

ROUTE 2

we value our employees and the people around us



Our workforce



Local communities



Safety

ROUTE 1

we take responsibility for the environmental impact of our operations



Water



Energy



Waste

Shaping sustainable living, together.

Route 2030

ROUTE 3

we work towards a circular economy with the whole value chain in mind



Renewable & recycled content in products



Packaging



Circular solutions

ROUTE 4

we take responsibility for our climate impact



Renewable energy



CO₂ emissions

ROUTE 5

we act with integrity and value open communication



Communication



Code of conduct for suppliers



B.I.G. policies and guidelines

Vision

Sustainability is gathering momentum across all industries. Although it is not a term that lacks in substance, it is too often used as a loose catch-all to show a company's good intentions towards the environment – and sometimes little else. That's why we've taken the time to work out a sustainability strategy that we all believe in and are willing to fight for. One that's based on actionable commitments, encompasses our key priorities and reflects the spirit of B.I.G. in a sincere way.

The more concrete result is our very own corporate social responsibility (CSR) model, translated into a roadmap for 2030. We fully realise that the route ahead is still long and bumpy, but if there's one thing we've learned over the past years, it's this: the greatest threat to our planet is thinking that someone else will save it.

Today, we feel ready and equipped to take up our responsibility.

Our vision for the B.I.G. change is to actively build a better future by reducing our environmental footprint to zero, taking care of our people and those around us, and doing business in a transparent, ethical way. In that sense, it's the perfect translation of our Group's purpose: shaping sustainable living, together.

Here. We. Go.

“Call me a naïve bio engineer, but I firmly believe that our generation should actively build a better world. The way we're living now is plundering and suffocating the planet. And since I'm also convinced that pioneering companies hold the keys to a more sustainable future, B.I.G. will do everything in its power to be part of the solution.”

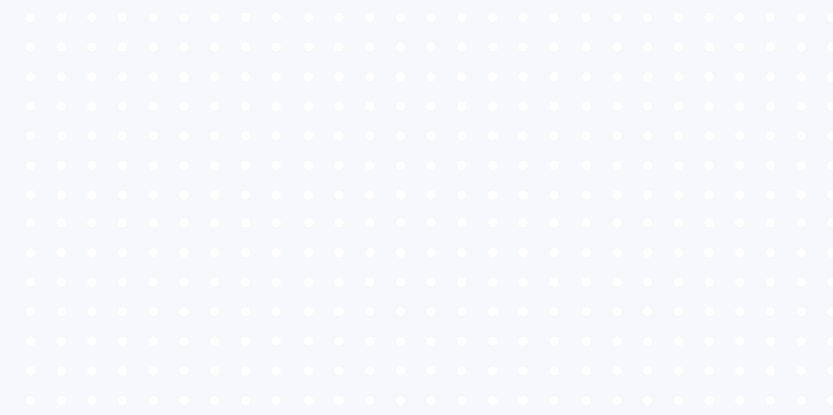
Pol Deturck, CEO



Our vision for 2030
Reducing our environmental footprint to zero, taking care of our people and the ones around us, and doing business in a transparent, ethical way.



A vision inspired by 4 key ideas



#1 Impact

Strategy is choice

We want to make a lasting impact. So, we have the clear ambition to only focus on domains in which we can really make a difference. That means saying 'absolutely' to certain CSR domains and 'not now' to others. Since no existing CSR model felt like a perfect match, we created our own model with 5 routes towards a more sustainable future, from taking care of our employees and the people around us to minimising our climate impact.

#2 Relevancy

No lone-wolf model

Although we work with our own model, we stay close to widespread existing CSR models, such as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations and its 5 Ps: people, planet, prosperity, partnerships and peace. This allows for quick 'translation' of our efforts to other CSR models within our ecosystem of partners, customers and other stakeholders. Moreover, our model is suitable for GRI reporting, which in turn permits benchmarking our organisational performance.

#3 Unity

One for all, all for one

A sustainability strategy only works if everyone is on board and heads in the same direction. Therefore, to pinpoint our 5 routes, we involved colleagues from all business units and regions, and started from the bottom-up projects that were already in place. Today, everyone is committed to make the B.I.G. change a reality - top management as well as our 4.957 employees. Together, we'll keep on evaluating our strategy and adjust course when necessary.

#4 Ambition

Realistic but eager to succeed

No point in overpromising or trying to control what's not in your hands. We won't end poverty, so to speak. But every business that - well - means business, should put the bar as high as possible for their key priorities. For example, to protect our environment, we aim for zero environmental footprint by 2030 - an ambitious goal for a global industrial group that is still heavily dependent on oil-based materials. We aim much higher than most international plans, such as the European Green Deal.



ROUTE 1

We take responsibility for the environmental impact of our operations



If you're serving over 16.000 unique customers in 8 industries with products ranging from PP corrugated sheets and advanced fibres right through premium flooring solutions, you inevitably have a direct impact on the environment. Therefore, the first route concerns our own operations. We want to excel in our own house above anything else.

Objective:

Mitigating the direct effects of our operations on the environment, namely through savvy water consumption, clever energy use and intelligent waste management.

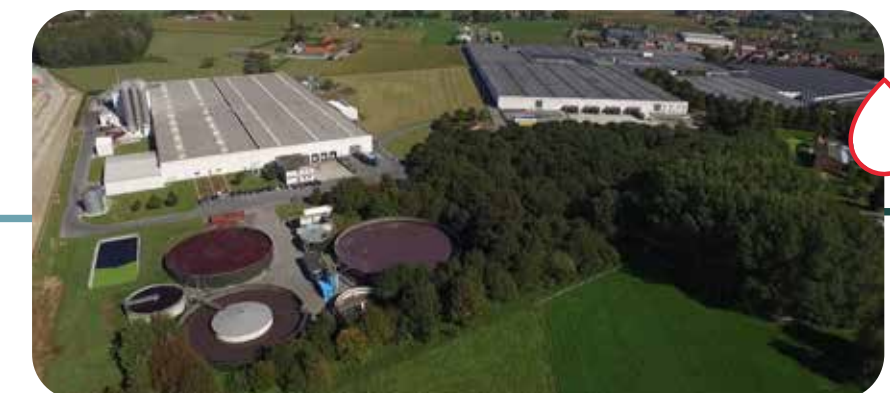


Water

Worldwide water consumption has been growing at more than twice the rate of population increase in the last century. This had led to issues concerning water access, water scarcity and water pollution. Needless to say, industrial groups have a significant impact, because they use water to fabricate, process, wash, dilute, cool or transport products. Well aware of our own water footprint, B.I.G. has launched various initiatives to:

- responsibly source water and stop withdrawing water from underground reserves.
- decrease water consumption in our production processes and increase the share of water reuse.
- develop wastewater solutions.

Water stewardship not only benefits our impact on the direct environment of our facilities, it also frees up funds and leads to valuable expertise – both of which can be used to set up future projects.



