



# Climate Policy Document

Willy Naessens Group

1. Introduction	3
2. Situation report	3
3. 'Short-term' targets – towards 2030 and 2050	4
4. Actions and projects to support 'long' term	4
5. Support - decision	6

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear insight into how climate neutrality is pursued within the Willy Naessens Group.

To this end, the Willy Naessens Group has been systematically mapping its companies' scope 1 and 2 emissions since 2020. These data are all registered in the Smarttrackers app. Based on this data, an annual update is made via a CO2 progress and reduction report as well as an energy assessment report.

## 2. Situation report

Within the Group, at the end of 2019, the decision was taken within the Board of Directors that they wanted to actively work on climate issues. Research was therefore carried out into the most suitable certified approach regarding reduction of CO2 emissions for the Group's construction-related companies. It was decided to follow the system of the CO2 Performance Ladder, with Level 3 certification as the target.

In 2020, an inventory of the data of the various companies of the Willy Naessens Group's construction-related companies was started. Through workshops, executives from both production companies and contracting companies were able to have their say on where they felt improvement was possible. A clear sustainability management system was established with a CSO (Chief Sustainability Officer) at its head. A communication plan was also drawn up to keep employees and external stakeholders informed of sustainability efforts.

The year 2020 was chosen as the base year for reporting for the CO2 Performance Ladder of these Willy Naessens Group companies. From 2021, CO2 emissions will be offset annually with certified projects.

At the end of 2022, the Board of Directors of the Willy Naessens Group decided to extend the inventory of scope 1 and 2 emissions to the entire Willy Naessens Group from the year 2023 onwards. Organisationally, the Willy Naessens Group is divided into 5 different departments with an umbrella family office (Koutermolen). These departments are shown below.

### Concrete

This department comprises the various production plants where concrete elements are prefabricated.

### Build

This divisional department includes all contracting companies of the Willy Naessens Group. It also includes the companies that arrange transport for the construction sites.

### Pools

This department includes the various pool companies.

### Invest

This department includes a number of real estate investments and other holdings.

### Food

This division includes companies engaged in the distribution of food products and the preparation of ready meals.

Since the start of scope 1 and 2 emissions registration in 2020, many things have changed, making it difficult to report CO2 emissions in absolute:

- The number of construction-related companies within the group grew. For example, additional transport companies and a manufacturing company were acquired.
- The companies whose emissions have already been recorded since 2020 have grown strongly and often have additional activities and additional buildings.

- Non-construction related companies should also be included and there is organic growth and growth through acquisitions in these divisions as well.

It was therefore decided to work in relative emission values (Intensity target according to chapter 11 of the GHG Protocol) for the targets and progress reports. Here, emissions are related to turnover. To take into account price increases, turnover is each time indexed with the (Belgian) consumption index compared to 2020. By reporting in this way, the base year 2020 can be used as a reference and a sustainability target can be communicated in a clear and verifiable way. The Willy Naessens Group also continues to report absolute emission values anyway.

These results are discussed at regular intervals by the sustainability cell with the various people responsible so that there is a continuous drive towards more sustainable solutions within the Group.

### 3. 'Short-term' targets – towards 2030 and 2050

The basic objectives of the Willy Naessens Group are very clear:

1. Organise a clear, structured approach to sustainability within the company involving and encouraging all employees.
2. Map the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint in detail and set up clear actions towards reduction from that detail.
3. Keep reducing, year after year!
4. Achieve as a minimum the Belgian scales for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in accordance with the Paris climate agreement (35%).
5. The calculation is not based on minimum targets but on active reduction. The target reduction is therefore much higher than the Belgian scales.
6. Annual certification of climate neutrality.
7. Achieving climate neutrality without offsetting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050 at the latest
8. Encourage suppliers and customers to actively include sustainability within their own organisations..

Within the management team of Group Willy Naessens, it is very clear that they want to create a support base for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and sustainability in all areas. This support will have both economic and social support, both within the Group and outside. Community will also be supported towards more sustainability and the way of life from the Willy Naessens Group.

### 4. Actions and projects to support 'long' term

Rolling out sustainability cannot possibly be borne by 1 company. The impact on the global problem of global warming is therefore too limited. However, this does not mean that the Willy Naessens Group is not committed to doing its part. As Willy Naessens Group, we therefore not only focus on what we can do now but also look at research projects that offer longer-term outcomes towards reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Indeed, at the moment we are already actively pursuing a number of projects. The following projects/themes relevant to the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of concrete production, transport and logistics are currently being monitored. The extent to which these are followed up or in which way they are involved are indicated per project. This list is not exhaustive.

