

Employee Policy



Ekopak
∞ Ekopak Sustainable Water

Together towards
a sustainable future.

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1 Formalizing our values and standards


The identity of Ekopak is not determined by a piece of paper in some drawer but is deeply rooted in our employees, suppliers and customers. Everyone we work with day in and day out must act with integrity according to the values and standards for which we stand. Only then can we speak of a truly sustainable policy. As a company, we provide the necessary safeguards to continuously monitor these values and standards.

In order to formalize our values and standards, we have penned the "Ekopak policies". These policies form the basis of our culture. By communicating transparently on this matter, we ensure that everyone is well aware of what our DNA is and how to promote it.

In this document, **we address our employees**. What values and standards do we expect our employees to propagate? And how do we, as an employer, put in place the right processes and procedures to ensure that our employees are supported and protected in promoting these values and standards?



1.1 Policies vs partial policies

A policy is a written expression of a culture. It shows how a company distinguishes between right and wrong, and what processes are put in place to promote & guarantee this distinction. A policy can be stipulated at various levels within the organisation.

This document specifies the code of conduct, and contains a more detailed elaboration of how the code of conduct is applied to employees. However, this document will also feature topics that require even more detailed elaboration. These topics will be indicated with a  symbol. In other words, the sections where this symbol occurs will be further detailed in a partial policy.

1.2 Generally professional vs company specific

A company can only build its own identity – a unique DNA - if it applies general social values and standards at its core. In this policy, we therefore clearly distinguish between legally established values and standards, which we consider to be the absolute minimum, and the extra-legal values and standards that are generally accepted by society at large but have not yet been codified in a clear legislative framework, and the company-specific values and standards that make Ekopak unique and differentiate us as a company.

The legally established values and standards are indicated with a  symbol and the extra-legal values and standards with a  symbol. The company-specific values and standards are laid down in a separate chapter.

1.3 Control vs support

Although the general and company-specific values and standards have been drawn up as a list of “rules”, this policy was not drawn up to be used as a control document. We believe that society and life experience has bestowed each of our employees with a moral compass of their own. It is our responsibility to correctly inform employees on what values and standards are important to Ekopak, to foster dialogue that reflects on these values and standards, and to give them the tools with which to apply these values and standards during their daily tasks.

This is done specifically by describing procedures within this policy that aim to provide sufficient support to employees in becoming familiar with the prevailing company-specific values and standards:


- Sufficient training so that every employee has the right competencies to make the right decisions for themselves;
- Sufficient moments of reflection offering space to process (deviant) behaviour and;
- A reporting procedure in which the employee can report (deviant) behaviour.

2 General professional values and standards

This chapter offers an overview of the basic – both legal and company-specific – values and standards that Ekopak chooses to meet.



2.1 General professional decisions

2.1.1 Financial and economic decisions

		
No money laundering or terrorist financing	Ekopak complies with anti-money laundering and terrorist financing laws and employees are always alert to unusual transactions and report them to the appropriate authorities.	Ekopak adheres to EU guidelines, as transposed into local national legislation.
Complete and faithful accounting	Ekopak endeavours at all times to provide faithful accounting, and to supply the necessary information regarding the balance sheet and our income statement at least twice a year with the necessary explanatory notes via published financial statements.	Ekopak applies IFRS accounting standards to the consolidated annual account of the group and Belgian accounting standards to the statutory annual accounts.
Fair tax contribution	Taxes ensure that companies provide a contribution to society. Ekopak will always make a fair contribution and therefore comply with legislation on direct and indirect taxation and on information sharing in the fight against tax fraud.	Ekopak applies national legislation with regard to direct and indirect taxation. Ekopak adheres to the international OECD guidelines on tax information sharing in the fight against tax fraud. ⊕ Ekopak also commits to always choosing its head office based on practical considerations and not for the purpose of avoiding taxes.
Acting in line with economic sanctions and trade embargoes	A sanction is a diplomatic or economic tool for putting an end to certain acts or policies, such as violations of international law or human rights, or to change policy when legal or democratic principles are not observed.	Ekopak applies the European sanctions regimes.
Fair Competition	Fair competition ensures that we remain alert at all times. Competition ensures that we are challenged and promote innovation. We comply with antitrust laws and will not intentionally violate competition law.	Ekopak follows the guidelines of the European antitrust laws.
Compliance with import and export laws	Ekopak will always know and understand the requirements applicable to the movement of our products, services and technologies. We are responsible for following applicable import and export laws and regulations.	Ekopak complies with EU trade policy, trade defence instruments, EU import and export legislation, EU sanitary and phytosanitary standards and the EU product regulations.


