



DANVA

THE WATER SECTOR AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

How will Danish water and wastewater companies meet the UN sustainable development goals?
An inspiration catalogue based on the experiences of Danish water and wastewater utilities

TABLE OF CONTENT

	3 Why?		7 Screening	
2 About the SDGs		4 Who?	6 Foster curiosity	8 Prioritisation and goals
1 The guiding vision		5 Stakeholders		9 Communication

How to use the
inspiration catalogue

Preface

PREFACE

[Back to
table of content](#)

The autumn of 2015 saw two important events that affected the Danish water sector.

The first one was on 25 September 2015 when the UN General Assembly adopted 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The goals must be met by all nations across the world by 2030. And, for the first time, water has its own goal, SDG 6: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all".

The water goal is ambitious, focusing on relevant and diverse issues such as safe drinking water, wastewater treatment, water efficiency and environmental protection.

Our activities in the water sector are important when it comes to meeting the water goal, but several other goals concerning, e.g., cities, the environment and energy, are linked to the water goal, and the activities of the water sector are a precondition for meeting other goals. Consequently, without clean drinking water and effective wastewater treatment, we cannot safeguard public health. Goals must be seen in context since they are mutually dependent.

The UN SDGs are given high priority by DANVA, and under the heading "Clean water for Denmark and the world", the global challenges are key to DANVA's strategy: "For and with its members, DANVA will make Denmark a global hub

for knowledge about water, climate solutions, resource efficiency and integrated management of the entire water cycle. DANVA will accelerate technological advances and access to new markets."

Joining forces with other organisations, companies and public authorities in the water sector. One of the pivotal principles is that utility companies are obligated to assume social responsibility. This involves preparing a plan for how the water sector can contribute to realising the UN SDGs.

The second important event took place on 5 October 2015 when DANVA and IWA Denmark won the right to host the major IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition 2020 in Copenhagen on 18–23 October. Then, we will account for the status of our SDG activities and show how Danish solutions and competencies can contribute to meeting the goals in Denmark and the rest of the world. And we will show how Danish water companies contribute to meeting the goals through their activities – every single day.

On that basis, DANVA wants to make the SDGs relevant and implementable for our members. Therefore, we have prepared an inspiration catalogue in cooperation with a background group consisting of a number of water companies. The inspiration catalogue builds on their specific experiences and demonstrates how we can learn from each other within the water sector.

Happy reading, and good luck working towards the SDGs.

Carl-Emil Larsen, Executive Director
DANVA

HOW TO USE THE INSPIRATION CATALOGUE

This inspiration catalogue aims to help water companies develop visions and specific efforts for their working with sustainable development goals (SDGs) by:

1. Specifying relevant steps in the implementation of the SDGs.
2. Sharing experiences about how some water companies approach the SDGs.

The inspiration catalogue is divided into nine themes, which treat different aspects of SDG activities from a water sector perspective.

Danish water companies cover a range of different disciplines, companies and corporate structures. They are big and small, located in the cities and in the country, but regardless of how they approach the SDGs, their efforts must contribute to supporting each company's strategy and contribute to solving the core tasks of the water companies.

Given the differences in water company size, disciplines and SDG experience, we chose not to prepare a cookbook with step-by-step instructions. Rather, we developed this inspiration catalogue, which contains clear guidelines on the order and relevant activities for integrating SDGs in daily activities and on developing company strategies in cooperation with the owners.

The inspiration catalogue can be considered as phases in a process. To some water companies, it will be relevant to go over the themes in the listed order, whereas others will benefit from seeking inspiration in just one or a few themes.

Nevertheless, every water company must decide at what level they wish to work towards the SDGs – what is the vision behind their efforts? And since everyone must first have an understanding of the SDGs and their mutual dependencies, we will start by stating the vision and introducing the SDGs before providing inspiration for specific activities.

STRUCTURE OF INSPIRATION CATALOGUE

- Preface
- How to use the inspiration catalogue
- 1. The guiding vision
- 2. About the sustainable development goals
- 3. Why work to advance the sustainable development goals?
- 4. Who in the organisation should advance sustainable development goals?
- 5. Who are the key stakeholders?
- 6. Foster curiosity
- 7. Screening – understand the sustainable development goals
- 8. Prioritisation and goals
- 9. Communication

All figures come with a magnifier.
Click it to view them in a larger version.

The figures are also available at the back of the
inspiration catalogue in larger, printable versions.



Click figure
to see larger
version

The inspiration catalogue includes brief introductions to each theme. The text contains links to additional information. Some texts were written for this catalogue, elaborating on each theme while focusing on the water sector and our challenges, and some are references to official reports and documents on the SDGs. This is followed by cases from water companies, which describe their approaches.

You can choose to just read the introductory texts to find assistance for your SDG activities and fill in any relevant knowledge gaps. You can read the entire catalogue or use the elements that make the most sense to your company.

In order to assess progress towards fulfilment of the SDGs, it is useful to define targets that you can monitor. DANVA's benchmarking is a good tool for measuring progress in this process. Work in this regards started in 2018 by gaining an overview of what goals the DANVA members are working on and how. This will allow us to include specific results for selected SDGs in the long term.

This inspiration catalogue was developed by DANVA's secretariat in cooperation with consultants Falko Nørr and John Hird. DANVA set up a task force which monitored the project and contributed many useful comments and experiences. The task force consisted of representatives of Aarhus Vand, Trefor Vand, VCS Denmark, Aalborg Vandkoncern, Kalundborg Forsyning, Fredericia Spildevand og Energi as well as Herning Vand. Furthermore, Skanderborg Forsyning and AquaDjurs also contributed cases describing various elements of their work towards the SDGs. COWI also contributed a case based on experiences from HOFOR, NOVAFOS and FORS.

After the task force's discussing and studying the many good examples, it is clear that implementing the UN SDGs creates value for both large and small water companies across Denmark.

[Back to
table of content](#)



1 VISION GUIDING WATER COMPANIES' SDG ACTIVITIES

[Back to table of content](#)

Danish water companies are regulated by the Danish Water Sector Act. They must contribute to efficient operations, securing the lowest possible, stable prices for consumers, and they must support innovation, as well as demonstration and export of water technology solutions. Water companies must contribute to water and wastewater services of high health and environmental quality that consider supply reliability, the climate and nature.

This implies that water companies must look beyond their daily supply activities. As regards innovation, export, climate and nature, there is an evident, close link to the issues that are included in the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Danish water companies are ambitious in their daily operations, and those who are addressing the UN SDGs are ambitious in their efforts, setting visionary objectives for their work.

One of the visions behind this project was to inspire water companies to make vital contributions to fulfilling the SDGs that they consider most important to their work, both operationally in terms of daily activities, and tactically and strategically in terms of what is most expedient and what yields the best results.

Therefore, we set out a vision for the SDGs in water company activities that you can be inspired by.

Next, water companies can set out their own vision in relation to their work on the SDGs. AquaDjurs did so through its vision: "Everyone has access to clean water – in the tap and in the sea."

In the short term, the project's mission is to inspire the water companies to deal with the SDGs and integrate them in their daily activities.

"The vision for this project is to inspire Danish water and wastewater companies to ensure that, by 2030, they have made vital contributions to fulfilling the SDGs that are relevant to their efforts, strategically and operationally through daily operations"

"The mission for this project is to ensure that, by 2022, all Danish water and wastewater companies know and integrate SDGs in their strategic and operational activities – every time they perform a task"

**Read about
how AquaDjurs uses
the SDGs in its
strategy and vision.**

2 ABOUT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

[Back to table of content](#)

A new feature is that the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN General Assembly must be met by all countries by 2030. They are no longer just relevant to developing countries. The discussion about how the SDGs can leverage change is everybody's business.

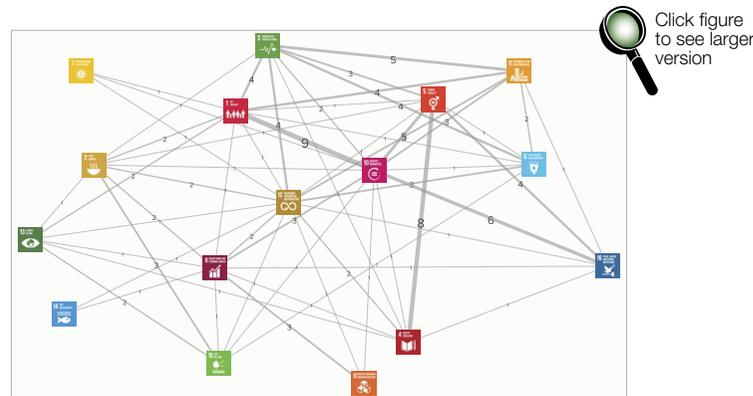
The SDGs focus not only on economy and growth, but also on well-being, the environment, peace and safety. And this is the context in which we should see the new water goal, which does not focus merely on water supply and sanitation, but also includes wastewater treatment, water efficiency, protection of water resources and the environment as well as better water management.

MUTUAL DEPENDENCIES

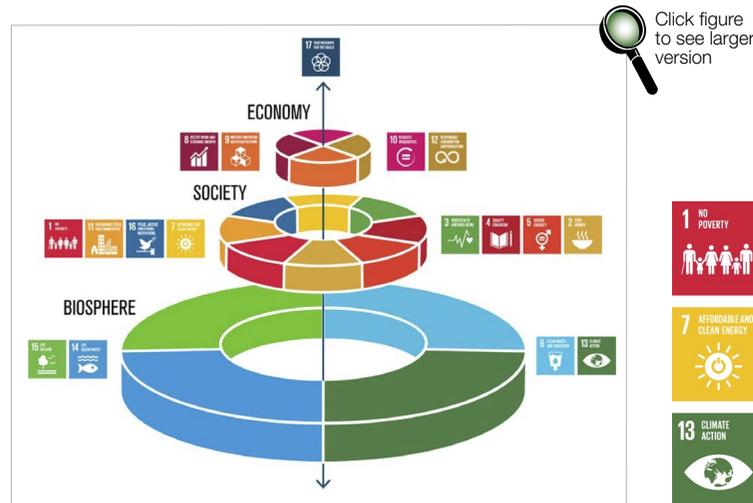
Each year, for its summit in Davos, the World Economic Forum (WEF) lists the largest global risks.

In recent years, water has climbed the list of global risks. WEF also prepares an overview of how the risk elements are connected. The overview shows clear links between food crises, water crises, extreme weather and climate change.

In the same way that the major global challenges are connected, so are the solutions – the SDGs. There is no isolated approach to meeting an SDG: You have to consider it in the context of the other goals.



