

Impact Report  
2022-2023

Our Conscious Journey  
People & Planet





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We are Design Hotels.  
A collection of 300+  
independent hotels  
rooted in design,  
locality, and culture.

# Welcome to the Design Hotels Impact Report 2022–2023

We see our hotels as a global network of inspiring, forward-thinking spaces that make a positive impact on their surroundings, connect travelers to local communities, and enact gentler ways to move in the world. We aspire to help our Community—our readers, travelers, hotels, and the people who make them—find more meaning from their travels and pave the way towards a more conscious future.

While we work to inspire our hotels to meet new environmental and social standards, we also work hard to improve ourselves internally. In 2022 and 2023, we established a range of new sustainability related projects and initiatives and we are proud of our progress and the many positive outcomes which are displayed in this report. In everything we do, we are guided by a collaborative approach with our community, working together with an ever-growing network of creatives and experts across a range of fields. We regularly host roundtable discussions, dinners, learning sessions, and more at our Berlin headquarters and wherever else we pop up in the world. We learn and improve by engaging with people, partners, and employees and contemplating the change we want to see in the world while continuously challenging our perspectives.

In more concrete terms, we are committed to publishing a company audit, to establish new sustainability goals and policies for responsible practices, such as business travel and event guidelines, offering more in-depth employee education around sustainable practices, and setting aside time as an organization for volunteering for causes that can make a

difference. Furthermore, we strive to become a more inclusive workplace through the provision of training and education programs, regular Lunch & Learns, and awareness workshops with our Impact Team.

At the same time it is important for us to acknowledge that we don't always get the answers right, but we always aim to do better. We still have a long way to go. A driving force for our work is a sense of urgency, driven by the climate crisis. We and our hotels collectively have the responsibility and the tools available to drive meaningful positive change.

We are proud to present to you our first impact report, which provides a comprehensive overview of our sustainability efforts. It is the place where, in the future, you will find all updates on our progress and achievements. On behalf of Design Hotels and our sustainability team, we invite you to come and see for yourself.

Onwards,  
Stijn Oyen, Managing Director  
Design Hotels

Our goal with this report is to provide a transparent overview of our impact performance to our stakeholders and to create an Impact Strategy according to this baseline. We plan to improve our processes and publish an impact report every two years.

We have a responsibility not only to our planet but also to our people to enhance diversity across all business facets, encompassing ethnicity, gender, sexuality, neurodiversity, and accessibility. We find that the intersectionality of the identities of our colleagues is essential to our success. In this report, we cover carbon accounting by our partner Normative, Scope 1 to 3\*, for our Berlin headquarters from Jan to Dec 2022, while the project and people data is from Jan 2022 to October 2023. The carbon emissions from our 300 hotels are outside our scope, as we are not directly managing our hotels, nor are we a franchise company, but rather a member community.

\* See Glossary p 43





# I Our Story

## About Design Hotels

For 30 years, Design Hotels has been at the forefront of a movement in travel by crafting a handpicked portfolio of 300+ independently owned and operated hotels in over 60 countries. From cultural hubs in fast-paced cities to tiny off-the-beaten-path escapes, each hotel reflects the vision of its pioneering owner—or “Original”—who possesses a passion for genuine hospitality, cultural authenticity, thought-provoking design, and architecture.

More than a collection of hotels, Design Hotels brings forward-thinking member hotels insightful travel industry expertise—from trend forecasting and creative consultancy, to PR, marketing, and global sales representation. Design Hotels is not just a brand — it's a movement.

Design Hotels is headquartered in Berlin, with offices in London, Los Angeles, New York, and Singapore. Since 2019, the company is proud to be a part of Marriott International which has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2050.

# We believe that, in hospitality, great things happen when creative & passionate people focus on their strength: creating original experiences.

### Vision

To be the global leaders of experimental hospitality. Renowned for pushing the boundaries of travel, culture, and design.

