

CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

IMPACT REPORT

2021

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Foreword

We publish our annual figures every year just like any other organisation. These can be found on our website. The figures certainly give an idea of what SKAO is about. However, they do not reveal anything at all about who does all the work, what the impact of the CO₂ Performance Ladder is, and what developments are taking place.

So, it is my honour and pleasure to write the foreword to our first impact report in which we publish our annual figures and also show the impact of the CO₂ Performance Ladder.

In this first edition, we introduce the reader to the people behind SKAO. We also show the relationship between SKAO and the Sustainable Development Goals. Then we highlight two procurement tenders from 2021 where the CO₂ Performance Ladder was used, namely, an infrastructure project case study from Belgium and a project case on coffee. We also describe certain high points from 2021: the start of the development of Handbook 4.0, the event Making an Impact with Climate-Neutral Procurement, the impact of the Action List, the increase in certified authorities, and the start of the study into the feasibility of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in Europe.

All of this is to tell the story behind the 2021 figures, which we believe is just as interesting.

Enjoy your read!

On behalf of everyone at SKAO,

Annemiek Lauwerijssen
General Manager SKAO



The CO₂ Performance Ladder

The sustainability instrument of the Netherlands

The CO₂ Performance Ladder is an instrument that helps organisations reduce CO₂— in their business operations, projects, and in the chain. The instrument is both a CO₂ management system and a procurement instrument. Organisations can obtain an award advantage in procurement tenders when they have a certificate on the Ladder.

With over 4,000 certified organisations (more than 1,250 certificates) and 200 contracting authorities, the CO₂ Performance Ladder is the CO₂ reduction instrument of the Netherlands.

Want to learn more? Watch our video about the CO₂ Performance Ladder for use as a [CO₂ management system ↗](#) and [procurement instrument ↗](#).

And for inspiration on how to get started with the Ladder, read the project case studies on p. 18 and 32 in this report, or go to [our website ↗](#).



The Foundation for Climate Friendly Procurement and Business (SKAO) uses the CO₂ Performance Ladder to encourage businesses and governments to reduce CO₂, to achieve a climate-neutral business community. We connect parties, share knowledge, and are the heart of a large network.

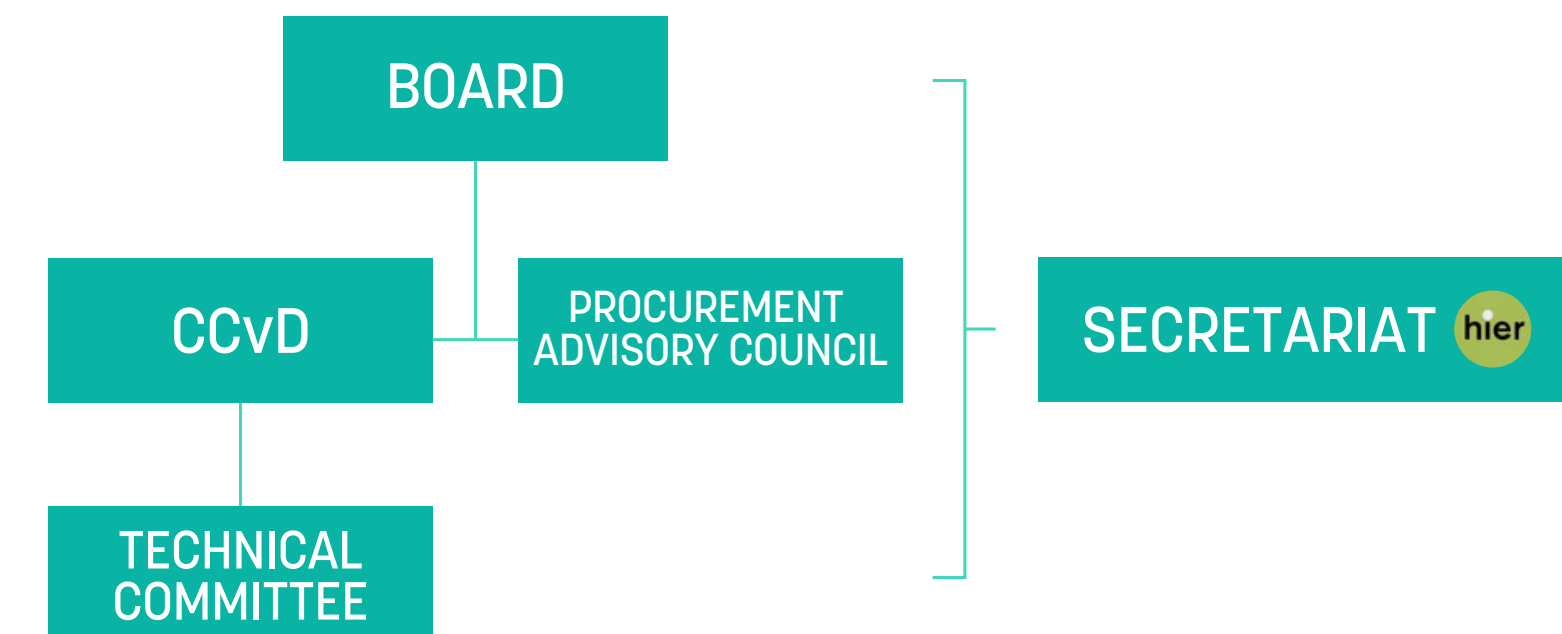
The Foundation for Climate Friendly Procurement and Business:

The heart of a large network

SKAO is the independent owner and manager of the CO₂ Performance Ladder and is responsible for the use and continued development of the certification scheme. Moreover, we foster the increased use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder among organisations, commissioning parties, and different sectors.

and the Technical Committee. The team also gave numerous presentations to authorities on procurement and to companies, or on certification at the company level. It is responsible for the communication (tools), website, and help desk, and facilitates research on the improvement and further development of the CO₂ Performance Ladder.

In 2021, SKAO organised dozens of meetings and gatherings for different parts of the foundation, such as the board, the CCvD, working groups,



Organisation Chart of the Foundation for Climate Friendly Procurement and Business
Read more about the foundation and all its individual parts [here ↗](#).

The Sustainable Development Goals and the impact of the CO₂ Performance Ladder and SKAO

We face enormous economic, social, and environmental challenges worldwide. To address this, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out global priorities and ambitions for 2030. 17 goals for making the world a better place. How will SKAO's activities and projects and the CO₂ Performance Ladder contribute to this in 2021?

In this article, we discuss the SDGs to which the CO₂ Performance Ladder and SKAO contribute. Each SDG is composed of a main target, sub-objectives, and indicators. We try to show our impact with an indicator level where possible. This helps our organisation have a clear view of the foundation: 'what are we doing it for'. Below, we discuss the six SDGs to which the CO₂ Performance Ladder and SKAO make a *direct* contribution, where we refer to articles in this impact report that deal with them.



