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COMBINED NON-FINANCIAL REPORT

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ABOUT OUR NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING

Springer Nature aims to be a leading publisher of sustainability-related content, and in line with our mission and values we have voluntarily reported on our progress towards sustainability-related goals since 2017. Our aim is to share relevant information with our stakeholders about material environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics, and you can find our reporting archive on our website.

2024 reporting requirements

Becoming a public company in Germany in October 2024 brought with it new requirements to report on sustainability matters. Because the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) – the European Commission's new regulatory reporting framework – has not been transposed into national law in Germany, we are reporting in accordance with the German Commercial Code (Handelsgesetzbuch, or HGB) and its current requirements for non-financial disclosures.

Our report structure

The HGB requires reporting against five sustainability matters: environmental, employee-related, social, corruption and bribery, and respect for human rights. Since respect for human rights is inherent in everything we do, we have structured our report in line with the first four topics, and woven discussion of human rights throughout. The topics we report on have been determined by a double materiality assessment.

Transition towards CSRD

As part of our transition towards future CSRD reporting, we have adjusted the structure of our Combined non-financial report to meet current HGB requirements. We have included references to certain disclosure requirements of the European Sustainability Reporting Standard (ESRS) to help readers understand our reporting choices.

The report, therefore, comprises four core sections, corresponding to the relevant sustainability matters laid out by HGB, as outlined above. We focus on material impacts, risks, opportunities, policies, actions, key metrics and goals or targets (where they have been set) against each of the relevant areas set out in the HGB and as a step towards reporting in line with the CSRD in future.

This is the Combined Non-Financial Report of Springer Nature AG & Co. KGaA and all Springer Nature entities for fiscal year 2024 in accordance with Sections 315b, 315c in conjunction with 289b to 289e of the German Commercial Code (HGB) and the EU Taxonomy Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council, including the related delegated acts. The concepts and results presented relate to both Springer Nature AG & Co. KGaA and the Springer Nature entities. In this report, we present environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics of relevance to our business activities. The reporting period is the fiscal year 2024 (1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024). Unless otherwise stated, the report covers all fully consolidated entities of Springer Nature. For 2024, the report was created with reference to the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) as specified in the European Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). We describe our materiality approach and the material topics we report on, in Assessing our material topics. In future, we aim to carry out our non-financial reporting in accordance with the CSRD and ESRS. In previous years, Springer Nature published a stand-alone Sustainable Business Report.

Selected key performance indicators (KPIs), relating to diversity, carbon reporting and some specific publishing topics, have been assured by our auditors, EY GmbH & Co. KG Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft, and are provided in a separate sustainability supplement available on our website.

BUSINESS MODEL

Springer Nature operates in markets that matter for society – research, education and health information – and our vision is to 'accelerate solutions to the world's urgent challenges'. This purpose is the foundation for our sustainability strategy, which we have aligned with the topics most relevant to our business model and stakeholders that have been identified in our materiality assessment.

Springer Nature is one of the leading publishers of research in the world. We publish the largest number of journals and books and are a pioneer in open research. Through our leading brands, trusted for more than 180 years, we provide technology-enabled products, platforms and services that help researchers to uncover new ideas and share their discoveries, health professionals to stay at the forefront of medical science, and educators to advance learning. We are proud to be part of progress, working together with the communities we serve to share knowledge and bring greater understanding to the world.

Our structure

With a team of more than 9,000 employees in over 40 countries, Springer Nature is committed to advancing open science and enabling research to address pressing global challenges. We manage our operations through our four main segments: Research, Education, Health, and Professional. From 2025, we will incorporate Professional into the Research segment.

Our Research publishing portfolio includes journals, books, databases and digital platforms, with a growing emphasis on open access (OA) publishing. Our Education segment focuses on English language teaching and K–12 curricula, catering for key markets such as Mexico, India and South Africa. With a strong presence in Europe, North America and Asia, we operate in robust, growing markets while fostering an inclusive workplace, prioritising sustainability and leveraging technology to enhance our global reach and influence. In the Health segment, we support healthcare professionals and pharmaceutical clients with educational resources, publications and digital platforms that connect research to practice.

The value chain

Our supply chain is international, although some business areas (including certain education and health markets) operate on a more localised geographical basis. Across the business as a whole, direct goods and services (those that typically go into the production of the products and services we sell) include global production (pre-publishing, print, paper) and global distribution (transport and shipping, postage, warehousing and logistics). Indirect goods and services (those that support daily business operations) include IT (hardware, software, services, fixed and mobile telecoms), marketing, travel and events, external agencies and communications, auditing, consulting, outsourcing and offshoring. When mapping our material ESG impacts, risks and opportunities we consider the company's value chain as a whole, since there are significant overlaps between divisions.

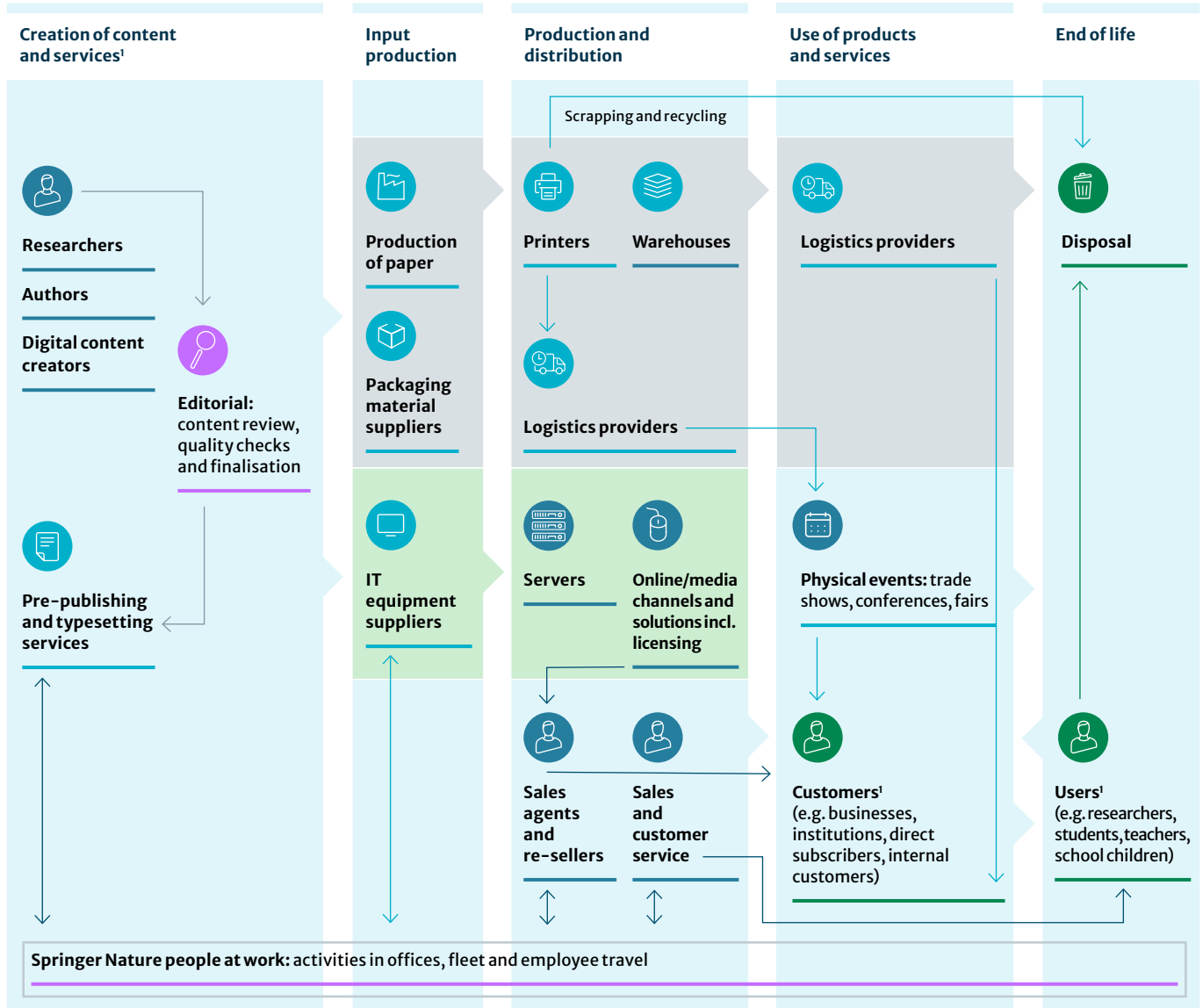### The value chain for research publishing

In our largest segment, Research, we publish content that has either been acquired directly from individual authors and editors, or indirectly through contracts with academic societies and smaller specialised publishers who act as intermediaries in acquiring content from the authors. In the research community, we build deep connections with authors and use the latest innovations – including artificial intelligence (AI) tools – to bring global visibility to their work. Through our partnerships with editors, peer reviewers and experts across our vast ecosystem, we evaluate, quality assure, improve and publish new discoveries, big and small. Our main customers in the research business are universities (through their academic libraries), government institutions, corporations, individuals and, especially regarding open access (OA) models, research funding bodies including charitable foundations.

A unique characteristic of the value chain in research publishing is the dual role played by the research communities, who can simultaneously be both customers and suppliers. As content creators, researchers contribute articles, studies and discoveries that form the foundation of our publications. At the same time, the research communities we serve rely on these publications as consumers to access and build upon their peers' work. This interconnected relationship creates a symbiotic dynamic, where the needs of researchers as both contributors and end users shape Springer Nature's products, services and innovations.

BUSINESS MODEL
continued

OUR VALUE CHAIN

This is a simplified outline of Springer Nature's value chain, a version of which has been used when considering stakeholders and material impacts, risks and opportunities.

Creation of content and services[1]

Researchers
Authors
Digital content creators

Editorial: content review, quality checks and finalisation

Pre-publishing and typesetting services

Input production

Production of paper

Packaging material suppliers

IT equipment suppliers

Production and distribution

Scrapping and recycling

Printers   Warehouses

Logistics providers

Servers   Online/media channels and solutions incl. licensing

Sales agents and re-sellers   Sales and customer service

Use of products and services

Logistics providers

Physical events: trade shows, conferences, fairs

Customers[1] (e.g. businesses, institutions, direct subscribers, internal customers)

End of life

Disposal

Users[1] (e.g. researchers, students, teachers, school children)

Springer Nature people at work: activities in offices, fleet and employee travel

Upstream value chain

Own operations

Mixture of own operations and value chain

Downstream value chain (physical and digital routes to market)

Physical products

Digital value creation

[1] Customers and users in some cases are the same and in other cases are differentiated.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE

In this section, we explain our approach to sustainability, considering the material topics that we reviewed using a double materiality assessment in 2024. We also set out our due diligence approach for sustainability topics – in line with the requirements of HGB Section 289c. We have sustainable business governance practices in place and conduct due diligence throughout our business and supply chain.

OUR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS STRATEGY

Springer Nature's sustainable business strategy is based on one of our core values: responsibility. We want the work we do to have a positive impact on the world and as publishers of journals such as *Nature Sustainability* and *Nature Climate Change* we are keenly aware of the immediacy of the issues the world faces. Sustainability is crucial to delivering our vision to 'accelerate solutions to the world's urgent challenges'. This means doing the right thing for our communities, acting as a responsible business, driving sustainable progress and recognising the ideas and opinions of all. We have woven four themes through our strategy: publishing, people, planet and governance.

In our publishing activity we aim to:

- accelerate solutions to urgent societal challenges by publishing more content related to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and making it more open

- champion diversity, equity and inclusion both within our content and in our interactions with external publishing partners

- use technology to advance discovery and learning and to respond to risks in the market, by building and using new tools.

We also consider how we deliver for people and planet, by being a responsible employer, partnering responsibly and meeting our net zero commitments. And we build on foundations of good governance.

OUR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS STRATEGY

RESPONSIBILITY

We do the right thing for all our communities and champion diversity and inclusion. We act as a responsible business, driving sustainable progress and recognising the ideas and opinions of all.

ACCELERATING SOLUTIONS TO URGENT SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

USING TECHNOLOGY TO ADVANCE DISCOVERY AND LEARNING

CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
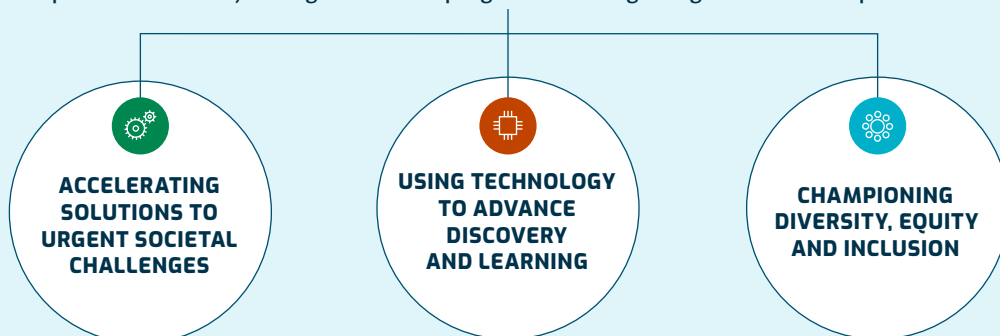
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE
continued

HOW WE GOVERN SUSTAINABILITY

Our sustainable business strategy and management of material ESG topics are overseen by a steering group, which includes members of the Management Board and wider Executive Team. Dedicated committees and working groups focus on specific initiatives and the operational activities that support them.

Our governance, risk and compliance team designs and operates our group–wide risk and compliance system, which is a key part of how we manage ESG topics.

This system helps us identify and proactively address the risks and opportunities we face, including relevant ESG, legal and regulatory risks, and other issues covered in our Code of Conduct. We are evolving our approach in response to the incoming CSRD requirements to incorporate a double materiality assessment (DMA), following a specific process set out under the reporting regulations, which we outline below.

Our governance approach

Sustainable Business Steering Group

Management Board and Executive Team

Related groups guide our actions on the following material issues:

Business partner risk management

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Editorial and publishing policies

Environment

Governance, risk and compliance

Policy management

Reporting and communications

SDG publishing

We also have a suite of policies that help us manage our most material sustainability topics and our Policy Management Committee meets several times a year to review and update existing policies and adopt new ones, as required.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE / HOW WE GOVERN SUSTAINABILITY
continued

The table below illustrates how our existing policies relate to the sustainability matters that we describe in this report (in the order that they appear in the report). More detail on these policies and how we use them to manage our material topics can be found in the relevant section.

Report sections / Referenced policies	Environmental matters		Employee-related matters	Social matters					Corruption and Bribery
	Climate change	Other impacts across the value chain		Workers in the value chain	Information related impacts for end users	Editorial Policies and Research Integrity	Open access	Societal impact of content	
Environmental Policy	x	x							
Paper Policy	x	x							
Business Partner Code of Conduct	x	x		x					x
Code of Conduct			x						x
Global Health and Safety Policy			x						
Whistleblower Policy			x						x
Global Hybrid Working Framework Policy			x						
Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy			x						x
Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy			x						
Speak Up Whistleblowing System				x					x
Various Editorial policies					x	x	x		
Open Access (OA) Policy					x				
Article Processing Charge (APC) Waiver Policy					x				
AI principles					x				
Privacy Policy					x				
Author Rights and licensing					x				
Journal Editors' Code of Conduct						x			x
Sustainable Development Goals publishing strategy								x	
Fair Competition Policy									x

See Management Board and Supervisory Board of Springer Nature AG & Co. KGaA in the Corporate governance report for more detail.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE
continued

ASSESSING OUR MATERIAL TOPICS

To ensure that our non-financial, or sustainable business, approach and reporting reflects the most relevant impacts, risks and opportunities for Springer Nature and our stakeholders – and that we meet the requirements of the CSRD – we developed a new double materiality assessment (DMA) process in 2024. This builds on the materiality assessment approach that we've used in previous reporting cycles and is being aligned with the existing group-wide risk process. The aim is to ensure we have a single, streamlined approach to risk across the business, identifying our materially relevant ESG impacts on our stakeholders and risks and opportunities. We will continue to refine this process in 2025. More information on Springer Nature's overarching risk management system can be found in the Report on risks and opportunities in the Management report.

We developed our approach using guidance from the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG), combined with internal existing processes and our understanding of the issues that matter to a range of our internal and external stakeholders, including customers, suppliers and the wider industry. As part of this work, we mapped out the main business activities for different business areas to understand the various touch points inside Springer Nature's value chain – considering geographic spread and different business segments (as set out in the Our value chain graphic).

We used the ESRS and other frameworks, as well as previous materiality assessments and issues reported by similar organisations, industry associations and customer groups to define potentially material topics. This consolidated list of ESG topics formed the basis of the DMA. We also carried out a desk-based assessment to identify other relevant impacts, risks and opportunities and gather more detailed information on them. We then assessed the topics for their potential and/or actual impact on stakeholders or the environment (inside-out) and on our business (outside-in). This helped us develop a list of impacts (positive and negative, actual and potential), and potential and/or actual financial effects (risks and opportunities), which we mapped against the consolidated list of topics, our value chain and geography (where relevant). This process considers the level of risk and potential impact before any mitigating action is taken, which is different from the 'net risk' approach outlined in the Report on risks and opportunities.