Tessutica halves water consumption in 5 year

Karl Henderson, General Manager of Tessutica

“At our state-of-the-art production facility in Romania, we’ve been minimising our water footprint for many years. The result? An all-round approach, based on 3 focus areas: choice of products, efficient processes and wastewater disposal. And the numbers confirm we’re on the right track. In 2017, we recorded an annual consumption of 2.696 cubic metres. Five years later, we’re at 1.266 cubic metres.”



#1 Choice of products

“A major gamechanger is our shift from high-volume, low-cost products to high-end products. The former require water-intensive latex treatment, while premium upholstery fabrics are free of latex. That means we don’t use a single drop of water during production, except to clean our machines.”

#2 Efficient processes

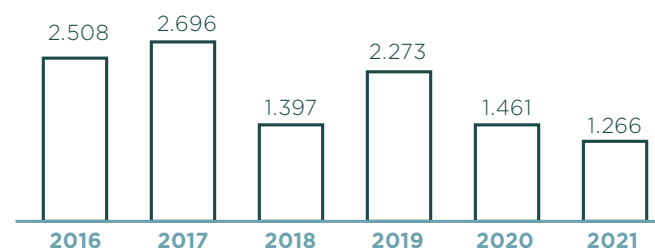
“Based on a thorough data analysis, we successfully optimised our finishing routings and planning. This way, we need fewer flushes to clean the pipes. Adjusting the flush duration of our mixers and applicator further contributed to reducing water consumption.”

#3 Wastewater disposal

“We meticulously collect our wastewater in cisterns. When full, specialised partners move the water for recycling, while other partners take care of the remaining sediment. Nothing ends up in public installations – a joint effort we can all be proud of.”



Total year water consumption



“The skies give us plenty of water, so why not use it?”

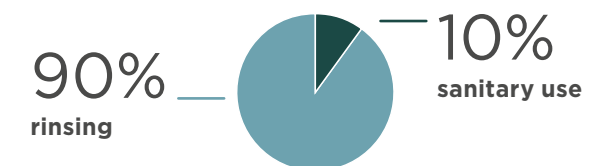
Fabien Taillieu, Production & Technology Manager at Turfgrass

“Artificial grass has the obvious advantage of being in pristine condition all year long as you don’t need to water your lawn. Moreover, it doesn’t have to be fertilised or sprayed with pesticides, keeping these harmful chemicals from finding their way into the soil and groundwater. This already drastically reduces the environmental impact of artificial grass, but B.I.G. wouldn’t be B.I.G. if we contented ourselves with these facts. We also minimise the amount of water used during production and prioritise the use of rainwater.”

Total amount of rainwater collected at our site in Oostrozebeke (Belgium):

2.797m³

Application of purified rainwater:



Share of water reuse in total water consumption:





Energy

Energy efficiency doesn't mean implementing various renewable energy sources from scratch – although we do (see Route 4). In the first place, it's about using exactly the right amount of energy to operate effectively, as opposed to using more than is necessary.

Leveraging international standards and new technological tools have allowed us to track and optimise energy consumption. More concretely, we ...

... proactively replace obsolete machines and equipment with energy-efficient ones.

... continuously review our most energy-intensive production processes, such as extrusion and drying.

... create a culture of energy awareness across all our destinations and divisions.

... focus on data to draw up evidence-based energy policies and guidelines.

... supply our own green energy or close green energy deals with external providers.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg.



Uniting forces to cut back on energy for extrusion

Quincy Nollet, Technology Engineer at Beaulieu Fibres International

“At Beaulieu Fibres International, we're constantly looking for ways to minimise our energy consumption. For example, in 2021, we started scrutinising the use of energy in our extrusion process. A project that we're carrying out in partnership with KU Leuven, a global top 50 university. The first concrete results are expected in early 2022.”

Sam Van Essche, Innovation Project Manager

“KU Leuven and B.I.G. are no strangers to each other. We've worked together on simulations before with their cutting-edge simulation tool. Moreover, they possess great expertise on extrusion, so they have become our go-to partner for projects like this. Side by side, we are evaluating new situations, without having to test them in real life, saving us time, money and risks. The insights are then translated into energy-efficient measures to further improve our energy footprint.”

Project funded by
**Flanders Innovation and
Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)**





Waste

Our ambition is to become a 'landfill-free' industrial group and our strategy for waste management is equally straightforward. In a perfect world, solid waste ultimately has one of three outcomes, ranked below from most to least preferred. B.I.G. takes action on all fronts. Some examples:



Reduce

We invest in state-of-the-art equipment that generates less waste, strictly use high-quality raw material, cut unnecessary steps from our operational flows, train employees to detect irregularities early on, and rigorously track data on our waste.



Reuse

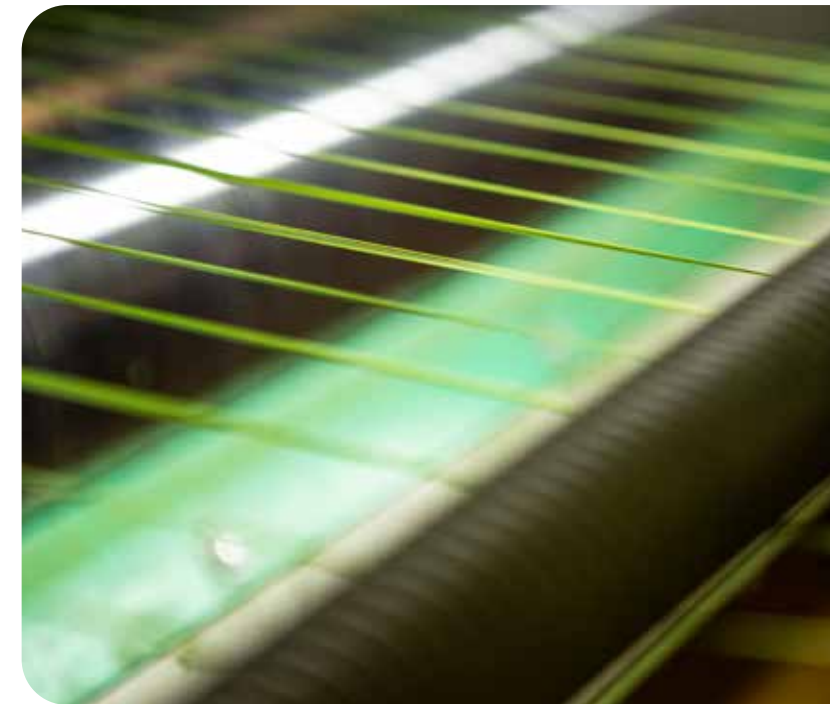
We resell unpolymerized monomer to suppliers to reduce flaring, reuse our extrusion and other internal waste as raw materials for new products, turn marine plastic waste into furniture upholstery, etc...



Recycle

We are gradually making our entire product offering recyclable, causing less waste at the customer end. Telling examples include our needle-felt event carpet Rewind, our UltraBond fibres and our packaging textiles. At the same time, we recycle much of our own waste: glass, cardboard, metal, etc.