### Mission

To connect a community of entrepreneurial spirits who believe hotels are spaces for meaningful cultural exchange. And explore how travel can be a force for good.

### Ambition

By 2030, our community will be the most influential cultural connector and collective innovator in hospitality, travel, and design. Design Hotels is not just a brand — it's a movement.



# Planet 2021 — 2022 — 2023 — 2024

## Research & Commitment Sustainability Pledge 2022/23

- Conscious Hotel Principles launch

## Sustainability Program Launch

- Virtual Roundtables launch
- Hotel Conscious Collaboration Platform launch
- Conscious Eye On article series launch

## Arena\* Audit

- Carbon Emission Audit 1
- Event Guidelines launch

## Appointed Head of Sustainability

- Impact Team kick off

## Company Audit

- Carbon Emissions Audit, Event Audit, Content Audit
- Corporate Balanced Scorecard integration
- Trainings

## Hotel Virtual Roundtables

### Internal Activations

- World Clean-Up Day
- Digital & street clean-ups across our global offices

## Arena\* Audit

- Carbon Emission Audit 2

## Impact Report Launch Sustainability Strategy 2025

## Hotel Conscious Commitments 2025

- Roadmap launch

## Policies review

- Carbon Emission Reduction Plan

# People

## Education

- Employee training on Conscious Principles and sustainability, special focus on Events

## Company Audit: Diversity, Equality & Inclusion, Well-being

- Review & Research
- Employee Surveys, Culture Labs

## Internal Activations

- Brand/Culture integration
- Lunch & Learn
- Celebrating Pride
- Mental Health & Well-being
- Appreciation Week
- Neurodiversity