The material topics include some that are relevant to Springer Nature's operations, some that are only relevant in our supply chain and some that are publishing-specific. Based on this assessment, within this report we report on: environmental matters (including climate change and the environmental impacts of physical products), employee-related matters (our own workforce), social matters (including workers in the value chain), and publishing topics, such as author rights, open access, editorial policies and research integrity, and the societal impact of content), and corruption and bribery (business conduct). We include references to the relevant ESRS throughout this report, where applicable, summarised in the table below. Human rights topics are woven into their relevant sections (see especially Employee-related matters, Social matters, and Corruption and bribery, in particular the information on our Business Partner Code of Conduct). This is because we do not have a dedicated human rights policy and human rights is not considered a material issue given Springer Nature's business model and operating activities. We also publish a UK Modern Slavery Act statement on our website.

Sustainability matters as defined in German Commercial Code (HGB) Section 289c	Sections in this report (ESRS)
Environmental matters	Climate change (E1)
	Other environmental impacts related to our physical products across the value chain (E2 Pollution, E4 Biodiversity, E5 Circular Economy)
Employee-related matters	Own workforce: Fair and just working conditions; Diversity, equity and inclusion (S1)
Social matters	Workers in the value chain (S2)
	Information-related impacts for end users (S4 Consumers and end users, including data privacy and author rights)
	Editorial policies and research integrity
	Open access
	Societal impact of content (SDG publishing)
Respect for human rights	*Not a material stand-alone topic for Springer Nature & Co. KGaA or Springer Nature so is, therefore, woven into other relevant sections of the report*
Combating corruption and bribery	Business conduct (G1)

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE / ASSESSING OUR MATERIAL TOPICS
continued

Statement on sustainability due diligence

Due diligence is a core part of the way we conduct responsible business with our supply chain partners and ensures we comply with regulations that address risks in our supply chain, such as the Modern Slavery Act and the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG). We require our business partners to follow our Business Partner Code of Conduct and include this in our standard contract templates. Under our due diligence approach we risk assess our suppliers and carry out supplier audits. For details, see Workers in the value chain. We encourage all stakeholders to report violations of our Code of Conduct, which they can do via our anonymous whistleblowing system, Speak Up. For details, see Business conduct.

The right-hand column of this table reflects how each due diligence element is addressed in our topic sections in this report. Where we say 'overarching across all matters', the due diligence element is anchored overarchingly for all HGB matters, rather than for each matter individually.

Core elements of due diligence	Where to find in this report	Associated HGB sustainability matters
Embedding due diligence in governance, strategy and business model	– Sustainability strategy and governance – Business conduct	– *Overarching across all matters* – Corruption and bribery
Engaging with affected stakeholders	– Climate change – Other environmental impacts in our value chain – Fair and just working conditions – Diversity, equity and inclusion – Workers in the value chain – Information-related impacts for end users – Editorial policies and research integrity – Business conduct	– Environmental matters – Employee-related matters – Social matters – Corruption and bribery
Identifying and assessing negative impacts on people and the environment	– Assessing our material topics – Climate change – Workers in the value chain	– *Overarching across all matters* – Environmental matters – Employee-related matters
Taking actions to address negative impacts on people and the environment	– Action sub-sections in all sustainability matters	– Environmental matters – Employee-related matters
Tracking the effectiveness of these efforts	– Metrics sub-sections in all sustainability matters	– Social matters – Corruption and bribery

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Given our globally distributed business and value chain, and the raw materials used to make our products, we recognise the potential risks that climate change poses to the company and our business model. Other environmental impacts that are associated with the parts of our supply chain that produce and distribute physical products (highly reliant on printing processes and the paper supply chain) are also relevant to us. In addition, we publish research and insights that can help policymakers and the media, as well as academic audiences, understand the challenges the world is facing and find potential solutions.

This section covers:

- climate change
- other environmental impacts related to our physical products across the value chain.

CLIMATE CHANGE

As a publisher of some of the world's most significant climate research, following the science is fundamental to our approach. We are committed to becoming net zero by 2040 and have been carbon neutral for our emissions related to offices, fleet and flights since 2020. This means we offset emissions from our buildings, fleet and flights see GHG removals and mitigation. In 2022, we developed science-based carbon reduction targets, which were then validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) in 2023. Our carbon footprint data, which we report according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and additionally categorise in line with our business activities, helps us take decisive action to reduce that footprint and work with our suppliers to encourage further reductions within the value chain.

The impact of climate change on our strategy and business model

We consider climate change within our group-wide risk management processes. This includes transition risks, such as the impact of regulatory and market factors on, and the physical risks to, our own operations and our critical suppliers. As part of our 2024 double materiality assessment, we also considered climate-related impacts, risks and opportunities through the whole value chain, which allowed us to identify and evaluate issues arising from the potential effects of climate change and transition-related regulatory and market developments that could affect our business model. We follow the framework applied by the ESRS, which is based on the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), including the development of a transition plan.

Resilience to climate-related risks

In 2024, Springer Nature conducted analysis to understand how resilient our operations are to climate change. This included climate scenario analysis of both the physical and transition-related climate risks and opportunities we face.

This analysis reviewed our own operations, focusing on strategically important locations, as well as critical parts of our value chain (see Business model). We considered a broad range of risks and opportunities, including acute and chronic effects of climate change, as well as transition-related developments and their impact on our business model in a scenario which aims to avoid global average temperatures increasing beyond 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

We discussed and documented the risks affecting our business model and financial dimensions in a series of workshops involving internal expert stakeholders, and using scientific data from climate projections from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and scenario modelling from the Central Banks and Supervisors Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS). For the purpose of the assessment, we assumed that macroeconomic variables remain stable and that print products will not be replaced entirely with digital content in the future. At the same time, we assumed a steady increase in demand for digital content.

We considered the following time horizons to reflect future developments of climate change:

- Physical risks. Short term: historic values; mid term: until 2040; long term: until 2060.

- Transition risks. Short term: 0–5 years; mid term: 5–15 years; long term: 15+ years.

These diverge from the provision of the ESRS, especially in the short and mid term, to reflect the longer timescale over which climate-related effects are expected to unfold. These time horizons align with the scientific evidence and data used to assess our risks and opportunities.

The analysis revealed insights into the capacity of our operations to withstand both physical effects of climate change, in particular from heat- and water-induced hazards, and transition effects in a 1.5°C scenario. It confirmed that, overall, our strategy and business model only need minor adjustments. The risks and opportunities identified by the analysis would have little impact on our business, while the ongoing shift towards digital content mitigates transition-related climate risks. We have taken steps to counteract the effects of physical climate risks on our operational expenses, procurement costs and revenues.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

We could face higher transition risks, however, because of uncertainty about potential carbon taxation or other penalties, or financial instruments related to future environmental policies. This could lead to increased costs, especially in printing, logistics, or disposal of unsold product.

Actions include continuing to take steps to reduce the carbon footprint of our inputs, such as in paper procurement. Specifications of paper required to meet the high-quality printing standards needed for high-resolution images required in our Research segment limit our ability to use recycled paper as an adaptation action; however this may be considered for parts of the business in future.

We have additional business continuity processes in place for some of our strategic processes, such as printing for key journals.

Overall, the analysis confirmed that our business model is resilient in a 1.5°C scenario.

Our transition plan
Our transition plan includes a commitment to achieving net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across our value chain by 2040 from a 2019 baseline. The plan includes science-based carbon reduction targets that were externally validated by the SBTi in 2023. These targets align with the scientific consensus that emissions reductions are necessary to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Our near-term target is to reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 54.6% by 2032, from a 2019 baseline, and Scope 3 GHG emissions 32.5% by 2032 from the same baseline.

Our net zero target is to reduce absolute Scope 1, 2 and 3 GHG emissions by 90% by 2040, from a 2019 baseline. This is in line with the SBTi requirements that no more than 10% of emissions be offset via permanent carbon removal and storage to counterbalance the residual emissions that cannot be eliminated.

For details on our emissions targets, see Our climate targets.

The main ways in which we are aiming to achieve our targets include:

- reducing emissions from offices and warehouses by sourcing clean energy and implementing energy efficiency measures

- reducing business travel emissions

- participating in the ongoing transition to digital products

- shifting towards carbon-neutral and energy-efficient cloud-based suppliers, wherever possible, rather than fixed data centres

- monitoring and managing emissions from logistics services to distribute our products.

Corresponding to these levers, key actions for 2024 are set out and prioritised across Scope 1, 2 and 3 CO_2 equivalent (CO_2e) emissions. Some of these actions are ongoing – i.e. began before 2024 or will continue beyond this reporting year. For example:

1 **Reducing emissions at our office buildings:** This primarily includes energy efficiency and clean energy sourcing. Our major sites use an internally-developed tool, called the green building checklist, to guide discussion on and collaboration in activities that could make our offices more environmentally friendly. This may include improvements to heating or cooling, lighting, energy efficiency of office equipment, water and waste reduction. In 2024, this included ongoing work to introduce energy-saving lighting, energy-saving awareness programmes, collaborating with waste management contractors to improve recycling rates and switching from plastic water dispensers to drinking water systems. By the end of 2024, we had also reduced our office space by 32% as part of specific office reduction programmes implemented since 2019, further reducing our buildings-related emissions.

2 **Reducing business travel emissions:** we reduced emissions from flights taken for business purposes by 22% in 2024, compared with 2023, and this continues to be a key area of focus for us. Our Environmental Policy also sets out our requirement to reduce fleet emissions over time by replacing vehicles with lower-emissions vehicles.

3 **Shift from physical to digital products:** all our Research segment content is available digitally. As the transition to digital continues we expect the number of physical products we produce to fall, which will lower our emissions associated with the use of paper, as well as transporting and storing products. We also seek opportunities to further digitise products in our Education and Health segments. We estimate that we used around 20,000 tonnes of paper for our products in 2024, reduced from around 28,000 tonnes in 2023.

4 **Transition to carbon-neutral and energy-efficient cloud-based suppliers:** we have formed a specialist team to help us switch to cloud-based computing. The team's work will continue until 2027 and aims to further reduce our energy consumption by closing an internal data centre and moving to virtual servers. We specifically choose suppliers that are already carbon neutral and use green energy. We continue to work with our IT suppliers on this matter and monitor emissions.

5 **Reducing emissions from logistic services:** in 2024 we changed our fulfilment methods to support our aim to reduce emissions in shipping and returns, and we continue to work with our suppliers to reduce emissions associated with the 'last mile' of delivery.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

To help meet our targets and support collective climate action across our organisation, we have put specific training measures in place. Our internal mandatory values and conduct training follows a three-year cycle, and from 2022 to 2024 our overarching theme for this training was 'sustainable business'. In 2023, we introduced a dedicated environment module, which we developed in-house using leading climate science published in our journals and books. It also includes guidance on how to apply our Environmental Policy. See Training on business conduct for more information on our training programme.

We recognise that becoming a net zero company requires ambitious emissions reductions and that some residual emissions will need to be neutralised before we reach net zero. While we work towards our targets, we are committed to remaining carbon neutral, which is why we offset Scope 1, 2 and some of our Scope 3 emissions (including flights and leased buildings).

Our Environment Committee is responsible for identifying, reviewing and taking action on priority environmental issues. That includes monitoring progress and recommending actions to address our science-based carbon reduction targets and other environmental goals. The committee reports to the Sustainable Business Steering Committee, which, in turn, reports relevant information to the Management Board.

We have made substantial progress in implementing our transition plan and agreed SBTi targets for climate change mitigation, as outlined in the Our emissions progress graphic.

Our Environmental Policy

Our Environmental Policy is our main guide for responding to climate change and its related impacts, risks and opportunities.

The policy sets clear expectations for colleagues on how we can take action to reduce the company's environmental footprint in line with our targets, and clarifies the areas for greatest focus for action.

It applies to all our geographical locations and segments, covers Springer Nature's operational activities and includes areas relevant to specific parts of the value chain (e.g. paper, energy, fleet). It aligns with our Business Partner Code of Conduct, which sets out general expectations towards our business partners regarding their environmental practices.

The policy is aligned with our most material impacts and climate-related actions. Based on our net zero roadmap, we report annually on our carbon footprint across all three scopes and our progress towards climate-neutral operations (for details on our carbon footprint see Climate change metrics). Additionally, our emissions reduction targets have been validated and certified by the SBTi.

It covers topics that are relevant to our response to climate change, including:

- Climate change mitigation:
  - Through our science-based emissions reduction targets we aim to reach net zero emissions by 2040. See Our transition plan for more information. Additionally, our Paper Policy and related guidance is designed to help us avoid emissions (see Other environmental impacts).

- Climate change adaptation:
  - We actively manage building controls, such as air conditioning, to provide comfortable temperatures for employees. Additionally, we offer employees flexible working hours and the possibility to work from home at times when climate change might affect the office environment, such as in significantly high temperatures.

- Energy efficiency:
  - We aim to reduce energy consumption at our sites wherever practical. See Our transition plan for more information on our green building checklist, which supports this work.

- Renewable electricity:
  - We aim to purchase 100% renewable electricity directly from energy suppliers. However, this is not always practical, so we sometimes purchase renewable electricity for specific offices via attribute certificates. In exceptional cases where this is not possible, we purchase certified offsets.

For information on other areas covered by our Environment Policy, see Other environmental impacts (E2, E4 and E5).

The Environmental Policy and its implementation are overseen by the Environment Committee and the Sustainable Business Steering Committee, which includes members of our Management Board and wider Executive Team.

Within our own operations we make the policy available on our intranet for all our employees to access. We also participate in relevant industry association working groups on topics such as carbon measurement methodologies and tools, in order to minimise duplication of effort for suppliers and others in the value chain.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

Our climate targets

We have set climate-related targets, using the process set out and validated by the SBTi, which includes distinct targets for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Our reduction targets have been validated by SBTi and, together with our total carbon footprint, map out our route to net zero. We have both a near-term (2032) and a net zero (2040) target.

Our science-based targets

	Near-term target (2032)	Net zero target (2040)
Scope 1 and 2 Includes: On-site fuel and electricity Fleet	Reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 54.6%	Reduce absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 90%
Scope 3 GHG Protocol Categories 1–15	Reduce absolute Scope 3 GHG emissions by 32.5%[a]	Reduce absolute Scope 3 GHG emissions by 90%

a Scope 3 categories covered are fuel- and energy-related activities, waste generated in operations, business travel, upstream leased assets, purchased goods and services, capital goods, and upstream transportation and distribution.

We have adopted the market-based accounting approach for Scope 2 (in line with GHG Protocol requirements Scope 2 emissions are measured and reported using the location-based and market-based approach). In line with SBTi requirements, 95% of these emissions are covered by both our near-term (2032) and our net zero (2040) target. As part of our SBTi validation we have committed to validate and recalculate our targets every five years.

Scope of our climate-related targets

Each target includes Springer Nature's own activities and extends, where applicable, to our upstream and downstream value chain. This is line with Springer Nature's methodology and assumptions used for our GHG inventory boundaries as stated in this report and consistent with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol definition of Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

In accordance with SBTi's approach, our near-term science-based targets must cover 67% of our Scope 3 emissions in the base year. Categories 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 15 (see table below for details) are not covered by our near-term (2032) science-based targets but are covered by our net zero (2040) targets. We intend to continue reviewing potential carbon emissions reductions across all categories where we have emissions. Optional reporting activities are not covered by our science-based targets.

Scope of our climate-related targets

	2019 tCO$_2$e	2032 target coverage (%)	2040 target coverage (%)
Scope 1	4,442	95	95
Scope 2 (market-based accounting approach)	2,621		
Scope 3			
1 Purchased goods and services	96,750	78	100
2 Capital goods	13,056	78	100
3 Fuel and energy-related activities (not included in Scope 1 & 2)	2,909	100	100
4 Upstream transportation and distribution	20,762	78	100
5 Waste generated in operations	175	100	100
6 Business travel	23,220	100	100
7 Employee commuting	12,617	0	35
8 Upstream leased assets	500	100	100
9 Downstream transportation and distribution	7,016	0	100
10 Processing of sold products	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant
11 Use of sold products	0	0	0
12 End-of-life treatment of sold products	15,113	0	35
13 Downstream leased assets	173	0	100
14 Franchises	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant
15 Investments	47	0	100

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

Metrics

In this section we report on key metrics that allow us to understand the climate-related impacts of our operations, following the GHG Protocol.

Our reported metrics are:

- Energy consumption and mix
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Greenhouse gas removal and mitigation.

