

SR 23

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT



bene

Benedikt Wolfram



The best way we can do this is through sustainable production, which is why we develop recyclable products and focus on using environmentally friendly and resource-efficient materials. Wherever possible, we use recycled materials to help conserve natural resources. Our newly developed products can be sorted into separate component types and are designed to be durable and repairable; to avoid waste.

Michael Fried



DEAR READERS, THANK YOU FOR TAKING AN INTEREST IN BENE'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY.

The effects of human activity on our planet are becoming increasingly apparent. It is therefore crucial that we make an active effort to bolster measures that are already in place, to take further action to offset the various damaging developments that have been happening, and to promote positive change.

The principle of sustainability is nothing new at Bene – it has been deeply embedded in our culture for a long time. We have already introduced numerous key measures in the past with the aim of reducing our carbon footprint and this is something we are planning to build on further. For us, it is not just about seeking profitable paths; we also need to set our sights on ideas that are sustainable in the long term. We embrace our responsibility towards society and make sure that our business activities have a minimal impact on the environment.

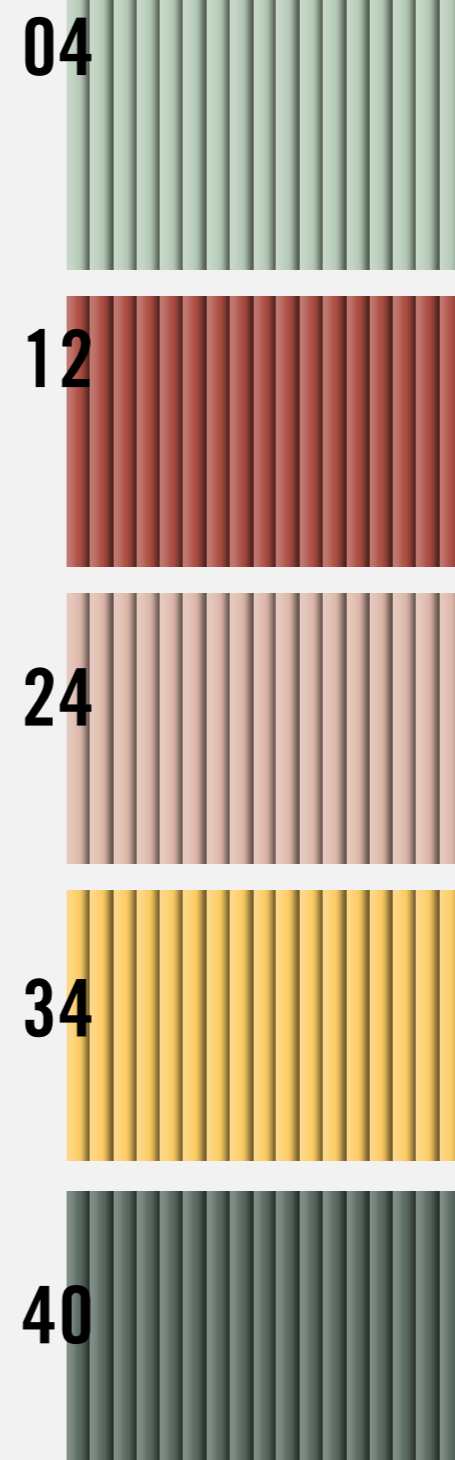
Manfred Huber



The goal we set ourselves is to produce furniture that offers both functional and aesthetic appeal in a way that conserves resources. Our main expertise lies in innovation and design – and in linking the two together. This is how we are able to ensure the lasting success of our business, while also protecting the environment and offering our customers added value.

Yet sustainability is about more than just mitigating our impact on the environment. We also pay close attention to the wellbeing of our employees. By guaranteeing equal opportunities and promoting diversity within our company, we create a positive working environment where everyone can achieve their full potential. We encourage all of our employees, partners and customers to continue to actively support us in achieving our sustainability goals. Every single contribution makes a difference, no matter how big or small. This is how we are building a sustainable future together at Bene.

Best regards,
Michael Fried, Manfred Huber, Benedikt Wolfram
Bene Executive Board



CONTENT

OVERVIEW OF 2021 AND 2022	04
FOCUS ENVIRONMENT	08
FOCUS ON SOCIETY	09
FOCUS COMPANY	10
FOCUS ON PRODUCTS	11
INNOVATION	12
RETHINKING DESIGN PROCESSES	14
SUSTAINABILITY AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION	16
MILESTONES	22
RESOURCES AND PRODUCTION	24
MATERIALS	27
RAW MATERIALS AND SUPPLIERS	27
PACKAGING AND TRANSPORT	32
ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY	32
WASTE MANAGEMENT	33
EMPLOYEES	34
OBJECTIVES & OUTLOOK	40

This year's publication is our fourth sustainability report. This condensed version provides a compact overview of what matters to us here at Bene. If you would like more background information and details, we also offer an extended version containing all aspects, figures and information we are obliged to present according to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). The Sustainability Report 2023 covers the calendar years 2021 and 2022.

System boundaries: Unless otherwise specified, this report is based on the following "system boundaries": economic and employee-related key figures on the one hand – which refer to Bene GmbH as a whole and to the sales offices in Austria and abroad – and environmental data on the other, which refers to the production site in Waidhofen an der Ybbs. Since this is Bene's only manufacturing site, production is fully covered. The production of trade goods and OEM goods (Original Equipment Manufacturer) is not covered.

OVERVIEW

OF 2021 AND 2022

Milestones in the areas
of environment,
society and business



YEARS OF PROGRESS

Product innovations, certifications, CO₂ savings and a new management. The most important developments at a glance.

