



2019- 2020



UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

Our Progress

CEO Message

Building a sustainable model for Biogrow

With the Food and Agriculture Organization estimating that there will be around 9 billion people to feed by 2050, the question of what agricultural models and practices will be able to support this population boom, remains a significant one. At Biogrow, we aim to produce alternatives to current types of non-natural, non-organic substrates, and consequently, contribute to, and promote the development of more environmentally responsible methods of agriculture.



Our first production site was developed in India back in 2014, where we benefited (and continue to benefit) from the country's vast coconut reserves. Since then, Biogrow's development has been on a continuous upward scale, with an increase in production capacity and volumes (by 4), the gaining of new markets, and improvements to our entire production process. Our workforce also expanded from a mere 50 employees in 2014, to almost 200 in the high season of 2016.

Nevertheless, we are continually searching for new and innovative ways to develop our business while limiting our environmental and social impact. By limiting our energy consumption, promoting responsible farming and a sustainable production model with less fertilizers and pesticides, improving the wellbeing of our employees and local communities, we hope to contribute to the management of more global issues, such as climate change. This issue is a huge concern for us, as if coconut estates experience decreased productivity or the quality of the raw material deteriorates due to climate change, then there is no doubt that our development opportunities will be directly impacted. If we do not start to address them appropriately, and soon, these issues could well become significant risks in the future.

To help promote sustainable development both within our company and those of our partners, we devised a 'corporate social responsibility' strategy that we strongly believe will help us improve our impact on local environments, while contributing to the management of more global issues. We see sustainable development as an opportunity to develop our company by reducing some of our operational costs (e.g. energy consumption, waste production) and by promoting responsible behaviour towards our stakeholders. It is our responsibility as a modern, forward thinking and ethical company to encourage such actions, and to ensure that every employee is involved.

Our 2017 action plan aims to give our managers the tools to reach their sustainability targets and to positively alter the company's impact from a global perspective. We have every confidence that as a team - and as an environmentally sound and responsible company - we will remain true to our commitments and reach all our objectives.

Bruno Vila, CEO Biogrow India

Improving our processes & raising our quality standards are our primary commitments, and in doing so, we believe that we are closer to creating the perfect coir-based substrate and giving our customers – who are at the heart of everything we do – a product that they can be proud to use.



Profile and History

Biogrow India (Pvt) Ltd is an India subsidiary of SARL Vila, who produce fruits and vegetables in green houses in the south of France. Other subsidiaries of SARL Vila are in Sri Lanka and Brazil.

Biogrow has been operating in the field of coconut-based organic substrates for 5 years in India and has two main operating sites: Coimbatore for administrative needs, and both Poosaripatti and Nallampalli for production.




Thanks to the hard work of more than 200 employees in India during high season, Biogrow annually produces more than three million slabs of coconut-based organic substrates and serves more than 180 customers worldwide. Additionally, the company employs about 20 workers through its subcontractors.



Production Sites

Our production sites are in Brazil, Sri Lanka and India, with France being the location for our company headquarters.



-  FACTORIES
-  HEAD QUARTERS
-  MAIN MARKETS

Our Commitments

Employees

At Biogrow, we believe that our employees are essential to the success of our business, and while we rely predominantly on low-skilled workers for production duties, they are as integral to our company as all other team members.

With a strong team of both female and male staff at all levels within our company, we have implemented equal salaries for those employed within the same position, irrespective of gender. This commitment to our employees aims to see an end to discrimination based upon age, race, sex, gender, genes, religion, sexual orientation, social status, disability, political opinion, and trade union activities.

We also have a commitment to ban forced and child labour, and will not employ minors, neither support the employment of minors in companies that we work closely with.



Our workers are employed on the premise that the same pay should be given for the same job, or 'Equal JOB, Equal PAY'.

Every employee has also been trained equally for their jobs, making it impossible to imply that a female is less worthy of earning the same pay as a man, for fulfilling the same role.

A free annual medical camp is organized for every employee, in which their general health is assessed, and medications are prescribed as necessary.

Environment

Biogrow believes that environmental production is crucial for the sustainability of our business, and our planet, and is essential if we are to meet the needs of the future generation.

By maintaining an eco-friendly working environment for our employees, we are hopeful that it will also prove stress-free, and enable them to fulfil their roles in the best way possible.

In following the central governments Swachh Bharat mission, we are continually striving to keep the environment around us neat and tidy, and all recyclable waste is dealt with in the appropriate manner as per the government's guidelines.

Lastly but by no means least, we commit to protect the environment and our local natural resources and biodiversity, and to continuously work at lowering our impact related to the consumption of energy and water, along with paper management.

We also provide safe and hygienic accommodation for our workers who originate from outside of the state.

Suppliers & Subcontractors

We believe that the suppliers and subcontractors that we do business with, are part of our success and sustainability, and we rely heavily on a growing network of small, medium and large businesses to supply us with the raw materials that we require. In turn, we support *their* businesses through maintaining stable and profitable relations, and by providing them with technical and financial support. This also contributes towards the economic development of the entire region, as well as our own company.

We commit to keep up to date with weekly payments to our suppliers when they deliver their loads on schedule.

Customers

For us, providing our customers with a quality product is our absolute priority, and we have several systems in place to ensure that we always deliver on our promise. Some of

these include frequent checks to manage moisture levels, water retention capacity, sand content, mix of coconut chips and fibers, electric conductivity, expansion level, size, weight, etc.

Community and Charity work

At Biogrow we strive to provide as much help and support to the local community as we can, and with a strong sense of pride and charity among our own company community, helping others around us becomes second nature.

With the neighboring state of Kerala badly affected by floods recently, we donated funds and supplies to those worst hit by the natural disaster, and made sure that they were delivered directly to those in need.



Children attending government owned primary schools in India come from very poor families, and as a company, we aim to help as many local schools as we can. We have already donated electrical items, books and writing equipment to schools in our locality, and plan to do even more for them in the future.

We have also donated garbage receptacles to local villagers so that their trash and waste can be safely and hygienically disposed of, and we take care of the street dogs in our vicinity by ensuring that they are vaccinated, sterilized and given nutritious food.



The United Nations Global Compact Principles

We also concentrate on the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact:

- Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.
- Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights issues
- Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- Businesses should support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
- Businesses should support the effective abolition of child labour
- Businesses should support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
- Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges
- Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility
- Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies
- Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

ANTI- CORRUPTION



We are committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards within our company and comply with all anti-corruption laws whenever we conduct our business.

With our long-standing commitment to conducting business with integrity, we avoid all forms of corruption, including bribery, and encourage our partners and suppliers to do the same. Our anti-corruption compliance program encompasses numerous reporting, monitoring and certification controls, as well as providing education to our employees.