SDG 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ensure good health and promote well-being for all ages

Sub-objective 3.9 Reducing air, water, and soil pollution. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by certified organisations on the CO₂ Performance Ladder reduces the pollution of air, soil, and water. **Certified organisations** take actions to reduce their CO₂ emissions, such as the electrification of transport, which reduces fine dust. This improves our citizens' well-being.



SDG 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

Organisations using the CO₂ Performance Ladder are challenged to reduce the use of fossil energy and increase the use of renewable energy. This contributes to **sub-objective 7.2 increasing the share of renewable energy in the energy mix.** First, by generating renewable energy ourselves. Second, by purchasing it. The **KPI 7.2.1** 'Share of renewable energy in total energy consumption' will be better understood and increased by using the CO₂ Performance Ladder.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



SDG 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation

The use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in construction, infrastructure, and industry contributes to **sub-objective 9.4 Cleaner infrastructure and industries**. Although 'the Ladder' has also been used for some time in other sectors and in other types of tenders (such as ICT, **Facilities** ↗, Waste, etc.), it is still strongly represented in **Civil Engineering** ↗. **KPI 9.4.1** 'CO₂ emissions per unit of added value' is promoted with the CO₂ Performance Ladder.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



SDG 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Sub-objective 12.6 Encourage companies to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle. Companies and authorities implement a CO₂ management system via certification for the CO₂ Performance Ladder. Moreover, they are encouraged to communicate with internal and external stakeholders about CO₂. **KPI 12.6.1** 'Number of organisations with sustainability reports' is positively influenced by SKAO.

SKAO gives many presentations to contracting authorities that (want to) use the Ladder for procurement. SKAO also organised the event '**Making an impact with climate-neutral procurement**' ↗ in 2021 together with the Rijkswaterstaat and PIANOo. These activities contribute to **sub-objective 12.7: Promote sustainable public procurement practices**, and more specifically, this fosters **KPI 12.7.1** 'Degree of implementation of sustainable procurement policies by public sector organisations'.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



SDG 13 CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact

The CO₂ Performance Ladder maintained by SKAO contributes in particular to **sub-objective 13.2 – Measures to combat climate change**. For certified organisations and public authorities, certification on the CO₂ Performance Ladder provides insight into their CO₂ emissions (**Indicator 13.2.2** total emissions per year) and accelerates the reduction of CO₂ emissions. The same applies to the use of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in government procurement.

SKAO focuses heavily on knowledge sharing about the CO₂ Performance Ladder and climate-related developments, which implements **sub-objective 13.3 Education and increasing awareness about climate change**. Examples include Communities of Practice, which SKAO organised for ministries and water boards in 2021, the newsletters on our website and social media, and the fact that we give an annual guest lecture to students at Utrecht University.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SDG 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

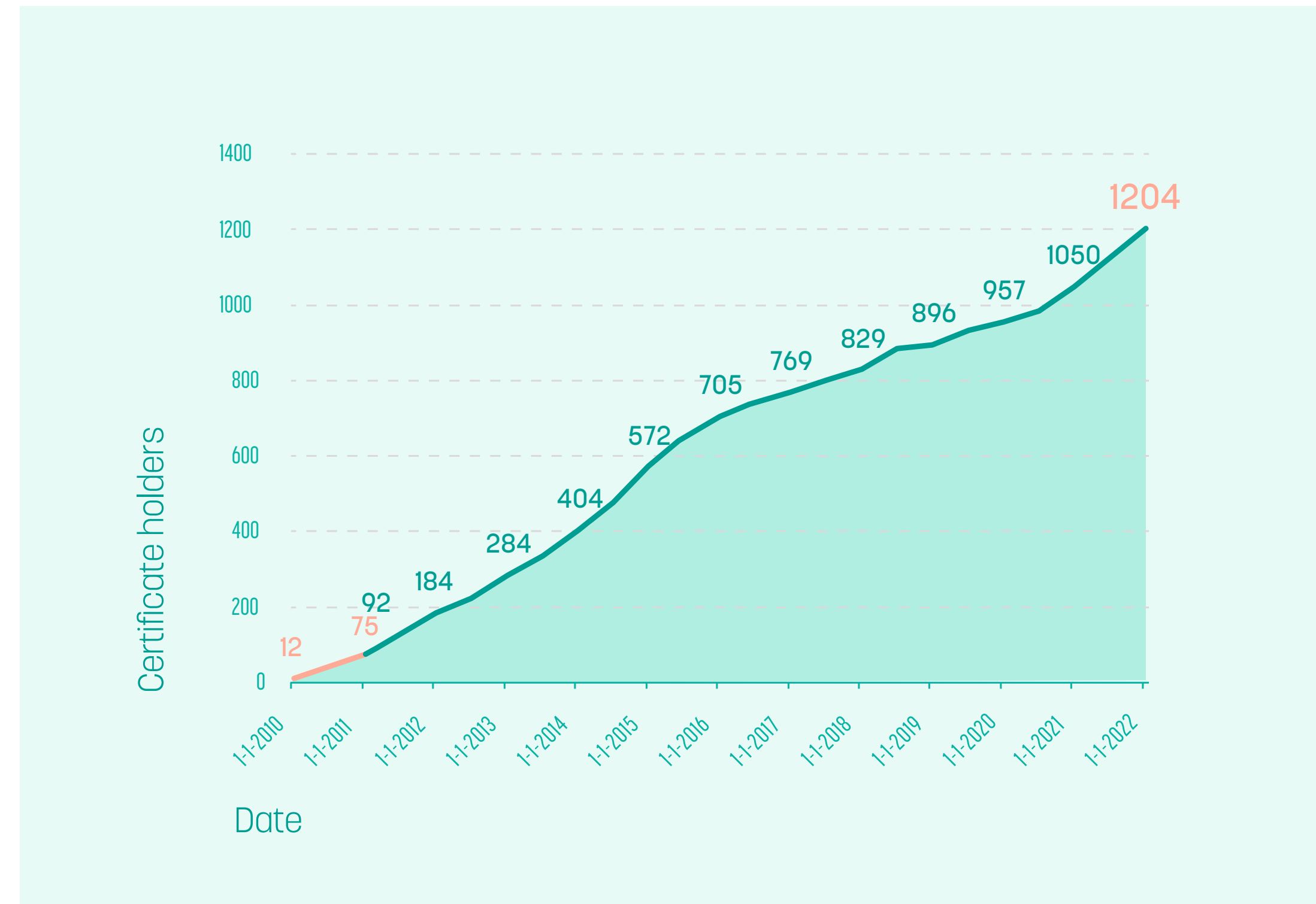
Sub-objective 17.17 Encourage effective public, public-private and social partnerships is typical of SKAO's work method. A clear way forward to a sustainable world is embedded in SKAO's DNA, namely, collaboration. In almost all its activities, SKAO stimulates companies and governments to collaborate and join forces. For example, governments, market parties, and civic organisations are represented on our **Board and Central College of Experts** ↗, where we regularly ask for input from our stakeholders. In addition, we also participate in Buyer Groups. This gives substance to **sub-objective 17.17 Encourage effective public, public-private, and social partnerships**, which is typical of SKAO's work method.

