



**United Nations**  
Global Compact

**DE BRAUW  
BLACKSTONE  
WESTBROEK**

# **UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT**

Communication of  
Progress

October 2021

# INDEX

	MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PARTNER	3
1	ABOUT DE BRAUW	4
2	INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT	6
3	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	8
4	LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS	10
5	ENVIRONMENT	15
6	ANTI-CORRUPTION	19
7	PRO BONO INITIATIVES	22
8	OUTLOOK	25

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PARTNER

De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek (De Brauw) has set itself an ambitious goal of integrating sustainability into our firm's DNA. Far from impinging on how we do business, the Covid-19 pandemic has not hindered our commitment to sustainability: rather, it has made us more resolute in our commitment to embed a more sustainable approach into our practice. This is the right approach, not only for the firm, our employees and our clients, but also for wider society and the planet.

De Brauw therefore became a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) in 2021 and I am pleased to present this inaugural Communication of Progress (CoP) Report.

I naturally reaffirm our support and commitment of the Ten Principles of the UNGC in the areas of Labour, Human Rights, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

In this CoP, we are able to report on the progress that we have made towards our sustainability ambitions in 2020 and 2021 in laying the foundational groundwork for our Sustainability Strategy, and we set out our future objectives and targets to realise our sustainability ambition in 2022 and beyond.

Of all of the progress in this report, I am especially proud to highlight three examples which reflect our alignment and commitment to three of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically:

## **Gender Equality - SDG 5**

Our endeavours to build a sustainable pipeline of diverse talent is beginning to bear fruit. Our entire employee group is now 59% female, and our next target is to increase the number of female partners to 30% by 2025, through positive policy actions such as the Female Leadership Programme.

## **Climate Action - SDG 13**

We have also set goals to reduce our reliance on non-renewables electricity sources, and to ensure that we offset residual carbon emissions by investing in forest retention programmes in the Amazon, to become carbon neutral.

## **Justice and Strong Institutions - SDG16**

In 2021, we have increased our pro bono legal advice programme, to increase our capacity to support environmental and human rights organisations.

I trust you will enjoy reading our progress to align to the United Nations Global Compact.

**DOROTHEE VAN VREDENBURCH**

EXECUTIVE PARTNER, DE BRAUW





# 1 — ABOUT DE BRAUW



United Nations  
Global Compact

DE BRAUW  
BLACKSTONE  
WESTBROEK

# 1 ABOUT DE BRAUW

De Brauw has standing as the leading international law firm in the Netherlands. We have been representing our clients as a strong and spirited collective of renowned legal experts for over 150 years.

Together we invest in building relationships of trust with our clients, through profound engagement with their business and a deep understanding of their ambitions.

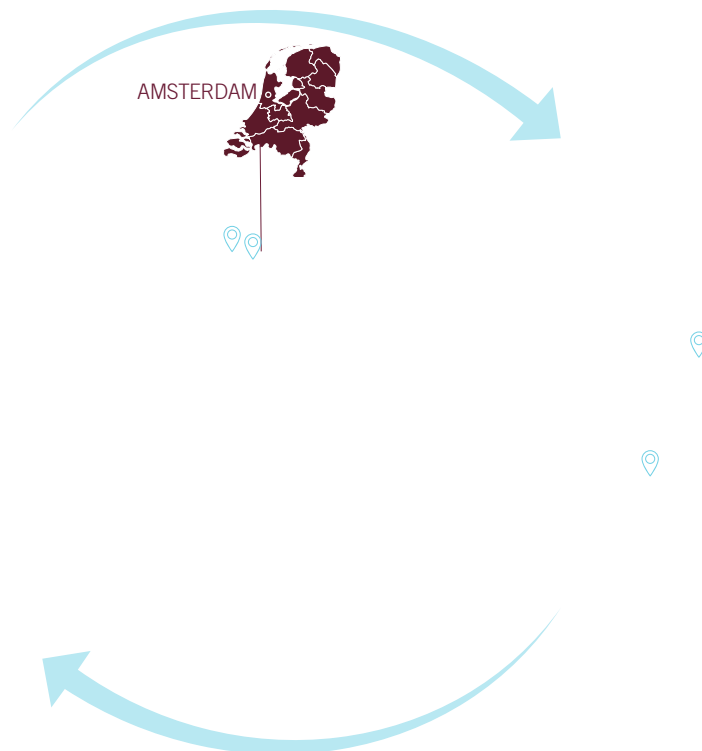
Our relentless pursuit of excellence is driven by our core values:

*courageous, curious, and collective.*

It therefore follows that we pursue the highest level of quality in every aspect of our business conduct and are committed to hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards of professionalism, ethics and integrity.

We have approximately 400 lawyers and over 350 business support employees in the Netherlands and in our offices located in key centres of business across the world, in London, Brussels, Shanghai and Singapore.

DE BRAUW  
BLACKSTONE  
WESTBROEK  
**150**



We are a Dutch firm with a global reach: from our head office in Amsterdam we provide our clients with unrivalled expertise in complex, often multidisciplinary and international, corporate transactions, disputes and regulatory enforcement matters.





## 2 — INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT





## 2 INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

De Brauw is a proud a signatory of United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), and committed to sustainable development and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The Ten Principles of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-corruption and been incorporated into our Code of Business Conduct, and provide us with guidance and certainty in establishing our CSR policies and processes.

To ensure that our business operations are aligned to these Ten Principles, we have set objectives, actions and targets which we monitor and continually improve, and are able to report on in this Communication of Progress (CoP).

De Brauw supports the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is invested to specifically advance and contribute to:

Gender Equality (SDG 5),  
Climate Action (SDG 13) and  
Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16).

To address the overarching context of the Ten Principles, each of the three ESG themes are described in their own section:

Social (covering labour and human rights);  
Environment; and  
Governance (addressing anti-corruption).

For each theme, this report provides an overview of the respective challenges and risks, and the policies and objectives that we have put in place to address the same. Our performance in relation to the policies and objectives for 2019 and 2020 are included as an illustration of our progress and commitment, and fuel our ambitions and actions for 2022 and beyond.



## **3 — SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



## 3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

De Brauw supports the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and is invested to specifically advance and contribute to:

### SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY



We believe in gender equality and we recognise the importance of actively empowering women to achieve this societal balance.

We have therefore firmly embedded SDG 5 into our policies and practices. Our Management Board fully endorse and lead on the firm's commitment to gender equality, and are supported by a Gender Diversity Working Group who help ensure that gender equality pervades all relevant policies and processes.

It is the responsibility of all partners and all employees to play their full part in increasing diversity at every level across the firm. Our Director of Culture and Inclusion, (appointed in July 2021), is a further illustration of our commitment to foster a culture of inclusion in which everyone is able to fulfill their potential.

Our Labour Policy serves to promote a diverse working environment, where indeed all employees can thrive. The Female Leadership Programme provides a platform and pathway for women to become leaders. The Top Parent Programme, along with the Family Policy, seeks to reflect the diversity of family life, and ensure that all of our employees are supported to find their own family/work life balance. We were a signatory to the Dutch Diversity Charter, 'Talent naar de (to the) Top' in 2009, and have been actively setting targets, and measuring and reporting on our progress with respect to gender diversity since this date. In 2020, we achieved our target to have females comprise 50% of our entire group of employees (59% in 2020). The target to have 30% of our partnership comprised of female partners by 2025 is on course (19.8% in 2021, 18% in 2020, up from 16% in 2019). See [page 12 Section 4.1](#) for further information.

### SDG 13 - CLIMATE ACTION

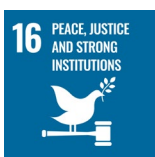


The climate emergency is visible to everyone, and to align ourselves to SDG 13 was an inherent and obvious responsibility for us.