Energy consumption and mix

In 2024, total energy use in our buildings (which includes offices and some other storage facilities) was 13,740 MWh[1], 68%[2] of which was renewable energy. With fleet vehicles included, total energy use was 23,006 MWh. Electricity use in our buildings from renewable and clean sources was 98%[3]. We aim to prioritise purchasing renewable electricity directly from our energy suppliers; where that is not practical, we buy renewable electricity certificates (RECs). We purchased carbon offsets for a small number of sites where it was impractical to buy RECs. Additionally, we purchase J-Credits (certified reduction or removal credits within Japan) in relation to the electricity consumption of our Tokyo office.
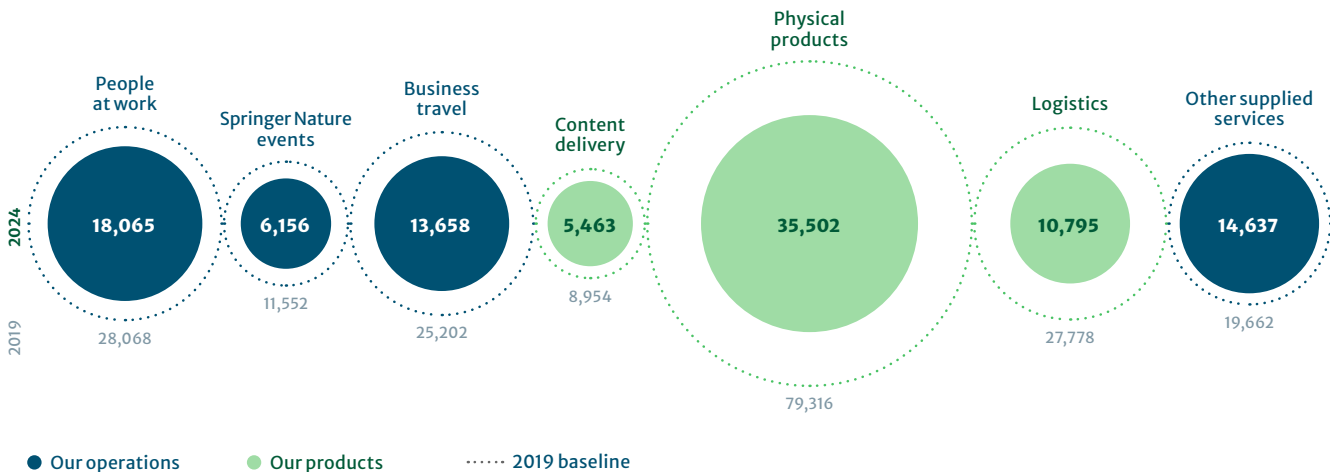
Greenhouse gas emissions

The following table displays our GHG emissions in Scopes 1, 2 and 3, comparing our 2019 baseline with 2023 and 2024. Total GHG emissions for Scope 1, Scope 2 and flights, as included in our previous sustainability reporting, were 17,093 tonnes CO_2e gross (net tonnes 12,723 CO_2e) in 2024[4] of which 10,490 tonnes CO_2e were from flights[5]. Total emissions have fallen around 50% when compared with the 2019 baseline.

OUR EMISSIONS PROGRESS

Scopes 1-3 emissions, mandatory and optional reporting (market-based factors)

2024 total: 104,276 tonnes CO_2e* net carbon emissions
2019 total: 200,532 tonnes CO_2e (2019 baseline)

	People at work	Springer Nature events	Business travel	Content delivery	Physical products	Logistics	Other supplied services
2024	18,065	6,156	13,658	5,463	35,502	10,795	14,637
2019	28,068	11,552	25,202	8,954	79,316	27,778	19,662

● Our operations   ● Our products   ⋯⋯ 2019 baseline

*In 2024, we purchased 20,000 tonnes of Plan Vivo-certified carbon offsets.

1 2023 energy and carbon emissions have been restated from those published in the Sustainable Business Report 2023, due to improved data. This figure includes energy used by sites where we have operational control, our serviced sites and major outsourced data centres.

2 This figure shows our renewable and clean electricity purchases, as a proportion of total site energy use. For 2024, the metric has been updated to exclude J-Credits purchased for our Tokyo office, which are instead counted as 'carbon offsets'.

3 This figure includes nuclear electricity, which was purchased for some of our sites in Spain until July 2024. For 2024, the metric has been updated to exclude J-Credits purchased for our Tokyo office, which are instead counted as 'carbon offsets'.

4 Gross emissions do not factor in the purchase of renewable and clean energy (including renewable energy certificates) or offsets. Net emissions include supplier-sourced green and clean electricity and purchases of additional renewable electricity certificates, but exclude offsets.

5 The emissions stated relate to the combustion of aviation fuels and associated radiative forcing. Including emissions relating to the sourcing of aviation fuels ("well-to-tank") increases 2024 emissions to 11,780 tonnes.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

Disaggregated GHG emissions[a][b] (E1–6 AR 48)

		Retrospective		
	Base year (2019)	2023	2024	% 2024/2023
Scope 1 GHG emissions				
Gross Scope 1 GHG emissions (tCO₂e)	4,442	3,019	2,009	−33.4%
Percentage of Scope 1 GHG emissions from regulated emission trading schemes (%)	not relevant	not relevant	not relevant	n/a
Scope 2 GHG emissions				
Gross location–based Scope 2 GHG emissions (tCO₂e)	7,514	4,255	3,957	−7.0%
Gross market–based Scope 2 GHG emissions (tCO₂e)[c]	2,621	215	187	−13.1%
Significant Scope 3 GHG emissions[d]				
Total Gross indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions (tCO₂e)	192,338	127,537	95,957	−24.8%
1 Purchased goods and services[e]	96,750	72,808	53,330	−26.8%
2 Capital goods	13,056	6,184	5,659	−8.5%
3 Fuel and energy–related activities (not included in Scope 1 or 2)	2,909	2,271	1,562	−31.2%
4 Upstream transportation and distribution[g,h]	20,762	10,005	8,298	−17.1%
5 Waste generated in operations	175	131	108	−17.3%
6 Business travel	23,220	17,181	12,586	−26.7%
7 Employee commuting	12,617	3,497	4,733	35.4%
8 Upstream leased assets[f]	500	913	636	−30.3%
9 Downstream transportation[h]	7,016	3,698	2,497	−32.5%
10 Processing of sold products	not relevant	not relevant	not relevant	n/a
11 Use of sold products[i]	–	–	–	n/a
12 End–of–life treatment of sold products	15,113	10,691	6,401	−40.1%
13 Downstream leased assets[f]	173	145	137	−5.5%
14 Franchises	not relevant	not relevant	not relevant	n/a
15 Investments	47	13	9	−31.4%
Total GHG emissions (location–based) (tCO₂e)	**204,294**	**134,811**	**101,923**	**−24.4%**
Total GHG emissions (market–based) (tCO₂e)	**199,401**	**130,771**	**98,153**	**−24.9%**

a 2023 energy and carbon emissions have been restated from those published in the Sustainable Business Report 2023, due to improved data.

b The 2024 figure is calculated using location–based factors for Scopes 2 and 3 is 55 CO₂e per €1 million revenue.

c Market–based emissions figures include the carbon benefits of purchasing renewable "green" electricity and "clean" nuclear electricity. The market–based figures are the basis of our science–based target, validated by the SBTi. The location–based figure for Scope 2 for 2024 is 3,957 tCO₂e.

d Scope 3 figures meet the minimum reporting requirements under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's "Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard".

e In Category 1, paper purchases for Q4 2024 and the associated carbon emissions are extrapolated based on spend data. This is a significant methodological change from 2023, where full year actual data was used.

f Scope 3 market–based emissions figures include the carbon benefits of purchasing renewable "green" electricity and "clean" nuclear electricity (the latter was purchased for some of our serviced sites in Spain until July 2024). Examples include the renewable energy certificates we procure to cover the electricity purchased by our landlords to provide leased building services to us (Category 8), green electricity used by one of our co–located datacentres (Category 8), and green electricity purchased for the portion of our Berlin office we lease to a third party (Category 13). For standard ("brown") electricity purchases, we apply a residual factor if one is available, or otherwise the location–based factor; the latter may result in double–counting of "green electricity" between electricity users. Category 3 is only calculated using location–based factors at present. The market–based figures are the basis of our science–based target, validated by the SBTi. Emissions based on market–based figures for Category 8 are amounting to 37 tCO₂e and for Category 13, 60 tCO₂e, resulting in a total of 97,477 tCO₂e across all Scopes.

g This Category covers transportation of our product, but excludes delivery of other goods from direct suppliers, because these emissions are estimated to be minimal.

h The logistics data for our Local Education business is largely extrapolated from 2023 activity data, adjusted for revenue changes per market.

i Emissions for Category 11 within the minimum boundary ("mandatory reporting") are zero.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

We categorise our GHG emissions under the following activities, which align with areas where we can take action across the business:

Disaggregation of emissions by Springer Nature business activities[a][b] (E1–6 AR 41)

Emissions from activities	Explanation	Base year (2019)	2023	2024	% 2024/2023
People at work	Emissions from our offices, homeworking environments,commuting and fleet	28,068	21,159	18,065	–14.6%
Springer Nature events	Virtual and physical events	11,552	5,634	6,156	9.3%
Business travel	Transport, accommodation and other expenses involved in business trips	25,202	18,483	13,658	–26.1%
Content delivery	Processes and activities to produce and digitally host content	8,954	4,689	5,463	16.5%
Physical products	Paper, printing and binding	79,316	54,801	35,502	–35.2%
Logistics	Packaging, storage and distribution of our physical products in our direct operations and supply chain	27,778	13,702	10,795	–21.2%
Other supplied services	Supply chain emissions not captured elsewhere	19,662	18,324	14,637	–20.1%
Total Scope 1–3 emissions, mandatory and optional reporting (market based)		**200,532**	**136,792**	**104,276**	**–23.8%**

a Scope 3 figures meet the minimum reporting requirements under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's "Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard".

b Figures in this table use market-based factors for Categories 8 and 13, reducing the overall total when compared with the data in the Disaggregated GHG emissions table by 676 tCO_2e (total GHG emissions 97,477 tCO_2e). Here we include optional reporting under the GHG Protocol's "Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard" of 6,799 tCO_2e. Only categories with significant optional emissions are included.

GHG emissions per million € net revenue

GHG emissions intensity (E1–6 AR 54)

Type	2023	2024	% 2024/2023
Location-based	72.8	55.2	–24.2%
Market-based	70.6	53.1	–24.7%

We include all Scope 1, 2 and 3 (except Category 15) GHG emissions from entities that are included in our consolidated financial statements. In our Scope 3 Category 15 (Investments) emissions we include emissions that relate to associates and other investments in proportion to our shareholding. In 2024 there were no significant changes or disruptive events that had a substantial effect on our carbon footprint.

For Scope 1 and 2, we collect primary data for our largest sites (with more than 100 employees) and sites of strategic importance, based on either geographic location or business activity. Approximately 80% of energy consumption, 77% of the associated gross carbon emissions (91% including flight emissions) and more than 80% of resource use is, therefore, based on actual data. Data for the remaining locations is extrapolated based on consumption values per square metre of office space or per employee.

The organisational boundary reflects the same consolidation approach as is used for financial reporting. No exclusions are made by geography or function.

No acquisitions or divestments in 2024 had a material impact on our emissions data. We divested the Springer Fachmedien München business in June 2023, with an overall impact on 2023 gross and net emissions of 1.2% and 1.6% respectively. We have not restated prior years' figures. We divested the American Journal Experts (AJE) business in December 2024, which had no material impact.

Scope 2 GHG emissions
We report both gross location-based and gross market-based Scope 2 emissions. The hierarchy of emissions factors from the GHG Protocol Scope 2 Guidance is applied for both location-based and market-based reporting.

Springer Nature's total disclosed GHG emissions include 3,957 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) derived from Scope 2 emissions measured using the location-based method. The total GHG emissions derived from the underlying Scope 2 emissions measured using the market-based method are 187 metric tonnes of CO_2e.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

For location-based emissions reporting, we apply the hierarchy of emissions factors illustrated in the table below, i.e. regional or sub-national grid averages where a recent factor is available, and if not, national production figures:

Factor source	Country
Umwelt Bundesamt, Strom- und Wärmeversorgung in Zahlen (2024)	Germany
UK Government, greenhouse gas reporting: conversion factors (2024)	UK
The most recently published regional or sub-national grid factors available from the national government	Argentina, Australia, France, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, USA and Vietnam
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Standardized baseline – grid emission factor for Southern African Power Pool, Version 01.0 (2018)	Botswana, Eswatini, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe
European Environment Agency, greenhouse gas emission intensity of electricity generation (2024 edition)	All other European operations
IEA, Emissions Factors (2024 edition)	All other operations

For market-based emissions reporting, emission factors are selected per site following a hierarchy of factor sources. We use supplier information where available and otherwise make use of residual factors, as set out by the GHG Protocol. If these options are not available, the market-based factor is taken as equal to the location-based factor.

We make use of two types of electricity instruments to reduce our emissions from electricity consumption at our sites:

1 renewable and/or clean electricity purchased directly through the electricity provider, and

2 additional renewable energy certificates (RECs) purchased centrally via a broker.

Our biogenic CO_2 emissions amount to 2,210 metric tonnes. For 2024 reporting, this figure now includes an estimate of the biogenic emission relating to purchased electricity (assuming a location-based reporting approach), as well as the direct use of biofuels.

Scope 3 GHG emissions
We measure our Scope 3 GHG emissions using inputs from specific activities within the entity's upstream and downstream value chain. We calculate around 40% of our Scope 3 emissions within minimum boundary using primary data obtained from suppliers or other value chain partners, ensuring a more accurate representation of the emissions associated with the activities corresponding to the Scope 3 categories of the GHG protocol.

We identify our significant Scope 3 categories based on the magnitude of estimated GHG emissions. The categories with emissions greater than zero under the 'minimum boundary' reporting of the GHG Protocol include Categories 1–9, 12, 13 and 15. In other words, all categories except Processing of sold products, Use of sold products and Franchises.

Springer Nature's gross Scope 3 emissions exclude GHG Protocol Categories 3.10 (Processing of sold products) and 3.14 (Franchises), as they are deemed irrelevant to our business model. According to the GHG Protocol, Springer Nature reports emissions that are considered 'optional'. These include emissions associated with guests travelling to our physical conferences or accessing our digital content (Category 3.1 Use of sold products), employee hotel stays and working from home (Category 3.6 Business travel) as well as employee commuting (Category 3.7 Employee commuting). These 'optional' emissions are not included in our science-based target as per the SBTi guidelines but are included in figures in this report.

We continuously work towards increasing our use of primary data so that calculation methodologies will be gradually substituted for more accurate alternatives, as set out by the GHG Protocol. This may require restatement of data to the baseline year (2019) in the future[1].

The calculation methodology for each category is selected based on which is the most accurate for the data available, as defined by the GHG Protocol. In order of preference: 1) supplier-specific method, 2) hybrid method, 3) average-data method and 4) spend-based method.

The spend-based method has been applied for some of the Category 1 and 2 emissions calculations, such as those related to our purchases of production paper (used to print our books and journals; this accounts for approximately 40% of Category 1 emissions in 2024), certain IT and production services and for Category 15 in relation to one of our associated companies.[2]

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1 A recalculation of the baseline will become necessary if 'inorganic' growth (i.e. merger, divestment, acquisition) or methodological change alters the baseline calculation by greater than 5% (net). A recalculation may be necessary if the change is less than 5% if it is deemed necessary to support the fair and meaningful comparison of performance. The baseline has not been recalculated for this report.

2 The 'share' of these emissions is calculated based on the % shareholding.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / CLIMATE CHANGE
continued

Emissions are calculated per type of purchase based on the 'amount' or 'volume' of the goods or services purchased by Springer Nature or value chain partners, which is multiplied by an 'average' emissions factor, e.g. tonnes of copy paper and cubic metres of water used in offices (Category 1); kWh of fuel and electricity used to power buildings and vehicles (Categories 3, 6, 8, 13 and 15[1]); tonnage of waste (Categories 5 and 12); distances travelled (Categories 6, 7 and 11); and tons-kilometre of freight transported (Categories 4 and 9).

The same approach as for Scope 2 is used for the sources of the factors applied to grid electricity (see above). Factors for the upstream emissions of electricity purchased by the company (Category 3) are sourced from the International Energy Agency (IEA)[2] (the factors for UK electricity are sourced from the UK Government[2]). Other carbon intensity factors per unit of volume (applied to minimum boundary emissions) are sourced from the UK Government, 'Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions'.[2]

Spend data for purchases of goods and services are multiplied by a relevant 'industry average per monetary value of goods' factor; in 2024 this was the main approach used for calculating Category 1 and 2 emissions, and third-party warehousing services.

Carbon factors per unit of spend are sourced from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 'Supply Chain GHG Emission Factors for US Commodities and Industries'.[2]

The Global Warming Potential (GWP) applied by the EPA factors relates to the AR4 figures over a 100 year period. This differs from the UK Government dataset from 2023 onwards, which applies AR5. The overall impact on Springer Nature's Category 1 and 2 emissions is considered to be minimal. The figures provided by EPA are adjusted for inflation to match the current reporting year based on the US Consumer Price Index.

For some categories, different methodologies are used for different data sources. We ask suppliers from certain key sectors (e.g. for the production of printed products and IT services) to complete an annual questionnaire to provide supplier-specific data.

GHG removals and mitigation
Springer Nature offices, warehouses, fleet and flights have been carbon neutral since 2020. We have achieved this by using renewable electricity, introducing energy efficiencies and purchasing offsets. We recognise that to reach net zero, we will need to deliver 90% emissions reductions by 2040 and that offsetting is not included in those reductions. We offset emissions related to buildings, fleet and flights. We currently include a portion of homeworking and commuting emissions, in light of increased hybrid working patterns.

Our work relies on using paper – produced from timber, a natural resource – to produce physical products (journals and books), so we aim to contribute positively to biodiversity and carbon sequestration while also delivering positive social co-benefits to local communities through the carbon offsetting programmes that we support. Working with C Level, we support Taking Root's CommuniTree project in Nicaragua, which enables local farmers to reforest land with native trees in ways that build their capacity to earn money from their well-maintained forests. In 2024, we purchased certificates totalling 20,000 tonnes of CO_2e. We prioritise the core principle of additionality, by ensuring that the certificates we purchase reflect carbon balancing that would not have occurred without our investment. The initiative is certified by Plan Vivo, the longest-standing voluntary carbon standard. These credits meet strict quality standards ensuring they are additional, permanent, and verified by third parties.

