

ADVENTURES IN UTOPIA

SHAMBALA

IMPACT REPORT
2023





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ABOUT THIS REPORT

Welcome to our 2023 Impact Report! This is our latest foray into the figures behind the festival – and it’s a biggie...

We’ve made some huge leaps and bounds into new territory, looking further, wider, and deeper into the environmental data than ever before! We’re committed to total transparency – it helps us think about how to lower the dials on our consumption, planetary impact and how we do things.

As ever, it takes absolutely everybody involved in Shambala (crew, artists, audience, suppliers and beyond!) doing their bit, to reduce our impacts and contribute to a liveable future – so a big thank you to everyone who did their bit this year, for helping us on this journey.

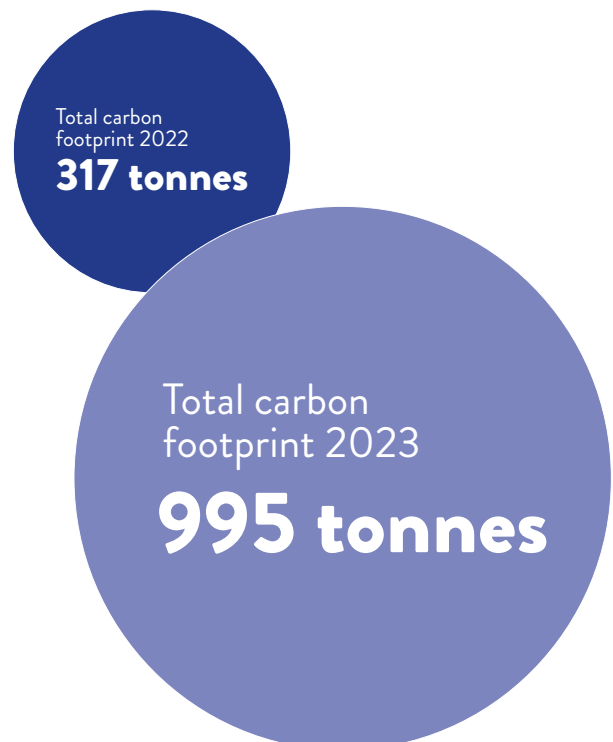
SHAMBALA IN NUMBERS (like never before!)

Carbon Footprint:

Our total carbon footprint has sky rocketed compared to last year.... but don’t panic! This is because we’ve measured in far, far more detail than ever before.

We are getting more granular on data and wider in scope, to better understand our full impacts, at the festival and beyond.

So, as a reminder, here’s how things looked in 2022, vs in 2023.



Whilst 2023's footprint may seem depressingly high compared to 2022, this is due to our team going to deliciously nerdy new depths when measuring the data. For the first time, this year, we've got data on:

- Third party travel emissions including artist travel
- Transport of all our infrastructure
- Food & drink related emissions and impacts*
- Crew and suppliers' travel
- Life cycle emissions of all the materials used that become waste**
- The emissions of the materials we purchase***

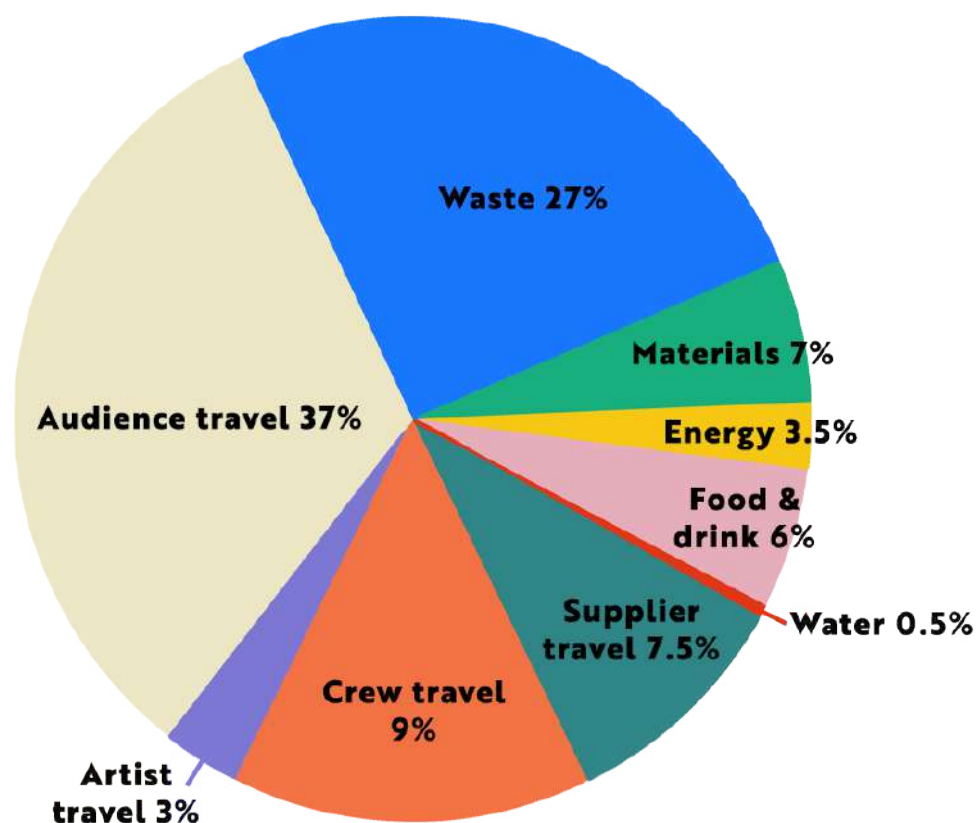
Sources:

* Klimato Food impact tool

**Creative Climate Tool (Julie's Bicycle)

***Circular Festivals (GCDF) Monitor

- **WASTE** - This has sky rocketed onto our agenda. Our reporting partners have significantly widened the scope of calculations for materials-related emissions, which now includes the full lifecycle from production to end of life treatment.
- **MATERIALS** - We are now capturing the impact of materials and infrastructure. We'll aim to reuse everything again.
- **ENERGY** - We use electricity from a grid connection onsite on an 100% renewable tariff. We also use renewable hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel in generators and for site machinery.
- **FOOD** - This is the first time we've mapped the full impact of our crew and Trader food. It's been amazing to see how we're doing per plate!
- **TRAVEL** (audience, crew, artist & supplier) - Data samples and extrapolations of transport from our wider community includes suppliers for the first time. This gives us a great benchmark to work on improving.