2.1.2 Social decisions

Ekopak treats its own employees in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as drafted by the United Nations and applicable national labour laws according to the standards of the International Labour Organisation. Ekopak treats its employees in line with its own Human Rights Policy.

		
Zero tolerance in the field of forced and child labour	We will in no way commit violations relating to forced and child labour.	Ekopak complies with national labour legislation as it aligns with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
Zero tolerance towards discrimination	Zero tolerance towards discrimination is achieved through unwavering commitment to equitable policies, rigorous enforcement, and fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect for all.	Ekopak complies with (inter)national policies and legislations on Human Rights and non-discrimination.
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	Organising as trade unions is a fundamental labour and human right. Likewise, every person has the right to negotiate working conditions collectively. Ekopak recognises the right of employees to join or not join a trade union.	Ekopak complies with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. ⊕ If there are no unions in which the employees can unite, Ekopak will ensure, if they so wish, that employees have the opportunity to participate in such a collective dialogue through some form of representative structure.
Flexible work and rest times	Ekopak takes into account the minimum work and rest times as laid down in the collective labour agreements. In addition to this basic component, Ekopak gives its employees the opportunity to shape their working conditions in such a way that best fits with their private circumstances.	 The details regarding work times and work environment are described in greater detail in the terms of employment.

2.1.2.1 Attractive employment conditions

Through collective dialogue, individuals can unite to negotiate the right employment conditions in terms of wages, allowances, working hours and rest periods. These arrangements are combined into collective labour agreements. Ekopak complies with these labour agreements in good faith, for each individual, without exception. The company also guarantees that every employee will receive the legally required and necessary training to allow them to perform their job properly.

 Ekopak complies with EU labour law.

⊕ We believe it is important to expand the legal obligations when it comes to professional social decisions and to offer our employees an attractive social benefits package. The following paragraphs offer an overview on the matter.

2.1.2.1.1 Growth and development

In order to support employee development, Ekopak has put in place a growth and development policy describing the company's various job profiles, along with their growth paths. The job profiles indicate what competencies are expected for each profile while the growth paths show what coaching, training, and courses are provided in order to grow from one job profile to the next. Each employee is evaluated annually according to an evaluation cycle as described in the growth and development policy.



The overview of the job profiles, the associated growth paths and training, and a description of the evaluation cycle are described in greater detail in the growth and development policy, which will be further developed.



The overview of the arrangements regarding employees staying abroad to gain additional work experience are described in greater detail in the travel policy.

2.1.2.1.2 Flexible work and rest times

Ekopak takes into account the minimum work and rest times as laid down in the collective labour agreements. In addition to this basic component, Ekopak gives its employees the opportunity to shape their working conditions in such a way that best fits with their private circumstances.



The details regarding work times and work environment are described in greater detail in the terms of employment.

2.1.2.1.2.1 Variable weekly schedule

Ekopak allows their full-time employees to be flexible with their work hours. It is possible to apply a variable weekly schedule whereby employees are allowed to work more hours one week, and fewer hours the next week (this where the job function allows it).

