



People

NICOLE POHL, SENIOR ESG MANAGER AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER

An open and inquisitive mind

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Nicole Pohl's key tasks include keeping pace with the dynamic and increasingly complex issues concerning sustainability and ensuring that KHS is well set up for the future. And her field of responsibility continues to grow: in October she was also appointed the company's human rights officer.

PHOTOGRAPHY / ILLUSTRATION

Frank Reinhold

COVER PHOTO

Nicole Pohl has been senior ESG manager under the Act on Corporate Due Diligence Obligations in Supply Chains and human rights officer for the KHS Group since October 2024.

Nicole Pohl has been very involved with the various issues surrounding sustainability at KHS for around ten years now. Prior to this, as senior online manager she was responsible for the company's entire online communications – from the website to social media. Then the Dortmund systems supplier wanted to place greater emphasis on the benefits resulting from energy and water savings, for instance. “We needed a suitable format for this,” Pohl remembers. “This marked the start of KHS' voluntary sustainability report.” Creating this document was to become one of her core tasks.

Thinking outside the box

From this point forward, she found herself increasingly focusing on the topic of sustainability. Shouldering responsibility for the report enabled her to build up a large network within the corporate group. She began discussing the relevant issues with her colleagues and providing new impetus and incentives for more sustainability at KHS. To this end, she repeatedly familiarized herself with new aspects of this subject on her own initiative.



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You can always learn something when it comes to sustainability, believes Pohl. She focuses on considering how KHS can ready itself in time to meet new challenges.



Pohl welcomes the high visibility of sustainability issues and the fact that KHS and parent company Salzgitter have a common goal.

Continuous learning process

The Paris climate conference of 2015, with its aim of achieving worldwide climate neutrality by 2050, was a key trigger for Pohl; since then, she's intensively monitored the multitude of state and institutional obligations and proposals issued in order to derive opportunities from these and assess any risks therein for KHS. "The many aspects of sustainability have since become a fixed feature of global regulation. And they're dynamic, as political changes or shifts also throw up new challenges. We find ourselves in a continuous learning process," stresses Pohl. "My approach is to judge in advance with my team how KHS can best prepare itself to meet these challenges." She's critical about the frequency of new ordinances and their extreme attention to detail. "You sometimes ask yourself if people haven't lost sight of the big picture. It's justifiable that climate

protection and human rights have to be a composite element of corporate responsibility. But too many rules and complex requirements made within a very short space of time just prompts reactionism. This is counterproductive.”

PROFILE:

Nicole Pohl

After studying Dutch at the University of Münster and her first job at an advertising agency, Nicole Pohl, born in Dortmund, joined KHS in 2006. She initially held the post of senior online manager before turning her attentions to sustainability, a field in which she has worked for over ten years. Now 53, Pohl has always remained loyal to the Ruhr region, where she lives with her family in Castrop-Rauxel.

High visibility

Pohl is positive about the topic as a whole, however. “It’s good that sustainability now enjoys this high degree of visibility.” This applies equally to both the KHS Group and Salzgitter AG. She welcomes the fact that the two have a common target mission, to which Group company KHS contributes with its own defined measures. For example, KHS documents its own sustainability achievements for its stakeholders through continued voluntary reporting. This has also had an impact on the organizational structure; in 2023, KHS’ long-term expertise and resources were merged to form its new Sustainability Management Department. This now controls the implementation and successive further development of KHS’ company-wide sustainability program.

Increasing responsibility

Since then, Pohl's area of responsibility has grown further. As senior ESG manager, since October 2024 she's not only coordinated various environmental issues but also those associated with social and corporate responsibility – always in close consultation with the respective specialist departments. This includes assuming the role of human rights officer under the Act on Corporate Due Diligence Obligations in Supply Chains that has also applied to KHS since the beginning of 2024. "In this function, together with my colleagues in Purchasing, Compliance, Legal Affairs and at our parent company, I make sure that we monitor and steer clear of possible risks in our supply chain. This encompasses a variety of exciting tasks and challenges which we tackle together," she says.





Nicole Pohl
Senior ESG manager, KHS

“Climate protection and human rights have to be a composite element of corporate responsibility for good reason.”

Naturally open-minded

In the course of her professional and private development, time and again Pohl has been able to take on new responsibilities and make new contacts across the globe. Here, she profits from her natural open-mindedness that she was literally born with; when he was just 20, her father embarked on a three-year journey

around the world on his bicycle that took him to Australia, during which time he met his later wife – who came from Amsterdam. “We’re a very polyglot family, spread out across Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Morocco and Suriname,” Pohl states. “I developed a great interest in other cultures very early on, as I was in constant contact with them at home. I’m always open to and interested in the new people I meet. Language and a sense of diversity are the key to good relations, both in your job and in your private life. My parents certainly opened several doors for me in this respect.”



Thanks to her multilingual family, Nicole Pohl from Dortmund – here at Lake PHOENIX in her home town – was literally born with an open-minded, cosmopolitan outlook.