

The background of the entire page is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background are dark blue silhouettes of various trees, including deciduous trees with leaves and evergreen trees, creating a forest-like scene.

Bech·Bruun

# CSR

OUR  
CSR EFFORTS  
IN 2020

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# We take responsibility



We are delighted to confirm, for the twelfth year running, our commitment to the UN Global Compact and the Ten Principles within the focus areas: People, Society, Environment and Ethics & Compliance. Once again this year, we are keen to contribute to promoting internationally recognised conventions on human rights, labour rights, the environment and anti-corruption. During the year, we implemented a number of CSR initiatives as outlined in this report.

## Translating thought into action

At Bech-Bruun, we are committed to operating with respect for the surrounding community. We therefore approach very seriously the task of translating these principles into specific action.

At the same time, having embraced the Code of Conduct of the Association of Danish Law Firms, advokatKODEKS, we work actively with the adopted parameters of openness, social responsibility, handling of ethical dilemmas, focus on clients and employees, and diversity.

## Our most important resource

Our employees and their highly specialised expertise are our single most important resource, which we do our utmost to protect. Through our tailored development and training programmes, we work closely with our employees to strengthen their personal and professional skills.

At Bech-Bruun, we also build our business on fundamental values of collaboration because we believe that collaboration develops the skills of the individual employee and enhances our organisation as a whole.

## Diversity on the agenda

As the law firm of the future, we are keen to lead from the front to create a posi-

tive change in the industry. To this end, we put gender diversity at the top of our agenda in 2020, introducing specific targets for the future gender composition at Bech-Bruun. Our ambitious targets must be met over the course of the next decade.

## Sustainable development

As a law firm committed to corporate social responsibility, we are making concerted efforts to contribute to the sustainable development of the society in which we operate. We believe we do this best by sharing our specialist knowledge.

With our BB Impact partnerships, we provided free advice throughout 2020 to a number start-up businesses that support the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In this forum, entrepreneurs received legal advice and strategic guidance to help realise their visions. We also provided pro bono advice to a number of organisations, including several voluntary projects focused on the well-being of children and adolescents.

## Our climate footprint

With far less travel days, less transport and a significant decline in the physical presence at our locations, our carbon footprint was much smaller in 2020 than in the year before. This has provided us with new information on the areas in which our resource consumption is the highest, and in which we can change our behaviour. This knowledge will form the cornerstone of our new climate strategy.

Moreover, a growing proportion of our business in 2020 was connected to development projects that benefit our environment and climate, particularly within renewable energy and sustainable construction.

## Ethical compass

Ethical conduct is the guiding principle of operation at Bech-Bruun. Based on our in-house Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct for the Danish Bar and Law Society, we maintain an ongoing focus on decent and responsible conduct in everything we do. We therefore make dedicated efforts to ensure the highest ethical standards both in-house and among our clients. Moreover, in 2020, we made a decision to expand our supplier policy with a view to ensuring that our business partners uphold the same high ethical standards as we do.

## Data security under control

With the rapid expansion of digitalisation, corporate compliance and data protection have become more important than ever. At Bech-Bruun, we are committed to being at the forefront of developments. During the year, we put openness and accessibility at the top of our agenda, sharing our specialist expertise within data protection in several free webinars.

## Looking back at 2020

Although 2020 was a year beset by unpredictability, we remained focused on our core skills at Bech-Bruun. This reflects naturally in our CSR activities in the sense that we take our responsibility very seriously, making dedicated efforts and working continuously to ensure more sustainable conduct.

Thank you for reading.

Steen Rode  
Chief executive partner

# CSR

At Bech-Bruun, we assume responsibility as a company, as a corporate citizen and as an employer. Based on our core values of collaboration, we act with care and respect for the society of which we are a part. We incorporate responsibility and decency throughout our business and proudly operate our business with the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact as a natural ethical compass.



## PEOPLE

- We will provide our employees with the best foundation for development, professionally as well as personally, through targeted development programmes.
- We will provide our employees with access to the best career opportunities through a strong focus on talent development.
- By defining specific targets for gender diversity, we will ensure equal opportunities for all employees regardless of gender.
- We will strengthen the well-being of our employees through a continued focus on building a good work environment.



## SOCIETY

- We will assume corporate responsibility by playing an active role in the world around us.
- We will assume corporate responsibility by offering continuous training and knowledge sharing.
- Through our start-up business collaboration programme, BB Impact, we will make a difference in the efforts to secure a sustainable future.





## ENVIRONMENT

- We will identify relevant key action areas in which we can limit our resource consumption.
- We will make an effort to continuously minimise our resource consumption and optimise sustainable business procedures.
- We will continually strive to prioritise dealing with green suppliers.
- We will have a strategic focus on collaborating with Danish and international players within renewable energy and sustainable construction.



## ETHICS & COMPLIANCE

- We will ensure the highest ethical standards and openness within the framework of confidentiality which is the foundation of our client relationships.
- We will ensure in-house compliance at the highest level.
- We will ensure continuous updating and development of our systems and digital tools so that we may serve our clients efficiently and safely at all times.

# People

More than 500 people work at Bech-Bruun every day, and our employees are our most valuable resource and strongest tool to achieve our goals. As a law firm, we sell our highly specialised advisory services, and the core of our business is therefore people and their knowledge and expertise.

As people are our most valuable resource, it is essential that we are able to create a workplace that fosters employee well-being and that we succeed in continuously developing the knowledge and competencies of our employees. This will strengthen both the individual employee at Bech-Bruun and our goal of being the law firm of the future.

## OUR AMBITIONS

- We will provide our employees with the best foundation for development, professionally as well as personally, through targeted development programmes.
- We will provide our employees with access to the best career opportunities through a strong focus on talent development.
- By defining specific targets for gender diversity, we will ensure equal opportunities for all employees regardless of gender.
- We will strengthen the well-being of our employees through a continued focus on building a good work environment.

## OUR 2021 TARGETS

- To continue our efforts to improve the framework for gender equality and our efforts to meet our gender diversity targets.
- To continue our targeted efforts to ensure the best possible skills and career development for our lawyers at all levels.
- To enhance our focus on employee well-being and the work environment of our employees as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## A responsible employer

In a workplace such as ours, it is essential to have a clear framework for how we interact with each other. At Bech-Bruun, we have therefore adopted a number of policies on behaviour in the workplace.

- Diversity policy
- Anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy
- Stress policy
- Whistleblower scheme
- Alcohol and substance-abuse policy
- Crisis policy

Common to our adopted policies is that they are intended to contribute to the personal well-being of every individual employee and to ensure a healthy work environment for everyone in our organisation. All policies and related recommendations for measures to be taken are freely available to our employees and are continually updated to reflect developments at Bech-Bruun and in society.

### Safety net stretched out

In a knowledge-intensive company such as Bech-Bruun, skilled employees are in constant demand, and heavy demands are sometimes made on our employees in respect of both performance and contribution. The fast pace and complex type of work naturally entail a risk that, at times, the well-being of some employees is not as good as it should be, and keeping abreast of this risk is a top priority for us.

This also applies to interpersonal relationships, which is another obvious but potentially risky situation in a company such as ours. When hundreds of different people work in the same location, there is an inherent risk of conflicts between individual employees, and we are fully committed to being able to address and handle any such conflicts.

Finally, as people, we go through many phases in our personal lives simultaneously with our work lives. Critical situations may arise here as well, requiring Bech-Bruun as an employer to be ready and able to provide help and advice.

Dissatisfaction in a company such as ours always sounds alarm bells and requires immediate action, regardless of cause. In such situations, we activate our extensive range of policies on behaviour and related processes in order to ensure that we are always ready to handle any risk situation involving our employees.

In our capacity as an employer, we support the UN Global Compact principles on human rights:

#### Principle 1

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights within the area in which they operate and have influence; and

#### Principle 2

make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

In our capacity as an employer, we support the UN Sustainable Development Goals and in particular:

**SDG 3** Good health and well-being

**SDG 5** Gender equality



# Bech-Bruun in figures

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211

in-house qualifying training days were offered in 2020

66%

of the courses were on professional and personal skills

20

employees were seconded at some time during 2020

7.8

years is the average seniority at Bech-Bruun

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526

employees

265

women

261

men

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Partners

7/63

women/men

Associates

54/75

women/men

Junior associates

37/49

women/men

Managing associates

3/5

women/men

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75

have the right to appear before the Danish Supreme Court and the Danish High Courts

60

have more than 20 years of experience

15+

different languages are spoken fluently

50+

lecturers at universities, in the corporate sector and at the Bech-Bruun Academy

70+

appointments to boards, trade organisations and committees

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# Lifelong learning as a competition parameter



As a client-focused and highly specialised law firm, it is crucial to our business that our legal advisers rank among the most highly skilled in the industry at all times. At Bech-Bruun, we therefore strive to be an attractive employer capable of attracting and retaining the brightest talents and the strongest profiles.

With tailored development programmes for all career levels, we strengthen the skills of our lawyers and prepare them for the role of value-adding and professional advisers. We do this because we know that specialist knowledge and high professionalism need to be combined with business understanding and commercial acumen. But just as importantly because we know that we can enhance our employees' job satisfaction and commitment by ensuring that competencies and career development go hand in hand.

Every year through the Bech-Bruun Academy, we offer skill-building for our lawyers in a number of targeted train-

ing programmes to make sure that they develop personally as well as professionally while at the same time supporting Bech-Bruun's strategic goals and visions. Our development programmes build on in-depth legal insight, human understanding and a constant focus on our clients' business areas.

In a time when markets change faster than ever before, technological advances happen at an explosive rate, and new business models, perspectives and growth opportunities arise, it is essential that we stay up to date on prevailing trends and stay at the forefront of developments in the corporate sector.

Our targeted focus on continuous professional development and skill-building at all career levels makes us stand out from the competition. However, our major investment in training our employees has a clear goal: We want to be the law firm of the future, and every individual employee at Bech-Bruun plays a key role in achieving this goal.

Read more about Bech-Bruun's development programmes in the following pages.



## ASSOCIATE

**Patrick Rask Buskbjerg**, associate,  
Real Estate & Construction, Aarhus

STRETCH is Bech-Bruun's ambitious management and training programme tailored for our first-to-sixth year associates. With STRETCH, we focus on developing the different strengths of our associates in the best possible way – as a group and individually and in a more strategic, business-oriented and collaborative direction. It takes courage if, as an associate, you really want to en-

hance your skills or acquire new skills. You have to be inquisitive and willing to challenge yourself. That's the essence of STRETCH.

At Bech-Bruun, it is not just about training our employees to become top lawyers. We perceive the role of a lawyer as something other and more than legal specialisation and professionalism. We

equally take on the roles of strategic advisers and sounding boards for our clients. We therefore also have a clear goal: We want to build unique Bech-Bruun lawyers with strong collaborative skills, business understanding and commercial acumen, all of which our six-year STRETCH training programme will help ensure.