2.1.2.1.2.2 Flexible labour agreement

As a company, we are always open to modifying an employment contract in order to better balance working hours with specific private situations. This is why we always give our employees the opportunity to apply career breaks or switch to another work schedule in conjunction with the relevant manager and HR.

2.1.2.1.2.3 Overtime

Ekopak strives for a healthy work-life balance. Therefore, we ensure that overtime can only occur in exceptional cases and that the workload is always adapted to the job profile. If an employee is continuously working overtime or experiences an unreasonable workload, this person may file a report and measures will be taken in consultation with the relevant manager to reduce the workload.

Moreover, the overtime performed in exceptional cases will be compensated at another time with additional rest periods, in consultation with the relevant manager.

2.1.2.1.2.4 Working from home

Ekopak gives employees the opportunity to choose a work location that is most efficient for them. Employees - who are not tied to a fixed workplace based on their job profile and do not have in-person (customer) meetings - can choose to work from home or at another location in consultation with the relevant manager.

2.1.2.1.2.5 Extra rest days

In addition to the holiday scheme agreed in the Collective Labour Agreement, Ekopak gives employees the opportunity to accrue extra rest days. These extra rest days may be used flexibly – in consultation with the relevant manager. These extra rest days are broken down as follows:

Reduction in working hours

As a company, we choose to implement a 40-hour working week. This means that 2 extra hours of work are performed every week that can be reclaimed in the form of 'reduction in working hours' holidays. In these ways, each employee accrues 1 additional vacation day per month, with a total of 12 days per year.

Holidays

As provided in the CLAs, Ekopak observes the 10 official holidays. If these days occur on the weekend, Ekopak employees can simply schedule these days at a different time. Ekopak also allows employees working for a foreign branch to observe cultural holidays in accordance with the country of registration.

Unpaid rest days

If employees need extra rest days due to circumstances - which are not included in the CLA and/or in the standard extra rest days - it is always possible to request unpaid holidays in consultation with the relevant manager.

2.1.2.1.3 Balanced remuneration

Ekopak takes into account the minimum pay scales as laid down in the collective labour agreements. In addition to this basic remuneration package, we take into account the independent wage benchmark so that wages are always determined objectively. The competitive remuneration is supplemented by benefits in kind. These benefits in kind are used as additional allowances - on top of wages - to provide extra motivation to our employees. Remuneration is in line with the EU directive on Pay Transparency, including utmost respect of equal pay.



The details of the independent wage benchmark, benefits in kind and mobility are described in greater detail in the remuneration policy.

2.1.2.1.3.1 Independent wage benchmark

Ekopak takes into account the independent wage benchmark that is compared with similar profiles in Belgium based on the definition of the job profile.

2.1.2.1.3.2 Benefits in kind

The salary of our employees is supplemented by the following benefits in kind:

Meal vouchers

Ekopak provides employees with a lunch cost allowance in the form of meal vouchers that can be freely spent on food in restaurants or supermarkets.

Hospitalisation insurance

Hospitalisation insurance offers our employees ample protection against medical costs in the event of hospitalisation due to illness, accident, or childbirth. In this way, it offers a reimbursement of the costs of admission, prior care and post-treatment that are not fully covered by compulsory sickness insurance.

Group insurance

A group insurance policy allows Ekopak employees to benefit from an additional capital supplement upon retirement. In addition to the accrual of a supplementary pension, the group insurance offers a number of additional guarantees such as death cover and a premium waiver guarantee.

Practical supplies

Employees are provided with a package of practical supplies to facilitate their work. This package contains standard necessities based on the job profile, such as a laptop and mobile phone with subscription, but can be supplemented with extras such as a tablet and (safety) clothing and equipment.

2.1.2.1.3.3 Mobility

Mobility is a broad concept and can be interpreted in various ways. Ekopak therefore defines the different options for each profile in the remuneration policy. These options may include an electric company car, charging infrastructure, (electric) company bicycles, scooters, shared cars, reimbursement of public transportation costs, a commuting allowance, a bicycle allowance or any combination of the above.