Recyarn makes artificial grass even greener



Nuria Villena Nerin, R&D Manager at Turfgrass

“What’s the word that always sticks when you hear the term ‘artificial grass garden’? Indeed, artificial. People nowadays have a greater environmental awareness and some try to steer clear of artificial products whenever possible. But we prove that sustainable and artificial don’t have to be mutually exclusive with our VLAIO-funded Recyarn project. We are using less virgin raw materials by reusing waste – a first step in making artificial grass a circular product. Truth be told, at B.I.G. you get a chance to really make a difference.”

Why?

To reduce our environmental footprint

What?

Using recycled content in artificial grass production

How?

A 3-step process to recycle internal and external waste streams:

- ✓ Making a business case including risks, investment requirements and potential recycling partners
- ✓ Conducting research into types of polymers, pre-treatment, additives, the extrusion process, etc. to create a handbook
- ✓ Reviewing the life-cycle analysis of artificial grass to measure progress

Who?

Turfgrass teams up with internal partners (B.I.G. Polymers, Beaulieu Technical Textiles, the raw materials centre, etc.) and external recycling partners

First results?

The first tests confirm the successful integration of 5% waste content in our monofilaments. Now, we’re ready to go into production.

Next steps?

The aim is to get to 10% with the current recycled material and to go even further with new recycled material streams. Meanwhile, we’ll further finetune our process handbook.

ROUTE 2

We value our employees and the people around us



No sustainability strategy without people. But it isn't just a numbers' game, you need the right people in the right place at the right time, surrounded by the right conditions. That's when the magic happens. This people-centric focus and our family values are something we like to extend to local communities as well. Behold: Route 2.

Objective:

Providing ample opportunities for our employees to do what they love most and do best in safe and healthy working conditions, while also bringing prosperity to local communities.



Our workforce

Above all, B.I.G. is a family. But a family of 4.957 requires responsible parenting. For us, that implies giving each individual ample opportunities to grow along with the company, creating an environment that allows for healthy minds in healthy bodies, and fostering a culture of appreciation, recognition and inclusion.

Such a talent-first approach sounds simple enough, but in practice it requires a well-balanced talent strategy.

Some of our current projects:

- **The B.I.G. University - personal development**
= preparation for future growth

Employees can take further training or retrain (reskill or upskill) in one of the university's 7 academies: Innovation, Leadership, Operations, Procurement, Sales, SHE & Technical.

This also includes a program for young engineers within the innovation talent pool: at any given time, we employ between 15 and 30 young engineers within this special development program aimed at creating the technological leaders of tomorrow.

- **The B.I.G. Jump - internal mobility**
= active career management

A campaign to encourage employees to advance within the Group, including an internal career page and a special selection process. We also have a strong focus on succession management.

- **Referral program - better together for ONE B.I.G.**
= active involvement of employees in attracting new talents

Who better to assess whether someone fits in at ONE B.I.G. than our own employees? They can nominate a candidate for a vacancy and cash in when it comes to a contract.

- **Inspiring settings - corporate culture**
= best-in-class working conditions

Across our locations, we look for ways to make our employees feel at ease. For example, we've transformed the roof of our Juteks administrative building into an area with an event zone, recreation zone, co-working zone and sports zone.

Mind you, these (and the projects you'll discover on the following pages) are just a few of our high-visibility projects. Behind the scenes, we also pay close attention to less visible priorities, such as diversity, fair wages, a healthy work environment & wellbeing, team building and much more.



Energize2GROW goes all the way

Vanessa Dutrieue, Talent Development Director

“Energize2GROW is an umbrella for a wide range of worldwide initiatives, centred around 4 pillars. ‘On the go’ is all about staying fit, while ‘glow’ focuses on healthy eating and ‘go slow’ aims at reducing unhealthy habits. Finally, ‘flow’ covers the initiatives on mental health and resilience – a topic that’s often undervalued. What these initiatives entail? Advice and tips from coaches, training, challenges, incentives and all kinds of fun activities. This way, we energize both individuals and teams to grow.”



A new year, a new sports watch

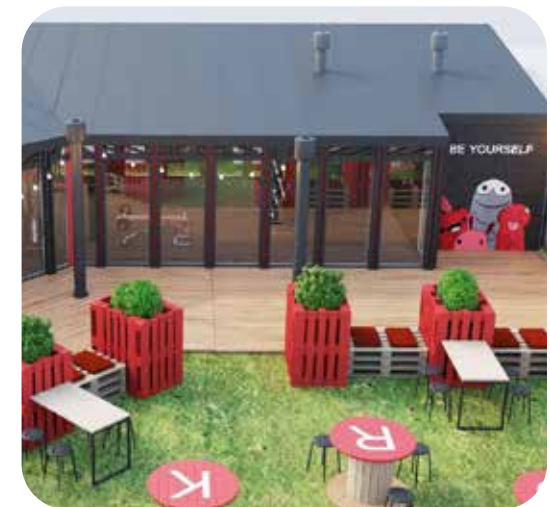
All employees received a brand-new sports watch for New Year. Not to make sure they always arrive on time, but to allow them to keep track of their daily steps and other activities. Off you go!

33-day resilience challenge

A series of daily tasks and tips – sent by e-mail – which take up 5 to 10 minutes of our employees' time and help to boost their energy level and resilience. Result guaranteed!

Well-being challenge at Beauflor US

Various teams with superhero names competed to clock up the most steps between mid-July and mid-August. We arranged for the use of an app called MoveSpring, which integrated with employee phones and pedometers to count steps and to see which team was in the lead at any given moment. The winner? Team Hulk!



Week of Sustainable Mobility

From 16 to 22 September, we motivated as many employees as possible to take the bike to work. To trigger them, we offered all participants a free bike check-up and a fun gadget.

Bike lease project in Belgium

Belgian employees get the chance to lease a(n) (electrical) bike for 3 years. They can choose between over 30 brands, including accessories. When the time's up they can swap their bike for a new one or buy their current bike at its attractive salvage value.

Hurricane Ida didn't break our team spirit

Deneice Bercegeay, President of Pinnacle

"In February 2021, we had to endure an arctic cold front in the south of Louisiana, but the worst nature had in store for us was yet to come. On 29 August, we faced the most severe hurricane that the Garyville community ever experienced. Our facility was in the direct path of hurricane Ida. We ended up losing about 70 million pounds of production and sales during this time. In addition, the new office administration building was damaged to the point that all administrative employees had to work remotely. Many of our employees also experienced great material losses at home, but B.I.G. stepped in with financial support. If something happens to our family members, we're there to help. And vice versa, the loyalty and commitment of our employees to get Pinnacle up and running again was heart-warming."

Category 4

Hurricane Ida registered wind speeds of over 150 mph and left a trail of destruction, setting numerous records.

22

Pinnacle employees suffered losses exceeding 30.000 dollars and were displaced for months.

