



PLOUGMANN VINGTOFT®

# Sustainability Report

October 2018

# Foreword by our CEO

We strongly believe that what we do is important and that our work can make a difference. Society will benefit as soon as innovative solutions to world problems become available. Our job is to help good ideas become real commercial products.

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**At Plougmann Vingtoft it is our vision to make a difference by strengthening knowledge, innovation, and creativity.**

In this report, we will highlight some of the inventions that have proven to be groundbreaking for society and in which our employees have been involved.

In 2017, we were awarded “IP firm of the year” by the acknowledged British analysis and news media, Managing Intellectual Property. The award has sparked our commitment to helping innovators and entrepreneurs develop, protect and commercialize their ideas, inventions, and brands by means of intellectual property rights (IPR).

With our vision, we wish to infuse our surroundings the deeper meaning of our function in society and acknowledge our field of work as part of something greater.

By strengthening the knowledge, we help the community, companies, and people to take advantage of the huge potential which is unfolded in and around the global IP system. By strengthening innovation, and creativity, we show that development and success is built on good ideas and the ability to think outside the box.

We take pride in the fact that we are committed to helping our clients benefit from the global IP system and strengthening their competitive position in the market. We live and practice this ideal in our daily work through our four core values:

**Commitment, Credibility, Creativity and Competence**

Plougmann Vingtoft employees have a passion for ideas, innovation, and new thinking that covers almost every industry you can think of.

Since the latest report on our sustainability progress in 2017, we have launched an updated employee policy that marks our obligation to encourage and pursue a positive impact on society, locally as well as in a global context.

Our CSR policy is embedded in the Plougmann Vingtoft brand, as we support research within green and renewable energy and focus on promoting the projects. Additionally, we make sure that our CSR policy is closely linked to our human resource strategy and we continuously strive to raise the job satisfaction of our employees.

I am pleased to confirm that Plougmann Vingtoft reaffirms its support for the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. In this annual Communication on Progress, we describe our actions to continually improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture, and daily operations. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

At Plougmann Vingtoft, we look forward to reporting on our progress on social responsibility and we hope that you will enjoy reading this year’s sustainability report.



**Annette Siewert Lindgreen**  
CEO



## Good Health and Well-being

In Denmark, the labour market is governed by many laws ensuring human rights to a very high degree, and we experience very few violations of the laws. However, we are well aware that this might not be the case in other countries, and consequently, we are devoted to monitoring our foreign business partners with a view to assessing their compliance with human rights.

### Physical environment

As part of our human resource policy we focus on ensuring that our employees are provided safe and suitable work facilities, e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol is not allowed at our offices.

Our employee handbook covers policies concerning our employee rights, physical and mental health, compensation packages, including pension and retirement schemes.

Our employees are covered by an extra health insurance as part of their employment contract, which provides them with quick and competent treatment in case of physical or mental illness. Each autumn, we offer all employees a vaccination against influenza free of charge.

We intend to convert good intentions into lasting behavioral changes for the benefit of every employee. Therefore, we carry out regular workplace assessments and make sure to follow up on expressed needs. An example is, that we have both single-, two-man offices, and open office space in our premises and an option to work from home, whenever there is a need to focus on a task away from the open office environment.

### Psychosocial environment

We aim at creating a mentally sound environment where all employees can communicate openly with their colleagues and/or managers. Our employees are with us because each and every one creates value to our

company, regardless of their function or title, and consequently, we value the opinion of all employees and encourage everybody to speak up on matters of concern.

We dedicate resources to monitor, remedy and eliminate environmental and safety risks through our work environment committee. The members are elected by and among the employees for a three-year period during which they receive mandatory work environment courses. The committee is chaired by our HR manager, and together this group is also responsible for carrying out workplace assessments at regular intervals.

Also, we have a worklife committee, which consists of employees elected among and by our employees, and they work to improve the job satisfaction in direct dialogue with the top management. Both committees meet at regular intervals and minutes of the meetings are published at our company intranet.

### Social events

We believe that social and celebratory events have a great impact on job satisfaction. Therefore, we arrange at least two parties every year with the purpose of bringing employees closer together and making sure, that they meet each other even though they work in different cities/countries or different teams.

As a new initiative this year, we have chosen to increase the budget for social team-events and encouraged our employees to get together outside of the office. Further, we celebrate special birthdays, anniversaries, and milestones during office hours, so that more people are able to attend.

