



Sustainability Report 2019

Ensuring our promises are more than
just words.



“The greatest threat to our planet
is the belief that someone else
will save it.”

Robert Swan

Author



Preface

Taking responsibility is an important aspect of the way Dataflex does business. As an organisation we feel it is our duty to make a positive contribution to society and the environment. Our choices have always been guided by what we feel is 'the right thing to do'. In recent years we have worked hard to set up a management system that allows us to actively plan for sustainable progress.

An integral part of the resulting system is to provide openness and transparency by reporting on our goals and achievements. We do this via our annual sustainability report, of which this is the second edition. Our stakeholders have a right to be informed and we want to engage everyone in critically assessing and reacting to this report. Your feedback will keep us on our toes and provide input for further improvement.

Whilst writing this preface, Covid-19 is rapidly spreading across the world. This coronavirus is having a huge impact on almost every person and, as a consequence, much economic activity has come to a halt. Many people have been or are sick or have suffered losses in their lives. We as humankind are coming together to solve one of the greatest threats we have seen for decades. Although we are still far from a solution, I have hope that this challenge will strengthen our resolve to overcome all other threats that humanity faces, and be able to do this together.

More than ever before, it is time to unite and take responsibility.

Take care!

Roderik Mos

Owner and managing director.



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Introduction

At Dataflex, we want to make a positive difference, both socially and environmentally. Our sustainability programme is rapidly evolving. In recent years we invested a lot of resources in structuring the management of our environmental impact. We set up a certified ISO 14001 environmental management system and conducted Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) for almost all of our products. These gave us new insights into the size and origin of the impact of our products. In turn this helped us to plan new and efficient strategies to reduce our environmental impact. Now this structure is up and running, it is time to set up a management system for our social impact.

We have always looked after the wellbeing of our suppliers, employees, customers, and the communities in which we do business. As our organisation grows, our influence over other organisations grows as well. This enables us, for example, to actively monitor the wellbeing of the people who put together our products in East Asia. In the coming years we will set up a management system that will help us identify the areas where most social benefit can be gained and to plan for improvement.

In this report we will first look at our plans for last year and present the results. The most important accomplishment is that through cooperation with our partner, Trees for All, we were able to compensate all our CO₂ emissions over 2019 and are now effectively climate neutral. We will further explain the reasons of this cooperation and present our next steps to achieve true climate neutrality in the future. We will then introduce our long-term strategy and go into more detail about the origin and content of our approach. We will also provide information on our plans for measuring, monitoring and improving our sustainable impact. Finally, we will reveal our plans for the next three years.

Goals 2019

Last year we set some challenging sustainability goals on three main topics:

The environment

- Launch 15 Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), verified by an independent third party, by the end of January.
- Extend Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) to include the products of our three largest suppliers that are not currently calculated.
- Start compensating CO₂ emissions by end Q1 2019. Our ultimate goal is to reduce our impact to zero, but in the meantime this compensation will help reduce the effects of our impact.
- Implement Design for the Environment (DfE) before end Q2 2019.
- Close a recycling agreement for at least 15% of all orders over 50 monitor arms in 2019.
- Lower our total gas, water and electricity consumption impact in 2019 by 10% as compared to 2018.
- Phase out diesel and petrol company vehicles by the end of 2025.

Health and wellness

- Install a Health, Wellness and Happiness (HWH) team by the end of January 2019.
- Raise employee involvement by increasing the frequency of personnel meetings from one to four per year.

Social responsibility

- Introduce the Level evaluation system.
- Publish standardised declarations and ISO certificates on our website before end Q2 2019 for even greater openness and transparency.

Results 2019

Last year was a good year for Dataflex. Thanks to the hard work of our colleagues we managed to continue the double-digit growth of the last few years. We achieved this growth through the further expansion of our sales teams and product development activities. Our sustainability trajectory is known within Dataflex and is widely supported, with discussions on more sustainable ways of doing business throughout several departments. Although managing this growth required a lot of our attention and resources, we managed to keep advancing our sustainability programme as well.

The environment

Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)

The 15 EPDs were published as planned. They provide a complete and transparent insight into the calculation of the environmental impact of our products in several different categories. The numbers were verified by an independent third party. The full reports can be found on the product pages of our website. The reports can also be found on the independent comparison website for sustainable office interior, called Inside/Inside.