## Employee Branding

- Handbook, Onboarding
- Purpose, Values

## Employee & Office Care

- Well-being, Recycling

## DEI Strategy

- Internal Inclusivity Board in collaboration with external advisors

## Recruitment Strategy

- Policies and action

## Well-being

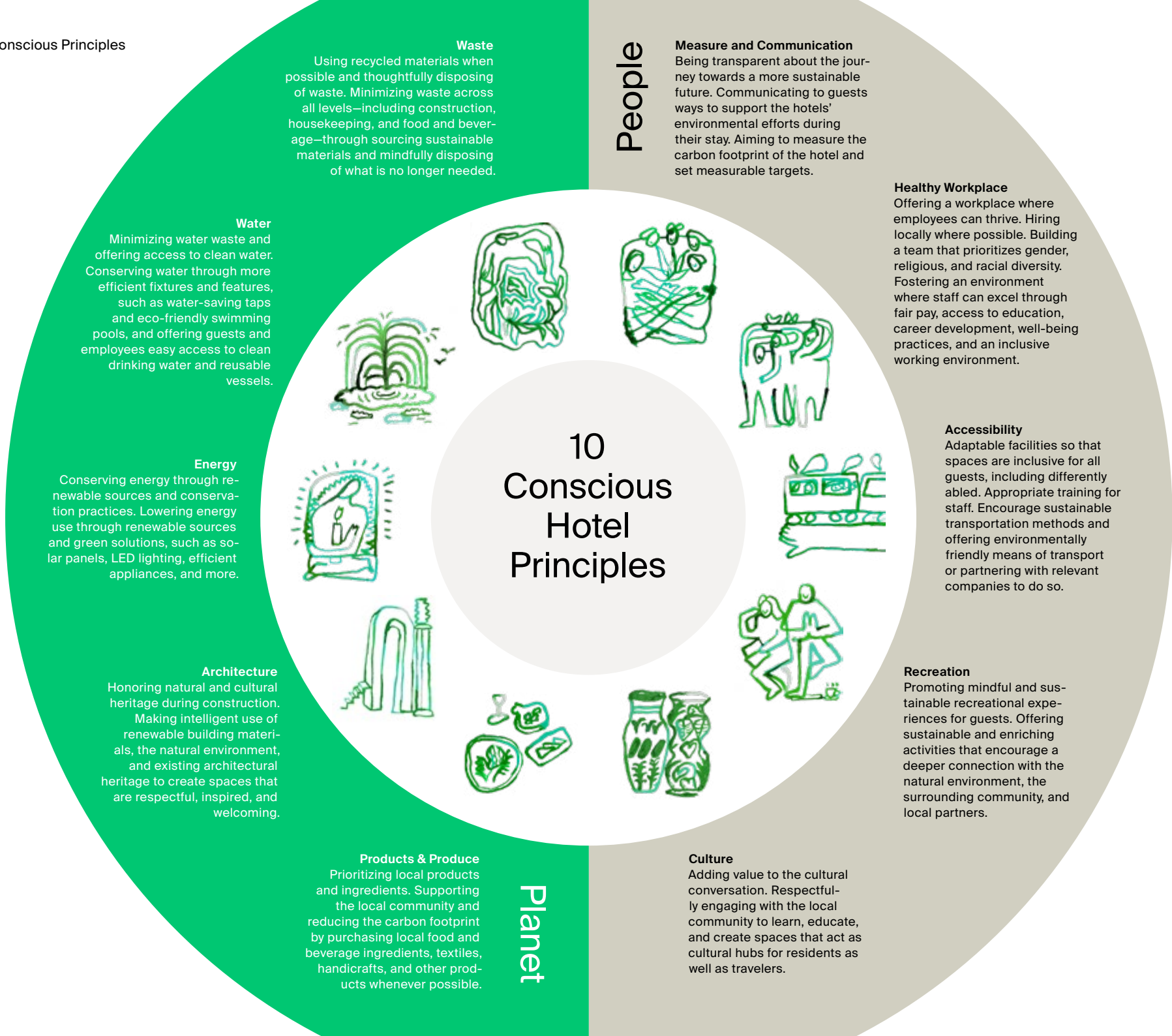
- Health and support



# Our Impact Framework

Based on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we have quantified the attributes of a responsible hotel.

We use these principles to assess applicants (hotels must meet 5 of 10 to enter our portfolio), discern where our hotels could use assistance, and share their stories. Hotels that meet 7 of 10 are listed on our website as Conscious Hotels. We also use this framework to set guidelines for our larger events and review our own practices as a company.



## People

**Measure and Communication**  
Being transparent about the journey towards a more sustainable future. Communicating to guests ways to support the hotels' environmental efforts during their stay. Aiming to measure the carbon footprint of the hotel and set measurable targets.

**Healthy Workplace**  
Offering a workplace where employees can thrive. Hiring locally where possible. Building a team that prioritizes gender, religious, and racial diversity. Fostering an environment where staff can excel through fair pay, access to education, career development, well-being practices, and an inclusive working environment.

**Accessibility**  
Adaptable facilities so that spaces are inclusive for all guests, including differently abled. Appropriate training for staff. Encourage sustainable transportation methods and offering environmentally friendly means of transport or partnering with relevant companies to do so.

**Recreation**  
Promoting mindful and sustainable recreational experiences for guests. Offering sustainable and enriching activities that encourage a deeper connection with the natural environment, the surrounding community, and local partners.

**Culture**  
Adding value to the cultural conversation. Respectfully engaging with the local community to learn, educate, and create spaces that act as cultural hubs for residents as well as travelers.

## Planet

**Products & Produce**  
Prioritizing local products and ingredients. Supporting the local community and reducing the carbon footprint by purchasing local food and beverage ingredients, textiles, handicrafts, and other products whenever possible.

**Architecture**  
Honoring natural and cultural heritage during construction. Making intelligent use of renewable building materials, the natural environment, and existing architectural heritage to create spaces that are respectful, inspired, and welcoming.

**Energy**  
Conserving energy through renewable sources and conservation practices. Lowering energy use through renewable sources and green solutions, such as solar panels, LED lighting, efficient appliances, and more.

