

# GREEN FINANCE FRAMEWORK

February 2025



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. About Burgenland Energie

Burgenland Energie Group (“Burgenland Energie”) is one of the leading energy service companies in Austria increasingly focusing on sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions within its business activities such as generation of electricity and heat, sale and distribution of electricity, natural gas and heat, and the provision of energy-related services. The activities of the Burgenland Energie Group are focused on the province of Burgenland. In this environment, the energy provider Burgenland Energie Group is of particular importance:

In year 2021 the Burgenland Energie together with the Federal State of Burgenland has set the goal of achieving climate neutrality in Burgenland by 2030 and taking on a pioneering role as one of the first climate-neutral regions in Europe. The majority of greenhouse gas emissions in Burgenland are caused by the transport, building and energy sectors. In order to achieve the ambitious goal of “climate neutrality by 2030”, a total of around 2 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> need to be saved in Burgenland. In light of this target sensible solutions are needed in many areas, such as renewable energy production, e-mobility, energy efficiency and energy saving, as well as enabling the heating transition.

Since 2020 installed capacities in wind generation has increased from 1.171 MW to 1.440 MW (+23%) as of 30th September 2024 and from 90 MWp to 490 MWp in photovoltaic generation (PV) in the Federal State of Burgenland. In the same period electricity consumption decreased by 10% to approx. 1.598 GWh and gas consumption by even 25% to 1.750 GWh.

With the aim of becoming a pioneer in the field of GreenTech, Burgenland Energie is focusing its energy generation increasingly on renewable sources such as wind, PV and biomass. This should not only reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but also make an important contribution to the energy transition. Through innovative technologies and investments in green infrastructure, the company aims to shape a sustainable energy future and offer its customers a climate-friendly energy supply.

An optimal supply of energy is a prerequisite for the sustainable positive economic development of a region. As a leading company in the region Burgenland Energie is an important employer and a significant market player due to the demand for intermediary goods and services. Regardless of the energy source, Burgenland Energie supports its customers with a comprehensive range of services in the efficient use of energy. The declared goal of Burgenland Energie, as well as of the Austrian energy industry as a whole, is to ensure a secure supply of energy in the future that is as environmentally friendly and as cost-effective as possible.

With the clear goal of being one of the leading GreenTech companies in Europe, we have acted and continue to act as an innovation driver for the energy transition of an entire region.

## 1.2. Burgenland Energie's Sustainability Contribution

Climate change is one of the world's greatest challenges and energy service companies have the opportunity to make a major contribution to the goal set in the Paris Agreement<sup>1</sup> to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. Burgenland Energie's electricity generation is purely based on renewables.

Group Burgenland Energie has increased its installed capacity in Wind generation from 462 MW in 2021 to 674 MW in 2024 (+29%) as well as in PV generation capacity from 8 MW to 146 MW (x18,25). The electricity generation has risen to 1.316 GWh in Wind (+44%) and 66 GWh in PV (x8,25) in that period. As of 30th September 2024 Group Burgenland Energie's electricity production therefore accounts for more than 85% of Land Burgenland's total electricity consumption.

During the last 4 years Burgenland Energie therefore not only remained Austria's largest producer of wind energy, but also will become the number 1 in photovoltaics in 2025 and further strives its transformation to a leading green tech company with an European focus.

To emphasize its commitment to sustainable development, Burgenland Energie has updated its investment program from 2025-2030 within its "Strategy 2030". In sum, more than one billion euros will be invested in Burgenland by 2030, divided in four growth areas as in the past 5 years: renewable energy generation – wind and photovoltaics –, grid expansion, digitalization, and customer services. More than half of this volume is earmarked for the expansion of the electricity grid. For our population Burgenland Energie acts as an enabler of establishing Renewable Energy Communities. For a renewable energy community, at least two participants join forces to produce and use energy together. Households can produce, store, use and sell renewable electricity across property boundaries. More participants means more savings without additional effort. Burgenland Energie promotes the formation of energy communities through the "SonnenAbo" program. Energy communities lease photovoltaic systems on a long-term basis in order to use locally generated solar power. This is done without one-off investment costs, but at a monthly lease price. This supports the motto "Locally produced, locally consumed". In an even larger scale the non-profit association "Fanclub Burgenland Energieunabhängig (FC BE)" promotes a sustainable energy supply in Burgenland through renewable energies. The Bürgerenergiegemeinschaft (BEG) offers members the opportunity to purchase electricity as well as sell the electricity they generate themselves. The members - private individuals, companies, farms and municipalities - want to actively contribute to the energy transition and benefit from sustainable energy. As a member, you enjoy favorable prices for wind and solar power and remain covered by your energy supply contract during unfavourable weather conditions.