- Collaboration with Universities  
Wim Moerman (CSO and R&D Manager of the Willy Naessens Group) is also a 10 % guest lecturer at UGent (Magnet Laboratory for concrete research) and in this way well informed about the various topics on which research is done.  
In addition, he regularly acts as assessor/supervisor of graduation projects or doctoral research that takes place at the KULeuven (Bruges department, RecyCon research group) and relates to the use of recycled aggregates..
- Project PURA  
The Willy Naessens Group actively participates in the Project Pura of UC Leuven-Limburg. This project organises 'Sustainability Research & Sustainability Courses for Large

Companies'. During these sessions, various topics such as CO<sub>2</sub>, Energy, Social, CSRD, etc. are discussed..

- CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in cement production

The Willy Naessens Group closely monitors the progress made by the cement industry in CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in cement production. Amongst others, it is looking at

- o The European research project Leilac (<https://www.project-leilac.eu/>) with, among others, Heidelberg Cement

- o The Holcim Group's GO4Zero project(<https://www.holcim.be/nl/go4zero>).

These projects mainly look at Carbon Capture and Storage techniques in which the captured CO<sub>2</sub> is stored underground. (<https://www.brevikccs.com/en>)

- The Willy Naessens Group has an internal program running in which, based on self-made LCAs, a continuous reduction of the embodied carbon of its concrete compositions is worked on. Tests are organized systematically. The meetings are discussed every 2 months (or more frequently if necessary).

- Recycling of concrete from our own production.

Within the Willy Naessens Group, production waste from vaults is systematically used for the production of new vaults. In this way, the production chain is closed. In addition, this avoids the transport of concrete rubble to crushing plants and of natural aggregates from the quarry to the factory.

- Geopolymers

The Willy Naessens Group has been following the various studies conducted in the field of low-carbon concrete based on all kinds of slags for some time now. The high CO<sub>2</sub> content of a classic concrete is mainly due to the high clinker content of the CEM I cement, which is mainly used by the precast industry. The slags are activated by adding alkalis. In this way, a geopolymer concrete is obtained that reacts in a similar way to a classic concrete based on cement. However, there are some specific disadvantages. For example, such a mixture generally has a slower hardening and higher temperature sensitivity. The Urbcon project (<https://vb.nweurope.eu/projects/project-search/urbcon-by-products-for-sustainable-concrete-in-the-urban-environment/>) investigated the possibilities of making such low-carbon concrete. This included looking at concrete compositions based on residual products such as ash and (copper) slag. The research was carried out by the following partners: City of Ghent, Ghent University, ResourceFull BVBA, CWare, Kamp C and ArcelorMittal Belgium NV, Stadsontwikkeling Rotterdam, Technische Universiteit Delft, FDN Engineering, Technische Universität Kaiserslautern, VDZ gGmbH, University of Sheffield, Imerys. One of the pilot projects carried out within the framework of this project was the casting of cement-free foundations for the provincial Centre for Sustainability and Innovation in Construction of Kamp-C (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCcHGQYBC30> & <https://www.kampc.be/nieuws/t-centrum-gebouwd-met-cementloze-funderingen-dankzij-het-interreg-nwe-urbcon-project>).

The Willy Naessens Group made one of its factories available. In this way, the developed concrete compositions could be cast in large volumes in industrial molds. By contributing to such projects, the Willy Naessens Group tries to promote research into concrete compositions with a reduced CO<sub>2</sub> content based on by-products.

- The Circle

The Willy Naessens Group is also fully committed to circular concrete construction. That is why The Circle project was developed, using 100 demountable, modular elements that enable rapid design and construction of logistical industrial buildings with elements that can be dismantled and reused. (<https://industriebouw.be/nl/thecircle/>) This results in a structure that can be dismantled, whereby the elements can be used for a new The Circle project. In this way, the Willy Naessens Group is now contributing to lower material use for buildings in the future.

- More efficient site management

Within the Willy Naessens Group, a 3D Bim platform was developed that enables a better organization of the production and assembly of the sites. Through clearer, unambiguous and visual communication, it is possible to better coordinate production and site, which

allows transports to be more efficiently scheduled and organized and waiting times (often with idling of equipment) on the site are also reduced..

- VIL LSI (<https://vil.be/project/logistics-sustainability-index/>)

As a constructor of many logistics buildings, the Willy Naessens Group participated in this project, which aims to map the sustainability of logistics companies even better and thus strive for further sustainability. This not only looked at transport but also at storage, buildings, etc.

The Willy Naessens Group contributed to this project – as a member of the steering group – by giving advice on the parameters that could be included as criteria to quantify the sustainability of the building and thus contributes to the pursuit of lower CO2 emissions from logistics companies..

## 5. Support - decision

The above objectives and way of thinking about sustainability and CO2 reduction are fully supported by the management team of the Willy Naessens Group. The expansion of the sustainability cell within the Willy Naessens Group to 4 FTE under the leadership of the CSO, Wim Moerman, illustrates the seriousness with which the Willy Naessens Group works on its sustainability. In order to clearly visually indicate the support, this note is signed by the employed CSO, which clearly approves the further roll-out in the short, medium and long term, as explained above.

Description of the Climate Policy Document.



For the Willy Naessens Group

Wim Moerman  
CSO – R&D Manager  
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