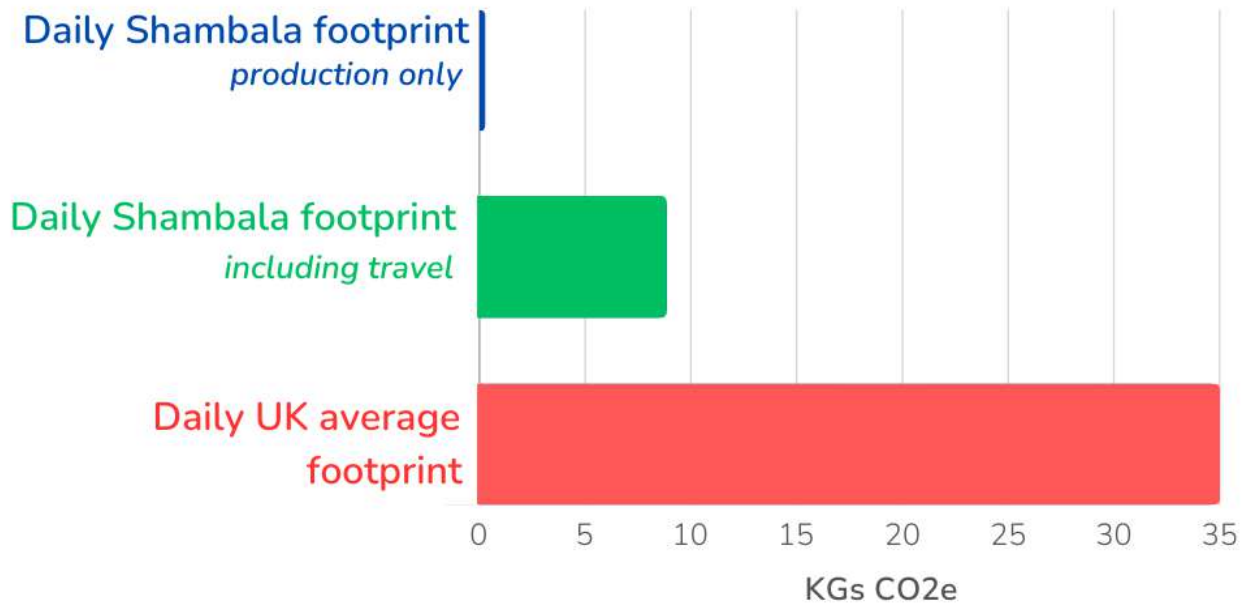


Daily carbon footprint at the festival:

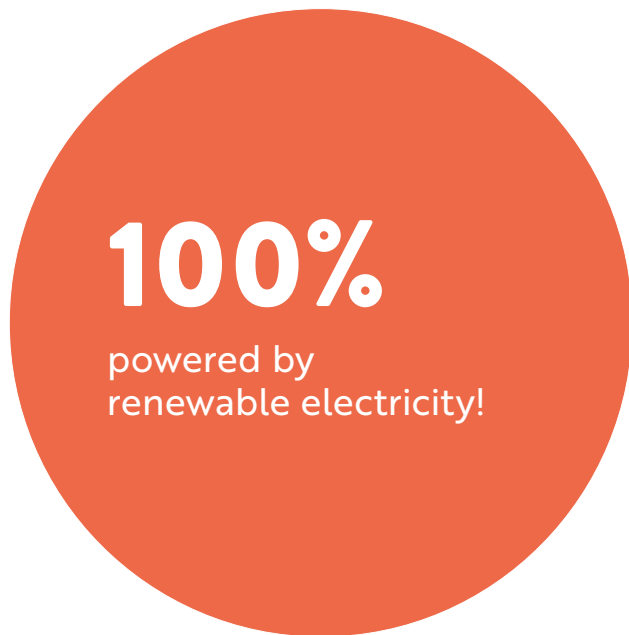
Our total footprint is a useful metric, but how does this relate to us as individuals? Below is the daily amount of CO2 equivalent for each person at the festival (including the build and break days).

It's increased, for sure, but it's still less than the daily average in normal life. Hurrah!

ENERGY FOOTPRINT PER PERSON PER DAY



Energy:



We've been powered by 100% renewable electricity onsite for years! We do this through renewable biofuel in our generators, 100+ energy monitors to measure and monitor efficiency, plus 5% of our energy comes from a grid connection using green tariffs.

The final pesky thing we need to tackle to become entirely fossil-fuel free is LPG gas used by café's for cooking.