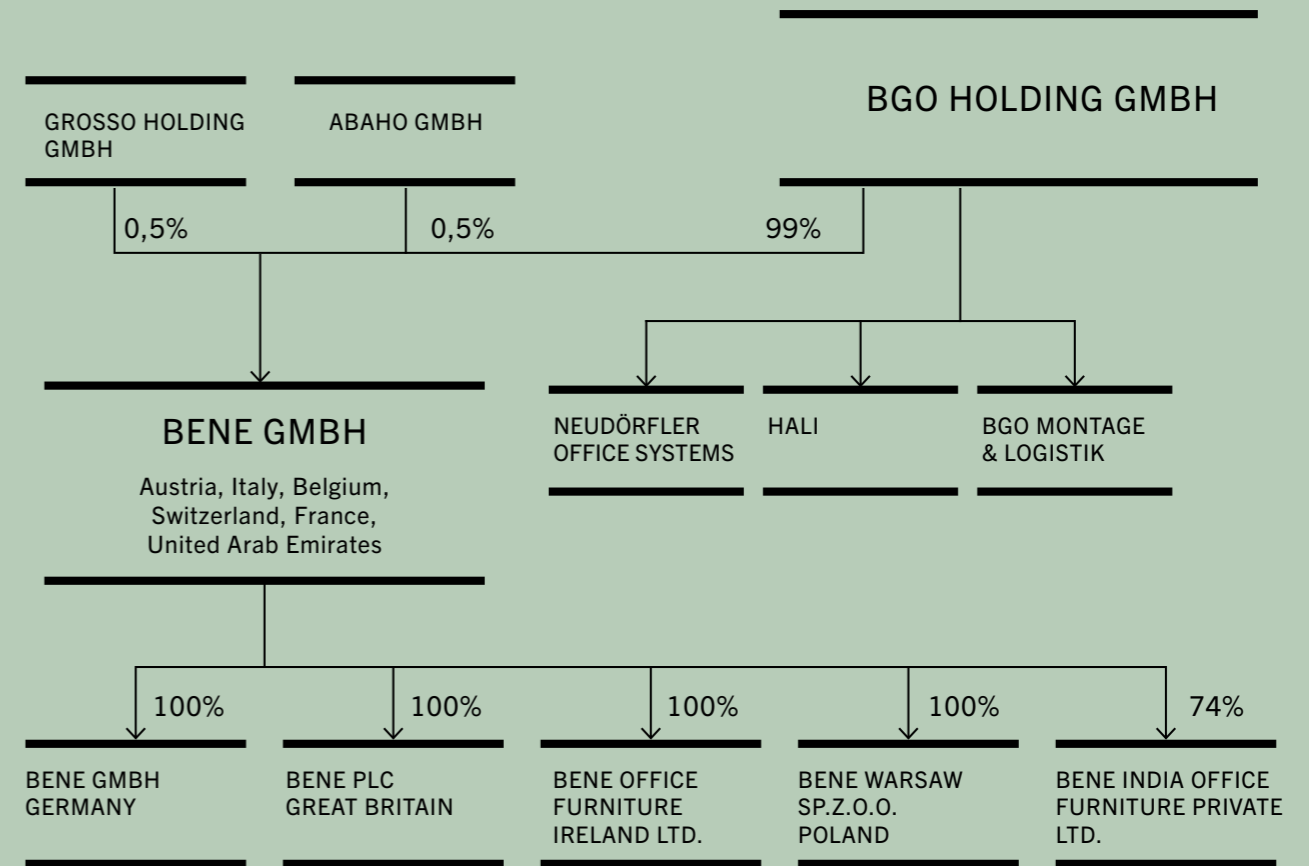
In 1790, a small joinery was founded in the heart of Lower Austria's Mostviertel region. The same year Leopold II was proclaimed Holy Roman Emperor, and another four emperors would follow after him before the Empire was dissolved, and Austria became a republic 1918. The Bene joinery bore witness to many historical events before it began producing office furniture on an industrial scale in 1951, 160 years after the business was established. Since that point, three quarters of a century ago now, we have been through yet more exciting times and watched the office concept evolve – and Bene with it.

BENE IS SYNONYMOUS WITH INSPIRING OFFICE AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS.

With our concepts, products and services, we turn the office into a living space where people can not only work well, but also enjoy what they do. The high standards that Bene has always maintained in terms of functionality, quality and design can be felt in every single project. With an integrated order processing system and consistent just-in-time production, Bene has one of the most modern and efficient production facilities for office furniture in Europe. Bene is transforming itself in a sustainable, growth-orientated and innovative way into a European market leader.

In addition to its production facilities, Bene GmbH runs its own sales offices. Spread across five countries, these branches are registered as companies in their own right and operate as subsidiaries of Bene GmbH.

The ownership structure



SUBSIDIARIES

IN 2021 AND 2022 WE FOCUSED ON THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES :

- Increase customer satisfaction
- Reduce the carbon footprint of our products
- Process raw materials and energy from sustainable sources
- Continue to develop expertise and make it sustainable
- Promote social community and health

More than 35 measures were successfully implemented on the way to achieving these objectives.

FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Our environmental impact across all areas of the company is continually monitored and documented. Since 2011, this information has been presented in sustainability reports. Bene also introduced an environmental management system in accordance with the EN ISO 14001 standard in as early as 2006. Ever since then, all projects – no matter how big or small – that have implications for the environment are included in the sustainability programme and their implementation is assessed based on sustainability criteria. Despite stepping up production in 2022, we have managed to cut the level of emissions generated during our business activities from 621 to 542 tonnes of CO_{2e}¹ (-12%). This includes all emissions directly attributable to the company, such as those generated from heating and fuel used by the vehicle fleet, and those that arise from producing electricity purchased by the company (i.e. scope 1 and scope 2 emissions according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol). The scope 1 emissions were cut to half the level produced between 2016 and 2019. This is largely due to a reduction in the use of fossil fuels for cars owned by the company and less use of oil for heating.



Reduction of CO₂ emissions 2022 despite increase in production

In terms of procuring new company cars for our staff, our focus is shifting more towards electric drive systems. By the end of 2022, our fleet already included 14 electric cars and four hybrid ones, out of 133 cars in total. Four new and efficient biomass boilers (including electrostatic precipitators) were installed in 2022 to replace the old wood chip boilers and oil-fired heating systems. These offer more efficient combustion, which boosts efficiency and reduces emissions. Wood waste from our production site is used as fuel.

In 2021, we became the first furniture manufacturer in Austria to have selected products certified according to the EU Ecolabel. This environmental label, which was launched by the European Commission in 1992, is awarded to products proven to be particularly sustainable.

We managed to minimise the amount of air travel by employees for business trips, keeping it well below the pre-pandemic level. 880,000 kilometres were flown in 2022 and 450,000 in 2021, compared to 2,200,000 back in 2019.

One of the key steps towards achieving the comprehensive circular economy we are aiming for is to recycle waste from production. In 2022, 2,500 tonnes of waste material were delivered to chipboard manufacturers to be made into new tabletops.

Comparative data (since 2020, Bene has been purchasing electricity generated from hydropower, which explains the sharp drop in scope 2 emissions):

Emissions in tonnes CO _{2e}	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Scope 1	1,035	1,040	1,117	1,085	921	597	516
Scope 2	2,397	3,689	4,105	4,075	23	24	26

¹ CO_{2e} = CO₂ equivalents. This unit includes all other greenhouse gases emitted apart from CO₂, converted into CO₂ values.

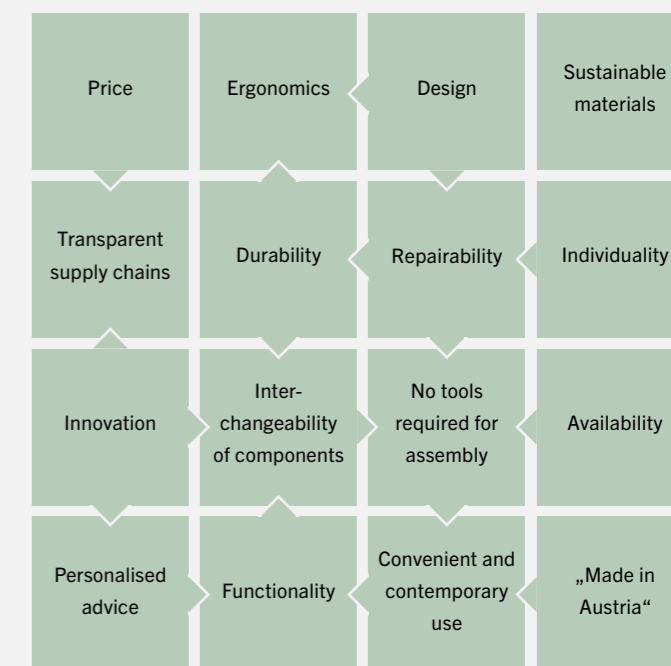
FOCUS ON SOCIETY

Being a leading company makes us an attractive employer within our region. We are conscious of the wide-ranging impact we have on society and take advantage of all the different opportunities this creates. We are always open to enquiries from the wider social community. In 2022, we had the pleasure of welcoming some 1,600 visitors to our production site in Waidhofen, including schoolchildren, students, trade partners and architects.

