

# SUSTAINABILITY IN COWI

# 2020

COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS  
2020 UN GLOBAL COMPACT



COWI



## ATLANTIC SHORES TO TURBOCHARGE CLEAN ENERGY TARGETS

New Jersey is pivoting away from fossil fuels, with some of the most ambitious renewable energy targets in the USA. To help realise the goal of more than doubling the state's offshore wind production to 7.5 GW by 2035, the 740 km<sup>2</sup> Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind project is underway. Developers Shell and EDF Renewables have chosen COWI to design the onshore and offshore electrical infrastructure, as well as the inter-array and export cables. Atlantic Shores will supply up to 2.5 GW of clean energy to the US east coast markets, enough to power almost 1,000,000 homes, while boosting the regional economy and creating green jobs. Plans are being explored to convert any excess electricity to green hydrogen, for clean energy storage, to help New Jersey further reduce its carbon intensity.

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# COMMITMENT FROM OUR CEO

## AT THE TURNING POINT

2020 was a remarkable year. The still raging COVID-19 pandemic has changed and challenged our daily lives, but it has also reminded us of our ability to change, innovate and adapt to new circumstances at an incredible speed. Humans are adaptable. Old habits can be replaced. Business as usual can be renewed. We are at a turning point.

Since signing the Global Compact in 2006, COWI has strived to mitigate our own impact on society, reducing our footprint and contributing to the SDGs by actively working with and implementing the COP policies. In COWI, 2020 meant positive tailwind for our decision to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions caused by running our business. The target of reaching zero emissions before 2050 now seems well within reach. Based upon a thorough analysis of what causes our footprint, we decided to dramatically cut down on business travel as this will have the most significant impact on our green accounts.

Reducing the company's air travel, domestic and international alike, will make it possible for COWI to reduce our carbon footprint by more than 70 per cent by 2030, and to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 without any need for off-setting.

In this years carbon footprint report we are seeing a remarkable 55 per cent drop in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to last year. This is mainly due to the extraordinary circumstances and travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 lockdown, which has impacted many of our activities.

For a company carrying out projects across the globe, the 2020 situation with extremely low travel activity cannot be a permanent scenario. We would never underestimate the value of getting to know our customers.

But one thing is for sure – we will never fly to the same extent as we did pre-COVID-19.

The sense of urgency that characterised 2020 has also spurred favourable new ways of working as a global corporation. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to think in alternative ways of working, as countries were put under restrictions and lockdown.

For instance, our employees are increasingly working remotely. Maintaining productivity and turnover demands great flexibility – and is supported by our human resource strategy, which drives results and fosters a sound, respectful work environment, where everyone can continue to develop their talents and unleash their potential, also under these new circumstances.

New sustainability indicators are also included in our contracts with partners and suppliers, from canteen operators to pension providers. These goals will be monitored and pursued in the coming years for the benefit of all parties.

The progress on implementing our policies for human rights, labour rights, environment and anti-corruption is reflected in this reporting on the ten principles in the UN Global Compact and in our continued work regarding the UN's sustainable development goals.

## THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

2020 might also be remembered as a year of forest fires, floods and landslides, record-high levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, and Arctic sea ice melting faster than most climate models predicted.

Nevertheless, 2020 was characterised by politicians, companies and individuals strengthening their resolve to put climate action behind their words.

In Denmark, an ambitious new climate law was passed in parliament, compelling Denmark's climate objectives to be legally binding.

Later in the year, the EU agreed on an ambitious target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adopting one of the most progressive renewable energy policies in the world. In the US, an eleventh-hour change of administration very positively entailed a renewed commitment to the Paris Agreement.

Businesses as well as national, local and municipal governments are stepping up their commitments to a greener economy. Strong partnerships across companies and public sectors are paving the way for more sustainable growth.

This is creating more opportunities to build back cleaner, while raising the bar for positive climate action. Together, these developments are vital to the health of our planet, while safeguarding our economic growth, freedom and democracy.

## OUR VISION

At COWI, it is deeply embedded in our DNA and business model to work with our customers on solutions that deliver long-term societal, environmental and human benefits, with sustainability top of mind.

Presently, we are seeing the green transition increase the demand for COWI's solutions and provide new growth opportunities. Many customers strengthen their focus on sustainability and demands solutions that mitigate the environmental impact of urbanisation and climate change. This is impacting our business and, as the examples in this report highlight, our services and impacts are wide-ranging:

From climate-friendly construction design, carbon-reducing infrastructure and urban planning, to smart digital design tools that integrate sustainability ambitions into all phases of analyses and decision making.

### STEPPING FORWARD TOGETHER

While it is essential that we bring our own house in order, we also wish to spearhead the green transition, since working with our customers is how we can have the greatest impact on society.

With the aid of technological drivers, urban design, systems, services and real-time data, we can offer tailored, smart and sustainable engineering solutions to make a positive impact on societies around the globe. Going forward, our focus will be on future energy systems, resource efficiency and green mobility.

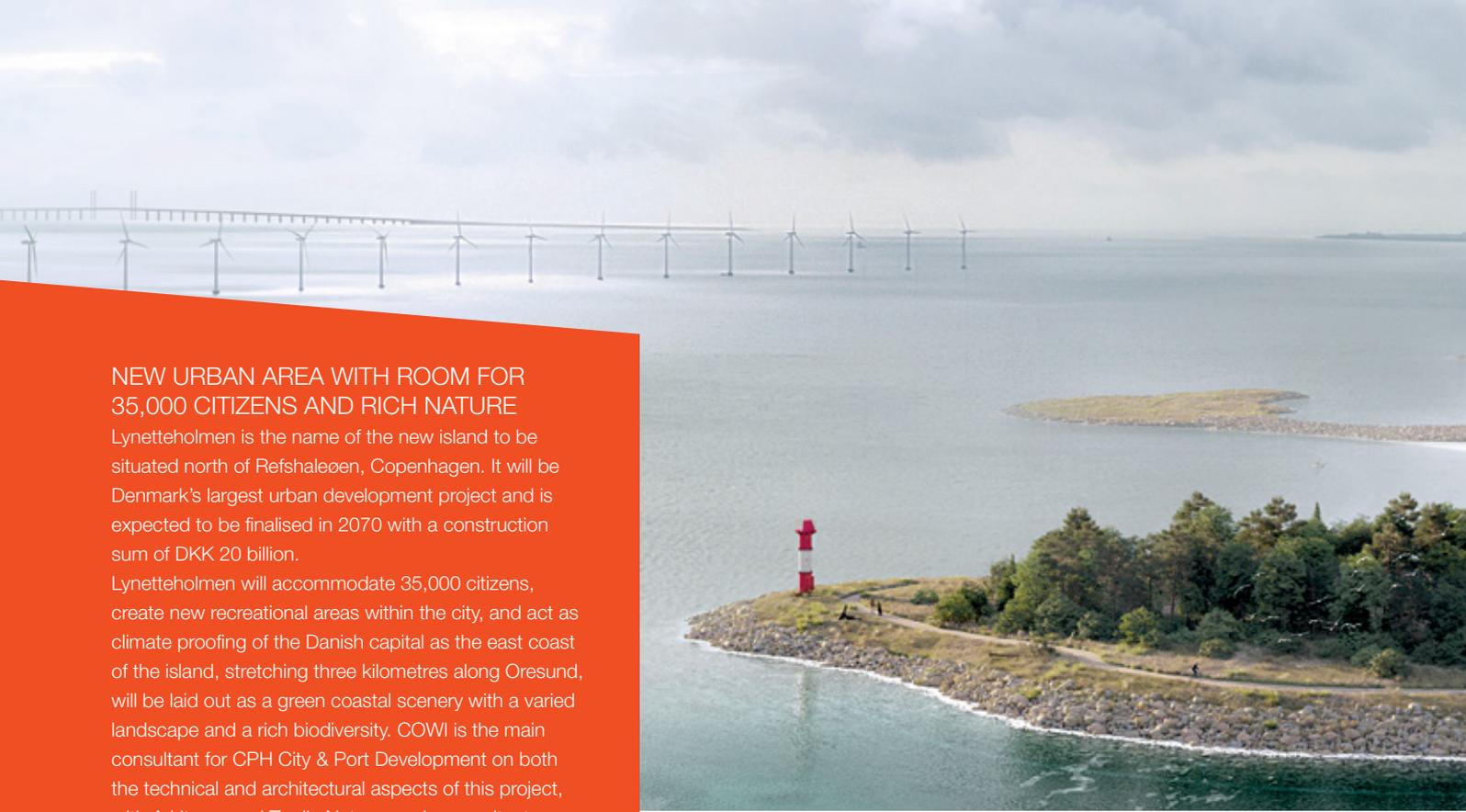
Personally, I am very excited about the great partnerships behind the realisation of the new lighthouse projects within urban development and climate protection, including Lynetteholm east of Copenhagen, Denmark, and the advanced Power-to-X energy partnership. The project can spearhead the maturation of sustainable fuels while creating jobs and new value chains to reinforce Denmark's role as a green energy leader.

These are the kinds of partnership that bring hope for a sustainable future.



Lars-Peter Søbye, Chief Executive Officer





## NEW URBAN AREA WITH ROOM FOR 35,000 CITIZENS AND RICH NATURE

Lynetteholmen is the name of the new island to be situated north of Refshaleøen, Copenhagen. It will be Denmark's largest urban development project and is expected to be finalised in 2070 with a construction sum of DKK 20 billion.

Lynetteholmen will accommodate 35,000 citizens, create new recreational areas within the city, and act as climate proofing of the Danish capital as the east coast of the island, stretching three kilometres along Oresund, will be laid out as a green coastal scenery with a varied landscape and a rich biodiversity. COWI is the main consultant for CPH City & Port Development on both the technical and architectural aspects of this project, with Arkitema and Tredje Natur as sub-consultants.

# SUSTAINABILITY AND CSR IN COWI

## THE CORE OF SUSTAINABILITY

The UN Global Compact calls for business to help build social and environmental frameworks that ensure open and free markets and provide people everywhere with a chance to share the benefits of the new global economy.

