



**VANDECASTEELE**  
H O U T I M P O R T



✓ Sustainability report 2023 - 2024

# Masters in wood - Rethink sustainability

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# Dear reader,

Our company is driven by a passion for wood and respect for nature, architecture, and the landscape.



Vandecasteele Houtimport is a family business that combines a strong local presence with an international character. Over the course of five generations, our family has devoted their expertise and efforts to the growth and development of the company. Vandecasteele Houtimport has evolved into a premier supplier of hardwood and softwood.

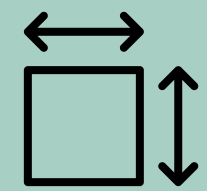
The year 2023 was special. The COVID-19 pandemic led to an unprecedented demand for building materials, which benefited our sector. However, the past year was marked by resilience and adaptability. There is more demand for finished products, technicality, and sustainability is also gaining importance. Today, we receive daily inquiries from customers about this. We strive to become the

European market leader in trading the largest assortment of certified wood exclusively sourced from sustainably and responsibly managed forests. We believe it is our duty to be a leader in our sector when it comes to sustainability. In this way, we aim not only to stay ahead of the government-imposed rules on sustainable business but also to ensure the future of our forests by choosing good forest management. By 2025, we aim to sell only certified wood from responsible logging. We see it as our mission to be the ambassador of wood, the most ecological and sustainable material in the world!

**Stefaan Vandecasteele**  
Owner since 2000

# About Vandecasteele Houtimport

Vandecasteele Houtimport is one of the largest timber importers in Europe, based in Aalbeke near Kortrijk, Belgium. Founded in 1883, this family business has a significant storage capacity of 140,000 m<sup>3</sup>, spread over 20 hectares, of which 16 hectares are covered. We offer more than 125 wood species from regions such as Africa, Asia, South America, Scandinavia, and Russia.



**85.466 m<sup>3</sup>**

Turnover

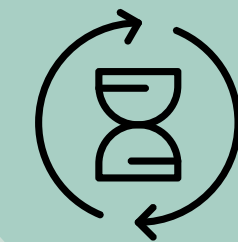


**100%**

Self-financing



**One-man  
business**



**100%**

Prompt payment

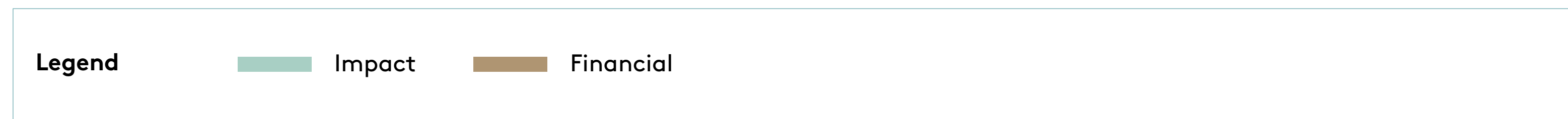
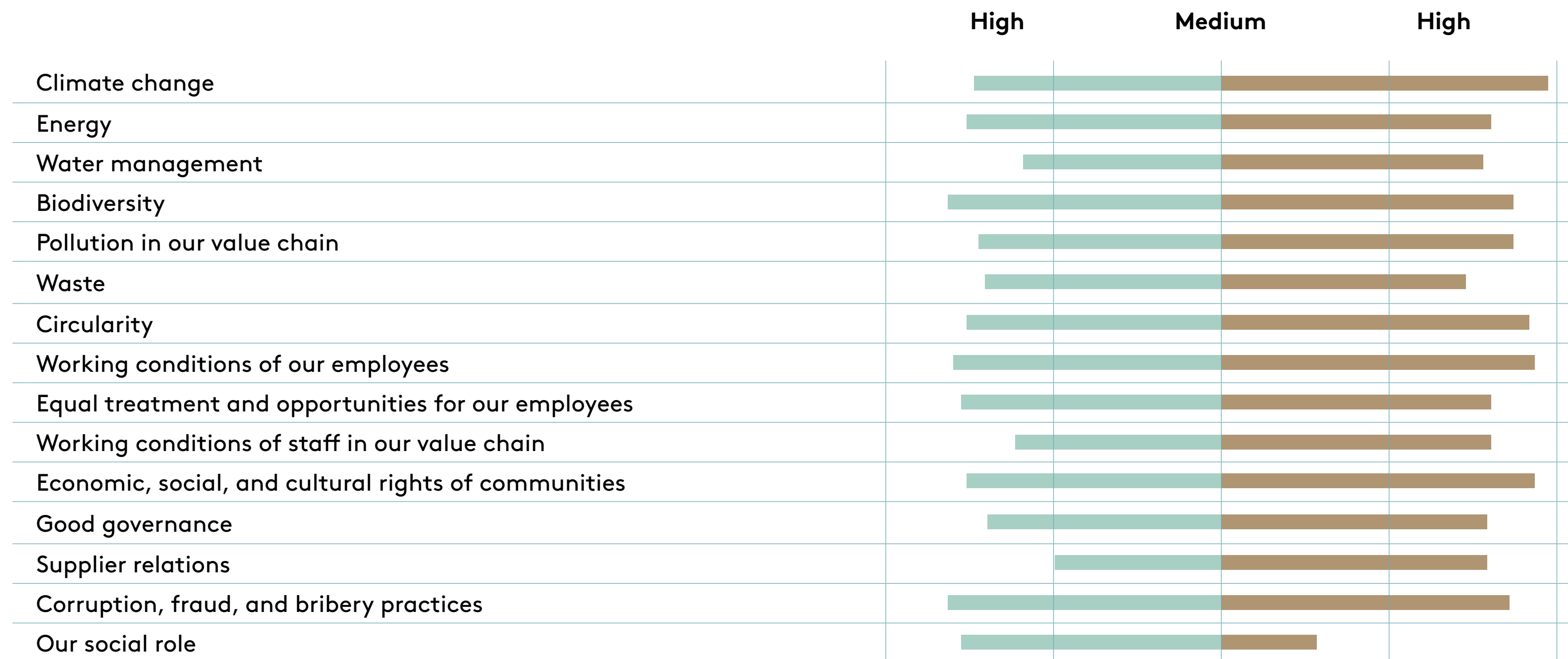
# Our sustainability priorities