For our offices in Japan, we purchase J-Credits (certified reduction or removal credits within Japan) for offsetting, amounting to 32 tCO_2e in 2024.

Offsets and the 'carbon neutral' designation do not count towards our SBTi-approved targets, as disclosed in Our climate targets.

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1 The 'share' of these emissions is calculated based on the % shareholding.
2 In all cases, the carbon factor set published closest to the reporting year (and available at the time of reporting) is chosen.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS
continued

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

We consider the impact of our operations and value chain on the natural environment, including the potential for material impacts, risks and opportunities related to air and water pollution, biodiversity and the circular economy. In the main, risks associated with these topics are connected with our ongoing production of physical products, generally printed by third parties and reliant on the sourcing of paper stock produced from virgin fibres. We have, therefore, combined the disclosures for environmental impacts along the value chain, which are closely interlinked for Springer Nature and align with ESRS E2 – Pollution, E4 – Biodiversity and Ecosystems and E5 – Resource Use and Circular Economy.

Paper production and printing processes can result in air and water pollution due to substances like chlorine-based bleaching agents and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), despite regulatory measures. Our Paper Policy aims to ensure that our printers use papers made from certified materials from responsible managed forests. However the paper sector can have a deforestation-related impact on biodiversity, carbon storage and ecosystems. Additionally, reliance on virgin materials and limited use of recycled content hinders progress towards a circular economy. The destruction of unsold stock can contribute to resource waste, additional logistical movements, and increased GHG emissions. We are committed to addressing these challenges as part of our sustainability efforts. Our carbon offsetting programme also supports the reforestation of biodiverse forests.

Relevant policies

We expect our suppliers and business partners to meet our standards and to manage their environmental impacts as relevant to their own business. The policies outlined here support our approach.

The relevant policies are our:

- Environmental Policy

- Paper Policy

- Business Partner Code of Conduct, including our Supplier Due Diligence Policy.

Environmental Policy
As our upstream value chain makes a significant contribution to the company's overall carbon emissions, as well as other types of environmental impacts, the environmental policy references actions taken with our suppliers and other partners. This is also where we face risks related to other types of pollution. Therefore, working with suppliers who are also responsible businesses is a key pillar of our Business Partner Code of Conduct.

Paper Policy
We aim to be part of a responsible paper supply chain and, therefore, are committed to sourcing papers from sustainable sources and responsible suppliers, and without a negative impact on biodiversity or other environmental or social impacts. Our Paper Policy guidance helps our purchasing managers implement the policy.

Wherever possible, we prioritise use of papers that meet at least one of the following criteria while also addressing pollution-related concerns: certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC), the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), or another PEFC-recognised scheme. As a minimum, papers should be rated 3* or 5 in the Publishers' Database for Responsible Environmental Paper Sourcing (PREPS) database.

Our associated guidance also includes information on how our suppliers can comply with the policy, along with the information we need from them to monitor their compliance. The policy applies to print and paper suppliers and to those responsible for purchasing. It relates to both papers that we purchase directly and that are purchased by our printers for use in our products.

Springer Nature is a member of the BookChain Project, a collaborative cross-industry initiative involving book and journal publishers, print suppliers and paper manufacturers. The BookChain Project collects and analyses data, such as the origin of the tree fibres used to make paper and the paper manufacturing process, chemicals and materials, with a focus on producing more sustainable materials, as well as supplier data through environmental and labour self-assessments. Access to the data enables us to make informed decisions about our production and manage the impact of our resource use.

We communicate the Paper Policy guidance to relevant suppliers via our purchasing managers and on our website. It is shared with relevant internal colleagues via the company intranet, Hive.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS / OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS
continued

Business Partner Code of Conduct, including our supplier due diligence policy

The Business Partner Code of Conduct sets an expectation that suppliers reaffirm commitments to respecting the laws and regulations that affect our business and to act in a sustainable, ethical and socially responsible way.

All in-scope suppliers are subject to due diligence, including completing a questionnaire at least every three years, and annually for those that meet a higher risk threshold (the risk level is set based on the response to the questionnaire). In-scope suppliers are those with whom we spend more than €100,000 per year. We regularly review and update the due diligence questionnaire to include upcoming legal and regulatory requirements relating to ESG matters, including environmental impacts such as air, water and soil pollution or any use of substances of concern. Through our supplier engagement programme, we actively manage and monitor our suppliers.

Actions

We took several actions in 2024 concerning other environmental impacts of physical products across the value chain at Springer Nature. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, the actions we take are recurring measures (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue).

Pollution

This area is managed through our existing policies for supply chain due diligence. We consider the environmental practices of key print suppliers as part of our due diligence and onboarding, and in supplier reviews (see Workers in the value chain for more information).

Biodiversity

The Paper Policy guidance seeks to ensure that papers used in our products come from known, legal and responsible sources, and in this way we aim to minimise and address biodiversity-related risks. In addition, we support a Plan Vivo-certified reforestation project in Nicaragua as part of our carbon offsetting programme (see Climate change for more information).

Resource use and circular economy

We manage our resource use and promote circular economy principles by focusing on reducing paper consumption, minimising waste and optimising packaging practices. Below we outline three ways that we are doing this.

Action 1: Print-to-digital transition

The continued migration from printed books and journals to digital delivery of product is already well underway at Springer Nature and is a significant contributor to the ongoing reduction in overall use of paper.

Action 2: Minimising waste to avoid scrappage of books

We continue to work to reduce overprinting and logistics emissions by increasing our use of print on-demand services. Our products are produced by third-party suppliers. We optimise our supply chain to make stock movement more efficient, taking advantage of data-driven forecasting, print-on-demand solutions, and a digital-first approach to minimise waste and avoid unnecessary scrappage.

Action 3: Minimise packaging

We aim to reduce packaging, especially plastic packaging for our products. In our Research segment, individual books are not wrapped in plastic, with exceptions only for very heavy books where plastic wrap may be used to avoid damage.

Metrics

We collect data each year to assess the proportion of paper that is used in Springer Nature products that meets the Paper Policy. Between January and September 2024 (the most recent period for which complete data is available), the figure was 97.2%. Many of our products are provided in digital-only format, and where they are printed, materials are produced by third-party suppliers. We estimate that we used around 20,000 tonnes of paper for our products in 2024, reduced from around 28,000 tonnes in 2023.

EMPLOYEE-RELATED MATTERS

As a people business with strong brands, we invest in our highly skilled and engaged employees since they play a critical part in our business. We also want Springer Nature to be a place where our people can be themselves and learn, develop and thrive in an inclusive culture.

Our employees form the foundation of Springer Nature's success, driving innovation, upholding our values and directly influencing our ability to serve our global community with integrity and excellence. By creating a great place to work we aim to manage potential risks related to our employees which could have consequences for their wellbeing and safety, or for our ability as an organisation to attract and retain talented people.

In 2022, we asked our people what is important to them about the work we do and why they enjoy working for us, from which we created our first employer brand, Be Part of Progress, launched in 2023. This helps us talk consistently about what we offer, how we attract the best candidates and demonstrate what our existing employees can expect from working at Springer Nature.

In this section we cover the most material topics related to our own workforce looking at our approach, policies, actions and metrics:

- Fair and just working conditions

- Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

FAIR AND JUST WORKING CONDITIONS

Working at Springer Nature means being part of progress and making a real impact on society. In return, we offer a place to work that enables colleagues to develop their curiosity by challenging themselves in a collaborative, nurturing environment that prioritises wellbeing, flexibility, opportunity and inclusion.

To create a workplace that allows our colleagues to follow their passions and be themselves, we listen to them through engagement surveys and employee forums, and act on their feedback. This feedback plays an important role in shaping Springer Nature's strategies for managing actual and potential impacts on our workforce.

We regularly run employee engagement surveys, covering topics concerning work-life balance, line manager support, growth and development, strategy, information and communication. Our Executive Team uses the results to define our priorities. We carried out our most recent full survey in October 2023 and will conduct our next one in early 2025. We also ran a global inclusion and diversity survey in 2024, in which our employee satisfaction score remained stable and consistent with external benchmarks. In addition, we gather feedback via townhalls, individual feedback as well as various forms of employee representation. We have local, formally-elected employee representation (including works councils) for colleagues in Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Spain, France and Austria as well as an international employee representative meeting at least twice a year.

We have 10 employee networks, with around 1,800 members collectively involved. These groups unite colleagues around a shared identity or goal, for instance gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability or neurodiversity. Our employee networks help to support an inclusive working culture and meet annually with the Executive Team.

We have processes in place for staff, business partners and all third parties to ask questions or raise concerns about how we operate at Springer Nature. One of these channels is the confidential and independent whistleblowing system called Speak Up (see Whistleblowing Policy). Additionally, we provide local grievance mechanisms for employees to raise concerns.

Relevant policies

Springer Nature has several policies in place to manage our material impacts on our own workforce, their health and safety, and related material risks and opportunities:

- Code of Conduct

- Global Health and Safety Policy

- Global Hybrid Working Framework Policy

- Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

- Whistleblowing Policy.

We follow the UN Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the standards issued by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and as stated within our Business Partner Code of Conduct, we expect our business partners to do so as well.

We monitor and revise policies periodically, as necessary, and share them with employees on our intranet and, where relevant, with external stakeholders on our website. We require our employees to complete mandatory training on the Code of Conduct and related topics each year, as outlined in Training on business conduct.

EMPLOYEE-RELATED MATTERS / FAIR AND JUST WORKING CONDITIONS
continued

Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct sets out how we expect employees to interact with colleagues, suppliers, customers and external stakeholders to avoid legal or reputational issues and to promote a responsible business culture. For a detailed description, see Business conduct.

Global Health and Safety Policy

Springer Nature's global Health and Safety Policy guides how we manage both physical and mental health risks at all our sites and was developed in partnership with employees working in relevant roles within our operations and facilities management functions.

We keep our risks as low as possible through mandatory training for colleagues, a health and safety management system, and regular reporting to senior management to consider trends and action to avoid an incident occurring again. Health and safety management guidance includes an accident prevention policy.

Our health and safety management system follows the 'plan' (policy and procedures), 'do' (take action), 'check' (analyse effectiveness), 'act' (apply lessons learned) principle. This includes carrying out a risk assessment to determine potential risks and establish targeted mitigation activities. As our buildings are primarily offices, ergonomics and wellbeing are important concerns. Based on the identified potential risks, we then put mitigation measures in place.

As part of its annual review of risk assessment processes the Management Board considers the effectiveness of our risk management systems and compliance with the global health and safety policy, with the aim of ensuring that it is applied consistently and adequate in meeting our identified risks.

We aim to ensure that appropriate and proportionate safety measures are in place to meet or exceed our health and safety obligations towards our employees and others working in or visiting our workplaces across the world. That is why the Health and Safety Policy considers the interests of all those on Springer Nature sites, including contractors and visitors.

Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

Discrimination and harassment of any form is unacceptable at Springer Nature, in the workplace or any other work-related situation, and we make every effort to support employees who feel they have been the victim of harassment. We aim to build an inclusive organisation with a diverse workforce and equitable structures that enable everyone to thrive. We comply with EU regulation and national law and have an internal Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy that sets out Springer Nature's commitment to treating all employees with dignity and respect in a workplace free of discrimination and harassment.

The policy applies to work-related discrimination, harassment, bullying and retaliation in all work-related settings both inside and outside the office. This includes business trips, conferences and business-related social events, or any form of communication (for example email, mail, phone) by employees, employees of other employers, contractors, vendors, customers, suppliers, visitors and partners.

The policy addresses various grounds for discrimination and harassment, such as discrimination and harassment based on personal characteristics (such as, but not limited to, age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, disability, gender, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristics) and aims to promote diversity and an inclusive working environment.

Global Framework Policy on Hybrid Working

We are committed to a hybrid working approach where colleagues can benefit from working from home, as well as from the positive effects of regular in-person office interactions, which supports career growth, collaboration, social connections and networking.

Our Global Framework Policy on Hybrid Working aims to support a balanced combination of working in the office and working from home as an equitable and sustainable solution for all. This policy expects an average of two days in the office and three days of work from home each week, with colleagues given the flexibility to decide with their manager how they want to spread office days throughout the month. The policy applies to all employees in all majority-owned Springer Nature companies in all divisions, business units and group functions. This policy does not supersede any mandatory national legal requirements for compliance needs.

Whistleblowing Policy

It is very important to us that our own workforce, as well as anyone working with and for Springer Nature, can raise any concerns, and our Whistleblowing Policy sets out the mechanism for this.

EMPLOYEE-RELATED MATTERS / FAIR AND JUST WORKING CONDITIONS
continued

Actions

We took several actions in 2024 aimed at continuously improving working conditions across Springer Nature. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, the list below also includes examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where actions were started and/or completed in 2024.

Action 1: Promoting wellbeing and health and safety

The health, safety and wellbeing of our employees is of great importance, which is why we provide colleagues with guidance and resources to support their wellbeing and promote good mental health and reduce feelings of stress. One example is our global employee assistance programme, which offers short-term counselling, information and resources on emotional, financial, legal and work-life issues. The programme is free-to-use and available 24/7 for all our employees, as well as their immediate family members, on an ongoing basis.

Action 2: Providing a healthy work-life-balance

We offer a 'workation' programme, which allows our employees to work remotely or combine work in a different country with a holiday or extended visits to family, for up to 20 days each year. This highlights our commitment to continuously provide and improve flexibility to support the wellbeing of our employees and promote a healthy work-life balance.

Action 3: Enhanced training, learning and development

Springer Nature is an organisation where everyone should be able to contribute at their best and thrive. All employees are encouraged to spend up to five days a year taking part in training and development activities. These include online and in-person courses, mentoring, job shadowing, on-the-job training and other developmental activities or education.

One example of the training we offer is the SN Leader Programme, which launched in 2023. The programme aims to empower all our business leaders, helping them develop their leadership capabilities and build a shared leadership community and culture across our company and regions. In 2024, more than 850 participants completed the training, with another 200 expected to complete in early 2025.

We also have employee-generated learning, which taps into internal knowledge and empowers our people to create their own training programmes for colleagues. Springer Nature has also created an internal career hub that brings together resources, training and events to help our people take ownership of their careers with support from their manager.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We want Springer Nature to be a place where our people can be themselves and learn, develop and thrive in a global and inclusive culture. We are deeply committed to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within our organisation, in our content and across our communities.

Relevant policies

To manage our material DEI-related impacts on our own workforce, Springer Nature has a DEI strategy that drives our activities, supported by two other relevant policies:

- Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy

- Code of Conduct.

Our strategy and policies cover all employees within our own workforce, and applies to all regions and businesses. Local law takes precedence if it is more detailed or precise.

We monitor and revise all policies as necessary and make them available to all employees on our intranet.

We explain our commitments, standards and approach to human rights, labour practices and ethical business in our Code of Conduct. This includes our fundamental principles on corruption and human rights violations (see Business conduct). We expect all employees to act in line with our Code.

Global and inclusive People Strategy
In order to fulfil our ambition to build a global and inclusive organisation, we have developed a DEI strategy, in the context of our People Strategy. The strategy defines our overall objectives, internal initiatives and specific actions.

Our objective to build an inclusive organisation with a diverse workforce and equitable structures that enable everyone at Springer Nature to thrive is supported by three strategic pillars: 'Increasing diversity and representation', 'Ensuring equitable structures' and 'Building an inclusive culture'. These three pillars provide the frame for our five main areas of action:

1 Talent attraction and retention

2 Equitable talent development

3 Equitable processes and policies

4 Education and skill building

5 Community building and advocacy.

While we strive for equitable representation amongst our employees, adhering to our goals does not mean we favour certain individuals or groups. We monitor our diversity data quarterly, using this and outputs from our annual inclusion survey to help us better understand what is happening within our organisation, identify possible gaps and consider where we need to make changes. This means we are better equipped to improve representation and inclusion. It also makes our DEI strategy measurable and transparent.

EMPLOYEE-RELATED MATTERS / DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
continued

We actively listen to – and act on – the views of our employees on DEI topics via our annual inclusion and diversity survey. This helps us identify areas that require special focus and engagement with employee networks. We also make sure people across Springer Nature can build DEI-related skills via dedicated training programmes (see Action 1 below).

Collaboration is key to the success of our DEI strategy. In particular, we closely collaborate with our employee networks to address the needs of the communities they represent. We also regularly share updates on actions and progress for maximum visibility and transparency.

Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy
Our Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy is a key tool in helping us promote DEI at Springer Nature.

Actions
We took several actions in 2024 to champion DEI across Springer Nature. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, the list below also includes examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, they were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where actions were started and/or completed in 2024.

Action 1: Create an inclusive environment for all, regardless of their identity
We have several employee networks across the organisation that help foster inclusion and connection (see more in Fair and just working conditions).

We encourage employees to take part in our DEI learning journey training programme, which covers a range of DEI themes to help them develop their inclusion skills.