COWI's chief potential for living the ten principles in the Global Compact lies within our service delivery and the solutions that we develop with and for our customers.

Throughout our 90-year history, we have worked with our customers to deliver solutions with long-term societal, environmental and human interests in mind because sustainability is part of our identity and incorporated into our business model.

By combining in-depth knowledge with innovation, a holistic outlook and an understanding of the bigger perspective, we help our customers achieve the best

solutions to the benefit of today's and tomorrow's society.

## RESPONDING TO SOCIETY

At any given time, we are involved in more than 10,000 projects across the world. Each project has an impact and can contribute to achieving the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs), if designed and realised in an innovative way.

In a world where growing cities and climate change are a reality, societies and customers need solutions that are effective and sustainable, and that enable quality of life for the entire community. The consequences of climate change remain an overarching challenge, and the green transition is both influencing the demand for our current solutions and providing new growth opportunities.

Infrastructure, the built environment, water and energy remain the four sectors

that frame our key services. They are instrumental in providing future and sustainable solutions to the challenges and to support these efforts, we continuously develop and strengthen our organisation and the way we work.

In response to the significant increase in public and private investments in the green transition, we have intensified our strategic focus on future energy systems, resource efficiency and green mobility.

## GEARING UP THE GREEN TRANSITION

In 2020, we consolidated our energy resources in one business unit focusing on renewables, thereby positioning COWI as an attractive partner in the green transition. To accommodate these ambitions and meet the demands from our customers, we are also beginning to implement and mainstream a range of new sustainability and carbon reduction tools into our project cycles.

This will proactively integrate sustainability and carbon reduction into all major projects and help our customers identify their sustainability ambitions and meet formal sustainability requirements.

While carbon reduction is a vital part of many major projects, we also draw on COWI's many different expertises and combine in-depth knowledge with innovation and an understanding of the bigger perspective, thereby benefitting biodiversity enhancement, air quality, reduced water consumption, stakeholder engagement and responsible sourcing.

For example, as a consumer of carbon-intensive steel and cement, COWI is exploring new ways to create infrastructure, rather than relying on manufacturers and research institutes to develop low-carbon or carbon-neutral options for us.

### LIFE-CYCLE PERSPECTIVES

Increased use of life-cycle assessments on huge construction projects has a significant potential to strengthen sustainability. For example, slight adjustments to gradient on highways and railways, can create significant carbon savings over time. Building bridges or tunnels with space for future cabling or services can extend service life.

With the aid of technological drivers, urban designs, systems, services and real-time data, we can offer tailored, smart and sustainable engineering solutions to make a positive impact on societies around the globe. These next-generation solutions redefine old infrastructure, not only in terms of how it was thought out, but also by transforming many liabilities into assets.

Our thinking stretches beyond the immediate remit to consider the project's use and lifecycle. For transportation infrastructure, we must consider how people travel and goods move, and how this will evolve in the future. We combine expertises to engineer our towns and cities in a way that integrates different door-to-door options to accommodate future changes and challenges such as climate or pandemics.

### GREEN FUELS FOR HEAVY TRANSPORTATION

Copenhagen Airports, A.P. Moller – Maersk, DSV Panalpina, DFDS, SAS, Ørsted, Nel, Everfuel and Haldor Topsøe have formed the first partnership of its kind to develop an industrial-scale production facility to produce sustainable fuels for road, maritime and air transportation in the Copenhagen area, Denmark.

The Power-to-X partnership brings together the demand and supply side of sustainable fuels with a vision to realise what could become one of the world's largest electrolyser and sustainable fuel production facilities. When fully scaled-up in 2030, the project could deliver more than 250,000 tonnes of green fuels for buses, trucks, maritime vessels, and airplanes. COWI acts as knowledge partner for the project.



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

COWI's services within infrastructure, energy, water and environment, and buildings contribute to several of the UN's 17 SDGs. In 2019, we started categorising all projects according to which SDGs they contribute to the most. Approximately 35 per cent of all active projects were classified by

the end of 2020. The table below outlines the percentage of registered projects that contribute to COWI's priority SDGs.

Our consultancy services contribute to reaching the following five SDGs in particular:

2020	PERCENTAGE OF SDG-CLASSIFIED PROJECTS	NUMBER OF ACTIVE PROJECTS
No. 6: Clean water and sanitation	10,1	197
No. 7: Affordable and clean energy	7,9	290
No. 9: Industry innovation and infrastructure	22,9	448
No. 11: Sustainable cities and communities	24,9	488
No. 13: Climate action	7,1	139
<b>All</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1957 *</b>

\*Total number of active projects 2020: 5,691.  
Not classified: 2,315; Classified: 3,376; SDG-classified: 1957

## PUSHING THE AGENDA

In recent years, especially our Scandinavian business lines have started to build a thought-leadership position around sustainability and green transition. Namely by sharing insights and knowledge regarding sustainable growth of cities (SDG 11).

We participate in the public debate and have held several seminars and events with customers and other stakeholders to discuss challenges facing societies and possible solutions. In 2020, sustainable urban development and the green transition continued to take priority in our internal and external communication.

## THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development





## OUR CSR APPROACH

Our approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability is embedded in our vision, mission and strategy. What we do and who we are as a company are naturally linked.

We want to create value for our customers, key stakeholders, COWI and the society, and we do this by enabling our customers to meet their sustainability ambitions and thus make the societies in which we operate more sustainable and more liveable.

We have a three-pronged approach, which integrates CSR and sustainability:

- › Business conduct: The way we carry out our own activities.
- › Employee behaviour: The way we behave at the workplace and our obligation to act.
- › Business deliverables: The way we ensure that the solutions we design for customers take environmental and societal impacts into consideration.

## THE HUMAN CAPITAL

It is essential to COWI and to the realisation of our strategy that we are among the most attractive employers for professionals looking for a career within

the consulting engineering industry. To this end, we promote diversity and cultivate a work culture with clear and high ethical standards. Both are critical to our efforts to attract talented candidates and retain outstanding professionals.

Our commitment is reflected in our endorsement of the UN Global Compact as well as our support to the Code of Ethics of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC).

COWI's specialist competencies and our ability to engage in societies' challenges together with our customers represent and sustain the creativity and innovation needed to meet these global challenges. This is the core of our services and our business model.

## POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

To formalise our focus, we have developed several policies and guidelines on sustainability and CSR, which set out the overall framework for how we work on a day-to-day basis. These policies and guidelines are described in this report and underpin the strong correlation that exists between our values and our business practices.

## CSR POLICIES 2020

- › Transparency and anti-corruption
- › COWI Whistle-blower hotline
- › Business integrity
- › Diversity and inclusion
- › Occupational health and safety (OHS).

This report serves as the required annual Communication of Progress for the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). As such, its content is structured around the ten UNGC principles and describes our activities regarding the environment, human rights, anti-corruption and social responsibility.

In addition, this report serves to meet the CSR requirements of Danish legislation. Thus, it presents our business model with the issues related to CSR. It explains how we handle the issues, and how we follow up on our CSR key performance indicators.

# COWI'S BUSINESS MODEL AND CSR RISK ASSESSMENT



\* 2018 was the first year we reported on our business model and discussed the CSR risks involved. Therefore, 2018 is the base-line year except in some cases where we did not have numbers from 2017 or 2018. In those cases, 2019 indicators are used for baseline.



## SOCIETY

GLOBAL/NATIONAL ECONOMIES and POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT constitute the framework conditions for all aspects of COWI's market presence. The CSR risks presented by the framework are MITIGATED by living COWI's mission and vision and practising COWI's five values: integrity, respect, independence, professional capacity and freedom. In addition, navigating a constantly changing political environment calls for a flexible and digitalised organisation which can adapt quickly to new project conditions.

### HOW WE FOLLOW UP

- › Management's and employees' knowledge of mission, vision and values is scored in COWI's annual engagement survey. Since 2020, our colleagues in Arkitema are included in the annual survey.
- › While knowledge of mission and vision scored 71 in 2020, knowledge of values scored 74.
- › At the beginning of 2020, we initiated a process of updating our company values. The aspiration is for the updated values to become integrated in how we do things and how we lead in COWI. The process has included input from more than 200 employees and 25 customers.
- › In 2021, we will work intensively on making the values come alive by helping all managers 'walk the talk' and by implementing the values in processes related to employee development, recruitment and onboarding etc.
- › It is COWI's ambition that all employees should have equal opportunities regardless of gender, age, race, religion, nationality, ethnic and social origin, disability, political or sexual orientation. COWI views diversity as a competitive advantage.
- › In COWI A/S, women account for 30 per cent of employees and 31 per cent of managers.
- › But the numbers vary a lot across business lines, and there is still room for improvement as the share of female leaders goes down the higher up the career ladder you get.
- › Implementation of COWI's policy for diversity includes awareness of the unconscious biases that can prevent diversity in recruitment processes, talent development and project execution.

## ENGAGEMENT SURVEY SCORING

In our engagement survey, we benchmark ourselves against similar companies. Scores in the engagement survey are as follows: 0-59: low; 60-74: medium; and 75-100: high.

Every year, we carry out an engagement survey to measure the overall engagement of our employees. COWI's target score for employees' knowledge of mission, vision and values is set to 77.

In 2020, more than 86 per cent of all COWI employees including Arkitema took part in the pulse survey.

Compared to 2019, the overall engagement score decreased by one point, from 77 to 76\*. The areas which showed room for improvement were clear processes and tools and how we use feedback from customers. COWI's target for 2021 is to meet or exceed the external benchmark, and we will therefore work on ensuring knowledge of our mission, vision and values.

Furthermore, we will include the questions regarding mission, vision and values in our annual engagement survey every year instead of only every other year.

## FOLLOW ME!

Sometimes, many small steps add up to something big. Some of those steps are taken every day between office desks and printer rooms. With more than 6500 employees producing reports and presentations to customers, the number of prints in COWI's offices around the world added up to 7,2 million in 2020. This is significantly fewer than in 2019 (10.6) and 2017 (14).