Thanks to the consistent implementation of the environmental management system according to ISO 14001, this results in continuous improvements as well as checks in the form of internal and external audits. This serves as a guarantee for all our stakeholders that we are constantly pushing ahead in terms of ensuring sustainability at Bene.

When we develop new products, we keep up constant communications with everyone concerned, and we involve them on aspects relating to sustainability too.

For instance, we asked them what is crucial to them when it comes to buying office furniture:²



The people we asked indicate that they are quite likely (with an average rating of six out of ten in each case) to:

- buy reclaimed second-hand furniture
- find out about how office furniture is manufactured before buying it
- approach Bene if they are looking for sustainable office furniture

Further feedback is being used to help develop measures and set the focus for the sustainability report. One question that came up, for example: "How about creating easy-to-cover seating furniture?" We have accepted this feedback and are working on the development.

² Stakeholder survey, n=166, period: March/ April 2023



FOCUS ON THE COMPANY

Responsible management is the key to ensuring lasting success. There was a prevailing sense of optimism and progress in 2021 and 2022 following the turbulent times since the start of the pandemic. Sales increased by 29% from 2021 to 2022, climbing from EUR 136.3 million to EUR 176.4 million.

Bene's innovative strength stood at 31% in 2022. This is measured based on how many sales are generated with products that have been on the market for less than five years. Bene also decided to change the ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system in production, in order to harness existing resources as economically as possible. This new system has not only helped us improve business processes, but it also provides key performance indicators and thus essential information to aid corporate management. 2022 also saw the acquisition of a powder coating plant, enabling us to create greater flexibility and shorten response times.

The Executive Management team was expanded from two people to three in mid-2022. Manfred Huber is now responsible for the operational processes and technical progress of the company as the new Chief Technical Director (COO). The new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is Benedikt Wolfram, who is responsible for both the Finance & Legal department and matters relating to digitalisation. Together with longstanding Executive Board member Michael Fried (Sales, HR, Marketing and Innovation), they form the new Bene Executive Board.

The framework conditions for environmentally friendly and high-quality economic activity have been, and still are being, put in place at corporate level. To pass on relevant knowledge within the company, new employees are provided with comprehensive training and information on sustainability topics is shared with other interested parties (including schoolchildren and customers) through guided tours.

FOCUS ON PRODUCTS

2021

Bene For Home

We entered the B2C (Business to Consumer) market for the first time with BENE FOR HOME, which means it is now offering its trend-setting workstation solutions for the home directly to end customers. By making this move, the Austrian expert for modern working environments is responding to the increased demand for innovative solutions for home offices and presenting a diverse product portfolio for the private consumer area.

bFRIENDS

The bFRIENDS collection is manufactured using a 3D printing process. All bFRIENDS products are made from the petroleum-free bioplastic PLA, which eliminates the use of fossil raw materials in all phases of production. The plastic itself is both recycled and recyclable, so that each accessory can be incorporated into new products when it reaches the end of its life.



2022

CASUAL by Bene

The CASUAL by Bene collection, featuring the CASUAL Bench, Lounge Chair and Table, creates spaces for interacting and connecting within the office environment. Bene made sure that sustainability was a priority in the CASUAL range right from the product development stage: the entire design is based on the resource-saving use of materials.

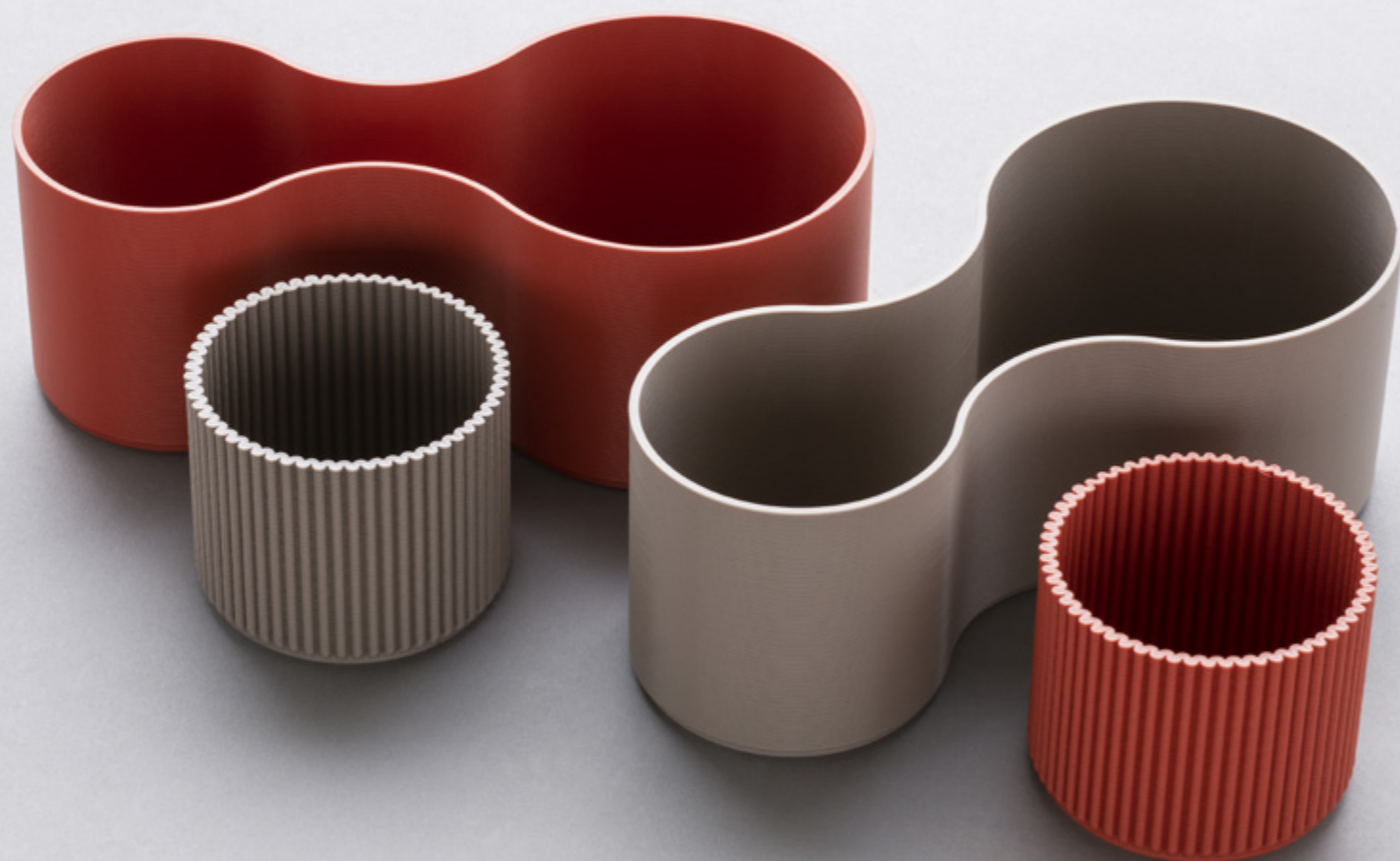
PORTS und STUDIO by Bene Chairs

The new PORTS complements the PORTS design line developed in 2019 and not only brings elegance to the office, but also lends it a homely atmosphere. The new STUDIO Chair, on the other hand, embodies above all comfort, functionality and aesthetics, and does so in perfect balance. It expands the STUDIO design line that has been in existence since 2017.