Our Opening Doors internship programme offers students and recent graduates in the UK, US and Germany the opportunity to develop early career experience with us, in a paid role. Applicants from all backgrounds are welcome, and we particularly encourage candidates from historically underrepresented groups to apply. Interns have access to training, career development guidance and insights into recruitment processes and other business areas. We plan to extend the programme to new territories in 2025.

Springer Nature's DEI mentoring programme connects mentees who experience lower levels of inclusion or are currently underrepresented in our leadership, with mentors within our organisation. In 2024, 94 mentee/mentor pairs took part in this global programme.

Action 2: Increase inclusion for people with disabilities in our own workforce
Our annual inclusion and diversity survey showed us that disabled or neurodivergent colleagues experience significantly lower levels of inclusion. To address this, we have developed a new framework policy that will support colleagues who may need workplace adjustments. We will roll out the new policy globally in 2025, together with training for managers on how to better support disabled and neurodivergent colleagues.

As well as monitoring our diversity metrics every quarter, our annual inclusion and diversity survey helps us to better understand the effectiveness of our inclusive initiatives. We evaluate key DEI initiatives, such as our mentoring programme or internship programme on an annual basis.

Goals
We aim to attract, hire and retain great people while fostering broader representation, especially in global leadership and key locations. To achieve this, we've set aspirational goals for representation across our global leadership and in certain locations. Those goals are:

- maintain at least 45% women in the top three tiers of leadership from 2024–2028.

- increase the proportion of people of colour in senior leadership.

We have also set goals to make sure our senior leaders reflect our global footprint.

Achieving our goals means taking intentional steps in the way we recruit, retain and promote people, as well as in the way we think about succession planning. That is why we reviewed our hiring practices in 2024, offering resources and training for managers, and investing in employee career development at Springer Nature.

Our DEI team tracks and reviews progress every quarter. Our DEI Council, which includes members from across the business and acts as a single governance structure overseeing both internal and external DEI activities at Springer Nature, monitors the implementation of our DEI strategy.

EMPLOYEE-RELATED MATTERS
continued

EMPLOYEE MATTERS: METRICS

In this section we provide key metrics related to our workforce. These metrics are referenced in Fair and just working conditions and Diversity, equity and inclusion, and are compiled in this separate section in line with the structure of the ESRS.

The metrics are:

- Our workforce
- Employee turnover
- Incidents, complaints and severe human rights impacts
- Collective bargaining and social dialogue
- Health and safety
- Diversity
- Training and skills development.

Our workforce S1–6

The key characteristics of our workforce are described in the following tables, with data taken as a snapshot on 31 December 2024.[1]

Characteristics of Springer Nature's employees
Number of employees by gender (S1–6 AR 55__1)

Gender	Headcount
Male	3,788
Female	5,586
Other	1
Not reported	19

Number of employees in countries with 50 or more employees, representing at least 10% of total workforce (S1–6 AR 55__2)

Country	Number of employees (headcount)
Germany	1,824
United Kingdom	1,730
India	2,115

Number of employees by contract type, broken down by gender (S1–6 AR 55__3)

Contract type	Female	Male	Other	Not disclosed	Total
Number of employees	5,586	3,788	1	19	**9,394**
Number of permanent employees	5,434	3,739	1	19	**9,193**
Number of temporary employees	140	40	0	0	**180**
Number of our non–guaranteed hours employees	12	9	0	0	**21**

Employee turnover

In 2024, 832 people left Springer Nature, and our turnover rate was 8%.[2]

Turnover rates vary according to local markets. Our total and voluntary turnover rates continue to be in line or better than global–footprint–weighted benchmarks we use. During exit interviews, the percentage of leavers that say they would positively recommend working at Springer Nature to others meets or exceeds benchmark level.

Incidents, complaints and severe human rights impacts

In 2024, Springer Nature recorded three incidents of discrimination and harassment across our global workforce.[3]

Collective bargaining and social dialogue

We have works councils, employee representation forums and other local, formally elected employee representation groups in Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK, covering 42% of our global workforce. 75% of employees within the EEA are covered by workers' representatives.[4]

Globally, 23% of employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

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1 Springer Nature uses headcount figures, on 31 December 2024. For the purpose of this report an employee is defined as any gainfully employed individual recorded on the reporting date ('headcount'). This includes full-time employees as well as part-time employees, home workers or teleworkers employed by the entity, employees during sick leave (including long-term sick leavers not paid by the entity), employees during statutory maternity protection period (maternity leave), and employees in the working phase of pre−retirement part-time employment. For consistency with financial reporting, interns, apprentices and trainees are counted as zero.

2 We calculate employee turnover as a percentage, representing the number of employees who left the company during the year in relation to the total headcount at the start of the year (1 January 2024) plus any new hires within that reporting year.

3 The number of incidents of discrimination, including harassment, refers to cases of discrimination based on national and ethnic origin, social origin, health status, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender, political opinion, religion or belief. This includes unequal treatment, particularly the payment of unequal pay for equal work, involving both internal and external stakeholders during the reporting period.

4 This includes total headcount for EEA countries where a workers' council is established as per legal requirements.

EMPLOYEE-RELATED MATTERS / EMPLOYEE MATTERS: METRICS
continued

Health and safety

Springer Nature is committed to protecting the health and safety of all employees. Any person conducting work on behalf of Springer Nature is, by default, covered by the health and safety management systems as set out in the global health and safety policy (i.e. 100% coverage), regardless of whether they are directly employed, working as a contractor or any other person, such as a sub-contractor.

In 2024, Springer Nature recorded seven work-related accidents and no fatalities.

Number and rate of recordable work-related accidents (S1-14 §88c)

Category	Number	Accident rate[a]
Work-related accidents – employees	6	0.35
Work-related accidents – non-employees	1	not reported in 2024

a We calculate the accident frequency rate (AFR) based on the accepted standard formula: (number of work-related accidents* 1,000,000)/ total average hours worked.

Gender split

Springer Nature is committed to fostering diversity across all levels of its workforce, with particular attention to gender representation in top management.

Employees by gender in management[a]
Gender distribution in number and percentage at top management level (S1-9 §66a)

Gender	Headcount	Percentage
Male	198	55.5%
Female	158	44.3%
Other	0	0.0%
Not reported	1	0.3%
Total	**357**	**100%**

a The gender distribution in number and percentage at the top management level refers to the representation of different genders within the top three tiers of management at Springer Nature. The Management Board is tier 1, direct reports to the Management Board are tier 2, and their direct reports are tier 3. For reporting purposes, this group is referred to as the 'top three tiers of management'. We report on diversity of the Management Board, following the recommendations of the German Corporate Governance Code. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

In 2018 we set our first gender representation goal: having 45% women in the top three tiers of leadership. We achieved that goal during 2024, although the percentage fluctuated slightly throughout the year, and the year ended with the figure at 44.3%. Our renewed goal is to maintain at least 45% women in our top three tiers from 2024–2028. Fifty percent of the Management Board are women.

Training and skills development S1-13

Providing training and skills development is an important way that we can support the personal and professional development of our workforce. The following tables provide disclosure on our training and skills development metrics.

Rate of employees that participated in training and regular performance reviews (S1-13 §83)

	Total
% of employees that participated in regular performance and career development reviews[a]	68%
Average number of training hours[b c]	11.9

a The percentage of employees that participated in regular performance and career development reviews at Springer Nature is based on the completion of year-end appraisals. These appraisals follow a timeline from April to March, which does not fully align with the business's financial year. For reporting purposes, as of 31 December 2024, we count all reviews completed in the prior year's cycle – ending 31 March 2024.

b The data is limited to training where there is access to systems that record useable data. As a result, this does not reflect external training or education programmes, nor development activities, and means the data shown here is a only a fraction of our employees' overall training and development time.

c The average number of training hours per employee is calculated by dividing the total number of training hours of all employees by the number of employees (headcount). Training includes on-site physical sessions managed by the people learning centre of excellence and reported globally, instructor-led virtual sessions, and e-learning based on estimated duration of the course, or browser view time. Training hours account for completed digital courses and booked time for instructor-led courses recorded in the learning management system (LMS). We evaluate data from a selection of further third-party learning platforms available to our workforce based on view time, and other estimations for completed courses.

For 2024 reporting, we apply the ESRS requirements for this indicator to a limited extent and report with reference to ESRS S1. The data used to prepare these figures includes interns, apprentices and trainees, as well as individuals who have left Springer Nature throughout 2024. It is reported without a gender split.

SOCIAL MATTERS

As a large global company and one of the world's largest publishers of research we have an impact on our value chain, through business partnerships and the material we publish.

In this section we cover topics that affect people in our value chain, including our suppliers and people who create or use the content we publish. We have policies and processes in place to help us review working conditions and labour standards in our value chain, with a particular focus on our strategic suppliers. The section also covers our impact as publishers of trusted and peer-reviewed research that we share widely to make a positive difference to society. For more information on our value chain, see Business model. This section covers:

- Workers in the value chain
- Information-related impacts for end users
- Editorial policies and research integrity
- Open access to research
- Societal impact of content.

WORKERS IN THE VALUE CHAIN

We work closely with business partners throughout the value chain to deliver a variety of products and services to our communities. Our partners' workers, including larger strategic suppliers involved in content and publishing operations, or those working in sectors such as typesetting, printing, logistics, digital delivery, through to the end use and disposal of products, fulfil important functions for us. We focus our action on these business partners and the labour standards of their workforce, aiming to create a positive impact for those workers. Together, we provide trusted content to our customers.

Types of workers
We deliver print and digital academic and educational content and services, working with suppliers all over the world, mainly in these core areas: production (including typesetting services and printing), editorial, information technology, customer services, marketing, travel, professional services and facilities.

By applying the standards set out in our Business Partner Code of Conduct through our value chain (including conducting labour standards audits and follow-up actions) we aim to have a positive impact on the working conditions of the people who work for the business partners in our supply chain.

Most of the value chain workers involved in these production activities work at supplier sites. However, some value chain workers, including those in editorial, information technology and facilities roles, may work at Springer Nature sites.

We consider labour standards and health and safety practices of our business partners to be potential material impacts for our value chain workers, which is why we have policies in place to monitor and manage them.

Modern slavery and human trafficking
We report on the actions we take to monitor and avoid child and forced labour in our annual Modern Slavery Act statement. It sets out the steps we take to assess potential risks of human trafficking and modern slavery within the goods and services we buy. This covers:

1 assessing goods and services where these risks are most prevalent, such as provision of security personnel, cleaning services, staffing agency support, driving and certain logistics services, warehousing, maintenance and construction, direct manufacturing, printing and pre-publishing providers

2 the risk indices used to assess countries with a higher risk profile for slavery and trafficking. At a group level, the in-scope suppliers that we monitor are those with whom we spend more than €100,000 per year. Where this threshold is not reached, local offices are encouraged to carry out monitoring activities locally.

To understand if and how specific workers in our value chain are treated, we conduct supplier audits at least every three years for suppliers in scope. The audits review five areas: labour, wages and hours, health and safety, management systems and environment. See Actions for more information on our supplier audits. The results of key performance indicators as well as incidents reported via our whistleblowing system, Speak Up, are communicated to our Management Board twice a year. We provide training on human rights, modern slavery and human trafficking issues to strategic suppliers and their staff.

Within our risk assessment processes, we consider the types of goods and services provided, the countries we source them from and the level of spend with suppliers, which allows us to prioritise suppliers for our planned programme of supplier audits. In 2024, high-priority topics identified via these audits were related to health and safety, and fair pay and conditions.

We provide more detail in our Modern Slavery Act statement on our website.

SOCIAL MATTERS / WORKERS IN THE VALUE CHAIN
continued

Relevant policies

Springer Nature has two main policies in place to manage our material impacts on workers in our value chain:

- Business Partner Code of Conduct

- Whistleblowing Policy (included in the Code of Conduct).

Both policies cover all workers in the value chain.

Our Code of Conduct and Business Partner Code of Conduct define how we expect colleagues, suppliers and customers to treat one another.

Topics covered in our Business Partner Code of Conduct include fair pay and conditions, health and safety and environmental practices. Human trafficking, forced labour and child labour are specifically addressed. It also covers freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, respect, diversity and prevention of discrimination and harassment. The policy's main objective is to set out our expectation that our business partners will follow responsible business standards as well as external legal and regulatory requirements. For details, see Business Conduct.

As described in Assessing our material topics section, all in-scope suppliers must complete a due diligence questionnaire at least every three years or more frequently based on the risk profile of the supplier. The questionnaire covers modern slavery and human trafficking, and we regularly revise it to align with evolving legal and regulatory requirements. We actively manage and monitor suppliers through our engagement programme.

As described in Fair and just working conditions, we act according to third-party standards and initiatives, and we expect our business partners to do the same.

Actions

We took several actions in 2024 concerning impacts on our main value chain workers. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, the list below also includes examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where actions were started and/or completed in 2024.

We adopt a proactive approach to managing the material impacts on our main value chain workers, with a focus on addressing the risks and opportunities that may affect their wellbeing and livelihoods. We aim to engage with our value chain workers about those impacts and to initiate tailored measures where necessary. Our risk-informed audits help us consider the perspectives of our value chain workers. During these audits, we conduct interviews with a sample set of employees, representative of the workforce, without management present to hear directly from workers. Meanwhile, our Speak Up system can be used by anyone within Springer Nature, as well as any external stakeholders, including our suppliers' employees, if they wish to raise

concerns about the way Springer Nature operates. We then investigate these concerns (for more detailed information on Speak Up see Whistleblowing policy). Any relevant feedback forms part of the audit report and we also report on actions taken within our Modern Slavery Act statement and to the Management Board.

The action listed below reflect our risk-based approach, in cooperation with our suppliers.

Action 1: Springer Nature Information on Customers and Suppliers (SNICS) system
We use this system to monitor and manage our relationships with partners, their labour standards and health and safety practices. All new suppliers must be registered in the system and complete a risk assessment questionnaire. In 2024, we also implemented a new environment questionnaire within SNICS. We will monitor the responses and identify further adjustments as necessary.

Action 2: New supplier onboarding process
Our supplier onboarding process evaluates potential risks related to labour and safety standards. We have updated the process to ensure all new suppliers complete the risk assessment questionnaire, to comply with the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz, LkSG). We have also updated our audit scope.

Action 3: Supplier audits
We conduct regular risk-based audits and address any non-compliance issues. We apply a proportionate risk-based approach to supplier management, coordinated by the business partner risk steering group. We use a third-party risk assessment tool to collect supplier due diligence data and prioritise suppliers. We assess suppliers for risks related to bribery and corruption, labour standards and human rights, data protection, information security and the environment. Our steering group assesses actions and tracks their completion, aiming to ensure that all identified issues are resolved. The steering group is made up of senior representatives of each relevant part of the business (including the Management Board and wider Executive Team members) and overseen by our Chief Risk and Compliance Officer. Where we have concerns, we work with suppliers to address them, discussing audit findings and any action plans stemming from them. We follow up on agreed actions and provide support to ensure action plans are carried out.

Metrics

Audits, and follow-up actions, help us minimise negative impacts on value chain workers. In 2024, we completed 27 audits, which is more than our threshold of 80% of in-scope suppliers for the year. As described above, the in-scope suppliers are identified based on responses to a due diligence questionnaire completed in our supplier risk assessment tool SNICS.

SOCIAL MATTERS
continued

INFORMATION-RELATED IMPACTS FOR END USERS

Our customers and end users rely on the high-quality, trusted research we publish – and our success relies on that trust. In this section, the impacts we consider relate to avoiding the dissemination of false information, ensuring our content is widely accessible and preventing copyright infringement of the content we publish. We do this by attracting great authors, evaluating, peer reviewing and enhancing their work and making it discoverable, accessible, understandable, usable, reusable and shareable. By managing these topics well we aim to minimise the potential financial, reputational and content integrity risks that may arise. The information contained in this section also relates to the ESRS standard S4 Consumers and end users.

Information-related impacts and engagement with our research community

By publishing and sharing trusted research through our channels and platforms, we help combat misinformation and ensure accurate understanding of the latest discoveries. It is important that research published by us is trustworthy and free from bias and discrimination. Our editorial policies and investment in research integrity resources and tools seek to protect these principles.

And since we interact with such a large number of global researchers and communities, we take data governance and privacy seriously across our platforms. This ensures we collect and share information in accordance with regulation and protects the communities we work with.

As the risks in our industry are constantly evolving, we aim to be flexible and responsive to current developments and introduce strategic measures, if needed. To help us do that, we carry out an annual survey to assess our reputation among our key research audiences and better understand how the communities we work with perceive Springer Nature and our priorities (see Processes to engage with our research community, in the next column).

Our key consumers/end users – the research community

We reach millions of people every day, through our websites, social media presence and news coverage, and we are constantly looking for ways to make our content even more accessible. We also engage with institutional librarians, researchers and educators through a range of events such as conferences, client meetings, editorial boards and library advisory boards. Many of the key consumers or end users of our content are also upstream content creators, i.e. researchers and research institutions.

How we contribute positively to the research community

At Springer Nature, we work closely with a large global community of researchers and educators who want to make a positive difference to society. Our mission is to support them, accelerating solutions to the world's biggest problems through the discovery and dissemination of trusted knowledge.

In 2024, we published more than 482,000 primary research articles and 14,000 books. The research we published and promoted generated over 175,000 news articles globally.

More than 62 million people visited the *Nature* and *Scientific American* websites each month in 2024, while our collection of *Nature Briefing* newsletters, a regular source of science news, has an annual reach of more than one million subscribers.