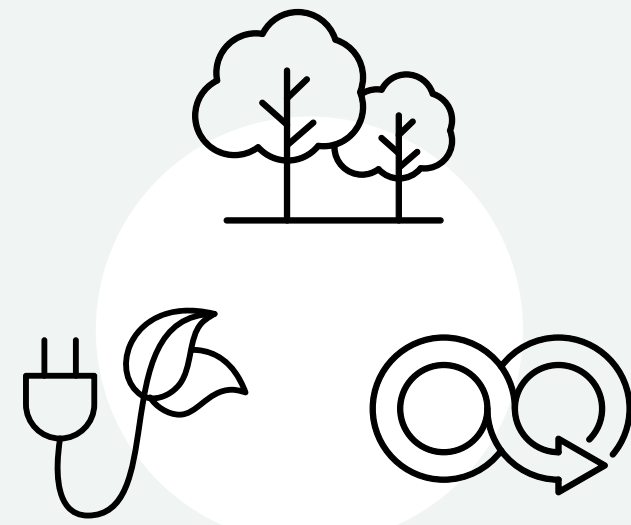
Sustainability is in the heart of our business. We commit ourselves to meeting the highest independent certification standards for all the wood we trade. We continuously work on improving our business practices to reduce our own ecological footprint. We highly value dialogue, cooperation, and respect, and we build long-term partnerships with suppliers, customers, and employees.

We have been actively engaged in recent years and are committed to continuing our progress. Last year, we conducted a double materiality analysis. We reflected on how our business operations impact people and the planet (impact materiality) and the potential financial consequences of these themes for our company (financial materiality). Throughout this exercise, we actively engaged with our stakeholders to gather their insights: several customers, suppliers, and civil society organizations were consulted and provided valuable contributions. Additionally, all our employees could indicate via a digital questionnaire which themes they found most relevant.



From this exercise, 8 priority themes emerged on which we, as a company, want to make the greatest impact. These form the basis for our sustainability strategy 2024-2030.

## Environment



### Sustainable forest management

- Protecting the biodiversity of tropical forests
- 100% certified wood

### Circularity

- High quality wood with longevity
- Maximizing the valorization of waste and side streams

### Climate & energy

- Reducing our ecological footprint

## Social

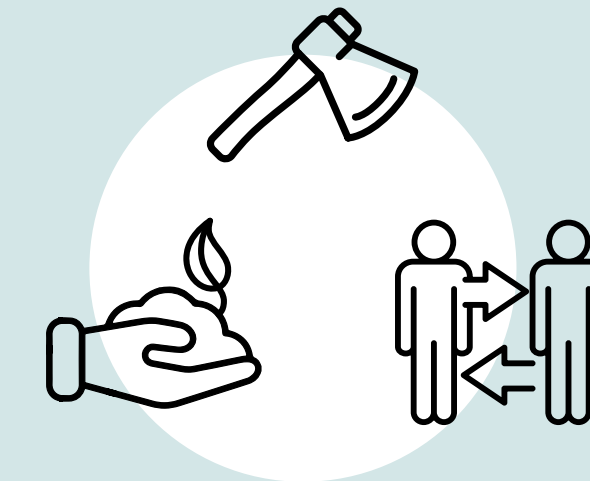


### Sustainable relationships with our employees

- Our family values
- A safe and healthy working environment

### Respect for workers and communities in our supply chains

## Governance



### Prevention of illegal timber trade

- Everyone included in the European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)

### Importance of good supplier relations

### Ambassador for sustainable timber trade

- Informing customers to the maximum
- Sector commitment



The implementation of this strategy is coordinated by our sustainability team and is a fixed agenda item in the management team. Our employees also play a crucial role in implementing and promoting this strategy.

# With a heart for the environment



# Protection of biodiversity in tropical forests



## Choose wood, save the forest?!

Yes, wood is an ecological material par excellence. There are many misconceptions about forests and trees. For example: cutting down trees means loss of forest and is bad for the climate and biodiversity. This concern is understandable because deforestation (permanently removing forest) is indeed bad for the climate. But where trees are responsibly cut, the forest grows back. This allows you to harvest wood from the forest without losing forest.

By buying certified tropical wood, you contribute to the preservation of these tropical forests and prevent them from being converted into agricultural land. When trees have economic value, they become a source of income, leading to investment in sustainable forest management instead of deforestation for agriculture. This helps protect and preserve the forests.

Our company was founded by Louis Vandecasteele in 1883. For 5 generations, we have dedicated our knowledge and energy to our company.





## Here we use certified tropical wood from sustainably managed forests

- local involvement
- management of FSC-certified forests
- longer lifespan
- preservation of tropical forests
- mature trees



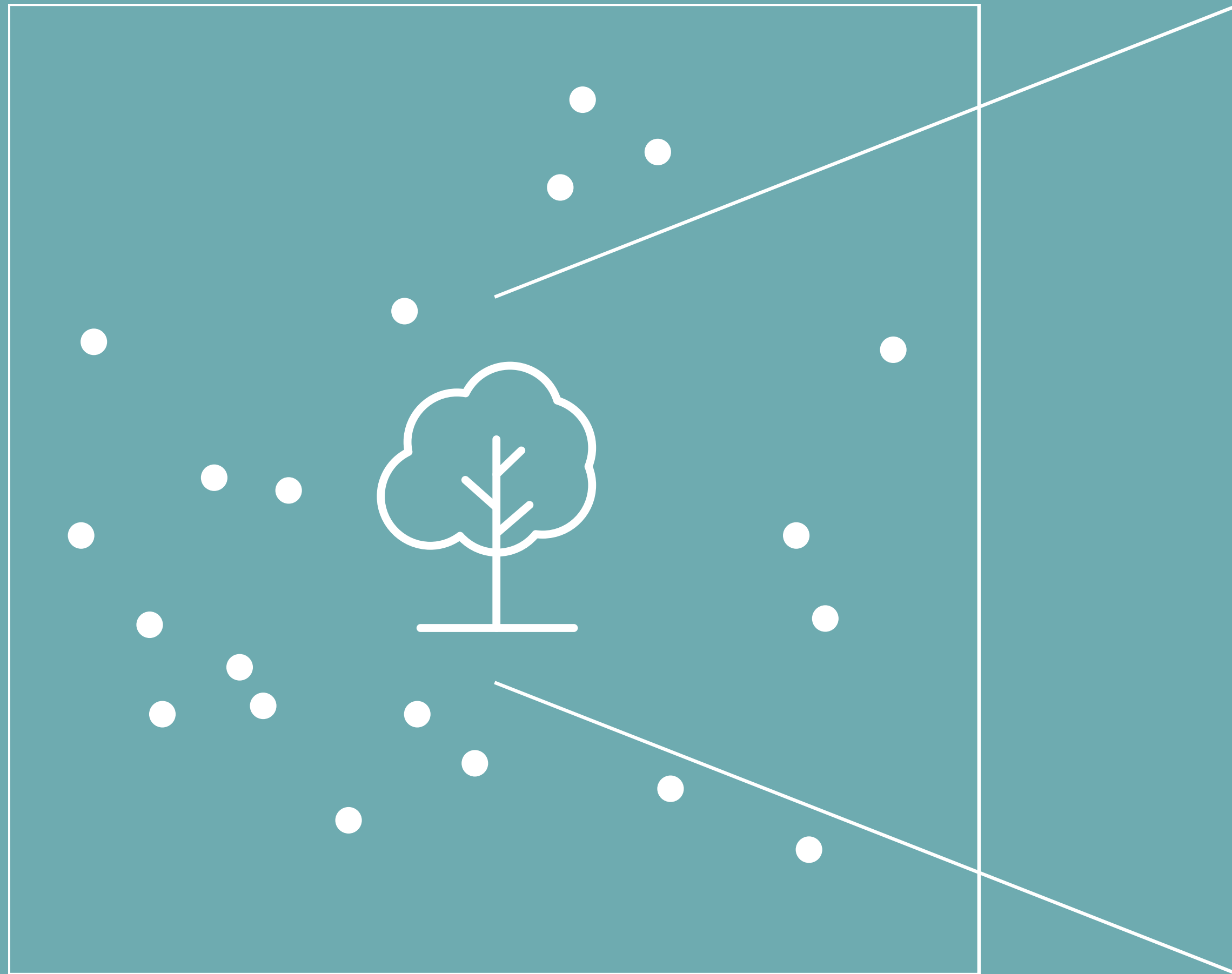
In practice, only one to three trees are carefully selected and harvested per hectare, with a rotation period spanning 25 to 45 years or more. This sustainable approach ensures that smaller shoots have ample time to regrow and thrive.