At De Brauw, we recognise the imperative necessity to reduce our carbon footprint. We have established a greenhouse gas monitoring programme to identify our carbon sources. Our Environmental Policy has set in place measures to reduce emissions, for example, through better control of building energy usage and reducing business travel. We have set targets for reducing our energy usage and aim to use only 100% renewable electricity by 2030. Where there are residual carbon emissions, we have committed to offsetting these through a rainforest preservation programme, and we are therefore carbon neutral.

See [page 17 Section 5.1](#) for further information.

### SDG 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Being a law firm, SDG 16 resonates strongly with our vision and our mission. SDG 16's goal to "provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" is personified specifically within our pro bono programme.

De Brauw is a member of Pro Bono Connects, which is the Dutch section of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) – the network of Advocates for Justice and Human Rights. Each lawyer is expected to conduct 30 hours pro bono work per year, which enables us to provide pro bono support and advice for many matters focused on environmental and human rights. Recent matters include supporting Afghan Refugees, the Dutch transgender and intersex community, Ocean Cleanup and Plastic Whale.

Refer to [page 23 Section 7](#) for additional information.



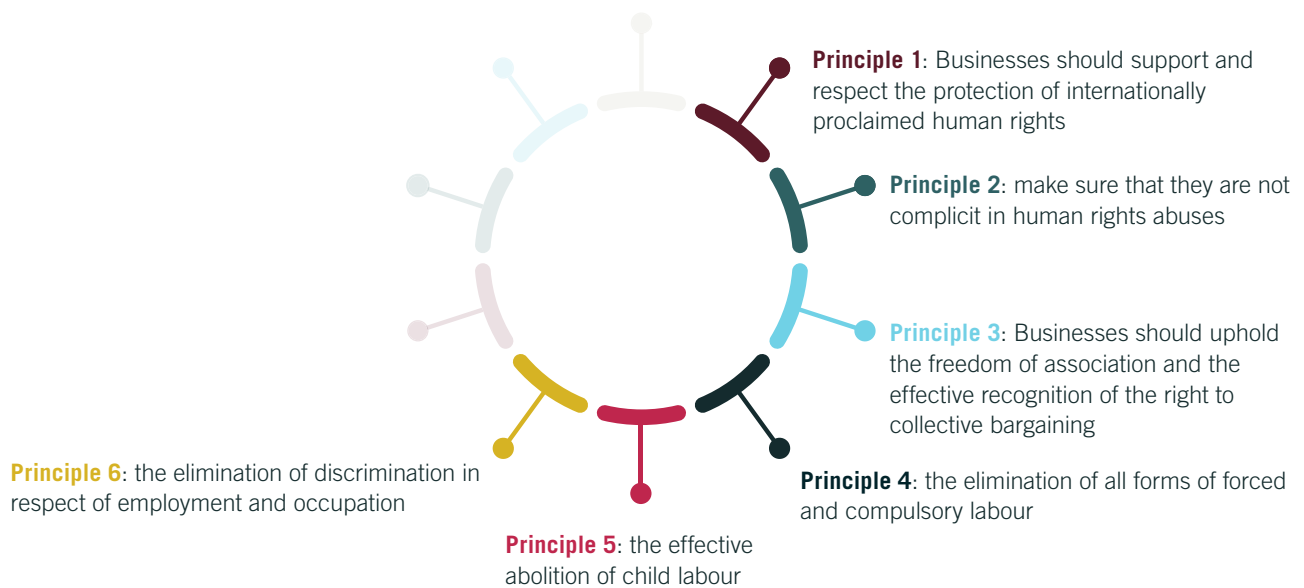
## 4 — LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## 4 LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS

De Brauw is committed to continuously improve how we facilitate and support a healthy, sustainable and fair working environment for all our employees and our business partners.

We comply with applicable legislation regulating labour conditions and our Labour Policy aligns with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organisation's Core Conventions.

De Brauw is committed to the following UNGC Labour and Human Rights Principles:



### POLICIES

Our Code of Business Conduct sets out the following Labour and Human Rights principles:

- support for human rights;
- facilitate a safe working environment;
- promote diversity and inclusion;
- a zero tolerance to child labour, forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking;
- offer employees the possibility of engaging in open and honest conversation and consider their feedback; and
- have a works council.