In its business activities, Burgenland Energie complies with the strict EU environmental and bird protection regulations that apply to wind farms. In addition to that, Burgenland Energie has introduced "Maßnahmenpakt Ornithologie" program in which it monitors the population, breeding success and use of space of birds. Here, additional studies on the

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<sup>1</sup> The Paris Agreement – UNFCCC: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

population development of the protected species of the bird sanctuary are carried out.

Likewise, there is an ongoing collision monitoring for bats. Furthermore, Burgenland Energie has created compensation areas to protect bird life, especially the imperial eagle. With these special protection programs, Burgenland Energie goes one step further and makes an important contribution to the preservation of nature and a livable, sustainable environment and takes important steps in environmental and animal protection.

Burgenland Energie is actively committed to preserving and promoting biodiversity. A key example of this is the introduction of the Agri-Photovoltaic (Agri-PV) system, which enables the sustainable multiple use of agricultural land. Numerous studies have proven the positive effect of ground-mounted PV on biodiversity:

- The combination of solar power production and agriculture reduces the intensity of agricultural use, creating additional habitats and thus promoting biodiversity.
- The greening under the PV systems also contributes to soil health and groundwater formation, while providing protection against extreme weather conditions such as hail, drought and flooding.
- The PV modules and materials used can be fully recycled.
- The properties contribute to the sustainable multiple use of land and offer ecological and economic benefits.
- Flexible PV system designs enable a wide range of agricultural uses from crop cultivation to animal husbandry.
- The modules used perform a shading function and protect the crop from extreme solar radiation. This leads to higher yields and reduced irrigation requirements for crops.
- no land sealing: The PV modules are installed on piles without sealing the surface. The module elevation on piles only require 1% of the total system area.

These measures underline Burgenland Energie's efforts to reconcile both ecological and economic benefits and to strengthen regional biodiversity.

### 1.3. Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Burgenland Energie supports and seeks to contribute to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals ("SDGs") that are part of the Agenda 2030. Burgenland Energie's investments are mainly focused on three goals – "Affordable and clean energy (SDG 7)", "Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9)", and "Climate action (SDG 13)". Still, in its daily operations, Burgenland Energie is mindful of further SDGs that affect its employees, the communities and the environment, such as "Quality education (SDG 4)", "Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)", "Life on land (SDG 15)", and "Partnerships for the goals (SDG 17)".



#### SDG 4 – Quality Education

Success in achieving the climate and energy targets is closely linked to the involvement of the local population. The company therefore relies on strong awareness-raising measures and education, but also supports educational programs for young people and interested adults. Within the company, Burgenland Energie relies on highly qualified employees who undergo continuous further training through a variety of training programs and offer the best possible quality in all business areas. Training programs are also developed and implemented together with partners. Derived from the "Change" corporate strategy, a new positioning of training and further education was defined within the company. The "GreenTech Empowerment" course was launched together with the Burgenland University of Applied Sciences, the WIFI and other educational partners. In this way, we want to counteract the shortage of skilled workers in the long term and strengthen Burgenland as a business location in the long term. As a pioneer on the path to climate neutrality and energy independence, we are increasingly focusing on educational projects for children and young people in order to raise awareness of the environment, climate and renewable energies. After all, our children and grandchildren are also needed for the energy future.



#### SDG 7 – Affordable and clean energy

The core business activity of Burgenland Energie is the secure supply of clean energy at fair prices to the people of Burgenland. The main aim is to expand capacities in the wind and photovoltaic energy sector by 2030. With these renewable generation plants, the company supplies renewable electricity for all inhabitants of the region. And this is precisely where we see ourselves as a strong partner, networker and supporter and are ready with innovative green and affordable products, contracting or subscription models as well as service offerings for private individuals, companies and municipalities so that an energy policy transformation

of all areas of life can succeed. One particular innovation worth mentioning here is the founding of the community energy association “Fanclub Burgenland Energieunabhängig”. The FC BE enables members to purchase locally generated wind and solar power at attractive conditions. Organized as a non-profit association based in Mattersburg, the fan club aims to promote the region's energy independence and ensure a sustainable energy supply.