Hans Kröder of Learn2Improve your planet helped SKAO determine which SDGs we directly impact.

Facts & figures

CO₂ Performance Ladder 2021

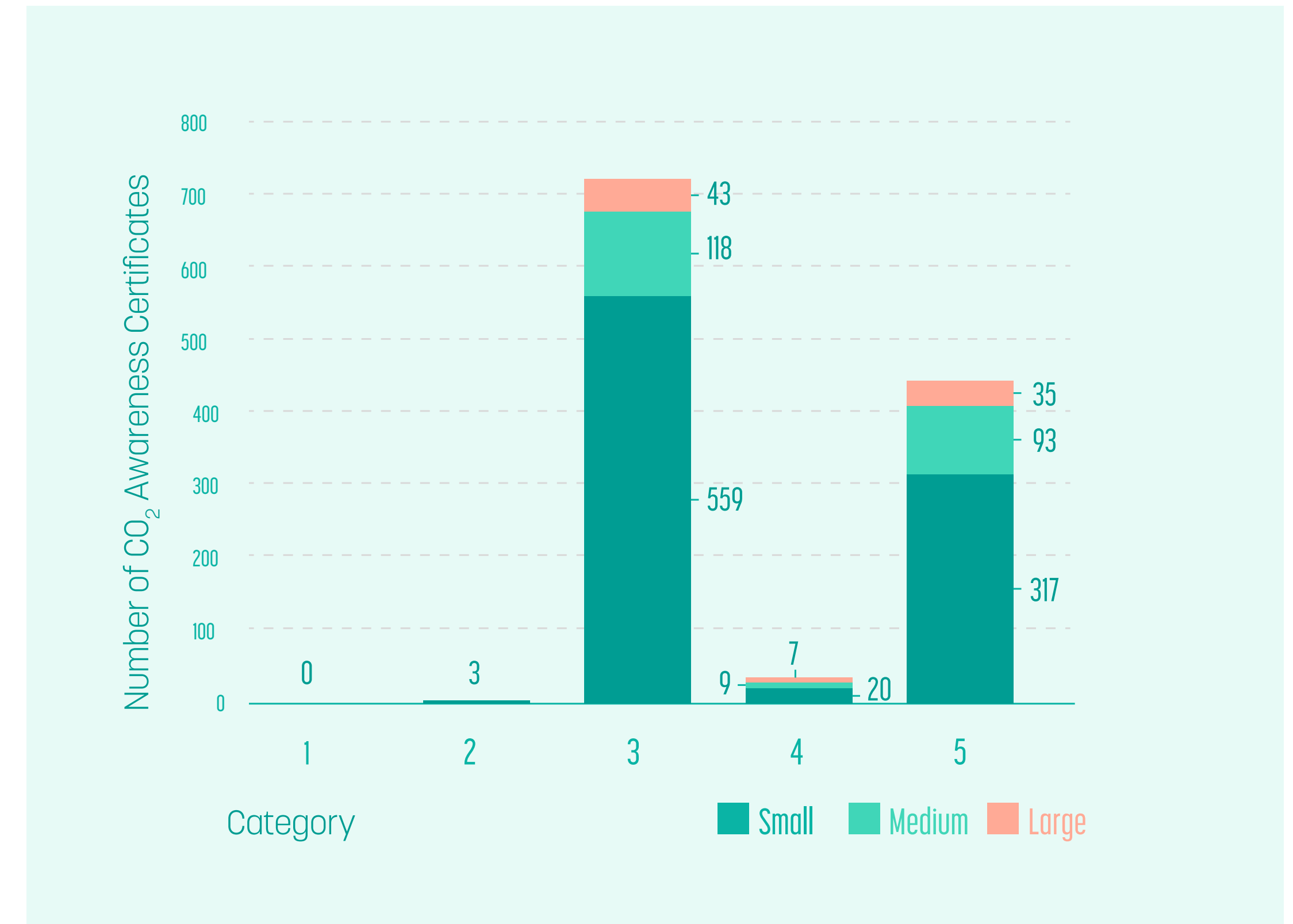
Number of certificates issued



Sharp increase in certified organisations

In 2021, the number of certificate holders increased dramatically by 154 organisations compared to 2020. This is the steepest increase since 2014. And 1,204 certificates were issued on the CO₂ Performance Ladder. One certificate may contain several organisations (subsidiaries). More than 4,000 organisations have been certified.

Number of certificates per level



Contracting authorities: more than 200

Selection of certified organisations 2021





Gijs Termeer
Programme director

'I'm proud of the impact we have made and the creativity and inventiveness we have shown as a team despite the coronavirus.'



Brian Heikamp
Marketing and Communication

'Our team has been very involved in the development of our new brand identity. Our strategy and positioning are now captured in a rock-solid brand story and a new visual identity.'



Tijmen de Groot
Policy and development

'I'm very proud that in 2021 we carried out a meticulous inventory of the topics for Handbook 4.0. And by "we", of course, I mean our experts in the CCvD, who represent our main stakeholders, but also all certificate holders and other stakeholders who provided their input via a survey or participation in meetings.'



Annemiek Lauwerijssen
Manager SKAO

'I'm proud of the team and the three new employees who started at SKAO. And it's remarkable that in 2021 there was a sharp increase in the number of certified organisations. The Netherlands has not been idle!'



George Thurley
Project Assistant CO₂ Performance Ladder Europe

'In 2021, we succeeded in using our network to increase our European contacts and gain (even more) knowledge about and enthusiasm for the Ladder. I believe this lays a great foundation for the rest of our European project.'

Highlights of 2021 per the SKAO Secretariat



Maud Vastbinder
Project Manager CO₂ Performance Ladder Europe

'I'm proud of our partnership with the IKEA Foundation because they see us as a key strategic partner that uses innovation to combat climate change. The Ladder is becoming increasingly well known in other countries. With IKEA's support, our goal in 2021 is to accelerate CO₂ reduction in Europe by promoting sustainable procurement with the CO₂ Performance Ladder.'



Joleen Zuidema
Content and events

'2021 was the year of the event "Making an impact with Climate-Neutral Procurement"! There were 300 participants and potentially an unlimited number of people watching the videos about getting started with climate-neutral procurement. I'm proud!'



Christiaan van der Spijk
Junior quality assurance manager

'The management of the current manual and its continued development into a new handbook are central to my work. I use the Action List to show which measures our certificate holders implement in their organisation and projects, which varies from zero-emission building material to gasless offices.'



Demi van Laaren
Office manager SKAO

'In 2021, the number of certificate holders increased massively! In diversity as well. It makes me happy when I hear that an organisation successfully completed the certification process that I contributed to.'