The drop can be explained by the COVID-19 lockdown, which had employees working from home. Most notably the number of PowerPoint and emails prints was reduced by more than 1/3 in 2020 compared to 2019.

Since COWI installed the "follow me" print system, the number of cancelled prints has also been reduced, reflecting a change of mindset and routines which impact positively on resources. Resulting savings include trees used for making paper, greenhouse gasses generated by paper production and electricity used for paper production.

COWI IT is taking several other measures to minimise the environmental impact of running big data servers and cloud solutions, and to encourage employees to be mindful about their need to print.





## MARKETS

As a global player in diverse GEOGRAPHIES and with diverse CUSTOMERS, COWI's employees face a number of CSR risks ranging from their personal security to the customers' business environment and CSR approach. These risks are MITIGATED by the Executive Board's approval of project geographical presence and COWI's safety organisation.

COWI is a signatory of the UN Global Compact, thus the business environment, including corruption, is a key focal point vis-à-vis customers.

### HOW WE FOLLOW UP

- › COWI's Executive Board applies the Transparency International Corruption

Perception Index (CPI) to decision-making on geographic presence.

- › Countries with a CPI below 40 requires the intervention of the Executive Board.
- › All COWI employees undergo business integrity training every third year. In 2020, the degree of completion was 66 per cent as opposed to 62 per cent in 2019. The increase from 62 per cent to 66 per cent completion is primarily a result of the timing of the rolling three-year training renewal deadline.
- › The target for completion remains 75 per cent in 2021.
- › Due to not reaching the target in 2020, we are strengthening our internal communication related to follow-up on completion of training.

## WHISTLEBLOWER

The type and severity of incidents reported in the COWI Whistle-blower system are assessed by the Executive Board and reported to the Board of Directors.

- › Eight cases were reported via our whistle-blower hotline in 2020 as opposed to two cases in 2019 and nine in 2018 (see more on page 16 regarding human rights).



## SERVICES

To supply our customers with state-of-the-art sustainable solutions, we need to be able to recruit and retain highly COMPETENT EMPLOYEES and attract strong and responsible PARTNERS. We MITIGATE the risk of losing such employees through leadership and by creating a great place to work.

We MITIGATE the risk of attracting inappropriate partners through our screening process and by making sure that our code of conduct is upheld.

### HOW WE FOLLOW UP

- › All training activities in COWI Academy are monitored regarding content and participants.
- › In 2020, 1,650 unique participants took part in COWI's instructor-led activities via COWI Academy. In 2019, the number was 2,748. Several courses were held as online courses only due to the lockdown.
- › In 2020, cooperation and sharing of competencies and resources across business lines and borders in COWI were further strengthened in our sector boards. Strategic and practical coordination of joint market activities took place in these boards.
- › In 2019, 2,748 unique participants took part in COWI's training activities via COWI Academy.

## KEY CONTENT OF THE COWI ACADEMY COURSES INCLUDES:

- › Leadership
- › Project management
- › Business development
- › Onboarding (incl. vision, values, obligation to act)
- › Policy and safety
- › Compliance training
- › Communication training
- › Financial management.



## VALUE CREATION

COWI's success in the market depends on meeting CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS and supplying RESPONSIBLE PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

The risk of not living up to customer requirements or being able to incorporate sustainable quality solutions through diligent management is MITIGATED by ensuring that COWI has a vibrant and strong professional environment, which can provide the high-quality, innovative and sustainable solutions that COWI's customers expect.

Responsible project management entails that quality management is integrated in every phase of project execution and is therefore a strong mitigating factor.

In 2020, the business in Denmark, the UK and Sweden was certified according to ISO 45001 (see more on page 18 regarding labour rights).

### HOW WE FOLLOW UP

- › Customer satisfaction is followed closely through the Net Promoter Score for the entire business on a quarterly basis.
- › Quality management is ensured through ISO certification, recertification and regular audits.
- › In 2019, all of COWI became certified according to ISO 9001.



## IMPACT

COWI's core business is to deliver projects based on the requirements of customers and society at large. In 2020, we worked with local and international customers in more than xx different locations around the globe.

As a business, COWI also makes a FOOTPRINT in these societies. In 2006, COWI signed the Global Compact. Since then, we have strived to MITIGATE our impact on society by reducing our footprint and contributing to the SDGs through actively working with and implementing the COP policies.

### HOW WE FOLLOW UP

- › Since 2019, COWI projects are classified according to their relevance and contribution to achieving the SDGs.
- › During 2020, the green transition became our core business focus, and we now work systematically to integrate sustainability into all major projects. We also offer advisory and expert services such as CO<sub>2</sub> calculator tools, life-cycle assessments, BREEAM certifications, green accounts, audits and benchmarking, plus a dialogue tool that helps customers identify and monitor their contribution to the UN SDGs.
- › Networks are initiated across business lines, speeding up the development of carbon neutrality tools and more competencies.
- › In 2020, we decided to reduce our business travel and this will contribute to reducing our carbon footprint by more

than 70 per cent by 2030, compared to baseline year 2008, and to reaching carbon neutrality in 2050 (see full carbon footprint report on page 24).

- › We closely follow up on the KPIs to which our external suppliers for catering, facilities and transportation have committed themselves regarding, e.g., reduced carbon emissions, less waste, increasing recycling and more organic food (see more on FM page 28).
- › Almost 3,000 COWI and Arkitema employees worldwide responded to a thorough mobility survey about commuting. The responses provide a valuable background for initiating new initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint and boost green mobility among our employees in COWI, e.g., by providing more charging stations at our offices.



## CERTIFIED OFFICE BUILDINGS

In central Gothenburg, two of Sweden's first WELL-certified office buildings are under construction. Both projects aim for GOLD level and a BREEAM Excellent certification. Gårda Vesta consists of two towers with 14 and 25 floors, respectively, and a total of almost 26,000 m<sup>2</sup> office space. Skeppsbron Merkur will offer 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> office space. The WELL certification focuses entirely on the well-being and health of employees and those staying in the building, while the BREEAM certification ensures that the buildings are constructed with good materials and good energy, environmental and quality properties. COWI has the roles of WELL Accredited Professional, BREEAM Assessor and BREEAM Advisory Professional in both projects.

## INCREASING COASTAL RESILIENCE IN THE USA

Communities along the Texas coast in the USA sustain extensive damage from the increasingly intense storms that frequently strike the 400-mile coastline. In 2017, Hurricane Harvey caused over a billion dollars in damage, while damaging or destroying an estimated 80 per cent of the city's housing. The Port Arthur Hurricane Flood Protection Program will enhance energy security, reduce the risk to human life and critical infrastructure, maintain and restore coastal habitats, and identify opportunities to enhance existing hurricane protection systems as part of a comprehensive plan to increase Texas's coastal resilience.

In 2020, COWI assisted in designing a segment of the Port Arthur and Vicinity project, part of the program, to increase the level of performance and resilience of existing flood protection infrastructure around Port Arthur.





## COMPOSITE BRIDGES TO A GREENER FUTURE

A concept footbridge named Futura is being developed into a prototype. It demonstrates the benefits that can be gained from using composites in railway station environments for both new build and replacement structures.

The footbridge demonstrator, which COWI develops together with National Composites Centre, Network Rail and Marks Barfield Architects in the UK, will adopt modern methods of construction and platform architecture through a standardised design and a set of adaptable components created in factories with digital controls for simple, rapid precision-fit assembly in the station environment. The project will specifically target key metric of reduced greenhouse gas emissions, making it more sustainable and environmentally friendly.

## ANALYSING THE LIFETIME OF A METRO

The Fornebu Metro is one of the biggest transportation projects in Norway, and a frontrunner within sustainability. COWI made a life-cycle analysis (LCA) on behalf of the City of Oslo. The LCA provides a climate baseline for the whole project, by calculating the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the project based on a cost-benefit analysis and projected CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The LCA studies the usage and choice of materials, machines, transportation during the construction as well as operation and maintenance of the metro line over a 60-year lifespan. Special focus is on the use and optimisation of concrete.

Parts of the work to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the Fornebu Metro were funded by the Norwegian Environment Agency through its Klimasats initiative.



# HUMAN RIGHTS

**01** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

**02** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

## WORKING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

The support of human rights is rooted in COWI's culture and reflected in one of COWI's five guiding values, 'respect'. The respect value states:

**“We respect those we work with, nature and society. We respect each other in decision-making and implementation. We respect friendship across the organisation, independent of hierarchy.”**

Through our policy on sustainable development, we integrate human rights in our business. In the policy, we commit ourselves to taking social aspects into account when carrying out projects, and to enhancing our employees' attention to and knowledge of social conditions.

This policy is integrated in our risk assessment and training systems. We continue to raise awareness among our employees about the importance of COWI not negatively affecting human rights in our external activities, including the work we do for customers, our procurement practices and our partners. Internally, our focus is on the right to a safe workplace with our health and safety policy as the overall guide.

## DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS ON PROJECTS

To ensure that we do not have any adverse impacts on human rights through projects in which we are involved, we operate according to three procedures: Due diligence, supervision and obligation to act, described on the following page. Employees are introduced to these procedures as part of COWI's training programmes.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Through COWI's procurement system, we assess suppliers in terms of human and labour rights, ethical standards, social and environmental policies, health and safety, diversity and anti-corruption.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

The risk of physical work injuries is very low in COWI's operations. In 2020, we had 14 injuries causing absence compared to 16 in 2019.

YEAR	INJURIES REPORTED
2018	24
2019	16
2020	14

In 2018, the Executive Board decided that the COWI Group should be certified according to ISO 45001:2018. The ISO 45001:2018 project started in Denmark in 2018. In 2019, the COWI Group worked intensively on establishing and implementing COWI's Occupational Health and Safety management system for Danish employees.

In 2020, COWI A/S in Denmark was successfully certified according to ISO 45001. COWI in Sweden and the UK transferred from OHSAS 18001 to ISO 45001. Being certified in occupational health and safety management has proven to be a powerful way to ensure and develop a good working environment, as an ISO 45001 certificate means that COWI's goals for health and safety must exceed the legal requirements, and occupational health and safety has moved even further up the agenda throughout COWI.