Building on the Code of Business Conduct, our Labour and Human Rights principles are further supported by the following specific policies and procedures:

- Labour Policy,
- Family Policy,
- Whistleblowing policy,
- Working from Home Policy,
- Modern Slavery Statement,
- Recruitment Procedure; and
- Works Council Regulations.



## 4.1 HUMAN RIGHTS, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

De Brauw upholds the UN's Declaration of Human Rights as incorporated within our policies pertaining to issues of diversity and inclusion.

We want everyone at De Brauw to bring their authentic selves to work. Guided by our core values of being curious, collective and courageous, we define inclusion as the environment in which diversity thrives and potential is realised. We value diversity in its broadest; all facets of individuality to include age, gender, and cultural diversity to nationality, personality and cognitive diversity, by way of examples only.

In fostering an open environment which facilitates different ways of working, thinking and being able to express ourselves, we must be curious in our approach, with regards to our work, and to each other's perspectives. We look to value and harness diversity of thinking - key to forge innovative and creative solutions for complex questions. Everyone is invited to join the conversation. Listening and empathy are essential building blocks in fostering an environment in which people feel seen, heard, and are therefore willing to contribute fully, and invest in a team which is the full sum of all talent.

We are collective at our core. Beyond a collegial respect for each other, we work on building relationships of trust with each other and our clients; a willingness to speak up individually and corporately, and to speak out for the benefit of everyone. This can require courage. We endeavour to be courageous in our example: to walk the talk, to share and address our challenges, and translate intentions into actions. In this, our internal culture, values and vision reaches beyond the walls of our own firm as we embrace our role in society and seek to have a positive and broader impact.

Becoming more inclusive and by implication increasingly diverse, is our joint ambition, and a joint responsibility.

### HUMAN RIGHTS, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUPS

We have four working groups focused on gender equity, talent with different cultural backgrounds, LGBT+ emancipation and the full integration of international colleagues. Everyone is welcome to join any one or more of these working groups, and by nature therefore the working groups are comprised of a diverse group of colleagues.

The working groups organise specific events (e.g. Pride celebrations, recruitment activities for bicultural students, webinars and social events) and work on specific policies and initiatives (e.g. extended leave for parents, gender transitioning support) that focus on their respective audiences, but do not exclude other groups (e.g. policies relating to parents also apply to multi-parent families). On the other hand, all committees work together as much as possible, for example when it comes to monitoring progress, onboarding new employees and organising client events.

As these working groups have a specific focus and expertise, representatives come together in one Inclusion Committee to facilitate our intersectional approach, and look at every touch point of the employee experience through an intersectional lens. We facilitate a transparent conversation, viewing issues through with different diversity lenses, to create one 'voice of De Brauw' championing change in advancing and realising our diversity and inclusion ambitions.

In the end, we all pursue a common goal and that is to further improve equality and inclusion for everyone within De Brauw.



## OBJECTIVES

De Brauw commits to the following objectives and actions to ensure that our Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion policies and objectives are achieved:

- treat everyone with courtesy, respect, and consideration;
- reward all employees equally;
- engage employees participating in the working groups to seek to include everyone's opinion and contribution;
- continue to explore and introduce new measures to facilitate people with disabilities' access and work at our office in Amsterdam;
- offer six informative lunch presentations on diversity at the workplace annually by 2022;
- ensure that any report of discrimination or harassment is carefully addressed, protecting the victim and the whistleblower and fully investigated;
- support for SDG 5 – Gender Equality; and
- to have women represent at least 30% of the partner group by 1 January 2025.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

TOPIC	TARGET	2019	2020
Percentage composition of females in the firm	50% of total employees	59%	59%
Women in top management	30% by 1 Jan 2025	16%	18%
Informative lunch presentations on diversity	A minimum of 6 pa	12	12

## 4.2 LABOUR



Providing all of our employees with highest standard of safety and wellbeing is a key priority. The high pace and intensity of work in a modern office setting can lead to stress and other well-being issues. We therefore invest in human resources systems and tools to ensure that our offices, the working conditions and all of our employment approaches, meet best practice.