**"At Bech-Bruun, we have a special common frame of reference reaching beyond the law. Heightened attention to cross-disciplinary and interpersonal skills prepare us for the work required of us as lawyers and ultimately allows us to provide our clients with better and more useful advisory services. Personally, I expected that STRETCH would give me an insight into all that is not law. And my expectations were met to the full. STRETCH has strengthened my competencies within management and project management and has given me specific tools to maintain control of major projects."**



## KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER



**Asbjørn Dalum Andersen**, KA manager and senior associate,  
EU & Competition, Copenhagen

With the specific focus on being the best possible sounding boards and advisers for our clients, we have set up an ambitious Key Account Management programme at Bech-Bruun. The programme entails a new way of thinking about client relationships, based on the idea that they are in fact partnerships, more than anything else.

The KAM programme also illustrates the cross-disciplinary and collaborative approach that is Bech-Bruun's hallmark. Our KAM clients are allocated to carefully composed teams with competencies that match the clients' specific needs.

The largest KAM teams have a specially appointed associate who has the role of KA manager. The KA manager presides over meetings, coordinates in-house activities and makes sure that the team is updated on strategic developments etc. affecting the client. The role of KA manager requires that you have a keen eye for the client's legal needs and that you are able to find the right adviser for any given assignment. As a KA manager, you guarantee that all legal challenges are handled by the right experts. That way, the client has only one point of contact with Bech-Bruun and will not have to find the right department or associate

on every separate occasion – and this serves to strengthen both the relationship and the collaboration.

Our carefully selected KA managers are continuously trained in fulfilling their role. With a view to continuously developing their business understanding and industry know-how, Bech-Bruun's KA managers complete a series of specially designed training programmes. The objective is clear: Professional and comprehensive advisory services, including sounding-board interactions for the benefit of our clients.

**"In my role as a KA manager, I've learnt to increase my focus on our clients' businesses. As trusted advisers, we need to not only handle our clients' specific legal issues. We also need to have in-depth knowledge of our clients and their industry in order to create lasting value. The KAM programme provides me with access to many valuable training programmes that will improve my advisory skills. It's really rewarding for me to perfect and develop my business understanding."**



## LAW STUDENT



INITIATE is our targeted development programme for law students at Bech-Bruun. This is where we lay the foundations for the future careers of our youngest talents. Through INITIATE, we zoom in on a number of behavioural parameters and work intensively to map out the strengths, weaknesses and patterns of our law students. Many law students place extremely high demands on themselves and may feel weighed down by the pressure of expectations. At Bech-Bruun, we make dedicated efforts to ensure that our young talents get the tools they need to balance the wish for perfect performance with the need for personal well-being. Working at Bech-Bruun is also very much about being able to collaborate and share knowledge and to prioritise and plan your work.

**Emil Gade**, law student,  
EU & Competition, Aarhus

**“The INITIATE programme has given me greater self-awareness and knowledge of my strengths, and it’s taught me where and when I need to step up to perform at my very best. At the same time, it’s given me an awareness of how to set goals for myself that are both ambitious and realistic.”**

**“Many of the tools we learn to use through INITIATE are focused on mental health and well-being, and I feel much better equipped to keep many balls in the air and work efficiently without losing my drive. To me, the development I’ve undergone with INITIATE also helps prepare me for the role of junior associate.”**



## MANAGING ASSOCIATE

The role of managing associate is a career path for experienced associates with particularly extensive expertise. Together with the partners of their respective departments, they assume wide-ranging management responsibilities. Based on their clear objectives of improving the overall management effort, steering major projects across the finishing line and providing in-house project management, our managing associates strengthen our business on many levels. Moreover, they act as guarantors of exceptionally extensive and professional expertise on each individual assignment. Our managing associates complete a two-year training programme to strengthen their business and management competencies and to prepare them further for the important role they play as managers and advisers.

**Inge Kirstine Skou**, managing associate,  
IP & Trademarks, Aarhus

**"Being a managing associate at Bech-Bruun is a career path with room for great diversity, and we each fill our role in different ways. Personally, I see the title as confirmation of the position I hold in the day-to-day management of the department. I assist the partner responsible on issues related to the department's day-to-day operations, resource management and employee development."**

**"Our clear division of roles and the authority given to me as a managing associate strengthen our collaboration. A characteristic feature of working at Bech-Bruun is our extensive focus on collaboration and cross-disciplinary teamwork, and in this context, I contribute to ensuring that we pull together as a unit and we all do what we're best at."**



## JUNIOR ASSOCIATE

RISE is Bech-Bruun's development and training programme for our junior associates, who play an important role in our business. RISE provides our junior associates with a three-year development programme, following them throughout their time as junior associates. The training programme equips them to handle the tasks and challenges they will face during their time as junior associates. Legal and commercial acumen is combined with personal awareness, providing our junior associates with strong foundations for further development and well-developed collaborative skills that act as a natural link to our STRETCH training programme for associates.

**Linnea Liv Grønberg**, associate and former junior associate,  
Real Estate & Construction, Copenhagen

**"RISE has helped strengthen my competencies far beyond the realm of law. Particularly in relation to client management and the role of trusted adviser, RISE has taught me to pick up on clients' differences and their individual needs which we are required to meet in our role of advisers. But RISE has also taught me the importance of being true to yourself in your work."**

**"Good habits and the ability to keep calm in an industry that requires full speed ahead at crunch times provide a really strong foundation for further development for someone like me who's on the threshold of my career. I've really learnt a lot about the role of an adviser and about myself, and it's no doubt made me stronger."**



It is a key requirement for a partner at Bech-Bruun to stay up to date on developments and to be at the forefront of prevailing trends, our clients' markets and developments in the corporate sector. To ensure this, all partners of Bech-Bruun undergo continuous professional development through our Executive Programme, which zooms in on new insights, new knowledge and new skills. Our partners are among the top legal advisers in Denmark, and we constantly strive to maintain this position by ensuring that their knowledge stays relevant and up to date. We know that the Bech-Bruun model and our approach to handling tasks through collaboration and innovation ensures that our clients get the best and most comprehensive advisory services. Our use of these competencies and tools in practice is one of the things that makes Bech-Bruun's partners stand out from the crowd.



## PARTNER

**Sandro Ratkovic**, associate and partner,  
Labour & Employment Law, Copenhagen

**"As an associate and an adviser, I always try to look beyond the purely legal solution to a given problem and always try to provide our clients with the best and most relevant advisory services. This approach makes great demands on my ability to see a problem from a commercial perspective and requires that I have in-depth insight into the issues that are relevant to the client's business."**

**"I've therefore completed Bech-Bruun's in-house training programmes as a junior associate, as an associate and as a partner. All these programmes focused specifically on my professional and personal development and they've provided me with the necessary practical tools which I use every single day providing advisory services."**

# From budding talent to experienced specialist

At Bech-Bruun, we prioritise developing talent and make every effort to support our employees in their personal and professional development. We invest in the development of our lawyers and support them on their journey from budding talents to specialist advisers. This creates strong people and mutual loyalty, strengthening the core of our business.

At Bech-Bruun, we have a proud history of spotting the most aspiring talents and providing them with the proper conditions for specialising and building their careers with us.

Lawyers “raised” at Bech-Bruun are given highly specialised training, a tailored career path and in-depth understanding and a flair for business. We have more than sixty senior associates and specialist lawyers among our colleagues.

## “I have been offered exciting professional challenges throughout my career with the firm”

Anne Mette Seest, a 44-year-old specialist lawyer with Bech-Bruun, Aarhus, is a leading legal specialist in the field of personal injury compensation and counts several Danish insurance providers among her clients. She began her career with Bech-Bruun as a young junior associate in 2002 and has since specialised in the law of damages, advising both private and public-sector clients.

“I applied for a junior associate position with Bech-Bruun, because I wanted to work for a law firm that prioritised trustworthiness and quality, and which also offered a pleasant, informal atmosphere in the office. I had the impression that there was a more broad-minded and tolerant atmosphere at Bech-Bruun compared with other major law firms, and that appealed to me,” she explains about the early years of her career.

### **The best training and a high degree of responsibility**

Ever since she joined Bech-Bruun, Anne Mette has experienced a high degree of specialisation and exciting professional challenges. She sees this as a highly characteristic feature of the company, and it has been a key factor in her career development.

“I was given really good and solid training as a junior associate, and that’s certainly one of the reasons why I chose to continue my career at Bech-Bruun. Right from the beginning, my assignments spanned several specialist areas, giving me plenty of opportunities to strengthen my professional skills and to specialise and work in the legal fields that interested me the most,” she says.

Since then, Anne Mette’s role as a highly specialised lawyer has grown, and she now heads the team dealing with personal injury claims and is responsible for more than a hundred pending cases on behalf of major insurance companies and local authorities.





## “My mentor played a crucial role in my career”



“I really don’t feel that I have been in the same place for 18 years because my role has evolved so much. Also, I thrive in a highly professional environment coupled with an informal atmosphere and fantastic colleagues, which is a characteristic feature of Bech-Bruun,” she explains about her rise from budding talent to specialist lawyer at Bech-Bruun.

33-year-old Camilla Søgård Hudson is a senior associate and a member of Bech-Bruun’s Dispute Resolution team in Copenhagen. She began her career as a law student, and in a decade, she has made the journey from talent to lawyer and advocate with a strong international profile. Already from the beginning of her career, Camilla received strong support from the partner she worked for and that had a great impact on her career.

“I noticed already when I was a law student that the partner I worked for always managed to support my professional and commercial development. He ensured that the next steps in my career were always clearly defined, realistic and mutually agreed. He was my leader, mentor and “sounding board”, and he played a crucial role in my career,” Camilla says on the guidance and support that helped mould her as a lawyer.

### High professional standards at centre stage

For Camilla, her professional and personal development as a lawyer has offered her a lot of hands-on experience in the legal field that is her main passion. This has given her a keen eye for identifying the merits of a case, which is of great benefit to our clients.

“As a member of Bech-Bruun’s Dispute Resolution team, a large part of my work consists of preparing court cases, whether small or large in scope. When I was a junior associate and young lawyer, I was often given the opportunity to observe an experienced partner arguing a case in court. I’m proud that I’m now the one in charge of both preparing and arguing cases in court,” says Camilla, whose extensive CV also boasts several secondments and a Talent 100 award.

In addition to a strong professional interest in dispute resolution and targeted career development, which she sees as the key factors in her development, Camilla also believes that the special conduct parameters and the unique culture at Bech-Bruun are equally important to her job satisfaction and enthusiasm.