This model by Kumu – <https://kumu.io/> shows the links and relations between the SDGs and demonstrates their mutual dependencies.



This model by Stockholm Resilience Center illustrates the links between the three sustainability elements: Planet, people and prosperity, where planet – biosphere – is the foundation that all other elements are based on. <http://www.stockholmresilience.org>



The 17 SDGs.

Water goal – SDG 6

Goal 6: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all"

The water goal consists of six targets and two so-called implementation mechanisms that go beyond water supply and sanitation by including areas such as wastewater treatment, water efficiency and environmental protection.

DANVA has studied the water goal, describing the status of fulfilment in Denmark and the goal's relevance to Danish water companies.

[See the table here](#)

As a country, Denmark meets the water goal to a large extent, but it is important to make sure that we will also have sufficient, clean groundwater at our disposal in the future and that we clean our wastewater as efficiently as possible going forward.

Water companies may find it useful to go over the different targets to see how they can use them as leverage to improve their efforts, to the benefit of customers and the environment.

THE WATER SECTOR AND THE OTHER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Looking at the SDGs as a whole, it is clear that the efforts made by the water sector are essential to fulfilling many of the other SDGs.

Which SDGs are most relevant depends on the tasks of the specific water company. We will get back to that later in the inspiration catalogue.

From a global perspective, in addition to the water goal, other SDGs obviously depend on the water sector in a broad sense:

Most obvious goals

Torkil Jønych-Clausen, International Water Advisor

"It's important to stress the link between the SDGs. The 17 goals and the 169 derived targets are mutually dependent, and fulfilment of the vast majority depends solely on the fulfilment of other goals. Yet, the 17 goals appear to be 17 silos prepared by different industries and groups without dialogue with the others, and without mutual references.

Goal 6 presumes fulfilment of a series of other goals, while being a precondition for the fulfilment of the majority of the other goals. For instance, poverty and health strongly depend on fulfilment of the basic water targets SDG 6.1 and SDG 6.2 about drinking water and sanitation.

A very topical example

More than 80 per cent of ocean pollution (and more than 90 per cent of all plastic) comes from land-based activities. However, the plans and targets for ocean target SDG 14.1, which concerns land-based activities, and water target SDG 6.3 about water quality and wastewater are not coordinated, and their indicators are mutually blind. In this matter, we could contribute Danish experiences to the international pool of knowledge, but that is not the case today, regrettably"

WHO IS PURSUING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

Across the world, an increasing number of national and international organisations and companies incorporate the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in their work.

Here is a list of and further information about organisations working to advance the SDGs.

Water companies may be inspired by the activities and methods developed by municipalities and companies.

All nations must report their progress towards each SDG to the UN, which carries out annual reviews of the goals. Denmark prepared a so-called Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2017. It is available here:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>

Each year, the UN highlights a number of themes. In 2018, it was SDG 6 (water), 7 (energy), 11 (cities), 12 (sustainable production), 15 (biodiversity on land) and, finally, SDG 17 on partnerships:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

In Denmark, the SDGs are anchored nationally with the Danish Ministry of Finance, which has prepared a national action plan:

<https://www.verdensmaalene.dk>

The EU Commission has prepared a plan for follow-up and implementation on a European level, obligate itself to implementing the SDGs in external and internal policies alike:

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/22_en

There is no national requirement to prepare local action plans, but in the Municipal Agreement for 2018 and 2019, the Danish Government and Local Government Denmark (KL) set the stage for cooperating on fulfilment of the UN SDGs, among other things by continuously integrating sustainable development in political initiatives and building partnerships across society to meet the SDGs. The parties encourage other actors to support the fulfilment of the SDGs.

With that in mind, the City of Copenhagen prepared a plan for implementation of the SDGs:

<https://www.kk.dk>

Many companies work strategically to advance the SDGs. With its project "From philanthropy to business", the Confederation of Danish Industry draws attention to the SDGs in a project that aims to integrate sustainability in companies' production and value chains in order to promote Danish export:

<https://www.danskindustri.dk/sdg/>

[Back to
table of content](#)



3 WHY WORK TO ADVANCE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

[Back to table of content](#)

Since 2015, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) have received increasing attention across businesses and industries. Many companies are now working to advance the SDGs as an integral part of their sustainability efforts. For instance, major Danish companies such as Carlsberg and Novozymes have been pioneers in terms of including sustainability and SDGs in their strategies, on the basis of the UN Global Compact. Their efforts to prioritise based on materiality could be relevant to water companies. Read more about this in the sections on "Screening – understand the sustainable development goals" and "Prioritisation and goals".

Companies in the water sector, like Grundfos, also work to advance SDGs as an integral part of their strategy.

The below quote from Kirsten Brosbøl offers part of the answer to one of the first questions in this project:

WHY SHOULD WATER COMPANIES IMPLEMENT THE SDGS?

Because:

- › Water is vital to fulfilling many other targets. According to Danish expert Torkil Jønch Clausen, as many as 59 of the targets strongly depend on the water goal.
- › The world expects us to commit to responsible action. Danish legislation even states that water utilities must care for the climate and nature and promote the export of water technology solutions.
- › Each water utility can make a difference to the overall fulfilment of the SDGs, through its daily activities.
- › Including SDGs in strategic activities creates value for companies, customers and the environment. We will get back to this in the following sections.

Cases

Kenth Hviid Nielsen, Grundfos

"In Denmark, we are used to having enough water for everyone, but there are still vast challenges across the world. Grundfos manufactures pumps and develops water solutions for the world, and it is important to us to work towards solving the many types of challenges the world is facing, such as overpopulation, urbanisation, flooding and pollution, to mention a few.

We focus on SDGs 6 and 13 in particular. Clean water and sanitation as well as climate action, which are two highly interconnected goals. We develop energy-efficient solutions so we help lower global power consumption every single day. And we believe that it is important to develop solutions in partnerships"

Kirsten Brosbøl, member of Parliament and Head of the Danish Parliament's Interpolitical Network for the UN SDGs

"There is a straight line from the water companies' daily operations, over our joint water vision to what we want to achieve by the UN SDGs.

We know that our water resources will be under massive pressure in the coming years, and the public will increasingly expect water companies to pitch in to find solutions to those challenges.

At the same time, the SDGs are a strong communicative platform for sharing with the world what you are doing and how you are performing your core tasks, meaning that it will be of high value to develop local objectives for advancing the SDGs"

4 WHO IN THE ORGANISATION SHOULD ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

[Back to table of content](#)

Activities involving sustainable development goals (SDGs) can take many shapes and take place at many organisational levels. Consequently, it is a good idea to decide early on who in the organisation will work to advance SDGs, in what way, to what extent and for how long.

It is a matter of organising, anchoring and formalising work – meaning that it is about deciding how many resources you want to dedicate to advancing the SDGs.

Some water companies may find it most useful to anchor work on SDGs with the executive board, whereas others may find it useful to establish an interdisciplinary project team or appoint a project manager/coordinator to work across the entire organisation.

Cases



5 WHO ARE THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS?

[Back to
table of content](#)

One of the first steps when working with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is to gain an overview of the different stakeholders – both external and internal – that will play a role in the activities. Naturally, the stakeholders may differ significantly. Some may need to be involved directly, whereas others just need to be briefed. Many water companies have already prepared stakeholder analyses that can be used as starting point.

It would be natural for the board to become engaged in and seek inspiration from national and international forums and the subsequent knowledge-sharing and potential operationalisation in the company, ensuring that work to advance the SDGs becomes a natural

part of the organisational culture and relevant to daily activities on all levels.

The individual water company may have a large number of stakeholders, making it all the more important to gain an overview and systematise activities. It may be useful to try to describe each stakeholder's role in terms of the work of advancing SDGs today and in the future. You can also prepare a plan for how to work, involve and brief each stakeholder. In that connection, it is obvious to incorporate stakeholders in various types of partnerships since SDG 17 treats partnerships specifically. Focus should be on creating value for the water company and the specific stakeholder.

Furthermore, each water company could benefit from deciding to what extent it wants to work to promote or perhaps even assume responsibility for selected stakeholders contributing to realising the SDGs. For instance, do you want to stipulate requirements for suppliers or change the behaviour of pupils in terms of the SDGs?

Cases



6 FOSTER CURIOSITY

[Back to table of content](#)

Often, water companies benefit from fostering curiosity about the sustainable development goals (SDGs) among selected stakeholders. That involves raising awareness about the SDGs and getting selected stakeholders to ask questions, wonder, think and search for additional knowledge. Potentially a difficult task in the daily routines where many organisations, companies, colleagues etc. are constantly fighting for our attention. Or where daily operations take up all our time.

To many stakeholders, the SDGs are a complex theme that they may have limited knowledge of. Therefore,

they do not have to be introduced to all aspects about the SDGs at once. We need to foster curiosity with them.

This can be achieved in different ways, of course: through events, presentations at employee events, newsletters, lectures, layout of rooms etc.

Cases



7 SCREENING – UNDERSTAND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

[Back to table of content](#)

The 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) are mutually dependent. They form a complex, yet coherent framework for the global development towards 2030. Each water utility needs to gain solid understanding of this framework. This understanding can be put to use – combined with, e.g., the water company's visions and strategies as well as knowledge about stakeholders – when screening SDGs. In this way, the water company ensures that it works towards the most relevant SDG(s).

Screening of SDGs is typically done based on one of these general principles:

- 1.** Focus is on areas that the water company is already working on. Or areas within which the company believes it has special competencies or conditions. Where do the water companies' current activities contribute to fulfilling the SDGs?
- 2.** Focus is on applying the SDGs as a source of inspiration for identifying brand new areas to work in. For a while, the water company does not focus on existing efforts that affect the SDGs.

Regardless which principle is used, it is vital that the water company works on SDGs that truly affect the water company – forming a natural part of its right to exist.

The global context and the interdependency of the goals are important, but, using a CSR concept, significance is central. What goals matter to my water company, our strategic planning and our daily work? Focusing on significance means choosing SDGs that have a significant impact on activities and value creation.



WHICH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ARE RELEVANT TO WATER COMPANIES?