In 2020, a range of initiatives to improve the working environment were launched. For instance, all heads of sections were trained in employee stress management, and procedures for safe working environment on sites were improved. Also, steps will be taken to reduce the noise level in open-plan offices.

Almost 100 employees took part in the external audit, which was carried out in September. The plan is to continue the journey towards getting the entire COWI Group certified according to ISO 45001, and in 2021 India is expected to join. Also, in 2021, efforts to get Norway ready for certification will take place.

## PRINCIPLE RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Employee conditions and compliance with human rights are important to COWI. To ensure that we detect any human rights violations on projects in which we are involved, we operate according to two procedures:



## ACCELERATING THE GLOBAL GREEN TRANSITION

The global reliance on fossil fuels has allowed harmful emissions to threaten our planet's stability. The Danish Energy Agency recognises that a successful green transition demands global collaboration. Through the Danish Energy Partnership Programme (DEPP), it is partnering with 16 countries to share expertise and assistance as they undergo their own green transition. DEPP uses Danish examples to show how green energy developments can support economic growth and meet the needs of the present, without compromising future generations. COWI is actively involved, providing knowledge and technical support for renewable energy integration, climate mitigation planning and energy efficiency, among other things.

- › Health and safety supervision: In COWI, we seek to increase our influence on project sites by offering supervision of safety and health conditions. This allows us to ensure that internationally accepted standards are enforced on a project.
- › Obligation to act: Employees at COWI have the so-called obligation to act, meaning that everyone is obligated to act if they see human rights violated on a project.

The two procedures are included in our project management training.

### POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS

- › Respect is one of COWI's five values.
- › COWI Whistle-blower.
- › FIDIC Code of Ethics adopted by COWI.
- › Policy on occupational health and safety.
- › Policy on sustainable development.

### MEANS AND ACTIONS:

- › Ensure structured risk assessments within the areas where employees are exposed to hazards.
- › Encourage all employees to contact their manager if they have work-related health and safety concerns.
- › Ensure that health and safety are an integral part of management meetings, department/section meetings and other relevant forums.
- › Actively involve employee representatives in health and safety matters.
- › Provide continuous health and safety leadership training for managers and specific training for employees.
- › Monitor health and safety procedures to ensure compliance and continuous improvements of the health and safety management system.

### POLICY ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The COWI Group is committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment for all employees, which also is essential to COWI's overall business performance.

In COWI, health and safety include psychosocial wellbeing, safety when working on site, physical working environment in our offices and accident prevention.

Our objective is to be a healthy and accident-free workplace.

We recognise that strong health and safety leadership is essential to maintaining and developing a good working environment.

To meet our objectives, we will:

- › Not compromise a healthy and safe working environment for economic or productivity reasons.
- › Encourage employees to openly share and discuss health and safety issues.
- › Emphasise that a healthy and safe working environment requires awareness from both management and employees.
- › Comply with all relevant health and safety legislation and codes of practice.

# LABOUR RIGHTS

**03** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

**04** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.

**05** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

**06** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

## LABOUR RIGHTS ON PROJECTS

The approximately 6,682 people working for COWI enjoy working conditions in line with international labour rights. We support and practise diversity and equal opportunities. Our employees are free to organise themselves and bargain collectively as they wish, and they are all paid a fair wage.

COWI dissociates itself from all kinds of child labour. The main challenge for COWI in terms of labour rights is that potential violations of these often take place outside our sphere of influence.

They frequently concern migrant labour in the construction industry. We attempt to meet this challenge by working according to the following guidelines.

When COWI has the management responsibility of the construction phase of a project, we can influence labour rights conditions at the construction site, and act if they are not aligned with national and international ratified legislation.

If we are not in charge of the supervision of the project, we do not necessarily have access to the construction site and are therefore unaware of the human rights and/or labour rights standards practised. The obligation to act described in the human rights section also applies here.

The COWI Whistle-blower system is available for reporting observations or suspicion of discrimination.

## DIVERSITY IS MORE THAN A RIGHT

COWI is an international company with projects all over the world. Diversity has been on the agenda for several years. We see it as a competitive advantage that affects our ability to attract and retain the best talent, secure innovation, develop an inclusive work culture, and manage to increase turnover and profit.

Today, we are 81 different nationalities at all career levels. We believe that everyone should have equal opportunities regardless of gender, age, race, religion, nationality, ethnic and social origin, disability, political and sexual orientation.

The field of engineering has traditionally been dominated by men, but in COWI A/S (our Danish locations) women account for 30 per cent of employees and 31 per cent of managers. We have a historically high percentage of women at all levels in the company and are seeing that it is becoming easier to attract female candidates. However, the percentage of women tends to go down the higher up the career ladder you get.

COWI counteracts this by implementing bias-blockers in processes for succession planning, people review and talent programmes, and extra efforts are put into searching for qualified female candidates in the recruitment processes.

In 2020, workshops and surveys on diversity were conducted. Managers are also being trained to become more aware of their own unconscious bias and on how they behave as role models. Additionally, experience shows that other types of diversity benefit from gender initiatives.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

In 2020, we continued our focus on talent management: improving recruitment and onboarding of new hires as well as continuing our talent programme and planning for further diversity initiatives.

During 2020, we continued our activities to ensure that COWI employees have state-of-the-art skills and competencies, securing not only their performance on COWI projects, but also their marketability outside COWI.

Among the new initiatives are a new internal career site for internal mobility, increased online training options and, in general, learning and development functions are given high priority.



## IMPACT THROUGH INVESTMENTS

2,300 COWI employees deposit pension savings with Danica Pension. The savings correspond to 11.6 per cent of their gross salary, and the total collected pension savings in Danica has reached DKK 2 billion. In 2002, we extended and improved the pension agreement, and from 1 January 2021, it includes a new sustainable pension product that lets COWI employees decide how much of their savings should be invested in sustainable businesses. Danica Balance Bæredygtigt Valg focuses on sustainability, especially in terms of the UN SDGs and environmental and social aspects.

We enhance skills and competencies through COWI's own in-house academy, which offers a broad range of training programmes and courses on a wide number of subjects to levels on all employees. Business ethics are taught and debated as part of the project management training, ensuring awareness as well as knowledge of our whistle-blower system.

## POLICIES, PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS RELATING TO LABOUR RIGHTS

- › COWI Whistle-blower.
- › Policy on diversity and inclusion.
- › Policy on occupational health and safety.
- › FIDIC Code of Ethics, adopted by COWI.

All policies are available at [www.cowi.com/csr-and-compliance](http://www.cowi.com/csr-and-compliance)

## POLICY: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

COWI views diversity as a competitive advantage that helps us achieve the best results for our customers. To meet our objectives, we:

- › aim to have a diverse workforce that mirrors the diversity of our business and markets.
- › give equal opportunities to everyone, regardless of gender, age, race, religion, nationality, ethnic and social origin, disability, political and sexual orientation.
- › ensure that our employment and recruitment practices adhere to local legislation, wherever we work in the world.
- › continuously improve equal opportunities in our employment and recruitment practices.
- › work towards creating a culture of tolerance and appreciation.

## NO ROOM FOR HARRASSMENT

COWI is a workplace where many employees enjoy having an informal, open and direct dialogue.

Since the #metoo debate re-emerged in 2020, it has been emphasised that sexual harassment is a violation of COWI's core values and that there is no room for disrespectful or sexually charged dialogues. The Staff Manual was updated in June 2019 with a sharpened policy on the matter, and procedures for detecting and handling harassment have intensified.

Management has been in dialogue with COWI's staff committee (CMU) and agreed that CMU will also assist

in detecting any potential issues and inform HR accordingly.

In the past 12 years, less than a handful of sexual assault cases have been reported to Group HR, and the group-wide engagement survey does not indicate that sexual harassment is an issue at the workplace.

All employees in COWI A/S are invited to participate in the workplace assessment.

When asked whether they "had been subjected to unwanted sexual attention in the workplace within the last 12 months", 0.4 per cent of the respondents, corresponding to ten individuals, replied yes. Of these, 67 per cent said that they had been harassed by a colleague.

11 per cent said the aggressor was a customer, zero per cent said that it was a superior, and 33 per cent did not wish to reveal the status of the aggressor. None of the ten respondents have reported their incidents to HR.

For comparison, the common rate for affirmative answers in other companies is around two per cent, according to our survey supplier Ennova.

However, COWI strongly encourages employees to immediately contact their manager, an occupational health and safety (OH&S) representative or HR, if they experience violations of this principle of zero tolerance.

# ENVIRONMENT

**07** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

**09** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

**08** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Environmental protection is the area where COWI has the greatest potential to make a difference and not only promote sustainable solutions to our customers, but also enable them to choose sustainable solutions.

We seek to reduce our own impacts through carbon-neutral policies and initiatives regarding the efficiency needs of our customers and our organisation. These activities are described in detail in the green accounts and in the chapter on sustainability and CSR.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

COWI's focus is on all environmental issues, ranging from analyses of environmental legislation and areas for improvement to climate change mitigation measures, solid waste, water supply and hands-on solutions for saving species when carrying out building or infrastructure projects.

We strive to include environmental aspects and to upgrade and develop our skills in this entire area to be able to propose new and more environmentally friendly solutions to our customers.

One set of challenges is related to the growing world population and to the increasingly high urbanisation rates across the globe with ensuing pressure on infrastructure, the built environment, water and energy.

These four sectors frame COWI's key services, which are instrumental in providing future and sustainable solutions to these challenges, and COWI's engagement in sustainable urban development planning exemplifies our commitment to working for more sustainable mobility and liveability in cities.

Further challenges are climate change, environmental degradation, bio diversity and the increasing production of waste, which constitute threats that need to be overcome by, e.g., low-energy buildings, security measures against adverse weather, and effective waste master plans.

The project cases selected for this report illustrate how COWI assists our customers in addressing these issues via innovative and environmentally conscious solutions.