Moreover, employees may also stay abroad for customer meetings or trainings. The overview of agreements made on this matter can also be found in the remuneration policy.

2.1.2.2 *Safe workplace*

It is essential that our employees are not endangered while performing their jobs, which is why we comply with national and international legislation on occupational safety.



Ekopak complies with the EU directives on occupational safety and health.






Ekopak understands that safety goes beyond physical safety. We believe it is important that all employees also feel mentally safe in the environment where he or she works.



The details of the working conditions will be elaborated in the health and safety policy. Extra attention will also be paid to mental safety.

2.1.3 Ecological decisions

Ekopak is compliant with the latest environmental legislation. In the current climate, this legislation is changing at an accelerated pace, making it necessary for us to remain informed at all times of any new applicable legislation and policies.

		
Pollution	Regarding any harmful activities that we may carry out, Ekopak always complies with the necessary environmental permits as laid down in accordance with national and international legislation. By complying with the prevailing environmental legislation, we ensure that we meet with the currently prevailing standards in terms of soil, water and air pollution.	Ekopak complies with the EU directives on pollution and liability.
Protection of land, water and natural resources	Ekopak will never exploit the lands, oceans and nature reserves protected by law and will always make use of other natural resources within the purview of prevailing national and international legislation.	Ekopak complies with the EU regulations on land use, land use change and forestry.
Climate adaptation	Ekopak is committed to complying with current and future climate change and adaptation legislation.	Ekopak complies with the EU Climate Law. + Ekopak is aware that we all have to do our part to minimize our ecological footprint. This is why we think it is important to expand the legal obligations in terms of professional ecological decisions and to make an extra contribution regarding our buildings and vehicle fleet.
Ecological building management	Ekopak undertakes to make its buildings more sustainable according to the definition of BREEAM and WELL and to pursue at least a score of Excellent and Gold in these building certificates.	 The details of the buildings and associated working environment will be described in greater detail in the health and safety policy.
Mobility	Ekopak is committed to making the mobility choices of their staff as sustainable as possible in terms of CO2.	 The overview of the possibilities and rules around mobility are described in more detail in the mobility policy. This comprises the car policy and other elements that are still a work in progress.

2.2 General professional interactions

Ekopak expects that interactions in the workplace always take place objectively and respectfully, with no room for bias or preferential treatment. We implement a diversity-sensitive policy in which we take individual characteristics into account and are aware of the group dynamics.

2.2.1 Evaluation cycle

In order to render personal growth, development, and the associated remuneration as objective as possible, the company provides a formal evaluation cycle whereby each employee is assessed according to predetermined evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria are determined based on the job profile to which fees are also linked. The growth paths between two job profiles will also be developed so that it is always clear and objective how an employee can evolve from one job profile to another. The evaluation cycle is described in more detail in the growth and development policy (work in progress).



The overview of the job profiles, the associated growth paths and training, and a description of the evaluation cycle including transparent task registration are described in greater detail in the growth and development policy. This is still a work in progress.

2.2.2 Selection cycle

New employees are recruited on the basis of pre-determined objective competencies - which are described in the job profiles - and according to a formal selection procedure. In addition, it is important that there be a cultural fit with the organisation. In this way, we guarantee maximum objectivity when hiring new people within the organisation.



A description of the job profiles is stated in more detail in the growth and development policy. This is still a work in progress.

2.2.3 Decision-making cycle

In order to avoid subjective decision-making by means of intentional or unintentional *groupthinking*, the *multiple eyes principle* is always applied to strategic and assessment decisions. This means that two or more people must independently assess the decision and come to the same decision before it is implemented.

2.2.4 Conflict of interest

In order to maximise an objective assessment, it is important that employees always disclose mutual relationships of any kind as soon as possible. This disclosure will in no way negatively impact the employee's actual situation and is only aimed at ensuring that personal interactions can always be objectively differentiated from professional interactions. If a personal relationship exists between two

employees, they can never work in the same team and there can also be no reporting line.