Often, the below order is suggested for assessing when a sustainable development goal (SDG) is relevant:

1. Understand the goals
2. Prioritise
3. Define objectives
4. Communicate

The order is very similar to the SDG Compass, which is a guide for businesses on how to undertake activities relating to the SDGs. Read more information about the SDG Compass here: <https://di.dk/marked/csr/fns-verdensm%C3%A5l/sdg-kompasset/pages/default.aspx>

To understand the goals, DANVA recommends that you go over them to analyse their relevance. This can be done in two ways:

- a. You can go over all goals and targets. That ensures a high degree of anchorage and awareness about the goal interdependencies with all those involved, although it is time-consuming. All the goals and targets are available here: <https://www.verdensmaalene.dk/delm%C3%A5l-og-indikatorer>
- b. You can build on DANVA's review of the goals. It includes the goals that we believe to be relevant to all water companies. The result is a list of 13 goals and 29 targets that we call "SDGs and water company activities".

[Check out the list here](#)

This list is a good starting point, but other areas may be relevant to individual companies:

- › The list is based on companies that work in the fields of water and wastewater. If, for instance, waste is part of your activities, other targets may be relevant.
- › If you work exclusively with either water or wastewater, you can start by omitting a number of goals.

The list does not include all areas that are important to all parts of the water sector. To put an end to world hunger, overall management of water resources is essential if we want to secure sufficient water for production purposes. However, in Denmark, this is not the responsibility of water companies, so the hunger goal may not be included.

Also, several targets are more or less identical. In those cases, we have only included the target that is most relevant to the water sector.

You can use this check list to initiate dialogue with those who will be involved in SDG activities in the specific company: At executive board level, in a task force, at project management level or another setup, according to the company's preferences. In that forum, you can discuss goals and targets, their importance and how to address each goal.

Using the check list as reference, you can tick off the goals you are working on, and externally highlight the SDGs and communicate the company's efforts and activities that are relevant in order to fulfil specific SDGs.

Even though the SDGs are placed at the top of the agenda, only few companies are able to prioritise 28 targets strategically and operationally, so the next step is to prioritise efforts and define objectives for your work.

For that, the check list is also a good starting point for dialogue with the owners about the work before you prioritise joint efforts.

Here are a couple of examples of how some companies have gone about screening the goals.

[Case Skanderborg](#)

[Other cases](#)

8 PRIORITISATION AND GOALS

[Back to table of content](#)

Once you have reviewed the SDGs – all or a selection – using the check list in this inspiration catalogue, you have an overview of why the SDGs are relevant to water companies, and you start to see which goals are important to the individual water company.

It is then time to prioritise the goals that you want to pursue strategically and operationally.

The companies that have prioritised goals so far have used different approaches. For instance, you can prioritise based on the company's core tasks, link to strategy and importance to value creation in the company.

The below table shows the distribution of the SDGs based on whether they are important to the core tasks of the company, or whether they are fully dependant on the company's activities. The fundamental task of a water company is to secure clean water, but on the other hand, you cannot fulfil goals on health or

well-being without access to clean water. A treatment plant is to provide high-quality cleaning of wastewater, but Life below water targets cannot be fulfilled without cleaning of wastewater.

Next to these two categories are a number of goals to which water companies contribute positively. These include quality education: A lot of companies implement educational programmes that teach citizens to, e.g., not throw items into the toilet. That saves the company operational costs. Or sustainable energy: Companies save money and contribute to the municipal climate targets. They also include goals that are related to how water companies organise their activities. For instance, good working environment, which benefits employees and contributes positively to a healthy company economy.

This division may support prioritisation and form the basis for dialogue with the owners.

Click figure to see larger version

Sustainable development goals and the water sector								
Core tasks of water companies			Goals depending on water companies			New tasks and other relevant goals		
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	14 LIFE BELOW WATER	4 QUALITY EDUCATION	5 GENDER EQUALITY	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	13 CLIMATE ACTION	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
			15 LIFE ON LAND	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION		



LINK TO OWNERS' STRATEGY AND OWN STRATEGY

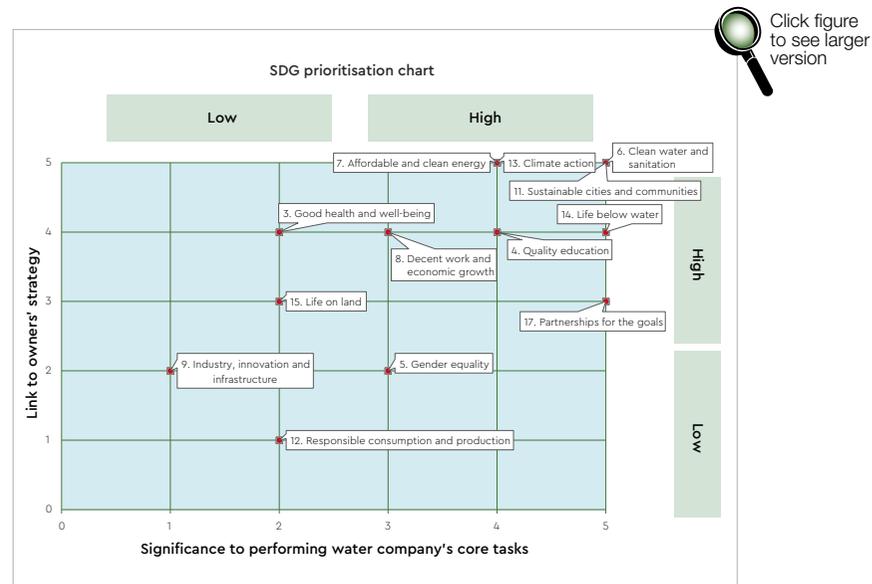
The starting point for prioritising is made up by the owners' – usually the municipality – strategy and expectations regarding results. They typically stipulate requirements for priorities, service level and development activities. For instance, the City of Copenhagen aims to be CO₂ neutral by 2025. That makes demands on utility companies to contribute to meeting this goal and thereby working on climate action (SDG 13) and affordable and clean energy (SDG 7). Another utility company discharges to vulnerable recipients, so wastewater treatment must be prioritised in order to achieve the quality required in terms of SDG 14, Life below water

In cooperation with the task force, DANVA prepared a chart to assist in prioritisation. The model is fictional, i.e. not prepared by a specific utility company. You can rate the sustainable development goals (SDGs) from the check list based on their relevance to the company and the owners.

The goals that are rated high in both parameters form the natural basis for more detailed prioritisation and selection of targets and objectives for activities. The chart can be used when starting dialogue with owners, partners, customers and other stakeholders. You can also use it as basis for a workshop with the employees that will work to pursue the SDGs. The chart is available with DANVA.

Naturally, you can choose other parameters and, e.g., make your starting point SDGs where the company is facing challenges in terms of meeting the targets.

Experience shows that there is no one answer to how many goals provide the best result, and our cases show very different numbers. Depending on local conditions and how you work with the goals, SDG 2 is just as correct as SDG 17.



[Back to table of content](#)



LINK TO VALUE CREATION AND BOTTOM LINE

Working with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) can be used to communicate in what ways the water company's efforts contribute to them. But you can also use the SDGs to become more efficient and improve service levels, creating better results to the benefit of customers and the local community. For instance, you can use SDG 13 as basis for striving for more energy-efficient solutions in the company's operations. Or, if work accidents is a concern, it would be useful to prioritise target 8.8 on working environment, since sickness leave is very expensive in the long term.

Experience from the many companies, e.g. Novozymes, indicates that SDGs are more successfully anchored in activities in the long term, if you build on the activities and goals that contribute to results as regards value creation and better bottom line for the company. Since water companies do not generate a profit by selling goods, the bottom line must be given a broader definition and measured against what activities contribute to, e.g.:

- > Efficient solutions and lower prices
- > Improved environmental performance
- > Local value creation, e.g. through local partnerships, R&D projects or development of solutions in cooperation with customers. Examples are available in two analyses that DANVA had prepared by, respectively, PLUSS and DAMVAD. The examples are available at www.danva.dk

With these parameters, the prioritisation chart can also be used for selecting the SDGs that contribute to value creation. And you can compare the different charts to select the SDGs that generate the best results, based on several criteria.

OBJECTIVES

Once you have prioritised your efforts and selected the most relevant goals, you can move on to define objectives for what you want to achieve by pursuing the SDGs. You can do that at several levels. One objective could be to:

- > Work on the SDGs for a period of time.
- > Communicate the water company's efforts in the context of the SDGs.
- > Integrate them in your strategy by a specific date.
- > Ensure that selected stakeholders understand the importance of working on the SDGs

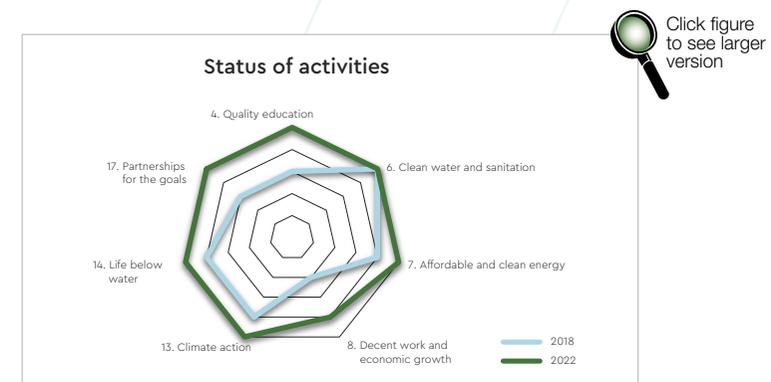
At a more general level, you can set objectives for better operations, service level and efficient solutions for all company activities. Your starting point could be the indicators linked to each SDG, or the list "SDGs and water company activities", which details the targets and suggestions for how to break down each target and set objectives to meet in the short or long term, within five years or by 2030.

[Check out the list here](#)

One example comes from Aarhus Vand's company plan for 2018. The water supply company's climate action target is that the energy produced at Aarhus Vand's treatment plant in 2030 must cover 100 per cent of the company's energy consumption for electricity and heat, and for 2018 the target was 55 per cent. In this way, you can work on specific objectives to reach global goals.

Setting specific targets, it is useful to be able to document progress regularly. A simple spider web can help you. You can score the prioritised targets based on status and desired goal, e.g. by using the values 1-5, 1 being the baseline and 5 being 100 per cent goal fulfilment. The illustration below shows a fictional example.

This framework allows you to come close to fulfilling the proposed vision stated in chapter 1: That Danish water and wastewater companies by 2030 have made vital contributions to fulfilling the SDGs that are relevant to their efforts, tactically and strategically, and operationally through daily operations.