### WORKING CONDITIONS AND WORKSPACE HEALTH & SAFETY

We conduct health and safety assessments to identify risks, and implement corrective actions to guarantee safety of our employees and guests. We have implemented an extensive emergency plan and conduct at least one annual emergency exercise to ensure we do all we can to help safeguard the safety of all employees in the case of a serious incident or emergency. De Brauw is committed to ensure the best working conditions for all employees, taking into consideration the challenges posed by the nature of our business activities. We approach the wellbeing of our staff from a holistic perspective. We offer them the tools to handle stress; provide wellbeing webinars and other wellness related activities, such as an in-house physiotherapist, an ergonomist and a wellbeing coach.

To help ensure that employees understand how to best tackle their work, employees can participate in Ethical Dilemma Conversations with an external advisor, which allows for open conversation on challenges they face, which are then reported to management anonymously. Furthermore, employees can reach out to internal confidential advisers as well as an external confidential adviser to discuss any concerns or questions that they may have.

## WORKS COUNCIL

The Works Council represents the rights and interests of all employees and facilitates dialogue between the employees and the Management Board. All employees who have been employed for a period of six months by the date of the election, have the right to join the Works Council. All employees are entitled to vote to elect the members of the Works Council.

## CHILD LABOUR, MODERN SLAVERY AND FORCED LABOUR

Forced labour, modern slavery and child labour in all forms are all categorically rejected by De Brauw, as articulated in our Code of Business Conduct and Modern Slavery Statement. We have undertaken analysis of our business and identified a very low risk of such practices occurring within our firm. We operate in a low risk sector and generally in low risk countries, but we are alert and vigilant to it with the necessary policies and procedures in place.

## OBJECTIVES

De Brauw commits to the following objectives and actions to ensure our Labour policies, principles and objectives are achieved:

- maintain a record of zero work-related injuries;
- conduct an emergency evacuation exercise from our Amsterdam headquarters every twelve months;
- conduct an annual safety assessment and update the information in the Emergency Plan document accordingly;
- ensure that at least five employees at our headquarters are Emergency Response certified during office hours;
- provide access to a physiotherapist and ergonomist on location;
- offer three wellbeing webinars and/or other wellbeing initiatives per annum to all employees;
- strive for our levels of absenteeism to be below the Dutch national average;
- have 14 members for Works Council consisting of 7 legal staff and 7 Business Solutions staff; and
- continue to engage in constructive and effective dialogue with the Works Council on employees' rights and interests.

TOPIC	TARGET	2019	2020
<b>Workplace Health &amp; Safety</b>			
Emergency evacuation conducted	Annual	1	0*
Employees trained in first aid	Number	27	31
Webinars on wellbeing and other health and safety topics	3 per year	n/a**	2
Days of sickness	5.3%	5.44%	5.11%
Total injury events	0	0	0

\* the office was closed for the majority of the year

\*\* New initiative in 2020





## 5 — ENVIRONMENT



## 5 ENVIRONMENT

As an office-based service company, our environmental impact is relatively modest. Our environmental risk review identified that our most significant environment impact arises from greenhouse gas emissions from our buildings' energy usage, travel of our employees, and material resources used and disposed of within our offices. Despite the relatively low environmental impact, we still believe that it is our obligation to be as sustainable as possible, and this is reflected in our robust Environmental Policy.

Our Environmental Policy states that *"The principle Environmental Objectives are to minimise our impact, direct or indirect, on the environment, and support the sustainability transition by actively reducing our environmental footprint"*. De Brauw is unequivocally committed to environmental protection.

De Brauw is committed to the following UNGC's Environmental Principles:

**Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

**Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

**Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges



### ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

The Code of Business Conduct sets the following environmental principles:

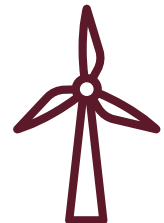
- support the sustainability transition by actively reducing our environmental footprint;
- monitor and reduce waste generation; and
- reduce energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Code of Business Conduct is further supported by the following policy documents:

- Environmental Policy;
- Environmental Management Handbook;
- Travel Policy;
- Sustainable Procurement Policy; and
- Working from Home Policy.