2.2.5 Bribery

It is important to us that every interaction in the workplace be professional and objective. This means that bribery cannot be accepted in the workplace. In other words, it is not allowed to offer or accept anything of value to retain business or gain an unfair advantage.

2.2.6 Data processing

We always treat our employees' data according to the GDPR principles. Prior to employment, clear agreements are made with the employees regarding the ownership rights of the products and/or services delivered.



A description of the handling of information is to be further elaborated in a privacy policy. This is a work in progress.

2.2.7 Informal Contacts

Informal contacts are important to maintain a pleasant atmosphere in the company and to build personal relationships between colleagues. Since these informal contacts are much more difficult to shape into processes, it is particularly important during these moments to be alert to group dynamics that deprive minorities within the company of sufficient opportunities to participate. Employees who do not fit within the generally prevailing group dynamics will feel uncomfortable during the informal contacts within the company and will therefore find it more difficult to integrate into the group. For this reason, Ekopak proactively maps out the characteristics and needs of employees within the company in terms of informal contacts. Subsequently, actions and activities are organized specifically focused on the characteristics and needs that are least common among employees within the company so that they too have the opportunity to participate in informal contacts.



The current group dynamics are mapped out – and periodically monitored – on the basis of the employee survey. Based on the results of this survey, working groups will be established that focus on the different needs of the employees. Actions will be further elaborated within these working groups.

3 Company-specific values and standards

The Ekopak DNA is the “genetic code” that determines what we do as a company, why we do what we do, what we stand for, how we function and how we interact with people. It is ingrained in the typical Ekopak employee.

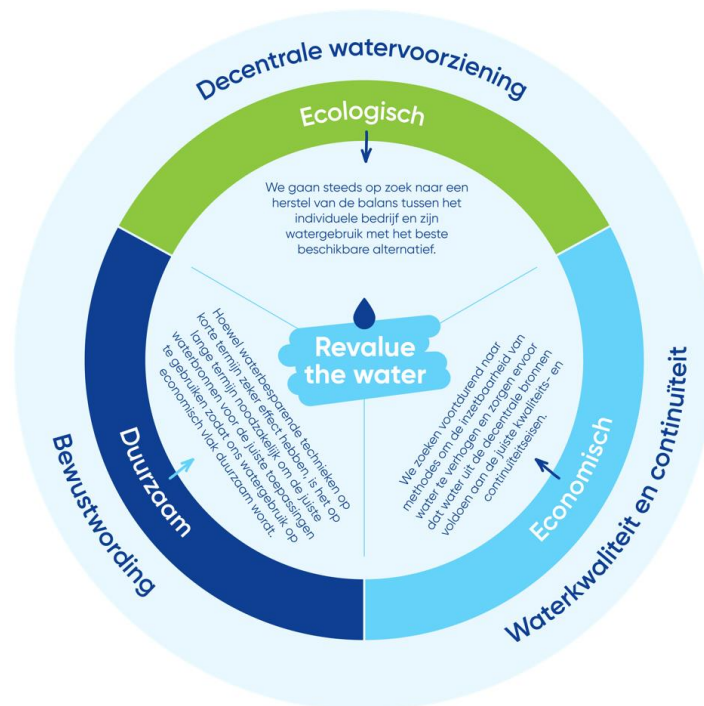


Figure: Ekopak compass

In this chapter, we provide an overview of the company-specific values and standards based on the company compass. We break down company-specific values and the competencies associated with them. Furthermore, Ekopak applies the *multiple eyes principle* whereby subjective decisions are objectified as much as possible.

3.1 Company-specific values

Company-specific values give direction to employees so they can more easily prioritize their decisions. The list below provides more instruction and guidance.