INNOVATION

Circular Economy, recycling, longevity and the repair of products are becoming increasingly important to us



RETHINKING DESIGN PROCESSES



Circular economy, recycling, durability and repairability of products are becoming increasingly important in the furniture industry. We have long recognised that sustainable design and production not only have environmental benefits, but can also create economic opportunities and improve the customer experience.

The circular economy is at the heart of these efforts. Instead of treating products as disposable, the focus is shifting towards making sure they are still useful beyond their primary life cycle.

This involves processing materials that can be reused or recycled or which are biodegradable. Our efforts to promote recycling are helping us to reduce waste and use resources more efficiently.

Another important aspect is the durability of our products. By opting for high-grade materials and sound workmanship, we can give them the lasting quality they need to provide pleasure for many years to come. This not only offers buyers a more cost-effective solution, but also reduces the need for new resources and the environmental impact of production.



Yet another key factor that is gaining prominence at Bene is repairability. Designing furniture on a modular basis that makes it easy to repair prolongs its useful life even further and means there is less need for spare parts or new products.

Promoting the circular economy, recycling, durability and repairability is not just good for the environment; it also brings benefits for both us and our customers. Using recycled materials and thanks to the efficient use of resources, we save costs. Moreover, customers appreciate durable furniture that they can adapt to their requirements and repair if necessary, so it can provide a significant boost in terms of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

SUSTAINABILITY AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT



Our objective is to produce durable and timeless furniture for the workplace. To achieve this, sustainability is incorporated into all areas of the company – from product development, purchasing, production and logistics right through to product recycling. Many of our furniture items can be repaired, reconfigured and sorted into separate component types, as this is the only way to avoid waste in the long run. All new product developments meet these criteria. Bene as a company and its products have already been awarded various sustainability certificates, which shows that our efforts are being recognised. Nevertheless, we are constantly searching for new solutions to make our products and services even more sustainable.

“We are rethinking our design processes: The entire process of product development is now significantly based on ecological requirements. After all, it is our responsibility as a company to provide customers with products that are as sustainable as possible,” explains Patricia Möckesch, Head of Innovation & Design at Bene. This is the only way to bring about positive changes for our environment and our society. In terms of the design process, the first step is choosing the right components. This means using environmentally friendly and durable materials, such as wood from sustainably managed forests or recycled textiles.

Office furniture has to meet high standards in terms of functionality, so it needs to be designed ergonomically, built to be robust and made from long-lasting materials. A modular design ensures that components are interchangeable and offers the option of repairing individual parts to help prolong the product’s life cycle and usefulness. In addition to the product’s longevity, a decisive factor when designing a piece of furniture is the ability to separate the built-in components by type so that they can be reintegrated into the closed-loop material cycle.

These principles call for creative approaches and genuine innovation in the design process. This involves accommodating ecological, economic and social aspects and creating a timeless design that is appealing on both a functional and an aesthetic level.

Another important consideration is the versatility of the design. Furniture should be designed so that it can serve a variety of purposes or be incorporated into a range of space concepts. Customers can then adapt their furniture over time and continue using it without having to replace it with new tables, chairs, shelves and so on. This helps to reduce consumption and encourages a resource-efficient way of living.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUSTAINABILITY CAN BE INCORPORATED INTO THE INNOVATION AND DESIGN PROCESS IS EXEMPLIFIED BY THESE PRODUCTS

CASUAL by Bene

The CASUAL by Bene collection, which features a bench, a chair and a table, encapsulates our aim to design offices as spaces that strongly encourage people to connect and interact. Economical use of materials was a key factor in designing this collection. The frame for the Casual Bench has been optimised to make it exceptionally light without losing any of its stability. The cushions make it very comfortable to sit on and were also developed with reduced material use in mind.



CASUAL Outdoor

The weather-resistant CASUAL Outdoor collection for terraces and gardens was launched in 2023. In this range, too, sustainability has been factored in right from the design phase: the modular structure makes it easy to change components, thereby making the product last longer and avoiding waste. And if the furniture ever does become unusable, all of the materials can be separated by type and reused. This helps to reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfill.



bFRIENDS

What is impressive about the sustainable accessories in the bFRIENDS series is that they combine extraordinary design with a low environmental footprint, showing just what is possible in terms of sustainability, material development and production. The bFRIENDS range features pen pots, stands, clips, books and decorative items in a range of colours and sizes. The collection is manufactured using the 3D printing process, in a decentralised production at two locations in Great Britain and the Netherlands. The products are made to order, thus avoiding warehousing and also waste. Electricity from renewable energy sources is used for production. The bFRIENDS items are made from the petroleum-free bioplastic PLA (polylactides), that can also be recycled. The plastic itself is both recycled and recyclable, so that each accessory can be reintegrated into the production cycle at the end of its life.

PIXEL by Bene

With its sustainable and innovative design, PIXEL can be a table, a bench, a stool, a stand or many other things. PIXEL makes it possible to design and transform spaces as needed. PIXEL is made of raw, untreated, PEFC-certified pine plywood – the use of wood testifies to our connection to the environment and nature. Each PIXEL has its own unique appearance and the grain gives each piece an individual character. All the plastics used in this product range are made from post-consumer recycled material, which reduces the use of new resources and gives the components a particularly long service life. In addition, all materials are sorted by type. The longevity is also favoured by the variety of possible applications. By using innovative lightweight panels, we have been able to reduce the amount of material used by 40% compared to similar products.



BENE COMPACT FACTORY

The heart of the company is in Waidhofen an der Ybbs. This is where development, design and production are united under one roof. On these approximately 11 hectares of company premises and 4.2 hectares (42,000 m²) of production hall we conceive and build our furniture.

In 2022, the following Bene products were created (with the respective percentage change compared to the previous year):

3,000

pieces of collaborative furniture –
from the Parcs and Docklands series

-9 %

6,400

linear metres of wall

+25 %

65,000

tables

+32 %

28,000

third working levels
and dividing walls

-3 %

5,000

pieces of executive furniture

+26 %

80,000

storage spaces

+12 %

25,000

chairs

+4 %

81,000

pieces for meetings
and workshops

+4 %

9,900

accessoires bFRIENDS

The majority of the products were manufactured in our production facility in Austria. For the production of some of Bene's seating furniture and cooperation furniture and the bFRIENDS accessories, we work closely with European companies.

With a clear commitment to sustainability measures, decisions are made throughout the company that favour the environment and society. Our quality and environmental management system (ISO 9001 and ISO 14001) has been consistently implemented since 2006. And our range of product certificates shows our commitment to healthy, safe and environmentally friendly furniture.

In 2022, Bene improved its FEMB certification from level 2 to level 3 (the highest level). This means that we were able to achieve more points in the impact areas of materials, energy and atmosphere, chemicals management as well as social responsibility.

MILESTONES



Furniture Industry Sustainability Programme. It is an independently certified sustainability programme that ranks highly, particularly in the UK.



ISO 9001 – Quality management sets criteria for quality management systems. ISO 14001 – Environmental management sets criteria for environmental management systems.



The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification is the leading global alliance for promoting, ensuring and marketing active, sustainable and climate-smart forest management. Wood and wood products with the PEFC seal demonstrably originate from ecologically, economically and socially sustainable forestry.



The institution Forest Stewardship Council® ensures that forests are used in accordance with the social, economic and ecological needs of present and future generations.



The EU Ecolabel serves as a uniform label for environmentally friendly products and services. It was initiated by the European Commission in 1992.