“Bech-Bruun is a modern law firm with an unconventional take on hierarchy and organisation. In my experience, all employees at Bech-Bruun value each other and each other’s work. Whether you are a law student, economist, consultant, receptionist or partner, you are respected at Bech-Bruun, and your individual views and opinions are appreciated.”





# Equal opportunities on the agenda

At Bech-Bruun, we have for several years been committed to promoting equality and equal career opportunities for employees regardless of gender. With the clear ambition of strengthening the company and preparing it for the future, we specified two official objectives for gender diversity at Bech-Bruun in late 2020.

Diversity has been on our agenda for many years with an ever-growing focus on promoting equality at management level, among our partners and on our Board of Directors. To push this development along, we set up a diversity committee in 2019, which since then has been tasked with analysing and evaluating our efforts so far and, not least, identifying new, specific initiatives aimed at creating a more equal distribution between men and women at our company.

“For several years, we have been wanting to offer more equal career opportunities for our talented employees regardless of

gender. A natural next step was therefore to launch a number of initiatives to help strengthen our efforts in that field. Our diversity committee has made impressive strides, giving us the tools to identify new specific initiatives to pursue our goal of greater equality,” explains Steen Rode, chief executive partner at Bech-Bruun.

## Two ambitious objectives

While we have been committed to promoting equality at Bech-Bruun for a long time, we are also aware that it may be a long process, if we do not help it along.

In order to kick-start the process, we adopted two specific objectives in late 2020, aimed at achieving a more equal distribution between men and women at Bech-Bruun:

- During the period from 2021 to the end of 2025, it is our officially adopted objective that at least one third of new partners at the company are women.
- During the subsequent five years from 2026 to the end of 2030, our declared objective is that Bech-Bruun achieves equal distribution between men and women among new partners.





## A DECADE OF FOCUS ON GENDER EQUALITY

During the period from 2021 to the end of 2025, it is our officially adopted objective that at least one third of new partners at Bech-Bruun are women.

During the subsequent five years from 2026 to the end of 2030, our declared objective is that Bech-Bruun achieves equal distribution between men and women among new partners.

## MORE WOMEN ON THE BOARD

In 2019, we decided that at least one woman was to be elected to our Board of Directors for the 2020–2022 term. This target was achieved in March 2020, when a woman, Anne Buhl Bjelke, was elected to our Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors now has six male members and one female member, who was elected for two years in 2020.

The Board of Directors of Bech-Bruun has adopted a target for the gender distribution on the Board to be more equal than that among our owners. We still aim to have at least one woman on the Board of Directors and to raise that number as the objective of having more

female partners is gradually achieved. This means that the Board of Directors will revise this target during the period leading up to the board election in 2022 in connection with the 2021 Annual Report.

## LEADING DATA PROTECTION SPECIALIST BE- COMES PARTNER AT BECH-BRUUN

Charlotte Bagger Tranberg joined Bech-Bruun as a partner on 1 January 2021. Charlotte is one of Denmark's leading experts in data protection law and has special expertise in the interface between GDPR and new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, Big Data and biometrics.

"We are proud to have an expert like Charlotte on our team of partners. Data protection law is becoming increasingly relevant, and with the development of new technologies, there is a greater-than-ever need for Charlotte's expertise. She has the rare ability of communicating to our clients the operational relevance of complex data protection rules. Her solution-driven and trust-inspiring approach contributes to securing our leading position in the field," explains Steen Rode, chief executive partner.

"These are ambitious, but certainly realistic goals we have set for ourselves. We now have a specific finishing line to aim for, which makes it more tangible and more of a commitment during the years to come. I'm confident that our efforts to ensure more equality will become a natural process as a result," Steen says on the reasoning behind the two specific objectives for gender diversity among partners at Bech-Bruun.

### **Talent development and culture**

For the declared visions and objectives to be realised in the course of the next decade, Steen argues that Bech-Bruun's

talent development activities will be instrumental, but require joint and dedicated commitment:

"We are launching a number of initiatives designed to strengthen our existing talent management, and targeted talent development will contribute to ensuring equal opportunities for everyone. At the same time, we will use multiple measures to develop the culture at Bech-Bruun together with our employees. We still have some way to go, but we have a clear ambition to move forward," says Steen Rode on the intensified focus on equality at Bech-Bruun.

At the end of 2020, Bech-Bruun had seven female partners and sixty-three male partners. This distribution will change significantly during the next ten years with the introduction of the new diversity objectives.

# Society

At Bech-Bruun, it is our basic philosophy that the best way for us to contribute to sustainable social development is by putting into play our most important tool: highly specialised legal knowledge. We consider knowledge sharing to be at the core of our corporate social responsibility, and every year we make dedicated efforts to share our specialist knowledge in a range of legal fields that impact the development of society.

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## OUR AMBITIONS

- We will assume corporate social responsibility by playing an active role in the world around us.
- We will assume corporate social responsibility by offering continuous training and knowledge sharing.
- Through our start-up business collaboration programme, BB Impact, we will make a difference in the efforts to secure a sustainable future.

## OUR 2021 TARGETS

- To stay focused on the mark we leave on the world around us.
- To secure a continued high level of knowledge sharing in an effort to ensure that our highly specialised knowledge is translated into action.
- To support the development of more start-up businesses with a sustainable vision through BB Impact.
- To keep prioritising pro bono work.

## We take responsibility

As a law firm, we contribute to securing the foundation on which the rule of law is built, both in relation to the individual citizen's legal rights and in relation to the legal advice we provide on the conduct of Danish and international businesses. In those contexts, our advisory services have a crucial impact on society at large.

Bech-Bruun's legal specialists are among the best in the country, and with that position comes corporate social responsibility which we continuously strive to honour. Legal specialist knowledge is our most important tool, both when we provide advice to Danish and international businesses and when we provide advice in cases of major significance to an individual's civil rights.

There is a potential risk, however, that businesses with no access to specialist legal advice do not have the same opportunities for navigating within the framework of the law, which may lead to imbalance and inequality. In 2020, we stayed focused on helping to mitigate that risk. With that aim in mind,

we implemented a series of specific initiatives, sharing our specialist knowledge with entrepreneurial businesses, NGOs, various small businesses and other organisations.

In this way, we leverage our strongest expertise to proactively live up to our corporate social responsibility and contribute to mitigating the risk of imbalance and inequality in society.

In our community work, we support the UN Global Compact principles on labour rights:

### Principle 3

Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; and

### Principle 4

the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

### Principle 5

the effective abolition of child labour; and

### Principle 6

the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

As part of our close BB Impact partnerships, we actively support a range of the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

**SDG 1** No poverty

**SDG 2** Zero hunger

**SDG 3** Good health and well-being

**SDG 4** Quality education

**SDG 5** Gender equality

**SDG 6** Clean water and sanitation

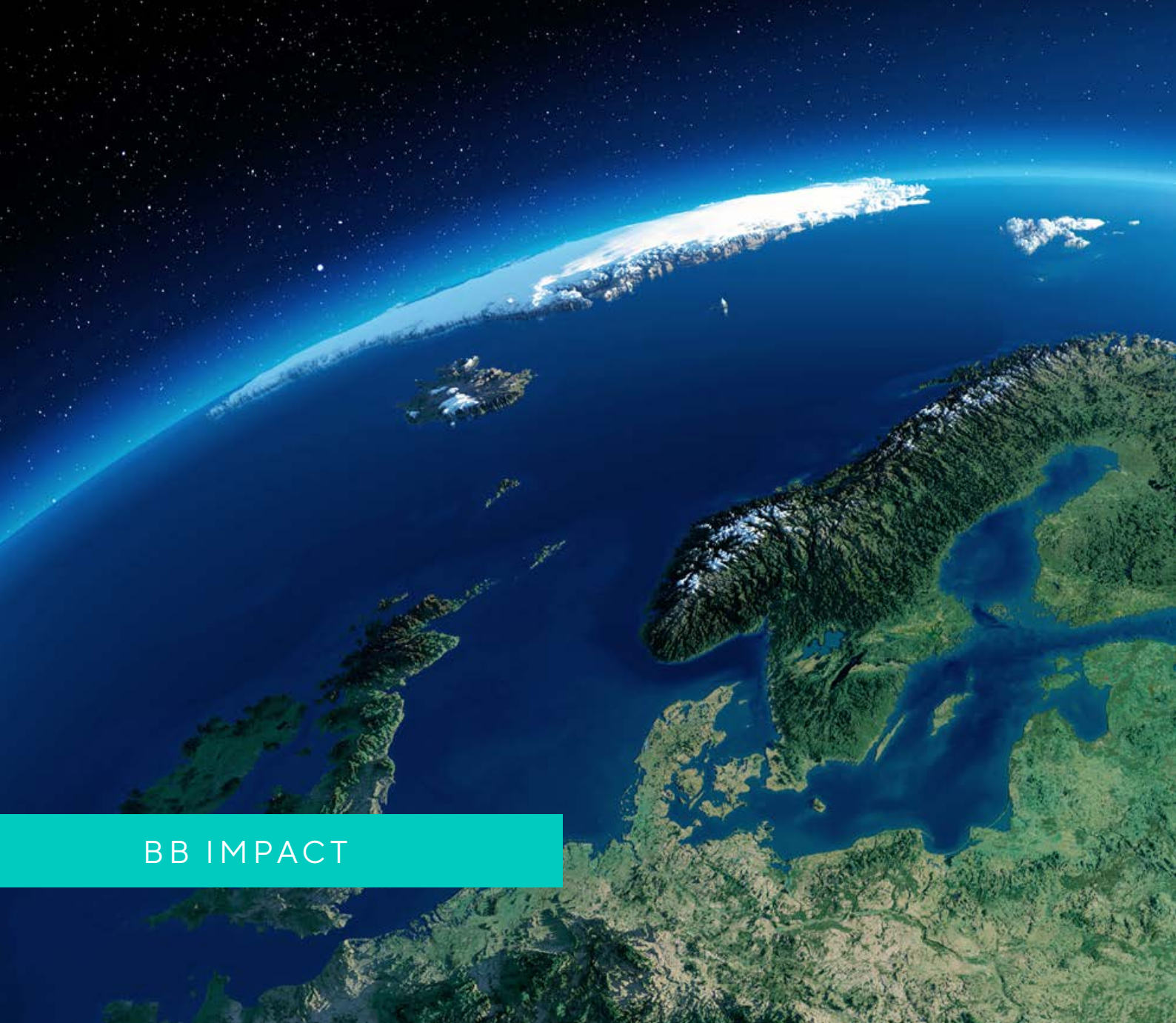
**SDG 7** Affordable and clean energy

**SDG 9** Industry, innovation and infrastructure

**SDG 12** Responsible consumption and production

**SDG 13** Climate action





BB IMPACT

# The future is sustainable

At Bech-Bruun, we work to promote a sustainable future. We do that best with our knowledge and close collaboration with businesses that have the skills to develop the new and efficient solutions required to achieve that goal. For that purpose, we launched our business collaboration programme, BB Impact, in 2018. Through BB Impact, we collaborate with some of the country's most talented start-ups in a dedicated effort to accommodate the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.