## 5.1 THE MANAGEMENT OF ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

In order for the Paris Agreement to achieve its objective of keeping global temperatures well below 2°C, it is up to every person, every organisation and every government to take action. At De Brauw, we recognise that our own operations do have a climate impact, and therefore this needs to be addressed. This is why we have identified SDG 13 - Climate Action as a key SDG that our firm can contribute to and we are putting in place significant programmes to mitigate our emissions.



### OBJECTIVES

Based on the 2020 baseline, De Brauw has committed to the following:

- Reduce Scope 1 and Scope 2 Emissions by 45% by 2030.
- Reduce Scope 3 emissions by 30% by 2030.
- Reduce emissions per employee by 30% by 2030.
- Source 100% of all electricity from renewable sources by 2030.
- Offset all greenhouse emissions.
- Avoid transport by plane when travelling to locations within a distance of 700km from our office.
- Maintain a policy to promote work from home in an effort to reduce commuting related emission.
- Provide public transport options for employees (e.g. public transport travel cards).
- Maintain the A-rated energy label of our corporate headquarters building in Amsterdam.

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	UNITS	JUNE 2019 TO MAY 2020	JUNE 2020 TO MAY 2021
Scope 1	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> eq	17.9	12.9
Scope 2	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> eq	17.5	8.4
Scope 3	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> eq	1,075.1	157.3
Total (Scope 1, 2 & 3)	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> eq	1,110.5	178.5
Total Emission per employee	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> /employee	1.42	0.26

The largest reduction was in Scope 3 emissions, from 1075.1 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2018/2019 to 157.3 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2019/2020. This was predominately attributed to the cancellation of all business travel during the Covid-19 pandemic.



## WE ARE WORKING WITH NATURAL CAPITAL PARTNERS TO OFFSET OUR CARBON EMISSIONS

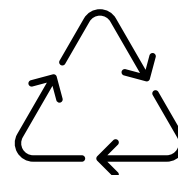


In 2019 we committed to offsetting our GHG emissions.

Working with [Natural Capital Partners](#), we selected a project in the Brazilian Amazon Rainforest. We have committed to help finance this project in the Acre State of western Brazil, which aims to prevent deforestation across 105,000 hectares of pristine rainforest in the Amazon basin. The project funds local community programmes, which identify and implement economic opportunities for indigenous peoples to incentivise them to avoid destruction of the rainforest. This includes providing training on growing additional cash crops and financing a boat to increase access to markets for produce. The project meets the REDD+, VCS and CCS-Gold standards.

## 5.2 RESOURCE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

As a service-based organisation working from an office environment, the predominant source of material usage is office material (for example, printing paper and stationery, food and drink packaging, obsolete IT equipment and other office related services).



### OBJECTIVES

Our Environmental Policy stipulates the following environmental actions:

- improve in reusing materials;
- collect coffee residue for recycling;
- reduce the use of materials that cannot be recycled or reused;
- recycle plastic, cans, glass and paper;
- recycle all of our ICT waste;
- work towards zero plastic waste in catering by 2022;
- continue developing partnerships with specialist third parties and investigate new materials which have a smaller environmental footprint to help us to improve our waste management efforts; and
- provide 80% of our full-time employees employed within Facilities & Hospitality with an environmental training that covers waste management topics by 2022.



