



**ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL,
AND GOVERNANCE PRIORITIES**



CONTENT

2

Who We Are

What We Do

Our Values & Ambitions

3

Our Sites

Our Certifications

4

Our Priorities

5

Organic

11

Social

15

Environmental

19

Governance

WHO WE ARE

Vossen & Co is a **family business** established in 1987 and based in **Brussels, Belgium**. We are distributors of mainly **certified organic essential oils** and **vegetable oils**.

WHAT WE DO

We distribute our essential oils and vegetable oils both from stock at our warehouse located in Brussels and directly from our production countries. Our oils are predominantly produced in **Asia** and **Africa**, coming from our own **subsidiaries in Vietnam and Nepal** and from our network of trusted and reliable partners, with whom we have preferential long-term agreements. This includes long-standing **partnerships** in **India, Albania, South Africa** and **Zimbabwe**.

We strive to provide only top-quality, **100% pure and natural** products and take a strong focus on the production of certified organic essential oils. Not only does this ensure a high-quality standard but it also aligns with our values of supplying oils which have been produced in a **fair** and **environmentally sustainable** manner.

OUR VALUES & AMBITIONS

We have always prioritized environmental sustainability and therefore focused on **organic production**.

It is also fundamental that all those who work with us and for us are supported by Vossen & Co in their wellbeing. We are committed to ensuring an environment of **support, inclusion, diversity** and fostering **progress**.

We have taken direction from the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** to guide us in identifying how we are positively contributing to sustainable development.

OUR SITES



Head Office & Warehouse:
Belgium

Our Subsidiaries:

- Malé International, **Nepal**
- Moonflower Oils & Spices, **Vietnam**

Our Long-Term Partnerships:

- **India**
- **South Africa**
- **Zimbabwe**

Our Trusted Suppliers:

- **Albania**
- **Ethiopia**
- **Indonesia**
- **Somaliland**

OUR CERTIFICATIONS



CERTIFIED ORGANIC
AS PER REGULATION
(EU) 2018/848



KLBD
KOSHER
CERTIFIED



COSMOS
CERTIFIED
CERTIFIED ORGANIC
AS PER
COSMOS STANDARDS

OUR PRIORITIES

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



15 LIFE
ON LAND



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



14 LIFE
BELOW WATER



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION





ORGANIC



OUR ORGANIC PHILOSOPHY



At Vossen & Co we focus on the organic production of our oils to offer products of a high quality in an ecological and sustainable way.

More than 95% of the essential and vegetable oils produced and imported by Vossen & co are certified organic.

We recognise the importance of protecting and restoring biodiversity, promoting the sustainable use of ecosystems, as well as supporting the livelihoods of our suppliers.

Organic agricultural practices are fundamental in achieving the sustainable development goals and contribute to our company values in the following ways:

**>95%
CERTIFIED
ORGANIC**



THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF ORGANIC

GROWING & COLLECTING:

- ⓧ Unsustainable farming practices cause the degradation of soil which contributes to the release of significant amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. Organic farming practices instead sequester and **store large amounts of carbon**.
- ⓧ Additional agroecological practices can be applied on organic farms for optimized environmental protection. Our farmers use processes of **crop rotation, intercropping and organic material composting**. These practices actively contribute to **soil health**.
- ⓧ Organic soils have a 137% higher water infiltration rate than conventional soils (IFOAM, 2022). This improved **water retention capacity** makes them more resilient to changing climactic conditions, providing flood protection. These soils are also able to produce higher yields under drought conditions in comparison to conventional systems, again improving resilience.
- ⓧ Intensive and mismanaged farming leads to a decline in **soil nutrients**. Organic farming practices protect these nutrient stores which are vital for plant growth.
- ⓧ Organic farming is more **supportive of biodiversity**, with organically managed lands hosting '30% more species and 50% more individuals' in comparison to conventional agricultural processes (IFOAM, 2022).