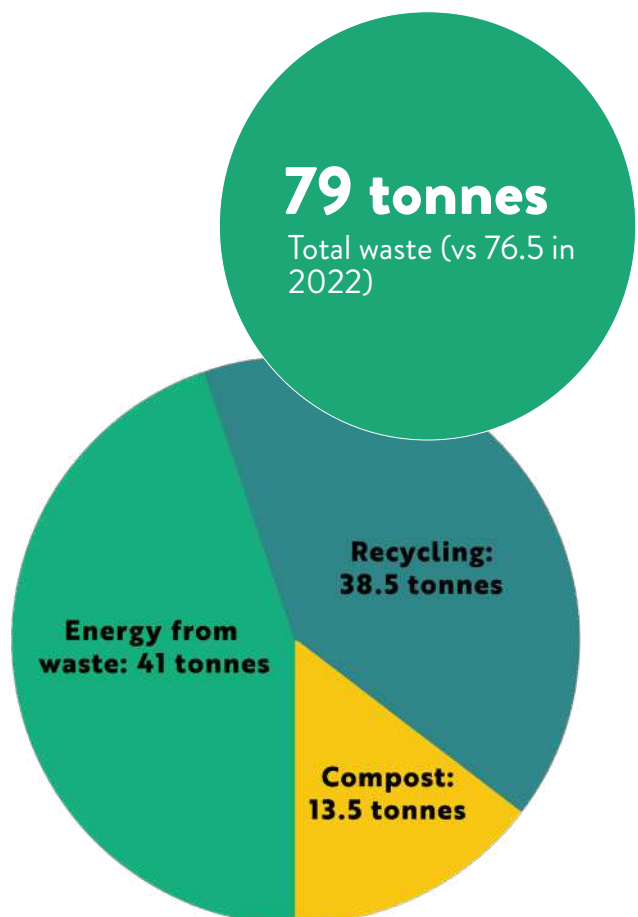
Our fuel use per person per day decreased from 0.30 to 0.26 litres – nearly 50% below the industry average for greenfield camping festivals, which is 0.5 litres (we included all fuel use this year, rather than just the generators – eg: all the fuel used for site vehicles at the festival).

Waste:

We've worked hard over the years to initiate all sorts of recycling and waste schemes, from the first festival Recycling Exchange (with Shambalans sorting their own bags of rubbish by hand) to Trashzilla the electric-powered mobile garbage-guzzler which prowled the campsites gobbling bags...

But we are struggling to improve our recycling rates. Our amazing waste partners are among the most committed and experienced recyclers, but like any society, city, or settlement – we're only as strong as our people. We do need everybody to come with us and get stuck in.

Our greatest challenge going forward is figuring out - as a community of contributors and festival goers – how to reduce that 41 tonnes of general waste and how to simultaneously also boost the percentage of our waste that manages to get recycled – contamination free!



Food & Drink:

190,000

reusable cups used (saving about the same amount of single use cups from landfill).

60

food traders serving up delicious grub.

6%

of Shambala 2023's total emissions.

13.5

tonnes of compost sent to a neighbouring farm, to grow food for next year – an example of our circular approach to food supply.

7000+

crew meals served by the legends in our canteen (we love you, Henry's Beard).

For the first time ever, in 2023 we captured the impact of all the food served at Shambala, and now have our first, proper, in-depth food footprint!

We did this by measuring the amount of ingredients and impacts of each dish prepared on site (both food traders and crew catering) and mashing it together into one simple carbon serving.

Our local regenerative Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm has a delicious, wholesome food truck on site - The Veg Shack. Be sure to try something next year! And [find your local CSA to support here!](#)

54.1 tonnes

Total festival food emissions (CO2 equivalent)



How can we improve on this?

We're already meat and fish free, which was a huge step for both minimising our footprint and for creating positive behaviour change when we're all 'back in the real world'.

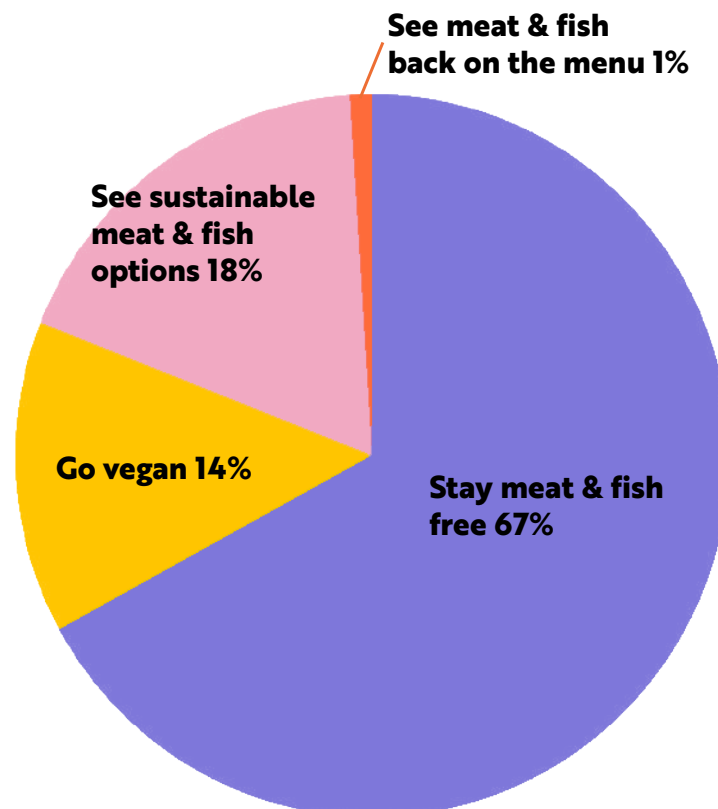
So, we're working with our food traders and crew catering to:

- 1 Develop an ambitious food policy which mandates certain elements and sets targets on obtaining more local, seasonal, sustainable produce.
- 2 This includes an exciting regenerative agriculture plan developed with consultants and partners to try to dial down our use of far-flung, high-impact ingredients like rice and the few remaining dairy products in some dishes.
- 3 Encourage the use of our vetted wholesalers onsite – we've worked with organic workers collectives to provide fresh fruit and veg, a local zero-waste refill supplier (available for public on site too!), to provide packaging-free dry foods and cleaning products, and sourced eggs from a local, real free-range farm.

Meat & Fish Free:

In 2016 we removed meat and fish from the menu. This helped us prevent an estimated 100 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions from the festival's carbon footprint each year.

We take a little temperature check of our audience each year, to see if they're gasping for a bacon sarnie, or content to keep Shambala a veggie paradise. Here's how they're feeling about it, in 2023...