Products with the GS mark comply with the requirements of the German Product Safety Act (ProdSG). The GS mark is the only certification mark governed by statute in Europe for product safety.

Industrial production of office furniture begins

Certification according to the standards EN ISO 9001 and EN ISO 14001

Introduction of product life cycle assessments; PEFC certification; FISP certification

First Sustainability Report (Austrian Sustainability Reporting Award)

FSC certification

Second Sustainability Report

Launch of the international “Gesund bei Bene” (Healthy at Bene) programme

Third Sustainability Report

1790 1951 1996 2006 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2014 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022

Company founded

Conversion to water-based varnishes; Austria Quality Seal for wood products

Award as Austrian Model Company; Austrian Ecolabel for products

Blauer-Engel (Blue Angel) certification; Bene joins respACT and UN Global Compact

Greenguard certification

Award as Austria’s best training company of the year for joiners

ISO-38200 certification; Award as Austrian Lead Company

FEMB level certification

Completion of the first photovoltaic system at Bene



The Austrian National Coat of Arms is awarded to companies for exceptional achievements. Companies that have rendered outstanding services to Austria as a business location.



The Austria Quality Seal shows at a glance that the certified company produces controlled, Austrian quality products of traceable origin.



The purpose of this German environmental label is to provide private consumers, institutional bulk consumers and public institutions with reliable guidance for environmentally conscious purchasing.



This certificate is for products that only emit low chemical emissions and contribute to healthier indoor environments.



Guarantees a monitored chain of custody for wood and wood-based products, cork and woody materials; the relevant requirements for monitored supply chains are strict. This ensures traceability, proof of origin and legality.



LEVEL is based on the FEMB sustainability standard; it is the first European certification to cover all the relevant aspects of sustainability.



Bene certified as a Great Place to Work.



The Austria Quality Seal is awarded by OQA – the Austrian Workgroup for the Promotion of Quality. With this quality seal, companies can prove that their extraordinary level of performance sets them apart from the rest.



The Ecolabel is a seal of quality awarded by the Republic of Austria for ecological business that identifies environmentally friendly products and services.



The UN Global Compact is the world’s largest corporate responsibility initiative. The participating organisations commit to following the ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and corruption prevention.



The manufacturer complies with safety, health and environmental protection requirements by means of a self-declaration. Based on the preparation of a conformity assessment and technical documentation, the Declaration of Conformity may be issued, and the CE mark affixed to the product.



Quality Office is a quality mark that combines all criteria for high-quality office furniture, competent advice and customised service. The furniture is certified in ten different categories.



65% of the materials we use are already recycled, meaning they have already served a purpose before being built into long-lasting Bene products.

RESOURCES & PRODUCTION



The environmental impact of PIXEL box production was further reduced during the reporting period; the adjustment legs were replaced with plastic made from 100% post-consumer recycled material.

EXAMPLE PIXEL BOX	
WEIGHT	6 KG
USE OF RENEWABLE MATERIALS	96.1 %
RECYCLING SHARE	2.5 %
EASE OF DISASSEMBLY	100 %
RECYCLABILITY	100 %
HEATING VALUE	32.4 KWH
GREY ENERGY	35.6 KWH
WATER-FOOTPRINT	4.9 KG
STORED CARBON DIOXIDE	10.6 KG CO ₂
CO ₂ -FOOTPRINT	2.6 KG CO ₂ e

BENE PRIORITISES ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MATERIALS

As a responsible industrial company, we focus on efficient and effective use of resources.

MATERIALS

65% of the materials we use are already recycled, meaning they have already served a purpose before being built into long-lasting Bene products.

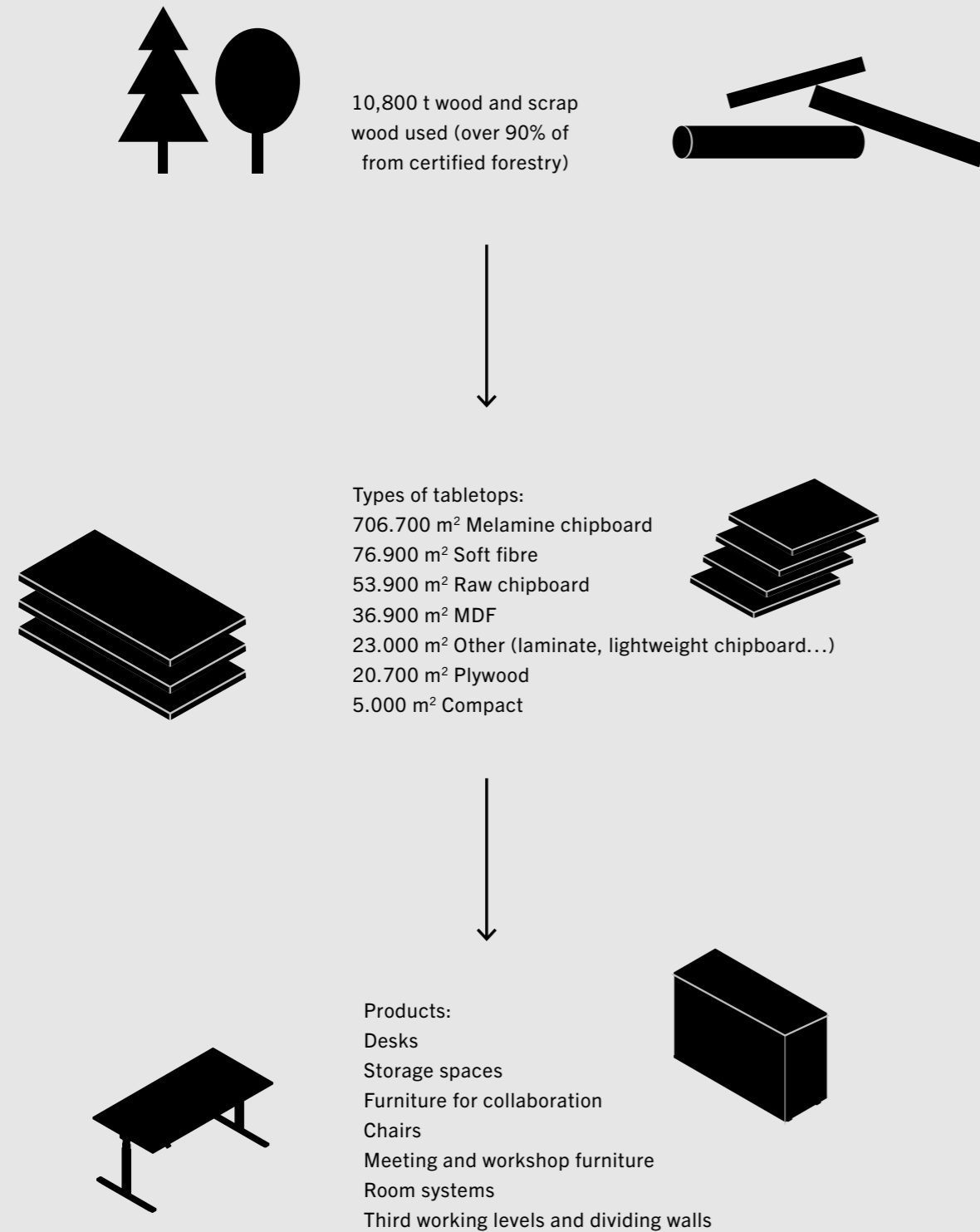
For each of its products, Bene prepares a life cycle assessment with all the data, in particular on the following aspects: Weight, CO₂ footprint, use of renewable materials, share of recycled materials, ease of disassembly, recyclability, heating value, grey energy (from the production of raw materials / upstream chain), water footprint, stored carbon.

