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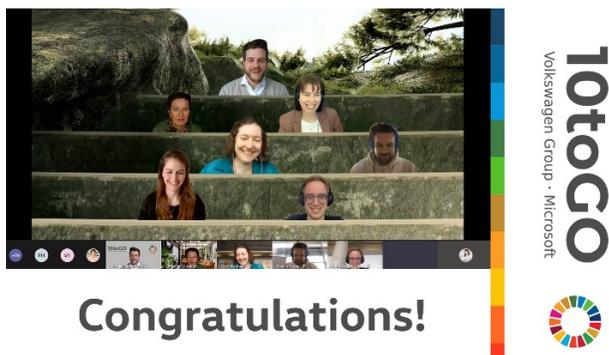
## Media information

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NO. 28/2021

## Data-driven innovations to combat climate change: Volkswagen and Microsoft Deutschland choose the most innovative sustainability project

**Wolfsburg/Munich – March 1, 2021. The [10toGO](#) thinkathon hosted by Volkswagen AG and Microsoft Deutschland has been won by the Pina team from Munich, which will receive funding of €100,000 for its sustainable forestry project. Microsoft and Volkswagen will also support the project with digital infrastructure and expert advice. As part of their joint 10toGO initiative, Volkswagen AG and Microsoft Deutschland aim to provide help in kick-starting sustainable, data-driven innovations that address selected areas of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.**



**10toGO winner team Pina with jury members Beate Hofer and Dr. Christie Haupt.**

20 teams took part in the contest. They had previously been chosen from numerous international applications.

The winning Pina team impressed the jury with its idea of introducing independent CO<sub>2</sub> certification of woodlands as a local means of compensating for emissions and enabling sustainable forestry. Bound carbon is to be sold in the form of CO<sub>2</sub> certificates as a voluntary compensation measure, for example. So as to bind additional CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, tree species that are especially effective in protecting the climate are to be planted and fewer trees are to be felled. The project aims to be the leader in CO<sub>2</sub> certification of forests by 2030, according to Gesa Biermann from Pina.

During February, the participating teams were able to call on support from technology, sustainability, creative thinking and other experts and mentors while working on their project ideas aimed at helping achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Last Friday, they presented the results of their projects to a jury of ten prominent experts from business, civil society, science and academia. A total of

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The team will not only be provided with funding in the coming weeks, but also supported with strategic and professional advice by experts from Volkswagen and Microsoft. The aim is to create the first 10toGO flagship project between the two companies.

10toGo initiator and Volkswagen Group's Director Machine Learning Lab Patrick van der Smagt reaffirms his support: "With 10toGO we have shown how together we can tackle the SDGs. Now the second, most important part of 10toGO starts, we will not only support the winning team but also help other teams with developing their ideas by growing their network."

Jury member Beate Hofer, Chief Information Officer at Volkswagen AG, explains the background to this cooperation: "Sustainability and digitalization are the key drivers at the Volkswagen Group and we have a precise plan for becoming carbon-neutral by 2050. We at Volkswagen are convinced that digital innovations are a powerful force in achieving sustainable social development. Yet we have a long way to go and there are still huge efforts required. It's all the more important to team up with like-minded partners such as Microsoft and drive initiatives like 10toGO. I'm delighted that we're supporting Pina, a team that is addressing multiple SDGs at once with its AI-driven solution."

Jury member Dr. Christine Haupt, Chief Operating Officer of Microsoft Deutschland, emphasizes: "Sustainability must be the basis for our actions and all future visions. We at Microsoft are convinced that technological innovations are vital if we want to reconcile sustainable climate protection and growing prosperity all over the world. We are deeply committed to solving the big challenges of our time together with our customers and partners. We're therefore delighted to be accompanying the winning team on its journey together with Volkswagen."

## **Cooperation to create social value added**

Volkswagen and Microsoft Deutschland have been committed for years to living up to their social responsibility by promoting sustainability and digital education. It is the two companies' conviction that data-driven innovations are key to overcoming the biggest challenges of our time. Just last year, the Volkswagen Group and Microsoft Deutschland agreed on a long-term [cooperation](#) in forward-looking sustainability and social initiatives in Germany. Their goal is to support and jointly implement projects relating to issues of social responsibility, such as sustainability, digital education, professional training and employee engagement for the good of the wider community.

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[10toGo Thinkaton: the winners idea in a video.](#)



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## About the Volkswagen Group

The Volkswagen Group, with its headquarters in Wolfsburg, is one of the world's leading automobile manufacturers and the largest carmaker in Europe. The Group comprises twelve brands from seven European countries: Volkswagen Passenger Cars, Audi, SEAT, ŠKODA, Bentley, Bugatti, Lamborghini, Porsche, Ducati, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, Scania and MAN. The passenger car portfolio ranges from small cars all the way to luxury-class vehicles. Ducati offers motorcycles. In the light and heavy commercial vehicles sector, the products range from pick-ups to buses and heavy trucks. Every weekday, 671.205 employees around the globe produce on average 44,567 vehicles, are involved in vehicle-related services or work in other areas of business.

The Volkswagen Group sells its vehicles in 153 countries. In 2020, the total number of vehicles delivered to customers by the Group globally was 9.31 million (2019: 10.97 million). Group sales revenue in 2019 totaled EUR 252.6 billion (2018: EUR 236 billion). Earnings after tax in fiscal year 2019 amounted to EUR 14.0 billion (2018: EUR 12.2 billion).

## Microsoft Deutschland GmbH

Microsoft Deutschland GmbH was founded in 1983 as the German arm of Microsoft Corporation (Redmond, U.S.). As the world's leading vendor of productivity software and modern services in the age of the smart cloud and smart edge, and as a developer of innovative hardware, Microsoft sees itself as a partner to its customers, helping them benefit from the digital transformation. As the world's largest contributor, Microsoft is driving open source technology through its leading development platform GitHub. Microsoft promotes professional networking worldwide with LinkedIn, the largest career network. Microsoft generated 143 billion U.S. dollars in revenue in fiscal 2020 (ending June 30, 2020). Its net profit in fiscal 2020 was 44.3 billion U.S. dollars. Microsoft Deutschland GmbH employs a total of more than 3,000 people. They work at headquarters in Munich Schwabing and at nine other regional offices throughout Germany (in Bad Homburg, Berlin, Eningen, Hamburg, Cologne, Munich, Stuttgart and Walldorf). Together with around 30,000 partners, Microsoft supports companies in all industries and of all sizes in Germany. The company is also engaged with representatives from politics, the business community, science and academia in diverse initiatives and projects to enable everyone to share in the advances made in a digital society.

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