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)

In 2018 we already received LCA information on the products of our four main suppliers. In 2019 we gathered LCA data from not only the planned three suppliers but from a fourth supplier as well. This took more time than expected, but thanks to the continued support of our suppliers all data are in and we are working hard to process and publish the results in the upcoming months.

CO₂ compensation

All emissions of the greenhouse gasses of our sold products and company processes over 2019 have been calculated and compensated. The emissions were calculated from a lifecycle perspective. This means that we not only compensated our own direct contribution to global warming, but also that of our entire supply chain and the waste processing at the end of the product life! The compensation was done with the help of our partner, Trees for All. This non-profit organisation supports sustainable forestation projects. In this way they contribute to a better climate, more biodiversity and better living conditions for local people.

Design for the Environment (DfE)

Although we decided not to fully adopt the 'Design for the Environment' approach, important steps of the DfE were implemented last year:

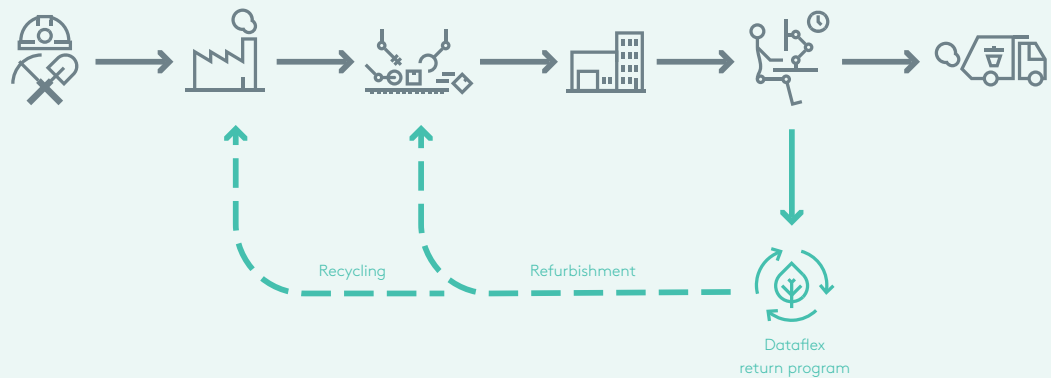
- Each design project starts with the identification of all stakeholders and listing their respective interests and demands regarding the project. The environment is always considered as one of the stakeholders.
- A product initiation document has been drafted, stating the demanded specification for the final product including environmental impact objectives.
- For the prototype an initial environmental review has been made.
- For the final product, a Life Cycle Assessment will be conducted to make sure that the initial environmental objectives are met.

The first product that was designed following these principles will be launched in July 2020. Our new cable management solution is made of 100% recycled PP. It will be available in different colours, lengths, and with various mounts. This product combines all benefits of our current cable management solutions and leads the way for a new line of sustainable products.

Recycling Agreement

The idea of the recycling agreement was that customers would return the product when they no longer had the need for it. Since the agreement would be made at the moment of the initial sale, it would take many years before we would get a significant return flow going. To decrease the amount of products that are disposed before the end of their lifetime, we are currently working on a programme that will enable dealers to return obsolete products. To keep the value of the products as high as possible, we are looking into ways to not only recycle them but with the help of trusted partners find ways to reuse or refurbish them. For that we want to make sure that we have a proper channel in place for putting refurbished products on the market. We are now exploring possibilities to cooperate with partners that can help us realise this.