Travel:

4435

cars.

2369

campervans.

3637

people travelled by Shambala Express coaches. (600 more than last year!)

132

'Red Fox' Cyclists.

3.08

people occupying each vehicle on average.

1000

rail travellers, via our new Rail Traveller train-and-entry packages.

Although we've added lots more specificity to our overall festival impact with new metrics, travel and transportation still remains by FAR the largest piece of the carbon pie.

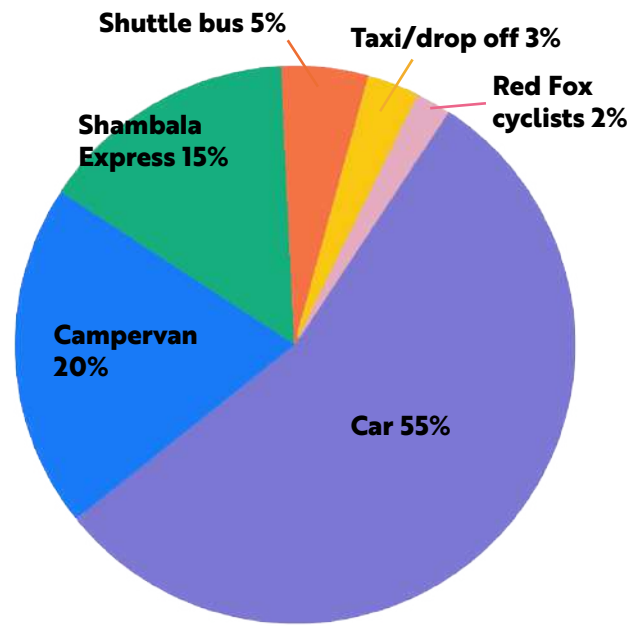
With travel currently making up a whopping 60% of our overall emissions, there is a real opportunity here for us to work with you lot; our crew, partners and artists, to reduce these figures in future years through public transport options, lift sharing and clever logistics.

2023 saw more people arrive by public transport than ever before – a HUGE high five to everyone who chose to travel sustainably. We'd love to keep this figure rising, so if there's anything we're not doing, that we could be doing, to help you ditch your car, [get in touch](#) and let us know!

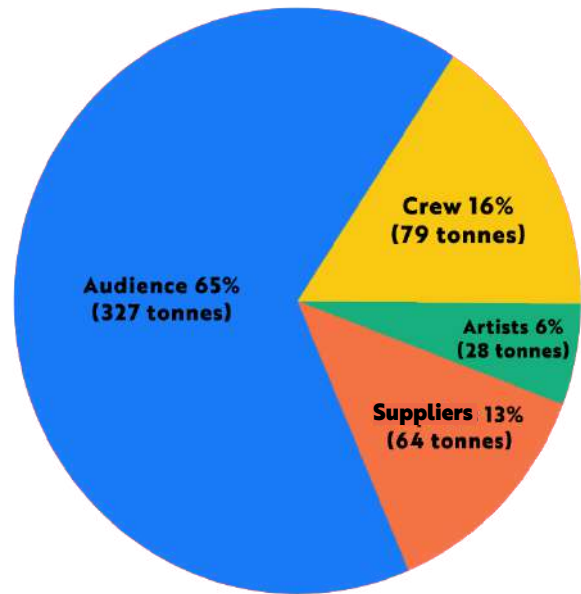




How our audience travelled to Shambala by travel type:



Travel emissions breakdown:



The carbon equivalent impact of transport to Shambala:

- Audience: 327 tonnes CO₂e
- Crew: 140 tonnes CO₂e
- Suppliers: 64 tonnes CO₂e
- Artists: 28 tonnes CO₂e

Community Impact:

In 2022, we launched our Pay It Forward: Share The Love campaign, to help open up Shambala to folks who would love to attend but have never been able to, due to financial barriers.

With your generous donations, made both when buying your tickets or by donating at the bars whilst getting your drinks in at the festival, we raised over £10,000 in year 1. We identified some fantastic organisations in the areas very local to site, who, using the funds raised, were able to bring some of their clients along to join the party in 2023.

£122,828.11

of funding raised for partner projects.

These organisations were:

The Leaving Care Service: Part of The Northamptonshire Children's Trust. They support Care Experienced Young People, aged 16 – 25 who were children in care, for example in foster care, children's homes, semi-independent accommodation and so forth. The Leaving Care Service is used by a lot of talented individuals, such as aspiring actors, singers and theatre technicians, who may not always get the opportunity to see professional musicians or artists, at festivals or gigs – so we were really pleased to be able to welcome them to Shambala this year.

Harborough EcoVillage CIC: This fantastic organisation (known locally as The Village) is a non profit CIC, set up 3 years ago to work with and feed the local community, alongside promoting environmental sustainability. Their 'Community Fridge' has saved tonnes of food from landfill and their community café works on a pay-it-forward system. Their school outreach programme has reached more than 2,000 local school children. They brought along some of their community members who are well-known, regular visitors to 'The Village' – as well as some young folks from the local youth centre ('The Cube').

Here's what Rachel, from the Leaving Care Service had to say, post-festival:

"Our care leavers had their eyes opened to a new side of life. One person absolutely found their tribe enjoying the Rebel Soul tent workshops and discussion and volunteered at the Extinction Rebellion stand. He is hoping to come back next year in some capacity. Another spoke to every sound desk person there and would love to work there next year, and the other 3 simply learnt a lot about life. Only one had ever camped before, none had used compost loos, none had been in crowds that big, or had all their senses hit like that, and they all found new foods they loved."

And here are some beautiful words from Chris, the Leaving Care Services CEO:

"I am blown away by the support you have given to enable our care leavers community to come along to such a meaningful, real and inspiring festival. This has created memories that will last a lifetime and I know they have opened a window of curiosity about how a truly caring, respectful and kind society could be."