First-aid costs

were covered by B.I.G. who helped its employees while waiting for their insurance to take over.



Return-to-work programmes ease employees back in

Tina Verner, HR Manager at Beaulieu Australia

"Over the years, we've learnt that it can be hard for injured or ill employees to return to work. That's why we create individual plans for these employees, after consultation with the treating physician, the plant manager, the safety advisor, the direct supervisor and - of course - the injured or ill employee. The plan exactly outlines the activities the employee can and can't do, as well as working times and breaks. Obviously, we can adjust the plan if necessary. If all goes well, the biggest beneficiary is the employee."

- ✓ Employees may sometimes feel guilty about their absence, or may perceive that their job is at risk. Our programs reduce that stress.
- ✓ Gradual return to work strengthens the employee's belief that he or she can still play a constructive part in the workplace.
- ✓ Keeping the mind and body active - although moderated - can speed up the recovery process in some cases.
- ✓ For some employees, their working environment is also their main social network. A return-to-work plan can counter loneliness.

"Since we launched this initiative in 2019, all injured employees on the programme have returned to work and resumed normal duties."

Success story

Graham Woodhouse suffered a heart attack in 2021. In October, he started coming back to work. At first, this was restricted to 1 hour a day. He then gradually increased and was almost back at full time by the end of the year.

"Gradual return to work helped me build up my physical stamina in a safe environment. It was the push I needed."

Graham Woodhouse, Coating Line Supervisor at Beaulieu Australia



Local communities

B.I.G. aims to take up a constructive role in all local communities surrounding our facilities. More specifically, in the 19 locations where we have a physical presence, we maintain good relations with local business leaders, non-profit organisations, educational institutions, customers, governments and other stakeholders. We always try to blend in with respect for habits and culture, and give back when possible. To illustrate, we manage several charity programmes with national impact, but we also leave our mark locally. For example, together with the local mayor, we planted a large number of trees at our site in Comines (France) to celebrate the launch of EqoCycle. And to promote youngsters to stay and work in the Kameshkovo region, our Juteks team organises excursions on its grounds.

To be fair, the ones we're closest to are the local residents, in particular the students and job seekers surrounding our facilities. They are today's neighbours, but might be tomorrow's machine operators or R&D directors. For them, we like to open our doors and share what we are doing. For example, each year, we give students the opportunity to enjoy a first work experience and explore their passions.

As globalised as the world may be, community life still matters a lot and will continue to do so. B.I.G. is honoured to be part of many different communities and we intend to make all of them flourish.



Supporting the community of Acton Vale, Canada

Serge Marceau, HR Director at Beaulieu Canada

"As you might expect from an organisation that was built on family values, we do all we can to share our success by supporting good causes and initiatives in the community of Acton Vale, just east of Montréal. From Christmas baskets for needy families to helping migrants integrate, every year we select a number of projects that we feel connected to and like to co-fund. No one has ever become poor from giving."

Local initiatives

- ✓ Promotion of professional activities with the Acton Vale Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Donation to United Way
- ✓ Donation to the Breast Cancer Foundation
- ✓ Christmas baskets for needy families in Acton Vale
- ✓ Donation to several hospitals across Canada
- ✓ Donation to the Centre Ressources-Femmes de la région d'Acton Vale
- ✓ Flooring products for Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi
- ✓ Donation to Forum 2020, which brings together political and socio-economic stakeholders to facilitate the integration of migrants in Québec

From cleaning up litter to sending snacks to our troops

Connor Ingram, HR Manager at Pinnacle

"Pinnacle Employees are always up for the challenge when called upon to support their local community. The Pinnacle team picked up litter and other disposed items along the roadside in the 2021 St. John Team Up to Clean Up Event. Our employees also helped support the Garyville Mt. Airy Magnet School with school supplies to help students in need. On top of that, Pinnacle hosted a Care Package Drive to send items to our Military Troops who are deployed around the world. We collected items such as candy, snacks, energy drinks and personal care items. Last but not least, in the giving spirit of Christmas, we hosted a toy drive to donate to the Toys for Tots Program."

Students get a taste of the B.I.G. life

Bruno D'Argent, Product Sustainability Specialist at BerryAlloc

"We had the privilege of hosting four post-graduate students in Sustainable Development for an internship at our DPL plant in Menen, Belgium. They analysed the current level of on-site corporate social responsibility and drafted a proposal with various improvements - some of which are already implemented in our 2022 sustainability goals. The whole project turned out to be a positive experience and provided a good learning opportunity for both me and the students."

Laura Dewulf, Innovation Project Engineer

"In 2021, we welcomed young talent studying product development and industrial design at Antwerp University and Ghent University. It's always interesting to have them look at our products and processes with a fresh perspective. They bring creativity to the table and keep us on our toes."

Isabel Van Daele, HR Director Polymers & Engineered Solutions

"Like every year on Youth Climate Action (YOUCA) Day, over 10.000 Belgian students went to work for a full day - three of them at B.I.G. Yarns. All wages go to youth projects all over the world. Thank you girls, job well done!"



Safety

In a family, everyone looks out for each other's safety. The same goes for the B.I.G. family. We want to provide a safe environment to make sure everyone can work with peace of mind and gets to go home safe and sound at the end of the day. And we're moving in the right direction. For example, over the last years, we've made great progress in reducing our accident rate: it dropped by 50% since 2017. As we want to accelerate our efforts, we launched an ambitious Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) plan for 2025.

What do we want to achieve by 2025?

A safer and healthier working environment with concrete targets such as ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 certification for all operational sites and a yearly accident risk rate reduction of 10%. This will be accomplished through:

- **Leadership:** a culture of leadership that establishes self-awareness of each employee to recognise SHE as their responsibility and act upon it.
- **Tools:** the implementation of user-friendly tools and systems to make our SHE performance visible, to stay self-aware and to keep moving forward.
- **Standards:** the structured application of global SHE standards for tools and equipment in all our sites to increase SHE maturity and set the benchmark in our industry.

It's important to note that every employee plays a role in this new approach, which is based on transparency and collaboration. Safety concerns all of us and we can all contribute to a safer working environment – a mindset that should be embedded in all layers of our Group. To that end, we intend to listen to our employees as much as possible on ways to keep improving safety at our facilities. They can count on the full support of B.I.G.'s top management. Together, we can and will make a major positive impact on our SHE performance.

Health and safety award for B.I.G. Yarns in Comines, France

Cathy K'Morvan, SHE Manager at B.I.G. Yarns (Comines)

"In November, we received an Industry Trophy from the Société Industrielle Nord de France (SINF) for our efforts to promote health and safety at work. Needless to say, this is a gratifying recognition for the whole team and a strong motivation to do even better in the years to come. Safe working conditions are and will always be a top priority."