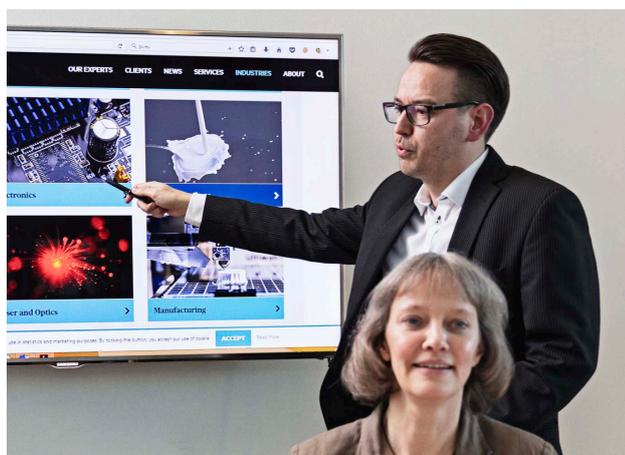
### Internal communication and dialogue

We support an open communication internally also with a view to avoiding harassment on the job.

At least once a year, we stage dialogue sessions between the employee and his/her manager on the performance and development of the employee, including the need for training. We also discuss what the employee can do to take responsibility for his/her contribution to the team and overall to the company.

In addition, we apply a situational management principle in order to keep a close dialogue whenever needed, for example we have an ongoing dialogue concerning workload, which is part of our efforts to enhance job satisfaction and prevent stress.

## Quality Education



Offering students part-time employments is a way of ensuring that our students also have time to study while working for us.

As for interns, we enter an agreement with their educational institution and offer students an internship, where they can practice their new skills, after they have completed their courses.

### **Learning opportunities outside the organization**

We make an effort to connect with different educational institutions, thus we find it important that new innovators know the importance of IPR. Consequently, we sponsor and support the Danish Museum of Science and Technology as well as the annual event, Danish IP Fair, which assembles all Danish Research institutions.

A number of our IP attorneys work as lecturers at educational institutions such as the University of Copenhagen, The University of Aarhus, The University of Aalborg, and The University of Southern Denmark.

Others provide lectures and presentations at institutions such as Copenhagen School of Design and Technology (KEA) and the innovation programme at Vaeksthus Copenhagen.

Further, we invest time in networking with students and telling them about career opportunities within the field of IPR.

### **Creating awareness about a career as an IPR attorney**

The education of IP attorneys in Denmark is solely provided by private IP firms, and it is of great importance that companies take on the responsibility of investing in educating new IP attorneys. At Plougmann Vingtoft, we take this responsibility very seriously. Thus, we are proud to announce that we have six young IP attorney trainees receiving training at our company.

### **Professional and technical development inside the organization**

As a knowledge-based consultancy company, our employees are our greatest asset. We focus on having the best qualified and highly skilled people and consequently, we keep on investing in providing our employees with relevant education.

### **Our responsibility as trusted advisors**

Right now, we are preparing our attorneys and specialists for the important changes on the European scene of IPR, which is affected by the EU patent package comprising the Unitary Patent and the Unified Patent Court (UPC). We invest in having a position on the market as trusted advisors to our clients in areas that are vital to their business. Therefore, it is a top priority for Plougmann Vingtoft to be able to provide the best counselling to our clients and associates on this topic at all times.

### **Relevant job experience for students**

We continuously bring student workers into our company as a part of our social responsibility, since it is a great way of preparing young people for their work life after graduation.

## Decent work - diversity

### Diversity is one of our strengths

As an internationally oriented company, we believe in employee diversity, which means that we set our team of experts independent of age/seniority, ethnicity, nationality, and gender. As an example, we employ both European, Japanese, and US patent attorneys, we have ten different languages represented, and our staff holds many nationalities and different cultural backgrounds, which enables us to understand and communicate even better with our stakeholders and communities all over the world.

### Facts and figures

- We have 78 employees (equal to 68 FTEs)
- 42% male and 58% female
- The average age at Plougmann Vingtoft is 43
- 44% of our employees have been at the company more than 8 years
- 11 student workers are employed part-time



## Life Science and Cleantech

### **Innovation with great societal impact**

We have specialists in many different industries. However, we have two strategic focus areas: the food and agriculture industry and the clean technology/renewable energy industry. We believe that these areas serve a higher societal purpose.

### **Life Science**

Our life science experts within food and agriculture have dedicated themselves to participating in several clusters, which are working to improve and develop new foods and food technologies. This area is one of our top strategic priorities since we acknowledge the fact that food is rapidly becoming a scarce resource globally, and mankind needs to find new ways of preventing widespread famine. We strive to assist the R&D within foods for which Denmark is renowned throughout the world by introducing the world of IPR to the industry and helping companies gain from their innovations.

### **Clean Technology**

The world of intellectual property truly revolves around new inventions. Many of the inventions we work with are smart solutions, which contribute to making small or large changes in the environment and society.

Clean technology relates to products and services that improve operational performance, productivity or efficiency while reducing costs, inputs, energy

consumption, waste, or pollution. Creators of clean technology need patent protection for their inventions and investments, as it secures their business and stimulates further innovation - for the common benefit of our society. As one of many good examples, we have helped the Norwegian firm, Kitemill, protect their revolutionary invention: a kite turbine that can harvest wind energy in high altitudes.

