



HAUS HIMMELFAHRT

Our 360-degree approach to SDG orientation

You hear, everywhere, about the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – and they are the same in South Tyrol too. After all, the 17 SDGs are about nothing less than the "transformation of our world" through an interconnected consideration of the most diverse phenomena from poverty, environmental degradation, health, to production and consumption patterns. In contrast to the old Millennium Development Goals of 2000, the new Development Goals of 2015 focus on the entire planet, in particular on the industrialised countries, which do a lot of damage to the earth. South Tyrol is also affected here, and this is where the Ascension House wants and needs to take responsibility.

The 17 SDGs can be divided into 4 clusters, which already shows that environmental protection is only one section of the broad concept of sustainability¹:

Primary needs	More just societies	Environmental protection
Poverty (Goal 1), hunger (Goal 2), ensuring healthy lives (Goal 3), availability of water and sanitation (Goal 6) and energy (Goal 7)	Education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), employment (Goal 8), equality among countries (Goal 10), establishing sustainable consumption and production patterns (Goal 12)	Climate change (Goal 13), marine protection (Goal 14), protection of terrestrial ecosystems (Goal 15)
Institutions and partnerships Infrastructure (Goal 9), cities (Goal 11), institutions including the judiciary (Goal 16), Partnerships (Goal 17)		

As part of an all-round renovation, we raised the climate profile of the building from class G to climate class B, thus reducing the building's energy loss many times over. We replaced the old liquid gas heating system with a pellet system, thus switching from fossil fuels to renewable raw materials. The power supply was switched to green electricity and the building was equipped with an e-charging station for electric cars. Preparations were also made for the installation of a large-scale solar power system. Whatever we do at House

¹ Taken from G.N.Toggenburg, Nachhaltigkeit: [Fata Morgana oder Mutter einer neuen Gesellschaftswirklichkeit?](#), in EURAC 2022.

Himmelfahrt goes through our own sustainability impact assessment. Our "360-degree approach to SDG orientation" seeks to ensure that we and our guests contribute to all SDGs. Where this is not possible, we will try to use donations from the hotel to support those local NGOs that are specifically dedicated to these goals. This issue will arise as soon as the house has paid off the investment costs and reaches the profit zone. Sustainability is never achieved, but remains a process. This was not only true for the big investment decisions such as energy supply, insulation, building materials, but especially for the countless small questions of everyday operation such as:

- Which drinking glasses should we buy for the flats? (Glasses made by hand from old wine bottles were used);
- What linen should we bed our guests in? Our partner became noca, a young company that offers the first bed linen with a climate-positive profile;
- What mattresses should our guests lie on? Organic mattresses were produced at Sägemüllerhof - a traditional social project in the Pustertal valley, where people with long-term mental illnesses are reintroduced to the labour market;
- Which towels should we buy? The products of the innovative company Kushel, which developed the first towel made of soft beech wood and rain-watered organic cotton, were chosen;
- Which kettles, toasters and coffee makers should we equip the kitchen with? There were appliances from the Eco Conscious series by Philips, which are made of bioplastic that comes from over 90 per cent recycled waste oil;
- What kitchenware should we equip the kitchens with? Sustainable ceramics made by the Werkstätten in Herrnhut - a service and support organisation for people with disabilities;
- What cleaning products and other everyday products should we use in the house? We strictly follow the EU eco-label in our choices.

In short, House Himmelfahrt has become a treasure trove of furnishings, equipment and other items, all of which tell their own little sustainability story. This even applies to purposeless, purely aesthetic elements such as the two giraffes that stand by the open fireplace in the seminar room - they have not only helped to secure jobs in Kenya, but their manufacture has freed the ocean from almost 200 discarded flip-flops.

Those who holiday at House Himmelfahrt contribute to a smaller, ecological footprint with this investment decision. Every holiday with us is a contribution to refinancing the greening of our house.

Of course, our guests can also contribute to sustainability through their behaviour:

- Use of local public transport;
- Sustainable purchasing and targeted promotion of local suppliers (e.g. food via "Biokisterl" or organic shops). Information is available;
- Sensible water consumption when showering and washing up;
- Keep energy consumption as low as possible by controlling heating, time in the sauna and economical use of hot water;
- Reduction of holiday waste to the bare minimum, use of the organic composter.