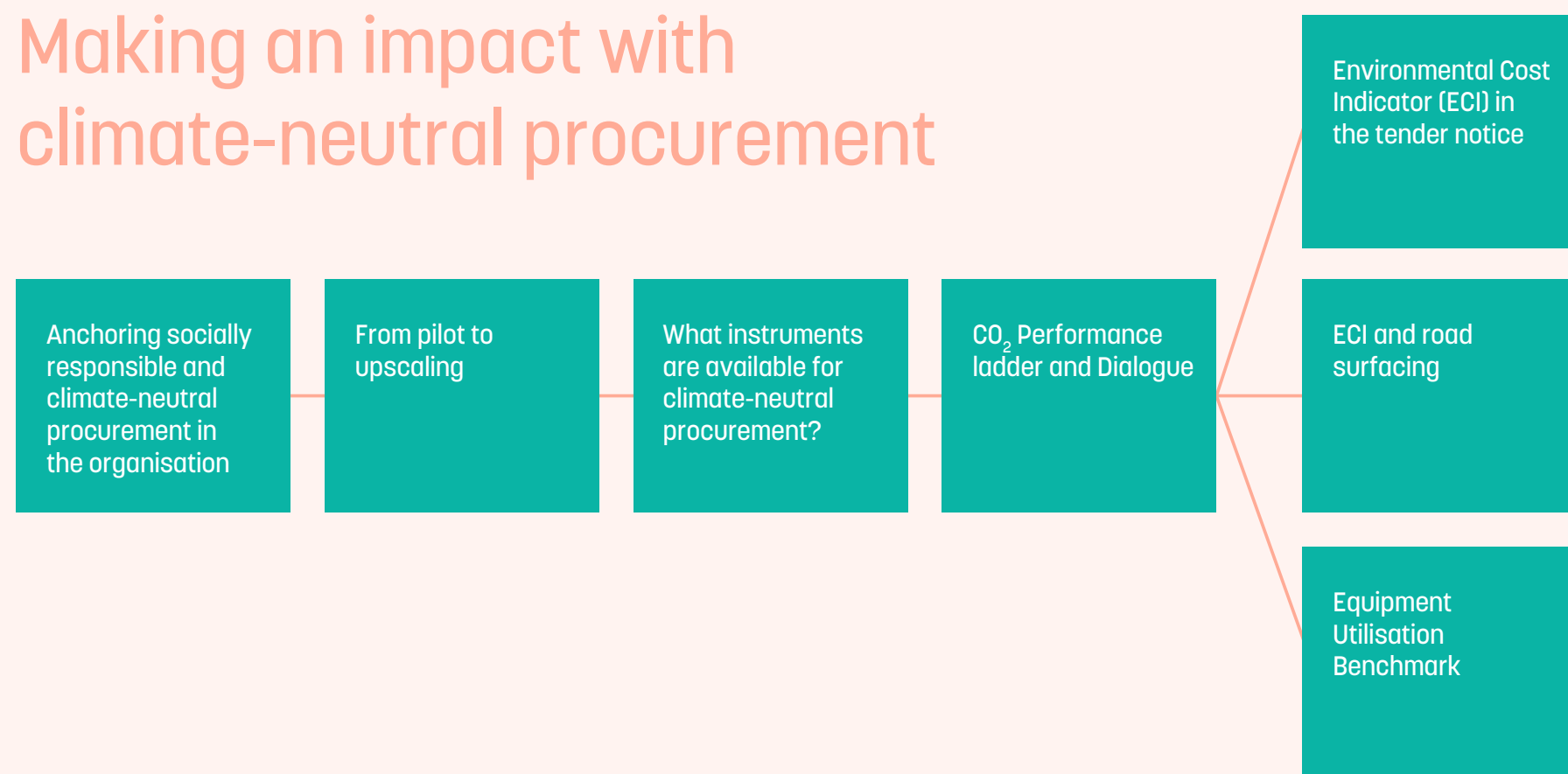
Ghislaine Dubvalois
Programme manager CO₂ Performance Ladder

'I contribute to making an impact by organising the Community of Practices for authorities to get started with the CO₂ Performance Ladder, for the development and exchange of knowledge on structural monitoring, and steering of CO₂ emissions.'

Climate change is one of the most important social and political issues of our time and the IPCC reports are not getting any less sobering. There's no time to lose in minimising the damage. Fortunately, the Dutch government's purchasing power is 83 billion euros per year, which gives it an enormous amount of influence to make appropriate choices – and they have to with the ever-shortening time remaining to achieve the Climate Agreement objectives.

Event: Making an impact with climate-neutral procurement

Making an impact with climate-neutral procurement



Thea Smid-Verheul (procurement advisor at Twinkel), Ivo Banajo (sustainability manager for central government at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations), and Leentje Volker (professor of Integrated Project Delivery at the University of Twente) in conversation with the day's chair, Froukje Jansen, during the KNI Event.

Online event

To support government authorities in their role as a contracting authority, the Rijkswaterstaat, PIANOo, and SKAO organised the event "Making an impact with Climate-Neutral Procurement" on 14 October 2021.

Practical training courses

The new Climate-neutral Procurement Approach was presented in the form of a varied plenary programme and seven practical training courses, all of which can be reviewed [↗](#). More than 300 participants during the online event learned all about how and with what tools they can conduct procurement in a climate-neutrally fashion and what the latest developments are. The training sessions are of interest to different procurement sectors and they are tailored to both pioneers and organisations that are still at the beginning of climate-neutral procurement.

Want to watch the sessions (Dutch only)? You can do so here!

- [Anchoring socially responsible and climate-neutral procurement in the organisation ↗](#)
- [What instruments are available for climate-neutral procurement? ↗](#)
- [From pilot to upscaling ↗](#)
- [Environmental Cost Indicator \(ECI\) in the tender notice ↗](#)
- [CO₂ Performance Ladder and dialogue ↗](#)
- [ECI and road surfacing ↗](#)
- [Equipment Utilisation Benchmark ↗](#)

Maintenance: Scheldelaan in the port of Antwerp

The CO₂ Performance Ladder isn't just used as a procurement instrument in the Netherlands. In Belgium, several pilot projects are currently taking place in which certification on the CO₂ Performance Ladder provides award advantages in the procurement tendering process. One such project is the Scheldelaan renovation project. What role did the CO₂ Performance Ladder play in that project? And what sustainable actions were taken?

Breaking up foundations and sub-foundations, profiling asphalted surfaces, removing tons of rubble, replacing it with new material, etc. This is just some of the huge amount of work needed during the maintenance work in the Scheldelaan in the port of Antwerp. It was a mammoth task complete with a tight deadline. Willemen Infra, the road construction branch of construction group Willemen and project implementer, had three months to complete the job.

Project Leader Hans Hendrickx explains the scope of Project Scheldelaan, which was carried out earlier this year: 'It was a three-kilometre two-lane road complete with parking areas and bicycle paths, which had to be completely renewed. We had to remove and replace about 30,000 square metres of materials (70 centimetres deep).'