Since they were launched in 2015, we have published more than one million research articles or chapters related to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and over half of our published SDG-related articles are open access (OA).

We published over 9,300 climate-related articles in 2024, seven of which are included in Carbon Brief's list of the top 10 climate papers most featured in the media that year.

Find more information in Societal impact of content.

Processes to engage with our research community

Springer Nature seeks feedback from consumers and end users on a regular basis. We conduct an annual reputation audit through a third-party research agency, as well as customer and stakeholder surveys and interviews. We also receive feedback through our customer service teams. We provide more information on our reputation audit, and its results in Editorial policies and research integrity and Societal impact of content. We also engage with industry association working groups and seek input from consumers and end users via our research advisory councils. The insights gathered inform our activities to manage actual or potential impacts on our consumers and end users.

We measure the effectiveness of customer and end user engagement by comparing our findings with previous audits to gain insight into the impact our work is having over time and to better understand how we are perceived among the communities we work with.

SOCIAL MATTERS / INFORMATION-RELATED IMPACTS FOR END USERS
continued

Relevant policies

Research publishers have a role to play in ensuring policymakers and the public have access to research that can be trusted, combating misinformation or false claims and protecting the integrity of the research process.

We put policies in place to manage the potential negative impacts on consumers or end users of our products that might arise in areas such as:

- misinformation derived from inaccurate, misleading or harmful content

- data breaches leading to losses of personal data

- piracy of content, in breach of author rights and interests.

The policies and principles we have in place to mitigate these potential negative impacts (and which cover all our consumers and end users in all geographies) include:

- Editorial policies to uphold research integrity and trusted content

- OA Policy and Article Processing Charge (APC) Waiver Policy

- Artificial intelligence (AI) principles

- Privacy Policy

- Author rights and licensing.

These specific policies are underpinned by several general policies that act as guiding principles for our business. For example, protecting the intellectual property and data of our consumers is central to maintaining the trust that consumers and end users place in our work. That is why we have privacy, data protection and author rights policies in place to protect the data we are trusted with.

Our AI principles help guide our ethically focused approach when designing, developing and deploying and/or using AI-based solutions. We use AI solutions responsibly, making sure that we consider and mitigate any negative impact, be it societal or environmental. We place human-centred values at the heart of our approach to the responsible use of AI.

We make our commitment to these standards publicly available. Our editorial policies, APC Waiver Policy and our AI principles can be found on our website.

We also outline these policies in our Code of Conduct and follow relevant third-party standards regarding respect for human rights such as those set out by the UN Global Compact and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

We aim to ensure the products, services and content that we procure and provide, conform to the latest W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2, to at least level 'AA'. It is a fundamental principle that our products and services can be used by anyone, regardless of any permanent, temporary, or situational disability that they are currently experiencing.

Additional information on how we ensure that the rights of our consumers and end users, with regard to free speech and anti-discrimination in publishing, can be found in Editorial policies and research integrity.

As already outlined in this report, our Speak Up whistleblowing system provides an important channel for all stakeholders to anonymously ask questions or raise concerns regarding our operations, without any potential retaliation.

Actions

We continue to take actions to mitigate material negative impacts on our consumers and/or end users as a result of issues related to published content, including any that might lead to severe negative impacts such as human rights issues or incidents. We share here examples of actions taken in 2024; however, given the importance of the topics and time it takes for actions to yield results, we also include examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where we started and/or completed actions in 2024.

While our key audiences have differing concerns, priorities and needs, there are some areas that overlap, so the action we take reflects the range of consumers and end users that we affect and interact with.

As detailed earlier, we carry out an annual reputation audit that provides insights into the effectiveness of our actions. Additionally, our Speak Up system and external ombudsman (see Whistleblowing Policy for more information) help us ensure that processes to address issues are accessible for consumers and/or end users. Both are available on our website.

Our Management Board receives regular monitoring reports on our anti-piracy activity and our executive-level Accessibility Steering Committee receive monthly progress reports from senior managers on the steps being taken as we progress towards compliance with the European Accessibility Act (EAA).

We apply a holistic approach to our actions with the aim of making sure they include all business areas, geographies and affected stakeholders. Unless otherwise specified, they are also recurring actions.

SOCIAL MATTERS / INFORMATION-RELATED IMPACTS FOR END USERS
continued

Action 1: Counteracting fake news/disinformation
By publishing peer-reviewed research and disseminating it via high-quality channels and platforms, Springer Nature can play an important role in combating the rise of misinformation and ensuring accurate understanding of the latest scientific discoveries. Throughout 2024, as well as in previous years, Springer Nature has provided financial support for the infrastructure, project management and communications of the global network of Science Media Centres. Bringing together these expert organisations helps ensure the public has access to the best evidence and media expertise when science is in the news.

Action 2: Preventing data breaches
We rely on data to provide the trusted services and insights that our customers and end users expect, so we have a duty to ensure we protect that data and have established technical and organisational measures to protect our systems and commercially sensitive information. We also ensure all personally identifiable information is stored and processed in a legally compliant manner. We have infrastructure and server-level security initiatives in place and continue to invest in data protection training for our employees on a regular basis.

Action 3: Preventing piracy and protecting author rights
We proactively identify, monitor and act against potential legal infringements in all published content, ensuring that threats are identified, targeted, disrupted and, where possible, countered. Any concerns about online piracy or physical counterfeiting can be reported to our anti-piracy team. Additionally, we participate in industry-wide efforts, such as working groups, to address piracy and collaborate with the relevant police authorities where necessary. In 2024, we issued more than 2.5 million requests to take down content that infringes our copyright and enhanced our take-down programme to incorporate all major social media platforms.

Action 4: Creating content accessibility
We want to make our content and platforms accessible to all our consumers and end users. To achieve this, we are working towards compliance with the EAA, which comes into force in June 2025. In 2024 we also appointed a Global Head of Accessibility who reports to the Chief Digital Officer. They are responsible for increasing our focus on accessibility across the business. We also prioritise accessibility as part of our commitment to DEI within our content and communities.

EDITORIAL POLICIES AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Springer Nature strives to share outstanding and robust research with our consumers and end users. Inaccurate, incomplete or potentially dangerous content could lead to a loss of trust in our publications, with the potential for reputational damage or financial loss. Content that does not adhere to our research integrity standards is, therefore, a material risk for our business.

To mitigate this, we have editorial and publishing policies that are available on our website, plus information and resources on research integrity, which we share with our communities on a dedicated hub.

These policies help us support and encourage researchers to follow good practice in their research. We supplement our policies with a positive and proactive approach to preventing and addressing errors and misconduct, which includes activities such as training for our editors to help them spot this kind of content and uphold the standards of practice we expect.

Relevant policies
Our principal policy for editors is our Journal Editors' Code of Conduct. We have a number of other editorial policies that underpin our commitment to supporting research excellence.

Our relevant policies are:

- The Journal Editors' Code of Conduct

- Third-party standards and initiatives we adhere to

- Various editorial policies.

Journal Editors' Code of Conduct
Our Journal Editors' Code of Conduct (available on our website) sets out our standards and expectations associated with the role of editors. We base our requirements on guidelines and best practice issued by organisations such as the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). We are an active member of COPE and are committed to working in line with its core principles, such as correct handling of defamatory content and ensuring manuscripts meet the relevant ethical standards. Adhering to these principles ensures we are working to the highest standards of editorial practice.

Third-party standards and initiatives
As well as COPE's core principles, we commit and refer to other third-party standards. These include, but are not limited to the:

- IUCN Policy Statement on Research Involving Species at Risk of Extinction and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

- World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki or a comparable standard that aims to protect safety and human rights of research participants

SOCIAL MATTERS / EDITORIAL POLICIES AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY
continued

- TRUST code: a Global Code of Conduct for equitable research partnerships to avoid the practices of helicopter research or ethics dumping

- Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) guidelines for reporting of sex and gender information in study design, data analyses, results and interpretation of findings.

Our editors, reviewers and authors are advised by or informed by work from the Springer Nature Research Integrity Group (RIG) on best practices and ethical conduct in research. We provide training for editors on the fundamentals and best practices of publication and on how to resolve research integrity problems as they arise. Whenever more complex cases come up, we will conduct any investigation required to support the editors in resolving the case.

Editorial policies

We have several editorial policies in place that underpin our commitment to supporting research excellence. Policy topics include:

- **Artificial intelligence**: AI must be used responsibly and for the benefit of the research community

- **Author contributions**: all authors should be adequately credited within their publications

- **Competing interests**: editors, peer reviewers and authors are required to disclose competing interests

- **Corrections and retractions**: in a case where an allegation is made, we act as quickly as possible to investigate it, aiming to maintain the integrity of the published literature

- **Editorial independence**: the editorial process should be independent from all commercial concerns

- **Harmful research content**: using principles and guidance, we assist authors, editors, reviewers and publishers in considering all potentially harmful or discriminatory content

- **Plagiarism**: we investigate instances of plagiarism, have clear guidelines for editors in place and routinely check submitted manuscripts using a third-party tool

- **Reproducibility and robustness of research**: by providing clear guidance to authors and supporting them in the reporting of their work, we aim to ensure high standards of transparency and robustness in the research we publish (see also Open access).

These editorial policies and underlying guidance are relevant to everyone publishing with Springer Nature, i.e. our authors, editors, researchers and peer reviewers, most of whom are not employees. The policies aim to help them adhere to our principles when publishing research with us.

All our editorial policies are available on our website.

Actions

We took various actions in 2024 to make sure we are sharing outstanding and robust research with our consumers and end users. However, given the importance of the topics and time it takes for actions to yield results, we also include examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where we started and/or completed actions in 2024.

The use of AI technologies, which support editorial processes and were used in some of the following actions, aligns with Springer Nature's strategies and values, meets the principles of ethical AI use and aims to fulfil current and future legal requirements. We use AI solutions responsibly, making sure that we consider and mitigate any negative societal and environmental impacts.

Action 1: Research Integrity Group
Our policy teams and RIG are dedicated to ensuring our policies and practices keep up to date with changes affecting research, including technology developments and ethical concerns. They consider topics regarding authorship, data, plagiarism, duplicate submissions and publications, research ethics and research participant consent. Whenever issues are confirmed, we act by publishing corrections, editors' notes and expressions of concern or by retracting articles.

Action 2: Publishing industry associations
Within the requirements of our own internal Fair Competition Policy and local laws and regulations, we work with publishing industry associations to share knowledge and work together to respond to shared challenges, such as the increased volume of submissions which fail to reach our own and the research integrity standards set by COPE. Our Research Integrity Director was appointed Chair Elect of the World Conferences on Research Integrity Foundation in 2024 and we are also part of the UK Committee on Research Integrity and COPE.

Action 3: Resources and training
We have a research integrity page on our website for our editorial audience, which contains all related resources, including a multi-language overview of our commitment to publishing trustworthy, reliable research. We also provide free training and resources for internal and external editors on the fundamentals of publication best practice, and on how to identify and resolve research integrity problems when they arise. Our Nature Masterclasses platform offers on-demand training covering good research integrity practice for researchers. To increase diversity in published content and create more open, diverse and inclusive cultures within our professional and research communities, we also run training on addressing unconscious biases in the research and publication ecosystem, which can affect decisions and ultimately research integrity if unmanaged. We also assess the developments around diversity in the publishing community with regular reports, including our most recent on editor diversity.

SOCIAL MATTERS / EDITORIAL POLICIES AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY
continued

Action 4: Using tools
Tools can help identify and, therefore, mitigate the risk of inaccurate, nonsense or potentially dangerous content. We have developed and use AI tools like Geppetto and SnappShot, alongside human oversight, to help identify potential problems with papers, such as AI-generated content or image integrity issues.

Action 5: Research integrity surveys
Conducting surveys enables us to collect insights into research integrity training and data, which in turn helps us identify gaps and training needs and support the research community to improve practices. In 2024, we ran surveys in Japan, China and Brazil. Prior to that, we have collected survey data in Australia, India, the UK and the USA.

Action 6: Investment in research integrity
The RIG grew to be 50-strong at the end of 2024 and we have also created a technology product team specifically responsible for developing research integrity solutions. Within the next three years we plan to increase our investments in three key areas: prevention of integrity problems, resolution of integrity cases, and deterrents for bad actors.

Action 7: Process for retractions
If there is a suspected integrity concern, we conduct an investigation based on five steps: submission, assessment, contact, decision, and if required, retraction. This allows us to act quickly and responsibly in response to potential issues.

Through our harmful content policy and by retracting content that does not meet our editorial standards, we aim to minimise the potential negative effects on anyone who may be harmed by content published in our journals or books.

We monitor and review the publication of submitted papers and prevent papers with major integrity problems from being published. Compared with the total number of publications, the number that were confirmed in 2024 as not reaching our integrity standards was relatively small.

As part of our commitment to openness and transparency, we publicly share data on our website about our ongoing work to protect the scientific record. The data on this webpage (which is additional to the research integrity resource page mentioned in Action 3: Resources and training) includes the number of papers we reject and retract, as well as those detected as problematic.

Metrics
In 2024's reputation audit of views from the research community, conducted by a third-party agency, (see Societal impact of content for more information), Springer Nature held the highest Reputation Credit Score and Intensity Score in the publishing sector. Some 97% of more than 3,500 respondents surveyed said Springer Nature publishes research that can be trusted, outperforming industry peers.

OPEN ACCESS

At Springer Nature we believe that the world's greatest challenges can be best addressed when research is open and we aim to ensure that all aspects of research, including data, code and protocols, are open to all. We aim to increase the use and re-use of research, create faster research systems, speed up scientific advances, build an equitable research landscape, foster collaboration between disciplines, protect research integrity and improve trust in science.

Open access (OA) is the foundation of our support for open science. We aim to provide immediate access (also referred to as 'Gold OA'), at the point of publication, to the final published version of record (VOR) of peer-reviewed research.

Researchers, funders and wider society increasingly expect research to be published OA so that it can have the widest societal impact. OA is the largest area of growth in academic publishing.

We support OA across all academic disciplines. Additionally, by collaborating with partners across the scholarly ecosystems, we can help create faster and more effective research systems that operate sustainably and at scale and build an equitable research landscape. See Action 3: Partnerships for more information.

We are the most comprehensive OA research publisher, having been the first to publish more than one million OA articles, and driving the transition to OA for over 20 years.

Relevant policies
We have multiple publishing policies in place to help our authors achieve a high level of openness with their research and support them in meeting the OA requirements of their research funders and institutions. As well as authors and researchers, our approach to OA covers the interests of librarians and institutions, society and science globally.

These policies apply to relevant content published primarily in our Research, Health and Professional segments and are structured along four main areas: journals, books, data and code, and are aimed at authors and editors (most of whom are not Springer Nature employees). The policies include a self-archiving policy, accepted manuscript terms of use, guidance on funder compliance, and copyright and licensing. We also have publication policies on research data covering areas like data availability and data repositories, and a policy on sharing newly developed code used for research. These policies address OA holistically and are designed to help Springer Nature make the most of the opportunities that OA offers by simultaneously mitigating potential risks associated with the increasing demand.

SOCIAL MATTERS / OPEN ACCESS
continued

We also adhere to Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable (FAIR) data principles. Furthermore, we have pioneered transformative agreements (TAs, see Action 1: Transformative agreements, in the next column) to accelerate the global transition to OA.

Additionally, we are long-standing partners of and active contributors to Research4Life, a cross-industry initiative that offers subscription research content to scholars in institutions in low and lower-middle income countries at no, or very low, cost and provide a range of other support and services to enable more equitable access to publishing.

Our funding and support service, which offers support for OA and open research, is also used as a channel to gather feedback from our customers and end users. We consider the open discussion between European standard setters and industry bodies within our own policies, and we remain an active voice within these working groups and industry bodies to help develop and implement sustainable industry-wide standards. Our main objective is to ensure the best support for researchers and the wider community, ensuring their views and needs are addressed and that anyone wanting to publish OA, regardless of location or discipline, can do so, advancing discovery and collaboration worldwide.

All policies are available to relevant stakeholders, such as authors, researchers and customers on our website. We offer training and workshops to researchers on various topics to raise awareness of publishing topics and editorial policies, including via our Nature Masterclasses platform. Content from this platform is also available free-to-access for researchers in institutions registered with Research4Life.

We have a dedicated team that advises on and develops our OA policies. The team also supports authors who wish to publish OA in finding available funding to do so.

Actions
We carried out several actions in 2024 to support our commitment to OA. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, we also include examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where actions were started and/or completed in 2024.

Our actions in this reporting year and beyond focus on expanding OA agreements and launching new journals to enable OA for all researchers, regardless of their academic discipline. We aim to minimise inefficiencies in the publishing ecosystem by working to increase operational efficiency in publishing workflows. Improving the transfer of submitted papers to the most suitable journal reduces the need for resubmissions, creating a streamlined way for authors to be published. To help authors from all countries, disciplines and backgrounds find the right home for their research, our strategy includes TAs and APC waivers that can provide more inclusive access to publishing.

Action 1: Transformative agreements
TAs enable authors to publish OA in most journals while still being able to access subscription content. They are centrally negotiated with individual institutions or groups of institutions meaning costs can be spread out, and are of great benefit for authors who are active in less-well-funded research areas, such as humanities and social sciences. We believe TAs are the best means of delivering a fast and equitable OA publishing system on a global scale. In 2024, we signed 22 new TAs including our first agreements in France, South Korea and Hong Kong and our first TA with a government department in India. That means our 66 total TAs now cover more than 3,700 institutions worldwide.

