

Our commitment to biodiversity conservation and protection from deforestation

Preserving biodiversity and protecting against deforestation have been important issues for Deutsche Telekom for several years. We are underlining the importance with this commitment, brought to life via a wide range of measures along our value chain.

One of the main causes of biodiversity loss and species extinction is the increasing consumption of land by industry, agriculture, and transport. As a telecommunications company, we consume little land compared to companies in many other industries. However, our business activities have an impact beyond this in other areas of our value chain.

To ascertain these impacts, we conducted a qualitative impact analysis. This involved assessing the positive and negative impacts of Deutsche Telekom's business activities on various biodiversity parameters along the upstream and downstream value chain. This includes deforestation, species protection, and protection of oceans and ecosystems.

Our approach to sustainable purchasing

The greatest impacts were identified in the procurement of raw materials in our upstream value chain. Deutsche Telekom rejects any activities, drilling, exploration, or mining in or near areas with globally or nationally significant biodiversity. At the same time, our scope for action is limited because we do not produce our products ourselves. We expect our suppliers to work to protect the environment and have been committed to minimizing negative impacts on biodiversity, deforestation and water scarcity since 2022 as part of the Supplier Code of Conduct. This is regularly verified on site as part of social audits. Our suppliers should also place the same requirements on their subcontractors.

To minimize the impact in raw materials procurement and promote the circular economy, Deutsche Telekom has implemented take-back systems for mobile and fixed-network devices. This allows us to extend the useful life and return valuable resources such as precious metals to the materials cycle. We additionally aim to increase the share of recycled raw materials in the products we offer. We monitor the success of these measures using various KPIs. For example, "Take Back Mobile Devices" quantifies the proportion of mobile devices taken back in relation to the number of devices put on the market. Our ambition is to steadily increase this figure. The current status of the KPI can be found in the latest [CR report](#).

Our climate strategy

Energy production also has a strong impact on biodiversity, as climate change has a high impact on ecosystems and biodiversity. Thus, Deutsche Telekom's active commitment to climate protection is also a commitment to preserving biodiversity. Climate protection is a key component of our corporate responsibility strategy. This ensures that climate protection measures are closely linked to our core business. Our integrated climate strategy is based on four pillars: emissions from the value chain, renewable energies, energy efficiency and enablement (positive climate protection effects among our customers). We have defined targets and key performance indicators for each of the four pillars.

Among other things, we support reforestation projects in the actions against climate change. Trees store CO₂, generate oxygen, regulate the water balance, provide a habitat for countless species and promote biodiversity. Under "Magenta Forest," we are bundling existing projects across the Group and making it clear that many small gestures together can achieve great things. We have already exceeded our target of 100,000 trees planted. By the end of May 2022, 176,580 trees had been planted by Deutsche Telekom and our employees as part of the Trillion Tree Campaign. Our Green Pioneers community is also dedicated to the topic of forestation. To make better use of the lawns of technical facilities, a tiny forest was planted to promote biodiversity at our facilities.

Protection from deforestation

However, we see it as our responsibility not only to contribute to forestation, but also to stop deforestation. Deutsche Telekom is committed to the responsible use of forests and wood as a raw material. We see our greatest impact in our paper consumption. Our Paperless Office project aims to decrease paper use as much as possible throughout the Group by 2025. To this end, we have introduced print-on-demand systems and provide payroll electronically. The continuous switch from print to online invoices is also a good example of the biodiversity potential of digitization. The majority of our customers already receive their invoices online. Since 2018, we have been procuring only environmentally certified office paper that has been awarded the "Blue Angel" or the "Nordic Swan" certificate via a paper wholesaler.

Impact of our services

The provision of our services can also have an impact on biodiversity. The basis of mobile communications is the use of electromagnetic fields for the transmission of voice and data. The effects of electromagnetic fields on the environment are the subject of research and public debate. The German Federal Office for Radiation Protection states that, according to the current state of science, there are no indications of negative effects if the limits are observed.

Our subsidiary, Deutsche Funkturm, is responsible for expanding the infrastructure of our mobile communications network. When selecting suitable sites, we take ecological aspects into account as part of building permit procedures. At the same time, species and plant diversity is promoted. In cooperation with nature conservation authorities and Naturschutzbund Deutschland e.V. (NABU), Deutsche Funkturm plants trees and plants and promotes the habitats of native animals by installing nesting and bee boxes.

Nesting storks on cell towers are not uncommon, as the towers offer good protection during the breeding season. In order not to disturb the animals, our maintenance intervals are adjusted and interference suppression work is carried out as gently as possible. Deutsche Telekom cooperates with NABU on a case-by-case basis.

Our contribution to the preservation of biodiversity

In addition, Deutsche Telekom considers other biodiversity issues such as water consumption and sustainable buildings and canteens to be very significant. Even though our footprint in these areas is limited:

- Sustainable telecom buildings that are CO₂ -saving and optimally used [\[Link\]](#).
- Resource efficiency in the workplace, incl. sustainable office range and reduction of waste in canteens [\[Link\]](#).
- Employees take on sponsorships for flowering meadows on Telekom sites
- On our Telekom areas, we avoid mowing the lawns as far as possible to protect rare plant species

We also offer numerous products and solutions to reduce this environmental impact, e.g.:

- ICT solutions support transparency on water consumption and water management systems as well as animal tracking for the protection of endangered species.
- Beehives networked through ICT solutions contribute to biodiversity by having sensors collect data from beehives and transmit it to beekeepers [\[Link\]](#).
- 5G supports the digitization of agriculture [\[Link\]](#).

- Organizations such as Pro Wildlife e.V., the Bavarian Society for the Protection of Birds and Hellabrunn Zoo join forces with Deutsche Telekom to collect used terminal equipment and use the proceeds for species conservation [\[Link\]](#).