### **SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth**

The companies of the Burgenland Energie Group offer their employees not only secure and sought-after jobs, but also excellent training and further education opportunities as well as attractive development prospects. Under the motto “My apprenticeship with full energy”, an apprenticeship initiative was launched years ago, offering young people the opportunity to receive top training in commercial, technical and industrial apprenticeships. In the course of implementing its strategic goals, the company is creating jobs for highly qualified people in Burgenland and is making a significant contribution to economic growth in Burgenland. In Burgenland alone, 4,600 green jobs are associated with the company's business activities.



### **SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

Burgenland Energie is investing significantly in Burgenland's infrastructure in order to maintain security of supply at a very high level and to open up white spots in broadband expansion in Burgenland. Together with partners, promising innovation projects for the future of energy are being implemented. These range from new smart products and the use of digital technologies to research projects. To this end, Burgenland Energie is also a co-sponsor of the Green Energy Lab, a research initiative for a sustainable energy system. In addition, Burgenland Energie operates the energy grid in Burgenland and invests heavily in its grid infrastructure to meet the demand of a renewable energy system.



### **SDG 13 – Climate action**

The success of the energy transition and the transformation of the energy system is central to achieving climate neutrality and the climate targets. The implementation of the Change Strategy is therefore an active contribution by Burgenland Energie to climate protection. Burgenland Energie AG calculates its annual corporate carbon footprint to monitor its greenhouse gas emissions. The Green Tech BioCampus of Burgenland Energie and PANNATURA has the motto “A journey into the future of energy”. In future, this educational facility will show children in Burgenland how nature, landscape and energy production can be reconciled.



### **SDG 15 Life on land**

As part of the expansion of renewable generation capacities, the company is focusing not only on compliance with all legal requirements but also on accompanying measures that protect life on land and promote an increase in biodiversity. Multiple use concepts, such as agrivoltaics, focus on the dual use of land for energy generation and agricultural use.



### **SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals**

Burgenland Energie relies on strong regional partners to achieve its corporate goals. After all, joint efforts are necessary for the success of the energy transition and the achievement of climate targets. In addition to many years of close cooperation with regional electricians and installers, the company also works intensively with municipalities and commercial enterprises on sustainable projects.



## 2. The Green Finance Framework

As part of its broad commitment to sustainability, Burgenland Energie first published its Green Finance Framework in 2021 to highlight its focus on shifting capital resources towards environmentally friendly projects. To stay aligned with shifting expectations, best market practices, and to broaden the Eligible Green Assets in line with Burgenland Energie's evolving sustainability strategy, the Green Finance Framework has been updated in 2025. This Green Finance Framework ("Framework") has been developed in alignment with the ICMA Green Bond Principles 2021 ("GBP")<sup>2</sup> and the LMA/APLMA/LSTA Green Loan Principles 2023 ("GLP")<sup>3</sup>. The Framework is applicable for issuance of Green Financing instruments including Green Schuldscheindarlehen, Green Bonds and Green Loans where net proceeds will exclusively be applied to finance or re-finance, in part or in full, new and/or existing Eligible Assets with clear environmental benefits.

The Green Finance Framework is aligned with the four core components of the GBP:

- Use of Proceeds
- Process for Asset Evaluation and Selection
- Management of Proceeds
- Reporting

As such the Framework will be updated by Burgenland Energie from time to time to reflect current market practices and potential updates in the GBP.

Furthermore, the Framework is reviewed by an external impartial firm, ISS Corporate Solutions, that has provided the second opinion confirming the alignment of Burgenland Energie's Green Finance Framework with the GBP, GLP and on best effort basis with the EU Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act<sup>4</sup>. The Framework together with the second party opinion is available on the issuer's webpage<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Green Bond Principles published in June 2021 (with June 2022 Appendix 1) are voluntary process guidelines for issuing green bonds established by International Capital Markets Association (ICMA): <https://www.icmagroup.org/assets/documents/Sustainable-finance/2022-updates/Green-Bond-Principles-June-2022-060623.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Green Loan Principles build on and refer to the Green Bond Principles (GBP) of the International Capital Market Association, with a view to promoting consistency across financial markets: <https://www.lsta.org/content/green-loan-principles/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R2139>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.energieburgenland.at/unternehmen/facts-figures/geschaeftszahlen>




## 2.1. Use of Proceeds

An amount equivalent to the net proceeds raised by the issuance of Green Financing Instruments will be used to finance or re-finance, in part or in full, new or existing Eligible Assets providing distinct environmental benefits (“Eligible Green Assets”).