## 100% certified wood by 2025

At Vandecasteele Houtimport, we are committed to trading wood responsibly, ensuring we do not contribute to deforestation. Instead, we actively support sustainable forest management to enhance forest density and biodiversity globally. To achieve this, we exclusively purchase certified wood.

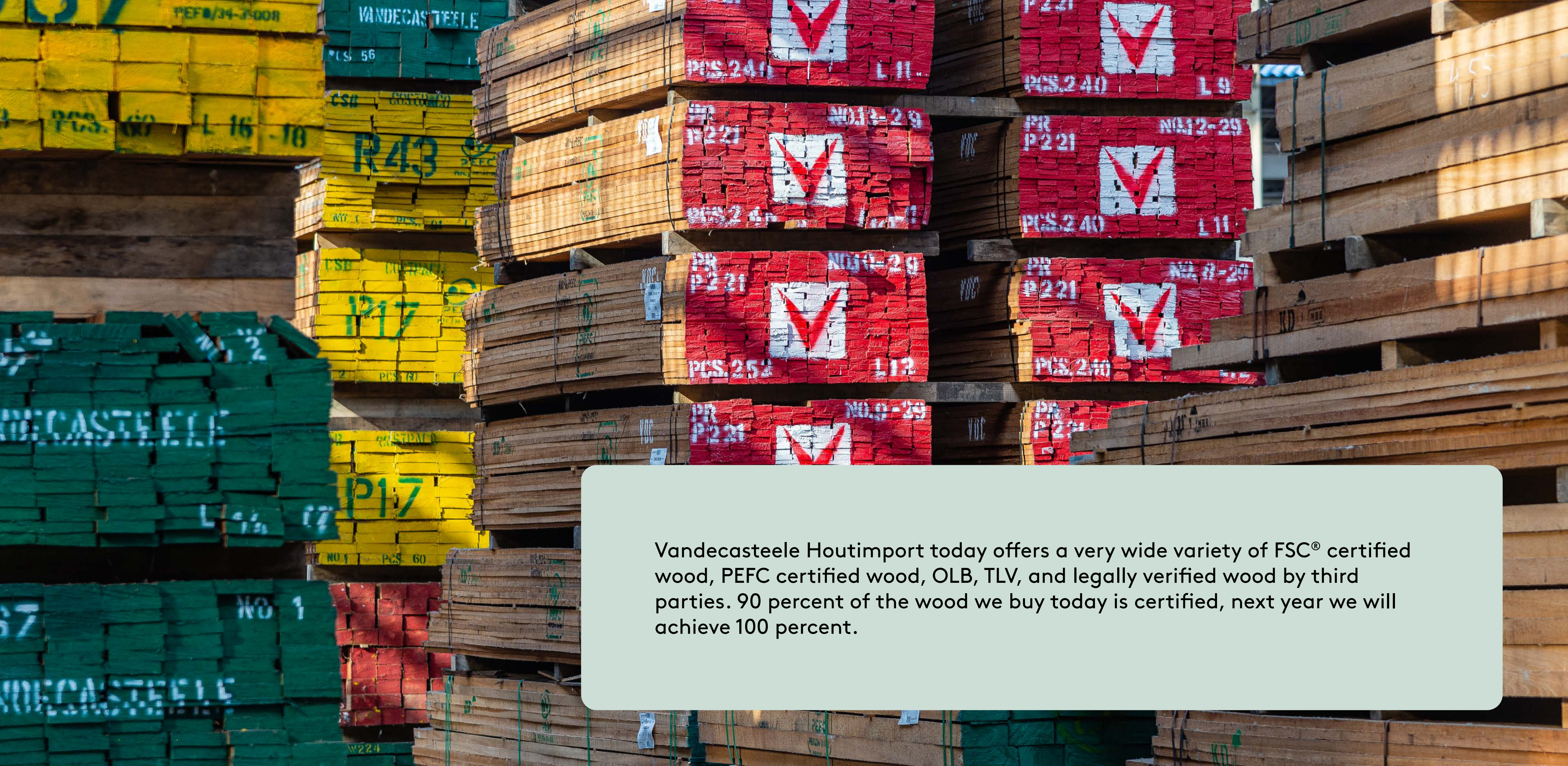
With wood from certified logging, it is carefully determined which trees are cut in which places, so that the forest and tree stock are preserved. In practice, this means only two to three trees per hectare are harvested, and that area is then left undisturbed for 25 to 45 years. This approach allows smaller shoots to grow into mature trees, maintaining the forest's health and vitality.



1-3 trees/Ha



harvested every  
25 years



Vandecasteele Houtimport today offers a very wide variety of FSC® certified wood, PEFC certified wood, OLB, TLV, and legally verified wood by third parties. 90 percent of the wood we buy today is certified, next year we will achieve 100 percent.