BB Impact is our collaboration programme aimed at start-ups that are committed to building a more sustainable future for our planet. The visions and business targets of these businesses support one or more of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. And we help them get off to a good start by contributing what we are best at: legal advice and solid business understanding.

For many start-ups, it is a major challenge to navigate the law and get to grips with everything from labour law to tax, contracts, intellectual property rights and company law. It is time-consuming, challenging and onerous work which is therefore often given low priority, but it may have major negative consequences if not handled appropriately.

Our BB Impact partnerships span a wide range of aspects within commercial law. Start-ups often have limited resources for legal assistance, and we provide them with an opportunity to come off to a good start.

### **Turning innovative visions into reality**

In 2020, four of our most recent BB Impact partners have shown great dedication in turning their individual start-ups into successful businesses. We have assisted, supported and advised the founders of the four businesses, offering strategic guidance and business understanding aimed at helping them off to a good start.

By offering advice to the four businesses, we also contribute to supporting a number of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, thus fulfilling the object of BB Impact: We contribute to sustainable development by sharing our legal knowledge and expertise.

# Four ambitious BB Impact partners

## CARBON STORAGE IN SOLID FORM

Climate Solutions' vision is to reduce global carbon emissions by converting CO<sub>2</sub> into solid form. The method may be applied to both existing and future carbon emissions, and even past carbon footprints can be reduced.

With its 'Carbon Capture and Storage' invention, Climate Solutions will convert CO<sub>2</sub> collected from the air or directly from a flue gas into a solid form, using less energy than previously possible.

*Climate Solutions supports particularly SDG 7 on clean energy.*

7



## A BETTER LIFE WITH A PACEMAKER

The founders of the start-up business Vital Beats used an extensive research project as a platform for developing a visionary business idea. With the development of their app, the aim is clear: offering patients with pacemakers more peace of mind and clinical staff more time. Vital Beats gets legal advice from Bech-Bruun, having been a BB Impact partner since 2019.

"We have a clear ambition to grow and to capture new markets. This is why it was crucial for us to have all legal matters in hand in order to avoid tripping ourselves up in the future. With the BB Impact partnership, we have received advice and assistance on everything from aligning contracts and partnership agreements to signing agreements on capital increase and ownership interests. Working with Bech-Bruun's advisers, we gave everything an overhaul to ensure that we had a proper legal foundation for our business, so that we are ready to take the next step."

Jonas Moll, main founder of Vital Beats

*Vital Beats supports particularly SDG 3 on good health and well-being.*

3





## IMPROVED FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WORLD'S POOR

Give the world's poor access to financial services so they can build the foundation for a brighter future. This is the mission of Jamii.one, a start-up business which has digitised traditional local savings groups in developing countries, enabling users to obtain a credit assessment and maybe qualify for bank loans. Bech-Bruun joined the business as legal adviser on its journey to reduce poverty.

"Bech-Bruun helped us take a helicopter view of the compliance landscape for our business before we delved into the details of the most important aspects. This enabled us to identify legal aspects to consider and to prioritise our focus to get off to a good start. Thanks to that, we can now say with confidence that we have our compliance in place. This is very reassuring, and it's a key competitive parameter to have clearly defined processes in place, both in relation to competitors and in relation to investors. The fact that we have the legal support of and a partnership with a recognised law firm gives our business a seal of approval."

Charlotte Rønje, CEO and co-founder of Jamii.one.

*Jamii.one supports particularly SDG 1 on ending poverty.*



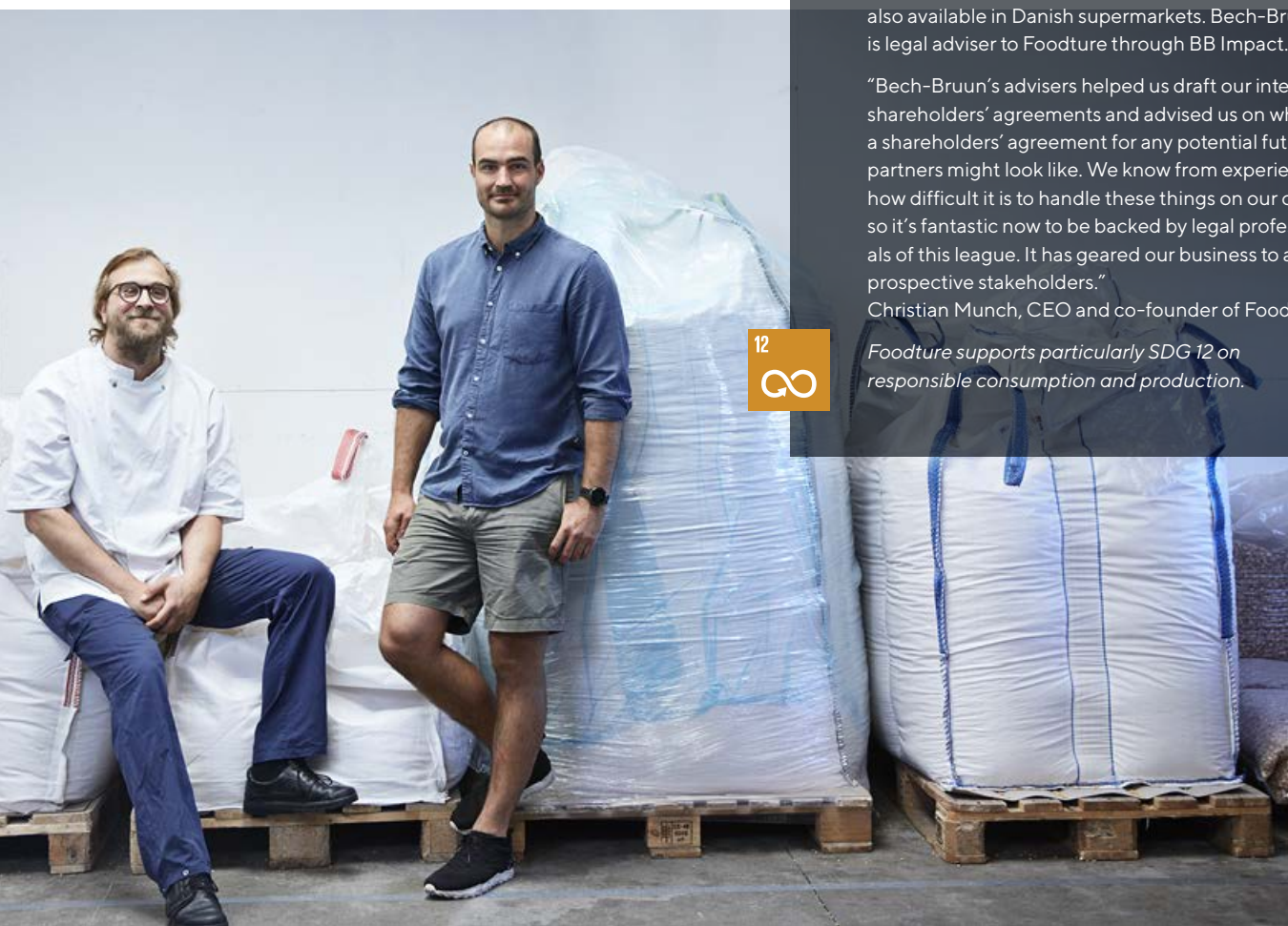
## THE PROTEIN SOURCE OF THE FUTURE

The entrepreneurs behind food manufacturer Foodture are frontrunners in the field of healthy and sustainable food. It all began with month-long experiments in their own kitchens to develop a new Nordic version of tempeh, an Indonesian food. Today, Foodture has its own professional manufacturing facilities in Copenhagen, and after primarily being sold to restaurants and cafes, their product "tæmpeh" is now also available in Danish supermarkets. Bech-Bruun is legal adviser to Foodture through BB Impact.

"Bech-Bruun's advisers helped us draft our internal shareholders' agreements and advised us on what a shareholders' agreement for any potential future partners might look like. We know from experience how difficult it is to handle these things on our own, so it's fantastic now to be backed by legal professionals of this league. It has geared our business to attract prospective stakeholders."

Christian Munch, CEO and co-founder of Foodture.

*Foodture supports particularly SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production.*





# Advisory services for a sustainable future

BB Impact is Bech-Bruun's collaboration programme through which we support the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals via focused collaboration with creative and innovative start-ups that are all committed to building a sustainable future.



For three years now, BB Impact has given us the pleasure of working with some of Denmark's many talented start-up businesses to promote the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals through innovation and creative thinking. In late 2020, we selected four new interesting and very different start-ups, which each in their own way supports sustainability.

### **Energy agreement of the future**

We look forward to working with Reel, a business that has developed a software solution allowing businesses to source climate-friendly electricity through energy agreements that secure the financing of new wind and solar parks. Currently, that option is available to only one per cent of the largest companies. However, with Reel's solution, small and medium-sized businesses can also support the green transition.

"The complex legal energy agreements that we use must be simplified and be more flexible to target all businesses. That requires a high degree of legal expertise and industry knowledge, and the BB Impact partnership offers us just that," says Jon Sigvert, co-founder of Reel.

Reel's solution supports particularly global efforts targeting SDGs 7 and 9 on affordable and clean energy, and on industry, innovation and infrastructure, respectively.

### **Improved and healthier toilet habits**

Pinkorange, a design studio, was also selected as a BB Impact partner in 2020. The business has designed a toilet that is ergonomically and anatomically adapted to ensure that the body is automatically in the optimal position to defecate, in contrast to a conventional toilet which forces the body into an inappropriate position leading to health consequences such as constipation and haemorrhoids. These ailments affect many children and adults in Denmark, and many people find them socially debilitating.

"We're currently seeking a licence agreement with a large manufacturer so that our product can be widely marketed and in that way have the largest possible impact. In a negotiation situation, we would get "run over" if we didn't turn up with a good lawyer," says Ditte Marie Fog Ibsen, one of the two founders of Pinkorange.

The work of Pinkorange supports SDGs 3 and 12 on good health and well-being, and on responsible consumption and production, respectively. Furthermore, it supports SDG 4 on quality education, as Pinkorange has released children's books to help children communicate about the often difficult and taboo-filled issue of toilet problems.

### **Lever for research and innovation in the healthcare system**

A third, exciting new BB Impact partner in 2020 is Teal Medical, which has developed a software solution for automatically extracting large volumes of anonymised health data from hospital systems. The solution saves time and ensures compliance with the GDPR rules and secure processing of personal data. This creates more favourable conditions for research in and development of innovative technological solutions to enhance efficiency in the healthcare system.