RAW MATERIALS AND SUPPLIERS

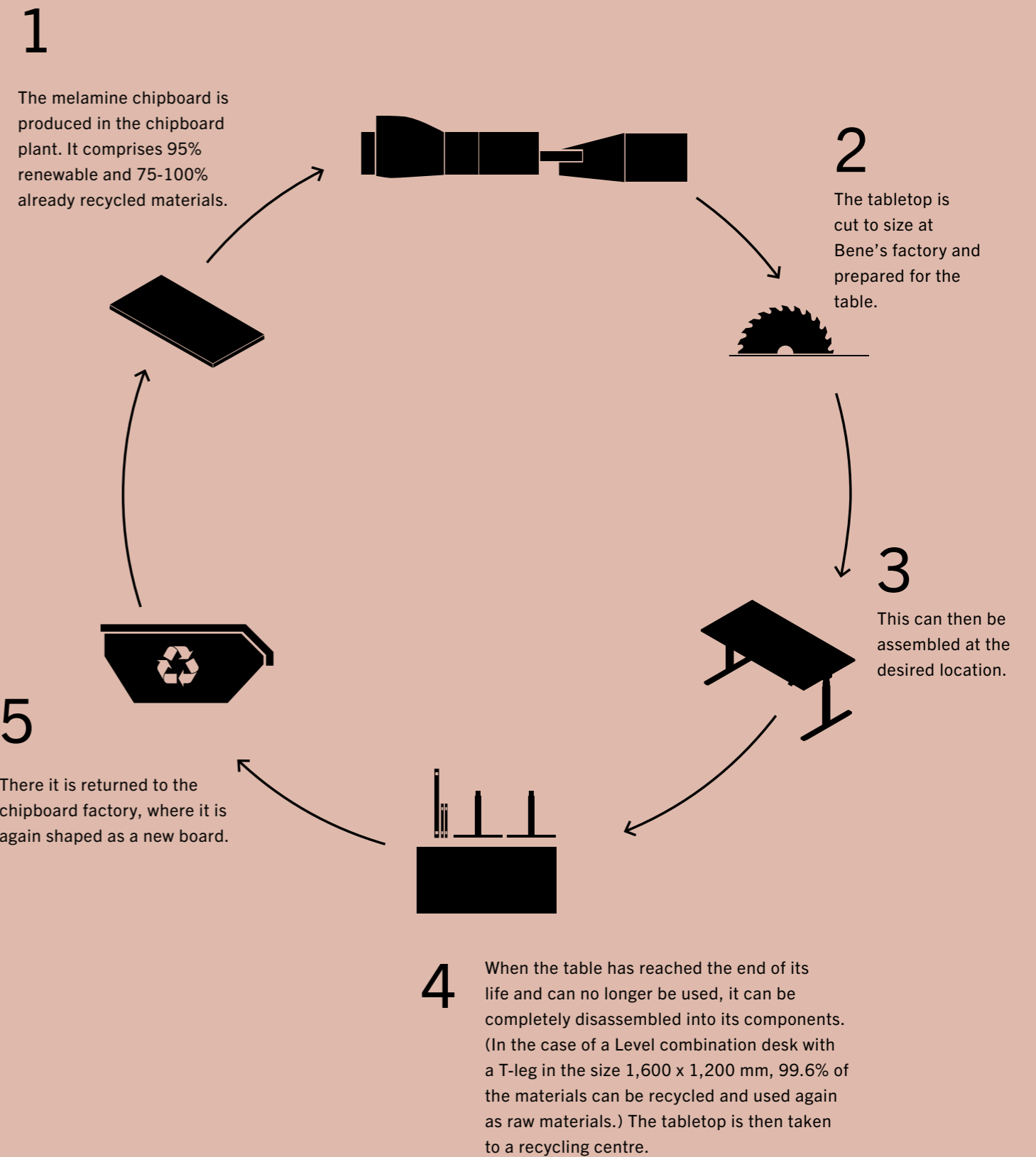
Most suppliers (around 95%) are located within a 500 km radius of our production site in Waidhofen an der Ybbs. Bene's established purchasing policy applies to our entire supply chain. Our purchasing department makes decisions on a daily basis that influence the sustainability and quality of our products. It also connects our suppliers, most of whom are located in European countries and therefore have to comply with minimum ecological and social requirements. Additionally, Bene conducts its own supplier audits and assessments – on quality, environmental factors and occupational health and safety aspects.

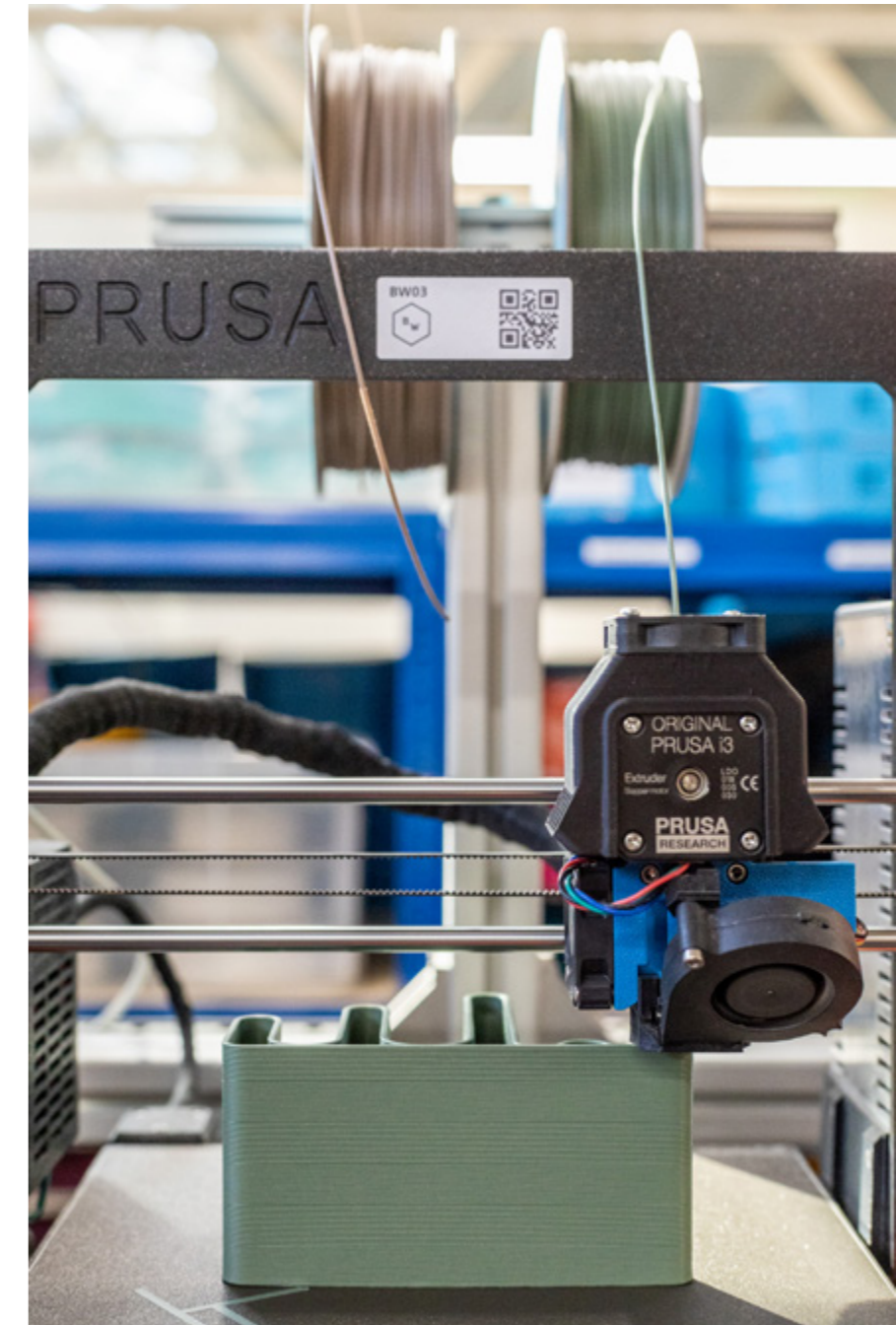
Of the raw material that Bene uses most is wood. Sustainable forestry is the inception and foundation of our supply chain for this material. This ensures the long-term supply of wood for future generations.