Case Aarhus

Case Roskilde

9 COMMUNICATION

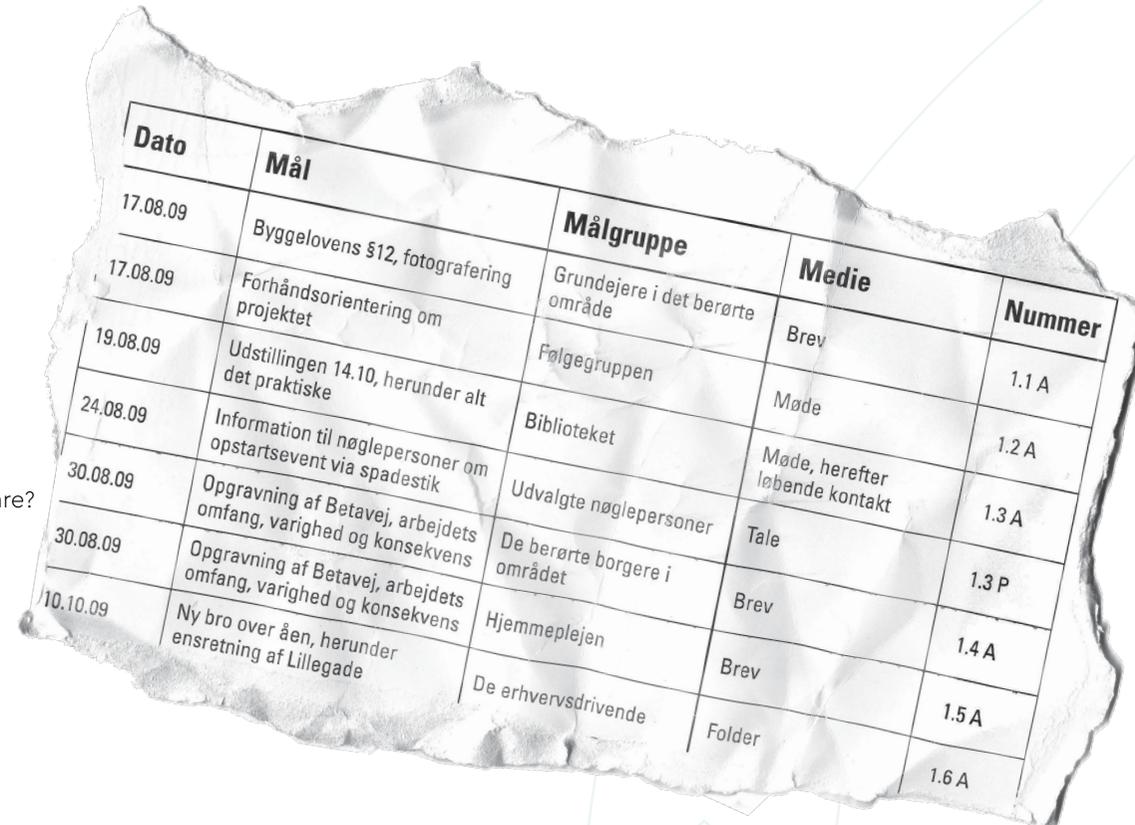
[Back to table of content](#)

Regardless of how water companies choose to pursue the sustainable development goals (SDGs), well-planned communication efforts play a key role both before and after activities. Therefore, it is useful to prepare an internal and an external communication plan that builds on the water company's general efforts in terms of the SDGs.

When preparing a communication plan, you can choose to take the below overall approach:

1. Target audiences (stakeholders) – who do we want to communicate with?
2. Messages by target audience – what do we want to communicate?
3. Communication goals – what do we want to achieve by communicating?
4. Communication tools – what specific tools (media) do we want to use?
5. Time schedule – when do we communicate? When do we have something to share?
6. Sender – who is behind the communication?
7. Measurement of effect – are we achieving what we want by our communication?

[Click here for an example of the communication process](#)



Dato	Mål	Målgruppe	Medie	Nummer
17.08.09	Byggelovens §12, fotografering	Grundejere i det berørte område	Brev	1.1 A
17.08.09	Forhåndsorientering om projektet	Følgegruppen	Møde	1.2 A
19.08.09	Udstillingen 14.10, herunder alt det praktiske	Biblioteket	Møde, herefter løbende kontakt	1.3 A
24.08.09	Information til nøglepersoner om opstartsevent via spadestik	Udvalgte nøglepersoner	Tale	1.3 P
30.08.09	Opgravning af Betavej, arbejdets omfang, varighed og konsekvens	De berørte borgere i området	Brev	1.4 A
30.08.09	Opgravning af Betavej, arbejdets omfang, varighed og konsekvens	Hjemmeplejen	Brev	1.5 A
10.10.09	Ny bro over åen, herunder ensretning af Lillegade	De erhvervsdrivende	Folder	1.6 A



AQUADJURS'S VISION AND STRATEGY START WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

To AquaDjurs, the work of advancing the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) began when General Manager Palle Lyngsø Mikkelsen attended a growth camp in 2015 – “Better bottom line with CSR”, organised by the Central Denmark Region.

“We were asked why we go to work, why we exist? And since we were also looking at how you link the SDGs and CSR to our daily work, the answer was actually pretty straightforward: We go to work to make sure that the local community has clean water in taps and clean water to bathe in – or, as we later put it: Everyone has access to clean water – in the tap and in the sea,” said Palle Lyngsø Mikkelsen in 2018.

And that made it quite simple for AquaDjurs to integrate the SDGs in its vision, mission and strategy, and today AquaDjurs’s vision is based on SDGs 6 and 14 – the water goal and the ocean goal, simply put. The project started out with several goals. Naturally, the company also works with climate, health, energy and cities, but to keep it simple and practical to work with and to ensure a link to the company’s vision, these two goals were prioritised. And using SDGs 6 and 14, the company applies the customers’ perspective: What can they do differently and better locally, and how can they change daily operations?

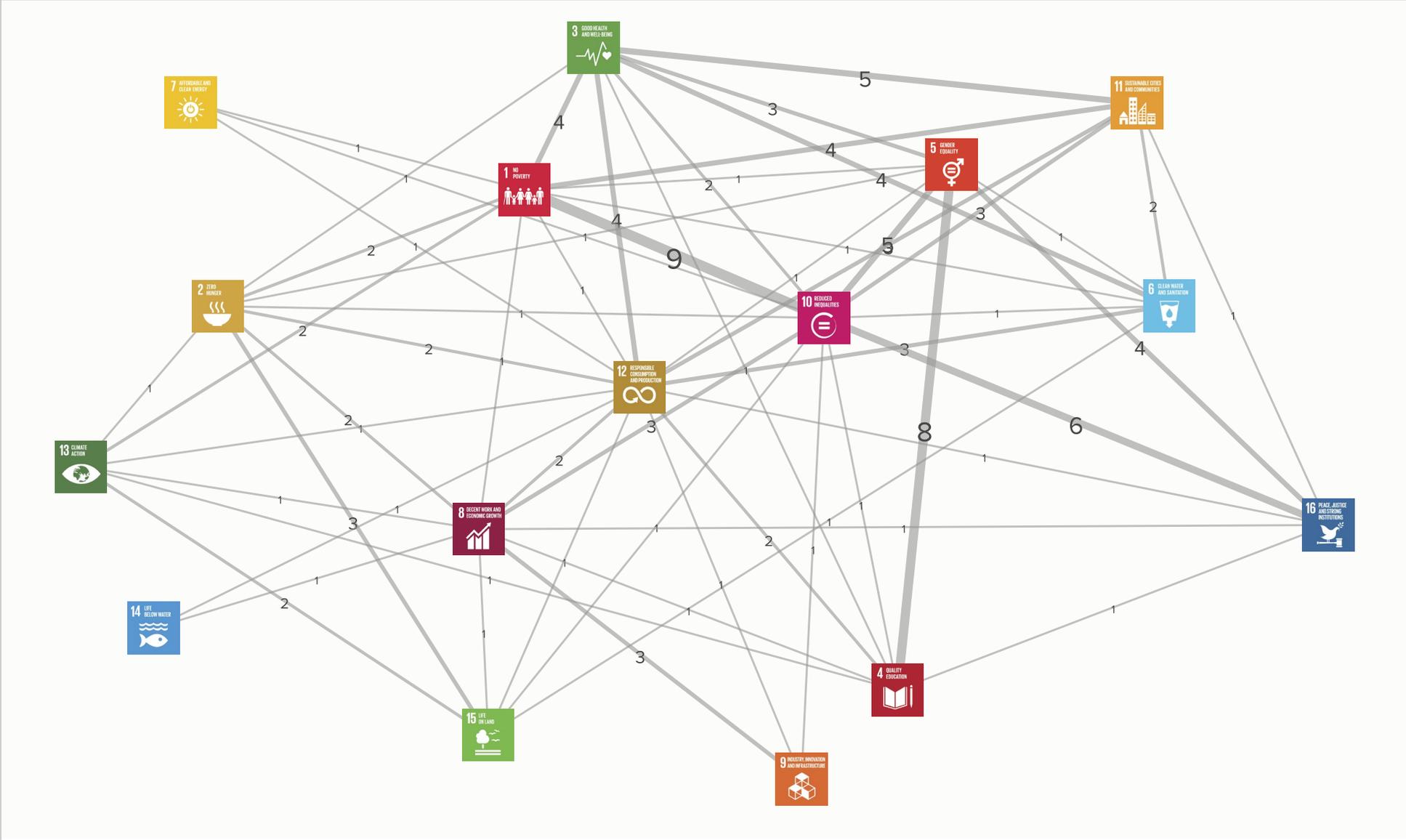
AquaDjurs employs a rolling four-year strategy plan, which has included a sub-theme on the SDGs since 2017. The strategy plan is included as a theme on the

annual general assembly, securing backing from the board and the owners to integrate the SDGs in daily activities.