"We have come a long way on our own, but it makes sense to obtain expert guid-

ance and assistance to ensure our own compliance and to ensure that we provide our customers with the correct advice," says Kasper Marstal, CEO of Teal Medical. Teal Medical supports primarily SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, as well as SDGs 3 and 8 on good health and well-being, and on decent work and economic growth.

### **Reduced water consumption and greater agricultural yield**

The fourth and last BB Impact partner to be selected in 2020 is SoilSense, which helps farmers optimise irrigation with a view to reducing their water consumption and increasing crop yields. The product consists of soil sensors that measure soil moisture and transmit data to a database. The results are automatically analysed, and the farmer can then see a live overview of the actual irrigation requirement on a smartphone or a PC. This technology can help reduce water consumption in agriculture by 20-50 per cent.

SoilSense supports SDGs 2, 6 and 12 on zero hunger, on clean water and sanitation and on responsible consumption and production, respectively.

"It's fantastic that Bech-Bruun has made their expertise available to us. This enables us to establish a strong platform for our business from which we can grow and fulfil our vision," says Jesper Alkestrup from SoilSense.

## **FREE ADVICE AND COMMERCIAL GUIDANCE**

Through the BB Impact programme, Bech-Bruun's advisers assist sustainable start-ups in realising their vision of developing new, effective solutions that will contribute towards a sustainable future.

By providing legal and strategic advice, assisting with business development and building commercial relationships and providing general guidance on areas in which we have knowledge and experience, we help the businesses off to a good start during the first years of their existence.

The first fifty hours of advice are free of charge, and the business then has the option of continuing our collaboration at a significantly reduced hourly fee and with deferred invoicing.



# An added dimension to the lawyer's role

As the head of Bech-Bruun's collaboration programme, BB Impact, Ditte Lassen-Kahlke's role as a senior associate has an added dimension. She has worked with some of Denmark's most talented start-ups to build a more sustainable future.

By offering, every year, a number of Danish entrepreneurial businesses with a sustainable agenda fifty hours of advice and ongoing guidance, Bech-Bruun contributes to supporting the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, it also has positive effects within our firm.

Senior associate Ditte Lassen-Kahlke has contributed to developing the programme and has furthermore been responsible for BB Impact and acted as an adviser on the programme:

"It's of great value that the company is supportive of employees who wish to dedicate their efforts to areas extending

beyond their primary fields of expertise and to shape their day-to-day responsibilities to match their interests," explains Ditte.

## A source of inspiration

As a lawyer specialising in company law, staying up to date with developments in the business sector and, not least, being at the forefront of developments and new trends in the market have always been part of her job and enable her to provide clients with the best possible advice and guidance. Also in this context, the BB Impact activities have been of great value to Ditte:

"I have developed a good understanding of developments in the entrepreneurial environment and businesses with highly creative mindsets. The creative approach among entrepreneurs – which is all about wanting to find solutions and making things better than they are today – is very inspiring. I have been able to use that knowledge and insight extensively in my relationships with my "conventional", well-established clients."

## Joining an important journey

The BB Impact programme has offered Ditte the opportunity to work with people who are passionate about solving a challenge in the world and to help



them turn their ideas into reality and get closer to their dreams.

"It's quite exceptional and very rewarding to be able to follow the journey of a start-up business at such close range, and to see that the guidance and advice we can offer them actually help them achieve the success they work so hard for," Ditte explains.

**Ditte Lassen-Kahlke** is 35 years old and has been with Bech-Bruun since 2011, employed as a senior associate in the M&A Corporate department. In spring 2021, Thomas Gjøl-Trønning will take over as the head of BB Impact at Bech-Bruun. Going forward, Ditte will work as a lawyer with beer producer Mikkeller, one of Denmark's most successful entrepreneurial businesses.

# Pro bono

At Bech-Bruun, we take our corporate social responsibility seriously. Therefore, every year, we offer our legal expertise free of charge to a number of organisations that work for a better world, locally as well as globally. Meet some of the organisations that received our free advisory services in 2020.



## SMILfonden – spreading smiles

Since 2014, SMILfonden has been devoted to bringing smiles to children suffering from serious or chronic illnesses. The association grew considerably in 2020 and managed to launch several new initiatives, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Bech-Bruun has supported SMILfonden since 2018 by providing pro bono legal advice.

A better life for children suffering from serious or chronic illnesses. That is the vision of SMILfonden, a charitable association which was founded in 2014 by former TV presenter Sisse Fisker. Since its establishment, the association has been committed to giving seriously and chronically ill children and their families a break from illness by creating strong communities and arranging positive and fun events, both in hospitals and outside, among other initiatives. But what can be done when disease is suddenly on everyone's lips and social interaction is no longer possible?

"We've faced many challenges. You can't just stop. The children are still ill, and they and their families still need to get away from the isolation of their homes," says Sisse Fisker, CEO and founder of the association. She continues:

"So, we rethought everything and succeeded with many initiatives. Looking back, 2020 is actually the year we had the most activities, and we received more donations than ever before. We have been really good at thinking innovatively, coming up with initiatives such as online communities and small gath-





erings. We insisted on still doing something and doing it right.”

### New successful initiatives

For example, SMILfonden held many corona-friendly versions of their events, including their popular SMILcamps. 2020 also saw new and fresh initiatives. When Denmark went into lockdown in March, the association set up a telephone helpline for families who felt frightened and worried that their vulnerable children would not be safe. The helpline became an instant success with both parents and children. Another success was SMILtv:

“I have a background in television, so I immediately came up with the idea that we had to make television for the children in hospital. We got children’s TV presenter Jacob Riising and artists Hjalmer and Gulddreng on board, who played online concerts and came up with lots of fun and games,” Sisse says. She goes on to talk about their biggest project ever, SMILET, a manned creative workshop for hospitalised children. It opened in November at the Copenhagen central hospital, Rigshospitalet, and has been up and running since.

“This was particularly appreciated, because all the hospital clowns, the “play heroes”, the voluntary musicians – everyone making it a little bit fun being hospitalised had to leave the hospitals. Our workshop is the only place where the children and their siblings can take a break from the hospital, and it has become a huge success. It was such a great project to launch.”

### Personal data all under control

When Sisse founded the association six years ago, she had no experience in establishing an organisation. In her own words, she “just wanted to do something for sick children”. Now, as the years have passed, the association has continued to grow. One result of its growth and success is the establishment of a Board consisting of members with experience in various fields, all of whom work on a voluntary basis, supporting the work and development of the association and each contributing their individual expertise. Niels Kornerup, partner at Bech-Bruun, has been a member of the Board since 2018:

“My collaboration with SMILfonden is a good opportunity for me to make a difference. I find it highly motivating that the legal knowledge and board

experience I have gained over the years can contribute to the further development of the association. We each contribute what we’re best at, so we can focus our joint efforts on creating the best conditions for children who are ill and their families,” says Niels.

Bech-Bruun’s legal support for the activities of the association has, for example, resulted in trademark protection of several of its initiatives. And then the data protection rules came under scrutiny:

“When Niels asked us if we had full control of all the data we handle, we quickly learned that we had to get everything organised. It meant a lot to us that Bech-Bruun helped us last autumn obtaining consent to using all the data we have collected. The information we have on the families is precisely what makes our work possible. It’s a difficult process, however, and it takes tremendous efforts to systematise everything. As CEO, I’m relieved to be able to go to bed at night, knowing that everything is in order. We have really become aware of what we are allowed to do and what we must do, and that has been a huge help. We would never have succeeded in this without Bech-Bruun – that is quite certain,” explains Sisse.

# Crisis management from the stage

More than 80 years ago, Danish world-renowned architect Arne Jacobsen created the iconic building now synonymous with the theatre Bellevue Teatret. The theatre stages mainly music shows and Danish drama and satire. The theatre, overlooking the sea and situated on the edge of woodlands, is beautifully located in the municipality of Gentofte, north of Copenhagen, and it has more than 100,000 visitors every year.

A year that no one could have foreseen, filled with restrictions and lockdowns, has left its unmistakable mark. As one of the theatres with the highest self-

generated income in Denmark, Bellevue Teatret particularly felt the impact of restrictions and changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In spite of all that, the theatre managed, through rescue packages and show adjustments, to complete the season and generate a profit. Bech-Bruun supported Bellevue Teatret by offering pro bono legal advice. Bech-Bruun partner Niels Kornerup chairs the Board of the theatre, and he has primarily been dealing with general board work and crisis management during the COVID-19 pandemic, including assistance with applications for rescue packages, etc.

## PROJEKT S

## Projekt S\*

*\*Mental strength training for children and adolescents*

The development programmes of Projekt S are all about self-esteem, self-confidence, health and strength. These four values form the core of all the activities of the project, targeting young people aged 10–16. The concept was invented by two entrepreneurs whose aim it is to promote mental health among young people. And they are making good progress. Since its establishment, Projekt S has developed the psychological and physical muscles of more than 2,000 children and adolescents in Copenhagen.

The project is facilitated by volunteer instructors. Through physical activity, dialogue and reflection, they teach young people to accept who they are and help

them to feel their own limits and enjoy life. In 2017, the international organisation Reach for Change selected Projekt S as the winner of the GameChanger award for the project's work with children and adolescents. Since then, the project has received support from several organisations, including the foundation Liljeborgfonden, which has resulted in close collaboration between Projekt S and Julemærkehjemmet Liljeborg, which runs homes for children with personal and social difficulties, including weight problems and bullying. Furthermore, the financial support enabled Projekt S to expand by establishing a division in Roskilde in 2020. Bech-Bruun took part in the development and provided pro bono legal advice.





# ART-2030

## ART 2030

ART 2030 turns the focus on the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals through the medium of art. Working with renowned artists such as Ai Weiwei, Yoko Ono and Jeppe Hein, ART 2030 promotes works of art that inspire the observer to understand and work for a sustainable future. In collaboration with Jeppe Hein, ART 2030 created the massive art project "Breathe With Me", which was launched at the 74th UN

General Assembly in New York. The art project has since been recreated in many places around the world and is estimated to have reached more than 93 million people globally. Bech-Bruun supports ART 2030 by providing pro bono legal advice. In 2020, we assisted ART 2030 with, for example, the conclusion of collaboration agreements on new art projects.



*\*The Danish Association of Lawyers and Economists*

## Djøl\*

The Danish Association of Lawyers and Economists (Djøl) offers legal aid to its members who are either entrepreneurs or thinking about becoming entrepreneurs. In 2020, Bech-Bruun worked pro bono, providing free-of-charge legal aid

for Djøl members wanting advice on legal issues related to entrepreneurship, for instance on which corporate form to choose, considerations as to ownership structure, review of simple contracts and questions relating to VAT and taxes.



