Sustainability & ESG Initiatives

Q2 2024

ESG

Environment

Social

Governance

ASCEND ELEMENTS®

Our ESG framework guides our corporate actions

ENVIRONMENTAL	SOCIAL	GOVERNANCE
NET ZERO	EMPLOYEES	CORPORATE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	HEALTH & SAFETY	POLICIES
REPORTING & MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	RESPONSIBLE SOURCING	ETHICS
	QUALITY	BOARD
	ENGAGEMENT	

Environmental Initiatives

ENVIRONMENTAL

NET ZERO

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

REPORTING & MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

ASCEND ELEMENTS

Environmental Actions

Net Zero

Drafting a Decarbonization Path

- Preliminary decarbonization study
- Clean energy procurement (VPPA, PPA, RECs)

Setting Targets Aligned with the Latest Climate Science

- Committed to the Science-based Target Initiative (SBTi)
- Development of GHG reduction targets for near and long-term

Environmental Protection

Sound Environmental Management

- Waste and water management
- Ensuring healthy air quality

Reporting & Management Systems

Environmental Management System (EMS)

- Working toward ISO 14001 certification

Measuring to Manage

- Greenhouse gases inventory in accordance with the GHG Protocol

Lifecycle Perspective for Sustainability

- Updated environmental life cycle assessment (LCA)

ENVIRONMENTAL

NET ZERO

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

REPORTING & MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Net Zero

Decarbonization

Drafting our decarbonization path

- We are assessing and prioritizing many decarbonization projects, including:
  - Fuel switching
  - Low-carbon reagents
  - Electrification with a cleaner grid
  - Electrification with renewables.
  - Discharging and repurposing electricity in spent batteries

Renewable energy procurement

- We are exploring long-term renewable energy opportunities and purchasing RECs to cover 100% of our current energy usage at our manufacturing sites.

PPA
Power Purchase Agreement

VPPA
Virtual Power Purchase Agreement

RECs
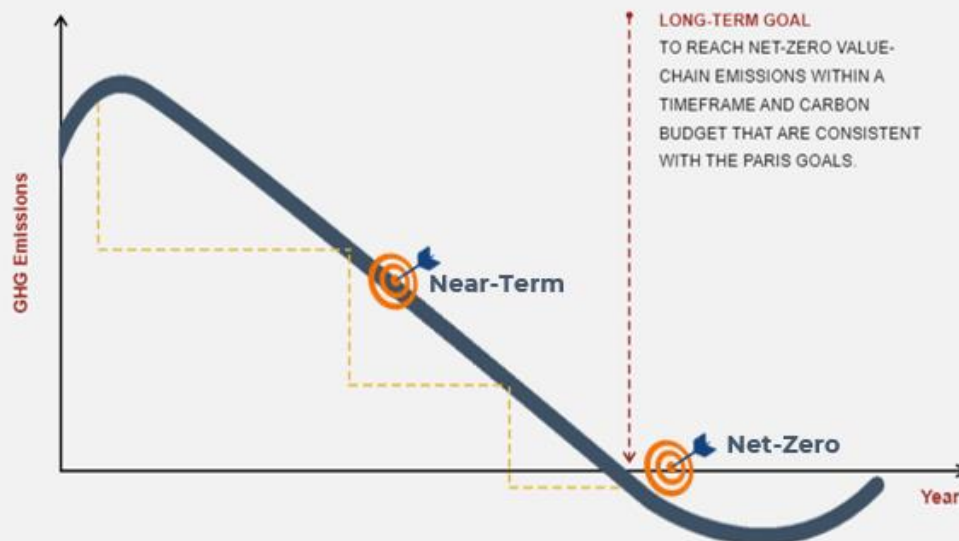Renewable Energy Credits

ENVIRONMENTAL

NET ZERO

Net Zero

Setting science-based climate targets

Recognized by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)