Action 2: Data sharing
Open research – where all parts of research are shared openly – is central to OA and open science, as it ensures research can be reproduced, re-used and built upon. We are committed to ensuring researchers can do this in a safe and secure way, developing and sharing their protocols (data and methods) openly, as well as publishing them in peer-reviewed publications. While our platforms, such as Springer Nature Experiments, have enabled this for many years, we look for opportunities to create greater collaboration, which is why, in 2024 we migrated all protocols to protocols.io, having acquired the platform in 2023.

Action 3: Partnerships
We continue our long-term syndication partnership with Research Gate, the most highly used and specialised collaboration and networking platform for scientists and researchers. Through this partnership, researchers can directly access Springer Nature content, improving the discoverability and accessibility of research.

Additionally, we work with Seamless Access and GetFullTextResearch (GetFTR) to support and improve researcher access to trusted content. This tool indicates which content researchers can access via their institutional subscriptions, but at the point of discovery – in other words, when looking for content on any public search engine or discovery platform that has integrated the tool into its systems. Together with figshare and Code Ocean, we enable more authors to benefit from enhanced reproducibility, transparency and research efficiency, enhancing their experience and helping to eliminate hurdles in sharing data and code.

SOCIAL MATTERS / OPEN ACCESS
continued

Action 4: Equitable access

Some researchers are concerned about whether the sustainable transition to OA might create inequities because of the need to fund publishing costs via APCs. We offer APC waivers and discounts for researchers who are unable to fund them, including researchers in low- and lower-middle-income countries (LICs and LMICs) and in some research disciplines where APCs and TAs are more difficult to finance.

We also offer subscription research content and services such as Nature Masterclasses, to enable more equitable access to publishing for scholars in LICs or LMICs, either for free or at low cost.

In 2024, we piloted a country-tiered APC pricing initiative in our BMC journals to support OA equity. Through this initiative, corresponding authors will pay between 0% and 100% of the journal's standard APC, depending on their country of residence. This will help remove barriers for authors who might not previously have been able to publish in our journals, while simultaneously helping us grow our community of published researchers. Countries are divided into five tiers, based on the OA funding landscape in those countries and our knowledge of the requirements these authors have for OA support. We will continue to run the pilot while we collect more data to determine its impact on our goal to make publishing more equitable.

Metrics

In 2024, 50%[1] of primary research articles published by Springer Nature was published OA, meeting the target we had set in prior years.

SOCIETAL IMPACT OF CONTENT

Global challenges – which we consider through the lens of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims and targets – won't be solved in a single research lab, institution or think tank. They require teamwork, cross-disciplinary thinking and an openness to alternative views. We believe that the biggest impact we can have on the SDGs is through the content we publish. By publishing more SDG-related research, we can disseminate new knowledge beyond academic circles and contribute to informed policy decisions. Additionally, our Education segment develops new SDG-related curriculum content, with the aim to help global students develop an understanding of sustainable development as well as critical thinking and citizenship skills.

Our content has the potential to raise awareness of climate change and energy issues, influencing policy and fostering behavioural change, thus creating a positive impact for the research community, civil society and people along our value chain. Researchers and other content creators provide evidence-based insights that support climate adaptation, mitigation, and solutions related to the SDGs and other wide-ranging topics that are important to society. This provides a foundation for further research and educational integration. We are committed to meeting evolving customer demands, particularly with the rising volume of climate change-related research submitted for publication. More than half of Springer Nature's SDG-related research is published OA, increasing its potential for societal impact and policy contribution on urgent topics, such as climate change.

Relevant policies

Our UN SDG publishing strategy supports our strategic goal to be the publisher of choice for researchers working on SDG-relevant topics. The strategy includes our aim to increase the societal impact of our content by achieving growth in SDG content across all publication formats. It also aligns with our aim to support the transition to OA (see Open access for more information), which makes SDG-related content accessible to even wider audiences. The strategy also supports our ambition to increase awareness of the SDGs internally through employee engagement activity. To monitor our progress, we have introduced specific internal targets with the aim of increasing the number of SDG-related articles, books and collections published.

Our Chief Publishing Officer is accountable for our SDG publishing strategy and oversees our SDG-related targets. The SDG Steering Committee reviews progress against targets quarterly.

We participate in several different third-party initiatives focused on the societal impact of content, including the SDG Publishers Compact and the SDG Publishers Compact Fellows, the UN Women Media Compact and, through *Scientific American*, the UN Media Compact. By participating in these initiatives, we aim to inform and support wider industry engagement to inspire actions to achieve the SDGs.

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1   The 50% refers to research articles including Cureus but excluding Nature Reviews and magazine content.

SOCIAL MATTERS / SOCIETAL IMPACT OF CONTENT
continued

We consider the interests of our key stakeholders – be they employees, authors, research institutions, higher education institutions, policymakers, funders or wider civil society that can benefit from the advances in research that foster progress towards the SDGs – in different ways. We have an SDG Steering Committee and working groups for each SDG, plus one with a regional focus. Within each of these groups, colleagues collaborate to commission and promote relevant content and organise SDG-related events. Our colleagues' commitment and involvement in our working groups helps to create new publishing opportunities and aligns with Springer Nature's purpose-driven approach and mission.

We conduct an annual survey of the research community (also referred to in this report as our 'reputation audit'), which includes questions designed to assess awareness of our SDG programme, within the context of our overall reputation. Additionally, in our employee engagement survey we ask our employees if they think Springer Nature has a significant impact on society and the environment. For a more global and holistic perspective we also engage directly with the UN, for example through the UN Publishers Compact, and other relevant stakeholders, such as the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Our external stakeholders can access information about our SDG publishing programme and our 17 individual SDG hubs on our website and regular external events. Employees can find all relevant information on our intranet.

Actions

We carried out several actions in 2024 to ensure the content we publish across Springer Nature has a societal impact and advances the SDGs. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, we also include examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where actions were started and/or completed in 2024.

Action 1: Publishing

At Springer Nature, we believe that the most significant impact we can have on society is through our publishing activity, which helps bring to light and disseminate important knowledge related to the wide variety of issues that are represented by the SDGs. A recent example is the Sustainable Development Goals book series, which now includes more than 200 volumes, covering SDG-related research, and publishing under both our Springer and Palgrave Macmillan imprints. In 2024, the series was indexed in Scopus (a database for peer-reviewed, scientific literature), recognising the consistent quality of the titles, and aiding the discoverability of the series.

Action 2: Surveys

As explained above, we conduct a reputation audit every year. The 2024 survey of more than 3,500 individuals across our key research audiences found that 46% agreed with the statement 'Springer Nature is supporting the Sustainable Development Goals'. In our most recent employee engagement survey (2023), our question about whether Springer Nature has a positive social and environmental impact scored 75, a two-point increase compared with 2022.

Action 3: SDG content hubs

We operate 17 SDG content hubs, which aim to make relevant publishing activities and content more visible to practitioners in policy, business and civil society and, therefore, increase their positive impact. Our internal expert networks, comprising colleagues from different disciplines and business areas, maintain and support these hubs.

Action 4: Partnerships and events

We organise regular SDG-related events for researchers, policymakers and subject matter experts to raise awareness of the goals and encourage discussion and progress towards them. In 2024, this included the fourth Science for a Sustainable Future event, a collaboration with the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) on the intersection between research and policy. We also hosted the third Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean summit, and the second Breaking Barriers for Gender and Health Equity Through Research Nature conference. Also in 2024, we brought politicians and scientists together to discuss topical scientific issues and the importance of evidence-based decision making with our annual Science on the Hill and Science on the Spree events in Washington DC and Berlin respectively.

Action 5: Employee engagement on the SDGs

Our award-winning SDG Impact Festival celebrates and recognises projects and colleagues across the business who contribute to the goals. In 2024, the SDG Games aimed to raise awareness and encourage colleagues to come together to learn more about the goals and make a collective impact. Colleagues from more than 30 Springer Nature offices participated in face-to-face activities, with more than 2,600 people taking part. The festival contributes to our commitment to engage our employees with the SDGs, to raise internal awareness about why they matter to us as a business and encourage colleagues to actively participate in actions to progress the goals.

Metrics

We aim to increase the impact of SDG-relevant content. Since the SDGs were launched in 2015, we have published more than one million SDG-related articles and book chapters. The SDG-related articles we have published since 2015 were downloaded over 530 million times in 2024.

CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY

Springer Nature is committed to the highest standards of business conduct. That means we operate in accordance with applicable laws in an honest and ethical way, free of corrupt practices, acts of bribery, fraud, anti-competitive behaviour or conflicts of interests.

BUSINESS CONDUCT

As a responsible business we seek to manage the risks related to corruption and bribery that could arise within our organisation or at business partners, and that could have the potential to create financial, reputational or content integrity impacts, and to take active steps to improve business conduct and culture. We require our business partners to adopt these same standards within their own business and supply chains and set clear expectations on conduct throughout the company and for our business partners. We operate a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption involving our employees or supply chain and recognise our role in ensuring that the funds committed to projects are not diverted or misused. We conduct stand-alone anti-bribery, fraud and corruption (ABFC) risk assessments on a regular basis and have an ABFC Policy and ABFC management guidance.

Relevant policies

Springer Nature has several business conduct-related policies that help us embed the principles of compliance with laws, responsible governance and ethical business conduct throughout our company.

Our company culture, and the policies and guidance that underlie it, are overseen by members of our Management Board and the wider Executive Team to ensure Springer Nature operates responsibly and is addressing the issues that are of most importance to our business and our stakeholders. Company-wide policies are designed to help us manage and mitigate the risks associated with business conduct, and we review them at least every five years to ensure they stay up to date.

Our policies are:

- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bribery, Fraud and Corruption (ABFC) Policy
- Fair Competition Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy.

We expect the communities and suppliers we work with to adhere to the same standards as outlined in our Codes of Conduct for Business Partners and for Editors.

Code of Conduct for employees

Our Code of Conduct for employees provides a framework for ethical behaviour, ensuring we comply with laws and regulations while reflecting Springer Nature's values. It guides how employees should interact with colleagues, suppliers, customers and other external stakeholders to avoid legal or reputational issues and to promote a responsible business culture. It addresses material impacts, such as prevention of bribery, corruption and fraud and protection of whistleblowers. We monitor and reinforce the use of our Code of Conduct through our annual training and Speak Up system. All our employees are covered by the Code of Conduct, and everyone is asked to confirm each year that they understand the Code and our expectations about fair and respectful treatment.

Anti-Bribery, Fraud and Corruption Policy

Our ABFC Policy is designed to ensure we operate in a manner that minimises the risk of bribery, fraud and corruption. It aims to establish transparent and ethical practices across all business activities, ensuring that Springer Nature complies with legal standards and maintains its integrity. Our policy specifically addresses the risks related to bribery, particularly in non-contractual expenditure, such as gifts, hospitality, entertainment and donations. It highlights three primary conditions that increase the risk of fraud: incentive or pressure to commit fraud, opportunity due to lack of controls, and the attitude or rationalisation of the person committing fraud. We monitor this in several ways, including a register of interests, reporting and controls and audits.

The policy also defines basic principles of conduct for a wide range of issues, such as combating corruption and fraud. Engaging in any type of corruption, whether with public officials or in the private sector, is a breach of this policy. We take a zero-tolerance approach to any corruption involving our employees and our supply chain. Anyone working with or on behalf of Springer Nature is covered by this policy.

Fair Competition Policy

The Fair Competition Policy raises awareness among employees, officers and directors about how to compete fairly. It establishes a consistent set of expectations and requirements and ensures that controls are in place to manage interactions and agreements with competitors, suppliers, service providers, retailers and customers. It also includes the exchange of information and the participation in committees and subcommittees of industry associations. By raising awareness of public procurement rules among employees who deal with public bodies, we provide clear guidance to people who have concerns about the way we or our competitors operate. This guidance also includes ways to raise concerns and seek help.

CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY / BUSINESS CONDUCT
continued

Whistleblowing Policy

Our whistleblowing system, called Speak Up, and associated policies are designed to encourage people to raise concerns or ask questions about the way we operate and to protect whistleblowers.

Speak Up is provided by Business Keeper AG, a third-party company, and enables people to report concerns securely and anonymously. The system's data security and data privacy measures are checked and certified by independent experts. No IP addresses are collected when someone uses the system.

Our Whistleblowing Policy is part of our Code of Conduct and protects employees or third parties – including business partners – who raise their voice about concerns. It is also designed to protect whistleblowers who act in good faith. As part of our Code of Conduct, this policy ensures that retaliation against whistleblowers is forbidden, making clear that unacceptable behaviour would lead to disciplinary action. No one within the company has the right to retaliate against someone who raises a question or makes a report through Speak Up, whether it is in writing, in person or online. The Speak Up system is available globally and questions and concerns can be raised in any language to our Compliance Officers or our Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is independent of Springer Nature management and acts as a neutral external partner to help resolve issues where possible. We appointed a new Ombudsman, Adam Rendel, in 2024. By implementing our Whistleblowing Policy, Springer Nature commits to complying with the EU Whistleblowing Directive.

Actions

We took several actions in 2024 and have established procedures to prevent, detect, and address allegations or incidents of corruption and bribery, as outlined in our ABFC Policy. However, given the importance of the topics and the time it takes for actions to yield results, we also include examples of ongoing actions (i.e. we started them before 2024, were active during the reporting year, and will continue). We make it clear where actions were started and/or completed in 2024.

We encourage our employees and business partners to raise any questions or concerns as soon as possible with the message: "If you see something – say something." Any authors, suppliers, editors or customers who do not wish to contact us directly can raise their issue through the Speak Up system.

To further understand potential risks, we conducted a group-wide ABFC risk assessment and review in 2023 and 2024. We are now incorporating the assessment's findings and recommendations into our key controls that will be rolled out.

Chain of management involved in investigations

We encourage our colleagues and everyone working in our value chain to raise any concerns about our operations with us, or if they suspect corruption or bribery, via the independently operated Speak Up. Our Chief Risk and Compliance Officer provides the Management Board and Audit Committee of our Supervisory Board with reports on our compliance programme twice a year. These reports include the outcome of all group-level investigations, including any allegations of corruption or bribery. This ensures investigations are separate from the chain of management and can be conducted anonymously to avoid the possibility of retaliation. However, since we are now required to carry out some investigations locally to comply with the EU Whistleblowing Directive, these investigations are not completely separate from the chain of management.

Training on business conduct

According to our Code of Conduct and group policies, all our employees, including our Management Board are required to complete annual values and conduct training. Our values and conduct training programme follows a three-year cycle, starting with the Code of Conduct (year one) before breaking down topics into bite-sized modules (years two and three). From 2022 to 2024, the overarching theme for our training was 'sustainable business' covering the ESG topics that are material to our business, our values, sustainability strategy and the SDGs. We provide specialised training and webinars for colleagues in higher-risk roles and locations as well as our senior managers.

In 2024, the modules included some of the biggest challenges we face as a global business, including sustainability, hybrid working and artificial intelligence. Colleagues who are people managers, also received tailored content as part of the training.

The level of corruption and bribery risk within a function depend on the role they play within the business. That level is determined by a number of factors, including the location of our business activities as well as the companies and individuals with whom we interact, and the extent to which the business interacts with public officials.

Metrics

Compliance with the Code of Conduct is considered mandatory and embedded in all of our processes. All colleagues are required to complete training each year and completion figures are closely monitored by our Governance Risk and Compliance team. Actual completion rates vary given employee turnover and reasons such as long-term sickness or parental leave. In 2024, 90% of our staff completed the training. There have been no convictions or fines related to violation of anti-corruption and anti-bribery laws in 2024.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES

In this chapter on the EU Taxonomy, we include information on the following sub-chapters:

- Assessment of EU Taxonomy eligibility

- Assessment of EU Taxonomy alignment

- EU Taxonomy KPIs

- Reporting of EU Taxonomy KPIs.

INTRODUCTION

The EU Taxonomy is a classification system for sustainable economic activities in the context of the European Green Deal. Its aim is to transform Europe into a net zero emitter of greenhouse gases (GHG) by 2050. The information from the EU Taxonomy provides companies, investors, and policymakers with appropriate definitions for which economic activities can be considered environmentally sustainable. The EU Taxonomy currently defines sustainable economic activities under six environmental objectives that focus on activities to reduce GHGs:

1 Climate change mitigation

2 Climate change adaptation

3 Sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources

4 Transition to a circular economy

5 Pollution prevention and control

6 Protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems.

The EU Taxonomy regulatory framework, as applicable in our 2024 reporting, includes regulation (EU) 2020/852 as well as all delegated acts, guidelines and other supporting documents published up to the end of 2024.

For all defined sustainable economic activities, the EU Taxonomy differentiates between eligibility and alignment of the respective activity. An activity is considered taxonomy-eligible if it matches the descriptions provided in the delegated acts and has the potential to contribute to one of the environmental objectives. A taxonomy-aligned economic activity is one that meets the EU Taxonomy requirements by substantially contributing to at least one of the six environmental objectives and satisfying the prescribed technical screening criteria outlined in the delegated acts of the EU Taxonomy regulation. Additionally, it must 'Do No Significant Harm' (DNSH) to any of the other objectives and comply with minimum safeguards. The relevance of an economic activity to these environmental objectives is determined by its potential to influence them. To fully assess the sustainable activities defined by the EU Taxonomy a two-step analysis is conducted: first, the eligibility of each activity is assessed. Second, the alignment for all eligible activities is assessed.

