

# Sustainability@Commerzbank

Corporate Responsibility Newsletter

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## Just "green" finance? Or should it be "sustainable" finance?

Everyone in the banking industry is talking about green finance these days. For many people, this refers mainly to financial products that take ecological aspects into consideration. In the UN Environment Programme's Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), green finance is a general term for financial products and services that make a positive ecological contribution, meaning that the ecological harm is outweighed by the benefits.

In Commerzbank, we broaden this focus to include a social component, and therefore prefer to use the term "sustainable finance". For us this refers to all forms of financial services that help to improve the impact of a productive real economy on the environment and society in a positive way.

Commerzbank has been very active for a long time, for example with more than 25 years experience in the financing of renewable energy projects. Since 2003 it has maintained a dedicated competency centre and is thus one of the major providers of financing in that area. Moreover, Commerzbank offers advice and financing solutions to small and medium-sized enterprises in the area of energy efficiency in cooperation with experts from the TÜV standards organisation.

To guide Commerzbank's strategic development in these areas, the Bank has established the Sustainable Finance Committee. This is a contribution towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the targets of the German Climate Action Plan and the Paris Agreement. As a first step, the committee is working to network the Bank's various business segments, which all make important contributions to the development of sustainable finance: Corporate Banking product units, for example, are active in such areas as green bonds, renewable energy financing, energy

efficiency financing and sustainable asset management, while the retail banking segment offers sustainable mutual funds and KfW consulting, for example. And, finally, the reputational risk management function attempts to limit the environmental and social risks from financing activities. The communication is organised by the Bank's sustainability management function. Because it is quite clear: sustainable finance is a key area for the Bank's future that poses special challenges, but also offers growth opportunities for Commerzbank. With the committee, the Bank has laid the foundation for product innovations with clear ecological and social benefits. "Whether we put it all under the heading of 'green finance' or 'sustainable finance' is actually of secondary importance. What's important is to transparently show the kind of contribution the finance industry can make," says Rüdiger Senft, the Head of Corporate Responsibility.

### Further information:

- [Project Energiewende@Commerzbank](#)
- [Our Positions and Directives in the CR Portal](#)

### Imprint

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## In a nutshell: Sustainability initiatives at Commerzbank

### Oekom Research upgrades Commerzbank to 'Prime'

In January 2017 Commerzbank was upgraded to the highest quality classification by Oekom Research, a rating agency that has specialised in sustainable investments for more than 20 years: By granting Prime status, Oekom has recognised the activities of Commerzbank in that area. This places the Bank among the world's leading companies for the inclusion of ecological and social considerations as management criteria. A major factor behind the prime rating for Commerzbank is the Bank's coal policy, which came into effect in 2016. In addition, Oekom Research praised the high quality of the Bank's coordinated and intermeshing measures, the environmental management of banking operations and the efforts to promote a healthy work-life balance for the workforce.



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### Commerz Real steps up investment activity in renewable energy

At the end of January, Commerz Real purchased two wind farms in Brandenburg for 105 million euros for the CR Institutional Renewable Energies fund. A total of 15 wind farms in the Dahme-Spreewald district to the south-east of Berlin are owned by the fund, which has a target volume of approximately 300 million euros in assets. More wind farms will be added. The fund is intended mainly for institutional investors which continue to show strong demand for professionally managed facilities in the renewable energy sector. Along with wind power, Commerz Real also has several funds with investments in solar farms and is one of the largest asset managers in that area.

### Commerzbank Foundation sponsors cultural education

The Commerzbank Foundation is promoting education in the arts with four scholarships for artists and art education facilitators as well as a graduate award for the post-professional master's programme in cultural education. The goal of the new programme, established in cooperation with the Faculty of Education of Philipps-Universität Marburg and the ALTANA Cultural Foundation, is to give greater emphasis to cultural education at schools. The first graduates of the programme received their certificates in January. The second cohort of the post-professional master's programme began their studies in November 2016.

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### Rollout of ISO 50001 energy management system

Commerzbank AG has obtained ISO 50001 certification for its energy management system at all of its German locations through an external agency. With the energy management system introduced in 2016, Commerzbank is implementing the requirements of the German Law on Energy Services and other Energy Efficiency Measures (EDL-G). The aim of the Act is to protect against climate change by achieving a 20% reduction in primary energy consumption in the EU by 2020 as compared with the 2007 baseline level. At the same time, ISO 50001 certification was obtained for 12 subsidiaries integrated into the energy management system of Commerzbank AG. The energy management system complements the Bank's environmental management system, which received ISO 14001 certification in 2009. In this way, Commerzbank ensures the monitoring and ongoing development of all ecological and energy measures with the goal of further reducing its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

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### Christmas campaigns in Commerzbank

Again in 2016, Commerzbank employees in Hamburg, Göttingen, Berlin and Frankfurt lent a big helping hand in making Christmas a memorable time for children in need. The Christmas wishes of more than 830 children staying in facilities that care for children and refugees were fulfilled. The wish cards were snapped up eagerly by Commerzbank staff, and the wrapped presents were waiting under the tree on the big day. The Bank has carried out its Christmas wish campaign every year since 2007.

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### Commerzbank Foundation supports blind and visually impaired students

The Commerzbank Foundation is teaming up with the German Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Education and the Career World (DVBS) to sponsor the DVBS TriTeam Mentoring Programme for students. Under the programme, mentees in key phases of their degree courses are provided with an experienced mentor for a year: either students in higher semesters or working people with qualifications that match the mentee's field of study. Both partners are blind or visually impaired. If additional skills are needed, a team can request the support of an additional specialised coach. After the positive experience gained in the first two rounds, TriTeam is now getting underway for the third time and will again receive financial support from the Commerzbank Foundation.

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