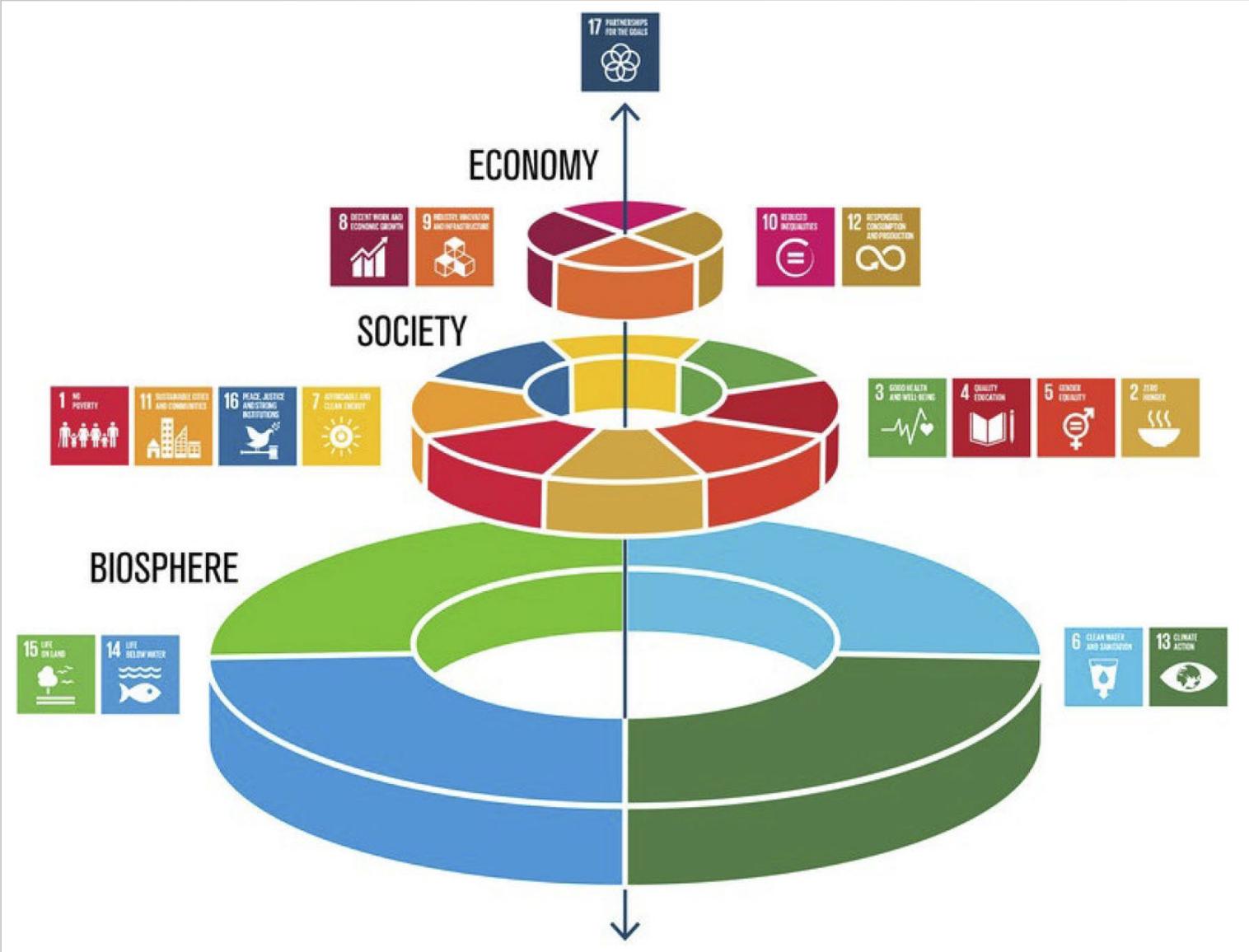
Employees are also involved in the efforts. Workshops for all employees were organised to ensure anchorage in daily work and, not least, to ensure understanding of the goals and their importance to AquaDjurs, thereby ensuring a common thread between CRS, the SDGs and the company vision and strategy.

When asked how this affected daily activities, Palle Lyngsø Mikkelsen explained: *“Working to pursue the SDGs was a strategic choice for us, our board and our surroundings. It shows that we focus on our social responsibility and we are very aware of that in our daily tasks.”*

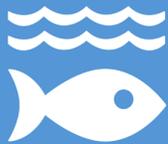
LINKS AND RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



LINKS BETWEEN THE THREE SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENTS: PLANET, PEOPLE AND PROSPERITY



THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

<p>1 NO POVERTY</p> 	<p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p> 	<p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p> 	<p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p> 	<p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p> 	<p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p> 
<p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p> 	<p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> 	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 	<p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 	<p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 	<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 
<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	<p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p> 	<p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p> 	<p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> 	<p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> 	 <p>THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development</p>

THE WATER GOAL AND THE DANISH WATER COMPANIES

[Click back](#)

Water target	Status	Relevance to water companies
6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.	Is implemented in practice in Denmark.	Ensure groundwater protection to allow us to continue to supply clean drinking water without pesticides at affordable prices.
6.2 Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all.	Is implemented in practice in Denmark.	Maintain efficiency and low prices for households.
6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.	Is implemented through national legislation, water plans and the Water Framework Directive. The Danish sewage system is extensive, but some places in the open country may experience problems. Recycling of water in industrial processes can be improved.	The use of pesticides and fertilizers, the cancellation of border zones etc. may put water quality and groundwater under pressure. Focus may be placed on recycling of water and using water of different qualities, e.g. for industrial cleaning. Water companies may help manage and supply this.
6.4 Substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors.	In general, Denmark boasts high water efficiency and little loss, but within the industrial sector, there is room for improving both water and energy efficiency.	Knowledge about our water resources is important in order to use them efficiently. Sharing knowledge about efficiency, recycling, energy and climate adaptation as regards water for export and in development aid. Continual information to the Danish public about water savings. Contribute to innovation projects about water-efficient solutions in the utility business. Contribute to disseminating Danish solutions and experiences – administrative and technological – to achieve water savings abroad.
6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.	Is handled through the Water Framework Directive, among other things. Low Danish awareness of international catchment areas in Denmark since we only have one in South Jutland, which is subject to a cooperation agreement.	Need to focus on the management of water in catchment areas, including in connection with climate-adaptation measures. The water councils may play a relevant role.
6.6 Protect and restore water-related ecosystems.	Better wastewater treatment has resulted in considerable progress for water-related ecosystems. There continues to be issues involving discharge of nitrogen and pesticides from agriculture.	Pesticides, fertilizer, overflow, and the lack of protection of wells can pose a threat to the drinking water and ecosystems. Maintenance of facilities and wells must be ensured to prevent any risk of groundwater contamination.
Implementation mechanisms:		
6.a Expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities.	-	Disseminate Danish solutions and Danish technologies across the world. This should be seen in the context of the Danish Water Vision 2025 and the involvement of water companies in promoting exports www.vandvision.dk
6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.	There are rules and a wealth of experiences regarding public involvement in water management and climate-adaptation solutions. However, there is room for improvement.	Water companies can collect and share experiences with public involvement locally. This could be on a national and international level.

EXAMPLES OF LINKS BETWEEN WATER AND OTHER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



It is not possible to put an end to poverty without securing water for production, hygiene and protection against water-related catastrophes.



Ending hunger is linked to sustainable food production. This is not possible without sustainable management of water resources and clean and sufficient water for both flora and fauna.



Every day, almost 1,000 children under the age of five die from diarrhoea due to lack of clean water, and many other diseases could be cured by means of sufficient and clean water and better sanitation. Even in our part of the world, we have to be aware of the risk of diseases when handling water above ground level in climate-adaptation projects and in connection with flooding.



SDG 7 concerns renewable energy and energy efficiency, in which energy-efficient solutions and energy production at treatment plants play a role. International partnerships, such as those involving Aarhus Vand, contribute to fulfilling SDG 7 in Denmark and abroad.



The city goal includes, among other things, sustainable urban development, which involves the local population and access to green areas in cities – elements that many water companies work on in connection with climate adaptation.



Climate action is highly linked to better management of water resources, not least in cities. In this regard, countries will be measured on whether they have plans in place for integrated climate adaptation and discharge reduction. Once again, the energy production and efficiency of water companies affect the national goals. This SDG also includes targets on support to climate action in developing countries where water companies can contribute important knowledge.



The SDG on better life below water cannot be fulfilled without treatment plants making significant efforts to clean domestic and industrial wastewater.



The partnership goal looks at technology transfer between countries and local, regional and global partnerships where water companies can play a role in connection with knowledge sharing.

Last, but not least, several other goals can be relevant if you apply a different perspective on the goals. In particular, they are relevant to developing countries where, e.g., better education and gender equality are also linked to better water and sanitation. Thereby, children do not spend time being sick instead of going to school, and girls do not spend days getting water instead of attending school.

The 17 SDGs have 169 targets and one to three indicators for each target that you use to measure efforts.

All goals, targets and indicators are available here: <https://www.verdensmaalene.dk/delm%C3%A5l-og-indikatorer>



PURSUING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IS OBVIOUS

To VCS Denmark, it is an obvious and natural decision to pursue the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in a focussed manner, since social responsibility, sustainability and value creation in relation to the surrounding society are already key components of the company's DNA. VCS Denmark uses the SDGs both as a source of inspiration and to set the direction for how the company best optimises its efforts to contribute to sustainable development of society – locally and internationally.

VCS Denmark pursues the SDGs based on Odense Municipality's owner policy, which, e.g., states: "Odense Municipality wants to ensure sustainability and social responsibility...".

FOCUS ON SDGS

Herning Vand is dedicated to advancing the SDGs, for instance by participating in the project by the Danish Confederation of Industry "From philanthropy to business".

Working on the SDGs gives Herning Vand a unique possibility to create a strong, strategic direction for the company's efforts in the period 2020–2030. Herning Vand cannot save the world, but by focusing on and continuously developing its current strengths, Herning Vand can act as inspiration to others while strengthening relations to customers and partners through its motto "More for less" – in a market that is seeing an ever increasing demand for sustainable solutions.

One of the sources of inspiration for Herning Vand's work on the SDGs is a presentation that Steen Hildebrandt gave in connection with DANVA's new year banquet in 2016. The presentation stressed the necessity of advancing the SDGs and the market possibilities that the SDGs open.

SDGS AS CRITERIA AND INSPIRATION

Aarhus Vand is a water supply company, but also an environmental company where social responsibility and sustainability are deeply rooted in the company culture, the core business and the business strategy. So, to Aarhus Vand, it is natural to focus on the SDGs and use them as both a set of criteria and a source of inspiration for the company's continuous development as a sustainable company.

Initially, Aarhus Vand chose to focus on the below three SDGs:

- > 6 (clean water and sanitation)
- > 13 (climate action)
- > 14 (life below water)



DIRECTOR USES POSTCARD OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Director of Aalborg Vandkoncern, Bo Laden, has made it a habit to pull out the map showing all sustainable development goals (SDGs) when he kicks off an internal meeting to underline the purpose of the company's existence. At the beginning, participants struggled to see how the SDGs link to their daily tasks. Now, they are used to it. And being the director, he believes it is his job to set an example by constantly reminding employees that everyone has to contribute to making the world a better place. Because if he does not, what will motivate the rest of the organisation to pursue the SDGs?

ANCHORING IS KEY

Herning Vand has anchored its SDG activities with the management and an internal group that focuses on environmental and asset management. This group, is made up of project managers and department heads.