3.1.1 Ecological

The Ekopak employee is aware of the ecological challenges in terms of sustainable water use for companies. Moreover, he or she is convinced that decentralisation at the water source level is the only right choice to make water consumption in the industry more sustainable. Hence he or she will convey and advise this vision to the stakeholder in all situations, well reasoned and with confidence.

The ecological aspect is reflected in the following values:

- Environmentally Conscious (Blue Planet) - We actively care for the planet and its limited resources. We become part of the solution by placing the ecosystem at the heart of our and our customers' activities and seeking to find mutually beneficial and pragmatic solutions that contribute to the preservation of water for the future. "Recycle – Reuse – Revalue"

3.1.2 Economic

For our customers, water quality and continuity are important parameters to safeguard the quality of their product and/or process. Our employees are aware of this economic necessity and will continue to challenge themselves to support each customer to ensure that the water from their decentralised source meets the right quality requirements. In addition, we also expect our Ekopak employees to showcase this *mindset* within their own company and to actively seek out ways to keep business operations economically viable.

The economic aspect is reflected in the following values:

- Agility: demonstrates a positive attitude, resilience, and openness to change. It involves adapting your approach under changing circumstances, being comfortable in ambiguous situations and working effectively with a variety of situations, different individuals/ groups with different backgrounds and experiences.
- Involvement with Ekopak: feel passionate about your work, dedicated to the organization and understand your role/ contribution throughout the organization.

3.1.3 Sustainable

The Ekopak employee is aware that unpopular decisions sometimes have to be made in the short term in order to do the right thing in the long term. We encourage everyone to always map out the long-term consequences of every decision and not to consider popular short-term decisions with a negative impact in the long-term. Employees are not afraid to think beyond the boundaries that still exist today. Sustainability is reflected in the following values:

- Sustainability: working together to meet interests & maximize value creation, so that all parties are satisfied with the result and a sustainable and long-lasting relationship is built.
- Integrity and authenticity: *walk the talk*: behave ethically, be honest and transparent, and act with a strong moral compass, be discreet, especially when dealing with sensitive information. Do what you say and say what you do
- Cross cultural & diversity: treats colleagues with respect, regardless of their background. Open to and accepting of differing opinions and views. Is able to understand, communicate and interact effectively with people of different cultures and beliefs.

3.2 Generic competencies

We encourage the following generic competencies among our employees that reinforce Ekopak's strategic positioning.

- Collaboration: achieve more together, work together towards a common goal with a positive mindset, without placing personal interests first.
- Cross-functional thinking (across departments): think & work beyond the boundaries of your expertise and connect with (people from) other domains, while working together to add value to the result. Think out of the box
- Welfare (Safety): respect the safety and environmental regulations of the organisation during daily work. Conscientiously foster the well-being, safety, and health of people, with empathy and affection, ensuring that everyone is safe at all times.
- Customer Delight: Deliver exceptional products and always place the (internal) customer at the centre of action initiation, problem solving, and question handling; but with the company's objectives in mind. See the situation from the customer's perspective.
- Quality: set high standards for the quality of work. Carry out responsibilities carefully to avoid mistakes. Continuously evaluating processes and output to improve the way of working (*plan – do – check – act*).
- Responsibility and involvement: take responsibility for all work activities and personal actions; adhere to commitments; implement decisions as agreed; maintain confidentiality with sensitive information; acknowledge and learn from mistakes without blaming others; acknowledge the impact of one's behaviour on others. Consistency between actions and words.
- Entrepreneur: act as though you own the business, be creative and seize opportunities to grow, manage the job with the financial impact in mind (cost-efficient, price/quality balance).
- Autonomous working: be able to work independently without support or guidance from others. Be able to solve problems and take on tasks. Take responsibility, make decisions and take action where possible.