BENE'S JOURNEY FROM THE FOREST TO PRODUCTION (2022)



Our objective is to make the circular economy a reality at all levels. Many of the materials we use are already recycled. Let's take a closer look at our tabletops as an example:





bFRIENDS
 bFRIENDS products represent an important step towards achieving a comprehensive circular economy. Already-used plant-based raw materials (some would consider them waste) are turned into office and home accessories using 3D printing – an astounding 9,900 pieces in 2022

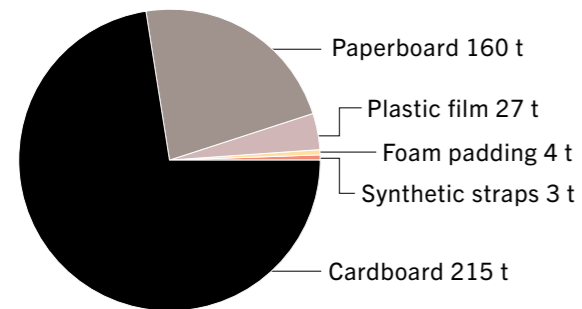
The following materials and quantities (in tonnes) were used in the manufacture of our products:

	2021	2022
Wood	10,393	10,782
Iron/steel	2,380	3,071
Glass	577	737
Packaging	614	707
Aluminium	413	531
Synthetics	377	381
Compact	139	121
Electronic components	69	115
Other provisions	265	272

	2021	2022
Additives	147	128
Textiles	32	39
Adhesives	30	29
Zinc	30	41
Varnishes	18	28
Staining	2	6
Concrete	6	1
Leather	0.5	0.2
Iron casting	0.2	0.2

PACKAGING AND TRANSPORTATION

The packaging materials used are divided as follows:



On average, 90% of the cardboard and paperboard are recycled materials. The transport and assembly of the furniture is handled by the company BGO Montage und Logistik, which belongs to BGO Holding. Every day, approximately 16 swap bodies, 1 semi-trailer, 4 vans and 1 pick-up truck are loaded with Bene products and sent on their way to the companies that use them to furnish and decorate their offices.

In 2022, 117,000 litres of fuel were used for the passenger cars in the company fleet; these are powered by combustion engines (i.e. this was for passenger transport). The company-owned vehicles for transporting goods consumed 14,000 litres of fuel. A total distance of 2,240,000 km was covered, and 449 t of CO₂e were emitted. Before the pandemic, however, in 2019, fuel consumption was twice as high.

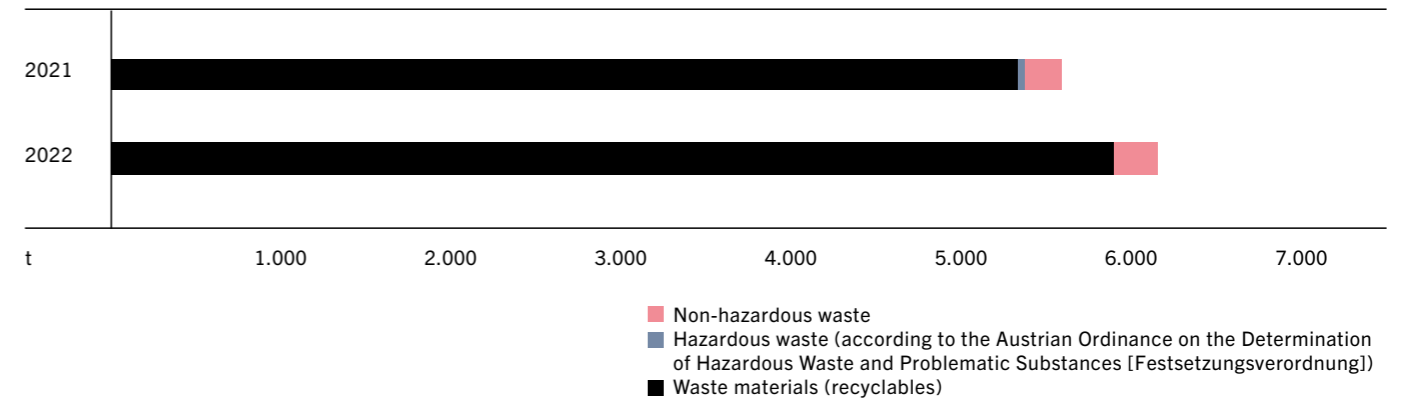
ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

Year after year, old lighting technologies are replaced by LED bulbs. During the reporting period, we were able to convert the lighting in the Paris and Vienna offices, as well as in individual areas at the Waidhofen location. The factory office and social rooms will be switching next at the main office. Since 2020, the electricity for our Austrian locations has come exclusively from hydropower. With the aim of using more electricity from our own generation, Bene installed a photovoltaic system with almost 100 kWp in 2022. Bene is thus committed to using renewable sources in this area as well. This makes us more independent and helps the environment. Over the past five years, our carbon footprint – all emissions from production, electricity supply, transport, provision of materials and waste recycling – has changed as follows:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
CO ₂ footprint per item produced in Waidhofen (in kg)	105	99	82	83	83

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The majority of the materials used can be reused, and we also follow a waste management concept. Waste management officers working for Bene ensure that this uniquely developed concept is implemented and that all legal regulations are also complied with.



Summary (in t)	2021	2022
Non-hazardous waste – not recyclable	234	292
Non-hazardous waste – recyclable	5,283	5,799
Hazardous waste	13	3

The waste per piece produced has developed over the years as follows:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Waste from value added per piece produced (in kg)	27.11	22.11	22.80	22.37	21.79

In 2022, less hazardous waste was produced than in previous years because fewer lead batteries from forklift trucks were disposed of. Furthermore, two waste categories can now be classified as non-hazardous as a result of a reassessment.

Cutting waste is used for heating purposes in the company's boilers. Another part is returned to the manufacturer of the wood-based panel for reuse in the production process.

EMPLOYEES



People are at the centre of our business. At Bene, we understand our craft and work with precision and with a passion for detail.

People are at the heart of what we do. Without people, we would not be a company of the future. At Bene, we are skilled in what we do and produce furniture with precision and attention to detail. No wonder, then, that our apprentices are often successful – not only in their work but also in competitions. Last year, they secured first and fifth place in the national apprentice competition and two victories at regional level. Since 1995, we have trained 79 carpentry apprentices – and thus skilled workers in the region. 36 of them continue to work at Bene. In 2021 and 2022, ten carpentry apprentices graduated.