Dataflex product lifecycle



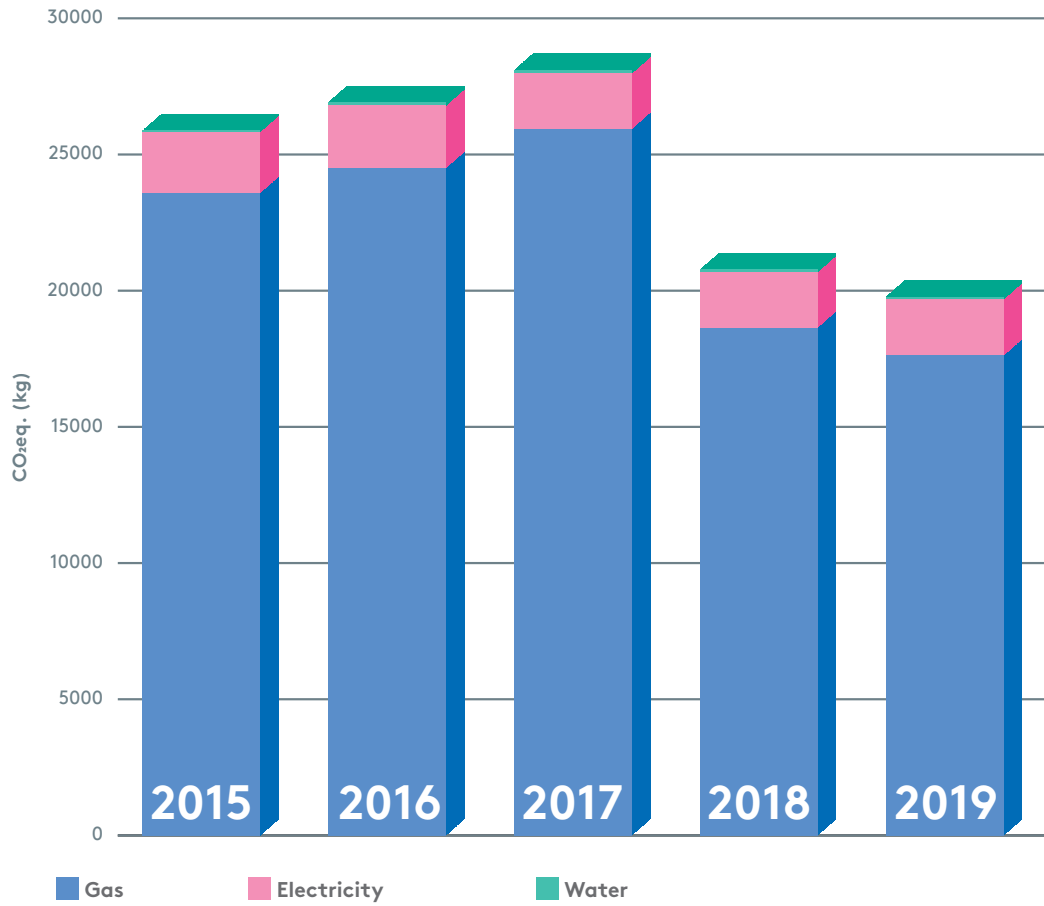
Gas, Water and Electricity Consumption

The total impact of gas, water and electricity was 20798 kg CO₂ eq. in 2018. For 2019 this was 19801 kg. This is a reduction of 4.79%, roughly half of our target of 10%. The reduction was mainly achieved by paying even more attention to small wasteful habits. Next to that we insulated heating ducts and hung strip curtains to prevent heat loss from drafts. Our growing team understands that the consumption would naturally go up, leading us to conclude that we are on a good track with this reduction. Because these measures were taken at the end of 2019, their full effect will become apparent in 2020.

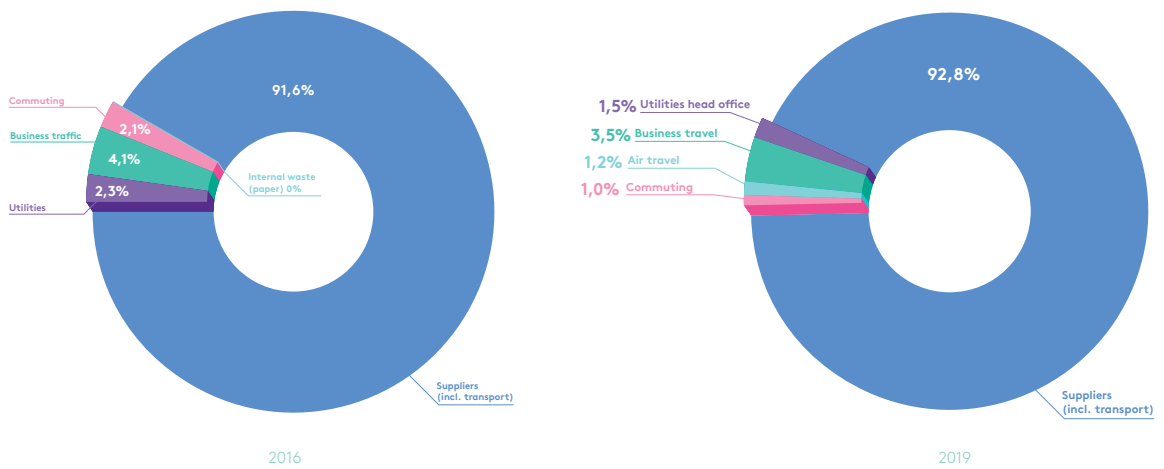
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Gas (m ³)	13 685	13 903	14 713	10 567
Water (m ³)	183	321	302	213
Electricity (kWh)	154 023	157 648	140 799	141 532