## BETTER ROADS AND LESS CO<sub>2</sub>

The building and maintenance of roads are a burden on the climate, but the Danish Road Directorate wants to be an active player in the green transition. A new life-cycle assessment model, developed in 2020, calculates the carbon footprint of the products used. For instance, asphalt, concrete, iron and steel. It can be used to screen and compare the climate impact of different contractor solutions and their choice of materials, thereby achieving carbon reductions in connection with planning, construction, operation and maintenance of roads. The new VejLCA is based on an existing Norwegian model, adapted to fit Danish road conditions.

## INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS FOR THE FUTURE

What will be the top 20 innovative bio-based products in the coming five to 15 years? And what would the financial and commercial success stories of a bio-based economy look like? On behalf of the EU DG Research and Innovation, COWI has led a major study with scientists from several European universities on innovative bio-based economy to enable policy-makers, the scientific community and primary producers to make informed decisions about bio-based products such as beverage bottles made of PET from sugar cane.





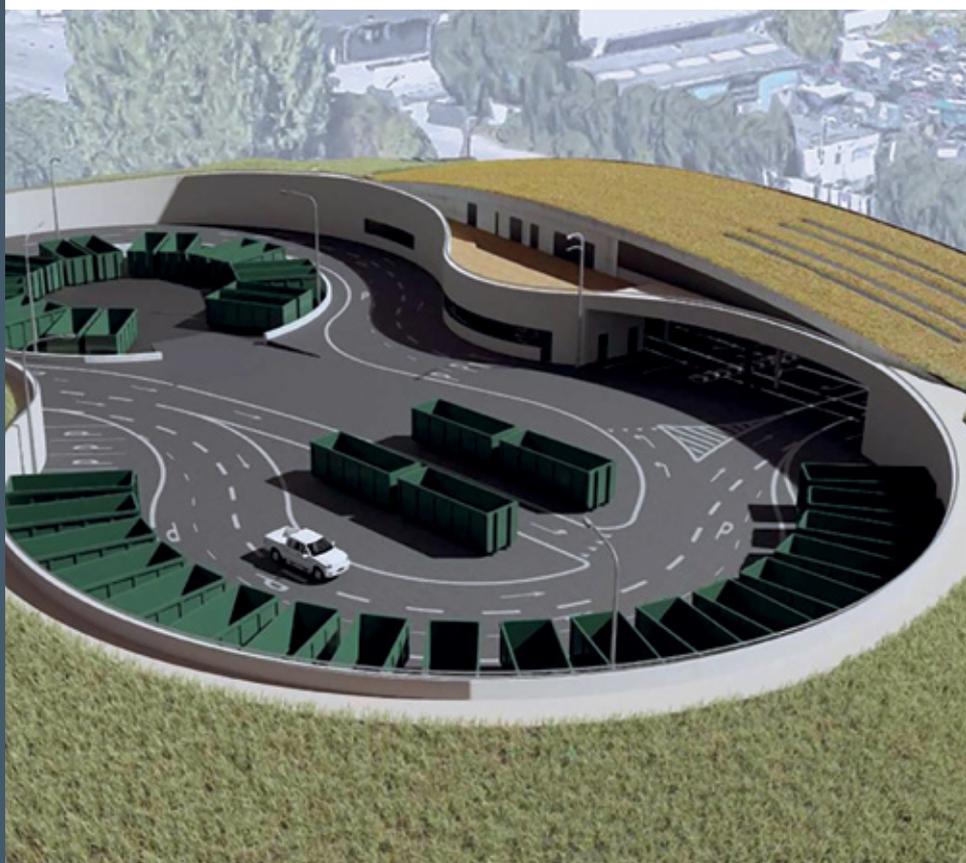
## TAKING THE POWER BACK

Local electricity production based on microgrids is well-suited for charging vehicles. Together with Østfold Energy, COWI is designing a new charge court in Sarpsborg, Norway, where 40 electric vehicles can charge simultaneously. The chargers are backed up by solar photovoltaic panels (PVs) and a battery energy storage system, together with smart deferrable load control.

The Inspiria Charge Court can be used for delivering electricity to the power grid in case of excess power supply. Instead of increasing the capacity at the point of interconnection to the grid, the battery energy storage system, solar PVs and vehicle-to-grid chargers will mitigate the total electric vehicle charge demand – offering increased security of power supply, with minimal strain on the power grid. Thus, saving costs and integrating renewable energy resources in a smarter way.

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN ACTION

The circular economy converts a linear system with finite lifespans into a closed loop, recycling and repurposing as much as possible from used items. This principle significantly reduces the need for raw material extraction, as well as the amount of waste entering landfills and polluting the environment. Circular economy can be seen in action at the Sydhavn Recycling Centre in Copenhagen, Denmark, which marks a significant step towards a zero-waste future. It is a state-of-the-art facility designed and overseen by COWI on behalf of Amager Ressourcecentre. Here, materials are carefully sorted and made available for reuse, primarily as construction supplies. A team of entrepreneurs work on site to find new uses for items, and educational courses are available in circular economy practices.





## PROTECTING THE CITY OF COPENHAGEN AGAINST FLOODS

In the coming years, the City of Copenhagen will be facing a major task when it comes to securing the Danish capital from flooding due to rising sea levels and storm surges. The municipalities of Copenhagen and Hvidovre have asked COWI to investigate how best and most sustainably realise flood protection in the Kalveboderne area south of Copenhagen. This includes analysing the most suitable locations and specific solutions with regards to security, construction economics and nature. Today, Kalveboderne is a Natura 2000 site, which should be integrated as a central part of the flood protection.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE SDGs

In 2020, we introduced COWI's take on a simple and fun way for customers to kickstart their work with the UN global development goals (SDGs). The SDG board game "Verdensmålsplet" facilitates a dialogue that makes it easier to articulate and understand the 17 goals and the underlying targets and indicators. This provides insight into which actions and options the customers have for working with the SDGs – both on a local scale and when creating a framework for prioritising efforts.

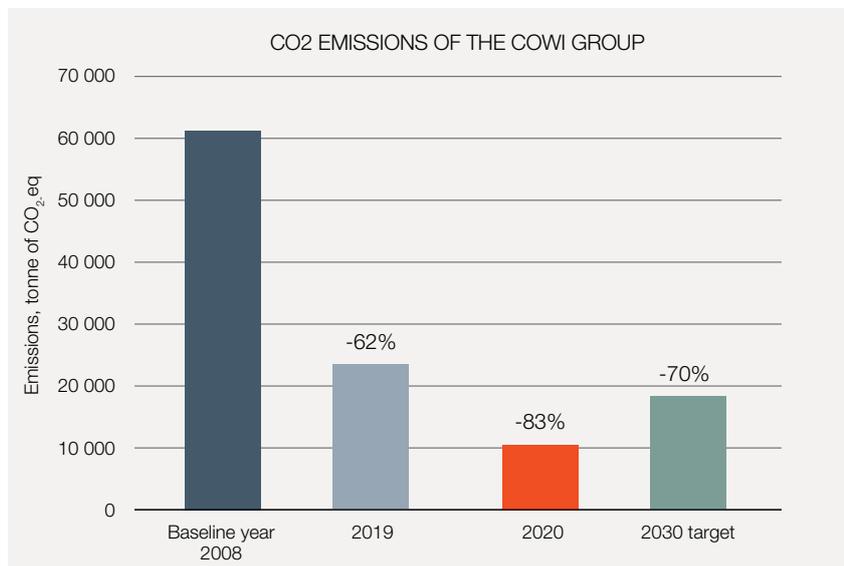




# CARBON FOOTPRINT REPORT 2020

Caring about our customers, our employees and the planet is a cornerstone in COWI's values. Since joining the UN Global Compact in 2006, we have reported on the carbon footprint caused by our day-to-day operations as a company.

The overall result of the carbon footprint report for 2020 shows that the COWI Group emitted 10,560 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> covering all scopes. This is a significant reduction compared to the 2019 level at 23,520 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.



**FIGURE 1**  
 Note that 2008 is an estimate.  
 The percentages are the reduction compared to 2008.  
 Reduced travel due to COVID-19 has significantly impacted CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in 2020

## COWI SLASHES CARBON EMISSIONS BY REDUCING BUSINESS TRAVELS

COWI wants to be a frontrunner by assisting our customers in becoming more sustainable and by looking into how our own daily operations can be improved to benefit the green transition.

In 2019, it was decided to become carbon neutral. This goal was achieved in 2020 thanks to reduction efforts already made and by acquiring CO<sub>2</sub> credits for the remainder of our emissions. Now, the ambition is to further reduce actual direct and indirect CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by more than 70 per cent in 2030 compared to 2008.

Thorough analyses of our own green footprint show that business travel is the

single biggest source of COWI's greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions from business travels by airplane account for 35 per cent of COWI's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, while all business travel including air travel contributes 47 per cent of COWI's total emissions. Thus, cutting down on business travel and converting more meetings with project teams and customers to online platforms are the most efficient and evident ways to fulfil our ambition of becoming carbon neutral.

Air travel for internal and external meeting was already reduced substantially in 2020, partly due to the COVID-19 lockdown. 2020 showed us that we can maintain strong relations with our customers with less travel activity, and we are seizing the opportunity to implement new climate-conscious ways of working.

Therefore, going forward, we will reduce air travel for internal meetings by 50 per cent and air travel on projects by 25 per cent, compared to previous years. Inspection cars will be converted to electric cars, where possible. COWI-owned cars will be converted to electric or hybrid cars, where possible.

Next step is to analyse the potential CO<sub>2</sub> reduction from buildings and commuting to explore the possibilities for reducing the carbon footprint even further.

These measures are expected to drive the company toward its ambitious goal of a 70 per cent carbon footprint reduction by 2030, and total carbon neutrality by 2050, without the use of carbon offset credits.

**FIGURE 2** Scopes 1, 2 and 3 with examples from COWI's operations. Scope 1 is direct emissions. Scope 2 is indirect emissions from purchased energy. Scope 3 is indirect emissions from, e.g., purchased goods and business travel. Most of COWI's emissions belong to scope 3, followed by scope 2 and, lastly, scope 1.

