

Annual Review

#WernerSobek #2024

Sustainability – The Work of Generations



Hello,

The climate crisis continued to intensify in 2024 against the backdrop of significant local and global political events. Reports of severe forest fires, torrential downpours and record-breaking heatwaves now arrive one after another at an ever-increasing pace. In the words of our founder, Prof. Werner Sobek, **“in the face of the climate crisis and the continually expanding world population, we must make it our goal to create an appropriate built environment around the globe with fewer materials and zero emissions.”** This **guiding principle** is one we have long been committed to ourselves. Indeed, the construction industry is the **largest emitter of greenhouse gases** on the planet, and we as **designers and planners are both able and obligated to take action**. Moreover, as a truly sustainable future cannot be built without such values as **diversity and social justice for all**, we can and must do our bit to promote these virtues wherever possible.

We are delighted that, despite challenging conditions, we are still succeeding in taking numerous small steps towards building up our contribution to achieving sustainability. We are also excited to see what we can accomplish as we unite our efforts over the coming twelve months. **Let us now get to work together with open minds and a clear goal in our sights that of using our actions to make the world a little better every day.**

Roland Bechmann

Dipl.-Ing. Roland Bechmann
CEO and Partner of Werner Sobek AG

P.S.: If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, please feel free to write to us at feedback@wernersobek.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Review 2024

We set off into 2024 by taking lots of little steps towards greater sustainability. In January we had the pleasure of hosting the [Stuttgarter Nachhaltigkeitsstammtisch](#) at our office. This event saw nearly a hundred interested designers and planners from a variety of firms coming together to exchange ideas in our Social Area and hear thought-provoking presentations on such topics as “Straw Bale Construction” (Zimmererei Grünspecht) and “Recycled Construction Materials” (Prof. Dirk Hebel from KIT).

In February we took part in the pro-democracy, pro-diversity [#gemeinsamdafür](#) social media campaign in the run-up to the European elections.

Engagement in this kind of initiative is particularly important to us, not least because our company is international and decidedly diverse. In fact, our staff of around 500 colleagues hails from over 40 different countries and nearly half of them are female.

Another example of the varied composition of our workforce can also be seen in our young teams that operate in such locations as [Berlin](#) and [Frankfurt am Main](#).

As you might expect, the [promotional films](#) both of these offices produced were especially well received by our followers on social media!



Stefanie Weidner (Copyright: Janine Kyofsky)

Our Female Managing Director Dr. Stefanie Weidner:

On 1 August 2024, we took yet another step towards greater diversity by welcoming Dr Stefanie Weidner to our Executive Board. This renowned sustainability specialist previously served as the [Director of Werner Sobek København](#), where she was inspired by the pioneering Danish attitude to all things sustainability.

Denmark's own [Kasper Køppen](#) – an expert with a great deal of local know-how when it comes to creating sustainable supporting structures – has now taken the helm of our Copenhagen office in her stead.

One of Dr Weidner's first official acts as our new board member came about in September when she signed a [WWF discussion paper](#) on the German Federal Government's "[National Circular Economy Strategy](#)". She explained that the decision to steer our company into more active involvement in the political discourse was a result of the fact that "**we at Werner Sobek AG consider it our responsibility to create a sustainable environment**". A further example of political engagement subsequently arose with the publication of the "[Manifesto for a Change of Course in Building Sector Climate Politics](#)" – a document that Prof. Werner Sobek helped author and was among the very first to sign.

Stefanie Weidner's dedication to promoting sustainability was recognised in November 2024 when she won the [German Leadership Award](#) from the ULI. In his prize-giving speech, Felix Grelck, the Managing Director of Development at Momeni Group, described Dr Weidner as a "preeminent representative of a new generation of young leaders". This was a wonderful compliment and a tremendous honour for our executive to receive.

Gold Medal for Prof. Werner Sobek:

During the year, prizes were also bestowed on our company's founder and on a number of projects we have undertaken as a firm. In September, for instance, Prof. Werner Sobek was accorded the **Gold Medal of the Institution of Structural Engineers (IstructE)**. This distinction honours individuals who have made unique, outstanding contributions to the advancement of structural engineering as a discipline.



Prof. Werner Sobek (Copyright: René Müller)

Yet another step towards sustainable planning and design also came about this year in the form of the **Building Resource Passport**

(Gebäuderessourcenpass). Since the spring, this initiative has enabled us to provide developers with even more comprehensive information about the potential measures they can take to increase the climate-compatibility of existing buildings.



PlusEnergy Quarter P18 (Copyright: Zooey Braun)

Iconic Award & German Solar Prize for P18:

In October, our highly acclaimed P18 PlusEnergy Quarter project in the Bad Cannstatt borough of Stuttgart added to its collection of accolades when it received the much sought-after **2024 Iconic Award** in the “Innovative Architecture” category. This was then followed in November by the **2024 German Solar Prize** in the category “Solar Architecture and Urban Development”.

These special awards are particularly meaningful to us as they recognise the achievements of a piece of work that is very close to our hearts thanks to its trailblazing nature.

Timber Construction Award for Fuchshofstraße School:

The Fuchshofstraße Primary School project in Ludwigsburg (architecture by VON M) was also granted numerous honours after its completion. In April 2024, for example, it was named among the group of brilliant winners of the **Baden-Württemberg Timber Construction Award**. The following month, the hybrid development made of timber, steel and reinforced concrete was then presented with the **Hugo Häring State Prize**. We are very pleased to have received this recognition for such a sustainable project!



Fuchshofstraße Primary School (Copyright: Zooey Braun)



Werner Sobek AG
Albstraße 14, 70597 Stuttgart (DE)
Tel +49.711.76750-0, newsletter@wernersobek.com

CEOs: Dipl.-Ing. Roland Bechmann, Prof. Dr.-Ing. M.Arch. Lucio Blandini, Dipl.-Ing. Stephen Hagenmayer, Dr.-Ing. Stefanie Weidner, Prof. Dr.-Ing. Thomas Winterstetter

Trade Register: Stuttgart, HRB 756874

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