Phase out Diesel and Petrol Company Vehicles

We are dependent on the infrastructure and market situation of the countries that we are operating in and we were able to further reduce our diesel and petrol company vehicles. 40% of our company car fleet is now electric. The percentage per country varies heavily. In the Benelux region we have already reached the target of 100%, but due to a lack of infrastructure in Germany this has not yet been possible. As we see rapid infrastructure development in this region, we will be able to make this switch very soon. In spite of regional limitations, we are well on our way to achieving the goal of phasing out all company vehicles with combustion engines by the year 2025.



Impact of gas, water and electricity use in our HQ in kg. CO₂



Dataflex CO₂ impact by category

Health and wellness

Health, Wellness and Happiness (HWH) team

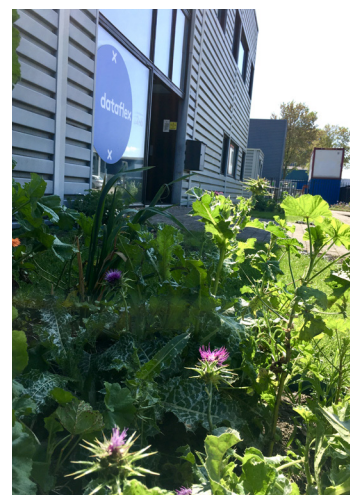
The goal of the Health, Wellness and Happiness (HWH) team is to start all kinds of social and environmental initiatives for colleagues to be involved in. This way employees become more aware of and involved in the sustainable aspirations of new ideas. At the beginning of 2019 we invited our employees, excluding managers, to share their motivation on why they would like to be a part of the HWH team. Three employees were selected and the HWH team was introduced to all colleagues during the personnel meeting in March. Below are a few examples of what the team realised:

With some elbow grease the bits of land in front of our HQ in Krimpen were turned into flower gardens with lots of grass. Thanks to the efforts of our colleagues, not only does our site look a lot better, we can now sit and relax in the grass during breaks and lunch time. The flowers are a mix of field flowers which attract all kinds of wildlife and should therefore have a positive effect on biodiversity.

A table tennis table and a small gym were set up for our employees to encourage exercise and social interaction.

At the World Cleanup Day 2019, all employees helped in collecting litter in the industrial zone where our HQ is located. In just an hour we collected 28 kg of waste.

Four personnel meetings were held as planned in 2019. During these meetings employees were informed about results, plans and operational issues. Everyone was invited to voice their opinions and contribute ideas. The increased frequency from one to four meetings a year was well received and will be continued.



Social responsibility

Level Furniture Industry Standard

The Level Furniture Industry Standard functions as an umbrella for many different theories and models that help organisations set and realise sustainability goals. The main reason for wanting to implement this Level standard was to improve the balance of our sustainable actions between our three main topics; health and wellness, environment, and social responsibility. Along the way we found that the Level system does not suit Dataflex. This standard was written for furniture manufacturers and so many of the requirements are not applicable to Dataflex. We therefore decided to find a better matching standard. We will elaborate on the search process and the results in the chapter 'Becoming the best in Sustainability'.

ISO Certificates and Compliance Documents

Last but not least, we recently published our ISO certificates and standardised compliance documents on our website. More will be added over time and all items will be updated at the beginning of each year.



CO₂ compensation

Compensating our impact is by no means an end goal. It is a method of eliminating our negative impact on global warming. The ultimate objective is not to have a negative impact at all. By promising to compensate the entire life cycle impact of all the products we sell each year, we created an extra financial incentive for reducing our impact.