Within our team of IP attorneys we have a highly competent and innovative cleantech team that helps promote technological development to improve environmental conditions.

### **Our environmental impact**

As an office-based consultancy company, the nature of our operations makes our direct environmental impact relatively small as compared to e.g. production plants. However, we are constantly on the outlook for ways to act environmentally sound. In 2018 we have set up a number of project groups to help develop and implement digital tools that can ease our procedures and decrease our consumption of resources. This includes projects about automation of estimates, document handling, and system optimization. Further, we work paperless whenever this is possible, which helps us minimize our consumption of resources and our impact on waste handling.

## Promoting Innovation

As mentioned in the beginning of this report, society will benefit as soon as knowledge and innovative solutions to world problems become available by means of new products deriving from inventions. At Plougmann Vingtoft, we help entrepreneurs act on their ideas and commercialize their inventions.

### **Commercialization of Inventions**

As one of the only IP firms in Denmark, Plougmann Vingtoft offers in-house services relating to technology transfer services and commercialization of inventions. This is offered through our specific brand: [www.tto.eu](http://www.tto.eu)

We focus these services on helping companies and assisting universities in commercializing their inventions. Also, we help to improve the overall performance of their technology transfer units through implementation of innovation management processes.

We enjoy cooperation with entrepreneurs and students, and the university sector is one of our most innovative and inspiring client bases.

Firstly, we help our clients obtain protection of their specific invention. Secondly, there are occasions where we choose to partly sponsor such inventions of upcoming businesses, because we find it important to aid the good ideas and promote innovation that helps society as a whole.

### **Communication on Sustainable Inventions**

We find it important to share our stories behind good ideas that have great societal impact. We communicate stories through online articles, case stories, and blogs. So far, we have published stories about the pharmaceutical patent of the birth control pill, genetic engineering, using ozone for efficient water purification, and much more.

## **Ethical Standards**

Our business terms available online, cement that our relationship with our clients is built on a healthy foundation of mutual trust and balancing of expectations.

The business terms include a list of ethical standards describing that our main priority is to look after the interests of our clients and to safeguard their rights and retain our independency as professional advisors.

### **Ethical frameworks**

One way of safeguarding the rights of our clients is to share our knowledge on how to avoid CEO and/or email fraud, which continues to be a high risk issue. Another way is to operate within an ethical framework that is subject to codes of conduct of trade-related international organizations like ADIPA (Association of Danish Intellectual Property Attorneys), EPI (European Patent Institute), ECTA (European Communities Trade Mark Association), FICPI (International Federation of Intellectual Property Attorneys), and NPF (Norwegian Association of IP Attorneys).



### **Denmark – one of the world's least corrupt countries**

Fortunately, administrative corruption, business corruption, and other forms of corruption are very rare in Scandinavia. In a global study performed by the World Justice Project in 2017, Denmark was ranked as the least corrupt country in Europe and Central Asia for the fourth year in a row (no data for 2018 has been published). See full country profile for Denmark on the WJP's website: <http://data.worldjusticeproject.org/#/groups/DNK>

### **Our Commitment**

Plougmann Vingtoft is committed to non-acceptance of all forms of bribery directly or indirectly. We make an effort to ensure that all of our employees are aware of this policy, and we apply strict governance of e.g. financial approval procedures.

The Danish legislation concerning anti-money laundering is incorporated in our business teams, which show our firm commitment to avoid money laundering in connection with our business transactions and avoid insider trading of stocks.

## Corruption perception index 2017

2017 Rank	Country	2017 Score	2016 Score	2015 Score	2014 Score	2013 Score	2012 Score	Region
1	New Zealand	89	90	91	91	91	90	Asia Pacific
2	Denmark	88	90	91	92	91	90	Europe and Central Asia
3	Finland	85	89	90	89	89	90	Europe and Central Asia
3	Norway	85	85	88	86	86	85	Europe and Central Asia
3	Switzerland	85	86	86	86	85	86	Europe and Central Asia
6	Singapore	84	84	85	84	86	87	Europe and Central Asia
6	Sweden	85	88	89	87	89	88	Europe and Central Asia
8	Canada	82	82	83	81	81	84	Europe and Central Asia
8	Luxembourg	82	81	85	82	80	80	Europe and Central Asia
8	Netherlands	82	83	84	83	83	84	Europe and Central Asia

### Data Security

We keep our IT/IS and data security policies at a very high level to ensure the best possible protection of our clients' data and information at all times.

We comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which was introduced in May 2018, and we commit to always being able to document that only relevant data controllers can access and store sensitive, personal data and that we have a strict privacy policy

and established IT security processes to handle personal data such as health information, labor union, personality tests, political beliefs, etc.

Further, we have decided to include additional data in our rules related to sensitive personal data, including personal identification number, passport number, and bank account details to increase security with respect to hacking, fraud, and financial fraud.

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