISS is expressly committed to complying with applicable law and respects the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the rights set out in the International Bill of Human Rights. The core labor standards of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and environmental protection are also of particular importance to ZEISS.

**ZEISS has derived the following basic principles from this:**

### Prohibition of child labor

ZEISS rejects any form of child labor. The company does not employ any children under the minimum employment age applicable in the respective country of employment. Furthermore, no persons are employed who are younger than 15 years of age and/or are still of compulsory school age according to local regulations, irrespective of whether employment of younger persons is permitted according to local regulations. ZEISS employs persons who have not reached the age of 18 (typically apprentices, interns) exclusively in compliance with the legal requirements of the respective country of employment, in particular in observance of compulsory schooling, protection of minors, working hours and regulations on working conditions.

### Prohibition of forced labor and all forms of slavery

Employees perform their work at ZEISS voluntarily. ZEISS does not tolerate any form of forced labor, slavery or similar practices, modern forms of slavery, human trafficking, servitude or other forms of domination or oppression in the workplace environment (for example through economic or sexual exploitation and humiliation).

## Protection against discrimination

ZEISS stands for equal opportunities and equal treatment and promotes fair and unprejudiced cooperation. ZEISS prohibits any discrimination or unequal treatment on the basis of characteristics such as national and ethnic origin, social origin, health status, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender, political opinion, religion or ideology, unless this is justified by the requirements of the employment. This also includes not paying unequal pay for work of equal value.

## Right to health and safety at work

Occupational safety and the physical integrity of employees are a top priority for ZEISS. ZEISS undertakes to comply with all applicable occupational health and safety laws, including regulations on working hours, rest breaks and recreational leave as well as safety precautions at the workplace.

## Right to adequate remuneration

ZEISS is committed to paying an appropriate and fair wage. The remuneration of employees complies with local industry and labor market standards as well as any minimum wage regulations. In all other respects, remuneration is based on collective bargaining agreements, insofar as the prerequisites for this exist.

## Freedom of association and right to collective bargaining

ZEISS respects the right of employees to freely form or join trade unions within the scope of the applicable legal regulations without experiencing or fearing threats, intimidation, discrimination or other disadvantages. Furthermore, ZEISS respects the right of trade unions to operate freely within the framework of the relevant legal regulations, in particular to conduct collective bargaining and to exercise the right to strike; this also applies analogously to the activities of employee representatives.

## Deployment of security forces

ZEISS does not tolerate any unlawful behavior by security forces. If security forces are deployed, they are appropriately trained and controlled and compliance with recognized human rights standards is contractually agreed.

## Environmental protection and respect for natural resources

Environmental protection and respect for natural resources are of great importance to ZEISS. ZEISS relies on sustainable and efficient technologies in its production and acts with the greatest possible care so as not to damage the environment, in particular soil, water and air, nor to use natural resources in a way that endangers the livelihood and health of people. In doing so, ZEISS complies with all applicable environmental requirements and regulations, in particular the Basel, Minamata and Stockholm Conventions.



## Expectations of employees and business partners

The ZEISS principles on human rights and environmental protection are reflected in the ZEISS Code of Conduct and the additional relevant corporate guidelines. Every employee is obligated to comply with these regulations and ZEISS expects employees to align their professional actions accordingly.

ZEISS requires existing and future business partners to comply with the principles set out in this German Supply Chain Act Statement and to implement structures and processes in order to be able to take swift and effective action in the event of identified risks or violations.



## Risk management

ZEISS has a risk management system in place. This defines uniform rules and processes for the early identification, assessment and management of risks for its own business area and the supply chain. Risk coordinators in the various business units support the management responsible in each case in implementing central requirements and guidelines.

The Group Executive Board has appointed a Human Rights Officer to monitor the risk management with regard to human rights and environment-related risks. The Human Rights Officer is integrated in the compliance and reporting processes of ZEISS and maintains a close exchange with the business units. Management of the respective ZEISS business unit is responsible for identifying, managing and reporting human rights and environment-related risks.

At least once a year and on an ad hoc basis, the Human Rights Officer reports the results of the risk analysis, findings from the review of complaints received, and information on the effectiveness of remedial and preventive measures to the Executive Board and the management of the ZEISS companies concerned.



## Risk analysis

ZEISS performs an annual risk analysis and assessment both for its own business area and for its direct suppliers. In addition, event-driven risk analyses are carried out in response to substantiated knowledge and a changed risk situation, with indirect suppliers are also being considered.

ZEISS uses a staggered procedure for this purpose. To identify risks, external data sources, mainly country-specific indices, are first used to determine whether abstract human rights and environmental risks exist in the company's own business operations or at suppliers. Industry and business purpose-specific risks are also taken into account. In a second step, information to which ZEISS has access, either in a tool or on a case-by-case basis, is added as part of a concrete risk analysis, and the results are evaluated in an overall assessment. The identified net risks are then prioritized on the basis of the legally prescribed criteria.

For the risk analysis of the own business area Group companies are evaluated. As a basis for the concrete assessment of risks, ZEISS takes the following factors into account: business activity, type of causal contribution and ability to influence. For individual companies with increased risk, the protected legal positions are evaluated using an internal risk inquiry whereby net risks may be determined. The result is verified by further internal indicators, materiality determinations and specialist departments. If high net risks are identified, additional preventive measures are taken on a needs-based basis. As a result of this overall process, the areas of occupational safety

and health have been identified as areas that will be further monitored.

