

For immediate release

Thuringia's State Secretary for Economic Affairs Suckert Visits Koehler Paper in Greiz

- **Discussion regarding the attractiveness of the site for qualified skilled workers**
- **Dialogue between government and business focusing on energy and climate strategy**
- **Obstacles to local wind farm projects in Thuringia**

Oberkirch, Germany, 08/27/2025 – Mario Suckert, the State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Rural Areas of the German state of Thuringia, recently paid a visit to Koehler Paper's site in the Thuringian town of Greiz. The conversation revolved around a number of topics, including both local and national challenges regarding the recruitment of skilled workers, the company's climate strategy, and the various obstacles faced by local wind power projects in Thuringia.

Discussion regarding the attractiveness of the site for qualified skilled workers

Against the backdrop of current demographic trends, ensuring that there are enough skilled workers will be one of the biggest challenges in the coming decades. In fact, businesses in numerous sectors, including the paper industry, are already starting to deal with a labor shortage in that regard, and governmental support will be absolutely indispensable in reducing this gap. However, the Koehler Group is also being proactive in this area, and working there means being part of the company's sustainable business strategy: Its employees actively help shape the future – not only in terms of sustainable paper and energy production, but also when it comes to the environment and society. Within this context, vocational training is a great way for entry-level workers to open up good prospects for transitioning to their professional life. "At our Greiz mill, Koehler Paper provides young people with the chance to build unrivalled professional qualifications that are perfect for real-life jobs while also offering them a large variety of additional development opportunities," said Udo Hollbach, Managing Director of the Koehler Paper Greiz mill, during his talk with State Secretary Suckert.

Dialogue between government and business focusing on energy and climate strategy

During the discussion, all parties agreed that energy prices need to be competitive if production is to be kept in Germany. Udo Hollbach clarified that energy prices are a powerful lever that can be used to noticeably improve the German industry's situation and ensure job security. The company's management explicitly mentioned that there is a concrete need for action at the political level: "As a business, we need planning reliability. When it comes to the self-supply of green energy within the industry, as is being called for by politicians, we are facing immense challenges here in Greiz."



“We’re happy to see that Koehler Paper is intent on ensuring that its Greiz mill continues to grow and is accordingly expanding its own independent and environmentally friendly energy infrastructure,” Suckert said. In this regard, the energy cost relief measures passed by the German federal government are an important first step in helping improve the overall attractiveness of Germany as an industrial hub. However, the state government believes that additional relief is still necessary, with electricity rates being one example, and is accordingly pushing for the expansion of dispatchable power plant capacities that should help ensure energy security well into the future. Converting the power plant at Koehler’s site in Thuringia to fine wood fraction will save more than 24,000 metric tonnes of CO₂ per year, and represents another step towards achieving the goals set out in the Koehler Group’s Climate Strategy.

Obstacles to local wind farm projects in Thuringia

The Koehler Group has been involved with wind farm projects in the immediate vicinity of the Greiz site in Thuringia for some time now. Within this context, designating and obtaining approval for potential areas for further wind turbines is an obstacle faced by Koehler Paper's Greiz site. Generating local green electricity is essential for securing the location's long-term future. After all, as a family business, the Koehler Group has always thought in terms of generations, rather than quarters.



Figure: Dialogue between the political and business spheres: Mario Suckert, Thuringia's State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Rural Areas, recently paid a visit to Koehler Paper's site in Greiz. From left to right: Lars-Helge Peters (Mill Director of the Koehler Paper Greiz mill), Mario Suckert (Thuringia's State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Rural Areas), and Udo Hollbach (Managing Director of the Koehler Paper Greiz mill). Source: Koehler Group



2030 Sustainability Strategy

With its climate strategy, the Koehler Group is helping achieve sustainable development goals in the area of climate and environmental protection. The climate strategy roadmap sets out how the company plans to fully replace fossil fuels with renewable energy.

Koehler Paper SE

Hauptstraße 2 · 77704 Oberkirch · Germany · Phone +49 7802 81-0 · Fax +49 7802 81-4330 · www.koehlerpaper.com

Sitz: D-77704 Oberkirch · Amtsgericht Freiburg i. Br. · HRB 722393

Vorstand: Kai Furler (Vorsitzender), Dr. Stefan Karrer, Frank Lendowski · Vorsitzender des Aufsichtsrats: Wolfgang Furler

About the Koehler Group

The Koehler Group was founded in 1807 and has been family-run from that moment to the present day. The group's core business activity lies in the development and production of high-quality specialty paper. This includes—among others—thermal paper, playing card board, beverage coasters, fine paper, carbon-less paper, recycled paper, decor paper, wood pulp board, sublimation paper, and also innovative specialty paper for the packaging industry. In Germany, the Koehler Group employs around 2,500 people across five production sites, with three additional sites in the USA. The group operates internationally, with an export share of around 70% in 2023, and brings in an annual turnover of around 1.1 billion euros.

As an energy-intensive company, Koehler invests in renewable energy projects such as wind energy, hydropower, photovoltaics, and biomass with its Koehler Renewable Energy business unit. The Koehler Group has set a goal of producing more energy from renewable sources by 2030 than is required for its paper production operations.

With its Koehler Innovative Solutions division, the Koehler Group is collaborating with start-ups to promote innovations in the core business segments “paper” and “renewable energy”.

Find more information at: <https://www.koehler.com>

Your contact person:

Alexander M. Stöckle

Koehler Group press contact

Phone: +49 7802 81-4749

e-mail: alexander.stoeckle@koehler.com