

# Global Compact

Communication On Progress

**2014**



Christensen & Co

**Christensen & Co. architects a/s**  
Member since 2010

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### **Executive Statement of Continuing Commitment**

**We are pleased to confirm our ongoing commitment and support to Global Compact and the 10 principles covering the issue areas; human rights, labour, environment and anticorruption. In this Communication on Progress report, we express our support for the principles, which are a part of the core values of Christensen & Co. architects.**

We believe that good architecture applies to all aspects of a building. Neither design nor function, economy nor process should be considered separately, but holistically together.

Good architecture makes a difference. Architects with intention, empathy and thoroughness make buildings that actively can change people's lives.

Michael Christensen  
Director and founder Christensen & Co. architects.



Technical University of Denmark;  
DTU - Compute. Lyngby Campus  
Sustainable research and education building and furniture design.

## Short description of the Company

**Christensen & Co. architects (CCO) was established by Michael Christensen in 2006 and has gained a reputation of building healthy sustainable new buildings with a good indoor climate.**

**CCO has won a number of major international and Danish competitions, amongst them buildings for education, leisure, culture and offices with a focus on sustainability. Our projects covers square meters ranging from around 2000 m<sup>2</sup> and up to 50.000 m<sup>2</sup>**

In 2013 we delivered the first DGNB certificated building in the new Nordhavn area in Copenhagen; Soil Centre Copenhagen. We are also proud participants in the charity project to build a foster home for 20 orphaned children and food a kitchen will the facility to feed up to 200 children from the village, as well as a medical unit in one of South Africa's poorest province of Limpopo.

Architecture is one of the fundamental pillars of our society. Worldwide, buildings account for 40% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, through responsible architecture we can help to provide a higher life quality. We aim to create buildings, built from environmentally sound materials and buildings that contribute to a sustainable and responsible society.

We constantly seek new innovative solutions, through close collaborations and extensive research. Our ambition is to constantly challenge architectural methods and processes. We believe that unique and characteristic solutions occurs when location, function, culture, climate challenges the architectural intention; Sustainability through integrated design.

We support NGOs like Architects Without Borders and the Danish NGO campaign The World's Best News part of the Danish contribution to of the UN initiative End Poverty 2015 Campaign, supporting The United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

We are a team of 50 people; architects, design engineers and administrative staff. The office is situated in a residential area in the Northern part of Copenhagen.



## Response to the four issue areas

The centre of our approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is our architectural philosophy, to create buildings that are healthy for people as well as the environment. As consultants we advise our clients towards decisions that implement and introduce sustainable solutions in the building project's through dialogue, workshops and an interactive process involving the end users.

Together with the client and experts, we engage in the various issues and work together, promoting a culture of inclusion with everyone involved. With the aim to get decisions that will ultimately benefit the environment, the end user and stay within budget.

We adhere to the principles of Global Compact by following the four issue areas as stated below.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

In our business approach we follow the Human Rights principles, as described in the 1948 General Assembly Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We are a, predominately, Scandinavian-based office with projects in Scandinavia and we take utmost care and precautions, to ensure that Human Rights are upheld throughout all stages. In our choice of materials and fabricants and throughout the supply chain on projects we are involved in, as well as the collaborations within which we engage.

### LABOUR

At Christensen & Co. architects we comply with the labour standards as described by the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

There is complete freedom of association at Christensen & Co. architects, as well as the recognition of the right to collective bargaining. There is a staff representative at the office, chosen in a vote among all employees.