- Ascend Elements is recognized as "committed to achieving **near-term** and **net zero** emissions" targets by SBTi
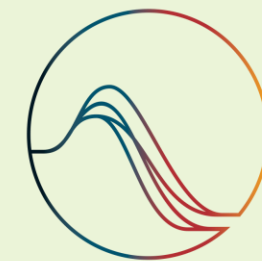
Next steps in the SBTi process

1. Forecast the 2025 carbon footprint for Ascend Elements' full commercial operation and model potential reduction targets
2. Measure our 2025 carbon footprint in early 2026
3. Submit reduction targets to SBTi for validation

LONG-TERM GOAL
TO REACH NET-ZERO VALUE-CHAIN EMISSIONS WITHIN A TIMEFRAME AND CARBON BUDGET THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PARIS GOALS.

ENVIRONMENTAL

NET ZERO

SCIENCE BASED TARGETS

DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION

Environmental Protection

Waste Management

Tracking hazardous and non-hazardous waste

- Across all sites in compliance with U.S. EPA regs

Designing alternate uses for waste output streams

- Recovery of NH_4OH, Li_2CO_3 and $NaSO_4$ for use in other processes
- Commercializing commodities (copper, plastic and aluminum)

Water Management

Developed a <u>water management policy</u>, including:

- Water recycling in our manufacturing processes
- Onsite reverse osmosis (RO) units to treat water and recycle it
- Meter/tracking devices for accurate measurement
- Conduct water risk assessments

Air Quality

Minimized air pollution

- Implementing dust collectors and operating indoors

Regulatory compliance

- Adhering to all regulatory requirements, including Title V permits

ENVIRONMENTAL

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Reporting & Management Systems

Environmental Management System (EMS)

Working toward ISO 14001 certification

- Implementing EMS to meet objectives and comply with laws and regulations

Measuring to Manage

Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions

- Measuring in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard and Scope 2 Guidance

2024 Sustainability Report

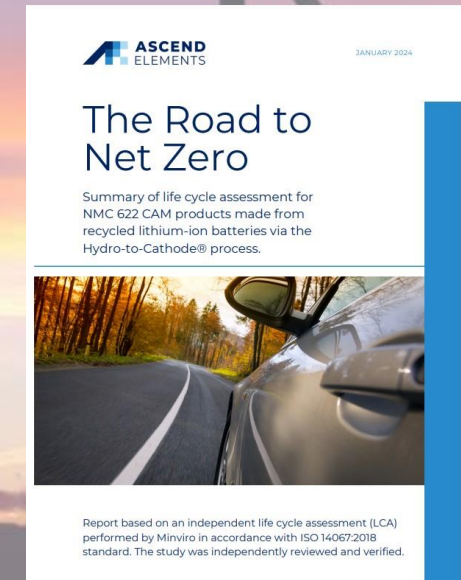- Publish 2024 data in Q2 2025 in a comprehensive 2024 Sustainability Report

Lifecycle Perspective for Sustainability

Updating and expanding scope of 2023 LCA studies

- Improving accuracy based on new Apex 1 facility designs and data
- Studies planned for pCAM, lithium carbonate, graphite, co-products and sodium sulfate
- LCA studies following the ISO 14040/44 LCA Framework

ENVIRONMENTAL

REPORTING & MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

ASCEND ELEMENTS · JANUARY 2024

The Road to Net Zero

Summary of life cycle assessment for NMC 622 CAM products made from recycled lithium-ion batteries via the Hydro-to-Cathode® process.

Report based on an independent life cycle assessment (LCA) performed by Minviro in accordance with ISO 14067:2018 standard. The study was independently reviewed and verified.