"Accident-free year shows we're on the right track"

Grega Borinc, Plant Manager at Juteks Slovenia

"A few years ago, we switched into a higher gear regarding safety. Together with an external partner, we analysed critical workplace issues and implemented new measures, such as safety fences and additional marking. A complete risk assessment by an auditor then revealed some extra points of improvement, which we all took care of. But we felt we weren't entirely there yet. So, we actively started involving our employees. First, we organised motivational workshops to create a safety culture. Afterwards, they all got to participate in risk assessments that affected their workplaces. A tactic that quickly led to improved results: 0 work-related injuries in 2021."



Additional safety measures at Juteks Slovenia today:

- ✓ daily safety meetings between managers and shift leaders
- ✓ visual safety management through bulletin boards and monitors
- ✓ daily Gemba walks in production areas

ROUTE 3

We work towards a circular economy with the whole value chain in mind



From reducing the pressure on our environment and securing the supply of raw materials to increasing competitiveness and stimulating innovation, the benefits of a circular economy are plentiful. That's why we prioritise responsible material sourcing, circular products and sustainable packaging to break through the take-make-waste model, and we expect our suppliers to live by the same principles.

Objective:

As a European market leader, we want to blaze trails within the circular economy and - ultimately - strictly offer sustainably made and fully recyclable products to the market.



Recycled and renewable content in products

Raw material prices and supply shortages skyrocketed in 2021. This was always just a matter of time and chances are it will get worse before it gets better - if it gets better at all. So, as a Group, we already took the decision to go all in on responsible sourcing a long time ago. To be more specific, we invest a lot in:

- **Using fewer virgin materials**
Simply put, we make products lighter and simpler without compromising on quality. Besides that, we also focus on flawless operational processes to avoid loss of materials due to production errors.
- **Using recycled materials**
Our products contain more and more recycled and reclaimed content, either from our own facilities or external streams. To this end, we set up effective partnerships and tie in-house innovation to circularity.
- **Using renewable materials**
Our Eqobalance yarns enable a significant saving on fossil resources by using biomass in the value chain. Our wood divisions, on the other hand, mainly use PEFC-certified wood in their products, thus supporting sustainable forestry.

The general idea comes down to this: if your kids are playing football on our artificial grass or if you relax in a luxury sofa made from our upholstery fabrics after a long day's work, we don't want you to worry about sustainability. Even in our Polymers business unit we pull out all the stops as we'll be exploring the opportunities of biobased and circular polymers. The future is circular and we plan to do what's in our power to contribute to its success.



“None of us is as smart as all of us”

Femke Faelens, Innovation Project Manager

“We’re excited to play a leading role in CISUFLO, a cutting-edge EU Horizon2020 project between various industry partners, associations and research institutions. The project’s overall goal is to minimise the environmental impact of the EU flooring sector, by setting up a systemic framework for circular and sustainable floor coverings taking into account technical feasibility and socio-economic factors. Three specific types of floor covering are being examined: wood, textile and PVC. For the latter, B.I.G. is in the lead. We’ll be drawing up design and traceability instructions for PVC flooring, as well as carrying out pilot tests with recycled content. Today, our LVT flooring already introduces major quantities of recycled content, which we are aiming to increase even further. For heterogeneous Cushion Vinyl on the other hand, the prospect of adding merely 5% recycled content would mean a significant breakthrough for the industry. Meanwhile, our competitors – who are our industry partners in this project – conduct similar projects for wood and textile. In the end, we will all benefit from the findings and results to accelerate the transition towards a circular economy.”

Shift towards rPP will be a gamechanger

Pieter Vanoosthuysen, Business Development Manager for Recycled Polypropylene (rPP)

“The origin of raw materials accounts for a large impact in our full product life cycles. And although we convert many types of polymers, such as PVC, PA, PE and PET, about 70% of our total polymer volume consists of polypropylene – or PP. We constantly look for non-fossil, recycled alternatives for each of our polymers, but simple maths point out that rPP has the biggest potential to reduce our carbon impact. Therefore, we’re rolling out a strategy across all divisions to sustainably source rPP, in which we explore multiple options, from bio-renewables to mechanical and advanced recycling. We value long-term sustainable partnerships within these options.”



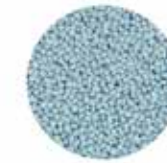
Pet bottles



Flakes



Pellets



Yarn



Fabric



From theory to practice

- ✓ Distriplast manufactures corrugated sheets with recycled propylene in black construction applications, as well as white for outdoor communication purposes.
- ✓ Technical Textiles offers ecological woven black agrotexiles with rPP alongside their renewable and industrially compostable wovens.
- ✓ Within our soft flooring division, we partner up with decentralised recycling hubs to recycle our post-consumer Rewind carpet.

Many more applications are being developed in our Innovation pipelines. We’re just getting started. Moreover, when focusing on eco design, our business units are also shifting from the usual design-for-recycling to design-for-reintegration and life cycle engineering.”

Let’s close loops, together

Our materials sustainability strategy (funded by VLAIO) goes much further than integrating rPP in our products. We apply a 360-degree perspective with long-term solutions on the input and output side of our processes. B.I.G. assumes 3 roles:

- #1 A renewable and recycled material consumer, by reintegrating renewable feedstock, post-industrial and post-consumer recyclates.
- #2 A key actor in close-the-loop programmes for both post-industrial and post-consumer waste.
- #3 A feedstock provider for streams that can’t be reused internally to stimulate open-loop recycling.

The goal: creating a sustainable model that considers by-products of manufacturing processes and end-of-life materials as high-quality resources, to drastically reduce our environmental footprint.





Less wood, same quality: why Senses makes sense

Nele Vannieuwenhuyze, R&D Manager Wood at BerryAlloc

“Within our offering of strong wood floors, resource efficiency is a burning topic. We constantly look for ways to do more with less, thus preserving our forests. A telling example is Senses, a brand-new flooring solution with a 0,6 mm real oak top layer. Because the top layer is that thin, Senses is classed as veneer instead of parquet. To call it parquet, the top layer needs a minimum thickness of 2,5 mm. To be clear, BerryAlloc also offers parquet with 2,5 and 3,3 mm top layers, but we wanted a more sustainable option to complete the product range. Senses minimises the need for logging, while it maintains the same technical qualities, look and authentic feel. The harder high-density fibreboard that’s incorporated even raises the floor’s impact resistance. In short, you can’t tell the difference between Senses and parquet, but nature can.”



Packaging

Packaging is necessary to be able to deliver our products in the best possible conditions. If not, we risk ending up with damaged material that’s not fit for use, with all the associated environmental consequences. But packaging can also be wasteful when excessive amounts of plastic, cardboard, tape, etc. are used. The first step in creating sustainable packaging practices is therefore doing more with less – something all our teams look out for on a daily basis. Reducing packaging material decreases environmental impact throughout the supply chain.

Additionally, we’re shifting towards a business that works exclusively with recycled and recyclable packaging materials. For example, the material that Beauflor uses to protect its vinyl rolls is made of 100%-recycled cardboard, and there are loads of other examples within our Group. Step by step, we’re eliminating virgin materials and single-use materials from our packaging practices.

