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BIODIVERSITY CHECK FOR COMPANIES

Why Biodiversity Check?

The loss of biodiversity, alongside climate change, is currently one of the largest and most important challenges. It is believed that the current rate of species extinction, due to human influences, is up to 1,000 times higher than the natural extinction rate. Many of the vital resources and services, which are underpinned by biodiversity, are provided to us by ecosystems that are at risk. Companies use these ecosystem services and natural resources in various forms and thereby have a large impact on nature. Therefore, even by just considering economic reasons, companies depend on the conservation of biodiversity and a steady decline in biological diversity can become a risk for many businesses in the future. At the same time, a proactive approach to conserve biodiversity can create new business opportunities.

What is the Biodiversity Check?

The Biodiversity Check for companies was developed by the Global Nature Fund, the management consultancy doeko, the Lake Constance Foundation and other organisations. The Check serves as an initial guide to determine the impacts of companies and their business units on biodiversity. The Check is based on the objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

- Conservation of biodiversity
- Sustainable use of its resources
- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources

What does the Check achieve?

The Check is an ideal start for companies - it offers a first individual overview of the issue of biodiversity, and thus provides the basis for integrating biodiversity in the company's (environmental) management, and to undertake actions for the sustainable use of resources and the protection of nature. The Check is confidential, meaning that problems and potential barriers can be discussed openly. By performing the Check, a company does not commit itself to continue with the issue of biodiversity. The Biodiversity Check assesses, according to the procedure of environmental management systems EMAS III and ISO 14001, potential negative impacts of individual business units, manufacturing facilities, products or processes, and identifies potential risks and opportunities. The Check does not issue a certificate or label because it serves as a first orientation and is less detailed than an environmental impact assessment. The results are freely available to the company, e.g. for corporate communication.

What does the Check examine?

The Check examines the company's direct impacts on biodiversity, for which the company is clearly responsible and which can be influenced by the company. The Check also takes into account indirect effects, which the company can influence through dialogue with its stakeholders.

Areas that are examined within a company:

1. Strategy and management
2. Stakeholder and public relations
3. Company premises, real estate
4. Procurement: raw materials, energy, water, etc.
5. Product development and production
6. Logistics and transport
7. End products and services
8. Sales and marketing
9. Human Resources

What Sources are used for the Biodiversity Check?

- Company profiles, environmental, sustainability and CSR reports
- Meeting/workshop with the company
- Interviews with managers and department managers
- Local NGOs that provide information on locations, production facilities and mining areas
- Research results and studies on industry-specific influences on biodiversity
- Legal requirements at national and European level
- Biodiversity Management Handbook - A guide for industrial practice. Berlin/Eschborn/Lüneburg: BMU (ed.)/GTZ/CSM University of Lüneburg
- National and international standards and agreements (CBD, GRI Guidelines, ISO 26000, etc.)

What Outputs does the Biodiversity Check provide the Company with?

- Relationship between business and biodiversity
- Proposals for goals and measures to reduce risks and negative impacts
- Proposals for goals and measures to protect biodiversity or compensate for negative impacts
- Themes for communication (e.g. as part of the sustainability report)
- Recommendations for further steps

Based on the Biodiversity Check results, the company can initiate goal-oriented actions, in order to reduce negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems or even to prevent them altogether. In the long term, this is not only beneficial for nature, but also for the company. Risk minimisation, long-term protection of resources, improved reputation, higher profits, cost reduction and employee motivation all have a positive influence on the financial statement.

What is the Procedure of the Check?

- Determining the scope and limitations of the study with the company (screening)
- Data and facts collection using an industry-specific biodiversity matrix
- Meeting with representatives of the company and departments concerned to complement the data collection, discussion of first results and options
- Development of a preliminary report, coordination with the company
- Completion of the final report and presentation of results



Depending on the scope of the analysis, our experts invest about 5 to 20 days for the completion. The costs for the company depend on the scope and depth of the Check, which will be defined in advance.

For more information about the Check:
www.business-biodiversity.eu/biodiversity-check



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