4 Supporting Procedures

The chapters above list the general and company-specific values and standards that are important to Ekopak. In this chapter, we will delve deeper into the supporting procedures that we install to adequately inform all employees and give them the opportunity to address deviant behaviour towards these values and standards in a safe environment and in open dialogue.

4.1 Selection and recruitment

Irrespective of the objective characteristics clearly described in the job profile, each new applicant will also be assessed on the basis of general professional and company-specific behaviour. This behaviour is formalised in the vacancy and evaluated consistently across all candidates being considered for Ekopak.



The selection criteria are determined on the basis of the job profiles, skills, competencies and DNA match.

4.2 Training

Employees can only work if they are also aware of what is objectively and concretely expected of them. Hence, during *onboarding* all new employees will receive more clarification of Ekopak's values and standards, and how these are translated into the day-to-day operation of the organisation. Moreover, every 1.5 years, knowledge of these values and standards and the employee policy is re-evaluated for all employees via an online questionnaire.



The overview of the job profiles, the associated growth paths and training, and a description of the evaluation cycle are described in greater detail in the growth and development policy, which will be further developed.



We strive for every new employee to receive training on the Ekopak DNA, the dealing code and employee policy within 3 months of starting out.

4.3 Evaluation

Irrespective of the objective characteristics clearly described in the job profile, each new employee will also be assessed on the basis of the company-specific values and generic competencies. This behaviour is formalised in the growth and development policy and is evaluated consistently across all Ekopak employees. If an employee does not score well on this matter during the annual evaluation, a personal development plan will be drawn up in consultation with the relevant manager.

These values and competencies are always assessed on the basis of at least 3 reviews. This form of evaluation allows for feedback to be given on the basis of daily behaviour, and not merely on the basis of snapshots.



The overview of the job profiles, the associated growth paths and training, and a description of the evaluation cycle are described in greater detail in the growth and development policy, which will be further developed.



As a company, we strive to ensure that at least 80% of employees achieve a good score for company-specific values and generic competencies during the annual evaluation moment, 15% achieve a score with a few focus areas, and at most 5% achieve a sub-par score, meaning that a personal development plan is to be drawn up.

4.4 Personal Development Plan

In the personal development plan, a roadmap is drawn up in co-creation between the employee, the relevant manager, and the HR manager with which the employee can grow, with specific focus on those values and competencies that are not fully in line with Ekopak's DNA. The personal development plan is drawn up for a 3-month period, after which a second evaluation takes place.



The overview of the job profiles, the associated growth paths and training, and a description of the evaluation cycle are described in greater detail in the growth and development policy, which will be further developed.



As a company, we strive to go through a personal development plan with 5% of employees at the most due to lower scores on company-specific values and the generic competencies.

4.5 Reporting procedure

Ekopak believes it is important to provide employees with the safety and confidence to identify behaviours exhibited by colleagues that do not correspond to the company DNA. As a first step, employees are asked to report such behaviours to the relevant manager, as a second step to HR, and lastly to the confidential adviser. All reports are treated confidentially and the reporter cannot be reviewed or judged in any way for the report. The recipient of the report is obliged to take the report seriously, to discuss it with the person concerned and, if necessary, to include it in the evaluation process. All parties involved can count on the same level of confidentiality.

If an employee notices an infringement by Ekopak of the matters listed in chapter 2.1, the employee is encouraged to report this to the whistleblower (external contact) through the email address report@4legal.be.



As a company, we strive to ensure that the employee feels sufficiently safe with and trusts his/her supervisor. As part of this, we strive to ensure that at least 80% of all reports are made via the relevant manager, 15% of all reports via an HR employee, and a maximum of 5% via the confidential adviser.

Policies are evaluated by the management team at the following times:

- *Annual Review*
- *In case of changes in legislation*
- *In case of acquisitions*
- *In case of expansion to other countries*

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001	01/10/2023	MANA_POL_EKOPAK EMPLOYEE POLICY_001_BE_ENG	HR department	Tim De Maet	Executive Management Committee