Many packaging companies also count on our polymers and technical textiles for their customers, so we make it our mission to develop sustainable industrial solutions for them. To illustrate: our coated and uncoated woven polypropylene fabrics – which go by the name of Durapack – are fully recyclable.

All these combined actions bring us closer to an economy that is free of packaging waste.

Smart packaging reduces material needs and plastic waste

Dieter De Jans, Global Category Manager Indirect Spend

“Procurement might be an unlikely actor in our sustainability story, but we also play a part. For the thickness of the plastic foil around our tufted carpet rolls, we benchmarked our packaging solutions with competitors and asked our suppliers for input. The goal: determining the minimum thickness without compromising on product performance and quality. In the end, this process showed that we could go from 70 to 67 micron. On a yearly basis, this results in 3 tonnes less foil for B.I.G., and customers have less plastic waste to deal with.”

Circular solutions

If we wish to tackle the global climate emergency, products should be designed to maximise their value and minimise waste over their whole life cycle. Many of our innovation efforts centre around this axiom that lies at the heart of the circular production and consumption model. We particularly invest a lot in eco-design to make sure none of our products end up as landfill or in incinerators, but instead are recycled fully closed loop in our own applications or get a second life as a new product. Completely revamping our diverse product portfolio is a time-consuming but necessary task, and we've already made great progress in recent years, with solutions ranging from cradle-to-cradle event carpet to mono-material fibres and PA6 yarns.

A second point of attention is improving the durability of our products. After all, if products last a lifetime, there's no need to dispose of them. For example, our vinyl and laminate floors come with lifetime warranties for residential use, while our high-quality polypropylene granulates allow our customers to manufacture highly resistant applications.

For 2022 and beyond, B.I.G. has various innovation projects and investments lined up to develop new circular solutions. This is only the beginning.



First Cradle-to-Cradle Certified event carpet steadily conquers Europe

Bénédicte Lobel, Business Development Manager Tradeshow

“Many event organisations have begun embracing sustainability in recent years and are achieving great results. But for needle-felt carpet, the decorative heart and soul of every event, there was never a satisfying solution. Until we came up with Rewind, the first Cradle-to-Cradle Certified event carpet out there. After intensive research, we were able to ban all latex, meaning not a single drop of water is used during production, while energy consumption is cut by more than 80%. This means CO₂ emissions related to production have dropped by 55%. And that's not even the best part. The carpet can easily be turned into pure, high-grade material for new applications. To make sure we close the circle, we are setting up partnerships with decentralised recycling partners to give our Rewind carpet a second life.”

Major event organisations that choose to Rewind their ecological footprint:



Distriplast's new take-back policy gives industrial customers more options

Olivier Lisowski, Technical Operations Manager of Distriplast

“Distriplast is one of B.I.G.'s frontrunners when it comes to recycling. For example, we've developed our own in-house recycling system and you'll find recycled materials in about half of our products. As of 2021, we also offer to collect old corrugated sheets from our industrial clients. Even if they transformed our products for packaging, we can take back the sorted waste or scrapped PP sheets. Our partner buys back any useful material and then takes care of the whole recycling process. Mind you, with only 22 tonnes recollected from a total of 15.000 tonnes in products, we still have a long way to go. But the first baby steps have been taken and we look forward to speeding up our take-back policy in the coming years.”



ROUTE 4

We take responsibility for our climate impact



This route comprises profound changes to lower our long-term impact on the climate. We are fundamentally transforming the way we generate energy for our worldwide facilities as well the way we produce and distribute our goods. Next to the efforts mentioned in Route 3, a focus on renewable energy, energy-low production and multimodal freight transport should lower our CO₂ emissions.

Objective:

Mitigating the long-term effects of our operations on the environment, namely through renewable energy and a drastic reduction in CO₂ emissions.



Renewable energy

Our energy transition towards renewable energy sources is picking up speed. This will make us less dependent on external energy providers, lower overall energy costs and provide reliable local grids for our facilities. Moreover, it's something both our employees and customers expect. Who wants to work for an energy-intensive industrial group that still favours fossil energy sources? Or which customer likes a consciously polluting supplier? Right, no one does. Having an energy mix that's primarily based on clean energy sources is – let's be honest – the only way forward. And why wait with fundamental changes if our planet is screaming for help as we speak?

Enough about the obvious decision to make renewable energy a part of our sustainability roadmap. Let's illustrate how we practice what we preach:

- At all our sites, we replace fossil fuel-driven forklifts and other assets with electric alternatives.
- Many of our sites are equipped with solar panels and the number is growing every year. For example, in 2021, 17,000 new solar panels were installed at our Belgian sites, generating 8.200 MWh of energy.
- Our wood divisions in Norway and France burn their wood dust to generate thermal energy for use in their plants. In Norway, the excess thermal energy is shared with the local community.
- In case we don't provide our own renewable energy, we try to close green energy deals with external providers (see case below).

100%
by 2030

These and other initiatives bring us closer to our goal of a renewable energy share that amounts to 100% by 2030.

Yarns and Fibres go green

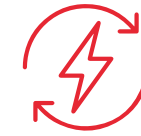
Maxime Vuylsteke, Group Energy Manager

“In 2021, we revised our electricity contract for 4 sites in France and Belgium: Comines, Komen, Wielsbeke and Kruisem. The bottom line: we went from a grey electricity mix to a 100% green mix. The more concrete result is that we went from 184 g CO₂-e/kWh to 24 g CO₂-e/kWh. In total, our carbon emissions for Scope 1 and 2 in these 4 sites have dropped by a whopping 49%. Although this switch comes with a heavy annual rise in costs for such a large energy consumer like B.I.G., we feel it’s our moral obligation just because of that. The ones with the biggest demand for electricity should set the example.”



New solar panels reduce dependence on external supply

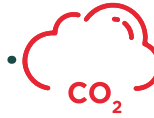
Two sites were equipped with brand-new installations. B.I.G. Yarns in Komen (Belgium) can now satisfy 3% of its own electricity needs, while Beaulieu Technical Textiles in Comines (France) covers 10% with its own solar energy.



“New waste-to-energy plant covers 50% of our energy needs”

Trygve Martinsen, General Manager of BerryAlloc Nordics

“Turning waste into energy is nothing new at BerryAlloc. We’ve had a dedicated plant since 1996. But time doesn’t stand still, meaning our infrastructure and techniques had become outdated. So, we invested in a new energy plant to produce hot water for heating in our production processes and buildings. To be more specific, we’ll use 5.600 tonnes of biomass – waste from our own production – to generate about 26 GWh a year. That’s enough to cover 50% of our total energy consumption. We should be fully operational in 2022. Good to know: we’ll also divert 5 GWh a year to the local community of Lyngdal, Norway. That energy benefits public services and commercial businesses.”