Eligible Green Assets may comprise of physical assets and capital expenditures, as well as investments in ‘pure player’<sup>6</sup> companies specialized in any of the below eligible Green Asset Categories.

For projects to be eligible, the EU Taxonomy’s Technical Screening Criteria (“TSC”) for Substantial Contribution (“SC”) to Climate Change Mitigation must be respected. In addition, Burgenland Energie strives to comply with the applicable Do No Significant Harm (“DNSH”) and Minimum Safeguards (“MS”) requirements on a best-effort basis.

**Eligible Green Assets relevant for use under the Framework include:**

Eligible Category	Eligibility Criteria	EU Taxonomy objective and activity	SDG Target
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	Investments in or expenditures for the acquisition, construction, development, operation, installation, storage, transmission and distribution as well as re-powering of renewable energy production, including:	<b>Climate Change Mitigation</b>	
	Solar Photovoltaic electricity generation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open space installations</li> <li>▪ Roof installations</li> <li>▪ Dedicated support infrastructure installations</li> </ul>		<i>4.1. Electricity generation using solar PV technology</i> 
	Wind power electricity generation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Onshore wind power plants</li> <li>▪ Re-powering / refurbishment of existing wind power plants</li> </ul>		<i>4.3. Electricity generation from wind power</i> 
Transmission and distribution of electricity complying with at least one of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the system is the interconnected European system;</li> </ul>	<i>4.9. Transmission and distribution of electricity</i> 		

<sup>6</sup> At least 90% of the revenue of the company derives from activities falling in any of the Eligible Green Category. Moreover, the part of the turnover that is not classified as “green” is not allowed to be in any of the excluded sectors that are on the Exclusion list of the current framework.

- b) more than 67% of newly enabled generation capacity in the system is below the generation threshold value of 100 gCO<sub>2</sub>e/kWh measured on a life cycle basis in accordance with electricity generation criteria, over a rolling five-year period;
- c) the average system grid emissions factor is below the threshold value of 100 gCO<sub>2</sub>e/kWh measured on a life cycle basis over a rolling five-year period;

Electricity storage (e.g. batteries)<sup>7</sup>

#### 4.10. Storage of electricity



## Exclusions

Burgenland Energie commits to use the proceeds of the Green Financing Instruments only for Eligible Green Assets described in the use of proceeds section above and explicitly excludes financing of fossil fuel generation, nuclear energy generation, the weapons and defense industries, gambling or tobacco industries.

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<sup>7</sup> The electricity stored will come from 100% renewable sources.

## 2.2. Process for Asset Evaluation and Selection

To ensure that allocations are made to Eligible Green Assets as specified in the use of proceeds section above, Burgenland Energie has established a Green Finance Committee (“GFC”), consisting of members of Burgenland Energie’s Finance, Sustainability and Project Management teams.

Only projects/assets which are approved by all members of the GFC can be selected as Eligible Green Assets. After approval by the committee, Eligible Green Assets will be recorded in a Green Asset Register which will be managed by the so called “external controllers” of the respective operating companies (e.g. generation, grids, etc.) within the group.

The Green Finance Committee will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the potential Eligible Green Assets are aligned with the categories and eligibility criteria as specified in the Use of Proceeds section above, and approving any proposed changes to the List of Eligible Green Assets in the event that the assets no longer meet the eligibility criteria
- Ensuring that the allocations are aligned with the relevant general company policies and company’s ESG strategy
- Approving the annual Allocation and Impact Report

The GFC meets at least on an annual basis and until full allocation.

### ESG Risks

As part of its broader risk management approach, potential impacts such as energy consumption, resource use, biodiversity, and occupational health and safety are evaluated, and corresponding mitigation steps if required are implemented. Burgenland Energie’s overarching objective is to mitigate these risks through ongoing initiatives and strategic measures.

For its projects Burgenland Energie regularly conducts Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) as part of its ESG risk management to identify and evaluate key environmental risks. For each project the environmental impact, and the measures to avoid or mitigate these impacts need to be evaluated. Additionally, a climate and energy concept contributes to climate protection and energy efficiency, and a soil protection concept promotes increased awareness of preventive soil protection and reduced land use.

As a group Burgenland Energie operates under a Code of Conduct that underscores its commitment to responsible corporate conduct and high standards of environmental, social, and ethical practices when engaging with its suppliers.

