

Building a sustainable business in a changing world



Edrington
United Kingdom
2009 > Ongoing



Objective

Carbon commitments:

- To achieve a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030.
- To achieve Net Zero by 2045.
- To reduce location-based intensity by 50% by 2030.

Environment commitments:

- To replenish 100% of water consumption from production sites in the Dominican Republic by 2030.
- To manage process water use annually to 12.5-25l/lpa across production sites by 2025 (SWA).
- To ensure that all packaging is sustainably sourced and widely recyclable by 2025.
- Increase the percentage of paper and board secondary packaging made from recycled material to 75% by 2030.
- To achieve zero waste to landfill from operations by 2025.
- To advocate sustainable wood sourcing by tracing oak supply to region of origin in Europe by 2025 and US by 2030.
- To execute a nature and wildlife strategy across all Edrington sites.
- Increase the biodiversity units at The Macallan and The Glenrothes sites by 10% by 2030.

Description

Edrington has worked for more than a century and a half to build a responsible and sustainable business that makes a positive contribution to society. Edrington is committed to actions that will

improve the sustainability of its industry and the natural environment it relies on.

2009 to 2020 Sustainability Agenda

Since Edrington believes that it can achieve more by working together it structured its sustainability agenda around the Scotch Whisky Association's (SWA) Environmental Strategy. The SWA's strategy was launched in 2009, revised in 2016 and set sustainability targets for 2020.

In addition to this, where it is appropriate for its business, Edrington aligned its sustainability agenda to the principles of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

The 2009 to 2020 targets focus on energy, emissions, water, waste, packaging and the supply chain.

Actions taken to achieve the targets

- In 2013, the Helius CoRDe biomass combined heat and power plant was completed. The plant uses distillery by-products to produce 7.25 megawatts of renewable electricity for the National Grid (enough electricity to power 9,000 homes). It also turns pot ale into high value protein for animal feed.
- Edrington reviewed the systems and heating at its Glasgow headquarters which reduced energy consumption by 20% in 2014. This also resulted in eliminating an estimated 375 tonnes of CO2 emissions.
- During 2012, the Famous Grouse pioneered the use of new glass technology to create a new bottle that is 14% lighter than before. The new bottle saves more than 2,000 tonnes of glass a year and lowers carbon emissions by around 14%, reducing the energy used in production and transportation.
- Edrington works with logistics partners to minimise its environmental impact. Edrington's supply chain requires an extensive logistics network, it prioritises journeys by sea, preferring Scottish ports and ships that run on low sulphur fuel. Within the UK, it seeks to transport goods by rail wherever possible.

2020 Sustainability Agenda

In May 2019, Edrington announced its new sustainability strategy, which reflects existing commitments. In 2020, the sustainability strategy was revised, sharpening the focus on the environment.

The new environmental sustainability strategy identifies five focus areas which are:

- Sustain Wood (new)
- Protect Water (previously protecting water resources)
- Reduce Carbon Emissions (previously cutting carbon emissions)
- Promote Circular Economy (previously working with suppliers)
- Conserve Habitats (new)

Sustain Wood

The use and management of wood is central to Edrington's business from the oaks used to create the casks, to the packaging and marketing materials. However, the supply of oak is at risk of climate change impact due to increased risks of wildfires and drought.

To help with early identification of potential supply chain issues and allow time to react accordingly, Edrington is:

- Working with wood partners to understand wood origin.

- Sourcing from sustainably managed areas with the aim of 50% of all Oak sourced from PEFC/FSC suppliers by 2030.
- Working to ensure full traceability of its oak supply.
- Developing strong relationships with oak suppliers.
- Continuing to responsibly manage the lifecycle of its casks.

Protect Water

Edrington is custodian of a scarce natural resource that is an essential ingredient in all its spirits. It has invested in biological water treatment plants in both Scotland and the Dominican Republic to ensure high-quality water is returned to rivers.

It is committed to replenishing water consumption from its production sites in the Dominican Republic, which is designated a water-stressed area. Edrington is:

- Cutting water use in the production and bottling facilities.
- Working with sugar cane suppliers to ensure that water is used efficiently.
- Pursuing ISO 46001 certification for water efficiency management systems by 2025.
- Implementing projects to restore and protect watersheds such as reforestation and rural communities' wastewater treatment and supporting a more efficient water use at our production sites.

In Scotland, Edrington is working to reduce process water use and aims to maintain an 'excellent' rating (the highest possible standard) from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency for the abstraction and return of water.