CO₂ emissions

Many of our locations were confronted with extreme weather conditions in 2021. Even more, the three most expensive natural disasters of the year all took place near our facilities and the homes of our employees: hurricane Ida in Louisiana (August), the floods in Belgium and France (July), and the winter storm in the southern states of the USA (February). The floods in China (July) and Canada (November), where we also operate, complete the top 5. In other words, the tangible consequences of climate change are right at our doorstep. Needless to say, we'd like to reverse the tide.

So, how do we proceed in turning the tide? In the long run, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions is one of the most effective strategies and therefore non-negotiable. In particular because simple actions can already make a big difference:

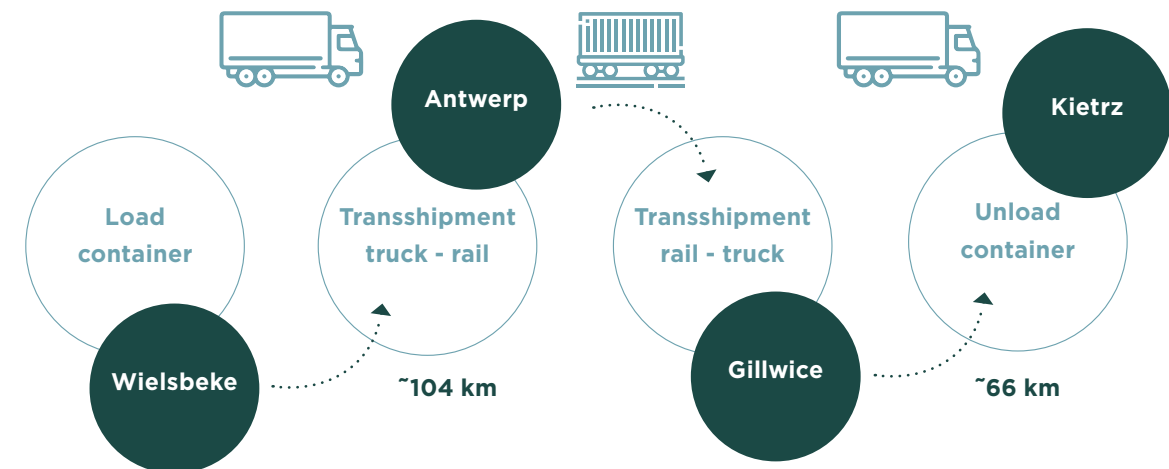
- Recycling and using recycled materials in our products to reduce the need for virgin materials.
- Collaborating with suppliers who pay attention to their carbon footprint.
- Allowing for remote work and creating the right conditions to make it a success, thus minimising the need for employees to commute.
- Prioritising multimodal freight transport.
- Investing in green energy.
- Producing close to our target markets.
- Planting trees and plants at our facilities.

To be as transparent as possible, we share our key figures on scope 1 and 2 CO₂ emissions in a quarterly publication. This way, all of our employees can follow our progress and propose new initiatives to get to zero environmental footprint.

Multimodal route cuts emissions by half

Frank Vancoillie, Production & Operations Manager

“Every month, Beaulieu Mats used to send dozens of trucks between its facilities in Belgium and Poland. This meant a big burden on the environment, because a single road journey equalled 1.270 km. In cooperation with Multimodaal.Vlaanderen, a company advisory board in Flanders, we worked out an alternative route by train. Rail freight now accounts for most of the distance – trucks are only deployed for 170 km of the total trajectory. The ecological gains? A 49% drop in CO₂ emissions. The next step is to also include inland waterways to cover the distance between our plant in Wielsbeke and Antwerp train station. This will further reduce the need for trucks, turning the original 1.270 km into just 69 km. If all goes well, total CO₂ emissions for the journey will then be 55% below what they used to be.”



In-house LCA team helps both B.I.G. and its customers to make conscious choices

Simon De Meyer, Innovation Project Engineer

“When it comes to reducing carbon emissions, you can’t cut what you can’t count. That’s where our LCA team comes in. Our LCA studies map the environmental impact associated with a product’s entire lifecycle, from raw materials extraction to end-of-life solutions. This allows us to determine the most harmful moments and their causes. Moreover, LCA studies enable us to officially communicate the environmental impact of a certain product by means of publicly available Environmental Product Declarations – or EPDs. These EPDs, which quantify the greenhouse gas emissions related to a product (in kg CO₂e) as well as other environmental performance indicators, offer customers a reliable way to compare products and thus buy cleaner.”

I joined the LCA team in November 2020 and have already assisted in elaborating various LCAs for technical textiles and fibres. The icing on the cake was drawing up my first own EPD for woven geotextiles at the end of 2021, the culmination of an interesting learning path. And the future looks promising as well, because we’ll be looking into the environmental impact of using recycled material in our products.”



ROUTE 5

We act with integrity and value open communication



In our quest for zero environmental footprint, we want to protect the interests of our employees and other stakeholders (customers, suppliers and local communities). Ethical business practices, written down in B.I.G. guidelines and policies, and complete transparency through solid communication plans are the yin and the yang of that resolution.

Objective:

Providing a moral compass to guide everyone in the same direction, while at the same time raising engagement through open communication.



Communication

Humans breathe, companies communicate. It's what keeps them on their feet. So, it shouldn't come as a surprise that open communication is one of the key paths within our sustainability roadmap. Particularly for a Group that employs over 4.900 employees in 19 countries, spread over a total 51 facilities. To be completely aligned with each other on one sustainability agenda, our team in Australia should know what our French facilities are up to, and so on.

If we truly want to operate as ONE B.I.G., we need clear-cut communication to bridge all possible gaps. Communication on how we're doing as a Group, where we're heading and why each individual matters in achieving our goals. This form of transparency generates trust and boosts motivation. And although we cherish the uniqueness of each employee, internal communication also creates a shared identity, a sense of belonging and - ultimately - a purpose.

Towards the outside world, we've also upped our game. We want to inspire others within our network to take action themselves or to join us in our efforts. New websites, a better presence on social media and ambassador initiatives all form part of that mission to share. Heck, this sustainability report is probably the best example.





Spencer for B.I.G.: the latest news in everyone's pocket

Sara Geris, Corporate Communications Director

“Although our internal communication has come a long way, we were still missing a tool to reach all our employees in their own language at the same time. Enter Spencer, one of the most complete employee communication platforms out there. We finetuned the platform to fit our needs, made it available in 12 languages and offer the accompanying app for free to our employees. The newly born Spencer for B.I.G. makes it possible to send company updates, event invitations, surveys and much more straight to an employee's mobile phone. Report a workplace accident, register for a staff party or start a brainstorm session among colleagues? It's all possible through the app. This not only makes our lives at the communication department easier, but especially that of the employees themselves, Office worker or production worker. From now on, we are all connected to each other.”



Code of conduct for suppliers



Although we're a vertically integrated Group, B.I.G. has an extensive network of suppliers in all corners of the world. And we can only achieve true impact if we're all aligned on key sustainability principles and values. To accomplish this, we created a Code of Conduct for Suppliers in 2021 to urge our partners to adhere to high standards of safe working conditions, fair and respectful treatment of employees, and ethical practices. Our goal is to have every single B.I.G. supplier sign the code.