For the time that we do have to compensate, we are proud to be able to do this with the help of Trees for All. We set up a partnership with this non-profit organisation because of the similar beliefs of our organisations. Trees for All are completely transparent about the projects they invest in and have third party reviewers who make sure their claims are true. The VCS and CCB accreditations guarantee that the promised quantity of CO₂ is actually compensated and that the project is of ecological and social-economic value. Our compensation for 2019 went to the Kibale National Park project in Uganda.



1728
tonnes CO₂ compensated



A small step back, a giant leap forward.

With the enthusiastic help of Jefta Bade we took a small step back to evaluate where we want to go with the company in the long run. Instead of using words, we drew a picture together to visualise our vision. The picture functions as a communication tool for sharing, both internally and externally, on what Dataflex is about. To realise the objectives of the drawing, we made a long-term strategic plan consisting of three main goals:

1. Become the best in our industry in customer service

We want all stakeholders to perceive us as being 'easy to do business with'. To reach this goal, all our future actions will be guided by the idea of 'Keep it Short and Simple' (KISS).

2. Become a one-stop shop for ergonomic workplaces

We want to offer our customers a wide portfolio of products to furnish ergonomic computer workplaces. This portfolio will enable customers to configure monitor arms that perfectly fit their needs, therefore setting us apart from the competition. Whether these products are designed by ourselves or are the result of a cooperation with other parties, they will all have the high levels of quality, design and functionality you expect from Dataflex.

3. Become the best in our industry in sustainability

We want to lead the industry in all aspects of sustainable entrepreneurship.

Becoming the best in Sustainability

In order to become the best in sustainability we must find a way to measure our performance. Last year we looked into Level certification. This certification is too specific to the furniture industry and it is on a product level rather than on an organisation level. We therefore researched several other sustainability standards. For a good standard, two demands had to be met:

1. **Good match with ISO 26000 standard.**
2. **Good match with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.**

The standards mentioned above are the most well-known standards worldwide for good reason. They were drawn up by international teams of experts which makes them well researched and widely known and supported. The disadvantage is that both standards are not certifiable or very specific. Therefore, we looked for a standard that is based on both matches but would give us more specific demands and scoring. The specific demands will be used as a checklist that can steer our improvement planning. After a long search we found only one standard that meets our demands. We are proud to announce that we plan to become a **Certified B Corporation**.

B Corporations are open and transparent, commit to continuous improvement, and are part of a community where members share their knowledge and experiences so that everyone can benefit. The ultimate goal is to build a B Economy; a world in which organisations cooperate together to build a sustainable economy that works for everyone.



B Corporations are scored on their performance in five main impact areas of sustainability:

1. Governance
2. Workers
3. Community
4. The environment
5. Customers

These five topics will provide the framework for all of our sustainable improvement plans from now on. We will pursue balanced and continuous progress so no stakeholders are favoured or left out.

Our main sustainability goal for the next three years is to be the first in the industry to become a certified B Corporation. In the consecutive years we will continuously improve in order to stay at the top.

For more information, please visit the B Corporation website.



Goals 2020-2022

The main sustainability objective for the next three years is to become a Certified B Corporation. The goals listed below all contribute to attaining this objective.

Governance

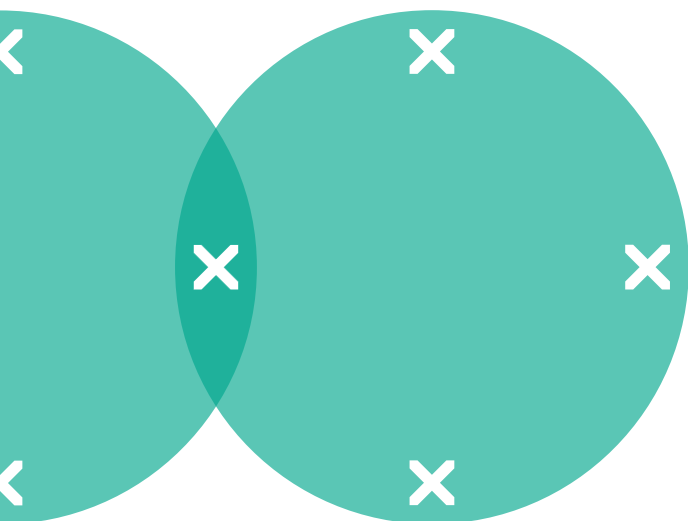
- Review all company policies and our system to manage and communicate them.
- Improve systems for stakeholder feedback, engagement and follow up.
- Set up a social management system following ISO 26000 and the BIA.

