

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEOs

# (Y)OUR FUTURE BEGINS WITH SUSTAINABLE THINKING

THROUGH ITS VARIOUS BUSINESS LINES, THE CFE GROUP PLAYS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN THE EVOLUTION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT, IN A BROAD SENSE, AND OF OUR LIVING TOGETHER. A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THAT THE THREE DIVISIONS – DEME, CFE CONTRACTING AND BPI REAL ESTATE – TAKE TO HEART, AS EVIDENCED BY THEIR SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENTS AND THEIR DESIRE TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL. A LOOK BACK AT THE YEAR 2021, WHICH WAS MARKED BY RECONQUEST AND TRANSFORMATION.



**PIET DEJONGHE & LUC BERTRAND**  
 MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE CFE GROUP  
 & CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sustainable and innovative, the achievements of the CFE Group are part of a long-term vision of our society. Building the future is the goal of all the divisions, whose different business lines and know-how combine through ever-stronger synergies. Luc Bertrand, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Piet Dejonghe, Managing Director, and the managers of the three divisions, Jacques Lefèvre (BPI Real Estate), Raymund Trost (CFE Contracting) and Luc Vandenbulcke (DEME), take stock of the past year and explain to us the renewed ambitions of all the entities.

“The largely positive results of the last twelve months and the record results that we are reporting confirm the relevance of our governance and allow us to approach the future with serenity», notes Luc Bertrand, Chairman of the Board of Directors. “Despite a difficult context, marked by a global pandemic that has affected all sectors of the economy, the CFE Group as a whole has been able to continue to develop and achieve its objectives. The restructuring efforts undertaken over the past six years, and the sometimes courageous decisions that we have taken have borne fruit. Our

strategic approach to sustainability has also demonstrated its importance in even more concrete terms, particularly at CFE Contracting and BPI Real Estate. These developments led us to take the decision in 2021 to split our Group into two independent companies. DEME will separate from the other two divisions from 2022.”

#### **A NEW CHAPTER**

Piet Dejonghe, Managing Director, underlines the importance of this major transformation: “This demerger makes it possible to more clearly define the identities and



corporate projects of DEME and of what is now called CFE 3.0. As the two companies work in distinct markets and sectors, they will be able to adapt their governance even better to these specificities and to position themselves even more clearly vis-à-vis their customers, partners and shareholders, but also vis-à-vis current and future employees. From the spring of 2022, we are going to enter into a new dynamic situation that has been made possible by the excellent results of the Group as a whole and, in particular, by the excellent development of BPI Real Estate and CFE Contracting in recent years. The net result for 2021 is three times

higher than that of 2016, which is undeniably a great achievement and confirms the validity of our commitments”.

“DEME will continue its momentum and, of course, will remain a key player in the fields of dredging and offshore wind power. The award of a second major contract in the United States for the installation of the foundations and cables of the largest offshore wind farm in the country to date, is the reward for 15 years of investment and development by DEME in this sector, while also demonstrating the strong potential of this market internationally. Offshore wind

power is coming of age on the other side of the Atlantic, and we are participating in its development in the same way we have done in Europe and will soon do in Asia, which bodes very well for the future. For their part, BPI Real Estate and CFE Contracting will strengthen their links and synergies, in line with the progress made, in particular, in 2021».

#### **TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

“More than ever, operational excellence is at the heart of our business plan. The Fit 4 Future initiative is a part of this strategy, and is one of the most telling examples.

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LUC BERTRAND

This approach to analysing our processes has the objective of structurally improving our results, by making them more stable and more predictable. All the Belgian entities of the construction segment are taking part in this large-scale project, through working groups bringing together teams from Van Laere, BPC Group and MBG. This has already enabled us to develop new working methods and, in particular, to implement a new integrated management software package (PGI), in addition to a whole series of common digital tools. Here, we are laying the solid foundations of what CFE 3.0 will be, with an efficient development platform that will allow us to work on all our assignments and all our projects in a fully integrated manner.”

These developments are also based on a sustainability policy that is still anchored in the DNA of the Group: “Putting sustainability at the heart of our work is not a matter of opportunism but the result of careful thought. It is a strategy that drives out waste and non-quality, promotes innovation, opens up business opportunities for us, strengthens our growth, and permits us to assume our social responsibility to the full. The work of identifying the elements that best match the nature of our activities

- among the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations Organisation - resulted in the formulation of key performance indicators (KPIs) by which we can clearly measure the progress made. 2021 marked the concrete implementation of a whole series of measures in the various entities of CFE Contracting and at BPI Real Estate, as well as the appointment of new sustainability officers. The stronger integration that will result from the split of the Group in 2022 will allow the various sustainability initiatives to be aligned even better.”