Sustainable procurement: an important part of our EcoVadis rating

Lieven Flamée, QHSE Director

“As of 2021, B.I.G. has 3 accounts on EcoVadis, a global sustainability ratings provider. B.I.G. Yarns, Beaulieu Fibres International and BerryAlloc have all joined a network of over 85.000 companies that share their ratings on 4 CSR topics: environment, labour and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. Why does this matter? Because an increasing number of major companies and banks check these ratings to decide who to do business with. And many of our recent projects have increased our scores, such as:

- ✓ an ambitious action plan to cut back on CO₂ emissions
- ✓ commitment to the 17 SDGs via the Voka Charter for Sustainable Entrepreneurship
- ✓ certifications for the international standard ISO 14001
- ✓ a Code of Conduct for Suppliers
- ✓ KPIs for sustainability
- ✓ commitment to Operation Clean Sweep to prevent the loss of plastic granules into the environment
- ✓ an internal Code of Business Conduct and Ethics

“We realise we still have a lot of ground to cover to achieve absolute top ratings, but we're moving in the right direction. Step by step, we're taking on new challenges and via EcoVadis everyone can follow our evolution.”



B.I.G. policies and guidelines

Not the sexiest item to finish with, but ever so important. Policies and guidelines bring uniformity to our Group. Or put differently: policies and guidelines organise employees to behave in certain ways, allowing the business to achieve its strategic objectives, including our zero environmental footprint ambition, more efficiently.

These are some of the more practical benefits:

- They help to build effective compliance programmes, whether it's about anti-bribery or employee privacy.
- They provide a mechanism to make sure all employees are informed about what to do in certain situations (and what not), reducing the risk of unwanted events.
- They put anomalous events into sharper relief when they occur, so it's easier to detect them and mitigate risks.
- They help to build a stronger company culture by sharing the core ethical values and priorities behind the policies and guidelines.

We make sure our policies and guidelines are always fit for purpose – an important footnote in our fast-changing business environment. Whenever we move into new geographical areas, offer new products, target new customers, embrace new technologies or face new laws and regulations, we cross the t's and dot the i's.



E-learning: explaining the *why* and *what* of our Code

Darie Robbrecht, Group Legal Director

“To help our employees make the right choices, we’ve updated our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics. It contains the values and standards we wish to uphold as a company. And it outlines our views on how employees should behave towards co-workers, supervisors, subordinates and the organisation in general. In a brand-new mandatory e-learning, we stress the importance of this document. Moreover, we present a series of specific situations and share advice on how to act if these occur, based on a certain rule in the Code. At the end, there’s a short test and a certificate for those who pass. This way, we make sure everyone familiarises himself or herself with the contents of our Code.”



Partners and memberships

Many artists have sung the lyrics 'One is the loneliest number'. And although they probably weren't singing it with sustainability in mind, it aptly summarises one of the key principles in corporate social responsibility: alone, you can only do this much. That's not a criticism, but a simple fact. Every company has restricted expertise, know-how and experience in certain domains, while resources can't be targeted to do everything at once.

B.I.G. is no exception, but we do strive to fill in the gaps with complementary partners and valuable memberships. Whether we work together with business partners, universities, research institutions, public authorities or other organisations, everyone has something to bring to the table. And connecting the right competencies is essential in bringing us closer to our goal: zero environmental footprint by 2030.

If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.

A selection of our partners and memberships

Universities and knowledge institutes



The top 3 Belgian universities assist B.I.G. with several projects. For example, the University of Antwerp examines new applications for Needle Felt with us, while Ghent University gives specialist advice and helps with contract measurements. KU Leuven is also engaged in various projects, from exploring ways to add more recycled content in our products to optimising the reflection of technical textiles.

One of our high-potential projects with Catalisti, the spearhead cluster for the chemical and plastics industry in Flanders, is PoCoPAdd. The goal: designing new additives to boost post-consumer PVC up to the level of virgin PVC and in turn to increase the amount of post-consumer PVC recycle in current and potential new high-quality products.



For all non-woven related matters, the Nonwovens Innovation & Research Institute (NIRI) helps us to improve product performance and resolve quality issues.



Centexbel, the Belgian textile research and testing centre of which B.I.G. is a board member, shares its textile expertise in various innovation projects, such as CISUFLO – a Horizon2020 project to minimise the environmental impact of the EU flooring sector.

Business partners



Various renowned companies within the data science and digitalisation sector join us in thinking how to optimise our manufacturing processes, supply chains and maintenance systems with Industry 4.0 solutions.

cre·ax

Innovation expert Creax offers human and artificial intelligence to de-risk and accelerate our innovation processes. Joint ideation helps us to identify new business opportunities.



The multidisciplinary services Verhaert offers for industrial design and modelling accelerate our product innovation strategy.



We partner up with the labs of the Agfa Gevaert Group to perform chemical analysis, to define the look and feel of our products, and to experiment with physical characteristics.

Sectoral organisations



We are an active member of VinylPlus, the European PVC industry's commitment to sustainable development, which aims to improve the sustainability performance of PVC.



As a member of the European Man-Made Fibres Association, we benefit from the expertise and advocacy services on a number of issues: trade, environment, energy and technical. Together, we also ensure a level playing field and gather statistics and other data.



EDANA, the leading global association and voice of the non-wovens and related industries, offers a wide range of services that help B.I.G. to achieve its goals.



essenscia

Together with essenscia, the Belgian Federation for Chemistry and Life Sciences Industries, we develop and promote innovative as well as sustainable solutions.



As part of the European Floor Coverings Association (EUFCA), we have access to a wealth of expertise, participate in standardisation and remove trade barriers.



As a partner in the European Plastics Recycling Branch (EPRB) of the confederation representing the interests of the European recycling industries at EU level - also known as EuRIC - we promote the recycling of different types of plastics.

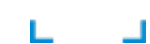


The European Association of Geosynthetic product Manufacturers (EAGM) promotes the knowledge and usage of European synthetic products and underlines their sustainability benefits.

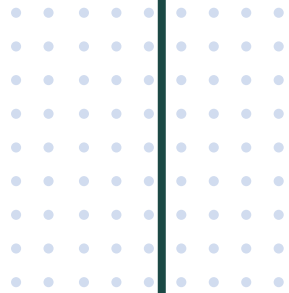


Fedustria, the Belgian federation for the textile, wood and furniture industry, provides valuable advice on many topics, including environment, techniques and energy.

Standardisation bodies



We take part in multiple workgroups for standardisation committees. These address product categories such as resilient, textile and laminate floor coverings (CEN/TC 134 & ISO/TC 219) and geotextiles (CEN/TC 189 & ISO/TC 221) as well as processes, including the circular economy and sustainability for textile and plastic products (Centexbel). This way, we co-create standards in our key markets and are always up to date on the latest developments.



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