Bene has a total of 522 employees in Austria (including 21 leasing employees) and another 160 around the world. About twice a year, all employees are informed about current developments in a business update. Of the 661 employees (excluding leasing), 91% have no management responsibilities; 9% are in management. 1 in 5 managers is female. As of the end of 2022, there were 15 registered disabled employees in the Bene Group. Bene GmbH is an Austrian company; the Bene Group comprises our global organisation.

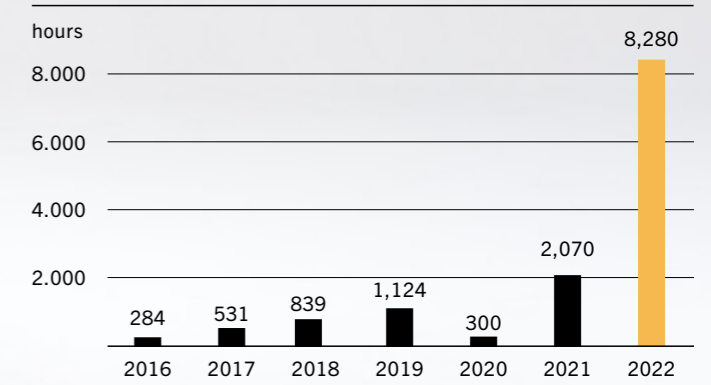
Respectful interaction with each other characterises our actions and has a positive effect both internally and externally.



In 2022, employees took advantage of training and further education opportunities that were not available in the years before due to the pandemic. Bene employees profited from a total of 8,280 hours of training and further education.

501 people work in Austria. The other 160 employees work in the sales offices abroad, mainly in Europe (Belgium, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Ireland, Poland, Switzerland), as well as in the United Arab Emirates and India.

Education and training hours



Bene Group	
Partial retirement	17
Parental part-time work	22
Disabled beneficiaries	15
Apprentices	12
Functions	
Works councils	16
Youth Councils	2

In 2021 and 2022, parents took a total of 239 months (corresponding to 20 years) off for parental leave (parental leave, paternity leave, maternity leave). Fathers took 11% of this time. Bene Group's entire employee turnover decreased slightly in 2022: from 17 to 13%.

Our blue collar and white collar works councils stand by our employees in word and deed. Part-time parental leave? Semi-retirement? Sure! 96 employees benefited from these in 2022.



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of part-time employees	96	97	121	123	125	121	96
Share (in %)	12.9	13.3	15.3	15.0	17.1	18.1	14.1



We place particular emphasis on perfect and modern workplace design for our employees. That is why, for example, we have our own "Gesund bei Bene" (Healthy at Bene) programme. This means that we continuously offer exercise and relaxation programmes as well as campaigns on healthy nutrition.

As of autumn 2022, a new cycle path along the "Ybbstalbahn" railway route runs directly past Bene's premises. Bene also specifically promotes cycling with our "job bike" programme. At least 120 employees have already signed up for it, enabling them to enjoy a new bicycle in return for an attractive usage fee. This increases the number of employees who choose to bike to work and also motivates them to be physically active in their free time.

Our corporate culture promotes performance as well as personal development.



Receiving the title of "Great Place to Work" in 2022 reflects Bene's friendly and supportive corporate culture. Bene was awarded the title in Austria, Germany, the UK and India. And for good reason, because at Bene, our top priorities are:

Team spirit: positive working environment and corporate culture – family-friendly, supportive, full of humour

Freedom and scope: taking responsibility, creating things independently and having your say

Passion: passion, joy, thematic commitment

Pride in our brand: identifying with the brand – "Made in Austria", the company's rich tradition, innovation, design awards

Variety: varied business segment, international dimension and innovation

Working conditions: flexible working hours, home office, good infrastructure links, a family-friendly attitude, a flat hierarchy

OBJECTIVES & OUTLOOK

Bene's growth is sustainable,
growth oriented, innovative
and leading in Europe.



OUR COMMITMENT CONTINUES

We have prepared a comprehensive set of new measures for the near future. For example, by 2024, in the area of procurement, we will be focusing on packaging (recyclable packaging, use of material from sustainable forestry) as well as on increasing the recycling share and the ease of disassembly of our products in production. This represents a piece in the jigsaw puzzle of our vision to manufacture completely recyclable products. In the company fleet, we are gradually converting to electric drives. The roof of the production hall will be renovated and equipped with a photovoltaic system that will significantly contribute to our electricity supply with an output of 3 MWp (or 3,000 kWp). As part of the work carried out on the roof, we will also improve the insulation, in turn reducing our heating energy requirements.

In 2023, part of the sealed area at the Waidhofen site will be “unsealed”, making room for a biodiversity paradise for plants and insects, as well as for all of Bene employees. Five themed islands invite people to work and hang out there. And for the first time in the company’s history, we will have our own bees that will enjoy the flowering scented plants across 130 m² of flower meadow and beds. Crops with yields for snacking, such as blueberries and grapes, will also feature. Currently, four-fifths of the company’s site in Waidhofen are sealed (built on) – on the remaining fifth, nature can flourish with meadows, trees and shrubs.

Sustainability criteria will be a focal point in the selection of newly used textiles. Bene develops modular products that can be dismantled and repaired, meaning customers can replace spare parts themselves if necessary. We are constantly striving to ensure that all products are recyclable and ideally made entirely from recycled materials. Textiles being used for the first time must meet various minimum criteria in accordance with a sustainability scheme before they can be used at Bene. Even though we cannot predict the future, we are still sure of one thing: the digital transformation and the climate crisis will continue to shape and impact our everyday working lives. Bene develops smart office concepts that adapt to the strategies and requirements of its customers, as well as to their environmental conditions. Sustainability is high on Bene’s agenda at all levels: both in small teams and in corporate decision-making. For the future, we are striving to achieve the following:

To be one of the most sustainable companies in our industry by 2030. To be CO₂ neutral (Scope 1 and 2) and all our new product lines to be recyclable by 2030 at the latest. In an effort to always offer sustainable products and services to our customers, we are committed to sustainable action and encouraging and practising sustainable actions such as environmental protection, primarily circular economy, social diversity and inclusion.

These sustainability goals will shape our corporate activities until 2030:

1. Aligning the entire value chain with the principles of sustainability – in particular:

- Developing new product lines that are recyclable
- Developing an action plan to reduce all emissions (Scope 1-3)
- Consistently using sustainable and recyclable materials

2. Integrating sustainability into our corporate culture – in particular:

- Raising awareness for sustainability and social responsibility
- Promoting variety and inclusion
- Ensuring optimal working conditions for everyone at Bene





The logo for Bene GmbH, featuring the word "bene" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter 'b' is significantly larger than the other letters, and the 'e' at the end has a unique, slightly irregular shape.

INSPIRING OFFICES. SINCE 1790.

Bene GmbH

Schwarzwiesenstraße 3
3340 Waidhofen an der Ybbs
Austria
bene.com
Tel. +43 7442 500-0
office@bene.com

VAT no. ATU70065136
FN 444783v
GLN no. 9110022782844
Eori no. ATEOS1000072483
DUNS no. 300486498
Tax no. 09-258/3699
IPPC-Nr. AT-30221

 @bene.office
 @beneoffice
 /company/bene
 /beneoffice
 /beneoffice