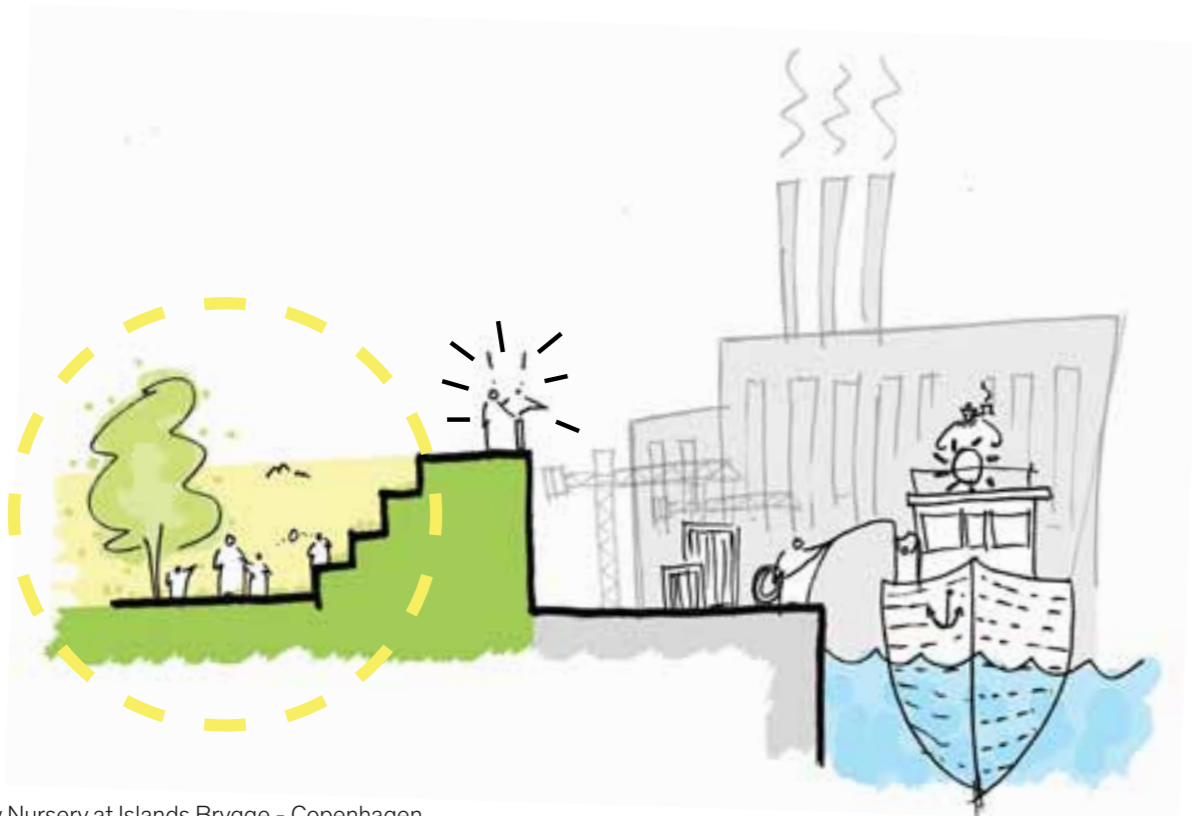
### ENVIRONMENT

The end user and the environment is a focal point for the practice. Being an architectural company our most important output is our buildings.

Our main aim is to create buildings with a healthy indoor climate whilst respecting the environment. During the building process as well as in considerations for the life cycle of the building, with respect for the surrounding area and existing nature and context within which we are building.

### ANTI-CORRUPTION

Promoting close cross culture collaboration between the various disciplines within the building industry, the sub-contractors and our supply chain ensures a healthy working climate. Where corruption is not permissible.



New Nursery at Islands Brygge - Copenhagen  
Workshop sketch: preparation for the initial dialogue with the users and the client.

## ACTIVITIES

Charity project in South Africa.  
The opening of the foster home and medical clinic in Limpopo, South Africa



## Practical actions

### OUR APPROACH

Our foundation is based on dialogue and recognition of the social responsibilities of the practice. We encourage communication and broad collaboration within the office, as well as a close collaborative cooperation with all external partners on the projects. Ensuring that our knowledge is updated with the latest research, in order to give the best possible advice to clients.

One of the drivers of a successful building is respectful collaboration between all parties included. We therefore engage in extensive user involvement dialogue from the very beginning of the project and throughout the planning. Input from the end user is of particular significance, and their knowledge of how the practicality of the daily life in the future building will unfold, a prerequisite for the project's success.

We believe in ambitious and challenging collaborations where dialogue is key and the collective aim is high from the outset. We also focus on measuring the performance of the sustainable buildings.

### ACTIVITIES

In 2013 we were asked to take part in a charity initiative to build a foster home housing 20-40 children, and a medical clinic in Alldays.

Alldays is a small town in the province of Limpopo, South Africa, one of the poorest provinces in South Africa.

We have taken great pleasure in offering our services, free of charge, to the project. Meeting the locals, staff at both the foster home and medical clinic and getting an insight into life in one of the poorest communities in South Africa has been an experience.

The building is built from local material and by local workers with assistance from young people from Alldays as part of their training as craftsmen.

A courtyard will provide the central social area of the foster home. A large tree will be positioned in the middle of the courtyard, providing shade. There will be an outdoor fireplace and the courtyard will be the social focal point for the children and adults.

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

Christensen & Co architects has been engaged in the development of new policies and tools for CSR in the Danish architectural practices.

The project is initiated by the Association of Danish Architectural Firms (Danske Ark) who has commissioned social responsibility consultants from Responsible Assets to cooperate with three architectural firms in Denmark; Henning Larsen Architects, C. F. Moller Architects and Christensen & Co. We have worked together with the aim to develop new procedures and tools for handling CSR in architectural projects in Danish architectural practices. The new CSR tools will be presented to the professional community in Denmark at a conference on June 11 2012.

We at CCO will add to the general work by developing specific tools and code of conduct for internal use, as a practical tool for the management staff and project leaders. We find it hugely satisfying to participate in these projects, which help us push the boundaries for modern building design. Not only does it keep us up to date in the field of innovative sustainable initiatives it also offers a constant challenge in our quest to create healthy modern buildings.

We are looking forward to see the new CSR tools put into practice after, and hope that everyone within the Danish architectural community will find it easier to act responsibly on a daily basis.