It is important to the management that everyone in the company understands and pursues the SDGs. The SDGs must be anchored firmly with all organisational units. To this end, in the early summer of 2018, all managers were tasked with discussing the SDGs and Herning Vand's role in SDG activities at department meetings.

Herning Vand wants to have an impact on its surroundings and gain inspiration outside the organisation, so representatives of local companies and organisations were invited to a meeting in 2018 to discuss potential cooperation and partnerships based on the SDGs.

[Click back](#)

INVOLVING THE ENTIRE ORGANISATION

VCS Denmark has worked on the SDGs for years, and it made a conscious decision to involve the entire organisation in this work.

Today, daily SDG activities are anchored with a project manager who refers to the management. Furthermore, a project group was set up, consisting of mid-level managers and non-managers across the entire organisation. Among other things, the project group assessed the 17 SDGs and the related targets to prepare suggestions for which goals and targets VCS Denmark could work on in the future.

It is important to VCS Denmark to create a change process that ensures clear prioritisation of its endeavours to create value (in a broad sense) for itself and its surroundings.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AT THE LIBRARY

In 2017, Fredericia Spildevand and Energi A/S were approached by the town library, which was finalising an exhibition on water, inspired by the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). The librarian had the notion that the town's wastewater utility company actually played a key role in fulfilment of all 17 SDGs and contacted Operational Manager Annemarie Gotfredsen.

The company still had materials from another campaign – “Only three things go into your toilet” – and in less than one work day, they set up a toilet and two large glass cylinders among the 17 posters showing the SDGs. One glass included examples of what you should not throw into your toilet, and the other held clear water and pictures of porpoises.

They also organised a drawing competition for school classes, showcasing the children's drawings of a clean Little Belt. According to the librarian, the users were excited about the combination of posters, imaginative drawings, the contrast between clean and contaminated water – and the toilet acting as an eye stopper.

It does not have to be time-consuming to convey the message that a water company is aware of the UN SDGs and works towards advancing them, if you reuse materials in a public place that children and other citizens visit and if you do not have to be physically present a lot.

COOPERATION ON VALUE-CREATING GROUNDWATER PROTECTION

Together with NIRAS, Vejle Municipality and agricultural consulting company LMO, TREFOR Vand highlighted the possibilities of implementing value-creating groundwater protection through farming agreements by introducing primarily energy crops in catchment areas. Energy crops in the shape of grass and willow that are grown without the use of pesticides and absorb vast quantities of nitrate are gentle to our groundwater, which is important to TREFOR Vand, while being profitable for the agricultural sector.

One of the first steps was to commence development of a business model in terms of sales of energy crops and signing of farming agreements.

Through its work on value-creating groundwater protection, TREFOR Vand supports local agricultural and energy production while contributing to solving several social and global challenges:

- > Protect clean drinking water from contamination from cultivated land
- > Preserve agricultural land as the limited resource that it is
- > Build organic matter in the soil and thereby tie up CO₂ in the soil
- > Produce energy from locally produced crops
- > Supply biomass to a biorefinery in the long term
- > Produce protein for monogastric farm animals to reduce the import of soy protein

SEWER CONTRACTOR DAY

Since 2016, Aalborg Vandkoncern and Aalborg Municipality have organised an annual day for the many sewage contractors that they work with. This is an example of three parties coming together to help a fourth party, the citizens, perform a task. Here is an extract from the 2017 invitation to the sewer contractors.

Background

Aalborg town council has adopted a target of 0 per cent incorrect pipe connections in our pipe system. This ambitious target can only be reached if stormwater and wastewater are kept separate in two pipes, i.e. if there are no incorrect pipe connections. However, as demonstrated by an analysis of our separate sewer system strategy, there is a significant number of incorrect pipe connections. On this basis, Aalborg town council has set the target that the percentage of incorrect pipe connections in the pipe system must be reduced to zero over a period of 12 years, i.e. by 2028. Meeting this ambitious target calls for significant efforts from the authorities, the wastewater utility company, citizens and authorised sewage contractors.



EMPLOYEES PROVIDE THE ENGINE

In the canteen at Herring Vand hangs a photo of its employees next to the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs). You see, the employees are the engine powering the company's SDG efforts. The different parts of the engine have to work together to achieve sustainable development, which is stressed by the CEO at the quarterly meetings, which all employees attend.

The SDGs are practically a permanent fixture in the newsletter emails that all employees receive. The management used one newsletter to inform about Herring Vand joining the Danish Confederation of Industry's project "From philanthropy to business". Another newsletter revolved around the employees' roles as the engine behind the company's SDG activities.

One thing that never ceases to intrigue and pique interest about the SDGs is the SDG pin that the CEO of Herring Vand, Niels Møller Jensen, always wears. He has a lot of people inquiring about the pin, which leads to more questions and interesting talks about the SDGs and sustainable development.

SDGS AND EMPLOYEES

During the first year of pursuing the SDGs, Aarhus Vand carried out a series of initiatives aiming to foster curiosity with employees. It is important to Aarhus Vand to make sure that employees are able to recognise themselves in the SDGs – personally and professionally.

Examples of initiatives

- › To kick off the SDG work, Mogens Lykketoft was invited to speak at a staff meeting. He offered perspectives on why a utility company has a large task to perform – among other things, in relation to sustainable development on a global level.
- › At a steady pace, the SDGs have become part of internal and external communication with Aarhus Vand. So, they play a more prominent role in its communication, both in terms of graphic design and content.
- › To render SDGs tangible, Aarhus Vand bought large cubes that represent the 17 SDGs. Today, the cubes are scattered across the company – serving as

decorative items, as toys and as dialogue tools. What is characteristic about the cubes is that they are hard to keep track of. They move constantly about the company – as intended.

- › Department relay where each department shares how they work with SDGs. Using these stories and other material, a task force was set up to prepare a catalogue of ideas.



Per Bach, CSR Manager at Aarhus Vand, shows the SDG cubes together with HR Consultant Inge Borre Haupt.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND WATER COMPANY ACTIVITIES

NB: For convenience, the below table does not include the UN indicators. The indicators are mainly national, and some are only relevant at global and national level. Some targets can be translated very directly into local targets, whereas others can be translated to have local relevance. This table seeks to do so by only including targets that are relevant to water companies. The table also only features short descriptions of targets. All indicators and the full description of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) are available at: www.verdensmålene.dk

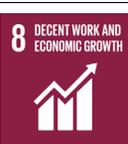
	SDG	UN target	Water company activities What do we do?	How can we measure development?
	SDG 3: ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES			
	3.9 REDUCE THE NUMBER OF DEATHS AND ILLNESSES FROM CHEMICALS AND CONTAMINATION	By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.	Ensure clean water for, e.g., households, hospitals and institutions. Prevent diseases by cleaning wastewater, including water from hospitals that may contain pathogens and medicinal residues.	Instances of contamination, supply interruption or recommendation to boil water.
	SDG 4: ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL			
	4.7 TEACH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.	Feature school facilities and/or educate schools and other visitors on key activities such as the cycle of water, drinking water supply, wastewater treatment and treatment plant processes. We teach climate action and what citizens can do to adapt to a changing climate.	Are there school facilities? How many annual pupils and others visit? Development in number of visitors and school events?
	SDG 5: ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS			
	5.5: ENSURE WOMEN'S FULL PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.	Have a policy for women in management.	Number of women at management level in the organisation? Increasing or decreasing number?

	SDG	UN target	Water company activities What do we do?	How can we measure development?
	SDG 6: ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL			
	6.1 ACHIEVE ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER	By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.	Supply clean water at a fair price, below the UN affordability level of three per cent of household income (Danish average: 1.3 per cent). We protect the groundwater to secure clean drinking water for future generations. We set up taps to offer access to drinking water in urban spaces.	Supply degree. Leaks – water loss in pipe system in percentage. Recommendation to boil water. Price. Scope of secure drinking water resources. Taps mounted.
	6.2 ACHIEVE ACCESS TO SANITATION AND HYGIENE FOR ALL	By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.	Discharge wastewater in a safe manner. Hygiene and toilets are not the responsibility of the utility company.	Degree of connection.
	6.3 IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND CLEAN AND REUSE WASTEWATER BETTER	By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.	Clean and discharge wastewater safely to recipient.	Degree of connection. Cleaning efficiency. Overflow. Good quality of streams, cf. the EU Water Framework Directive, and marine recipients (not the utility company's responsibility, though).
	6.4 INCREASE WATER-USE EFFICIENCY AND ENSURE SUPPLY OF FRESHWATER	By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.	Inform customers about water-use efficient solutions. Ensure sustainable abstraction of groundwater.	Degree of sustainable abstraction in the supply area.
	6.5 IMPLEMENT INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.	We work with municipalities and utility companies across catchment areas to ensure expedient solutions regarding water, wastewater and, not least, climate action.	Participation in cooperation on management of water across catchment areas.
	6.6 PROTECT AND RESTORE WATER-RELATED ECOSYSTEMS	By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes	We protect the groundwater, e.g. by means of afforestation, and contribute to restoring lakes, wetland etc., also in terms of climate adaptation.	Changes to local extent of forests and water-related wetlands that the municipality contributed to.
	6.a SUPPORT WATER AND SANITATION-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies.	This is not relevant to national level, but the utility company may participate in international capacity building and knowledge-sharing with external financing.	Do we have a policy for capacity building? Number of projects that the utility company participates in.
	6.b SUPPORT LOCAL WATER AND SANITATION MANAGEMENT	Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.	Inform and involve citizens in projects, including co-creation related to climate adaptation.	Policy for involvement and co-creation. Number or share of projects involving citizens.

[Click back to page 15](#)

[Click back to page 18](#)

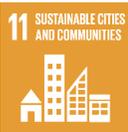
page 2/6

	SDG	UN target	Water company activities What do we do?	How can we measure development?
	SDG 7: ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL			
	7.2 INCREASE GLOBAL PERCENTAGE OF SUSTAINABLE ENERGY	By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.	Recover renewable energy at treatment plant and through other production (excess heat, biogas, heat pumps, solar panels etc.) and contribute to supply based on, e.g., district heating.	Production of electricity and heat at and in connection with the utility company's plants.
	7.3 DOUBLE THE RATE OF IMPROVEMENT IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY	By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.	Use and contribute to developing energy-efficient solutions in our entire supply area.	Energy-efficiency in production, measured against supply.
	7.a ENHANCE ACCESS TO CLEAN ENERGY RESEARCH AND INVESTMENT	By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology	Cooperate internationally to develop new, innovative solutions.	Number of international partnerships regarding knowledge-sharing that we participate in.
	SDG 8: PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL			
	8.5 ACHIEVE FULL EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK WITH EQUAL PAY	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.	Have an employment policy that promotes equal pay and diversity in the composition of employees.	Diversity in employment – percentage of men and women, other employment categories.
	8.8 PROTECT LABOUR RIGHTS AND PROMOTE SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENTS	Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.	Focus on physical and psychosocial working environment and safety at work.	Employee satisfaction analyses. Number of work accidents. Number of sick days caused by poor working environment.