Social Initiatives

SOCIAL

EMPLOYEES

HEALTH & SAFETY

RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

QUALITY

ENGAGEMENT

ASCEND
ELEMENTS

Employee Focused

Competitive Benefits

Health & Wellness

- Medical, dental, vision, life, AD&D, short- and long-term disability

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Free, confidential consultants with mental health providers

Retirement and Savings

- 401(k) retirement savings plan
- Health Savings Account (HSA)

Workforce Development

Online Learning

- Offered access to 20,000 LinkedIn Learning courses
- Monthly lunch and learn sessions

Employee Engagement

Communication

- Multi-channel communications program with annual survey
- Monthly all-employee meetings with CEO
- Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

SOCIAL

EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE SURVEY

NOW OPEN!
Opens June 5th - June 30th

- 100 % anonymous and confidential
- Tell us what is going well
- Tell us what can be improved
- Access through link or QR code
- Open to all employees

Health & Safety

Training

- Safety training for all new hires
- New policy training for all staff members
- Specialized training for manufacturing and chemical/processing employees

ISO 45001 Certification

- Working toward ISO 45001 Certification at manufacturing sites
- Implementing a systematic approach to managing safety
- Proactive risk prevention & compliance with laws and regulations

Safety First Discussions at Every Monthly Meeting

- Embedding safety in all operations and team behaviors
- Fostering an environment of safety and continual learning

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Ensuring protection and proper PPE is available for all employees
- Training on proper PPE use and maintenance

SOCIAL

HEALTH & SAFETY

Ensuring a Safe and Healthy Workplace for All Employees

Responsible Sourcing

Policies & Commitments

Memberships & Frameworks

IRMA
Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance

RMI
Responsible Minerals Initiative

RMAP
Responsible Minerals Assurance Process

RRA
Risk Readiness Assessment

Traceability Audit
Supply Chain Transparency

Supplier Code of Conduct
- Published Supplier Code of Conduct for:
  - Labor
  - Health & Safety
  - Environment
  - Ethics
  - Privacy
  - Responsible Sourcing
  - Management Systems

Responsible Sourcing Policy
- Published to ensure all sourcing practices are ethical, sustainable, and transparent to minimize environmental impact and promote social responsibility.

Ethical Labor & Human Rights Policy
- Published and aligned with international standards.

Anti-Corruption & Bribery Policy
- Published to establish required standards of conduct for all employees, partners and suppliers.

SOCIAL

RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

Quality

ISO 9001

Quality Management System

- Implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) in compliance with ISO 9001 standards to ensure consistent delivery of high-quality products and services. Certification audits successfully completed in June 2024.

Continuous Improvement

- Regularly evaluating and enhancing their processes, products, and services based on customer feedback and internal assessments.

Documentation and Traceability

- Documenting processes and products, providing full traceability to meet ISO 9001 requirements and facilitate effective quality control and audits.


SOCIAL

QUALITY

Community Engagement

Volunteer Opportunities

- Hosted WPI Business school tour of our facility

- Covington's Adopt-A-Highway Program picked up roughly 112 kg of debris and trash along Industrial Drive

- Memorial Day volunteer event in Westborough to lay flags at a local cemetery and honor fallen military personnel

- Tree planting Earth Day celebration in Covington

- Partnered with YMCA to pack 500 bags of food for the community

Community Benefits Plan (Hopkinsville, Ky.)

- Job creation: approximately 400 good-paying jobs

- Childcare facility partnership for Ascend Elements employees to create sustainable and affordable daycare options

- Reducing barriers to public transportation access

- Created an Equity Team to lead our equity initiative, work closely with our partners, and assign priority to minority vendor selection