## 2.3. Management of Proceeds

An amount equal to the net proceeds raised by the Green Financing Instruments will be allocated to Eligible Green Assets as specified in this Framework. Burgenland Energie will establish a Green Asset Register in relation to Green Financing Instruments issued by Burgenland Energie for the purpose of monitoring the Eligible Green Assets and the allocation of the net proceeds from Green Financing Instruments to Eligible Green Assets.<sup>8</sup> The Green Asset Register will form the basis for the impact reporting described in Section 5.

All Green Financing Instruments issued by Burgenland Energie will be managed on a portfolio level. This means that a Green Financing Instrument will not be linked directly to one (or more) pre-determined Eligible Green Assets. Burgenland Energie Treasury Department will be responsible for keeping track and ensuring that there are sufficient Eligible Green Assets included in the Green Asset Register matched to the proceeds of Green Financing Instruments until full allocation. Additionally, the approved Eligible Green Assets will be earmarked as “green” in a profit-center manner within the company.

Any portion of the net proceeds of Green Financing Instrument that have not been allocated to Eligible Green Assets in the Green Asset Register will be held in accordance with Burgenland Energie’s normal liquidity management policies and guidelines in money market products, such as cash and/or cash equivalents and/or bank deposits.

Burgenland Energie plans, on a best effort basis, to fully allocate the proceeds of its Green Financing Instruments within 24 months upon issuance.

This framework completes and replaces the Green Finance Framework published in 2021. Eligible Green Assets complying with the latest version of this Framework will be added to the existing Eligible Green Asset Portfolio.

As this framework may evolve from time to time to consider the evolution of market standards and regulation, the green assets must meet the eligibility criteria at the time they are added to the Green Asset Register. Any new Green Financing instruments shall be aligned with the most recent version of the Framework.

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<sup>8</sup> In case a Green Financing Instrument has multiple tranches, each tranche is clearly labelled and tracked.

## 2.4. Reporting

To be fully transparent towards Green investors and other market stakeholders, Burgenland Energie commits to publish an Allocation and Impact Report within 12 months of issuance and then annually until full allocation and on a timely basis in case of material developments. The report will cover the entirety of assets financed under this framework, it will be publicly available on Burgenland Energie's website<sup>9</sup> and will cover the following areas:

### Allocation of proceeds reporting

The allocation report will provide:

- ✓ Total amount of Green Financing Instruments issued
- ✓ Share of proceeds allocated/ yet unallocated
- ✓ Breakdown by eligible category and subcategory
- ✓ The EU Taxonomy environmental objective and activity
- ✓ The geographic distribution of Eligible Green Assets
- ✓ Examples of Eligible Green Assets that have been financed or refinanced (project name and location, if not of sensitive nature)

### Impact reporting

Where feasible, and on a best effort basis, Burgenland Energie will provide an impact report which may include below criteria indicating environmental impact for the total amount of Green Eligible Assets covering:

Eligible Categories	Example of Possible Key Performance Indicators
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Installed renewable energy capacity (MW)</li> <li>▪ Renewable energy produced (MWh)</li> <li>▪ Estimated annual GHG emission reduced/avoided (tCO<sub>2</sub>e)</li> <li>▪ Additional renewable energy capacity connected to the grid (MW)</li> <li>▪ Additional energy storage capacity installed or acquired (MWh)</li> </ul>

For investments in partially-owned pure player entities, aligned with the Eligible Green Asset categories described in section 2.1., the impact will be calculated on a pro-rata basis based on the share of ownership. Where impact data is reported, details of the methodology applied in compiling the data will be disclosed in the report.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.energieburgenland.at/unternehmen/facts-figures/geschaeftszahlen>

## 2.5. External review

### Second party opinion (pre-issuance)

To confirm the transparency and robustness of Burgenland Energie's Green Finance Framework the Framework has been reviewed by an external second party opinion provider ISS Corporate Solutions, confirming the alignment with the ICMA Green Bond Principles and EU Taxonomy. The second party opinion by ISS Corporate Solutions is available on the Burgenland Energie website<sup>10</sup> together with this Framework.

### Audit of the Allocation Report (post-issuance)

Allocation of the proceeds will be subject for an annual review by an independent auditor confirming that an amount equal to the net proceeds of Green Financing Instruments has been allocated to Eligible Green Assets. A verification report provided by the external auditor will be published on company's website.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.burgenlandenergie.at/de/ueber-uns/geschaeftszahlen/>

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