Reduce Carbon Emissions

Edrington is committed to reducing emissions and their carbon reduction strategy is consistent with aim of limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5°C (a key element of the Climate Pact signed at the COP26 global climate summit). To achieve this it:

- Works with the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) and the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). It also incorporates the Taskforce for Climate Related Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations into reporting.
- Entered into a renewable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) backed by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGOs) to supply all electricity for UK owned sites from October 2021.
- Uses low carbon biomethane (produced from distillery co-product) at The Glenrothes and The Macallan distilleries, with Renewable Gas Guarantees from Origins (RGGOs) confirming the source since 2021.
- Purchased CER certificates in 2021 to reduce the burden of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the Dominican Republic.
- Rolled out further energy submeters to improve site energy management with all electricity streams at the Highland Park and Macallan sites being captured.
- Installed a new heat recovery system at Glenrothes Distillery in 2023.

Promote Circular Economy

Edrington works with its suppliers so every key raw material it buys meets an independent standard for social and environmental performance which is essential to Edrington's success. The environmental strategy reflects a commitment to ensure that the business is maximising its ability to reduce, re-use and re-cycle materials used for its products.

Edrington is taking steps to ensure that all packaging is sustainably sourced and widely recyclable and to achieve zero waste to landfill from its own operations. To do this it:

- Produced the Environmental Sustainability Guide to aid with action and dialogue. All main supply chain partners are engaged in the process.
- Focused on reusing all co-products from the distillation process. Excess co-products are sent to its biogas supplier to be used in the biogas production process.
- Achieved zero waste to landfill at its main Glasgow bottling and production site.
- Aims to use packaging with low environmental impact whilst meeting the premium consumer demand for bottles and packaging that convey the heritage and value of the spirit.
- Aims to source cardboard only from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accredited suppliers and for it to be fully recyclable.
- Aims to create innovative designs that are efficient in the use of glass, increase recycled glass content and reduce weight of existing products.
- Aims to reduce packaging weight.
- Aims to sustainably source and recycle all marketing materials and point of sale.

Enhance Biodiversity

Edrington's distilleries and associated land are located in beautiful natural landscapes. It has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that the environment is maintained and that it supports and develops the landscapes and biodiversity. Edrington is:

- Executing nature and wildlife strategies across all its sites that will significantly reduce carbon and improve biodiversity.
- Actively developing the 3,000 acres of its own land to improve the environment.
- Focussing on restoring the peat bogs in Orkney through an extended regeneration programme.

Edrington Brands and Sustainability

Each of Edrington brands has its own sustainability strategy, with its own targets and goals and each has already achieved some environmental credentials:

- **The Macallan:** It aims to be a carbon neutral estate by 2030, to have a 100% electric passenger fleet, to protect Spey Salmon population and have 100% recyclable or sustainable packaging. It currently has excellent water protection, recognised environmental management and a habitat management plan in place.
- **Highland Park:** It aims to extract peat responsibly to support environmental net gain by 2030, become carbon neutral by 2030 and ensure packaging is widely recyclable or sustainably sources by 2025. It has been restoring Hobbister peat moor for the last 24 years, which is a designated a RSPB nature reserve.
- **The Famous Grouse:** It aims to become carbon neutral by 2030, source all grain and barley sustainably by 2030 and increase recycled glass content to 50% by 2025. It has partnered with the RSPB for over 10 years.
- **Brugal:** It aims to have 100% recyclable or sustainably sourced packaging by 2025, zero waste to landfill by 2025 and replenish 100% of water consumption from production sites in water stressed areas by 2030. Currently, 50% of steam used for distillation is produced by biogas, 20% of glass bottles used in the Dominican Republic are recovered and reused and 100% of molasses sourced from local and sustainably certified suppliers.

- **Glenrothes:** It aims to execute a nature and wildlife strategy by 2025, source all packaging materials local to packing location by 2025 and source 50% of oak from PEFC/ FSC certified suppliers by 2025. Currently, co-products are repurposed into green energy and animal feed, there is 0% waste to landfill from whisky operations, all wood, paper & board is sustainably sourced from FSC accredited sources and 90% of packaging is kerbside recyclable at home.
- **Naked Malt:** It aims to remove all secondary packaging by 2027 and be carbon neutral by 2030. It currently has 100% recyclable packaging, excellent water protection (SEOA), barley sourced to highest UK standard (FSA/SAI 2.0 Platform) and sustainably sourced cork stoppers.