## DANSK SØREDNINGSSKAB

## Dansk Sørredningselskab

The Danish sea rescue society Dansk Sørredningselskab (DSRS) is a non-profit association helping yachters and boat owners in non-emergency situations at sea and assisting official emergency services. Bech-Bruun supports the association's activities by providing

pro bono legal assistance. In 2020, we advised on, for example, insurance and tax issues, donation policies, trust fund applications, GDPR, employment contracts, leases and various purchases of life boats and life-saving equipment.



# Knowledge is at the heart of everything we do

Bech-Bruun's legal specialists are among the best in the country, and with that position comes great responsibility. Every year, we strive to live up to our responsibility when sharing the expertise of our specialists with the world around us. During 2020, our specialist knowledge and targeted approach to knowledge sharing once again proved its worth.

With knowledge being at the heart of everything we do, we play an important role in society as a leading law firm, both when Danish businesses feel the effects of data protection law and when new complex EU legislation comes into force. And this becomes even more apparent when the whole world is turned upside down, as it was in 2020 when the pandemic struck. When thousands of employers have to send home their staff, when entire trades have to shut down, and when public debate is raging about civil rights, questions pop up and with them the need to have clarified what is right and what is wrong.

When the complexity of law takes a leading role in society, we see it as our duty to share our highly specialised knowledge, provide clarity on current legislation and to help those who have something at stake. Through the Bech-Bruun Academy, we have made the knowledge of our lawyers freely available in a constantly changing reality.

"Being a knowledge-intensive company, we have seen a whole new demand for our expertise due to the innumerable challenges which 2020 brought. We have seen an exceptionally high demand for the expertise of our

lawyers and, with the Bech-Bruun Academy, we have taken a completely new approach to knowledge sharing. We have reorganised major parts of our traditional course activities into free webinars which are open to all. We did this in response to the uncertainty and the resulting need for legal advice and expertise which many businesses and organisations were faced with in 2020," says Jeannette Skjoldager, head of Education and Training at Bech-Bruun.



### The role of the adviser has changed

Bech-Bruun's lawyers saw their roles as advisers change radically in 2020, and the traditional advice provided around a conference table now has a new format. We have established permanent webinar facilities at our offices in Aarhus and Copenhagen, and our lawyers have courageously and in record time taken their seat in front of a webcam and the many hundreds of online participants who zoom in to our webinars, week after week.

"For several years, at the Bech-Bruun Academy, we have trained our lawyers

to be ready for change – and in 2020, we suddenly found ourselves in a situation that demanded just that. Our lawyers have really proved that they have the courage to lead the way and take the floor when questions are asked. We share our knowledge with society where and when the need is most critical, and I'm proud that we provide that service. The legal specialists at Bech-Bruun have the answers to many of the questions being asked in the public debate. And we make those answers freely available to everyone who wants to listen in," explains Jeannette, commenting on the new role of virtual speaker taken on by many of our lawyers this year.

## KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Training and knowledge sharing are crucial at Bech-Bruun. That is why we have our own Bech-Bruun Academy, through which we focus on combining law and business understanding with personal insight. The breadth and quality of our courses build on in-depth legal expertise, a constant focus on trends in the business community and the ability to adapt to the times.

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315

courses  
in 2020

80

online courses in 2020  
(free webinars held over  
a period of nine months)

6,491

course registrations  
in 2020

3,756

client registrations  
in 2020

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84

free courses, after-hours  
meetings and day courses  
offered by Bech-Bruun in 2020

41

courses changed to webinars  
due to COVID-19 in 2020

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# Our knowledge makes a difference

Our skilled specialists also represented their firm, working on various boards and committees in 2020, and we are also active members of relevant Danish and international trade organisations and other professional and industrial bodies.

We contribute knowledge to help develop the frameworks in which we and our clients work and take joint responsibility for the influence that our activities have

on the rest of society. Selected trade and other organisations, networks, committees and boards that we were members of during 2020:

## **Danish Bar and Law Society**

**Procedural Law Committee of the General Council of the Danish Bar and Law Society**

**Anti Doping Denmark**

**National Association for Building**

**Climate Planet Foundation**

**Comité Maritime International**

**Danish Chinese Business Forum**

**Confederation of Danish Industry**

**Company law study programme committee of the Association of Danish Law Firms**

**Association of Danish IT Attorneys**

**Danish Environmental Lawyers**

**Data Saves Lives**

**Disciplinary body of the Danish Football Players Association**

**Danish Company Appeals Board**

**EU Commission EU China IP Working Group**

**European Patent Lawyers Association**

**Hempel Foundation**

**International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property**

**International Bar Association**

**Karnov Group**

**Danish Competition Appeals Tribunal**

**Board of Equal Treatment**

**Complaints body of Medicoindustrien, Medtech Denmark**

**Danish Press Council**

**Danish Save the Children**



# Selected sponsorships

We assume responsibility for the surrounding community and support more than twenty associations, organisations and businesses every year through our sponsorships.

Selected sponsorships in the past year:

## **AFFK**

Copenhagen association of junior lawyers, where young lawyers and junior lawyers meet for social and professional events.

## **AROS**

One of northern Europe's largest art museums with 20,700 sqm spread over ten floors.

## **Dansk Energi Leverandørforum**

A forum for suppliers and advisers of energy companies with a need for in-depth understanding of and staying up to date on developments in the energy sector.

## **ELSA Denmark**

One of a total of 44 national groups of the European Law Students' Association (ELSA), the world's largest organisation for law students and law graduates. ELSA Denmark is the Danish ELSA network with local groups in the four university cities, Aalborg, Aarhus, Odense and Copenhagen.

## **Erhverv Aarhus**

An independent business organisation, working with its member businesses for an attractive business climate in Aarhus and eastern Jutland.

## **FOCOFIMA**

The Forum for Company Law and Financial Market Law has dealt with company and capital market law and acted as a forum for research and training in these areas since 2003.

## **Hold Danmark Rent**

A non-profit organisation working to reduce litter and fly-tipping in the natural environment.

## **ICC Danmark International Chamber**

Joins and represents the interests of enterprises all over the world and plays a central role in international trade and commerce.

## **University of Copenhagen, University of Southern Denmark, Aalborg University and Aarhus University**

Support for law students.

## **Danish Mediation Institute**

Represents the country's best and most experienced mediators, whose skills cover a wide range of legal specialisms.

## **UN Global Compact Network Denmark**

Part of the world's largest voluntary initiative for corporate social responsibility, established in 2000 by then General Secretary of the UN, Kofi Annan, to mobilise enterprises all over the world towards a more sustainable future.

## **Vis Moot**

Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, also known as Vis Moot, is one of the world's largest and most prestigious moot competitions. Vis Moot is an intensive professional procedure taking place over two semesters and being concluded with a finals week, when the main competition takes place, with more than 350 universities participating from all over the world. The competition requires entrants to have a high level of professional knowledge and commitment, and participation in the competition is very time-consuming.

# “An opportunity to influence an industry and its footprint”

In 2020, Bech-Bruun partner Johannes Grove Nielsen was appointed chairman of the IBA Maritime and Transport Law Committee for 2021 and 2022. This is an honourable office, but according to Johannes, it is also an opportunity to assume more responsibility on behalf of the industry.



The IBA Maritime and Transport Law Committee is one of the oldest and most well-established committees under the International Bar Association (IBA). With more than 650 members worldwide, the committee is a forum for leading maritime law professionals around the world, giving them the opportunity to meet, network and discuss the most current legal issues in the field of maritime and transport law.

For Johannes, who is considered one of the leading shipping law professionals both in Denmark and abroad, the chairmanship of the committee is of high importance.

“It’s a great honour and a show of recognition of both Bech-Bruun as a law firm and of my achievements within the field during the past 15 years.”

## **Staying up to date with an industry**

But to Johannes, the chairmanship means more than honour and recognition. The committee duties provide him with the opportunity to stay up to date on developments in the industry, which is a great advantage in his role as an adviser.

“Shipping is a traditional trade with rules dating back thousands of years. However, it’s necessary to stay agile and monitor developments. I now have a far better opportunity to do this,” Johannes explains.

## **Social dimension**

However, the office of chairman also adds a third and equally important dimension, the social dimension:

“Being a member of the management of the Maritime and Transport Law Committee gives me the opportunity to ensure that, as a business, we assume responsibility and influence the industry and its footprint.”

“It’s important that we – as law professionals – leverage our expertise to aim high, defining a strong, common standpoint for the industry.”





# “You become a better adviser”

For partner Claus Barrett Christiansen, it makes sense on many levels to devote time to unpaid projects in addition to his work as a legal adviser at Bech-Bruun.

As a specialist in trademarks and design rights and with more than 20 years of experience, Claus is one of our many legal advisers who is actively involved in the work of boards and committees. In 2020, he was appointed to the Board of the Danish Design Board Association, which founded Designnævnet, a board that was recently established to review cases of copyright infringement on behalf of architects, designers, craft artists, etc.

“For me, it makes perfect sense to devote my time and efforts to strengthening the legal rights of designers and design businesses. This way, I can help ensure that cases of infringement of rights are effectively resolved,” he explains.

## Multiple side benefits

Claus is in no doubt that his voluntary work pays off:

“I believe that you become a better legal adviser by engaging in such projects. Here, I’m given the opportunity to get to know an industry inside and out, learning what design really is and learning about trends and developments and how the various industry players see the world and act. It’s very inspiring.”

There is much to be gained, both on a personal and a social level, and the fact that Bech-Bruun’s clients also gain is certainly a very positive side benefit:

“When taking on voluntary duties at Bech-Bruun, we always assess whether they will have any benefits for society at large. If our clients also stand to benefit, there is much to be said for getting involved.”

“You continually build more experience and knowledge through this kind of work, and you develop a strong network. All of this can help us assist our clients with their cases in a smoother and more expedient manner.”

# Environment

In 2020, we increased our focus on resource consumption at Bech-Bruun. As a law firm, we do not have a major production plant with a corresponding heavy climate footprint. Nevertheless, caring for our environment and climate is important to us, and we continuously strive to contribute to the green transition by minimising our resource consumption. Both as a modern law firm and as an employer of more than 500 employees, it is important to us that we contribute to sustainable developments also in the future.

In addition, an ever-growing part of our business is connected to development projects that benefit our environment and climate. Also in 2020, we advised a number of clients specifically on sustainable energy and sustainable construction across national borders. We contributed to ensuring sustainable power for households all over the world and to newbuilds designed with respect for our environment and climate.

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## OUR AMBITIONS

- We will identify relevant key action areas in which we can limit our resource consumption.
- We will make an effort to continuously minimise our resource consumption and optimise sustainable business procedures.
- We will strive to prioritise the greater use of green suppliers.
- We will have a strategic focus on collaboration with Danish and international players within renewable energy and sustainable construction.