Workers

- Introduce 360-degree feedback for employees.
- Start measuring employee satisfaction and set goals for 2021.

Community

- Introduce regular social audits at the production facilities of all major suppliers.
- Set up a structure to monitor and increase the amount of goods and services acquired from local suppliers.
- Implement structure for community investments.



The environment

- Implement a circularity project team to investigate and implement a circular model that could work for our products. Cooperate with the TU Delft for research on circular economy. Set impact goals for 2021.
- Cooperate with production partners to evaluate possibilities to use innovative solutions to reduce the environmental impact of production processes.
- Take action to reduce our direct impact.
 - Reduce gas consumption by 7% per year up to 2022.
 - Reduce electricity consumption by 10%.

Customers

- Increase feedback from end users (rather than our direct customers).
- Improve customer satisfaction measurement and set new goals for 2021.
- Introduce Trustpilot as a reliable feedback platform to further improve our products and service.
- Introduce quality control at the production sites of our main production partners (Asia). In case of rejects, we will lose less time and decrease the costs of rework. This will benefit both our suppliers and customers.

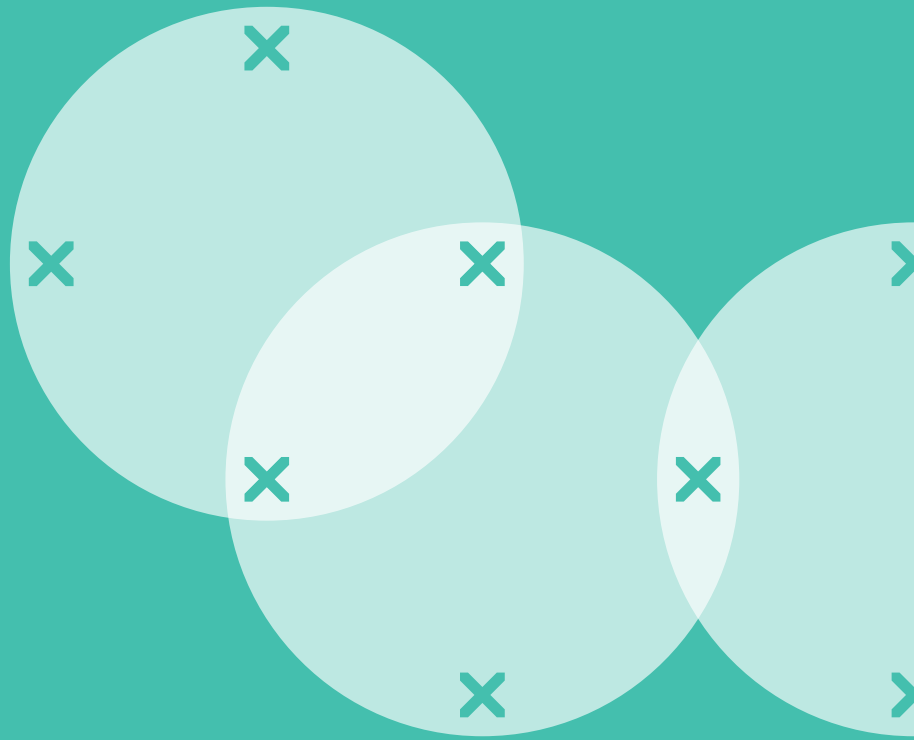
Epilogue

Challenging times often bring out the best in people. We now see that as a result of Covid-19 many people are taking initiatives to help each other. Along with the challenges and threats that this crisis has brought, times like these also open up new doors. Working from home is now more accepted and unnecessary commuting has become less. In many ways this rethinking of where and how we work is having positive effects on the environment.

These sudden changes prove that we are able to change, and we are able to do so quickly. Some changes in favour of sustainability are deeply needed and new policies that help the environment should be implemented sooner rather than later. We need to change our consumption behaviour and be more mindful about our decisions, whether this is on an individual or a company level. If we work together as a team we can have a big influence on the further development of these issues.