## Pioneer in the purchase of FSC certified wood

In 1999, we were pioneers in the purchase of FSC<sup>®</sup>-certified wood. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC<sup>®</sup>) is a voluntary certification scheme that promotes best practices for sustainable forest management worldwide. This scheme is currently applied in 89 countries, covering a total area of 162 million hectares.

FSC<sup>®</sup> is an important partner for anyone who wants to take action to support the sustainable management of natural resources, considering legal and customary rights and the involvement of all stakeholders. Thus, FSC contributes to achieving ecological, social, and economic objectives.

The ecological, social, and economic principles of FSC<sup>®</sup> directly relate to 14 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which focus on poverty reduction, equality, conservation of natural resources, sustainable production and consumption, decent work, climate action, inclusive societies, and global partnerships.



Trust and reliability are essential parts of the DNA of Vandecasteele Houtimport. If we want to assure our customers that we keep our promise to trade only wood from well-managed, certified forests, we must ensure that our trading partners respect the same strict certification and sustainability procedures as we do.

Certification is a growth process that requires significant investment from our suppliers, often spread over several years. It is a long-term commitment where the forest must be protected for at least 25 years. We guide our suppliers in this process and help them step by step towards certification, so we achieve this together through cross-pollination.

To support them in this, we send external auditors to our suppliers worldwide. Their report contains recommendations and improvement points that our suppliers can immediately work on to further grow towards certification. Additionally, we provide training to our suppliers and engage in dialogue with them. This makes them aware of their own impact and prepares them for sustainable business operations for future generations. Thanks to these efforts, we have more and more suppliers offering certified wood.

The demand for certified wood is growing. Therefore, we want to inform our entire team about the efforts made so that they can be ambassadors to our customers.



## Biodiversity on our own site

Our company covers 20 hectares within a park of 60 hectares. We have focused on reducing the hard surfaces on part of the site and planting an orchard with more than 1,000 trees and about 1,500 meters of hedges. In collaboration with an organic farmer, we allow 11 cows to graze on our land.

We have installed a pipeline from our large water reservoir in the higher new hangar to the lower meadow, so the cows now have drinking points thanks to the natural water pressure. Our meadow is no longer fertilized or mowed, as the cows maintain it themselves. The hedges provide a natural connection between the large pond and the higher small pond. This promotes the presence of insects, small animals, flowers, and plants, resulting in ecological benefits and increased landscape value. According to Natuurpunt, our pond is a true biotope with 149 different species of birds.

# Circularity as a starting point



## The right wood in the right place

We value the quality and longevity of our product. We take on an advisory role towards our customers, providing them with valuable insights. This means we are not afraid to discuss certain matters honestly. For example, we dare to explain that thermally modified wood, although popular, is energy-intensive and not always suitable for certain applications.

Tropical hardwood has a natural lifespan of 15 to 30 years or more, while in some markets, wood is sold that lasts 10 years or less. It is our responsibility to educate our customers on the benefits of certified tropical hardwood. This sustainable choice not only offers exceptional durability but also supports a healthier environment.

Whether it's office supplies or wood waste, we choose maximum longevity and reuse.



## Valorizing waste streams and by-products

At Vandecasteele Houtimport, we have a culture of reuse, whether it concerns office supplies or wood waste. We try to reuse or recycle everything and never throw anything away lightly. We have been doing this for more than 25 years, and always have.

We ask our suppliers to keep plastic packaging out of the stream because it creates extra waste and work. The plastic we do receive, we fold and stack for reuse. We sell paper, cardboard, iron, and plastic for recycling, and our wood waste is made into fibreboard.

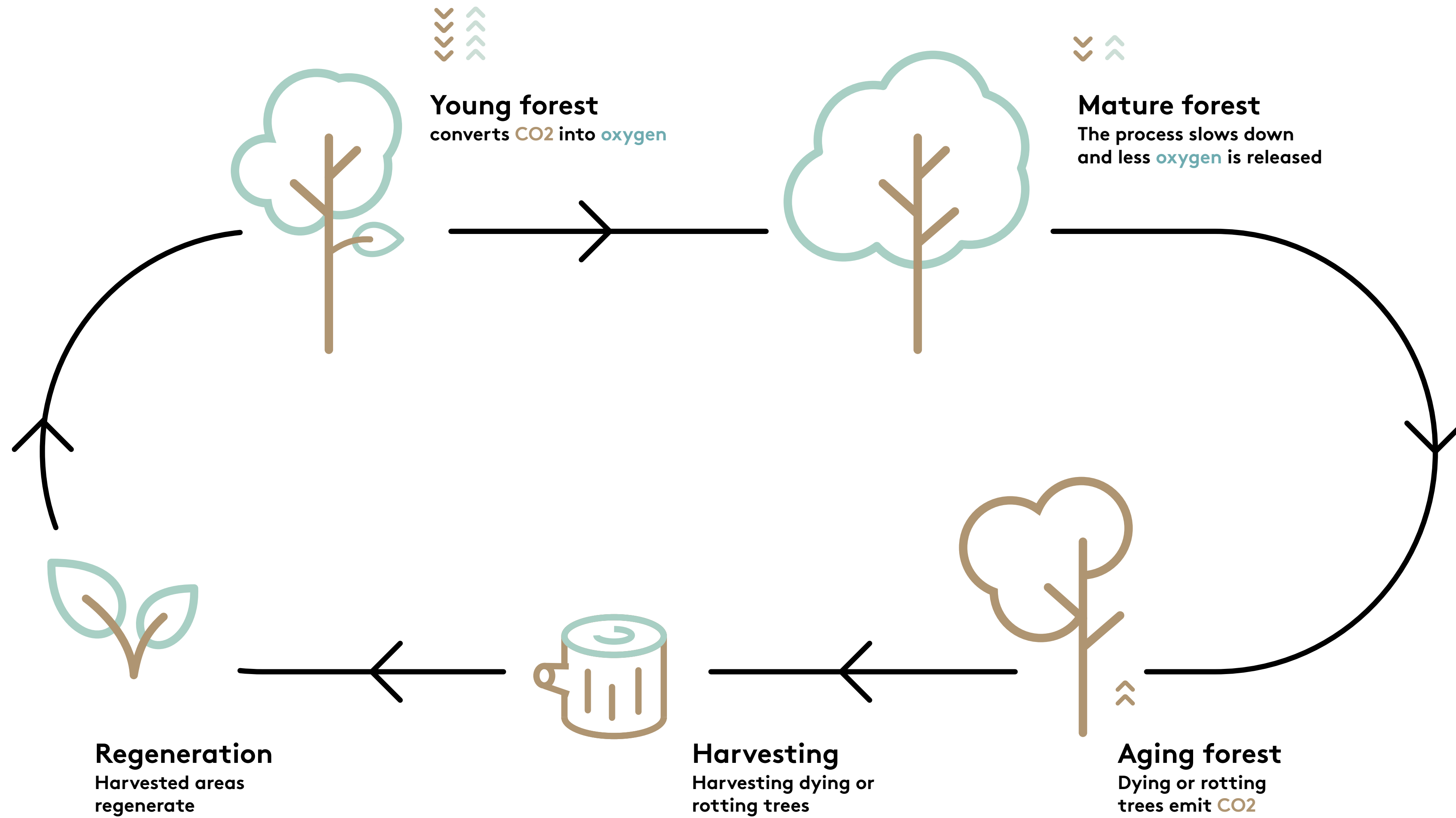
Additionally, employees, the local Chiro, and the horticultural school can buy wood at a favourable price. This way, our B-grade wood is turned into beautiful and useful projects instead of waste.