## OUR 2021 TARGETS

- To draft a climate strategy.
- To map out the areas in which we can minimise our consumption.
- To increase our focus on the climate footprint of our suppliers.
- To continue our commitment to sustainable development in the construction sector.
- To increase the scope of our advisory services on large renewable energy projects.

### A targeted effort

At Bech-Bruun, we take our corporate social responsibility seriously. This also applies when it comes to caring for our environment and climate and the footprint left by our business activities.

When we consume energy for electricity or heating in our offices, when our employees travel to and from work and when we travel around the world to advise international clients, we emit carbon dioxide, which impacts the climate. Thus, our business activities present a potential climate and environmental risk, particularly in connection with the operation of our offices at several locations and our domestic and international travel activities. It is therefore essential that we make a targeted effort to minimise our resource consumption and as a result our carbon footprint.

In order to monitor our climate efforts now and in future, we made the decision in 2020 to prepare annual carbon emission accounts. These accounts are intended to help us maintain a continuous focus on our consumption and on the suppliers with which we collaborate, but they will also act as a guideline for our work to identify relevant focus areas that may contribute to ensuring that we continually reduce our overall carbon footprint.

### Bech-Bruun's climate accounts

Our aim for our first climate accounts was to establish a useful tool that could help us zoom in on how to make an even more targeted effort to contribute to the green transition.

Unsurprisingly, our transport, travel and office activities deviated significantly from the norm in 2020. We did not travel by plane, car or stay in our offices to the extent that we would have done during a normal year. Instead, we held virtual meetings and worked from home.

As a result, the past year was in no way representative of our future conduct and not an ideal basis of comparison. But the experience we gained in 2020 provides us with new information on the areas in which our resource consumption is the greatest. This insight contributes to our upcoming work to define the focus areas for reducing our consumption and consequently our overall carbon footprint.

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# 47%

less carbon emissions  
in 2020

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## Carbon footprint in 2020

2020 changed many of our habits and routines, and in a short period of time we adapted to a new reality and some very different working conditions. This change is clearly traceable in our carbon footprint over the past year.

We want to learn from how we managed to adapt, and we will therefore launch a project to map out our consumption in even greater detail.

Bech-Bruun's climate accounts for 2020 have been prepared in accordance with the calculation method of the internationally accepted standard for climate accounts, Greenhouse Gas Protocol – Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard.

## Future focus areas

The considerable difference between our consumption in 2019 and our consumption in 2020 emphasises that our conduct has a substantial impact on the amount of carbon dioxide we emit. As a result, we will intensify our efforts to reduce our consumption going forward.

Our goal for 2021 is to draft a climate strategy with specific targets for our consumption and a clear plan for our future efforts. We will, for example, focus on making higher demands on the suppliers that we collaborate with to run our offices and to provide our modes of transport and organise our travel activities.

By focusing continuously on our conduct and resource consumption, our ambition is to reduce our carbon footprint and thereby to contribute to promoting the green transition.

In our environment and climate efforts, we support the UN Global Compact principles on the environment:

### Principle 7

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

### Principle 8

undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

### Principle 9

encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

In our environment and climate efforts, we support a number of the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

**SDG 7** Affordable and clean energy  
**SDG 12** Responsible consumption and production  
**SDG 13** Climate action





## NEW HEADQUARTERS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

# 13-floor sustainable build

Since 2001, Langelinie Allé 35 has provided the setting of Bech-Bruun in Copenhagen, but new horizons await. A 13-floor sustainable build is under construction, and in 2023 Bech-Bruun will relocate to completely new headquarters in the new district of Nordø.

In 2014, Bech-Bruun's offices in Aarhus moved to City Tower – Aarhus' first commercial build to meet the strict energy class 1 requirements. City Tower has 24 floors, is 92 metres tall and was designed with a focus on sustainability and energy optimisation.

Now the time has come for Bech-Bruun's offices in Copenhagen to follow suit. After two decades at Langelinie Allé, the Bech-Bruun team will relocate to completely new, sustainable headquarters in 2023. The future address will be in the new urban district of Nordø, situated at the tip of Nordhavn.

"Sustainability was a pivotal reason for our decision to relocate. We want to be at the forefront of developments and minimise our consumption as much as possible. Our new offices must be flexible enough to accommodate us as the

firm develops and to adapt to our changing needs, and our requirements will be fully met by the newbuild at Nordø. It will be a modern and attractive workplace for the whole team and a pleasure to welcome our clients to visit us," says CFO Martin Riber Povlsen.

### **DGNB certification to gold standard**

PFA is the company behind the establishment of the new urban district at Nordø and the construction of Bech-Bruun's future headquarters:

"We are incredibly proud and happy that Bech-Bruun has chosen Nordø as the location of its new headquarters. With its unique architecture, the building will become a landmark of the Århusgade quarter and, with its gold DGNB sustainability certification, it will fit in well with PFA's overall commercial portfolio in

Denmark," says Mikael Fogemann, executive director, Nordic Real Estate at PFA.

The DGNB certification means, among other things, that a comprehensive approach was taken to sustainability during the development and construction of the build, taking into account environmental, social and financial aspects of sustainability. Specifically, the project focuses on reducing carbon emissions during the life cycle of the build and on ensuring a good indoor climate in terms of daylight, temperature and ventilation.

Moreover, the new headquarters will feature a sky lounge on the 13th floor, a green winter garden on the ground floor and a comprehensively modern, sustainable and innovative approach to the layout and design of every single square metre.



## BECH-BRUUN'S SUSTAINABLE BUILDS

Aarhus City Tower, housing Bech-Bruun's Aarhus offices, has 24 floors and is 92 metres tall. The property was built with a keen eye on sustainability and energy optimisation and, at its opening, it was the first commercial build in Aarhus to meet the strict requirements for energy class 1 builds.

Nordø, Bech-Bruun's new headquarters in Copenhagen, is being built at the tip of the Nordhavn peninsula and is expected to be ready for occupation in 2023. The 13-floor sustainable build will be certified to the DGNB gold standard, indicating among other things that the design focuses on reducing carbon emissions from the building and on ensuring a healthy indoor climate.



# Our green kitchen

In Bech-Bruun's canteen, climate awareness plays an important role. Based on a sustainable philosophy, our cooks and kitchen staff make dedicated efforts every day to serve delicious meals that will benefit both our employees and the environment.

Our highly skilled cooks and kitchen staff from Meyers Kantiner, who prepare and serve all meals every day with passion, professionalism and a genuine love of good food are probably among the most well-liked employees at Bech-Bruun.

Head chef Charlott Bergmann Gether, who took over responsibility for the kitchen at Bech-Bruun in 2020, is in

charge of the regular services every day. She has spotted a trend – meat is gradually being upstaged by vegetables.

“Our colleagues at Bech-Bruun have gained a significant liking for vegetables to the effect that vegetables now make up two thirds and meat one third of every plate. We are very pleased with this positive trend, both from the point

of view of individual well-being and from a climate perspective. Moreover, it is a big motivator for our work in the kitchen to get as much taste and as many different preparations out of our vegetables as possible,” she says.





## SUSTAINABLE PHILOSOPHY

Our kitchen, which is part of Meyers Kantiner, has pledged to meet a number of parameters for sustainable canteen operations.

Our day-to-day work in the kitchen is based on a basic set of values that ensure delicious and sustainable meals.

**Taste**  
**Quality**  
**Organic produce**  
**Health**  
**Seasonality**  
**Sustainability**  
**Animal welfare**

### Organic produce



Cheese

30-35%



Dairy

100%



Eggs

100%



Grain

100%



Dried beans, lentils, chick-peas, pasta and rice

100%



Fruit & vegetables

40-50%

### Sustainability and animal welfare



Fruit

In the first half, at least  
**30%**  
must be grown in Denmark and  
**50%**  
must be grown regionally



Seafood

**100%**  
sustainable in accordance with WWF's seafood guide



Meat

At least  
**65-70%**  
meat of Danish origin  
**100%**  
free-range chicken recommended by Animal Protection Denmark



Increased focus on food waste

In the second half, at least  
**40%**  
must be grown in Denmark and  
**60%**  
must be grown regionally

# Ethics & Compliance

Corporate compliance is high on the agenda in the vast majority of Danish businesses. The digital transition and increased use of modern technologies come with new risks and an ever-growing need for compliance and data protection.

Last year, compliance was more important than ever, also at Bech-Bruun. In 2020, we therefore intensified our focus on future-proofing our data security in order to ensure that we stay abreast of developments also in future.

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## OUR AMBITIONS

- We will ensure the highest ethical standards and openness within the framework of confidentiality that is the cornerstone of our client relationships.
- We will ensure in-house compliance at the highest level.
- We will ensure continuous updating and development of our systems and digital tools so that we may service our clients efficiently and safely at all times.

## OUR 2021 TARGETS


- To continue setting the highest ethical standards.
- To continuously optimise our compliance tools.
- To stay focused on our high IT security.

## We assume responsibility

We have a clear ambition to operate a responsible business with the highest levels of integrity and security. We do that by fulfilling and defending the important role we play as a leading law firm, for the rule of law and by ensuring the highest ethical standards and openness within the framework of confidentiality that is the cornerstone of our client relationships.

In 2015, as one of the first law firms in Denmark, Bech-Bruun decided to adopt the code of conduct of the Association of Danish Law Firms, advokatKODEKS, and in 2020 we continued our active commitment to the five principles: Openness, social responsibility, handling of ethical dilemmas, focus on clients and employees, and diversity.

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advokatKODEKS is the legal industry's declaration that it is taking social responsibility seriously. advokatKODEKS ensures that as a law firm, we explicitly state to the surrounding world what we stand for. The value we create, how we run our business, and what makes us special as independent advisers.

The values of the code are directed at clients, employees and the public. They concern employee-oriented values relating to good management and diversity but also general values such as ethics and social responsibility as well as openness and transparency.

In our ethics and compliance efforts, we support the UN Global Compact principles on anti-corruption:

#### **Principle 10**

Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

In our ethics and compliance efforts, we support the UN **SDG 8** on decent work and economic growth.





# Compliance in Bech-Bruun



With access to new digital opportunities and increased use of modern technologies, businesses are working much smarter and much more efficiently than ever before. But with these developments come new risks and an ever-growing need for compliance and data protection. In just a few years, rules and recommendations in many areas have been tightened and have become actual requirements, and also during 2020 we saw a tightening of regulatory requirements and increased regulation.

Corporate compliance is high on the agenda in the vast majority of Danish businesses. Last year, compliance was more important than ever, also at Bech-Bruun.