First CO₂ Performance Ladder project

Sustainability was also paramount during the project. The project was tendered to the market by the Antwerp Roads and Traffic Agency (AWV), which included the CO₂ Performance Ladder in a tender notice for the first time. Dirk van Troyen, road measurement engineer at the agency, explains the choice:

'A few years back, a steering committee was set up to investigate whether the CO₂ Performance Ladder could also be used in Belgium. In 2019, the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels governments gave the green light for a pilot phase. This project is part of that effort.'

'A total of twenty-five pilot projects are under way with the CO₂ Performance Ladder. Five in Brussels, ten in Flanders, and ten in Wallonia,' he continued. 'The Scheldelaan project is the first CO₂ Performance Ladder project to be carried out in Flanders.'

'The Scheldelaan project is the first CO₂ Performance Ladder project to be carried out in Flanders.'

– Dirk van Troyen, road measurement engineer at the Antwerp Roads and Traffic Agency (AWV)

'The CO₂ Performance Ladder is stricter about what constitutes green power. We were already planning to switch to Belgian green power in due course, but the Ladder helped us speed up that change.'

– Franky van den Berghe, Sustainability Manager Willemen Groep

Individual implementation

The Belgian steering committee made several agreements about the CO₂ Performance Ladder. For instance, for the interim, companies with Level 4 or 5 certificates on the Ladder will receive the same notional discount as companies with Level 3 certificates. This prevents small contractors (who have no experience with the CO₂ Performance Ladder) from being at a disadvantage. Moreover, a document was drafted to help contracting parties use the CO₂ Performance Ladder.

Climate-neutral construction

Willemen Infra was awarded the Scheldelaan project. They were selected out of the three large contractors that submitted tenders for the project (all certified at Level 3 on the Ladder). The company attained Level 3 on the Ladder by mapping its CO₂ footprint and setting reduction objectives. Franky van den Berghe, sustainability manager at the company: 'We want to reduce CO₂ emissions by 10 percent within three years compared to our turnover with 2019 as the reference year.'

In the interim, Willemen Infra is already working on attaining a certificate on Level 4 or 5 of the CO₂ Performance ladder. Sustainability is paramount these days, says Van den Berghe. And a higher level on the Ladder aligns well with that goal: 'Sustainability used to be something we did on the side, but today it's truly integrated into our strategy and policy. We want to achieve the maximum added value throughout our business operations with the least possible

impact on the environment. The ultimate goal is climate-neutral construction with zero negative impact on ecosystems. This requires a lot of work. From optimal use and management of raw materials to innovative and circular construction methods.'

Green power and reuse of materials

Several sustainable actions were taken during Project Scheldelaan. For instance, Willemen Groep switched from green power from Europe to green power from its own country for all offices, warehouses, and production facilities. 'Green power is green power in Belgium, regardless of its origin,' says Van den Berghe. 'But the CO₂ Performance ladder is stricter on that. We were already planning to switch to Belgian green power in due course, but the Ladder helped us speed up that change.'

Secondly, material reuse was emphasised to reduce the CO₂ footprint of the Scheldelaan project. Hendrickx: 'We reused about ten per cent of the old road surface by mixing it with new material and milling it with cement. That's about 5,000 cubic metres (m³) of sand that we didn't have to transport back and forth.'

More sustainable asphalt

Thirdly, Willemen Infra focused on the use of asphalt with reduced temperature, namely warm mix asphalt (WMA). Asphalt is normally produced at a temperature of about 180° Celsius. But you can use certain techniques, such as bitumen foaming, so that a temperature of 120° Celsius is also sufficient. Hendrickx: 'Higher temperatures



CO₂ Performance Ladder

equal more energy consumption, it's as simple as that. If you carry out the process at a lower temperature, you save energy.'

Up until now, Willemen Infra was unaware of exactly how much energy it was saving with this more environmentally friendly form of asphalt production. Then it was mapped out for the first time using the CO₂ Performance Ladder. Van den Berghe: 'It reduces the consumption of natural gas in our asphalt plants by about 15 percent.'

Lessons learned

Project Scheldelaan was an instructive experience for all stakeholders in terms of the CO₂ Performance Ladder. According to Hendrickx, the Ladder served as a precaution to continuously think about improvements. 'You start designing processes smarter, combining things, you name it. The resulting energy and material savings aren't just good for the environment. They also improve your competitiveness. Which is a good thing given how fierce the competition is in Belgium.'

Besides, the CO₂ Performance Ladder ensured that sustainability was put more prominently on the agenda at Willemen Groep, adds Van den Berghe. 'It improved policy and staff got more involved. Sustainability is much more of a focus now. Not only with the management but also in the workplace.'

Positivity about the Ladder

According to the principal Van Troyen, Project Scheldelaan offers a lot of perspective for the future: 'We're quite positive about the CO₂ Performance Ladder so far. I believe there's a good chance that it'll be used on a large scale in Belgium in the future and will encourage contractors to use more sustainable measures.'

'The CO₂ Performance Ladder put sustainability more prominently on the agenda at Willemen Groep. It improved policy and staff got more involved. Sustainability is much more of a focus now. Not only with the management but also in the workplace.'

– Franky van den Berghe, Sustainability Manager Willemen Groep

Impact report 2021

The reporting on the **Action List 7** of the CO₂ Performance Ladder for 2021 makes it clearly visible across the board that the energy transition is gaining momentum. The question is whether it's fast enough

The impact of the Action List on organisations in 2021

The more than 1,200 certificate holders on the CO₂ Performance Ladder report annually on the actions taken and planned to reduce CO₂. Collectively, this now involves almost 30,000 actions. This is an average of 25 measures per organisation.

Self-generation continues to rise sharply

The Netherlands is working hard on more sustainable energy from the sun (on roofs and ground) and wind (at sea and on land). In the summer of 2021, 30 regional energy strategies (RESes) were published. These also focus heavily on solar on (large) roofs. This is also reflected in the Action list. Nearly 1-in-5 organisations are now working on self-generation at industrial premises. In offices, this is now even 1-in-3. In practice, these are solar panels in almost all cases. This growth has been rapid in recent years. More and more organisations are opting to generate their own sustainable power instead of only buying (Dutch) green power. Fourteen organisations consciously generate much more electricity than needed so they can supply it to third parties in the vicinity. Hopefully, this will

continue in the coming years. In this respect, the improved matching of electricity supply and demand is likely to become an important new measure. This is because the grid operators are finding it increasingly difficult to provide sufficient transmission capacity on the regional and local power grid.

Sharp increase in the electrification of mobility and mobile equipment

The Climate Agreement states that no fossil fuel cars may be sold by 2030. Moreover, the Dutch government is aiming for completely emission-free construction by 2030. Electrification is an important reduction strategy for mobility, transport, and all construction activities. This is clearly starting to be reflected in the Action List. Last year, we were still critical about this. But the number of organisations using at least one mobile tool will more than double by 2021. About 1-in-5 organisations that have mobile equipment now have at least one electric machine. Almost a third of the organisations now have at least 5% of their car fleet that is electric. That's an increase of 45%! It's than a tenth,

Most implemented actions



The top-10 most implemented actions in 2021. This relates to the number of organisations that undertook a particular action. For each action, the degree of implementation is shown (Level A, B, or C).

so this is already more than 15%. Great numbers. The leasing market in particular can be an enormous stimulus for the electrification of passenger mobility. So this must continue in the coming years.