# Reducing our ecological footprint

On our website, you can calculate how much CO<sub>2</sub> is stored in your wood products.



Trees absorb CO<sub>2</sub> during their growth, reducing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. When wood is then used in buildings or other long-lasting products, the carbon remains stored. A second climate benefit is that wood can often replace steel, concrete, and brick. The production of these materials requires a lot of energy and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. By choosing wood from sustainably managed forests, you build in an environmentally responsible way. On our website [www.vandecasteele.be](http://www.vandecasteele.be), you can calculate in two steps how much CO<sub>2</sub> is stored in your wood products. Additionally, we strive to continuously reduce our ecological footprint.



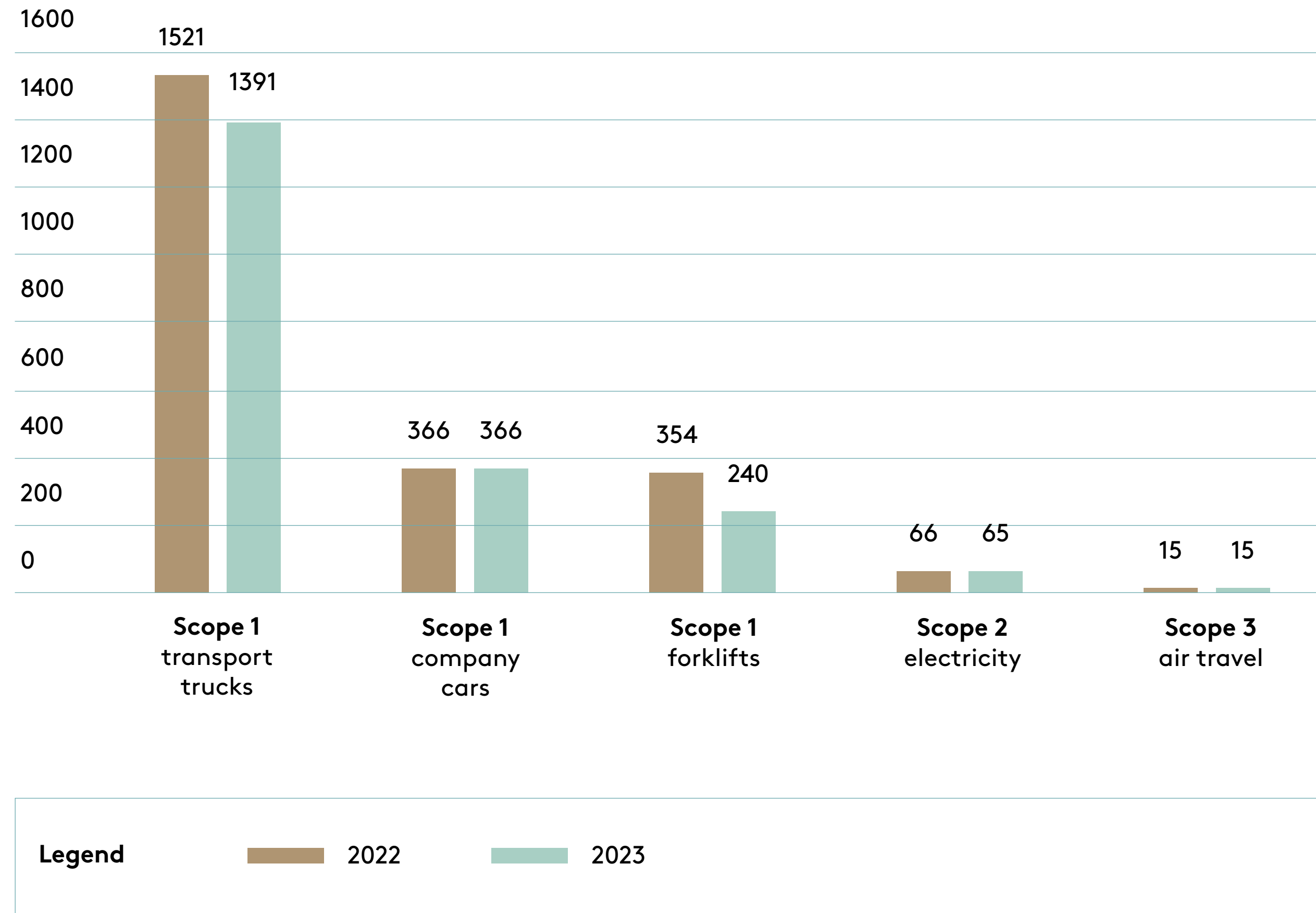


## Our carbon footprint

Since 2012, we have maintained a dashboard to monitor a range of social, environmental, financial, and other indicators for our company. This includes examining our own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Currently, we mainly monitor our scope 1 and 2 emissions, and for scope 3, we have so far only mapped the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from our air travel. Excluding scope 3 for now, in 2023, our carbon footprint for scope 1 & 2 was 2063 tons CO<sub>2</sub>e (comparable to the annual energy consumption of about 240 average European households). It is our ambition to map our entire carbon footprint in the coming year.

Nevertheless, we have already taken several steps to reduce our emissions.

## Scope 1, 2 & 3: 2022 vs. 2023 (tons CO2e)



### Scope 1

Direct emissions from sources that a company owns or controls, such as company vehicles and buildings.

### Scope 2

Indirect emissions from the energy a company consumes but does not produce itself, such as electricity and heat.

### Scope 3

Other indirect emissions not covered by Scope 1 or 2, such as the procurement of goods and services, business travel, and waste processing.