13 CLIMATE ACTION



15 LIFE ON LAND



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



- ⓧ The production of agrochemicals emits significant amounts of CO₂. An organic system is a **pesticide free** one and therefore more environmentally sustainable. This also ensures that we are not contributing to the harmful runoff of pesticides into waterways.

PROCESSING:

- ☞ We encourage and help to establish processing units close to the harvesting areas as to **minimize the transportation of raw materials.**
- ☞ The **water** used for distillation is **recycled** wherever possible, and the **waste raw material** recovered after distillation is either **composted** or dried and used as **mulch or fuel.**

13 CLIMATE ACTION



THE SOCIAL BENEFITS OF ORGANIC

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



- The ILO emphasizes the health risks for rural agricultural workers who work with or in exposure to agrochemicals. Organic procedures prohibit the use of these chemicals ensuring **healthier working environments** for our farmers in developing countries.

- Together with the help of local partners and experienced agronomists, we train our farmers and collectors in sustainable agriculture and collection practices. In this way organic agriculture is contributing to the **upskilling of rural workers** and providing them with the knowledge and capabilities to **promote sustainable development**.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



- Agriculture acts as a tool to **uplift rural economies** by providing communities with employment opportunities.
- The World Bank states that growth in the agriculture sector is two to four times more effective than other employment sectors in increasing incomes in impoverished areas (World Bank, 2023).
- We support our suppliers and their local communities with **fair and long-term partnerships**.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



ORGANIC & GOVERNANCE

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



- Organic processes guarantee improved environmental protection as this sustainable agricultural practice has a **well-regulated control system**.
- We provide our producers with all the necessary assistance in obtaining **organic certification**. This involves supporting them with the paperwork involved and financial resources required.
- **All our organic oils adhere to the strict international and European regulations** and our official certifications make it easy for our customers to trust in the product they are receiving.





SOCIAL

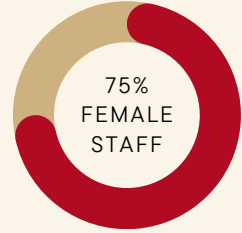


DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Here at Vossen & Co **>75% of our staff are women**. The highest positions within our company are all held by women, including our General Manager.

The protection and inclusion of all our staff is vital and that is why clauses **against discrimination and sexual harassment** are included within our internal work regulations, both in our code of conduct and in our employees' signed contracts. We not only uphold respect for gender equality, but also reject religious and racial bias, and stand in full support of the LGBTQ+ community.

We also provide **flexible working conditions**. 100% of office staff has the possibility to work from home at least once a week.



ASSOCIATIONS



We have been a member of the **European Federation of Essential Oils** since 2005. Our General Manager Elisabeth Vossen has been on the board of directors of the EFEO since 2013 and was president from June 2020 to June 2022.

These roles have all been volunteer activities. As such the team at Vossen & Co have dedicated their own time and resources to give back to the essential oils sector. Part of our General Manager's commitment to the EFEO has involved travel to different production countries, informing and educating on essential oil regulations, thus helping those involved enrich their understanding of the industry.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Vossen & Co value potential over diplomas. We encourage professional development and, through continuous training, allow for role progression and the strengthening of skills.



HEALTH & SAFETY

We have a **'Global Prevention Plan'** in place. This plan outlines a comprehensive well-being policy applicable to our office and warehouse staff. It involves criteria relating both to physical and mental welfare as well as the safety measures at our two Belgian sites. This plan is updated every five years and assessed annually to ensure standards are being met.

In addition, we have **annual health and safety checks** undertaken by an external company called 'Attentia'. They investigate both our office and warehouse and advise on any precautions to take or changes to make.

We continuously try to enhance the working experience for our staff, for example by installing an air filtration system in our warehouse. This is used during oil filtering and packaging processes to purify the air ensuring a **healthy working environment.**







ENVIRONMENTAL





ENERGY

At our Brussels headquarters we have **100% green electricity contracts**. Our electricity is supplied by solar and wind sources, making it entirely renewable. Our electricity consumption at our warehouse is also covered by solar panels on the roof.