SOCIAL

ENGAGEMENT
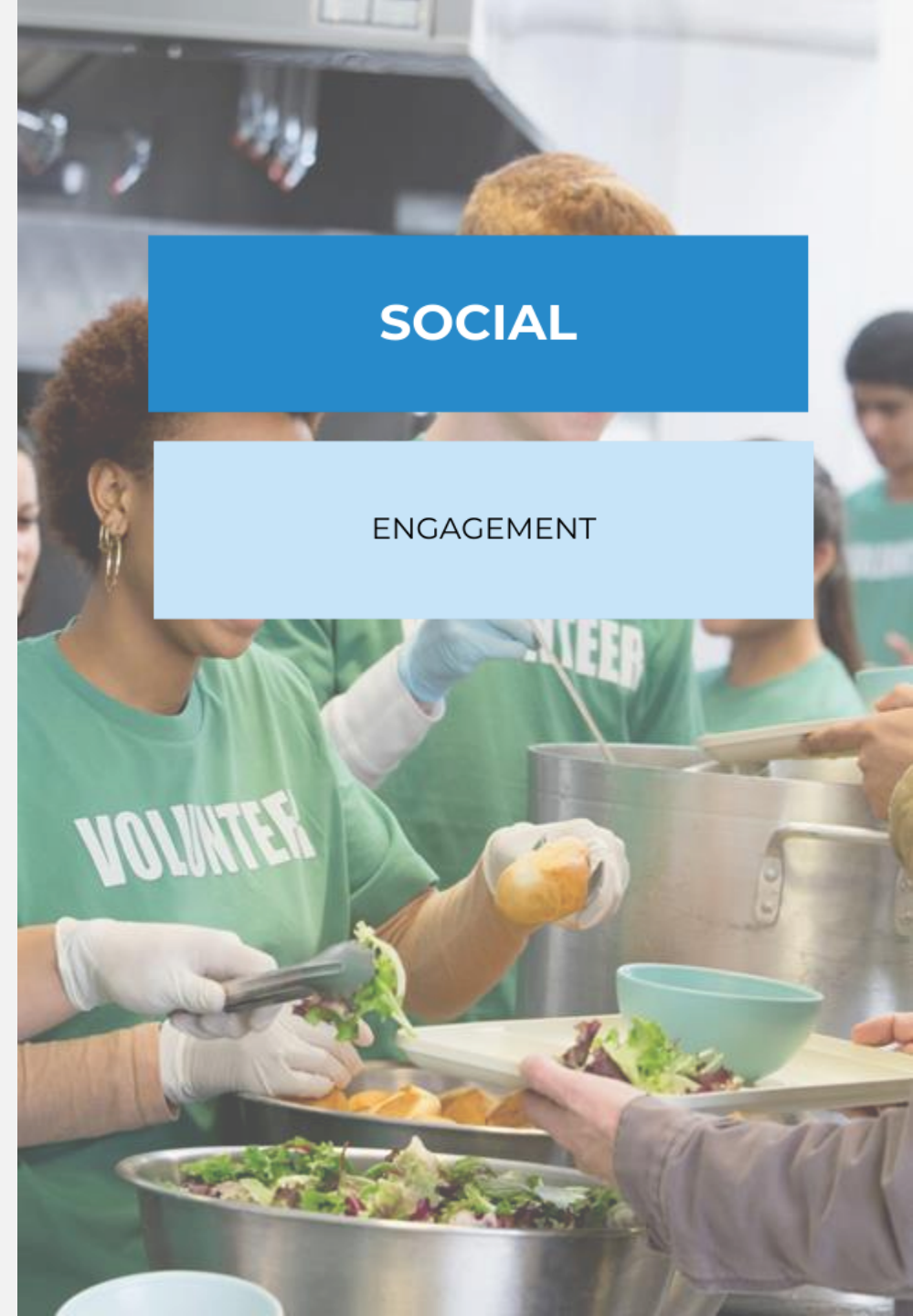
Governance Initiatives

GOVERNANCE

CORPORATE

POLICIES

ETHICS

BOARD

ASCEND ELEMENTS®

Ascend Elements has established **governing policies** that promote sustainability and ensure standards are met beyond compliance.

GOVERNANCE

CORPORATE

POLICIES

ETHICS

BOARD

Our Policies Demonstrate Commitment To:

Ethical Practices and Standards

- Supplier Code of Conduct

- Responsible Sourcing Policy

Protecting and Respecting Human Rights

- Human Rights Policy

Ethical Conduct and Integrity

- Anti-corruption Policy
- Ascend Elements Code of Conduct

Governance

Board Committees

Ascend Elements has established several board committees to enhance corporate governance, accountability, and transparency.

Committees include:

- Nominations in Governance
- Compensation
- Audit