## 6 — ANTI-CORRUPTION

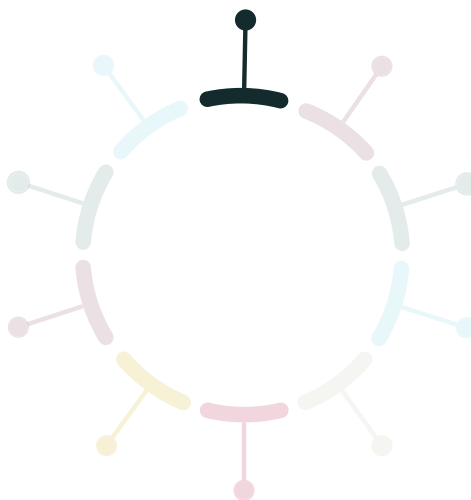
## 6 ANTI-CORRUPTION

We invest in relationships of trust with our clients through a profound engagement with their business. Our clients place their trust in De Brauw to provide top quality legal services, by means of our courageous, curious, collective approach. Corruption and bribery are given an opportunity to fester if there is a breakdown of trust, and they are a corrosive force of the basics of law and common good. Corruption is fundamentally opposite to and at odds with De Brauw's long standing tradition of upholding the principle and rule of law and honouring our client's trust and confidence in us.

We recognise that corruption and bribery are destructive to society and that every effort of its elimination is essential. Starting in our Code of Business Conduct, and reinforced within the Ethics Policy, we have made a categorical stance of rejecting all and any form of corruption within our firm, supply chain and business partners. To this affect, De Brauw recognises and supports the anti-corruption measures as established in the UN's Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

De Brauw is committed to the following UNGC Anti-Corruption Principle:

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery



### POLICIES

Our Code of Business Conduct sets the standard for all management and employees to adhere to, and sets of the following Governance Principles:

- act honestly, and with integrity, at all times;
- reject any and all forms of bribery and corruption;
- avoid being compromised by gifts and entertainment;
- play a role in combating financial crime;
- avoid personal conflicts of interest;
- not deal in shares or other securities when in possession of inside information; and
- support fair competition.





We have established a strong set of policies to ensure strong control against corruption which reinforce the Governance principles established in the Code of Business Conduct:

- Ethics Policy;
- Hospitality Gifts and Donations Policy;
- Investment Transactions Rules;
- Anti-Money Laundering, Counter Terrorism Financing and Anti-Tax Evasion Policy;
- Sustainable Procurement Policy;
- Conflict of Interest Policy; and
- Whistle-blower Policy.

## OBJECTIVES

De Brauw commits to the following anti-corruption objectives:

- maintain a zero-tolerance policy with regards to any corruption, bribery and fraud;
- conduct anti-corruption due diligence on every supplier we work with;
- facilitate our employees to report on any unethical business practices that they witness by virtue of the provisions of our whistleblowing policy;
- conduct an AML audit on an annual basis;
- ensure that all partners and relevant employees complete the annual mandatory AML training;
- do not to allow for any conflict of interest to arise between its employees and the firm;
- provide trainings on ethical business practices covering corruption, bribery and anti-money laundering (AML) to 80% of employees by 2022; and
- communicate our Code of Business Conduct, and our Hospitality, Gift and Donations policy to all employees.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

TOPIC	TARGET (UNIT)	2019	2020
Whistle-blowing related cases	0	0	0
Anti-Money Laundering risk assessment conducted for client side	YES	YES	YES
Business Ethics training (% of employees)	80%	85%	85%
Legal employees who attended a training on ethical business practices	80%	85%	85%

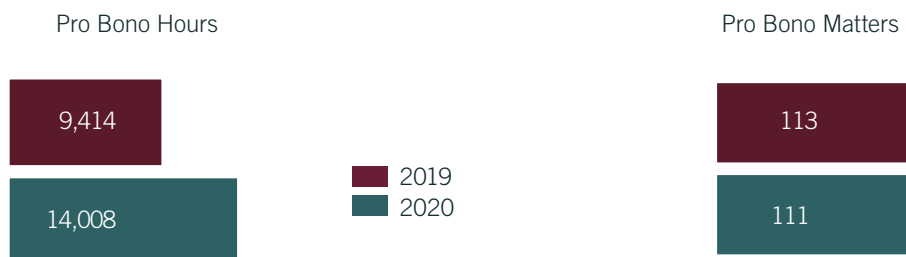


## 7 — PRO BONO INITIATIVES

## 7 PRO BONO INITIATIVES

As a leading law firm, we subscribe to the principle of access to the court for all, irrespective of one's financial means. To achieve this, we are a strong supporter of the concept of Pro Bono work, in which our lawyers offers their services for free to worthy, less able, causes and organisation. Our pro bono activity is part of the outworking of our support for an alignment with SDG16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Below are examples of recent pro bono projects that our lawyers have worked on:

