



Healthcare Logistics

The fourth goal : Sustainability as a strategic imperative in Healthcare Logistics

Balancing growth with sustainable outcomes

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On-time delivery, quality and resilience.

While these three strategic priorities for effective supply chains have remained the same for decades, a new year puts a fresh focus on goals. And sustainability continues to climb the ranks.

Our Vision 2030 focuses on Kuehne+Nagel as the most trusted supply chain partner for a sustainable future. Aligned

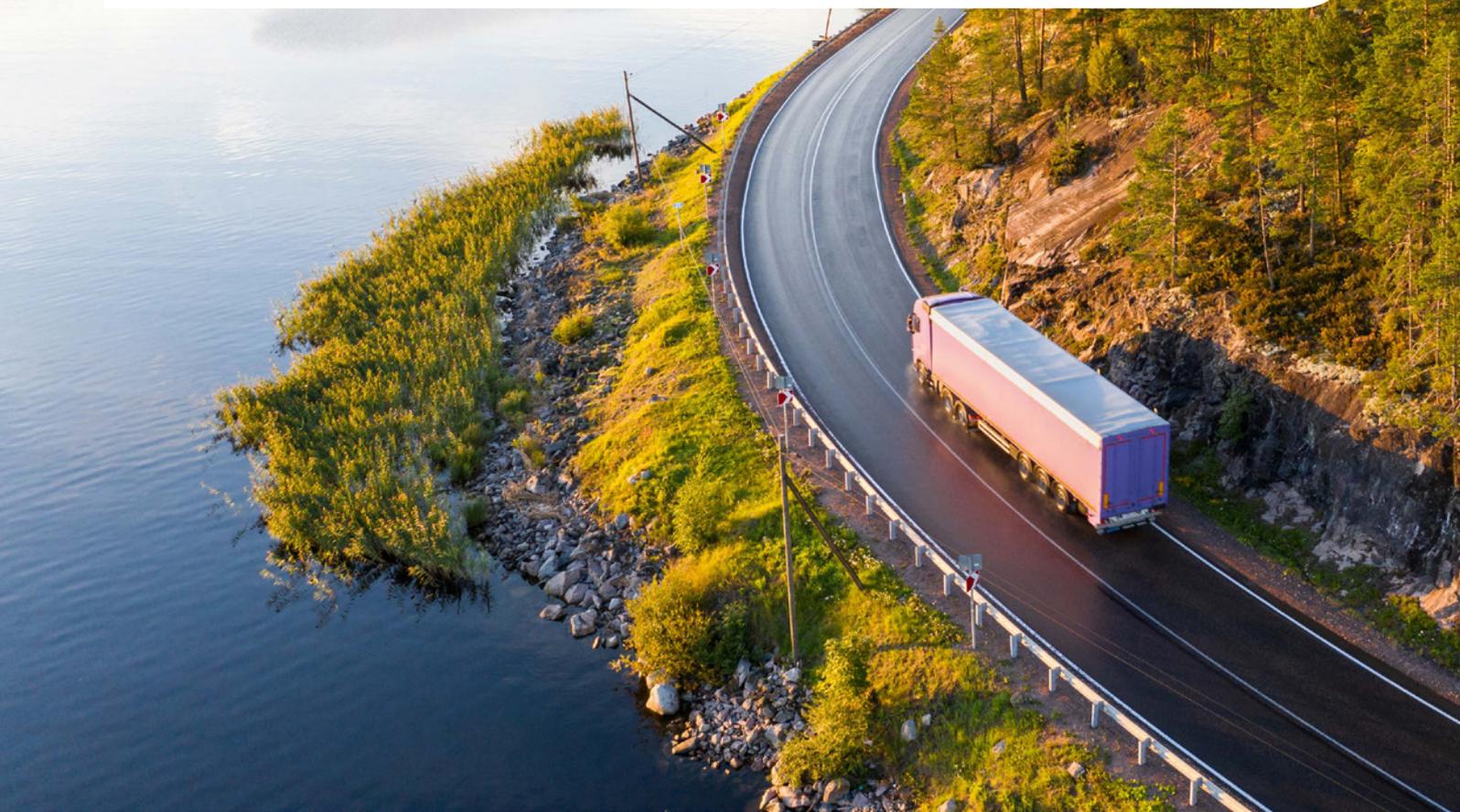
with the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi), the strategy also influences your business goals.

The challenge, no matter your role, is to ensure product is delivered on time, to quality standards, and on budget. Then add a new wrinkle to the list—helping achieve corporate sustainability aims—and do so within the context of geopolitics, climate impacts, and ever-changing policies and regulations.

The time is now

Building relationships that help customers and suppliers navigate these complexities may seem impossible, but solid collaboration can make the task more achievable. Whether your organisation is in the starting blocks of its sustainability journey and needs to establish benchmarks, or you're ready to clear the hurdles for Scope 3 emissions and set carbon reduction targets, sustainability is a team sport. It's the common thread that unites your company's functions, organisational units, and strategy, helping you deliver on your business priorities.