Rise of gasless offices, but Label C lags behind

Stopping the use of natural gas in the built environment is another important pillar of the Climate Agreement. By 2030, 1.5 million buildings will be taken off natural gas. A new measure on the Action List in 2021 is the gasless office. And in one year, 140 organisations say they are doing just that. At the same time, by law, all offices must have Energy Label C by 1 January 2023. Implementation of this action is slowly increasing. But according to the Action List, 339 of the organisations (33%) currently have on average an Energy Label C or better for their buildings. This number grew by 25% in 2021.

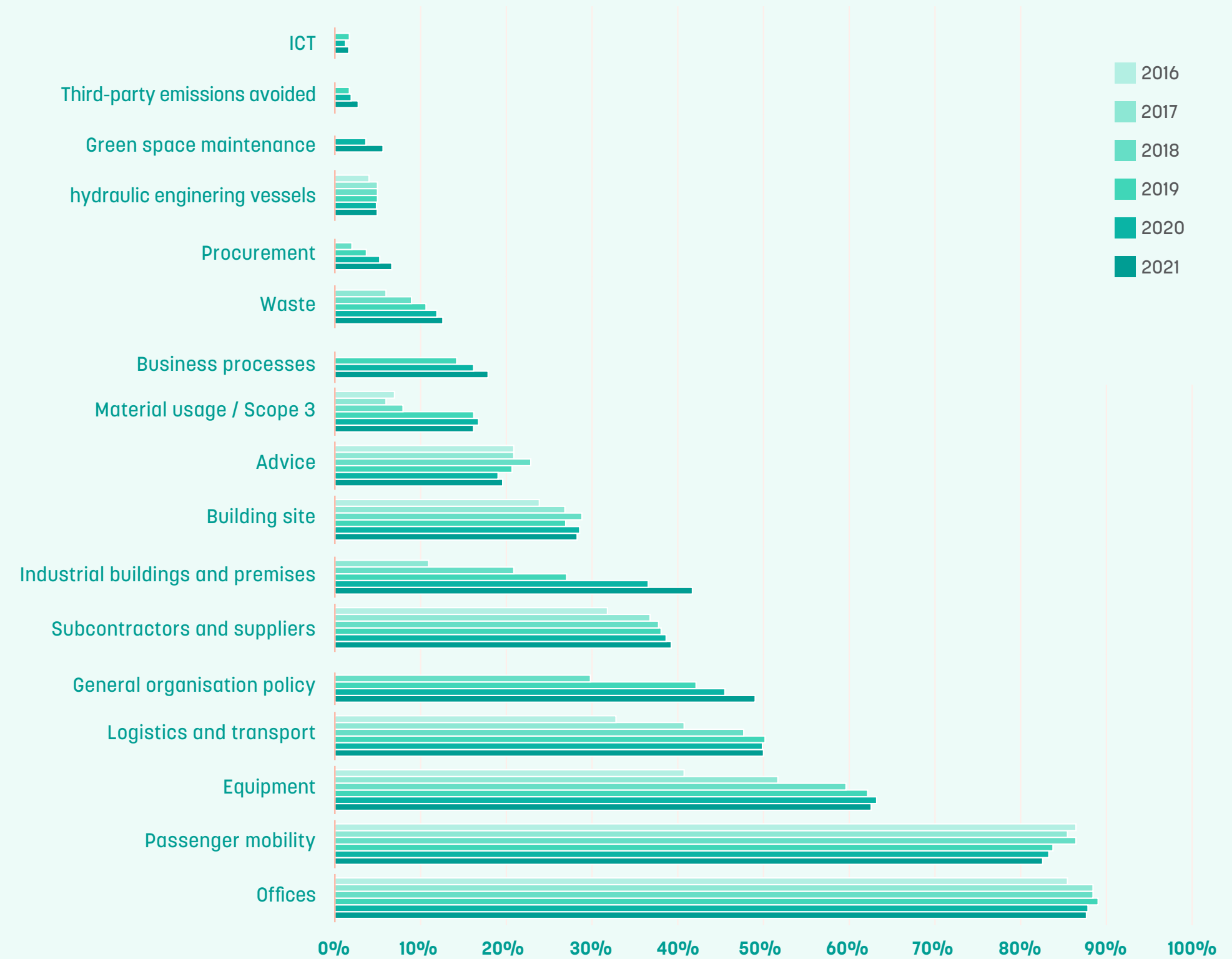
But this also means that at least two-thirds won't meet the statutory obligation of 1 January 2023. With the current crisis in Ukraine and the attendant increase in gas prices, these organisations should now finally commit to making these offices and premises more sustainable.

In short, there's a sharp increase in the self-generation of power and electrification of mobility and mobile equipment. Actions to get offices off gas are also on the rise. But whether this is rapid enough remains to be seen. The detailing of the new cabinet's plans and the use of the Climate Fund totalling 35 billion euros will be decisive in this respect.

List of actions in figures

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Number of organisations that completed the Action List	1175	1044	945	880	839	722
Implemented actions*	17970	15042	13560	11403	10010	6033
Planned actions (total)	10223	8282	7175	6095	4749	3259
NEWLY added actions (total)	582	466	528	382	603	850
Implemented actions (average per company)	17,3	16,2	16,4	14,9	13,6	9,4
Planned actions (average per company)	8,7	7,9	7,6	6,9	5,7	4,5
NEWLY added actions (average per company)	0,4	0,4	0,6	0,4	0,7	1,2