### A GLOBAL VISION

In 2021, BPI Real Estate confirmed its driving role in the construction of the urban spaces of the future, and reaffirmed its long-term vision, as explained by its CEO Jacques Lefèvre: “We anticipate the developments in the market by relying, in particular, on innovation. This means that we conceive our projects as real estate activities that must offer real services that allow us to adapt over time to the needs of our clients and to urban transformations.

The approach, which is linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, is now anchored in our procedures and allows us to analyse and determine the precise

structuring criteria for the selection and the design of each project. This includes, in particular, two essential aspects, namely the carbon footprint and the rational use of resources. There is a great demand in the market for buildings that integrate these issues throughout their life cycle, and BPI Real Estate is a pioneer here. We have been obtaining BREEAM certificates on all our developments for several years now, and are systematically aiming for even higher levels.”

« BPI Real Estate’s ability to focus on long cycles allows the Group to provide real answers to the crucial questions of housing and the evolution of the urbanisation of cities. Our experience in the field of redevelopment – and I’m thinking in particular of the Grand Poste project in Liège – or in the field of wooden construction – for which the new headquarters of CFE, BPI Real Estate, BPC Group and Wood Shapers in Brussels will be the showcase – are real assets in a market that is increasingly demanding innovation and sustainability. The synergies with the other entities, which will be reinforced in the new structure resulting from the split with DEME, are essential in this sense. The sharing of experiences, a flowing coordination, a methodology and a

**LUC VANDENBULCKE**  
(DEME)



common logic ... are so many constituent elements of an ever stronger identity. In order to meet the challenges of tomorrow's real estate development and construction, digital tools have now become a necessity. BPI Real Estate has undergone a real digital transformation, the first stage of which was an overhaul of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) in 2021, in terms of both sales and marketing. This significant progress foreshadows other transformations in the years to come, which will also be driven by our internal synergies."

### PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

"Just like BPI Real Estate, CFE Contracting experienced a tremendous upswing in business in 2021 that far exceeded our expectations," continues Raymund Trost, CEO of CFE Contracting. "The developments in Poland, in particular, are excellent, and have contributed significantly to this improvement. But it is above all the synergies between the entities that have driven this success. We achieve high levels of excellence on our sites thanks to the close cooperation between our various business lines. By working hand in hand with BPI Real Estate and Wood Shapers, we were able to realise the innovative Wooden project in Luxembourg, and, by pooling their skills, BPC Group, Van Laere and VMA have contributed to the sustainable ZIN site in Brussels."

"These synergies are coupled with a desire to transform and improve our businesses. We have given ourselves the means to do so with the Fit 4 Future operation, which brings together a series of programmes aimed at redefining the management of our construction activities. We want to sustain the considerable progress made in the field of sustainability over the past two years by further improving our operational excellence and combining it with digitisation and innovation. In order to do this, we are also banking on several growth vectors, in particular wood construction and industrial automation."

"It's important to underline the concrete and pro-active aspect of our sustainability policy. The substantial investments that have been dedicated to this over the past three years are the proof. This is not just window



**JACQUES LEFÈVRE**  
(BPI REAL ESTATE)

dressing, but a profound change, simultaneously linked to the needs of our society, our entrepreneurial responsibility and the demands of the market. CFE is a pioneer in these fields, particularly in its global approach, which integrates a vision of buildings in the broadest sense, from their design to their impact on their environment. I would add the human factor, which is at the heart of our business and without which we could not accomplish anything. These are above all our teams, which are essential to the success of our projects, but also include our partners. In all these relationships, sustainability also depends on people, on talent and on know-how."

### ACTORS OF CHANGE

Luc Vandenbulcke, CEO of DEME agrees: "2021 has once again demonstrated the strength and resilience of our employees,



**RAYMUND TROST**  
(CFE CONTRACTING)

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RAYMUND TROST

thanks to whom we have been able to ensure the continuity of our projects around the world. Order books have reached an all-time high, which would in itself be a tremendous success in normal times, but which takes on even more value in the context of a global pandemic. The decision to split the CFE Group into two separate companies gives DEME the opportunity to develop its own governance and better promote its potential and ambitions to its shareholders, employees and partners.”

“Sustainability remains a fundamental theme, in which DEME continues to play a leading role, with positions on the subject perfectly aligned between the three poles of the Group. Underlying trends such as climate change, increased pollution, rising sea levels and population growth require

solutions. After the global threat of the pandemic, an even greater emphasis should be placed on these issues. DEME is well placed in these areas, thanks in particular to our diversified portfolio of solutions.”

“Innovation is a key driver of these changes. Our investment program incorporates the latest technologies on board our vessels, which allows us to offer even more sustainable solutions and to significantly reduce environmental impacts. Our four activity lines - dredging, offshore, environment and infra - all play an essential role for the community and for the future of our planet. We have a social responsibility in the strict sense here, which we are assuming to the full. As proof, more than one billion of DEME’s turnover relates to renewable energies or de-pollution.”