We're buzzing to announce that in 2023, you generous souls raised thousands more – so we have £12,000 for the Pay It Forward pot, in 2024. If this has inspired you to donate to the Pay It Forward pot, [you can do so at any time, with any amount, here](#). Even if you can only spare a quid, it really does all add up!

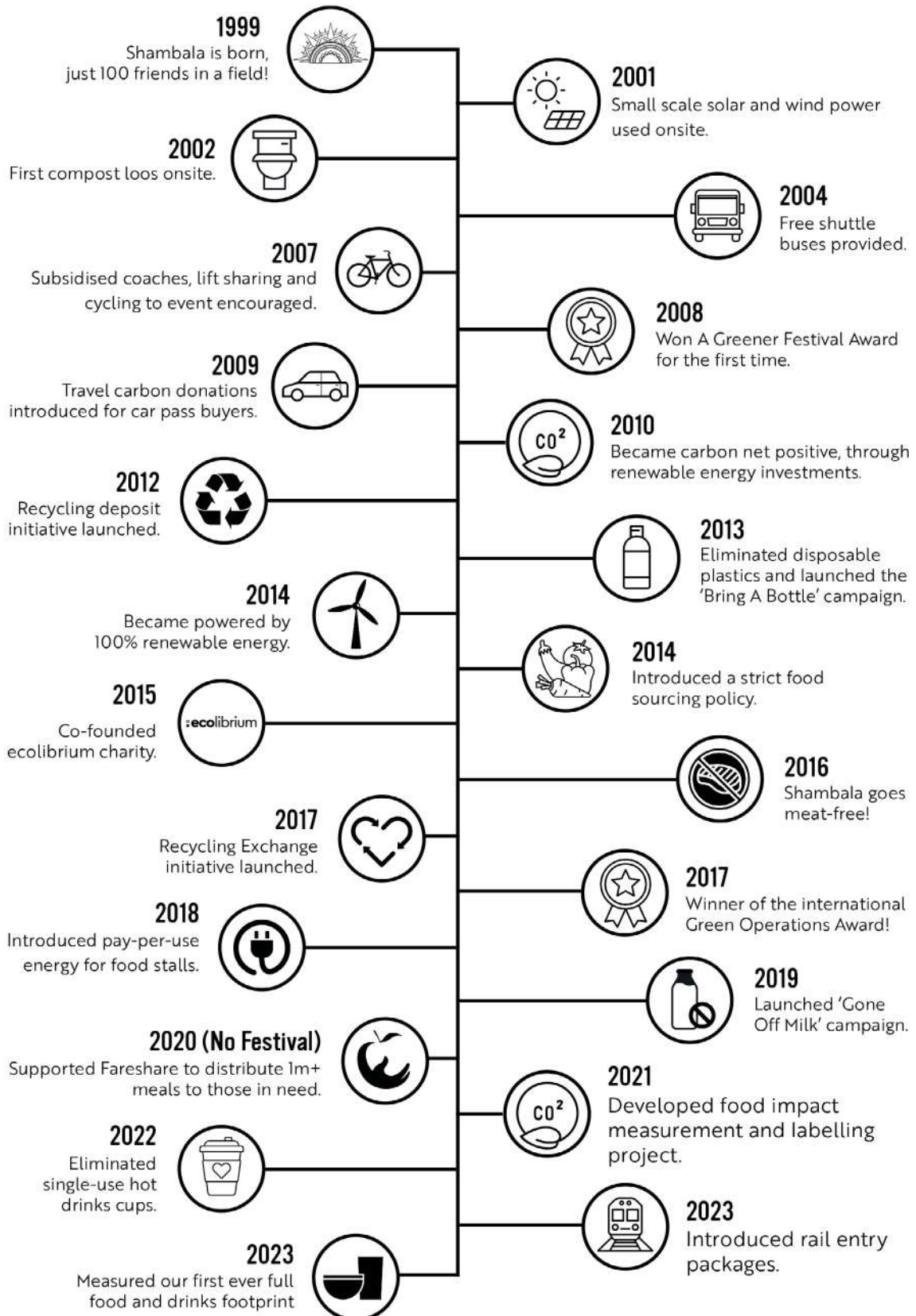
Here's what one of The Village's service users, a local mum, had to say about her family's experience:

"I really need to thank absolutely everyone. Whether you paid it forward 50p or £50 last year, this has been life altering for me. As a self employed, single parent to four children (3 of which are special needs), and working 2 jobs to make ends meet, there is no way I could have afforded to come to Shambala. We all had such an amazing time. I didn't have to cook or wash up for 4 days. That, in itself, was completely mind blowing. Add on to that all of the music and workshops etc etc and like I said, absolutely and completely life altering. I've cried tears of joy frequently this weekend (constantly embarrassing my poor kids!)."



THE SHAMBALA GREEN STORY SO FAR...

A little reminder of everything we have achieved together, in the 23 years since Shambala began...



WHAT WE'RE AIMING FOR

As times change, we realise that Shambala has to go beyond sustainable; to become regenerative, circular, net positive, life-respecting, fair, and future thinking. This is the ethos behind our actions.

We released our [3 Year Green Road Map](#) in 2022. We set ambitious and trail-blazing goals across our governance, energy use, material management, food and drink and our transport options, and we're looking deep into supply chains and the communities involved.

We also made a commitment to understand climate justice and put this at the heart of our actions. We have been through a process of learning, and are proud to launch a manifesto and action plan early in 2024.