The table below summarises how House Himmelfahrt and its guests can contribute to the 17 SDGs. The colour code illustrates three different ways in which holidaymakers can improve their SDG balance. Elements in **green stand for an automatic SDG contribution**, which is achieved by the choice of the House Himmelfahrt - through the structure, equipment and orientation of the house, the guest keeps his/her ecological footprint relatively small. Elements in **red show how guests can further improve** the sustainability balance of their holiday through their consumption and energy behaviour. Those who are even more ambitious can contribute to local initiatives by donating to them (colour code: **yellow**).

Concept of the 360 degree SDG orientation of House Himmelfahrt

SDG goals	Contribution by the structure of the house	Contribution by the guests
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms and in all places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations of the house as soon as the profit zone is reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on possible donations to local initiatives are made available
Goal 2: Ensure food security worldwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations of the house as soon as the profit zone is reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of local, sustainably produced food (promotion of organic farming) - List of local producers and growers is available.
Goal 3: Health and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the needs of older people and/or people with disabilities. • Focus on enjoyment of nature and creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm accessibility and sustainability as key aspects in the responsible choice of holiday destination
Goal 4: High quality education worldwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations of the house as soon as the profit zone is reached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on possible donations to local initiatives are made available
Goal 5: Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workplace created by Haus Himmelfahrt is family-friendly and enables a single mother to combine work and family life. 	
Goal 6: Sufficient water of the best quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showers instead of bathtubs • Water-saving technology throughout the house • Burying a 15,000-litre water storage tank to use rainwater. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use water sparingly for showers and washing up
Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive use of green electricity • Heating with recyclable energy source (pellets) • Solar power technology (in preparation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of renewable energy as a relevant aspect when choosing a holiday destination
Goal 8: Sustainable management as an opportunity for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a new, family-minded workplace • Only local companies for construction, conversion and maintenance of the residence • Creation of a new flat falling under the local regulations for social housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on possible donations to local initiatives are made available
Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building was completely renovated in terms of air-conditioning and raised from climate class D to climate class B, thus massively reducing energy loss during heating • Conversion and modernisation of the building in harmony with the protection of historical monuments and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect co-financing of the conversion of an energy-guzzling old building into a modern, energy-efficient building
Goal 10: Less inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent accessibility in the entire building as a contribution to more inclusion in tourism but also as a signal to promote social inclusion locally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on possible donations to local initiatives are made available
Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a fully accessible, ecological and appropriately certified structure, the house contributes to the inclusivity and sustainability of the hamlet of Maria Himmelfahrt but also of the municipality of Ritten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A holiday at Haus Himmelfahrt contributes to strengthening local structures in the rural municipality of Ritten and "rewards" a local sustainability project.

Goal 12: Sustainable production and consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture from old stock or upcycling to avoid new purchases • Reuse old building materials such as roof tiles, old doors (for tables) or natural stones • Apply for certification for the EU eco-label • All cleaning products and as many other products as possible certified with EU Ecolabel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase sustainable food and products during the stay. • Keep energy consumption as low as possible through heating control, time control in sauna and economical hot water consumption • Travel by public transport and/or use of public transport on site
Goal 13: Implement climate protection worldwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of climate-friendly travel to the venue and climate-friendly mobility on site • In-house charging station for electric cars • Sustainable heating system • Use of solar energy (in preparation) • Energy-saving appliances as far as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By choosing Haus Himmelfahrt: avoidance of fossil energy forms, large hotel structures that are harmful to the climate, but also avoidance of energy guzzlers such as air conditioning, swimming pool or steam bath. • By choosing Haus Himmelfahrt: sustainable energy supply, in-house electric charging station, sustainable selection of all products (from bed linen to washing machines) and corresponding certifications give guests the opportunity to leave as small an ecological footprint as possible.
Goal 14: Protect life under water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations of the house as soon as the profit zone is reached 	Information on possible donations to local initiatives are made available
Goal 15: Life on land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bio-composter enables recycling of organic waste • The garden of the house is maintained sustainably in order to contribute to biodiversity. • Local organic eggs • Extensive information on the European sustainability strategy is available in the chimney room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of holiday waste to the bare minimum, use of the organic composter • Sustainable purchasing and targeted promotion of local suppliers (e.g. food via "Biokister" or organic shops). Information is available.
Goal 16: Promote strong and transparent institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations of the house as soon as the profit zone is reached 	Information on possible donations to local initiatives are made available
Goal 17: Global partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Himmelfahrt cooperates with the Observatory for Sustainable Tourism in South Tyrol at the EURAC - one of only seven observatories for sustainable tourism in Europe. The EURAC in turn hosts the UN GLOMOS (Global Mountain Safeguard Research) programme and thus also the only United Nations University (UNU) office in Italy. 	

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