

## Independent Assurance Statement

### To the Management and Stakeholders of Symrise AG

DQS has been engaged by Symrise AG to provide independent assurance over the Symrise Sustainability Report 2017 ("*Sharing Values – Unfolding Strengths – Corporate Report 2017*") published in hard copy and online PDF on the Symrise website. The engagement took place from 13.02.2018 to 15.02.2018 in Holzminden, Germany.

#### Objectives

The objective of this assurance engagement was to independently express conclusions on underlying reporting processes and validate qualitative and quantitative claims, so as to limit misinterpretation by stakeholders and increase the overall credibility of the reported information and data.

#### Scope of assurance

The assurance encompassed the entire report and focused on all figures, statements and claims related to sustainability during the reporting period January 2017 to December 2017. More specifically, this included:

- Statements, information and performance data contained within the sustainability report;
- Symrise's management approach of material issues; and
- Symrise's reported data and information as per the requirements of the Global Reporting Initiative Standards.

The assurance engagement was performed in accordance with a Type 2 assurance of the AA1000 Assurance Standard (AA1000AS 2008), which consists of:

- Evaluating the company's sustainability framework and processes using the inclusivity, materiality and responsiveness criteria of the AA1000 AccountAbility Principles (AA1000APS 2008), and
- Evaluating the quality of the reported sustainability performance information.

The report has been self-declared to comply with the 'in accordance – comprehensive' requirements of the GRI Standards.

#### Additional on-site assessments

The evaluation of the non-financial performance indicators is safeguarded by an additional on-site assessment. For that purpose DQS generated a Symrise-specific KPI evaluation tool. The evaluation tool is designed according to the principles of data verification, covering all performance indicators within the scope of assurance. Assessors nominated for the on-site assessment have been calibrated and trained by contemporary technical solutions.

The following sites have been assessed in 2017:

- “Symrise Ltd.” - Marlow, UK
- “Symrise SAS” - France
- “Symrise S.A.E” - 6<sup>th</sup> of October City, Egypt
- “Symrise Inc.” - Teterboro - USA
- “Symrise Shanghai Ltd.” - Shanghai, China
- “Symrise S.R.L.” - Buenos Aires, Argentina

### **Level of assurance and limitations**

A moderate level of assurance under AA1000AS was provided for this engagement. Information and performance data subject to assurance is limited to the content of the sustainability report.

The assurance did not cover financial data, technical descriptions of buildings, equipment and production processes or other information not related to sustainability or already supported by existing documents, such as third-party audits or certifications and previous Symrise annual reports.

### **Independence and Competences of the Assurance Provider**

The DQS Group is an independent professional services firm that specializes in sustainability disclosures under the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), CDP and other specialized management and reporting mechanisms. Independent verifiers have not been involved in the development of the report nor have they been associated with Symrise’s sustainability program, data collection or strategic processes.

DQS Group ensures that the assurance team possesses the required competencies, maintained neutrality and performed ethically throughout the engagement. Further information, including a statement of competencies, can be found at: [www.dqs-cfs.com](http://www.dqs-cfs.com).

The management of Symrise was responsible for the preparation of the sustainability part of the Corporate Report and all statements and figures contained within it.

### **Assurance methodology**

DQS has certified the management systems of Symrise AG for quality, environment, energy, occupational safety and food safety, as well as the social and ethical management of Symrise AG according to ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 50001:2011, OHSAS 18001:2007, ISO 22000:2005, FSSC 22000 and SMETA 6.0.

The assurance procedures and principles used for this engagement were drawn from the International Standard AA1000 and methodology developed by DQS, which consists of the following steps:

1. Identify statements and data sets, which are classified according to the relevant data owners and the type of evidence required for the verification process.
2. Reviewing the Sustainability Report to determine whether the material topics identified during our procedures have been adequately disclosed.
3. Carry out interviews with key functional managers and data owners at Symrise AG office in Holzminden (Germany) as well as verification of all Symrise sites globally.
4. Assess the collected information and provide recommendations for immediate correction where required or for future improvement of the report content.

## Evaluation of the adherence to AA1000 AccountAbility Principles

**Inclusivity** - *How the organization engages with stakeholders and enables their participation in identifying issues and finding solutions.*

The stakeholder identification and engagement process is well documented and implemented through the Symrise Sustainability program and the Report brings out key stakeholder concerns as material aspects of significant stakeholders. In our view, the level at which the Report adheres to this principle is **good**. Therefore, it is recommended that Symrise should continue with the planned process of direct dialogue with the stakeholders at determined intervals.

**Materiality** - *How the organization recognizes issues that are relevant and significant to itself and its stakeholders.*

The Report addresses the range of environmental, social and economic issues of concern that Symrise and its stakeholders have identified as being of highest material importance. The identification of material issues has considered both internal assessments of risks and opportunities to the business, as well as stakeholders' views and concerns. A process of stakeholder engagement through sustainability board meetings identified the material issues. The Report fairly brings out aspects and topics and its respective boundaries for the diverse operations of Symrise. In our view, the level at which the Report adheres to this principles is **good**. It is recommended that Symrise continues with this process and works to develop a more detailed analysis of the issues that turned out to be critical. In this regard, those impacts that could be more relevant for both the organization and its value chain could be defined with greater detail, taking into account the various geographical areas where the company operates.

**Responsiveness** - *How the organization responds to stakeholder issues and feedback through decisions, actions, performance and communication.*

Symrise is responding to those issues that it has identified as material and demonstrates this in its policies, objectives, indicators and performance targets. The organization and its stakeholders can use the reported information as a reasonable basis for their opinions and decision-making. The company has taken various initiatives towards delivering environmentally friendly services along with occupational health and safety, appropriate measures for emergency handling, control and risk management in its operations. The responses to material aspects are fairly articulated in the report, i.e. disclosures on Symrise's policies and management systems including governance. In our view, the level at which the Report adheres to this principle is **very good**.

Symrise offers multiple channels and events to inform and educate stakeholders on material issues and the company's performance. These include online portals, newsletters, emails, reports, conferences and awareness programs.

## Conclusion

On the basis of a moderate assurance engagement according to the above-listed criteria, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the sustainability-related strategies of Symrise and its sustainability-related key performance indicators defined in the 2017 Corporate Report are materially misstated.

The Symrise Corporate Report of 2017 is in line with the GRI Standards Comprehensive Option. The material aspects and their boundaries within and outside of the organization are properly defined in accordance with GRI's reporting principles.

Symrise has made significant strides to introduce innovative solutions toward mitigating impacts and influence supply chain partners in the process. Continued internal alignment and capacity building will further strengthen the global sustainability practice of Symrise.

On behalf of the assurance team  
February 20, 2018  
Frankfurt, Germany



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