As more stakeholders engage in sustainable initiatives, we see how intertwined these priorities are with both operational and market-facing advantages. Instead of sitting as an expense line item, sustainability has evolved, hand in hand with innovation, to drive efficiencies and increase business, customer, and brand value.



The state of play in Healthcare Logistics



Kuehne+Nagel's 2024 Sustainability Report highlighted that air transportation accounted for more than 50% of our annual Scope 3 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This is due, in part, to the importance of air transport across industries, particularly in the healthcare and pharmaceutical space.



In 2019, the Health Care Climate Footprint report estimated that the global health sector contributed about 4.4% of all GHG emissions.



In 2024, Kuehne+Nagel deployed the use of sustainable fuels through the Book and Claim approach for all transport modes, achieving an 80,000 tonne scope 3 GHG emissions reduction.



Making a difference with Scope 3

In the healthcare and pharma landscape, over 90% of total emissions typically originate from Scope 3 sources within the supply chain. But since that percentage is not within your direct control, a shift toward greater engagement with those sources is key.

For logistics, the best starting point is to establish a baseline by requiring emissions data from all of your service providers. This data is not only vital for understanding your reduction or elimination options, but also to identify the costs and benefits of alternatives.

Even starting with small but important changes can lead to big, value-added results. While markets scale SAF supplies and may require a premium, identifying an incremental approach to decarbonisation is beneficial. This

includes choosing a percentage of sustainable fuels in your transportation portfolio, or a specific product or lane for decarbonisation. For example, the inclusion of SAF may yield significant results while underscoring the need to scale additional solutions. If your organisation is aligned with the SBTi, purchasing 18% SAF in the first year of your emissions-reduction efforts could help you make meaningful progress towards meeting your commitments.

In some instances, we see organisations budgeting emissions reduction for a specific SKU, lane, or a percentage of lane(s). Switching to a Kuehne+Nagel Cool Corridor for temperature-sensitive pharma and healthcare goods lowers electricity use, benefits from lighter packaging, reduces the emissions footprint, and saves money.

The case for sustainable aviation fuels

In 2022, Kuehne+Nagel joined pharmaceutical supplier Boehringer Ingelheim's supplier engagement programme as they sought sustainable solutions for their business. While only 9% of products were transported by air, those shipments accounted for 75% of the total emissions.

By 2024, Boehringer Ingelheim had invested in 2.6 million litres of SAF through partnerships with our carrier networks. This helped them meet demanding targets while saving 8,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions in one year.

[Watch the full story](#)





Reporting environmental impact

Whether or not you have formally committed to SBTi or are setting your own aims, a baseline metric is required. No matter your business size or data requirements, our tech-led reporting provides a starting point aligned with global standards and frameworks. The myKN dashboard offers real-time shipment data, including journey times, transport modes and emissions. With better

tracking, myKN establishes an internal benchmark to measure your progress against Scope 3 targets.

Leverage data points to inform cross-functional teams, from procurement and supplier management to strategy, finance, and the sustainability office. This facilitates decision-making and achieves multiple aims. The results: strategic, resilient solutions to make your business more nimble.

Where next?

Sustainability goals, initially viewed through a compliance and risk management lens, have evolved to deliver operational efficiencies, brand value, market differentiation, and first-to-market advantage – all of which are business imperatives.

Embedded sustainability can address pain points and influence investor decisions. As we tackle tough Scope 3 emissions, collaboration amongst all supply chain stakeholders will be key to delivering impact and achieving shared, measurable results for stakeholders upstream and downstream. In an industry where people's health is the ultimate goal, collective action is required to deliver a cleaner, healthier supply chain.



Conclusion

Sustainability is no longer an afterthought. It is the fourth goal. When managing effective healthcare logistics operations, multiple solutions exist: sustainable fuels, cold chain solutions that deliver sustainably under the tightest deadlines, and understanding innovations between the first and last mile.

In the short term, we're committed to our Roadmap 2026 and Vision 2030, even as we refresh our goals to go beyond. Through supply chain engagement, education, optimisation, routing efficiency, and more, sustainability remains our strategic imperative.

Roadmap 2026 Vision 2030

On-time delivery

Alternative routing or multimodal transport may shorten journey times as well as cut CO² emissions.

Resilience

Analytics monitor journeys and offer alternatives; SAF in some lanes reduces costs and disruption.

Quality

Advanced packaging and storage preserves temperature-controlled products.

Sustainability

Small changes equal big results. Bringing sustainability into the conversation may cut costs. We tailor our advice to an organisation's specific goals by leveraging long-time partnerships and innovating.

About us

Kuehne+Nagel is about making logistics work smarter for our customers. With a global network and deep industry expertise, we help businesses navigate complexity and unlock growth through reliable, digital services, advanced technologies and data-driven insights.

As the logistics partner of choice for companies worldwide, we deliver tailored, end-to-end supply chain solutions across Air, Sea, Road, and Contract Logistics.

Discover the future of logistics.

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