For direct suppliers, it is also important to analyse the results in greater depth as part of the concrete risk analysis using available information such as potential influence, sales volume and complexity, and to prioritize them on this basis. As a manufacturing technology company with international sites and a large number of suppliers, the risks regarding working conditions and environmental protection have to be considered. ZEISS also sees a particular challenge with regard to transparency and traceability in the supply chain. The company is therefore continuously working on further improving and systematizing the data situation.

The results of the risk analyses as well as insights from preventive and remedial measures and complaint management will be considered as additional data points in future risk analyses.



## Preventive measures

ZEISS takes appropriate preventive and remedial measures to avoid, eliminate or minimize risks in its own business area or those of its suppliers. In this context, ZEISS builds on long-established processes and structures from risk management in its own business area and supplier management in the purchasing departments.

All ZEISS employees are obligated to comply with the ZEISS Code of Conduct and the additional topic-related corporate guidelines. As part of ZEISS Compliance Management, mandatory training courses are held regularly at the ZEISS companies to raise employees' awareness of the contents of the Code of Conduct. Training courses that provide specific knowledge for effective implementation of human rights and environmental due diligence processes are also offered.

Furthermore, binding instructions apply throughout the Group at ZEISS – these intended to ensure occupational health and safety for employees through standardized and audited processes, among other goals. A large number of Group companies maintain a certified management system – for example in accordance with ISO 14001 (environmental management system) or ISO 45001 (management systems for occupational safety and health) – and are audited on this basis by external organizations. Irrespective of certification, ZEISS pursues a risk-based approach in monitoring its units and sites and, as part of this, carries out internal audits and internal reviews.

As part of the supplier selection process, suppliers at ZEISS undergo a comprehensive clearance check before a business relationship. This also includes and takes due account of criteria concerning human rights and environmental standards. The profile is then regularly updated and reviewed. Based on the identified and prioritized risks, suppliers are informed as appropriate and agreements are made. ZEISS reserves the right to carry out risk-based control procedures such as on-site audits. Supplier companies are obligated – on the basis of contractual assurances – to comply with ZEISS' human rights and environmental requirements, to propagate the same along their own supply chain and to cooperate in the implementation of preventive and remedial measures.

ZEISS also requires its direct supplier companies to support due diligence and traceability throughout the supply chain for conflict minerals. In a risk-based approach, supplier companies are requested to provide ZEISS with up-to-date information, such as Conflict Minerals Reporting Templates, and to work towards excluding non-compliant smelters from their respective supply chains.

If ZEISS obtains substantiated knowledge of a possible violation of a human rights or environmental obligation at indirect supplier companies, the measures described above will also be taken with regard to indirect supplier companies within the scope of the company's own possibilities.



## Remedial measures

If ZEISS determines (through queries, reports, audits, inspections or complaints management) that a violation of a human rights or environmental obligation has occurred or is imminent in its own business area or at a direct supplier company, ZEISS shall immediately undertake measures to prevent or end these violations or to minimize the extent of the violation. In the event of substantiated knowledge, ZEISS also takes such action at indirect suppliers to the extent of its legal means.

Depending on the severity of the violation, ZEISS reserves the right to react appropriately in connection with the business partners. The aim is to maintain the contractual relationship and improve the situation on site before terminating contractual relationships with suppliers as a last resort.



## Complaints procedure

Both internal and external stakeholders have the opportunity to report open or anonymous information on possible compliance violations – such as human rights or environmental violations – via the information system **ZEISS Integrity Line**, which is available in a number of languages. The ZEISS Integrity Line can be found on ZEISS websites and on the ZEISS intranet, describing the procedure of dealing with reported compliance incidents.

Any human rights and environmental-related incidents received are reviewed by the Corporate Compliance department while maintaining confidentiality and forwarded to the relevant departments for further processing (e.g. to the Human Rights Officer in the event of reports in the supply chain). Human rights and environmental indications can also be reported directly by email to [humanrights@zeiss.com](mailto:humanrights@zeiss.com) while maintaining the highest level of confidentiality.





## Effectiveness control

As part of regular effectiveness checks, ZEISS examines at least once a year and on an ad hoc basis whether the established risk management effectively prevents or counteracts human rights and environmental risks. ZEISS particularly uses findings from stakeholder surveys, ZEISS internal audits, reviews, supplier audits and risk analyses to validate the effectiveness of preventive and remedial measures taken. If it is determined in the course of these audits that existing processes have not adequately identified risks or that measures introduced have failed to have the desired effect, the Human Rights Officer initiates the necessary changes.

The effectiveness of the complaints process and the handling of reports of human rights violations is also regularly monitored. If there are indications of a need for improvement, appropriate measures will be initiated.



## Documentation and reporting

The fulfillment of due diligence obligations is systematically documented. More information on human rights and environmental protection at ZEISS can be found in the ZEISS Group Sustainability Report and on the [ZEISS homepage](#).



## Contact information

If you have any questions about this German Supply Chain Act Statement or the complex of topics relating to human rights and environmental topics at ZEISS, please contact [humanrights@zeiss.com](mailto:humanrights@zeiss.com).

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