Our gas installation at our Brussels office is a **cogeneration system**. This appliance is the more environmentally conscious choice **saving 30.9% of energy** that would have been wasted with a conventional system and transforming it into electricity.

Belgium has a meticulous **recycling** and waste management system, and we sort our waste accordingly.



TRANSPORT

Transport to work for our employees:

Although many companies choose to provide their employees with company cars, this does not align with our environmental values. Instead, all of our employees are provided with **free public transportation** to and from work with **77% of our staff choosing green mobility** (including electric bikes).

We are also working on the electric replacement of the cars which are used at Vossen & Co, with **one out of the two vehicles now fully electric**.

Transport of our oils:

Through the benefit of our warehouse, Vossen & Co in Brussels is the central hub for the distribution of our products. This reduces the need for the shipment of small quantities of oils from the production countries to our customers, who are globally scattered. Instead, we focus on **large, consolidated shipments** to reduce the amount of travel emissions.

This also applies to the transport of our oils from our warehouse stock to our customers. We encourage consolidated shipments of multiple oils and orders so as to reduce the number of journeys required.

SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Our yearly team building activity not only brings together our staff, but also centers around social and environmental issues that we find important to address, such as homelessness, global warming, or social inequalities.

Through 'Serve the City, Brussels' we brought food, blankets and personal hygiene products to the homeless for their 'Street Kindness' campaign.



At the beginning of 2023 we organized the donation of protective face masks to the University of Lviv in Ukraine. These masks were then distributed to medical posts for first aid care as the war with Russia continued.

To further enhance our education on climate matters, all employees at Vossen & Co took part in a 'Climate Fresk' workshop.





GOVERNANCE



- ✓ At Vossen & Co we are in **full compliance with local, national and international regulations** which are applicable to our business.
- ✓ As a member of the **EFEO**, we also adhere to their **code of conduct** requiring "all members to adopt a **transparent** and **ethical** approach to standard operating practice within the Essential Oil industry" (EFEO, 2023).
- ✓ We value an equal and non-hierarchical work environment. We have a **horizontal structure** in our workplace with no fixed chain of command.
- ✓ We hold **regular team meetings** involving our entire office staff. This allows for **open communication**, ensuring all individuals have a forum in which they can discuss any concerns constructively as well as allowing for the brainstorming and combining of ideas.
- ✓ **Data protection and cybersecurity** are critical components of our commitment to responsible business practices. In line with this, we have actively engaged all employees in an **awareness campaign**, ensuring that each team member understands the importance of safeguarding sensitive information and maintaining robust security protocols.

ETHICAL CHARTER AND CODE OF CONDUCT

At Vossen & Co, we believe that **ethical business practices** can drive transformative change for both people and the planet. Guided by internationally recognized principles, we are building a **responsible, sustainable, and equitable supply chain**. However, we aspire to go beyond these principles, integrating our own core values of environmental sustainability and social equity into our **Code of Conduct**.

By adhering to organic and regenerative agricultural practices in the production of our essential oils, we actively protect biodiversity and ecosystems while contributing to the upliftment of rural communities. This Code of Conduct reflects not only our **compliance with international standards** but also our **commitment to exceeding them**, fostering a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable way of doing business.

We view our **suppliers** as **essential partners** in this journey, and the principles outlined in this Code of Conduct are fundamental to our collaboration with them. By upholding these values, our suppliers demonstrate a shared commitment to responsible business practices, sustainability, and the well-being of workers, communities, and the environment. They commit to adhering to these principles at a minimum and are responsible for ensuring that their own suppliers uphold them as well.





contact@vossenbio.com



+32 2 344 91 76



www.vossenbio.com



Av. Van Volxem 264, C1
1190 Brussels, Belgium