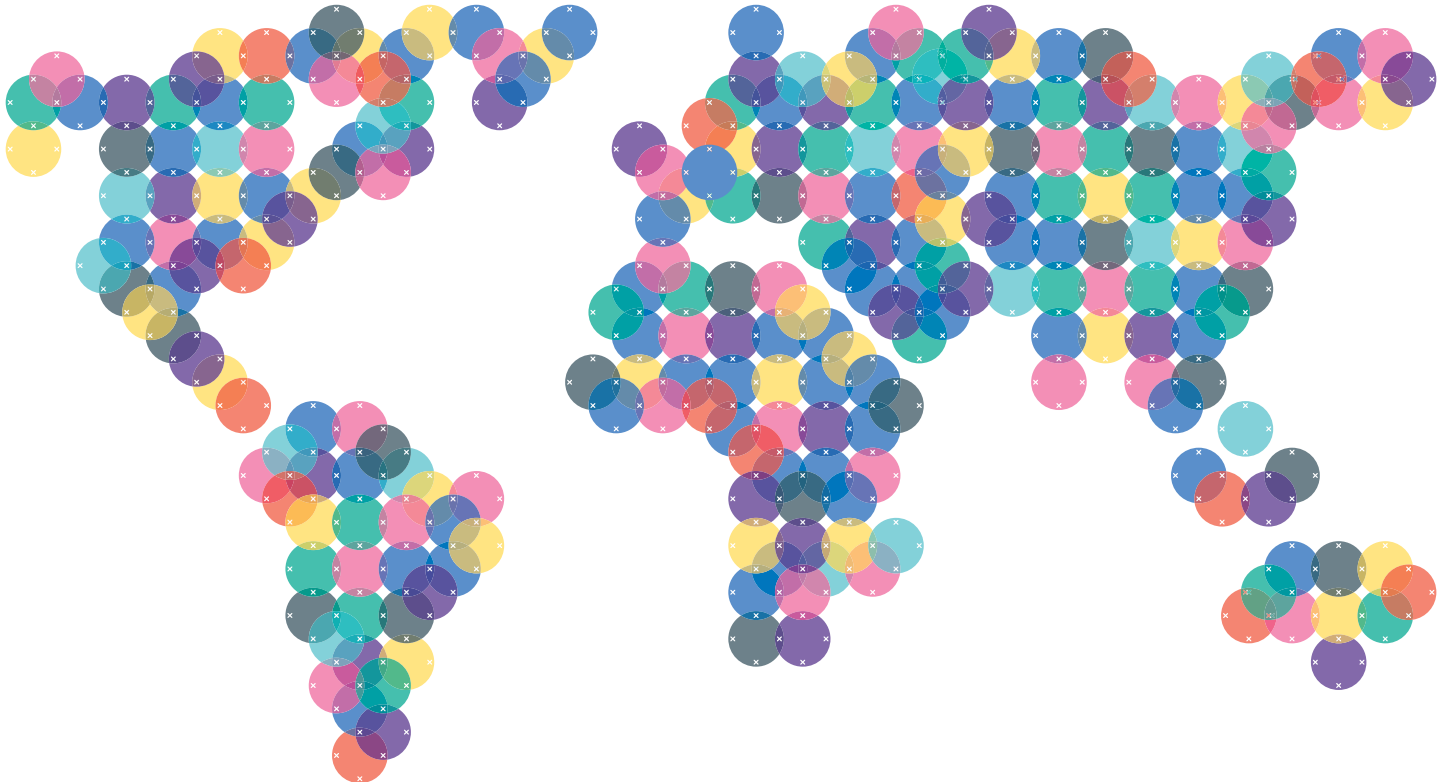
At Dataflex we are taking measurements towards a more sustainable business, and we are intending to increase this in the upcoming years. We want to prioritise a healthy, sustainable business by investing in the future to receive positive long-term results for our people, planet and company. Our motto 'feeling at work' represents how we work together as a team. We are a team that enjoys our work and aims to work hard to get through difficult times. We are ready and willing to expand our efforts in the fields of sustainability and learn continuously about ways to improve.

We all want to do good and have a positive impact on the people and environment that surround us. We are looking forward to a new year and are excited for what it brings.



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dataflex

feeling at work