This equals an emission of 1.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. per full-time employee, down from 3.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. in 2019.

This reduction of more than 55 per cent compared to 2019 can be explained by various factors. First and foremost, the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and restrictions heavily impacted our activities, especially regarding commuting patterns, business travel and facility management. Across the world, many employees have been asked to work from home – thus reducing the need for commuting to and from the office, business travel, printing, etc. This lowered the company's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

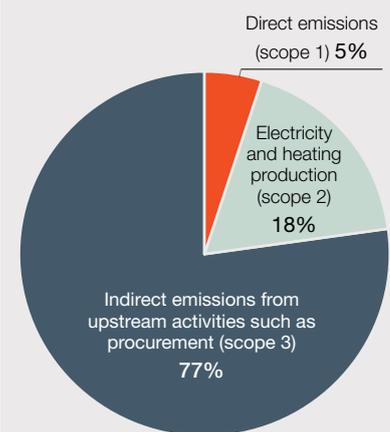
The additional electricity consumption caused elsewhere because of employees working remotely and needing, e.g., lighting, charging of pc and phones or simply by them having to prepare lunch at home instead of getting lunch from the canteen provider is not included in this report.

## METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

The GHG protocol was developed in collaboration between World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). The methodology requires the emissions mapped to cover scopes 1, 2 and 3, as defined by the GHG protocol. Some emissions, especially downstream and capital goods emissions, were excluded from the accounts. The scopes are explained in figure 3 and examples of emissions from COWI are displayed.

Moreover, we are beginning to see the impact of COWI's decision in late 2019 to become CO<sub>2</sub> neutral. This means that business travel related to both internal and external meetings will be significantly reduced in the years to come, regardless of the pandemic, as this is the most effective way of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions caused by COWI's day-to-day activities.

## TOTAL CARBON FOOTPRINT 2020



**FIGURE 3** For explanation of scopes, see figure 1.

The emissions in the carbon report vary from country to country due to large differences in the number of employees, different energy sources and differences in consumption. The graph in figure 4 shows the CO<sub>2</sub> per full-time employee in different countries and the source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.



## CREDITS TOWARDS ZERO

The decision to become carbon neutral has been put into effect by initiating own measures for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and following the PAS 2060 standard for Carbon Neutrality. Carbon neutrality is reached by investing in carbon credit offsets from a Gold Standard renewable energy project, with the objective to gradually source fewer annual offset credits as own mitigation measures gradually increase towards 2030.

To become carbon neutral in 2020, COWI contributed funds of DKK 700,000 to the Sidrap Wind Energy Project at Sulawesi in Indonesia. The project is Indonesia's first utility scale wind farm and produces 253,000 MWh of renewable energy per year to the South Sulawesi national grid – enough to power over 70,000 local homes, which can now replace fossil fuels like charcoal and diesel with green energy.

Indonesia is not obligated to meet any upper limit for greenhouse gas emissions, so CO<sub>2</sub> reductions may be quantified and sold as carbon credits as part of the investment and earnings basis for voluntary additional greenhouse gas reduction projects.

The lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic meant an instant and significant drop in business travel, which decreased the need for CO<sub>2</sub> credits in 2020. We spent 13,400 compared to the estimated consumption of approx. 25,000. Remaining credits are kept for 2021.

The Sidrap project has a Gold Standard certification, which ensures increased focus on environmental and socio-economic issues for sustainable development. The measured and calculated CO<sub>2</sub> reductions are verified by an independent verification and validation company accredited by the UNFCCC. The sourced carbon credits have unique serial numbers and are retired from the Gold Standard carbon credit registry in the name of COWI to ensure transparency and to promote the voluntary action taken by COWI.

**ENERGY**

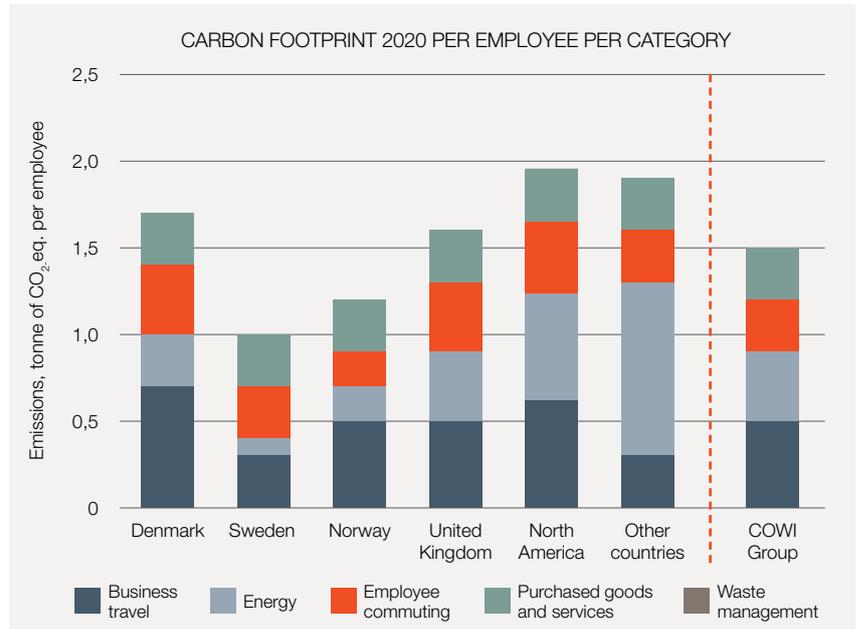
Emissions from energy consumption (heating, cooling and electricity) were measured in all three scopes and amounted to 2,570 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq., totalling 30 per cent of our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The emissions resulted from a consumption of 53,600 MWh energy.

In 2019, the consumption was 65,300 MWh, amounting to 4,920 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. In other words, we realised a reduction of 48 per cent compared to 2019. This indicates a reduction, not only in consumption, but also CO<sub>2</sub> emission factors. Heating/cooling was not regulated according to mean heat temperatures in the individual countries, so the results may fluctuate from year to year, depending on the weather.

**BUSINESS TRAVEL**

Emissions from road and rail, hotels, and air amounted to 3,720 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq., accounting for 35 per cent of COWI's emissions in 2020. Air travel, as always, accounts for a large part of our climate impact: 21 per cent in 2020, but less than normal years. This corresponds to 23 million kilometres travelled. Or, per full-time employee, 1,400 kilometres driven and 1,900 kilometres flown in 2020.

In 2019, these figures were, respectively, 2,400 and 6,300 kilometres per employee. So, road and rail travel per employee decreased in 2020, primarily due to COVID-19. This resulted in a 68 per cent reduction in 2020 compared to 2019, when emissions amounted to 11,760 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq.



**FIGURE 4** CO<sub>2</sub> emission per full-time employee, by category, by country. In 2020, the level of business travel was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 situation demanding employees to work from home.

**EMPLOYEE COMMUTING**

Employee commuting was estimated based on a survey conducted among the employees. The results estimate a CO<sub>2</sub> emission of 2,280 tonnes, equalling 19 per cent of the total emissions in 2020. This represents a reduction of 28 per cent, compared to 2019, when emissions amounted to 3,200 tonnes. The change is both due to improved data and COVID-19.

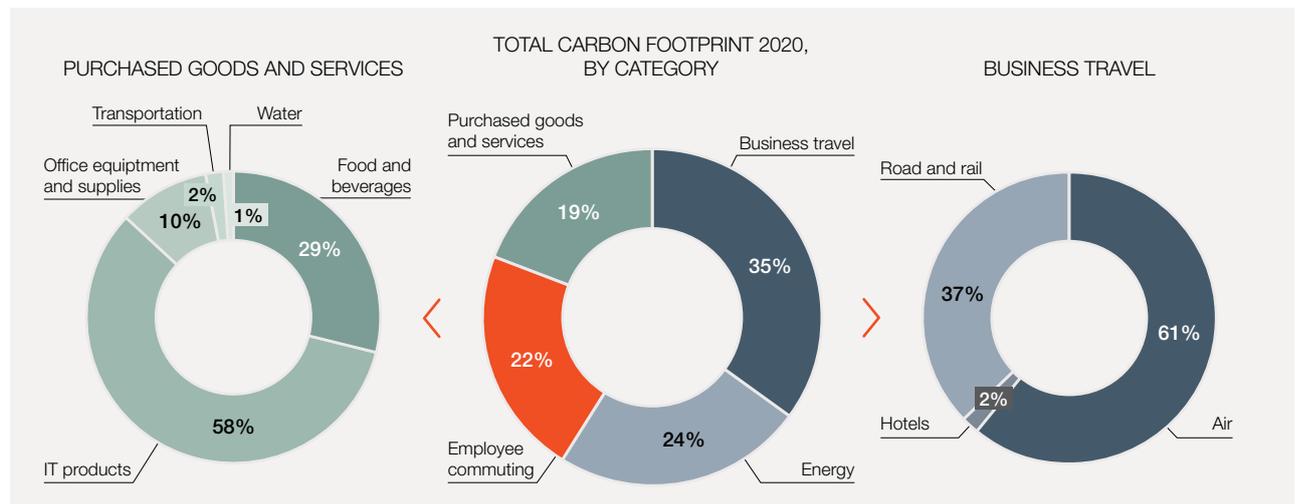
**PURCHASED GOODS AND SERVICES**

The category covers consumption of food and beverages, IT products, office equipment and supplies and water, as well as the transportation of these. Data

is constructed based on economic values and actual purchase data primarily from our largest offices. Data is then scaled based on the number of employees, or estimations.

In 2020, the CO<sub>2</sub> emission from the purchase of goods and services was estimated at 1,990 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, totalling 19 per cent of emissions. The largest share came from the purchase of IT products followed by food and beverages. This equals an emission of 290 kg CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. per full-time employee. This represents a reduction of 45 per cent compared to 2019, when this emission amounted to 3,610 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

**FIGURE 5** Our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions divided into major categories.





## BETTER FOOD, LESS WASTE

In 2020, COWI put our canteen management in Lyngby, Vejle and Aarhus out to tender. The result is a new three-year agreement with Compass Group, which increases the percentage of organic food served from 30-60 (bronze label) to 60-90 (silver label).