We have reduced the festival's footprint drastically over the past decade and achieved 100% renewable electricity onsite, become meat and fish free, eradicated single use plastics and encouraged over a third of audience members to come in public transport. But there is always more to learn and do! Here's our key aims for 2025:



CARBON FOOTPRINT

- Sourcing actual biogas for cooking - not easy!
- Net positive through climate investments
- Encourage more people to arrive on public transport (including crew and artists)
- To collect data for all non-direct emissions - from suppliers, artists, food, and infrastructure etc.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY APPROACH TO MATERIALS

- Implement a strict policy to reduce any unnecessary new materials for the build and delivery
- Increase recycling rates through community campaigns and innovation
- Measure the impact of our build including infrastructure and transportation



REGENERATIVE FOOD SOURCING

- Working towards totally plant based
- Ensure all meals are under the One Planet Plate 0.5 kg CO2e limit
- Work with local, small-scale regenerative farms
- Source the majority of food and drink from within 200km of the festival

POSITIVE INFLUENCE

Aiming to influence everyone in our community and beyond; audiences, artists, crew, food traders and suppliers - to take actions to make conscious choices for their businesses or art, to map their impact, and to create targets for improvement.

RESPONSIBILITY

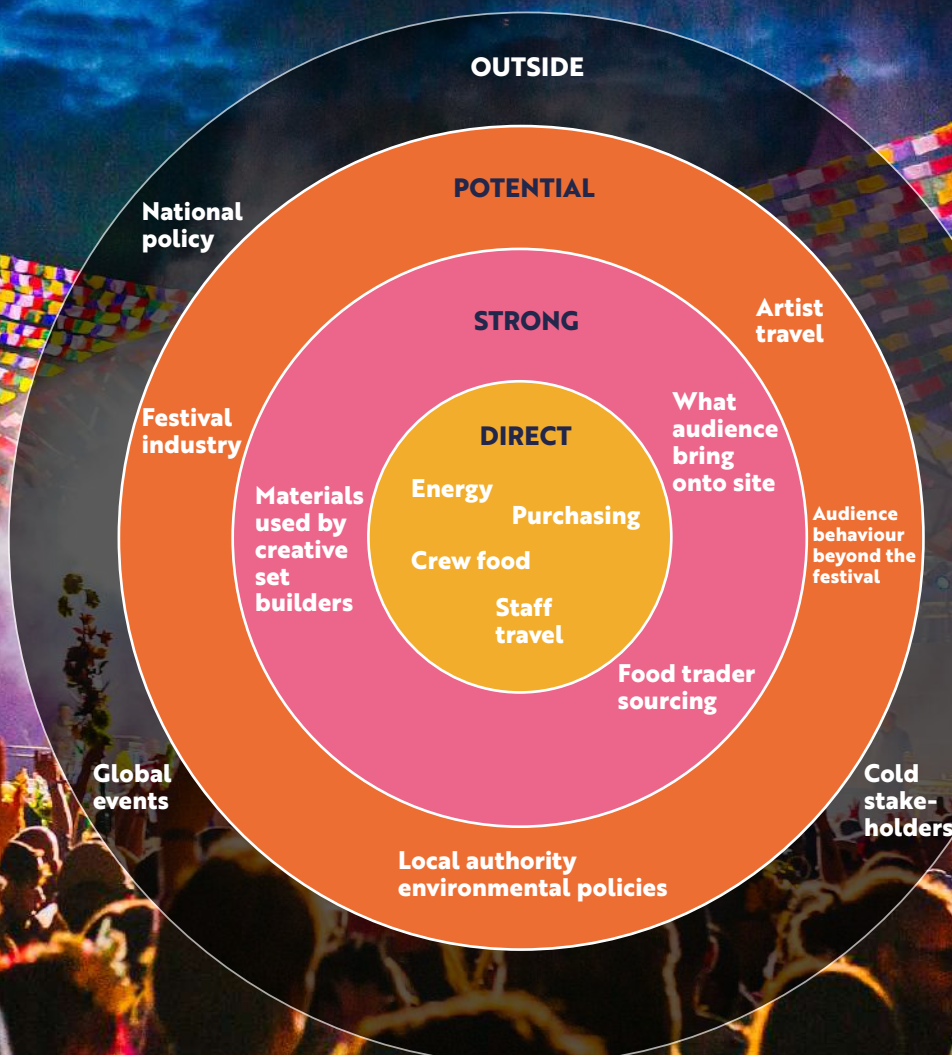
Boundaries of Influence

As a festival event, with many moving parts – defining our ‘boundary of influence’ on our community and contractors is tricky. We have minimised so many of the negative impacts of delivering the festival ourselves – as this is clearly our direct responsibility and within our control.

We also work with hundreds of partners, from big top providers to security staff, food traders and more. We’ve been working for years on how to have a positive impact on these members of our wider community – in order to provoke greater environmental and social consideration, in business.

But this is a difficult area to define, to plan and deliver. We are looking to review this process and ensure we’re working with the best, most ethical providers and encouraging others to improve their standards.

Additionally, initiatives piloted at the festival can spark behaviour change when we all go back to our every day lives – such as showing how amazing a meat-and-fish-free diet can be, to showing just how easy it is to bring your own mug to your local coffee shop.



Scopes of Responsibility

We consider responsibility for emissions, using international emissions frameworks, which use 3 'Scopes' of emissions:

Scope 1 = direct emissions from an organisation's activity

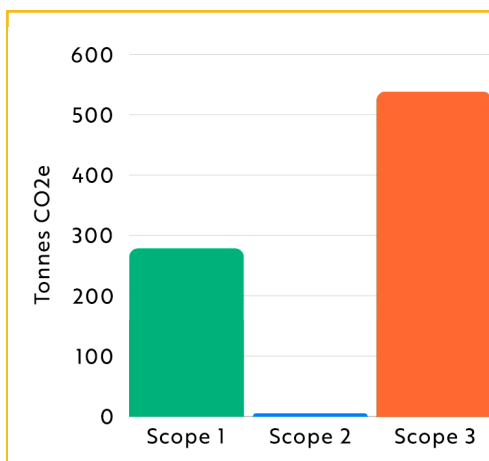
This is the energy we use to build and run the festival, the crew food, water and processing waste. We are directly responsible for reducing this year on year, and offsetting unavoidable emissions (which we have done for over a decade with investments in renewable energy).