### PILP/PRO BONO CONNECT



The Public Interest Litigation Project (PILP) focuses on strategic litigation for human rights. It is a pilot project of the Dutch Section of International Commission of Jurists (NJCM). Several De Brauw lawyers worked on PILP cases via Pro Bono Connect: the first public interest clearinghouse in the Netherlands (another project from NJCM).

Defending human rights or pleading for a public interest strikes everybody's imagination; every lawyer wants to be involved to make their contribution to these important topics.

Recent PILP pro bono matters include:

- the criticised Dutch policy that labelled Afghan refugees with a 1F status presuming that they committed war crimes without any individual investigation being conducted;
- a matter related to human trafficking; and
- reimbursements of cost for maternity care.

## THE OCEAN CLEANUP



De Brauw has acted as the first point of contact for The Ocean Cleanup's legal matters since 2015. On 8 June 2018, The Ocean Cleanup entered into a unique agreement with Dutch Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management relating to the deployment of The Ocean Cleanup's systems on the high seas.

This agreement confirms that the Netherlands will support and facilitate The Ocean Cleanup's activities, and (where necessary) represent The Ocean Cleanup's interests in relation to other states and in relevant international forums, such as the International Maritime Organisation.

The Ocean Cleanup's systems represent advanced technology designed to drastically reduce the amount of floating plastic in the world's oceans. Innovative from a legal perspective is that the position of The Ocean Cleanup's systems is largely equated to that of other seagoing vessels. This creates clarity as to the rights and obligations of The Ocean Cleanup when operating its systems on the high seas, towards states as well as other users of the high seas.

Further examples of sustainability and the environment pro bono cases:

- [Supported Zon op De Ronde Venen](#), (a cooperation that purchases the solar panels to be installed on local roofs that are suitable for everyone to generate solar energy), to set up the organisation.
- Assisting the [Dutch Marine Energy Centre](#) (DMEC), (a service provider for the international marine energy sector), on all kind of legal matters.
- Assisting [Plastic Whale](#), (a social enterprise whose mission is plastic-free waters), with many different legal matters.





## 8 — OUTLOOK

## OUTLOOK

In 2021 and through to 2022, De Brauw will continue to make a positive impact by enacting our Sustainability Strategy and policies. Our commitment to the UNGC provides further guidance and clarity in our policies and actions.

Our carbon emissions reduced significantly in 2019/2020 as a result of the travel ban necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to maintain this positive environmental side-effect, we have established a new travel policy. This policy includes the requirement that any travel less than seven hours long should not be via air travel. A closer monitoring of all GHG emissions will be required to maintain our lower carbon footprint.

Our stringent carbon reduction policy will be demonstrated in our upcoming office move. Our Amsterdam headquarters will move to a new building in 2023. We are already working closely with our team of architects and designers to ensure the premises is both BREEAM and WELL platinum rated, to maximise the wins for the environment and our all employees.

We have participated in the EcoVadis assessment for several years. EcoVadis is an independent sustainability ratings organisation. At present we are rated at Silver, but have committed to achieve the Gold level by the end of 2021. This will be achieved by the strong efforts outlined in this document. We aim to maintain this score going forward, and stretch for Platinum level in 2023.

Finally, in 2022, we will be taking a deeper look into our supply chain, to strengthen our Sustainable Procurement approach and ensure our suppliers are as committed to sustainability as we are.

debrauw.com

Claude Debussylaan 80  
1082 MD Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

DE BRAUW  
BLACKSTONE  
WESTBROEK

DE BRAUW  
BLACKSTONE  
WESTBROEK



United Nations  
Global Compact