[Click back to page 15](#)

[Click back to page 18](#)

page 3/6

	SDG	UN target	Water company activities What do we do?	How can we measure development?
	SDG 9: BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION			
	9.5 ENHANCE SCIENCE AND UPGRADE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY	Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.	Execute own and participate in partners' R&D projects in cooperation with research institutions, companies and other actors.	Number of R&D projects that we participate in. Degree of external financing of R&D activities.
	SDG 11: MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE			
	11.3 ENHANCE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION	By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.	Cooperate on initiatives in cities with all stakeholders.	Share of projects with participation of local stakeholders. Number of climate-adaptation projects focusing on additional value and co-creation.
	11.5 REDUCE LOSSES CAUSED BY DISASTERS	By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.	Contribute to mapping risk areas and prevent disasters.	Deaths and disease in connection with disasters. Financial costs and loss related to such.
	11.7 PROVIDE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE GREEN AND PUBLIC SPACES	By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.	Contribute, in connection with drainage of stormwater, climate-adaptation and other projects, to providing access to green spaces.	Number of projects that create additional value, green and inclusive urban spaces.

[Click back to page 15](#)

[Click back to page 18](#)

page 4/6

	SDG	UN target	Water company activities What do we do?	How can we measure development?
	SDG 12: ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS			
	12.6. ENCOURAGE COMPANIES TO ADOPT SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES	Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.	Report and become certified according to relevant standards (e.g., ISO) regarding CSR, environmental management and other activities.	Do we have the required reporting in terms of sustainability? Yes/no. Number of certifications and degree of fulfilment.
	12.7. PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PRACTICES	Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.	Have a sustainable procurement policy.	Do we have a sustainably procurement policy? Yes/no. Share of sustainable procurement.
	SDG 13: TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS			
	13.1 STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY TO CLIMATE-RELATED DISASTERS	Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.	Contribute to climate adaptation in the planning and implementation of our tasks. Provide the municipality with the necessary maps regarding wastewater, stormwater and risk mapping.	Do we have a local climate-adaptation plan? Yes/no. Share of projects implemented thanks to the plan. Incidents of water on the ground, cf. objectives.
	13.2 INTEGRATE CLIMATE CHANGE MEASURES IN POLICIES AND PLANNING	Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.	Reduce discharge of all greenhouse gases, including nitrous oxide. Save energy in all activities. Choose energy-efficient solutions. Contribute to a CO ₂ -neutral water sector, assisting in fulfilling local and national climate targets.	Energy savings. Reduction in discharges from all activities. Energy efficiency. "Vand i Tal", 2017, p. 34 shows method for calculating energy consumption.

[Click back to page 15](#)

[Click back to page 18](#)

page 5/6

	SDG	UN target	Water company activities What do we do?	How can we measure development?
	SDG 14: CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT			
	14.1 REDUCE MARINE POLLUTION	By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.	Remove nutrients, medicinal residues and plastic, also microplastics, at treatment plants.	Target for removal of substances at treatment plants, including microplastics, medicinal residues and other new pollutant types.
	SDG 15: PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS			
	15.1 PRESERVE AND RESTORE TERRESTRIAL AND INLAND FRESHWAER ECOSYSTEMS	By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.	Clean wastewater and ensure afforestation, which contributes to conserving and restoring forests and other ecosystems.	Afforestation, participation in projects and scope. Local share of forest and nature.
	SDG 17: STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT			
	17.16 ENHANCE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.	Participate in international partnerships aiming to promote the transfer of knowledge and technology.	Number of projects that the utility company participates in to promote international cooperation, knowledge sharing and technology transfer.
	17.17 ENCOURAGE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS	Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.	Participate in local, public-private and civil society partnerships to involve users and create local additional value through these projects.	Number of partnerships involving participation from several stakeholders, including citizens, across sectors. Share of projects carried out in partnerships or with participation of local stakeholders.

[Click back to page 15](#)

[Click back to page 18](#)

page 6/6

SKANDERBORG FORSYNING EVALUATES ALL PROJECTS' CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The water and wastewater utility company in Skanderborg has strived to make a difference to the SDGs since 2015, not least inspired by the then president of the board Henrik Müller, who was very active in this field.

The specific actions started by a strategy seminar with the partners of AquaGlobe, whose answer to the question "why are we here?" was: To contribute to two sustainable development goals: SDGs 6, clean water and sanitation, and 17, partnerships for the goals.

The next step was to show how that is done, so the company developed a guide which includes questions for all project managers in order to map their projects' contribution to the SDGs in terms of goal or target. The preliminary result is available at: www.aquaglobe.dk/projekter/

This mapping contributed to creating an SDG culture which not only views solutions as small and local, but assesses them based on their potential and global significance. That created immediate awareness about what SDGs the utility company contributes to and provided inspiration for how to implement them to gain the biggest effect in terms of SDGs. In the long term, Skanderborg will develop a list of which SDGs its projects fulfil, and which SDGs it can contribute further to.

The activities to advance the SDGs should be seen in the context of the company's vision to be Denmark's most modern water company. This will be realised through four must-win battles, each of which contributes to fulfilling the SDGs:

- > Ambitious environmental activities (6.3, 6.6, 13, 15)
- > Continuous optimisation of operations (6, 12, 13)
- > From utility company to service company (6.b, 16)
- > Innovative partnerships (17)

The SDG efforts are integrated in ongoing work, e.g. the company's business development plan for 2017, which says that a plan must be prepared for its efforts to advance the UN SDGs. Furthermore, the company is implementing the SDGs in its ISO standards.

Since the beginning, the company's SDGs activities have been developed in close cooperation with Skanderborg Municipality, which in November 2017 published a revised owner policy that gave the SDGs a prominent position. In April 2018, Skanderborg Municipality decided to prepare an SDG strategy, with the utility company being a natural participant.



[Click back](#)



GUIDE ET PAR SPØRGSMÅL OM VERDENSMÅL

VERDENSMÅL
for bæredygtig udvikling



Dette er en guide til hvilke af FN's verdenssmål DIT projekt bidrager til. Guiden stiller en række spørgsmål og hvis du kan svare 'ja' til dem bidrager projekter til de verdenssmål, der står ude til højre. Der står nummer verdenssmål og konkret delmål. Du kan selv læse mere på www.verdensmaalene.dk



• SKRIV NAVNET PÅ DIT PROJEKT OG DINE INITIALER

• SÆT KRYDZ VED DE SPØRGSMÅL, HVOR DU KAN SIGE 'JA'

• MARKER DE VERDENSMÅL, DU BIDRAGER TIL



PROJEKTET NAVN: _____

DINE INITIALER: _____

GENERELT OM PROJEKTET

<input type="checkbox"/> Udføres projektet i partnerskab ?	#17.6
<input type="checkbox"/> Er formidling og/eller varsel en del af projektet ?	#13.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Formidler projektet til elever og studerende ?	#4.7 #12.8 #13.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Indeholder projektet borgerinddragelse ?	#6.b #11.3 #16.7
<input type="checkbox"/> Indeholder projektet et rekreativt element ?	#11.7
<input type="checkbox"/> Vil projektet tiltrække turister ?	#8.9
<input type="checkbox"/> Bidrager projektet til større kundetilfredshed og gennemsnitlighed ?	#16.6

PROJEKTET EFFEKT

<input type="checkbox"/> Sparer projektet penge uden at det går ud over miljøet ?	#8.4
<input type="checkbox"/> Bidrager projektet til brug af vedvarende energi ?	#7.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Bidrager projektet til energieffektivitet ?	#7.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Gør projektet at vi udlæder mindre CO ₂ ?	#9.4

PROJEKTETS TEMA

KLIMATILPASNING

<input type="checkbox"/> Reducerer projektet omkostninger og afsavn ved ekstremregn ?	#1.5 #11.5 #13.1 #15.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Afhjælper projektet ifht. landbrugsspid ?	#2.4
<input type="checkbox"/> Reducerer projektet sandsynligheden for sygdom ?	#3.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Anvender projektet en integreret tilgang til vandhåndtering ?	#6.5

DRUKEVAND

<input type="checkbox"/> Øger projektet adgangen til drikkevand ?	#2.3 #5.4 #6.1 #10.1
<input type="checkbox"/> Giver projektet rent vand ?	#3.1/2/3 #6.1
<input type="checkbox"/> Øger projektet ejerskabet til vand ?	#5a
<input type="checkbox"/> Reducerer projektet vandtab ?	#6.4
<input type="checkbox"/> Anvender projektet en integreret tilgang til vandhåndtering ?	#6.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Bidrager projektet til mere bæredygtig og effektiv anvendelse af vand ?	#12.2

SPILDEVAND

<input type="checkbox"/> Giver projektet flere adgang til sønket ?	#2.3 #5.4 #6.1 #10.1
<input type="checkbox"/> Reducerer projektet mængden af urensset spildevand i naturen ?	#6.3
<input type="checkbox"/> Øger projektet genanvendelsen af ressourcer ?	#12.2/5
<input type="checkbox"/> Anvender projektet en integreret tilgang til vand håndtering ?	#6.5

NATUR

<input type="checkbox"/> Reducerer projektet kemt/affald/næringsstoffer i vandmiljøet ?	#3.9 #6.3 #12.4/5 #14.1
<input type="checkbox"/> Beskytter eller genopretter projektet naturområder ?	#6.6 #11.4
<input type="checkbox"/> Styrker projektet biodiversitet/artsrigdom ?	#15.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Indeholder projektet skovrejning og/eller mere bæredygtig skovdrift ?	#15.1/2

FROM SCREENING TO SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Fredericia Spildevand og Energi A/S signed a four-year partnering agreement with Per Aarsleff A/S. In the process of defining the strategic direction for the cooperation, the partnership developed the following vision after having screened the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and perusing the related 169 targets:

"The partnership contributes to the UN SDGs, focusing particularly on SDG 6 about sanitation and SDG 14 about contamination of the marine environment."