Scope 2 + 3 = indirect emissions caused by the activities of the organisation

In 2023 we've mapped Scopes 2 and 3 in more detail than ever – to include supplier artist and crew travel, plus the materials used at the festival, and the food that kept us fuelled for dancing.

As you know, £1 and £3 is added onto the purchase of every car and camper van pass. This year, our audience balanced 327 tonnes of carbon with an investment of £8,199 through [Ecolibrium](#), in ecosystem protection and restoration, including verified offsets.

Next, we will be discussing, behind-the-scenes, how to encourage our community to reduce their emissions, how to get smarter on logistics, how we can better support our crew to lower their emissions and how much we should be offsetting until these dreams become a reality!



Scope 1: energy, food, waste, water

Scope 2: power purchased from the grid (renewable)

Scope 3: artist/audience/crew/supplier travel, food & drink, materials

ENVIRONMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Good News: Top 10

- 1 We encouraged 1,000 people to take our rail & entry packages for the first time.
- 2 We increased public transport usage to the festival by 10%. 35% of our audience now arrive by public transport.
- 3 The travel emissions footprint from cars & campervans is down by 10%!
- 4 Our onsite energy emissions reduced by 13% (per person, per day).
- 5 We measured the full footprint of the food served at Shambala for the first time!
- 6 We used 2,600 litres less bottled gas for our traders and showers.
- 7 We sent 13.5 tonnes of festival food waste (2.5 tonnes more than 2022) to a local farm, to be composted and used to grow food for next year.
- 8 We've joined a European consortium of 43 festivals to explore what being circular really means for festivals.
- 9 Shambala won some awards; the Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Festival award (UK) and the International Clearwater Award.
- 10 Our team did a deep dive on climate justice, and we have an action plan for 2024.

The Less Good News...

The weight of our waste went up overall compared to 2022.

Our overall carbon footprint has increased massively, compared to last year – though this is due to changes in the amount of data we have collected and the methods we use to measure impact. Our three-year strategy set out to measure a wider 'scope' of our festival-related emissions, to understand more fully our impacts beyond the festival itself. We see this as a real positive, as we're truly mapping the full impact of running events, just like a city or society.

Our total energy use increased slightly - the small amount of grid energy (which feeds in from a renewable tariff) and the hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) we use as fuel for vehicles and generators went up. We set out to reduce energy use by 5-10%, but didn't manage it this year.

We still didn't crack our carbon food labelling. We'd like to have all food traders label the CO₂e of each dish they serve... but this is a fiddly one to pull off! It's difficult to get the exact right carbon figures for all the ingredients, and also to squeeze more info onto our menu boards. In future, we are really interested in whether this would influence people's food choices, and help us avoid high-carbon, cheesy, rice-heavy meals.

Our recycling rate actually decreased. In all honesty, we are struggling to know what to do next! We have plenty of compost caddies for campers to use to avoid heavy, juicy organic food waste going to waste for energy - where it's burned less efficiently. We'd prefer to capture more and send it to compost at our Community Supported Agriculture farm partner - so prepare for more support in the campsites next year!

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP

Beyond disposables

We were ahead of the curve, removing single use plastic bottles from our fields way back in 2014. Then, in 2019, we banned single-use, plastic-lined coffee cups and everyone brought their own. We've been providing reusable bar cups since 2013. We do the same behind the scenes, with reusable plates and cutlery in crew catering, wholesale oat milk provided to all food traders across site in glass bottles, and soft drinks across bars served from bulk containers.

We've trialled reusable plates and cutlery, but over 20,000 people across 4 days - we don't currently have a way of delivering this that works well. For now, we use only plant-fibre, "home-compostable" plates with wooden cutlery which is composted at a local farm after the show. We don't permit "bio-plastics" as it's basically greenwash - because it needs bigtime commercial processing to degrade properly (aka, it's not going to biodegrade in landfill) and it contaminates plastic recycling.

How you can help battle disposable culture with us:

To help us in this complex battle against convenience and disposables when you're at Shambala you could:

- Avoid plastic wrapped snacks, bread and fruit which are often left behind and can contaminate general waste.
- Instead, check out our [on-site zero-waste van](#) which offers delicious treats, or our on-site bakery or fruit & veg store which has all the fresh produce you'd want every day.
- You might even like to bring your own lunchbox and cutlery set, for your delicious meals from our amazing plant-based traders. There's plenty of water on site to rinse and repeat! (You can even buy your own, Shambala branded reusable lunchbox and cutlery sets, [right here](#)).
- Of course, separating recycling carefully on site will help us do our best with the waste we produce.
- Feel free to cook on site with your friends, just please keep your culinary waste as clean, tidy and separate as possible - using the clear grey and green bags provided.



Travel and transport

How you can help improve our travel emissions:

- Choose public transport. Our coach and rail packages make this easy to do - you'll not only save emissions but will likely save money on fuel, too!
- Pack light, and prepare to squeeze into vehicles. Aiming for 4-5 people per car would be incredible.
- Let us know if there's anything holding you back, or any ideas you have to improve on travel emissions.

Waste

Waste is top of our list for focus, because sadly we didn't make mountains of change this year. We nudged down the average waste from each person for each day of the festival by (a modest) 3% to 0.75kg for each Shambalan per day. We have achieved zero waste to landfill for 2 years, with anything unrecyclable going to create energy from waste.

On site, there's a few helpful things you can do to contribute to the community and improve how we handle our waste:

- If everyone grabbed a compost caddy from the campsite hubs to keep their organic food waste in during the show, our general waste would weigh tonnes less.
- Aim to keep your recycling clean to avoid contamination. You lot (like us) are humous fiends – but please do give your empty humous (or yoghurt etc) pots a rinse, and empty your bottles of liquids before throwing them in the recycling bins.