Minimum safeguards are due diligence and remediation processes. These are designed to align with a number of international guidelines including: the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the eight fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) covered in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the International Bill of Human Rights. These safeguards ensure compliance with human rights, including labour and consumer rights, and cover areas such as anti-bribery, anti-corruption, taxation and fair competition.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES
continued

ASSESSMENT OF EU TAXONOMY ELIGIBILITY

In 2024, we evaluated the impact of the EU Taxonomy framework. We based our evaluation on the delegated acts and other documents, as published by the European Commission on its EU Taxonomy Navigator portal. Following this evaluation, we identified some economic activities that qualify as eligible.

As our business model is not within any focus sector of the EU Taxonomy and publishing activities are not considered in the list of economic activities, we identified only the following material taxonomy-eligible economic activities:

- Activity 6.5 – Transport by motorbikes, passenger cars, and light commercial vehicles

- Activity 7.7 – Acquisition and ownership of buildings.

For 2024, these economic activities are solely eligible to the environmental objective climate change mitigation. We have not identified any other eligible economic activities related to the other five environmental objectives.

No eligible turnover-related activities occurred in 2024, therefore the numerator of the turnover KPI amounts to zero. For Springer Nature, Operational Expenditure (OpEx)[1] is not considered material as it is not material to our business model and has a limited contribution to the environmental objectives. Hence, the OpEx KPI is reported as zero. We concluded, therefore, that the eligible activities only affect capital expenditure (CapEx).[2] Further details regarding the assessment and definition of KPIs are described below.

Activity 6.5 – Transport by motorbikes, passenger cars, and light commercial vehicles – eligibility

Activity 6.5 consists of purchasing, financing, renting, leasing and operating passenger cars and light commercial vehicles not exceeding 3.5 tons as well as other lightweight vehicles, such as mopeds.

Certain employees are entitled to lease a car. In some countries we additionally own a fleet of vehicles. All vehicles are passenger cars and both types, leased cars and those in our own fleet, are considered under CapEx in our financial reporting and covered by the scope of activity 6.5.

Only the CapEx KPI is applicable to us for this activity.

Activity 7.7 – Acquisition and ownership of buildings – eligibility

Activity 7.7 consists of buying real estate and exercising ownership of that real estate, for example in the form of rental or leases. As we own and lease offices and other buildings this activity applies to us.

Only the CapEx KPI is applicable to us for this activity.

Assessment of other economic activities

We evaluated the potential applicability of additional Taxonomy activities. Specifically, activities 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, and 7.6 pertain to the installation, maintenance, and repair of systems in office buildings aimed at reducing energy consumption or promoting the adoption of renewable energy sources. Although such activities may be present at our offices, we concluded that in 2024 installation, maintenance, and repair were predominantly conducted by landlords of our leased offices and not by us. We also did not conduct such activities at our owned buildings in 2024.

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1   In the following, OpEx always refers to OpEx according to the EU Taxonomy definition. For more detail, see EU Taxonomy KPIs.
2   In the following, CapEx always refers to CapEx according to the EU Taxonomy definition. For more detail, see EU Taxonomy KPIs.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES
continued

ASSESSMENT OF EU TAXONOMY ALIGNMENT

As we only report CapEx C (see EU Taxonomy KPIs) the full alignment assessment for the respective activities lies within the responsibility of our suppliers. We contacted all in-scope suppliers to determine whether they had conducted an alignment assessment, and we did not conduct any further assessment of alignment with DNSH criteria and minimum safeguards. The results of the supplier questionnaire regarding potential alignment are described under the respective activity.

Activity – 6.5 Transport by motorbikes, passenger cars, and light commercial vehicles – alignment

The technical screening criteria, required to fulfil alignment with this activity, prescribes that among others the vehicle is a low or zero emission vehicle.

The additions to vehicles in our owned fleet in 2024 are mainly fossil-fuelled passenger cars that do not meet the alignment criteria. For our leased car fleet, we were not able to obtain sufficient evidence and confirmations to conclusively assess their potential Taxonomy-alignment. Therefore, we report them as not aligned.

This means that we are unable to quantify the proportion of aligned CapEx C for our leased cars based on the data available to us now.

Activity 7.7 – Acquisition and ownership of buildings – alignment

The technical screening criteria required to fulfil alignment with this activity prescribes that buildings that were built before 31 December 2020 have at least an Energy Performance Certificate class A or are in the top 15% of the national or regional building stock with regards to operational primary energy demand. Buildings constructed after this date must meet numerous detailed requirements around primary energy demand, use of water, reusability or recycling of construction and demolition waste, and pollution of building components and materials. For the DNSH assessment, a climate risk and vulnerability assessment regarding climate change adaptation must have been performed.

Most of the buildings that Springer Nature uses are office buildings leased from third-party providers. In-scope buildings for potential alignment are all additions that we acquired in 2024, including all newly leased buildings as well as buildings where the leasing contract was renewed in 2024. As for activity 6.5, we were not able to obtain sufficient evidence and confirmations to conclusively assess their potential Taxonomy-alignment. Therefore, we report them as not aligned.

Nevertheless, energy efficiency is a substantial selection criterion when leasing new buildings.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES
continued

EU TAXONOMY KPIS

Companies within the scope of the EU Taxonomy must report the revenues (turnover), CapEx, and OpEx ratios associated with their Taxonomy–eligible or aligned economic activities. These ratios must be detailed for each relevant activity, indicating the environmental objective it supports and specifying whether the activity is transitional or enabling.

The definitions as per the EU Taxonomy for all three KPIs are outlined below. Due to the nature of the EU Taxonomy these definitions might differ from Springer Natures definitions of CapEx and OpEx laid out in the financial statement of this report. The underlying accounting policies for the calculation of the KPIs are the IFRS as endorsed by the EU.

Our EU Taxonomy KPIs are summarised as follows:

In € million, unless otherwise stated	Taxonomy aligned	Taxonomy eligible, but not aligned	Taxonomy non–eligible	Total
EU Taxonomy turnover	**0 (0%)**	**0 (0%)**	**1,847.1 (100%)**	**1,847.1**
EU Taxonomy CapEx	**0 (0%)**	**22.2 (12.3%)**	**158.9 (87.7%)**	**181.1**
Activity 6.5 – Transport by motorbikes, passenger cars, and light commercial vehicles	–	2.6 (1.4%)	–	–
Activity 7.7 – Acquisition and ownership of buildings	–	19.7 (10.9%)	–	–
EU Taxonomy OpEx	**0 (0%)**	**0 (0%)**	**18.0 (100%)**	**18.0**

We provide further details on our EU Taxonomy KPIs below.

EU Taxonomy turnover
Turnover as per the EU Taxonomy definition includes revenues of all fully consolidated group companies from:

- revenue from customer contracts (IFRS 15)
- revenue from leases (operating and finance leases under IFRS 16), including related interest income
- other sales revenue.

The numerator of the turnover KPI per EU Taxonomy comprises the total revenues from eligible and aligned activities according to EUT definition. The denominator consists of total external revenues as reported in the financial statement.

As mentioned above, in 2024 there was no eligible and no aligned turnover for any economic activity at Springer Nature, i.e. the numerator of the turnover KPI is reported as zero. The amount of total turnover can be reconciled to the Consolidated financial statements in the notes in Table 1 Revenue under Total revenue.

EU Taxonomy CapEx
CapEx as per the EU Taxonomy definition includes additions to property, plant and equipment and intangible assets in the financial year before depreciation and amortisation (including those resulting from revaluations and impairments for the relevant financial year and excluding changes in fair value) including additions from business combinations.

The numerator of CapEx per the EU Taxonomy includes CapEx in three categories: CapEx A (associated with taxonomy–aligned activities), CapEx B (associated with expansion of taxonomy–aligned activities or conversion of eligible activities into aligned ones) and CapEx C (associated with the purchase of products from taxonomy–aligned activities or individual measures to reduce GHG emissions, provided that these measures are implemented and operational within 18 months).

At Springer Nature, the numerator of the EU Taxonomy CapEx KPI relates to the economic activities 6.5 and 7.7. It only includes CapEx C, i.e. only expenditures for taxonomy–eligible products or implementation of low–carbon measures. The denominator encompasses the expenditures as described above.

The amount of total CapEx can be reconciled in the notes to the Consolidated financial statements under 13. Goodwill and Other intangible Assets, 14. Property, Plant and Equipment and 15. Right–of–Use Assets.

EU Taxonomy OpEx

OpEx as per the EU Taxonomy definition includes direct non-capitalised costs for research and development, building renovations, short-term leases, maintenance, repair and other expenditures related to the day-to-day servicing of assets, either by the company or outsourced to third parties, to maintain their effective functioning.

The numerator of the OpEx KPI in the context of the EU Taxonomy, as for the CapEx KPI, includes OpEx in three categories (OpEx A, OpEx B, OpEx C). The definitions for the classification of OpEx into the three categories are the same as for CapEx. The denominator encompasses the expenditures as described above.

As mentioned above, OpEx as defined by the EU Taxonomy is not material to our business model, i.e. the numerator of the OpEx KPI is reported as zero.

REPORTING OF EU TAXONOMY KPIS

EU Taxonomy turnover

The total turnover in 2024 was €1,847.1 million while the eligible turnover amounted to €0.

EU Taxonomy CapEx

The total EU Taxonomy CapEx in 2024 amounted to €181.1 million. Eligible CapEx amounted to €22.2 million (12.3% of total). This comprises €2.6 million (1.4%) associated with activity 6.5 and €19.7 million (10.9%) associated with activity 7.7.

All reported eligible CapEx is related to the purchase of products from taxonomy-aligned activities or to individual measures that help carry out out the target activities in a low-carbon manner or reduce GHG emissions (CapEx C), i.e. none of it is part of existing plans to expand taxonomy-eligible economic activities or enables taxonomy-eligible economic activities to become taxonomy aligned.

Of the eligible CapEx, €0 was acquired through business combinations.

EU Taxonomy OpEx

The total OpEx according to the EU Taxonomy definition in 2024 was €18 million while the eligible OpEx amounted to €0.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES / EU TAXONOMY KPIS
continued

PROPORTION OF TURNOVER FROM PRODUCTS OR SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH TAXONOMY-ALIGNED ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – DISCLOSURE COVERING YEAR 2024

Financial year 2024		2024		Substantial contribution criteria						DNSH criteria (Does Not Significantly Harm)									
Economic Activities	Code	Turnover	Proportion of Turnover, year 2024	Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)	Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)	Water (WTR)	Pollution (PPC)	Circular Economy (CE)	Biodiversity (BIO)	Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)	Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)	Water (WTR)	Pollution (PPC)	Circular Economy (CE)	Biodiversity (BIO)	Minimum Safeguards	Proportion of Taxonomy aligned (A.1) or eligible (A.2) turnover, year 2023	Category enabling activity	Category transitional activity
		€ million	%	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	%	E	T

A. TAXONOMY–ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A.1 Environmentally sustainable activities (Taxonomy–aligned)

Turnover of environmentally sustainable activities (Taxonomy–aligned) (A.1)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										
Of which enabling		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%									E	
Of which transitional		0.0	0.0%	0.0%															T

A.2 Taxonomy–Eligible but not environmentally sustainable activities (not Taxonomy–aligned activities)

				EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL										
Turnover of Taxonomy–eligible but not environmentally sustainable activities (not Taxonomy–aligned activities) (A.2)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										
A. Turnover of Taxonomy eligible activities (A.1 + A.2)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										

B. TAXONOMY–NON–ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Turnover of Taxonomy–non–eligible activities		1,847.1	100%
TOTAL		**1,847.1**	**100%**

Proportion of turnover/Total turnover

	Aligned per objective	Eligible per objective
CCM	0.0%	0.0%
CCA	0.0%	0.0%
WTR	0.0%	0.0%
CE	0.0%	0.0%
PPC	0.0%	0.0%
BIO	0.0%	0.0%

Notes:

Gas and nuclear activities are not relevant for Springer Nature, so we do not present the special templates.

Y – Yes, Taxonomy–eligible and Taxonomy–aligned activity with the relevant environmental objective.

N – No, Taxonomy–eligible but not Taxonomy–aligned activity with the relevant environmental objective.

N/EL – not eligible, Taxonomy non–eligible activity for the relevant environmental objective.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES / EU TAXONOMY KPIS
continued

PROPORTION OF CAPEX FROM PRODUCTS OR SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH TAXONOMY-ALIGNED ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – DISCLOSURE COVERING YEAR 2024

Financial year 2024	2024			Substantial contribution criteria						DNSH criteria (Does Not Significantly Harm)									
Economic Activities	Code	CapEx	Proportion of CapEx, year 2024	Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)	Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)	Water (WTR)	Pollution (PPC)	Circular Economy (CE)	Biodiversity (BIO)	Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)	Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)	Water (WTR)	Pollution (PPC)	Circular Economy (CE)	Biodiversity (BIO)	Minimum Safeguards	Proportion of Taxonomy aligned (A.1) or eligible (A.2) CapEx, year 2023	Category enabling activity	Category transitional activity
		€ million	%	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	%	E	T

A. TAXONOMY–ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A.1 Environmentally sustainable activities (Taxonomy–aligned)

CapEx of environmentally sustainable activities (Taxonomy–aligned) (A.1)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										
Of which enabling		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%									E	
Of which transitional		0.0	0.0%	0.0%															T

A.2 Taxonomy–Eligible but not environmentally sustainable activities (not Taxonomy–aligned activities)

				EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL										
Transport by motorbikes, passenger cars, and light commercial vehicles	CCM 6.5	2.6	1.4%	EL	N/EL	N/EL	N/EL	N/EL	N/EL										
Acquisition and ownership of buildings	CCM 7.7	19.7	10.9%	EL	N/EL	N/EL	N/EL	N/EL	N/EL										
CapEx of Taxonomy–eligible but not environmentally sustainable activities (not Taxonomy–aligned activities) (A.2)		22.2	12.3%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										
A. CapEx of Taxonomy eligible activities (A.1 + A.2)		22.2	12.3%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										

B. TAXONOMY–NON–ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

CapEx of Taxonomy–non–eligible activities		158.9	87.7%

TOTAL		**181.1**	**100%**

Proportion of CapEx/Total CapEx

	Aligned per objective	Eligible per objective
CCM	0.0%	12.3%
CCA	0.0%	0.0%
WTR	0.0%	0.0%
CE	0.0%	0.0%
PPC	0.0%	0.0%
BIO	0.0%	0.0%

Notes:

Y – Yes, Taxonomy–eligible and Taxonomy–aligned activity with the relevant environmental objective.

N – No, Taxonomy–eligible but not Taxonomy–aligned activity with the relevant environmental objective.

N/EL – not eligible, Taxonomy non–eligible activity for the relevant environmental objective.

EL – Taxonomy eligible activity for the relevant objective.

Possible differences to the totals presented in the table are due to rounding.

EU TAXONOMY DISCLOSURES / EU TAXONOMY KPIS
continued

PROPORTION OF OPEX FROM PRODUCTS OR SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH TAXONOMY-ALIGNED ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES – DISCLOSURE COVERING YEAR 2024

Financial year 2024		2024		Substantial contribution criteria						DNSH criteria (Does Not Significantly Harm)									
Economic Activities	Code	OpEx	Proportion of OpEx, year 2024	Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)	Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)	Water (WTR)	Pollution (PPC)	Circular Economy (CE)	Biodiversity (BIO)	Climate Change Mitigation (CCM)	Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)	Water (WTR)	Pollution (PPC)	Circular Economy (CE)	Biodiversity (BIO)	Minimum Safeguards	Proportion of Taxonomy aligned (A.1) or eligible (A.2) OpEx, year 2023	Category enabling activity	Category transitional activity
		€ million	%	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y; N; N/EL	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	%	E	T

A. TAXONOMY–ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A.1 Environmentally sustainable activities (Taxonomy–aligned)

OpEx of environmentally sustainable activities (Taxonomy–aligned) (A.1)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										
Of which enabling		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%									E	
Of which transitional		0.0	0.0%	0.0%															T

A.2 Taxonomy–Eligible but not environmentally sustainable activities (not Taxonomy–aligned activities)

				EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL	EL; N/EL										
OpEx of Taxonomy–eligible but not environmentally sustainable activities (not Taxonomy–aligned activities) (A.2)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										
A. OpEx of Taxonomy eligible activities (A.1 + A.2)		0.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%										

B. TAXONOMY–NON–ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

OpEx of Taxonomy–non–eligible activities		18.0	100%

TOTAL		**18.0**	**100%**

Proportion of OpEx/Total OpEx

	Aligned per objective	Eligible per objective
CCM	0.0%	0.0%
CCA	0.0%	0.0%
WTR	0.0%	0.0%
CE	0.0%	0.0%
PPC	0.0%	0.0%
BIO	0.0%	0.0%

Notes:

Y – Yes, Taxonomy–eligible and Taxonomy–aligned activity with the relevant environmental objective.

N – No, Taxonomy–eligible but not Taxonomy–aligned activity with the relevant environmental objective.

N/EL – not eligible, Taxonomy non–eligible activity for the relevant environmental objective.