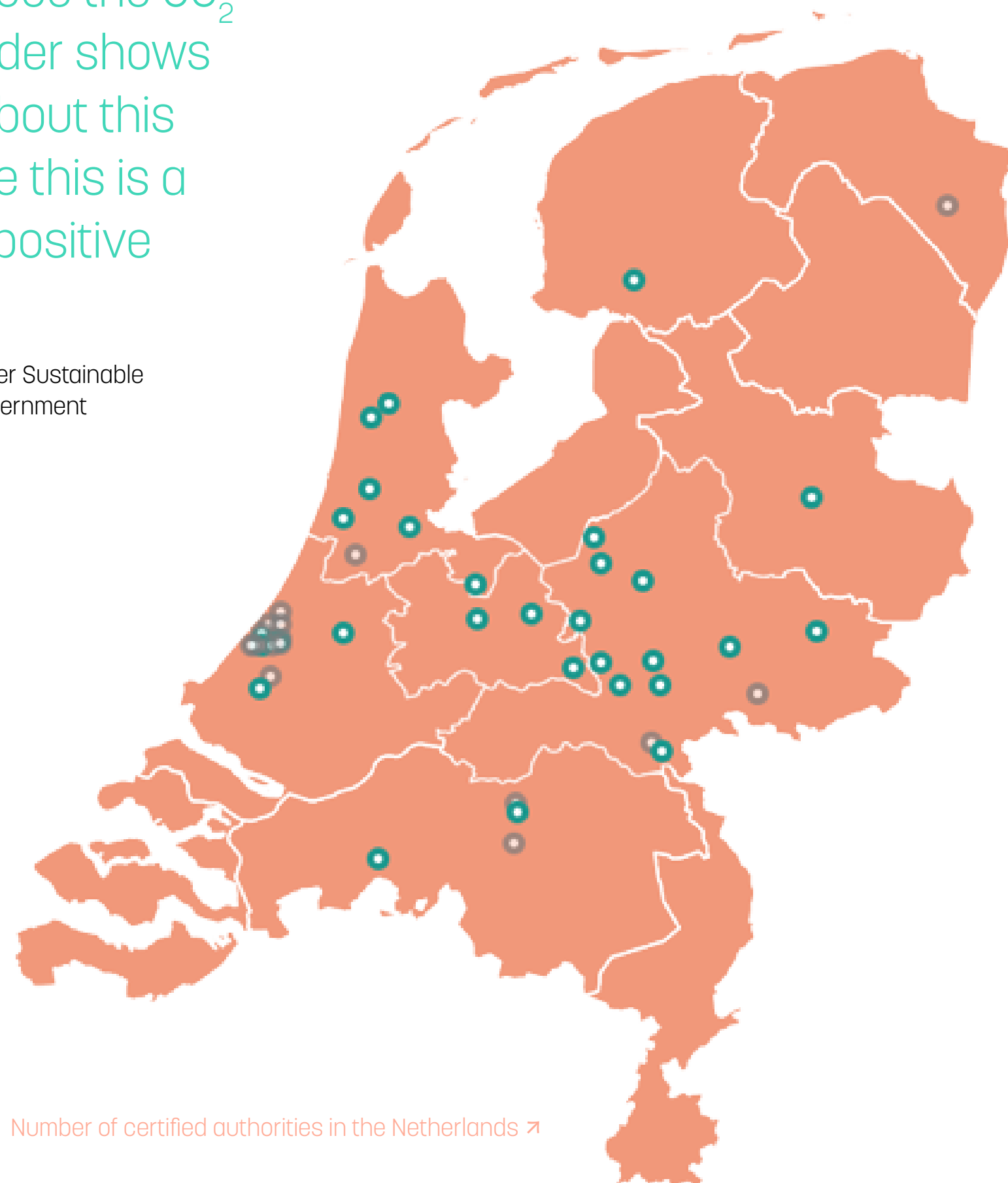
Number of organisations per category



The Action List is divided into 17 categories. The number of organisations that implemented one or more actions within a category are shown per category.

'We used the "Everyone does something" campaign to ask all of the Netherlands to take little or big steps towards a more sustainable life. The Central Government's decision to introduce the CO₂ Performance Ladder shows that it's serious about this message. I believe this is a great step and a positive sign.'

– Ivo Bonajo, Programme Manager Sustainable Business Operations Central Government



Number of certified authorities in the Netherlands ↗

Number of authorities certified in 2021 grows rapidly

The Netherlands is serious about implementing the Paris Climate Agreement. The government's coalition agreement includes firm objectives for CO₂ reduction by 2030.

The Netherlands must be carbon neutral by 2050. Municipalities, provinces, and water boards play an important role in achieving these objectives and shaping the energy transition at a local level. And they are increasingly using the CO₂ Performance Ladder to make this concrete in the short term in a structured manner. As a procurement instrument and certainly also to contribute to the solution with structural CO₂ reduction and thus set a good example.

In 2021:

- The central government decided that **all ministries will be certified** ↗ on the CO₂ Performance Ladder so they can map out their emissions and steer towards structural CO₂ reduction;
- A Community of Practice (CoP) was launched to support ministries and agencies in their certification process;
- The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management obtained the highest level on the CO₂ Performance ladder ↗, namely, Level 5;

- The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality ↗ were awarded a Level 3 certificate;
- Six municipalities (Amersfoort, Ede, Hilversum, Veenendaal, and Zaanstad), one water board (Aa en Maas), and the Amsterdam transport region were awarded a certificate on the CO₂ Performance Ladder;
- And the Union of Water Boards issued an urgent advisory to all **water boards that they must be certified** ↗ on the CO₂ Performance Ladder by 2025 to make their own business operations more sustainable.

Which authorities are certified?

An overview of certified authorities and authorities in the process of obtaining the certificate can be found on the CO₂ Performance Ladder website. You can find these by clicking on the map.

Continued development of the CO₂ Performance Ladder Handbook

The CO₂ Performance Ladder is constantly evolving. The Central College of Experts (CCvD) consists of companies, authorities, and civic organisations and is responsible for the content of the new Handbook.

Early in 2021, they started evaluating Handbook 3.1 based on their own experiences. In the spring, the CCvD compiled a list, as complete as possible, of more than 60 market signals that may be relevant for further development of the handbook. Eight main topics were selected from this very extensive list that was submitted to all stakeholders of the CO₂ Performance Ladder via a questionnaire in July 2021. These eight main topics were:

- The ambition of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in general and the ambition level of the reduction objectives
- Projects with an award advantage and Scope 3 emissions
- Gain better insight into the ladder's impact
- Alignment with climate policy
- Boundary determination
- Structure of the standard and user-friendliness of the Handbook
- Certificate holder size category
- Energy saving in the Ladder and green power with emission factor 0

The questionnaire received input on the changes from no less than 356 respondents. SKAO thoroughly analysed these. The output of this research is taken by the CCvD as advice for further development. The further development of content was then started in various working groups. SKAO's goal is to publish Handbook 4.0 in the spring of 2023.



Equipment Utilisation Benchmark

Climate Agreement, nitrogen problem, Clean Air Agreement: the evolution towards a zero-emission building site is inevitable, but takes time. The 'power of procurement' can already help to challenge contractors to use less diesel and submit procurement tenders with cleaner equipment and fuels or electricity. To this end, SKAO jointly with commissioning parties and market parties developed the "Equipment Utilisation Benchmark".

The Equipment Utilisation Benchmark is a scoring methodology that can be used for procurement tenders. The Equipment Utilisation Benchmark provides a straightforward comparison between the use of cleaner equipment, fuels, or electricity and a traditional diesel-based method. By 2021, the first commissioning parties will have used the benchmark in their procurement tenders.

IKEA Foundation supports CO₂ Performance Ladder in Europe

The CO₂ Performance Ladder has developed in the past 12.5 years into the most successful **socially responsible procurement (SRP)** ⁷ instrument in the Netherlands. It helps companies and governments reduce CO₂ and costs.

The increasing international interest prompted SKAO in 2021 to investigate whether the CO₂ Performance Ladder could also be used throughout **Europe** ⁷. SKAO receives financial support from the **IKEA Foundation** ⁷. The IKEA Foundation works together with key strategic partners that use innovative approaches to combat climate change.