We design our buildings for longevity and to improve life for the end user. There has to be a clear relationship between the design and the behaviour

of the end user, part of our commitment is to share the concept behind the design with the users in order for them to be able to use the building to its maximum. In a building with numerous sustainable and low-energy technical functions, there has to be a close relationship between design and end user.

We have an ongoing schedule of internal seminars in the office, a morning of exchange of knowledge where project experiences are shared. We invite external speakers to the seminars to enlighten us on any new methods on a given subject. Subjects have included: User dialogue, workshops, education and research environments, teamwork and flexibility.



**FACT SHEET**

**General contractor:**  
CPH City & Port Development  
**User:** Copenhagen Municipality,  
The Technical and Environmental  
Administration  
  
**Area:** 1,800 m2.  
**Architect:** Christensen & Co  
**Engineer:** Grontmij



**Measurement of  
outcome**

**CASE: SOIL CENTRE  
COPENHAGEN**  
**We are continuing our work  
creating sustainable buildings and  
opened a new zero-energy building  
in the summer of 2013. The building  
will house a new environmental  
center at Copenhagen’s new  
Northern Harbour Area, an  
upcoming area developed with an  
innovative sustainable green focus.**

**Between the sky and the ocean.**  
On the edge of Øresund, where the sky meets the ocean behind the Freeport and the Container Terminal lies Copenhagen Municipality’s new soil treatment centre, Soil Centre Copenhagen. It is here millions of cubic metres of dug up soil from construction projects and metro building sites around Copenhagen create new ground for Copenhagen’s new urban area Nordhavn.

The centre employees analyse and handle the contaminated soil, making sure that it is used in an environmentally safe manner. The landscape at Nordhavn is flat and makes for a fascinating and ever changing scenery, giant piles of soil and huge excavations. More than anything, it looks like a rough lunar landscape with left-over building materials and rusty metal parts. To the Northwest of Soil Centre Copenhagen the landscape is contrastingly lush with little green hills, shrubbery and little ponds and lakes fringed with rushes. A wild nature site filled with sounds from birds, swans and mewing seagulls. It is also here the protected European Green Toad, has made a new home for itself. This has led to a decision to always preserve the area the way it is. With this very unique context Soil Centre Copenhagen grows out of the landscape with its characteristic shape and rusty red facades. The building has a distinctive silhouette against the vast horizon, and the building is simultaneously an integrated part of the landscape and an obviously man-made object.

**Completely different spaces in one sculptural form.**

The sculptural building makes for a protecting boundary between areas trafficked by heavy machinery and the protected nature site, and with its zigzagging shape the building creates spaces that face either towards the soil arrival area or the nature site.

The facades are clad in stretch metal made from rusty weathering steel. On the roof tall grass and, in time, even smallish bushes and trees will grow. In this sense the building makes up for the piece of the landscape it has occupied, and will help preserve the natural biodiversity of the area. The weathering steel is protected by a red layer of rust, visually connecting it to the area and the ambitious environmental profile of the building. It offers, besides the beautiful red colour, a robust surface that can withstand the dust and dirt in this harsh environment.

The centre consists of a series of very different spaces and functions, and the shape of the building arose from the particular need for height and spaciousness. The building consists of an office section for employees, laboratories, dressing rooms, two large workshops, garages and storage spaces. At the centre of the building the office section makes for a peaceful

oasis with a view of the surroundings through the carefully placed windows, each offering beautifully framed views of the landscape or the waters of Øresund. At the same time, placement of the windows in the facade optimises the use of natural light, so the character and quality of that light becomes an integrated part of the architectural narrative.

A green and luxuriant interior  
When you step in through the main entrance you can see right through the building to the nature site behind it. Two large indoor trees, along with the lush plant wall, create a green and delightful internal contrast to the dusty and rough exterior environment. Dressing rooms, laboratories and the office section are all situated in one interior element that almost resembles a huge piece of furniture sitting between the tall concrete walls.

The office section is on the first floor, while dressing rooms and laboratories are on the ground floor. The large number of roof windows shower the building with a pleasant light from above, and along with the facade windows, allows for some very good natural light conditions in the office section. The floor plan encourages interdisciplinary synergy between the centre’s very different departments ranging from

engineers to excavator drivers. The materials in the interior are dominated by the raw concrete of the outer walls, walls and fixtures made of plywood, and floors made from bedding mortar.

**The first DGNB certified building in Nordhavn**

KMC Nordhavn is the first DGNB certified building in Denmark built after the test phase has ended and the very first certified building in Nordhavn. It is a zero energy building, which combines passive and active energy efficiency measures based on an overall view, which encompasses energy efficiency, building materials and social aspects.

The design of the building results in an extremely low energy consumption and the necessary energy is provided using geothermal energy from the many kilometres of piping underneath the black asphalt in front of the building as well as solar panels and solar cells integrated into the slanting roof surfaces.









For further information please go to our web site  
[www.cco.as](http://www.cco.as)