



## Managing sustainable business models in the hospitality sector with the help of a mission statement

Christine Göbel<sup>1</sup>, Melanie Speck<sup>2</sup>, Nina Langen<sup>3</sup>, Petra Teitscheid<sup>1</sup>, Tobias Engelmann<sup>4</sup>, Holger Rohn<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Applied Sciences, Institute of sustainable nutrition, Corrensstr. 25, 48149 Münster, Germany

<sup>2</sup>Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy, Döppersberg 19, 42103 Wuppertal, Germany

<sup>3</sup>Technische Universität Berlin, Institute of Vocational Education and Work Studies, Marchstr. 23, 10587 Berlin, Germany

<sup>4</sup>f10 Institute – Institut für nachhaltiges Wirtschaften gGmbH, Alte Bahnhofstraße 13, 61169 Friedberg, Germany

### Introduction

Currently, the normative mission statement of a sustainable development is increasingly gaining importance within the international political debate. A more comprehensive understanding of the term sustainable development is for example reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the sustainability policies of the European Union and Germany.

Although the food service sector is crucial for sustainable development no comprehensive sustainability strategy has been developed and the implementation of sustainable business models is not yet a major idea. So far, just singular approaches to apply aspects of sustainability are existent, e.g. aspects of animal and climate protection or consumer's health. Moreover, companies often deal with a great uncertainty about the implementation of the normative and political idea of sustainability. And since uniform regulations with regard to a comprehensive management of the concept are missing, companies sometimes develop their own policies. In conclusion, we hypothesize that the food service sector needs guidance on specific sustainability strategies due to a gap between the status quo in the industry and the target state set by science and politics.

### Background and Method

The presentation will give insights into the food service sector's status quo with respect to sustainable nutrition or more specifically, the implementation of sustainable strategies. Furthermore, the normative requirements for sustainability in form of a mission statement, called "sustainable food services" are discussed. We perceive this mission statement as a means to transfer current political demands (as in the SDG of the UN) into the sector. It could serve as a model for the entire food service sector to support and facilitate implementing aspects of sustainability into business practices.

The mission statement is derived from the current debate about sustainability in the food catering sector as well as from existing normative structures. Therefore, a participation procedure is necessary, including the following steps (Graf and Spengler 2000):

- 1. Analysis** - Desk research for an objective definition through the analysis of the target state (set of values, the normative basis) and the status quo of sustainability in the hospitality and food service sector.
- 2. Development** – of the mission statement draft within an interdisciplinary research consortium
- 3. Evaluation** and further development of the mission statement draft in Stakeholder dialogues, expert workshops and with with practice partners of the project to create compliance and acceptance.

Figure 1: Steps of the participation procedure to develop the mission statement

### Results

The following eight topics are included in the proposed and discussed mission statement. These guidelines are embedded in general values, which are e. g., the acceptance of the planetary boundaries as a limiting framework, acting socially responsible in the company, in the region and in global value chains as well as taking responsibility for the promotion of a healthy diet of the customers.



Figure 2: Key principles of the mission statement „sustainable food service“

### Conclusion

The proposed structure of the mission statement were discussed in participative stakeholder dialogues. Results indicate that a more concrete distinction of the basic values and guiding principles are needed due to interdependencies and target conflicts between the individual dimensions of sustainability. However, at the management level, sustainability should be substantiated by a mission statement with superior long-term goals and sustainable levels.

To reduce complexity and meet the challenges of anchoring the eight key principles of sustainability we suggest to use classical management tools which will help to break down the key principles to company- and management-level. Therefore, determination of a strategy, the formulation of short-, medium- and long-term goals, the definition of measures and individual performance indicators as well as the implementation into a continuous improvement process, is necessary. While the mission statement and strategy integrate the interests of internal and external stakeholders, goals, measures and key figures are set out concretely by the company's implementation. Results of the implementation in everyday companies practice can be discussed at the conference.

#### References

- EU Commission – European Commission (2011) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe. COM (2011) final. Brussels.
- Gebauer J, Hoffmann E, Westermann U (2011) Anforderungen an die Nachhaltigkeitsberichterstattung: Kriterien und Bewertungsmethode im IÖW/future-Ranking. Institut für ökologische Wirtschaftsforschung und future e.V. – Verantwortung Unternehmen (Ed.) Berlin, Münster.
- Gebauer J, Timme S (2011) Branchenkriterien Nahrungsmittelindustrie, in IÖW/future (Ed.) Anforderungen an die Nachhaltigkeitsberichterstattung: Kriterien und Bewertungsmethode im IÖW/future-Ranking. Berlin, Münster.
- Graf, P. / Spengler, M. (2000) Leitbild- und Konzeptentwicklung, Sozial Management Praxis, Augsburg.
- Vahs, Dietmar (2012) Organisation. Ein Lehr- und Managementbuch. 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Schäffer-Poeschel. Stuttgart.

SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research