Food

Food systems and choices rank in the top 3 actions we can all take to avoid catastrophic global warming.

For the first time ever we mapped the entire carbon-emissions-equivalent of all food served on site at Shambala. This was a huge task, and meant lots of detailed liaisons with our traders and chefs! But we got there! Across traders and crew catering, the festival's food created 54 tonnes of CO2 equivalent, and 0.54 kgs CO2e per dish. This is super close to the One Planet Plate measure (WWF) which asserts that a sustainable meal should be no more than 0.5 kg CO2e average.

How you can help improve our food related emissions:

- Our meals are already quite low impact, and we're working on reducing the higher-impact ingredients. You could consider this in your choices and think local, and seasonable as you shop.
- Thinking like this in normal life will help ripple the impacts of our food focus out into the world. Plant-based, local, seasonal produce will help us reduce reliance on far-away, exotic ingredients and bring more low-carbon, community produce into our local areas.

Drinks

Our bars are carefully curated to provide the most conscious, planet-friendly and, where possible, locally sourced range of booze we can. We carefully vet our suppliers choosing local, small-scale, sustainable companies.

97% of our drinks come from within 200km (it's mainly the soft drinks that don't) and our lagers are sourced from Helles, Purity and other small-scale suppliers. 92% of our beer is now vegan, and 80% of wines (damn those sulphites!)

How you can help improve our drink related impact:

- Please return the cups! They are made of plastic, and if they are not reused they are more carbon-intensive, and polluting than thin single use ones! That's why we don't make them pretty anymore – we need 'em back!
- Drop them in CUP bins in the Arena or at the Cup Amnesty points on the way out.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS & PARTNERS

Pay It Forward: Share The Love. You wonderful souls raised £10,000 for the Pay It Forward pot in 2022, and a further £12,000 in 2023! See page 11 & 12 for heaps more information on this initiative.

Our annual 'Flags For...' crowdfunder invites our audience to sponsor the strings of prayer flags, fluttering from the Shambala stage, raising funds for a different cause each year. In 2023, we chose **The Flying Seagull Project**, an incredible charity made up of clowns, musicians and play-makers who bring play and entertainment to children in the harshest environments around the world, from refugee camps to asylum shelters, hostels, care facilities and deprived community spaces.

Over 600 incredible **Oxfam** stewards donated their time to raise money to fight poverty and provide disaster relief in worldwide projects.

Our **MyCause** volunteers donated their time to raise funds for their chosen charities, including: Autism Alliance UK, Bristol Refugee Rights, Coppafeel, Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services, Sea Shepherd UK, Stonewall and War Child.

Temwa raised money through providing phone charging services on site, which will go towards various Malawian projects that support people and environment.

100% of public car and camper travel emissions were balanced with **Ecolibrium**, helping to initiative renewable energy projects and plant trees around the world.

Our stainless steel water bottles are supplied by **RAW Foundation**, who use the funds raised to continue campaigning against pointless plastic.

Our merch team raised much needed funds for **Bansang Hospital** through the sale of our paper programmes.

All profits raised by the sale of Love Specs at Shambala, helped **Love Support Unite** empower communities in Africa through sustainable development, education and healthcare.

WaterAid provided some lush toilets for us this year and raised money to provide people across the world with clean water, decent loos and good hygiene.

The heart of activism at Shambala is in **Rebel Soul** – whose on site café raises money for grass roots activism campaigns.





Research:

This year we had the pleasure of working with...

Green Deal Circular Festivals project:

We're one of 43 European festivals working to lead on green initiatives and share knowledge. The aim is to build a model for a circular festivals and events. The reporting platform is monstrously thorough.

Rubbish Ideas:

We are working with this awesome company to meticulously map out our input and outputs, and draw up a materials flow analysis – on the journey to circularity.

One Resilient Earth:

We are very grateful to this group of humans for helping us dive into the challenging topic of Climate Justice. We will release a manifesto for 2024 to help us focus on how we can address Justice as a central theme in our work with the community.

THE FUTURE

You can check out our [Green Road Map](#) for where we're headed in the coming 2 years. Keep an eye out for our **2024 initiatives** in the **Essential Guide** before you head to site next summer. But for now, here's a sneak peek at some of our main aims for 2024...

Planet

- Our recycling rates aren't budging. We need your help! Stay tuned for some new campsite initiatives to encourage better food composting rates.
- Introducing bio-gas for cooking would be a dream, to take the last vestige of fossil fuels out the fields! We're awaiting innovation, which is possibly just around the corner!
- We will increase public transportation links more and more, especially and specifically for crew in 2024 - as over 30% come from Bristol!
- We are deep diving into our supply, to map transportation emissions, sourcing and business. We will review our criteria for working with these partners and hold businesses to account.
- We are ready to undertake a comprehensive supply chain audit and review our criteria for working with partners. We want to make sure the companies we work with are actively improving the environment, focusing on diversity, and providing a Living Wage.
- The future see us sourcing the majority of our food for traders and crew from within 200km of site. We've already done this with our drinks!
- We are dying to filter our waste water, removing transportation emissions from carting it off site.
- Finally, and excitingly, we are making the events company behind Shambala ([Kambe](#)) a certified B-Corp – ensuring we are a business for good through and through!

People

- Increase and grow our amazing Pay it Forward: Share the Love campaign to widen access for low-income folks.
- We're focusing on Climate Justice, and what this means for our community. We want to have this topic at the forefront of our conversations, creativity and commitments – to help spread wisdom on how to inhabit this earth equitably, for all peoples.

Beyond 2024

With your help, we've already made huge leaps and bounds as a community, but we need to shift our perspectives and practices and usher in a new epoch of egalitarian living that is mindful of the climate, ecological and justice crisis.

Thanks to each and every one of you that who has contributed to making us one of the most sustainable festivals in the world!

Find out more about what we're doing on the website [here: Sustainability.](#)