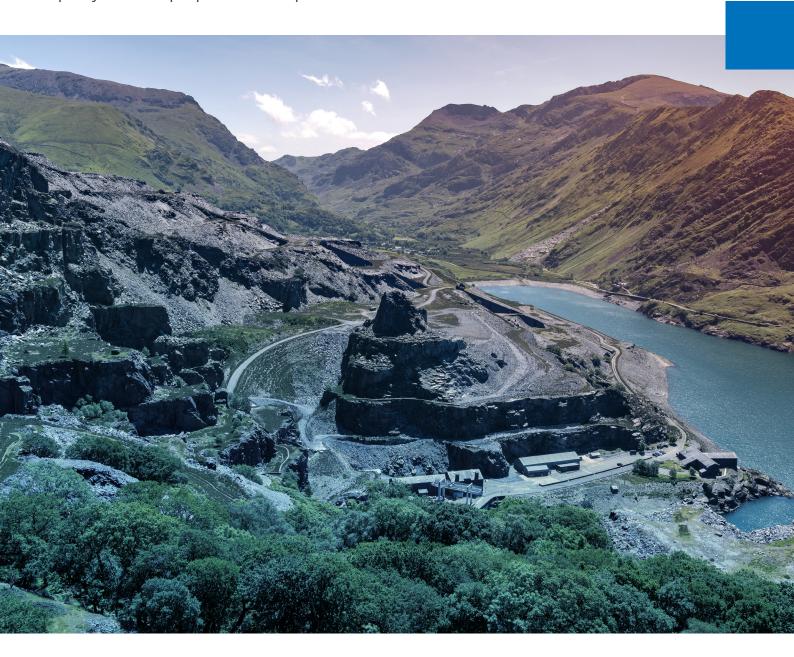Case study

Streamlining sustainability reporting for leading mining corporation

The client

The client is a large mining corporation, among the leading producers of lithium carbonate and other minerals worldwide. Headquartered in Chile, it is heavily involved in strategically important industries for the country, including those related to health, food, technology and clean energies. It is present in over 100 countries and has commercial offices in more than 20.

With business lines including plant-based nutrition, lithium, iodine and derivatives, potassium and industrial chemicals, the company has made significant commitments to sustainability which revolve around an approach focused on human progress and environmental action. Committed to the principles of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to carbon neutrality in all products by 2040, the client has pledged to contribute to developing solutions that improve the quality of life for people across the planet.

The challenge

As part of their sustainability commitments, the client is required to measure a whole host of metrics to ensure they are reaching their goals. In order to be successful in that regard, the challenge was to implement a well-structured sustainability program sustained by a solid technology platform.

The client had long been collecting data using a variety of legacy systems without any common interface, while data entry was still undertaken manually for the various metrics being evaluated. Furthermore, the data was coming from a number of different sources, with no overall visibility of the complete picture available. This was an untenable position for such an important metric; studies claim up to 70% of a business's EBITDA may be at risk as a result of challenges related to sustainability. This meant the client had a strong imperative to update their processes and find a better way to measure their KPIs.

NTT DATA proposed a proof of concept using SAP Sustainability Control Tower that would monitor metrics for four key areas:

- Governance

- Environment

- Social

- Economics

The longer-term challenge will be to synchronize all data collected with the legacy system in order to be able to view the KPIs in real-time.

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The solution

Having acknowledged the importance of sustainability to its long-term value, the client was keen to develop a proof of concept using SAP Sustainability Control Tower (SCT). NTT DATA's proposal initially involved understanding the potential of this what is still a relatively new SAP solution. In conjunction with the client, decisions were made about which of the 39 default metrics offered by SCT would then be implemented.

A tool first had to be configured that was capable of gathering data against all of the metrics that were relevant to the client, managing that data and presenting it in a single user interface. Once the appropriate metrics had been selected, the information was loaded into the system according to the structure established by the tool, before appropriate data mosaics were activated in order to permit user queries and visualization. A roadmap was drawn up to understand and direct the longer-term goals of this PoC, and establish prioritization moving forward.

The proof of concept developed by NTT DATA was implemented using the following architecture:

- SAP BTP

- SAP Sustainability Control Tower

- CSV files

- SAP Cloud Platform Extension

As SAP SCT runs on Fiori, a user-friendly interface would now be possible that provided a single source for queries against any metric, from any device.