At Bech-Bruun, we have the clear goal of being the law firm of the future, and this ambition also applies in relation to corporate compliance. In 2020, we therefore intensified our focus on future-proofing our data security, for instance by optimising and developing our processes and by training all relevant employees in the current legislation. The objective of our efforts is clear: We need to constantly be at the forefront of developments.

## One step ahead on data protection

As a leading law firm, it is crucial that we live up to our responsibility at all times and to the confidence that our clients place in us. This requires a constant focus on complying with applicable law, with data security and protection of per-

sonal data being major focus areas particularly in Europe.

As a result of the ever-growing demands on corporate compliance, we continued giving high priority to our internal compliance in 2020. Existing processes were optimised and new processes were introduced in order to ensure that we are able to continue efficiently identifying and managing external risks.

“Compliance is more than just complying with rules, it’s an active risk management component. We therefore expanded our IT-controlled screenings of potential new clients in the past year. This enables us to identify, assess and take action to mitigate risks and to ensure that we act in accordance with the law,” says Lars Lindenchrone Petersen, who, in addition to his longstanding experience as a legal adviser and lecturer, is Bech-Bruun’s knowledge management partner and the individual responsible for Bech-Bruun’s in-house compliance.

Our compliance efforts are anchored with our legal specialists and with the group of specialist compliance controllers. These are highly-specialised employees, whose principal task is to ensure that our in-house compliance procedures are observed and documented.

## Targeted AML and CTF efforts

Our responsibility and consequent focus on compliance also applies within the areas of anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CTF) as well as the potential risks to which we may be exposed as providers of advisory services.

As a law firm, we have a shared responsibility by which we are bound, because when we assist in transactions, we become privy to confidential information about our clients and their owners.

This applies, for instance, when we assist Danish and foreign clients in the acquisition or divestment of companies and property portfolios, which often involve



### **Lars Lindenchrone Petersen**, knowledge management partner

Lars joined Bech-Bruun in 2008 and is the partner responsible for our in-house compliance and knowledge management efforts. With broad knowledge of our many business areas and a keen eye for the future requirements for lawyers, he contributes to ensuring that Bech-Bruun's employees always have up-to-date knowledge on compliance and comply with current legislation in the area. Moreover, Lars is a former high court judge, has authored quite a number of books and he also lectures at the University of Copenhagen and at a wide range of continuing professional development courses for lawyers.

large sums of money. Again in 2020, we took our responsibility very seriously, implementing a number of precautions.

"We can't ignore the potential risk that someone might attempt to use us for money laundering or the financing of terrorist activity. Since 2010 we have therefore developed one of the legal industry's most rigorous systems for screening clients and their beneficial owners when we take on an assignment for them, and we monitor client relationships in accordance with our duties under the Danish Anti-Money Laundering Act. In 2020, we developed this system further in order to comply with new requirements," says Lars.

Our targeted AML/CTF efforts and our extensive knowledge within this area also benefit our clients. In the past year, we advised clients on an ongoing basis and took on several new assignments with connection to the Anti-Money Laundering Act.



## KNOWLEDGE IS OUR MOST IMPORTANT TOOL

Once again in 2020, we tightened our in-house guidelines with the aim of ensuring that all of our employees have comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge on AML/CTF issues.

To this end, we developed, among other things, a three-hour in-house e-learning programme on AML legislation and the related rules of data protection law, which all relevant employees completed in 2020.

In addition, we have further developed our digital system for obtaining AML documentation to ensure GDPR compliant processing of all our clients' personal data.

All employees at Bech-Bruun completed comprehensive e-learning programmes on cyber and information security and on data protection regulations in 2020.

## High level of complexity and high risk

Our data protection specialists are among the best in the Nordics, and they contribute to ensuring Bech-Bruun's internal compliance with data protection rules and regulations.

Data protection is a highly complex area, and many businesses find it increasingly challenging to comply with the rules.

Therefore, our specialists increasingly provide advice on the rules and their interpretation, and we experience a strong demand for their expertise from public and private organisations.

"As rules and regulations are tightened, our clients increasingly require assistance on compliance. At the same time, we're seeing violations of the law being punished harder and more consistently than in the past. In addition to substantial fines, such violations may also cause reputational damage to the business," says Susanne Stougaard, partner and compliance specialist in data protection law.

However, Susanne's advisory skills and expertise reach far beyond the walls of our offices. She is an active lecturer and keynote speaker, and she often contributes with her extensive knowledge of this complex area. In 2020, Susanne and some close colleagues also initiated a series of free webinars, again with the stricter EU GDPR requirements on the agenda.

"I genuinely feel that, as specialists in a complex legal field, we have the duty – but also the pleasure – to share the knowledge we possess. I believe that we have a shared responsibility for providing clarity and assisting businesses, organisations and authorities in this area," says Susanne on her role as a keynote speaker and lecturer.

## World-class data protection

In 2020, Bech-Bruun provided advisory services to a wide range of businesses, organisations and public authorities on the latest knowledge within data protection and thereby made a great effort to equip the employees in charge to handle regulatory compliance in-house.

We are among Denmark's leading specialists in this field, and since 2016, we have shared our knowledge through our Data Protection Officer (DPO) training programme, which has been completed by nearly 300 participants so far. Our DPO training programme covers every aspect required to prepare the participants for the role of Data Protection Officer in a complete course.

"The idea to create the DPO training programme came about before the commencement of the new General Data Protection Regulation, because we noticed a huge need to prepare Danish businesses for the new reality facing them. It seemed obvious to us to summarise the essence of our knowledge on the new legislation in a training programme which would enable businesses to handle GDPR issues in-house," says partner and data protection specialist Thomas Munk Rasmussen, who was one of the originators of Bech-Bruun's DPO training programme.



## Susanne Stougaard, compliance specialist

Susanne is a partner and compliance specialist in data protection law, who joined Bech-Bruun in 2011. She advises Danish and international clients on compliance within all areas of data protection law. In addition, Susanne participates in developing our digital services and she lectures at educational institutions, seminars, courses and webinars.





### **Thomas Munk Rasmussen**, specialist in data protection law

Thomas is a partner and one of Denmark's most esteemed specialists in data protection law and intellectual property law. He joined Bech-Bruun in 2013 and has been instrumental in the firm's increased focus on data protection law. In addition to being an active keynote speaker and lecturer, he is one of the originators of Bech-Bruun's DPO training programme.

### **We take responsibility**

At Bech-Bruun, we are fully aware of the position we have in the market for advisory services on data protection and, we believe, the resulting responsibility. We firmly believe that we have a duty to share our specialist knowledge with society at large – and thereby make an active effort to reduce the risk of businesses unintentionally violating the law or the risk of their weaknesses being exploited by external parties.

"There is no doubt that, in our capacity of leading advisers in this field, we have a great responsibility for ensuring that Danish businesses are capable of handling their data protection activities correctly. We continued honouring that responsibility in 2020. I do this, for instance, by giving speeches and lectures on data protection law and generally share my knowledge where I can," says Thomas, who is one of Denmark's leading advisers in his field.



## LEGALTECH AS A "SECRET" WEAPON

Our specialist knowledge within compliance, data protection and risk management is reflected in the advisory services we provide, but also in the new digital tools we made targeted efforts at developing further in 2020. Supported by our range of legaltech tools, we are in an even better position to assist our clients in keeping within the rules on compliance and data protection that are relevant to their businesses and ensuring that their knowledge is up to date at all times.

Through our DPO Service we act as an external Data Protection Officer (DPO) for a wide range of businesses and organisations.

With the DPA Service (Data Protection Audit Service) from .legal, we help businesses and organisations ensure that their data processors comply with legislation when they process personal data.

Similarly, many clients use .legal's compliance tool PACTIUS Privacy to ensure that they comply with the requirements of data protection legislation themselves.

In 2020, we launched an additional compliance tool in response to stricter legislation. Our whistleblower scheme, Safe2Whistle, enables businesses to comply with new EU legislation entering into force in 2021.

# Ethics and openness

As a law firm, we carry a vast ethical responsibility. Our work and business methods are based on good conduct and respect for our clients, our employees and our surroundings. General legal ethics, the Code of Conduct for the Danish Bar and Law Society and Bech-Bruun's Code of Conduct are the foundations for our way of operating as a business.



## We take responsibility

Our comprehensive corporate governance system outlines what we expect of ourselves, our employees and our business partners and covers a range of specific policies and codes of conduct, including in relation to attempted bribery, receiving gifts, handling conflicts of interest, preserving fair competition, the all-important protection of confidential information and minimising the risk of money laundering and financing of terrorist activity. In addition, we observe the standards of the Modern Slavery Act, which is committed to preventing slavery, forced labour and human trafficking.

Finally, our conduct and expectations to our suppliers, protection of human rights, prevention of discrimination and

protection of the environment are also important components of our ethical guidelines. In 2020, we heightened our focus on ethical conduct among our suppliers.

Although we are not a production company with sub-suppliers around the globe, we are nevertheless aware that our supplier relationships may involve a potential – albeit small – risk of human rights violations.

When we purchase goods and services, it is therefore essential to us that we can rest assured that our suppliers also comply with the standards to which we have committed. To this end, we will expand our supplier policy in 2021 with a view to ensuring that all Bech-Bruun suppliers uphold the same standards as we do.

## Our responsibility is our commitment

At Bech-Bruun, we aim to ensure the highest possible level of integrity in the way in which we do business. It is essential that our clients and business partners can rest assured that we act fairly and ethically correctly. We therefore expect all employees at Bech-Bruun to live up to our Code of Conduct and to contribute to complying with the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact and that all Bech-Bruun associates comply with legal ethics and the Code of Conduct for the Danish Bar and Law Society.

At the same time, our employees have a special responsibility to be aware of and refrain from engaging in illegal or unethical conduct in contravention of our ethical guidelines. As a law firm, we ex-



## CONFLICTS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Bech-Bruun's conflicts and ethics committee processes and settles issues relating to conflicts of interest, including questions as to whether Bech-Bruun can assume or continue the processing of cases in accordance with legal ethics and the Code of Conduct for the Danish Bar and Law Society.

pect our employees to ensure that their conduct is always compatible with our ethical guidelines. Moreover, we have a zero-tolerance policy on bribery and corruption.

### Openness

As a firm providing advisory services, it is essential that our clients and business partners have easy access to relevant information on us, and that we comply with the disclosure rules of the Code of Conduct for the Danish Bar and Law Society. We strive, therefore, for openness and transparency within the framework of confidentiality which is the cornerstone of our client relationships.

This means specifically that we give the public access to a wide range of information about our company, including our

values and ethics, management structure, products and services, pricing principles and relevant contact details. Our publicly available information is posted on our website and included in our annual management and CSR reporting.

In addition, we strive for openness and transparency by making our knowledge available for media enquiries, and we proactively provide information for the general public on new knowledge, strategic considerations and initiatives.