## Optimization and greening of our energy consumption and transport

To minimize our ecological footprint, we have implemented several sustainability initiatives. We have transitioned to 100% LED lighting and installed 120 solar panels on our roof. Additionally, we have invested in a battery system to optimize the use of solar energy. Furthermore, we procure green energy and generate our own energy through our solar panels.

We are continuing to electrify our vehicle fleet, including the side loaders used for loading and unloading wood in our warehouse. In 2023, we installed four additional charging stations. We renew our 17 trucks every 7 to 8 years, adhering to the most efficient standards. Our transport operations are optimized using advanced planning tools and human expertise.

In response to employee requests, we introduced a bicycle leasing option in 2023. Approximately 20 employees initially joined the lease plan, including 3 office workers, 4 drivers, and 13 laborers. Participation has continued to grow, with 35% of our employees now utilizing the bicycle leasing program. Additionally, our telecommuting options help reduce CO2 emissions from commuting.

Fully committing to inland shipping means that for every container we can bring in multimodally, our road transport is reduced by 80%.



Our international transport is done via container ships. Vandecasteele imports about 750 containers annually through the port of Antwerp, accounting for 175,500 km of road transport over the heavily trafficked Antwerp ring road and the E17 Ghent-Antwerp. Containers arriving through the port of Antwerp are no longer sent to a depot but go directly to the drying kiln in the Netherlands without first coming to Aalbeke. We are also increasingly focusing on transport via inland waterways. Through our collaboration with Multimodaal Vlaanderen, we found a sustainable alternative to transport containers by inland waterways to the River Terminal Wielsbeke and Zwevegem. From there, they travel only 23 kilometers by road. This concept significantly reduces road transport and halves our CO2 emissions for the entire route. Currently, 20% of our imports are already via inland waterways, and we aim to quickly increase this percentage to 50%.

# With a heart for our people



# Sustainable relationships with our employees



## Our family values

Our company is built on five values - trust, sustainability, passion, long-term vision, and committed partnership. Values passed down from generation to generation. We strive for long-term relationships and partnerships with our customers and suppliers, but also with our employees. We are building a sustainable collaboration. All of this is based on one central idea: trust.

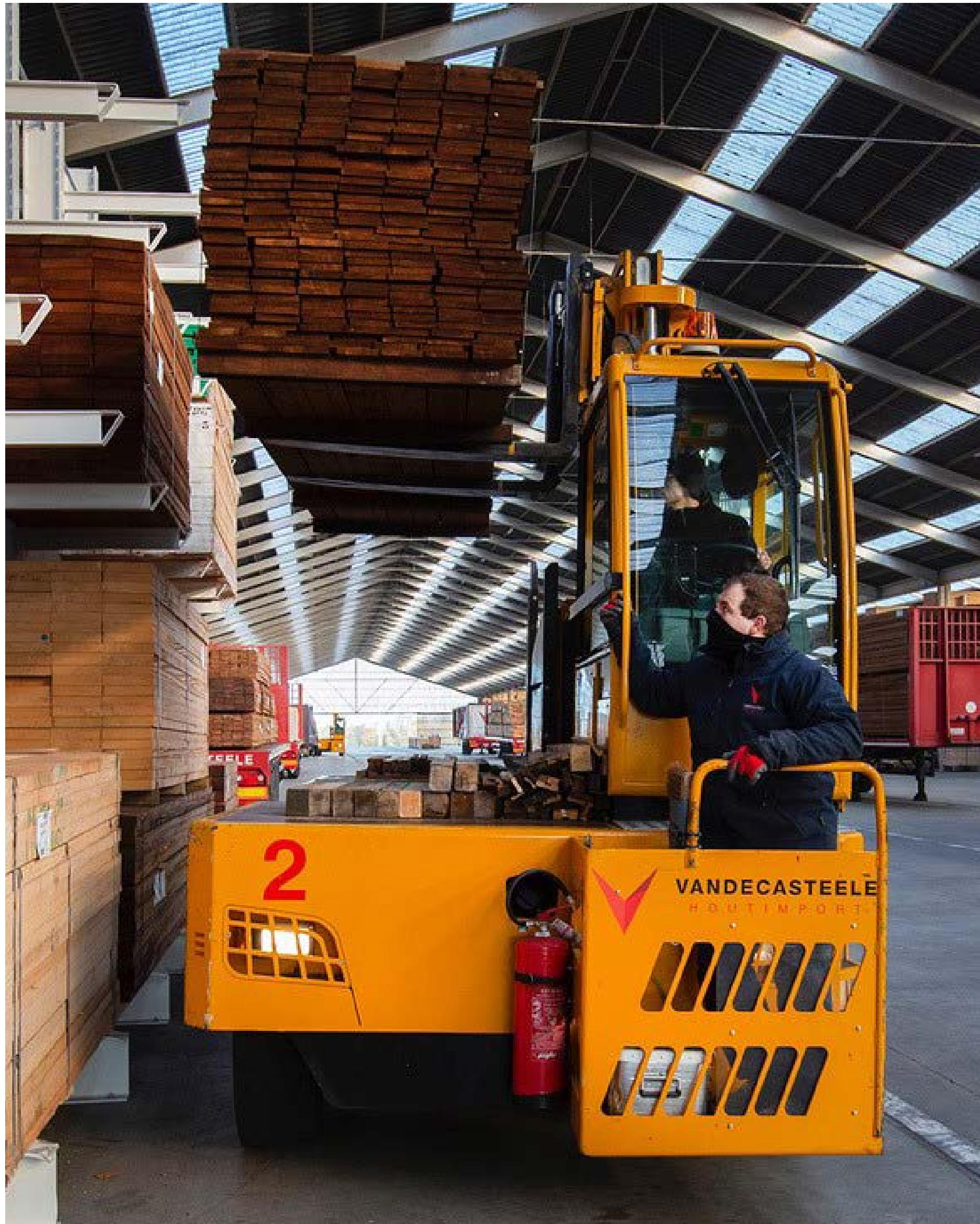
We operate with a long-term, generational mindset. We are committed to making investments that, while costly and not immediately profitable, will benefit future generations. This philosophy extends to our employees as well. We prioritize not only their work but also their well-being, offering a supportive and accessible environment. We listen to their concerns and provide resources such as external wellness coaches and personalized support when needed.



Investments that do not yield short-term returns but are beneficial for the next generation are acceptable to us.

For both our laborers and office staff, we invest in tailored training programs. Over the past year, general and specific training sessions were conducted on fire extinguishing, ergonomics, first aid, product knowledge, people management, assertiveness, leadership, garden maintenance, French, wood product knowledge, etc. The training sessions are managed in a training matrix. In 2023, we offered an average of 32 hours of training per employee.