Implementation of the proposed architecture would see the client become a pioneer in the use of these kinds of tools in their country, benefitting from one of the latest solutions launched by SAP in order to both gather and evaluate sustainability data in a far more efficient manner.
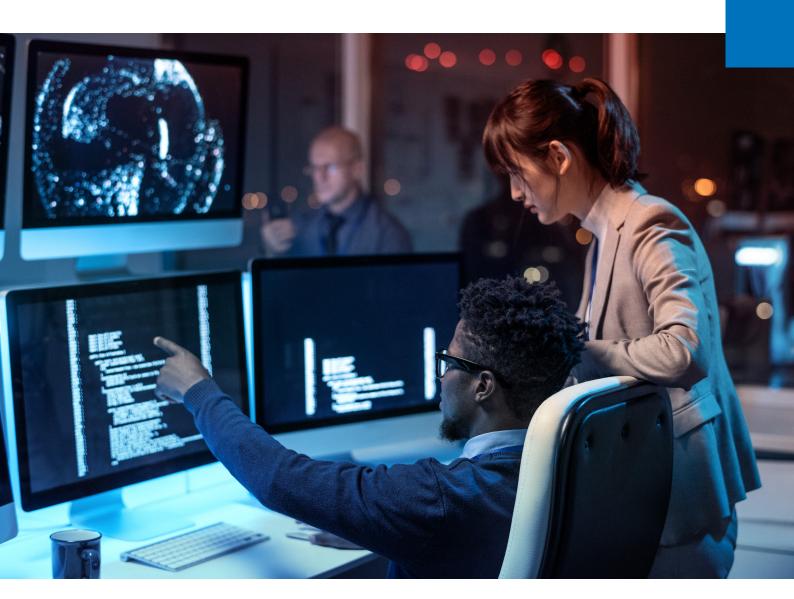
The ability to track crucial KPIs in this regard aligns both with their own corporate objectives, and their commercial, legal and social governance obligations.

The result

The proof of concept delivered by NTT DATA has helped the client make significant progress in the measurement and analysis of their objectives. First and foremost, the applied integrations represent a step forward in streamlining the collection, management and processing of the sustainability data that's so critical to their business model.

This is coupled with new analytical features that give the company a better oversight of their key sustainability metrics. They are now able to create projections based on current and possible performance, comparing incoming data with those projections to understand whether they're making adequate progress against the ambitious targets they have set themselves.

A single user interface is available through Fiori, using a series of easily interpretable mosaics, with the ability to generate comprehensive reports at the touch of a button. Essentially, the client is now in a position to be able to establish metrics and set targets that align with the corporate vision and commitment to sustainability, having all the data from their various legacy systems in one place.

Why NTT DATA

NTT DATA has established itself as an expert in the mining sector and has demonstrated a deep understanding of the unique needs and challenges presented by the industry. NTT DATA can count on extensive experience in offering innovative solutions to companies that provide sustainable commercial value, not to mention a long and successful track record in implementing the SAP Business Technology Platform.

There were a number of different business units involved in this project in order to ensure NTT DATA's experience and digital capabilities were combined to provide the best possible solution for the client. Not only did the project benefit from NTT DATA's technical expertise, but it also helped present a comprehensive vision of the market and the ever-changing demands in the field of sustainability.

It was the universal nature of the NTT DATA proposal that convinced the client they were the right choice to take the project on. NTT DATA essentially acted as an all-round partner in the company's attempts to consolidate their sustainability processes, driven by a mix of technological understanding and an innovative mindset.

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What's next

Following the implementation of this proof of concept, NTT DATA plans to collaborate with the client on a number of activities in the short term. These will include deploying new functions and technical elements, as well as offering guidance and support in the documentation of processes. The ultimate object is complete automation of the data gathering, management and reporting process.

The success of the project ensures NTT DATA will be well positioned for other similar assignments in the mid- and long term too, specifically those involving SAP Sustainability Control Tower. NTT DATA is well placed to implement new reporting methods not currently available as part of the tool, and will work alongside the client to spearhead new initiatives, as well as helping to determine priorities as the project continues to run on into the future.

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