Next, the partnership prepared five specific objectives that it has to achieve in order to realise the vision. Three of these specific objectives were based on Fredericia Spildevand og Energi A/S's key themes in the company's balanced scorecard:

1. Concern for the environment
 - › No local environmental nuisances during works
2. Supply reliability
 - › No unintended interruptions during works
 - › No unintended overflow
3. Efficiency
 - › Compliance with target budget (annual reduction of two per cent)

In addition, one objective concerns getting as many local stakeholders as possible involved:

4. Local partner
 - › We always make the local community an integral part of our activities

FOUR SDGS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Today, Herning Vand has placed four SDGs in the spotlight: 4, 6, 13 and 17. These SDGs are the result of a process that began with the management reviewing all 169 targets in relation to Herning Vand's current and expected situation.

For each of the four goals, it was decided to work dedicatedly on seven targets. For each target, a short description was prepared, explaining how Herning Vand will pursue the target. It was also decided where to anchor work on each target in the organisation. For instance, target 6.3, "Improve water quality, wastewater treatment and water reuse", is anchored with Herning Vand's environmental and asset management group. Herning Vand believes it is important to focus on a few SDGs and targets, rather than spreading its activities over a larger number. Focus brings change and results.

VALUE CHAIN FORMS STARTING POINT

With VCS Denmark, a project group with members from across the organisation assessed the 17 SDGs and the related targets, drawing inspiration from the SDG Compass and other sources.

The assessments were based on three parameters:

1. Relevance to VCS Denmark's value chain
2. GAP – an assessment of how far VCS Denmark is from fulfilling the targets
3. The ratio between effort and value. In other words, business

The challenge is to be specific and prioritise, which the assessments based on the three parameters are to enable. That ensures a transparent and understandable process, and a result that makes sense and creates value both internally and externally.

FOCUSING ON THREE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Aarhus Vand continuously works to advance all 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) in terms of integrating them in, e.g., the company's future strategies and specific projects. Thereby, the SDGs have found their place in the company as a set of criteria and a source of inspiration. When Aarhus Vand started working towards the SDGs in 2017, it chose to focus on three SDGs (8, 13 and 14). However, the world and Aarhus Vand are dynamic, so it is important to Aarhus Vand to constantly process all 17 SDGs in relation to developing the company.

Aarhus Vand listed specific targets for three of the SDGs:

SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation	SDG 13 Climate action	SDG 14 Life below water
Clean drinking water: Instances of exceeding limit values, leading to recommendation to boil water. 2018 target: 0	Climate adaptation: Areas that go from having a combined sewer system to a sewer system separating stormwater and wastewater. 2018 target: 75 hectare	Marine environment: Instances of exceeding discharge requirements for treatment plants that affect the marine environment. Target: 0
	Climate action: By 2030, the energy produced at Aarhus Vand's treatment plants shall cover 100 per cent of the company's energy consumption for electricity and heat. 2018 target: 55 %	Marine environment: Instances of exceeding discharge requirements for waterworks that affect the marine environment. Target: 0
	Climate action: The total energy consumption by Aarhus Vand's treatment plants. 2018 target: 23 GWh	
	Resource utilisation: Extracting phosphor from wastewater to use as, e.g., fertilizer. 2018 target: 250 tonnes	



Workshop in relation to the project.

**ROSKILDE FJORD
- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
FOR ANALYSING PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY**

The utility companies around Roskilde Fjord – FORS, NOVAFOS and HOFOR – studied in cooperation with COWI sustainable utilisation of the water resource and the treatment capacity of waterworks in the area. The vision was to create a structure offering high supply reliability, while minimising impact on nature and the environment and securing optimal settings for supplying the growing local population. Subsequently, the sustainability of the project was assessed in terms of to what extent it contributes to fulfilling the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs).

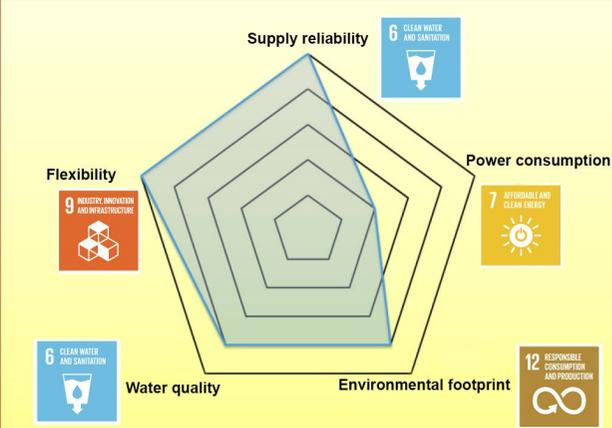
Sustainability and supply reliability have always been keywords for the utility companies, and they have always wanted better treatment capacity, a more disperse impact on the environment and nature, and higher flexibility in terms of groundwater abstraction. They have worked on a scenario that involves closing quite a few waterworks and establishing a ring of transport pipes around Roskilde Fjord, while developing new wellfields and establishing raw water pipes, e.g., from the waterworks at Slangerup and building a new waterworks at Hornsherred.

A sustainability assessment shows how to evaluate the project in terms of the SDGs.

Through a number of workshops, the utility companies assessed the project based on:

- > Supply reliability
- > Power consumption
- > Environmental footprint
- > Water quality and flexibility.

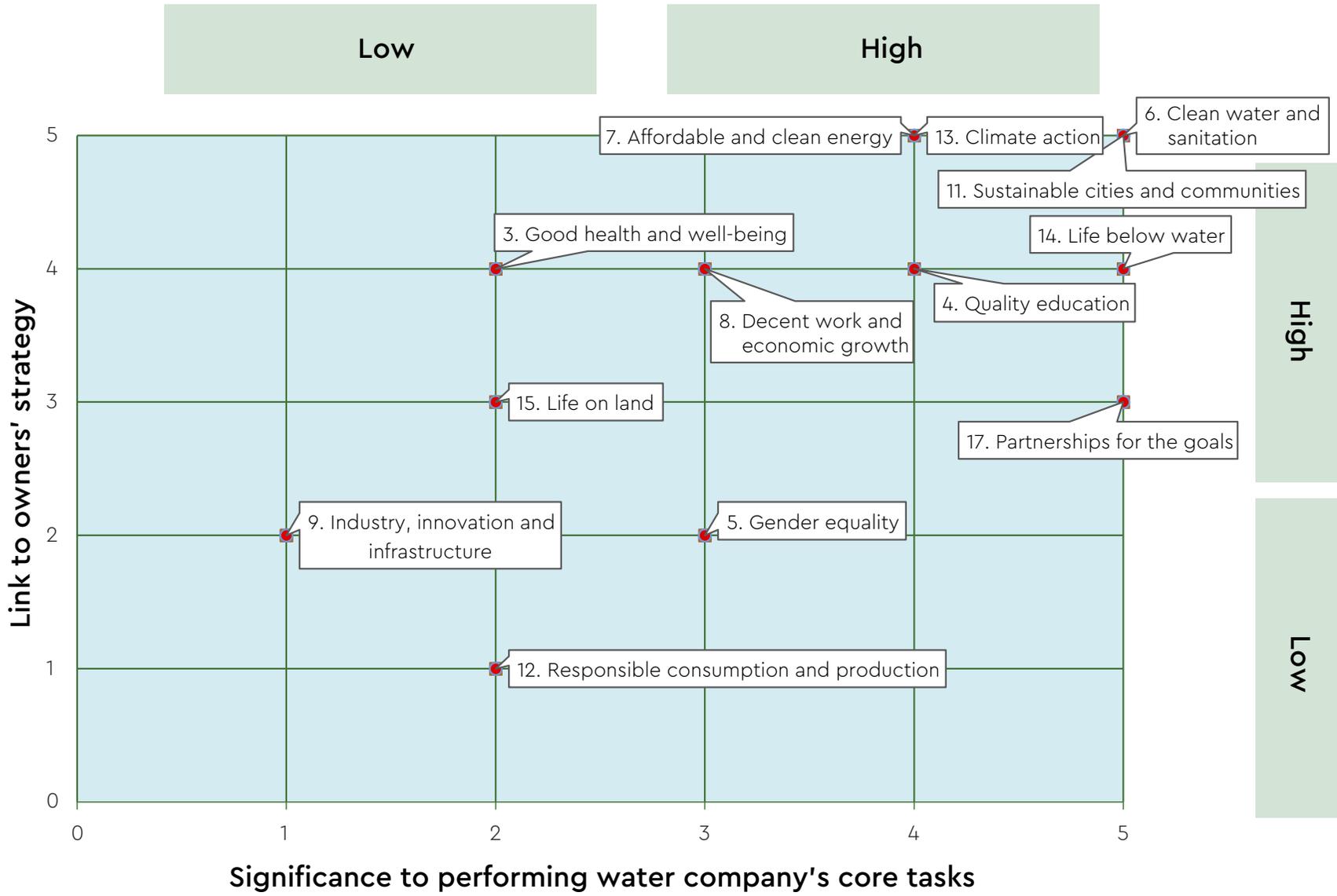
For each element, it was assessed how to measure it and a scoreboard was prepared (from 0 to 5). Some elements were assessed based on specific calculations, e.g. using the hydraulic model for designing the pipe network, and using the hydrological model for assessing the environmental footprint. For other elements, the score was based on more subjective assessments.



To exemplify: For SDG 6, a number of stress situations were assessed, calculated using the pipe system model. Subsequently, the impact on consumers was assessed and a score assigned. In this case, the score was 6 since all consumers are supplied in any individual stress situation. The results are shown in the spiderweb above.

Sustainable development goals and the water sector		
Core tasks of water companies	Goals depending on water companies	New tasks and other relevant goals
<div data-bbox="174 667 416 911"><p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p></div> <div data-bbox="450 667 692 911"><p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p></div>	<div data-bbox="725 667 967 911"><p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p></div> <div data-bbox="1001 667 1243 911"><p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p></div>	<div data-bbox="1276 667 1518 911"><p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p></div> <div data-bbox="1552 667 1794 911"><p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p></div> <div data-bbox="1827 667 2069 911"><p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p></div>
<div data-bbox="174 1034 416 1278"><p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p></div> <div data-bbox="450 1034 692 1278"><p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p></div>	<div data-bbox="860 1034 1102 1278"><p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p></div>	<div data-bbox="1276 1034 1518 1278"><p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p></div> <div data-bbox="1552 1034 1794 1278"><p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p></div> <div data-bbox="1827 1034 2069 1278"><p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p></div>

SDG prioritisation chart



Status of activities