Annually, we also organize various team activities. We provide performance reviews with everyone. In 2023, the average seniority in our company was 13 years.



## A safe and healthy working environment

Safety and prevention are obviously important to us. We invest in this through regular warehouse inspections, and since last year, we have been using new steel racks, which make the working environment more ergonomic. Every three months, we hold a prevention and safety meeting to evaluate and improve our procedures.

In 2023, we had four workplace accidents, one of which was serious. We thoroughly analyse these incidents to see how we can prevent future accidents. We keep a list of incidents and accidents, with ankle sprains and crush injuries being the most common. We offer a first aid course annually, which everyone can voluntarily participate in.



Health is also high on our agenda. We provide fresh fruit at work and encourage a healthy lifestyle, for example by offering bicycle leasing, so that more employees can come to work in a healthy way. Over the past few years, an average of just over 4 percent of total working days were lost due to illness. For long-term sick employees, we keep in touch and give them small tasks to stay involved. This helps with their reintegration and prevents them from staying at home completely.

Last year, we also invested in mental well-being through the Insights program, which helps employees gain better insight into themselves and their colleagues, improving collaboration.



## Inclusion and equality

We strive for a work environment where everyone feels welcome and valued, regardless of background, gender, age, or cultural origin. Many different nationalities work in our company, and language is not a barrier. For example, we sent out the internal sustainability survey in four languages.

We offer the opportunity to take Dutch lessons. We have a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment, and we encourage employees to report any concerns or incidents. Our goal is to provide a safe and supportive work environment where everyone can reach their full potential.

# With respect for employees and vulnerable communities in our supply chains

In production regions across Africa and South America, ensuring proper working conditions is not always guaranteed. However, with wood that is fully certified by organizations like FSC or PEFC, we can trust that, in addition to ecological practices, working conditions are also monitored.

If a supplier has not yet obtained FSC or PEFC certification, we commission a local agency to prepare a comprehensive report. This report includes inquiries into worker safety, decent work conditions, living wages, and other relevant factors. In cases where standards are not met, we initiate a dialogue with the supplier, emphasizing the importance of taking corrective actions and demonstrating a commitment to improvement. We find it encouraging when there is a growing awareness and willingness to enhance these conditions.

We have our own Responsible Purchasing Policy (RPP) for this, which our suppliers must sign before we do business. This policy contains extensive provisions on human rights and decent work, based on the requirements of FSC, and is updated annually. We use this policy not only for our wood suppliers but have extended it to all our subcontractors.

Our subcontractors, located in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Poland, and Estonia, perform various operations on our wood, including drying, planing, impregnating, and thermal modification. We also assess external transport companies against this standard. We maintain a comprehensive map of all our subcontractors and provide them with customized forms, tailored to the legislation of their respective countries, which they are required to sign and return.

We have a policy for monitoring decent work conditions both with suppliers and subcontractors.



# With a heart for good governance and supply chain management



# Prevention of illegal timber trade



Illegal logging and timber trade have a disastrous impact on the environment, biodiversity, and communities in production countries. Therefore, we implement strict measures to ensure that all the wood we purchase is legal and sustainable.

We achieve this by working almost exclusively with wood certified by reliable organizations such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification), ensuring that the entire chain, from forest to end product, is monitored for compliance with strict environmental standards and working conditions.

We require full traceability of all the wood we purchase. This means we receive detailed documentation about the origin of the wood, including permits and certificates confirming the legality of the wood. We carefully check these documents before making a purchase.

If we still have doubts, we report to the Belgian Wood Federation.

At Vandecasteele  
Houtimport, we  
fully support the  
objectives of the  
EUDR.



## Everyone on board with the European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)

The EUTR (EU Timber Regulation) already imposed strict legislation in the timber trade. At the end of 2024, the new EUDR (EU Deforestation Regulation) will also come into effect, requiring even more companies (importing soy, palm oil, coffee, cocoa, or meat) to demonstrate that their activities do not cause deforestation. The origin of all products must be accurately traceable and documented. We must prove that the products do not come from recently deforested areas. This can be done, for example, through satellite images, land registrations, and certifications. Companies must also identify potential risks of deforestation in their supply chain and take measures to mitigate these risks. This should lead to more transparency in the sector and a fairer playing field, as all companies exporting to the EU must meet the same standards.

At Vandecasteele Houtimport, we fully support the objectives of the EUDR. We want to share our experiences in due diligence (supply chain care) to clarify the relevance of this law to our suppliers and within the sector and to make clear what its implementation means.

# The importance of good supplier relationships

We truly focus on long-term relationships with our suppliers. We involve them in our story.



We focus on certification, but that is not enough. The wood from Canada, Europe, and Southeast Asia is one hundred percent certified, but for the wood from South America and Africa, it is only eighty percent certified. In Brazil and some African countries, there is still not much certified wood available, so we conduct our own audits. We travel there, have external inspections carried out, and actively engage in dialogue with our suppliers about this.

We truly focus on long-term relationships with our suppliers; we know them inside and out. For example, we are currently informing them about the content of the EUDR and discussing with them what further improvements are possible. We involve our suppliers in our story. This is a transition, and through audits and dialogue, they become aware of the steps needed to ensure our partnership. They want to do it well and correctly.

# Pioneering role in promoting sustainable timber trade



## Raising awareness among customers

In parallel with our goal of achieving one hundred percent certified wood by 2025, we also want to raise awareness among our customers about proper wood use. It is not only important to choose certified wood from sustainable forestry but also to select the right wood for the right place, ensuring it can last a lifetime.

This starts with our salespeople, who must first be well-informed themselves and then be willing to engage in conversations with customers about the benefits of sustainable wood. Through this proactive approach, we ensure that our customers receive not only a quality product but also one that lasts longer and is better for the environment.



## Communication role in the sector

Because we import from many different countries and can offer a very wide range of wood species, we have built up considerable expertise over the years. As a major player in this international market, we have a role model function. Therefore, we find it important to be present at sector events and share our knowledge.

We participate in international discussions on the implementation of the EUDR legislation in Europe. In recent years, we have provided specific examples during conferences in Brussels, Paris, and Berlin to give the audience insight into how due diligence becomes an integral part of business operations. We emphasize the importance of good cooperation and open communication with all stakeholders to gather all information through the supply chain. In November 2023, during the Amazon Business Encounter in Belem, Brazil, we gave a presentation from the perspective of a European importer on the requirements of the deforestation law and how our suppliers can prepare for it.

We are happy to help others with our many years of expertise in sustainable forest management and due diligence.