The provider has committed to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and other environmental footprints even further. As part of the negotiation process, we assisted Compass in defining a baseline and in setting KPIs for reducing electricity and water consumption by at least three per cent, and reducing food and packaging waste. We also follow up on its use of environmentally friendly cleaning detergent and on reduction of single-use plastics.

## GENERATED WASTE

Being a consulting company, COWI does not generate large amounts of waste from its offices. This is why less than one per cent of the emissions stems from waste management, totalling two tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2020. Furthermore, a large share is recycled or incinerated with energy recovery, which saves CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Emissions went down from 60 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2019.

## COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEARS

With the data collected in 2008 and the missing data being upscaled, a baseline year for tracking the emissions over time has been established. By collecting the data and calculating the emissions based on GHG protocol methodology in 2008, a comparison with calculations based on the same methodology is possible, allowing COWI to track emissions over time.

Figure 6 shows the emissions from 2008 compared to the emissions from 2019 and 2020. In 2008, we estimated that COWI emitted 61,240 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. We emitted 23,520 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq. in 2019, and 10,560 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2020. This is a reduction of almost 83 per cent compared to 2008, which is perfectly in line

with COWI's ambition and target to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 70 per cent in 2030 compared to 2008.

## NEW INITIATIVES

Besides reducing business travel, various initiatives aiming at reducing the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint caused by other direct and indirect sources such as the purchase of goods, facility management, electricity consumption, heating and waste management are also being explored.

Aiding and motivating employees to prioritise environmentally friendly commuting is also included in these actions plans.

## METHODOLOGY

As part of our reporting on the Communication on Progress, for the past 13 years, we have published our carbon footprint for Denmark. Starting in 2018, we published our carbon footprint for the entire COWI organisation, hence expanded to include the carbon emissions from our offices around the world. In 2019, we changed the methodology and expanded the scope to include scopes 1, 2 and 3 according to the recognised GHG protocol. The change of methodology in 2019 means that comparison with previous years is only possible in some categories.

The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions shown are in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents, thus covering all greenhouse gases. Overall, the emissions are divided into the following categories:

- › Energy
- › Business travel
- › Employee commuting
- › Purchased goods and services
- › Generated waste.

Data is gathered on energy consumption, transportation, waste management and water consumption for permanent COWI offices with more than 30 employees. Smaller offices are estimated based on average data per employee from offices we do collect data from. Generally, most data on purchased goods and services is retrieved. In some cases, we estimate consumption based on Nordic data. CO<sub>2</sub> factors for consumptions are calculated based on national average emissions or the energy of the specific fuel type.

## 2008 ESTIMATE

Data was collected in 2009 for COWI A/S in Denmark, though it only partly covered scopes 1, 2 and 3 according to the GHG protocol.

In 2008, COWI Denmark emitted 8,992 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-eq., covering energy, water

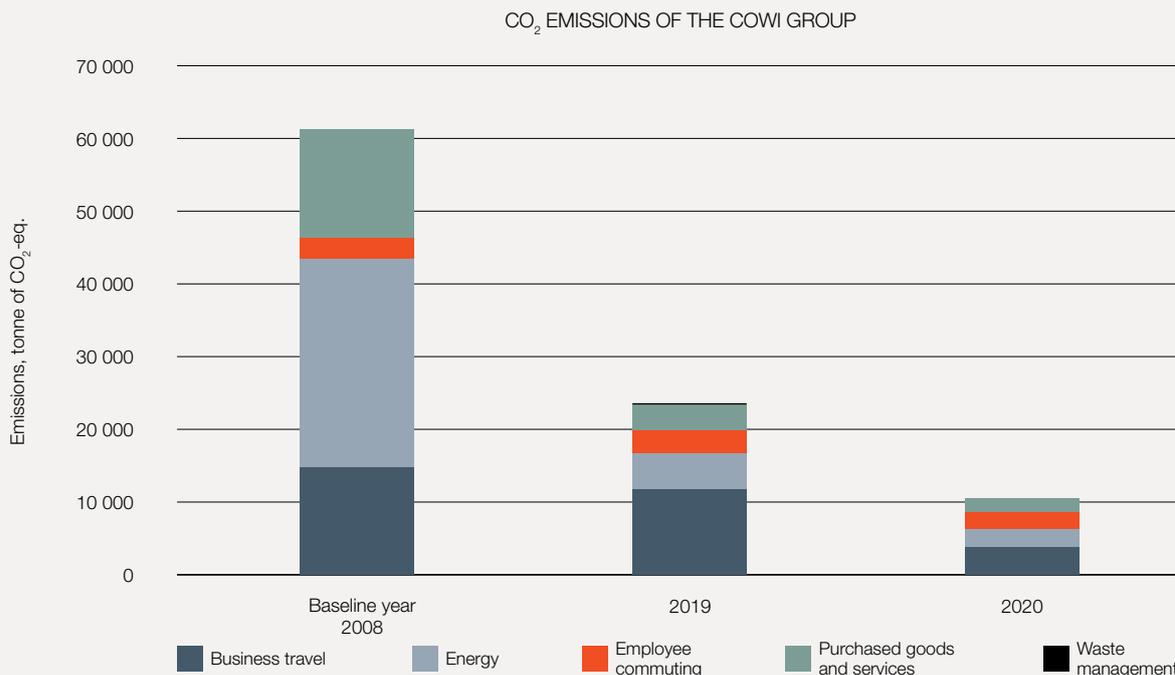


FIGURE 6 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the COWI Group, by year, by category.

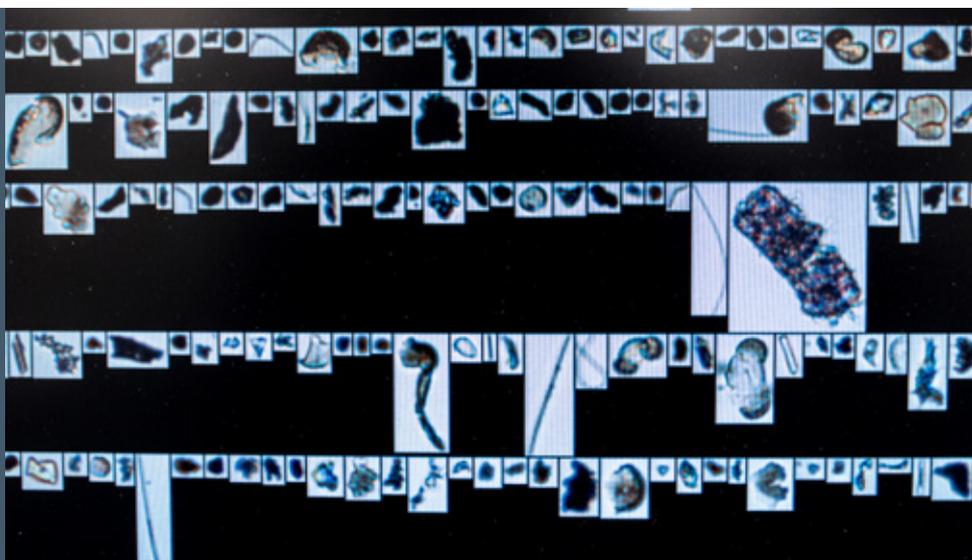
consumption, paper consumption, parcels, transportation, and waste management. This data is used to upscale to be able to compare with the new methodology chosen in 2019. The data was upscaled to cover the entire COWI Group (all countries) and the entire scope (1, 2 and 3). For data, the estimates are based on assumptions where the average emissions for COWI A/S in 2008 and the estimates in 2019 were used. If 2008 data was unavailable or insufficient,

2019 data and emissions were used and extrapolated to 2008. Additionally, other data was based on 2019 data, and the consumption was estimated per employee. Several of the consumption categories were estimated to be the same in 2008 as in 2019, such as computers, tea, coffee and food. The amount of printed paper was scaled up in 2008 compared to 2019, due to digitalisation. Other consumption goods such as headsets, external servers, large

screens etc. were assessed not to exist in 2008. Employee commuting was assumed to be the same as in 2019. CO<sub>2</sub> factors from 2008 were utilised for central data such as energy and transportation.

### WATER TREATMENT TO PREVENT MICROPLASTICS

Microplastics from car tyres is estimated to account for between 10 and 28 per cent of the microplastics in our oceans. During 2020, our research company, Aquateam COWI, conducted two studies on microplastics from surface water from roadways, to see how comprehensive the challenge of the black microplastics from worn down car tyres really is. Aquateam COWI collected and analysed samples from a local tunnel to see whether today's surface water treatment measures can effectively treat microplastics too.



# ANTI-CORRUPTION

**10** PRINCIPLE:  
Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

## AGAINST ALL FORMS OF CORRUPTION

We strongly believe and prove every day that it is possible to achieve success without accepting or engaging in any form of corruption. We have a business integrity policy to support this belief, which states:

**“We will not in our services or in any other activity, directly or indirectly, accept bribery, extortion, fraud, collusion or any other undue business activity.”**

Each entity in the COWI Group is required to implement business integrity management. This should be done in accordance with the FIDIC Code of Ethics, COWI's business integrity policies and guidelines, and the laws applicable in the company's home country and the countries of operation.