Accelerating CO₂ reduction through sustainable procurement

Socially Responsible Procurement (SRP) is considered an effective policy instrument to combat climate change, yet many European countries still face certain obstacles in implementing such a policy. One of the problems is the lack of practical sustainability instruments.

The project 'Accelerating carbon emission reduction through the power of procurement, by dissemination of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in Europe' aims to accelerate CO₂ reduction in Europe by encouraging sustainable procurement using the CO₂ Performance Ladder. SKAO, jointly with European contracting authorities, will investigate how the CO₂ Performance Ladder can make an impact using the instrument in procurement tenders. The project will run for 1.5 years from August 2021 to January 2023.

During the project, SKAO will work closely with the **International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)** ⁷. IISD is an independent think tank with the objective of accelerating solutions for attaining a stable climate, sustainable resources, and fair economies.

Belgian authorities

In the coming years, Belgian authorities will experiment with the CO₂ Performance Ladder in their procurement tenders. Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels will all participate. What if the pilot phase gives positive results? Then the Ladder will also become the norm with our southern neighbours.

About the IKEA Foundation

The IKEA Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the INGKA Foundation, the owner of the Ingka Group (IKEA companies). The foundation focuses on improving the lives of vulnerable children by enabling their families to create a sustainable livelihood and combat climate change. IKEA Foundation works in the field of climate change mitigation together with key strategic partners who use innovative approaches to achieve large-scale results. The IKEA Foundation believes in unconditional collaboration between countries, governments, businesses, and people to create a better future. This means they support programmes that foster new and unprecedented collaborations between businesses, civil society, and governments.

The Rijkswaterstaat has used the CO₂ Performance Ladder for some time in procurement tenders in the civil engineering sector. The award instrument has also been used in the hot drinks sector for some years now. It was successful here—when the Rijkswaterstaat asked, the market responded.

CO₂ Performance Ladder project case study

It supplied, installed, and maintained hot drinks machines including ingredients and cups

Johan Moesman, senior procurement advisor at the Purchasing Implementation Centre (IUC) of Rijkswaterstaat Corporate Service (CD), explains what this guiding movement looked like (and still looks like) in two consecutive procurement tenders.

Why did IUC start with the Ladder?

Johan: 'As the IUC of Rijkswaterstaat CD, we want to be the most sustainable purchasing department. It's pioneering when we purchase sustainably in all areas. This starts with the procurement of services and goods that meet certain environmental criteria, such as furniture made from FSC wood. This is PFC-free and contains no toxic substances. We've also observed the international social conditions as laid down by PIANOo for years now. And we adhere to the social return rules for sustainable employability where the objective is to return people to the labour market.'

But at some point, about three years ago now when the Climate Agreement was also established in the Netherlands, we also decided that we wanted to reduce our carbon footprint. And then we came across the CO₂ Performance Ladder. After all, that's what it's for.'

'When we decided we wanted to reduce our carbon footprint, we came across the CO₂ Performance Ladder. After all, that's what it's for.'

– Johan Moesman (RWS)



Does the hot drinks sector lend itself to the structural reduction of carbon emissions?

Johan: 'Absolutely. It starts with the coffee farmer who may or may not grow coffee sustainably. The coffee beans then have to travel 'til they reach the consumer where middlemen and transport method has a major impact on carbon emissions. The infrastructure involved with organising coffee machines also creates lots of transport miles because the machines are filled with coffee, cleaned, and the resulting waste removed. And this applies to a large number of machines, 450 for RWS and at least 1,400 for the Ministry of Defence. You control that whole chain with the way you issue a procurement tender,

which in our case was for eight years for both departments. So you can have a huge impact on reducing carbon emissions over a long period of time.'

What was the first impact you saw with "Procurement with the Ladder"?

Johan: 'Two years ago in March 2019, we started a procurement tender notice for 1,400 hot beverage vending machines in the Ministry of Defence. We still used the catering category back then. The market was still not good enough and we wanted to keep the requirements in proportion. So, we granted award advantages to Levels 1 to 3 on the CO₂ Performance Ladder in the procurement

'So you can have a huge impact on reducing carbon emissions over a long period of time.'

tender notice. Bidders could earn extra points with it, so we actually guided them to strive for the highest ambition level, in this case, Level 3. And that's exactly what happened. All four bidders indicated that they would achieve Level 3 Ladder certification within a year.' So it was a good result, and the department wanted to see a lot more of this kind of thing.

What was the next step?

One year later in March 2020. RWS is taking another step forward in driving the market. Johan says: 'We then put out an invitation to tender on the market for hot drinks at Rijkswaterstaat. We went further in the requirements because we wanted to shorten the chain from coffee producer to user as much as possible and pay the farmers a fair price. We calculated the price the farmers should get and it was up to the bidders to indicate how they would safeguard this price while keeping the chain as short as possible. To take our responsibility as a buyer, we gave a minimum purchase guarantee of at least 3 million consumptions per year and there were no option years in the contract.' Johan explains that this allowed the tendering parties to offer security to the farmers. 'Normally, the total number of consumptions was much more noncommittal, which made sustainable collaboration difficult.'

How did the winning party fulfil this award criterion?

Johan: 'Selecta won the tender. The party had found a coffee cooperative in three countries that would grow the beans especially for Rijkswaterstaat as well as a small importer

and roaster. So the chain was very short in one go. All unnecessary parties, such as importers, intermediaries, and brokers were dropped, which resulted in the agreed price actually going to the farmers. And they were then able to invest in sustainability. So, the impact was immediate.'

What was the effect of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in this tender?

Johan: 'Besides our requirement for a short chain and a fair price for the farmers, we also granted an award advantage up to Level 5 of the CO₂ Performance Ladder. The contract was for eight years, so we indicated that organisations could obtain the certificate for Levels 1 to 3, 4, and 5 in one, two, and three years, respectively. The outcome? All the parties signed up aiming for Level 5. So as a contracting authority, we really had an impact.'

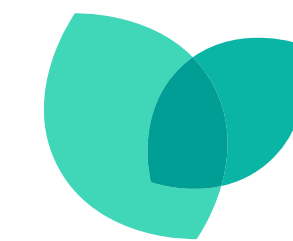
As a result, the winning party Selecta will be certified at the highest level within a few years. And if this doesn't occur within the specified time, they'll be fined heavily. Johan explains that maintaining the certificate for the duration of the contract is also guaranteed. This means that Rijkswaterstaat is the driving force behind eight years of structural CO₂ reduction in Selecta's operations and supply chain. The coffee supplier is now certified at Level 3, as are Maas and Jacobs Douwe Egberts Nederland.

A new house style for the CO₂ Performance Ladder

A good brand position ensures recognition and consistency. In 2021, we took up the challenge of renewing our brand identity and presented our new business identity and logo for the CO₂ Performance Ladder.



Old logo



CO₂ PERFORMANCE LADDER

New logo



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