Within the sector, we want to be a sounding board. We actively participate in sector organizations and promote sustainable timber trade through our external communications, such as at trade fairs. Last year – (September 2023) – we organized the annual event ‘FSC on tour’ here on site together with FSC Belgium-Netherlands, where we brought together various stakeholders – NGOs, customers, architects, municipalities. The attendees were given a tour of the timber warehouse and listened to speakers who talked about the traceability of wood, FSC certification, and its impact on biodiversity and workers in the supply chain.

# KPI's - Environmental Indicators

Water	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Tap water consumption	99	82	76	108	m <sup>3</sup> /year
Mains water consumption per employee	1,27	1,08	1,01	1,38	l/pp
Rainwater consumption for car wash and warehouse from 2022	650	740	870	708	m <sup>3</sup> /year
Volume of industrial waste water discharged	650	740	870	708	m <sup>3</sup> /year
Amount of domestic wastewater discharged	99	82	76	108	m <sup>3</sup> /year

Waste	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Amount of residual waste (collected by weight)	48,32	53,64	41,72	34,18	T/
% residual waste	8,27%	10,33%	8,96%	7,19%	%
Total waste costs	8.946	4.909	6.422	8.717	€
Sawdust	127,82	139,44	92,96	104,58	
m <sup>3</sup> > waste wood	0,12	0,03	0,21	0,21	kg wood waste/ m <sup>3</sup> processed wood
m <sup>3</sup> > waste PEPP	0,00	0,01	0,01	0,01	kg PEPP/m <sup>3</sup> manipulated timber
m <sup>3</sup> > waste steel	0,01	0,01	0,01	0,01	kg steel/m <sup>3</sup> processed wood
m <sup>3</sup> > residual waste	0,02	0,02	0,02	0,02	kg residual waste/m <sup>3</sup> manipulated timber
number of people > waste	2.404	2.467	3.750	3.906	sheets of paper/ employee

Energy	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Green electricity purchased	369	392	345	284	MWh
Green electricity self-produced	124	110	103	114	MWh
Green electricity self-produced & consumed	63	70	64	73	MWh
Green electricity injection	62	40	39	41	MWh
Diesel for forklifts	113.829	151.818	109.488	74.368	l/year

Commuting (winter)	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Number of cyclists	18,84	20,00	22,22	30,56	%
On foot	5,80	6,15	6,35	4,17	%
Number of employees using public transport	0,00	0,00	1,59	1,39	%
Number of carpoolers	0,00	0,00	2,00	0,00	%
By car	69,57	67,69	66,67	62,50	%
Motorcycle	5,80	6,15	3,17	1,39	%

Commuting (summer)	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Number of cyclists	20,59	23,08	22,73	31,94	%
On foot	4,41	4,62	6,06	2,78	%
Number of employees using public transport	0,00	0,00	1,52	1,39	%
Number of carpoolers	0,00	0,00	3,03	2,78	%
By car	69,57	66,15	62,12	59,72	%
Motorcycle	5,80	6,15	4,55	1,39	%
Number of employees with their own car	74,29	73,91	74,24	71,23	%
Number of employees with company car	25,71	26,09	25,76	28,77	%
% telework	72,73	69,57	72,73	72,73	%

Business transport	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Transport by inland ship CY Wielsbeke	0	0	220	269	containers/ year
Transport containers total				1094	
Number of traded m <sup>3</sup>	252.418	313.738	193.296	194.972	m <sup>3</sup> /year
Transport by truck	1.908.529	1.895.731	1.865.999	1.711.267	km/year
Fuel consumption for goods transport	623.415	595.086	556.390	484.324	l/year
Average consumption per 100 km: target 30	32,66	31,39	29,82	28,3	l/100 km
Idling: less than 9% of the time	8,40	6,80	7,26	9,26	%
Idling time: minimum 8%	6,20	6,40	5,44	5,86	%
Brake-stop ratio: 1 in 3 = 33%	25	25	21,5	31,7	%
Cruise control time: minimum 40%	42,9	43,8	43,98	40,98	%
CO2 emissions from goods transport	1.639,80	1.628,80	1480	1189,79	tons
Total fuel consumption goods transport/production	2,92	2,38	3,44	2,87	l/tons wood

# KPI's - Social Indicators

	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Total number of employees (1st quarter of the year)	78	76	75	78	amount
Number of employees with permanent contracts	79	79	74	76	
Number of employees with full-time contracts	91	89	71	73	
Number of employees with part-time contracts	1	2	4	5	
Total workforce FTE (1st quarter of the year)	73,70	73,87	67,15	64,19	FTE
Number of employees on parental leave		2	3	4	
Number of men	82	78	71	69	%
Number of women	10	8	8	9	%
Number of laborers	71	66	54	55	
Number of office staff (FTE)	19,834	19,638	20,386	20,542	
% of employees aged 55+	18,75	16,28	20,00	21,00	%
Average tenure			11,9	12,9	year
% of employees who are low-skilled, immigrants, or disabled	74	74	72	73	%
Number of people leaving the company	6	9	8	7	
Number of people leaving voluntarily	1	2	3	4	
Number of days absent due to illness	4,93	4,46	4,38		%
Number of workplace accidents	6	5	2	4	
Number of serious workplace accidents with detailed report	0	0	0	1	
Number of commuting accidents with physical injury	0	0	0	0	
Number of citations for non-compliance with welfare and social legislation	0	0	0	0	
Number of fines for non-compliance with welfare and social legislation	0	0	0	0	
Average number of training hours per employee/year	20	20	25	32	
% of performance reviews	100	100	100	100	



## EcoVadis

In 2023, Vandecasteele Houtimport was evaluated by EcoVadis, an international sustainability assessment system. EcoVadis evaluates across four domains (environment, labor, ethics, and procurement) throughout the entire value chain of Vandecasteele Houtimport. In 2023, we achieved a bronze medal.



## Voka Charter for Sustainable Entrepreneurship

The Charter for Sustainable Entrepreneurship is an initiative of Voka Chamber of Commerce to support companies in their growth towards sustainable entrepreneurship. Vandecasteele Houtimport has been participating as an early adopter since 2001. Each year, an action plan is drawn up with at least 15 action points linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Since the start, we have realized more than 570 sustainability actions. In 2019, we also achieved the UNITAR certificate “SDG Pioneer.” In 2021, we obtained the “SDG Champion” certificate by demonstrating our transition to certified wood. We are in full preparation to achieve the next title “SDG Ambassador”.





# About this report

This publication is the first sustainability report of Vandecasteele Houtimport.

It is a sustainability report for 2023-2024, but the data only pertains to the reporting period of 2023.

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