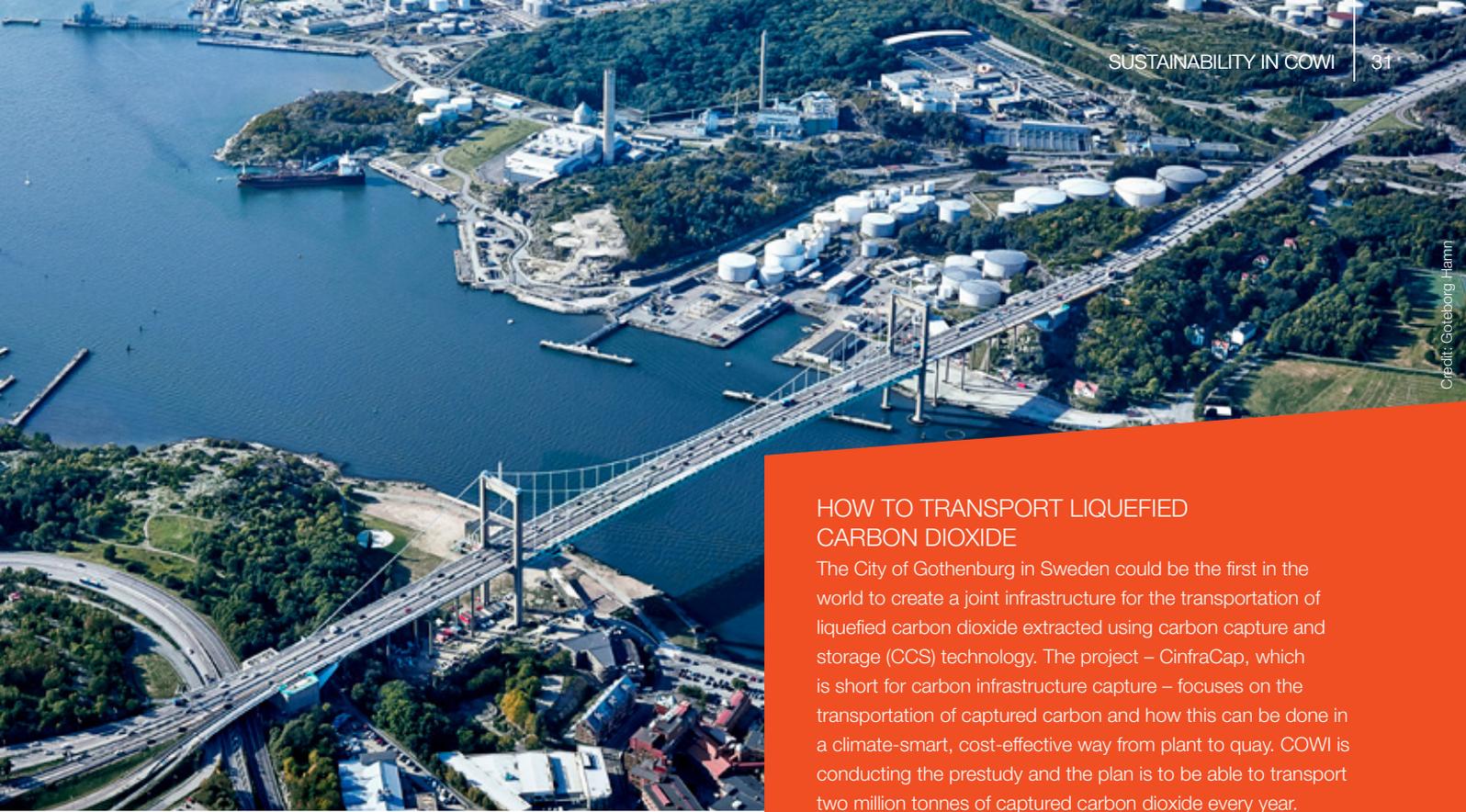
In COWI, we believe that the adoption of good governance, transparency and accountability into day-to-day business is the best prevention against corruption. COWI's Whistle-blower system enables employees and external stakeholders

to report anonymously any violations of our principles on business integrity and sustainable development. It is important that our employees have a joint understanding of our business integrity policy and are familiar with the COWI Whistle-blower system, which can help the business and prevent future offences and unethical behaviour.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

In 2020, COWI's business integrity compliance project continued to develop third-party due diligence practice of customers and collaboration partners, and COWI's global business integrity training programme successfully continued in 2020 with mandatory e-learning for all employees in COWI.

As part of our risk management system, twice a year, COWI reviews an internal list of countries that our business lines define as high-risk areas in terms of concerns related to personal security or business climate, the latter taking point of departure in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index. We apply enhanced risk management if, exceptionally, a project is carried out in one of those places. In 2020, 95 countries were on the list, a minor decrease from 101 in 2019.



## HOW TO TRANSPORT LIQUEFIED CARBON DIOXIDE

The City of Gothenburg in Sweden could be the first in the world to create a joint infrastructure for the transportation of liquefied carbon dioxide extracted using carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. The project – CinfraCap, which is short for carbon infrastructure capture – focuses on the transportation of captured carbon and how this can be done in a climate-smart, cost-effective way from plant to quay. COWI is conducting the prestudy and the plan is to be able to transport two million tonnes of captured carbon dioxide every year.

### WHISTLE-BLOWER USE

The COWI's Whistle-blower system functions as it should, because it is used. Eight cases were reported via our whistle-blower hotline in 2020 as opposed to two cases in 2019. These were all reported to the Board of Directors, investigated at corporate level or passed on to local management for follow-up.

### POLICIES, PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS RELATING TO ANTI-CORRUPTION

- › Integrity is one of COWI's five values.
- › Business integrity policy.
- › Corporate practice in business integrity.
- › COWI Whistle-blower.
- › FIDIC Code of Ethics, adopted by COWI.

### POLICY AND TOOL

#### GUIDELINE: COWI WHISTLE-BLOWER

COWI wishes to maintain a high standard of business ethics and encourages anyone to talk to their line manager about concerns regarding business ethics. If they feel uncomfortable doing so, they can use the COWI Whistle-blower system.

To meet our objectives, we will:

- › Ensure that any concerns raised through the COWI Whistle-blower are investigated, and appropriate action taken.
- › Allow everyone, including employees, former employees, sub-contractors, agency staff and business partners, to use the COWI Whistle-blower.
- › Allow whistle-blower notifications within:
  - › Violation of law, regulations and internal policies.
  - › Misbehaviour with regard to accounting and auditing.
  - › Fraud, theft and conflicts of interest.
  - › Improper giving or receiving of gifts.
  - › Discrimination and harassment.

- › Violation of environmental protection, health and safety legislation.
- › Unfair bidding procedures and scientific misconduct.
- › Make the COWI Whistle-blower publicly available via [www.cowi.com](http://www.cowi.com).
- › Continuously train our employees to maintain our culture of integrity and honesty and inform them of the COWI Whistle-blower system.

#### POLICY: BUSINESS INTEGRITY

COWI wishes to maintain its impartiality and independence, and contribute globally to a fair conduct of business, avoiding extraneous influence on selection, execution or compensation procedures. We will not in our services or in any other activities, directly or indirectly, accept bribery, extortion, fraud, collusion or any other undue business activity.

To meet our objectives, we will:

- › Continuously train our employees in the area of business integrity.
- › Continuously develop and maintain proper tools to help and guide our employees.

# ABOUT GLOBAL COMPACT

Global Compact is an initiative launched in January 1999 by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

It is a call to businesses worldwide to help build social and environmental frameworks that ensure open and free markets and help people everywhere secure a chance to share the benefits of the new global economy.

The Global Compact encompasses ten principles spanning everything from international declarations on human rights and labour rights to environmental and corruption issues.



## SUPPORT FOR ONLINE LITERACY IN INDIA

In the past year, COWI supported the Gairatpur Baas Panchayat school near Tikli, India, contributing infrastructure and educational equipment to support almost 500 schoolchildren in their education. One of the major impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic globally has been the disruption of pupils' learning caused by schools closing. COWI dedicated a portion of the corporate social responsibility budget to help the pupils at Gairatpur Baas Panchayat transition to online learning. COWI's India office supplies a complete IT lab with adjustable tables for better ergonomic and installed PCs and software for a new computer suite, along with 20 laptops for the school faculty. With only grade 9-12 pupils attending school under the current restrictions, the equipment is intended to help the pupils attending e-learning sessions and develop their online literacy to enhance their learning experience in this new environment.

## COMMERCIAL HEADQUARTERS SETS NEW SUSTAINABLE STANDARDS

When Bosch opens its new Danish headquarters in Ballerup in 2023, the building will set new standards and be a milestone in office buildings in several aspects. Sustainable design choices and materials have been a priority from the get-go. That goes for the entire foundation, the building shape and large groups of materials – not least the use of cross-laminated timber in key structures such as façades and floors. The new headquarters, a joint COWI and Arkitema project, will hold offices and serve as a meeting place for many of Bosch's departments operating in Denmark.





# ABOUT COWI

COWI is a leading consulting group that creates value for customers, people and society through our unique 360° approach. We supply services to customers within infrastructure, buildings, energy and the environment and water. We aim to create innovative and sustainable solutions for our customers through world-class competencies and close relationships.

Our stronghold is Scandinavia, but with offices all over the world, we combine global presence with local knowledge, which enables us to take on projects wherever our customers are. At any given moment, we are involved in more than 10,000 projects.

With our almost 90 years of experience in the business, we have created landmarks in many of the countries in which we operate. We are a leader within our fields of work, because our more than 6500 employees are leaders within theirs.

Together with our customers, we create coherence in tomorrow's sustainable societies.



## 2020 CLIMATE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FACILITY, SOUTHERN AFRICA

Competition over water access and supply has the potential to undermine the economic development and political progress in the sub-Saharan region.

By 2050, water demand is expected to increase by 55 per cent due to population growth. Water availability varies considerably across the region, with some areas regularly experiencing drought and other areas severe flooding. The majority of river basins in Southern Africa are shared by more than one country, so regional cooperation on tackling these problems is vital.

Through the UK Aid-funded Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF), COWI works in a joint venture with Tetra Tech International to support governments, regional bodies and the private sector in scoping, designing and implementing infrastructure projects to manage their shared water resources (rivers, lakes and groundwater) for economic development and contribute to climate resilience and poverty reduction. By the end of 2020, the CRIDF programme had seen more than 400,000 people benefit

from disaster risk reduction while almost 600,000 had benefitted from improved water security.

A number of small-scale livelihood interventions across the region (e.g., Kufandada and Bindangombe in Zimbabwe) demonstrated technical solutions to local problems – such as improving water storage or developing solar-powered irrigation. CRIDF is now ‘bundling’ these smaller demonstration projects into larger investment programmes to attract additional finance.