



## **Public Statement by Shareholders for Change (SfC), GLS Investments and KLUG – German Alliance on Climate Change and Health**

### **Protecting Employees from Heat Is a Core Corporate Responsibility**

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As responsible investors and civil society organisations, Shareholders for Change (SfC), GLS Investments and KLUG – German Alliance on Climate Change and Health are increasingly concerned about the growing health risks posed by heat stress in the workplace. Rising temperatures and more frequent heatwaves already affect employee health, occupational safety and productivity across many sectors. Heat exposure is therefore not only a climate issue, but a material social and governance issue that requires systematic corporate action.

Through our engagement with companies, we assess whether heat protection is addressed in a structured, preventive and comprehensive way. This includes robust risk assessments, clear responsibilities, effective technical and organisational measures, and appropriate information and training for employees. Our expectations are aligned with good practices recommended by occupational health and safety authorities and international institutions.

While we have seen numerous good approaches, we call on all companies to take action in three key areas:

#### **1. Systematically assess and monitor heat-related health risks**

Companies should identify heat risks across all workplaces and activities, including indoor and outdoor work. In particular, this means paying special attention to vulnerable groups of employees, such as older workers, employees with pre-existing health conditions, workers facing language barriers and workers engaged in physically demanding tasks. Heat must be explicitly integrated into occupational risk assessments, supported by temperature monitoring and the evaluation of health impacts such as heat-related complaints—submitted anonymously. An interdisciplinary and participative approach helps to incorporate important perspectives and to strengthen compliance.

#### **2. Establish clear responsibilities and implement effective protective measures**

Effective management of heat risks requires clear accountability at management level and structured heat protection and climate adaptation plans. Companies should invest in technical and building-related measures such as shading, ventilation, insulation and access to cool retreat areas, complemented by organisational and personal protective measures including flexible working hours, adequate breaks, access to drinking water and personal protective equipment. Employees and their representatives should be actively involved, and measures regularly reviewed and improved.

### **3. Ensure transparency, preparedness and employee empowerment**

Employees need timely information and practical guidance to protect themselves during periods of high heat. Companies should establish early warning systems for heatwaves, provide regular training and make clear recommendations on appropriate behaviour during extreme temperatures.

Protecting employees from heat is an essential element of decent work, effective risk management and corporate resilience in a warming world. SfC, GLS Investments and KLUG also encourage other investors to engage with companies on this topic. We expect companies to show measurable progress in line with the points outlined above.