Partners

Helius CoRDe biomass combined heat and power plant: Helius Energy PLC and the Combination of Rothes Distillers (a consortium of distilling companies, Edrington is the largest shareholder).

Lightweight glass bottle: Zero Waste Scotland and O-I (glass supplier).

EDF provides a range of innovative route to market solutions to over 8TWh of independent generators across the UK that enable them to optimise returns from their investments.

Results

Status as of March 2024

Carbon commitments:

- To achieve a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. **Achieved.** 59% reduction.
- To reduce location-based intensity by 50% by 2030. **Achieved.** 53% reduction.
- To achieve Net Zero by 2045.

Also, the 2021 PPA meant the 50GWh of power output from six wind turbines resulted in an 1,809 tCO₂e reduction. Low carbon biomethane removed 4,188 tCO₂e from the two distilleries from 2021 onwards. CER certificates resulted in a reduction of 9,001 tCO₂e in 2021.

Environment commitments:

Water:

- To replenish 100% of water consumption from production sites in the Dominican Republic by 2030: *Not communicated.*
- To manage process water use annually to 12.5-25l/lpa across production sites by 2025 (SWA): **Achieved.** 15.9l/lpa.

Sustainable sourcing, recycling and waste:

- To ensure that all packaging is sustainably sourced and widely recyclable by 2025. *Not communicated.*
- Increase the percentage of paper and board secondary packaging made from recycled material to 75% by 2030. *New target to be implemented from FY2025.*
- To achieve zero waste to landfill from operations by 2025. *Not communicated.*

- To advocate sustainable wood sourcing by tracing oak supply to region of origin in Europe by 2025 and US by 2030. *75% of Edrington's European oak supply can now be traced back to the forest where the wood was sourced.*

Wildlife and biodiversity:

- To execute a nature and wildlife strategy across all Edrington sites. *Not communicated.*
- Increase the biodiversity units at The Macallan and The Glenrothes sites by 10% by 2030. *Not communicated.*

Results of 2020 targets

Energy (2008 baseline):

- **Source 20% of primary energy from non-fossil fuels (SWA): Achieved.** In 2018, Edrington's UK sites sourced 50% of energy renewable sources (and 30% in 2019, 31% in 2020).
- **Improve energy efficiency by 7.6% (SWA): Achieved.** In 2018, Edrington's distilleries in Scotland were 11.3% more efficient.
- **Cut CO2 emissions:** The Helius CoRDe plant saved around 18,000 tonnes of CO2 by the replacing gas previously used to dry draff. The electricity produced saves 46,000 tonnes of CO2 compared to a similarly sized coal-fired station.

Water

- **Improve distilling water efficiency by 10% (SWA): Unclear** the 2019 report states "our Scotch whisky distilleries are on track to meet the 2020 target of improving distilling water efficiency by 10%".
- **Protecting Water Resources: Unclear** the 2019 report states "Protecting Water Resources is a key area of Edrington's sustainability strategy".

No general waste from Scotch Whisky operations to landfill (SWA): Achieved. The majority of Edrington's packaging is carried out at the Company's global bottling site in Glasgow. Since November 2013, no waste, either domestic or packaging materials, have been sent to landfill waste from the Glasgow headquarters (verified via external audit by BSI, British Standards Institute).

Packaging

- **Reduce the average unit weight of packaging material by 10% (SWA): Not achieved** (due to the strength of Edrington's super premium portfolio and its associated product weight).
- **40% of product packaging to be from recycled materials (SWA): Unclear** the 2019 report states "Edrington is on track to meet the target of increasing the recycled content of packaging to more than 40% or above".
- **All packaging to be reusable or recyclable (SWA): No information.**

Supply Chain Governance: Achieved. Wherever Edrington operates in the world, it aims to be a responsible corporate citizen, and work with companies with similarly high standards. As part of its formal procurement process, Edrington requires its suppliers of

goods and services sourced centrally to sign up to Edrington's code of ethical conduct.

Measurement & evaluation

The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency's Annual Assessment Scheme rated all Edrington's sites as 'Excellent' between 2014 and 2019 (The scheme ended in 2019. Full details are available on the [SEPA website](#)).

In the UK, Edrington are recognised by ISO14001 Environmental Management certification.

Edrington was awarded a B rating in the climate change category in 2022 (first time submitting) and 2023 with the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP).

Downloads

Photo gallery