**Water**  
Minimizing water waste and offering access to clean water. Conserving water through more efficient fixtures and features, such as water-saving taps and eco-friendly swimming pools, and offering guests and employees easy access to clean drinking water and reusable vessels.

**Waste**  
Using recycled materials when possible and thoughtfully disposing of waste. Minimizing waste across all levels—including construction, housekeeping, and food and beverage—through sourcing sustainable materials and mindfully disposing of what is no longer needed.

10  
Conscious  
Hotel  
Principles





# II People



## Healthy Workplace

We aspire to be a company that leads by example, a healthy and inclusive workplace to be proud of and that will attract the next generation of compassionate, curious colleagues, and travelers. We believe in the power of our people. We will invest in developing and nurturing our talent, providing meaningful growth opportunities, and fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment. By empowering our colleagues, we can unlock our full potential and drive collective success. Building an inclusive company means taking into consideration the perspectives of all our employees around the world. We do so by continually engaging our team through various touchpoints, be it in-person or anonymously through surveys.

### Takeaway

We are proud to see, through our annual employee engagement survey, an overall increase in key metrics such as a feeling of belonging, valuing diversity, and acceptance of diverse backgrounds and different ways of thinking. We currently work together with people from 41 countries, which is our highest recorded number since 2019 and acknowledges our various efforts to create a safe and diverse workplace. In 2022, we focused on establishing more touchpoints to engage employees, such as Lunch & Learns, roundtable discussions, well-being sessions, after-work drinks, and establishing an internal Impact Team.



82.8%

I feel that I belong to this organisation  
+5.7% compared to 2022

81.4%

Senior management / senior leaders here values differences in age, gender, and race or ethnicity.  
+4.6% compared to 2022

91.1%

My department is accepting of diverse backgrounds and different ways of thinking.  
+7.5% compared to 2022

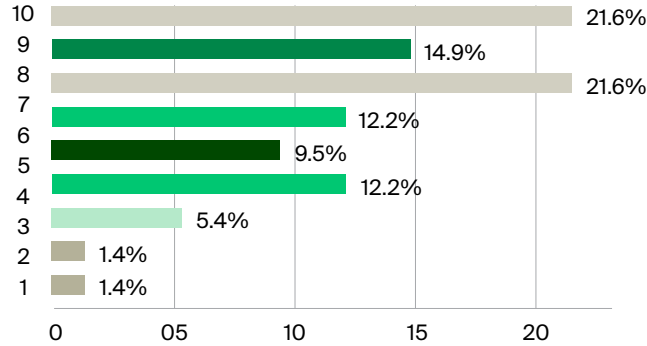
Year	Senior Leadership	Avg. Age	Nationalities	Gender Split
2021	5	41	3	F75% M25%
2022	6	44	4	F50% M50%
2023	7	47	3	F50% M50%

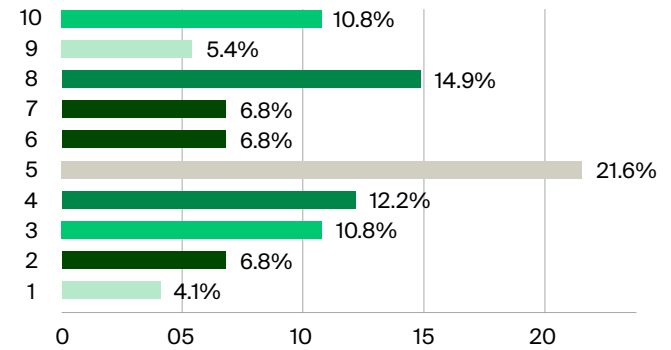
Year	All Employees	Avg. Age	Nationalities	Gender Split
2021	98	33.9	33	F57% M43%
2022	101	34.8	34	F57% M43%
2023	116	35.4	41	F64% M36%

# Diversity

On a scale of 1 to 10, how inclusive do you feel your workplace is? (1 being the lowest, 10 being the highest)



On a scale of 1 to 10, how creatively does the company work to source candidates from underrepresented communities? (1 being the lowest, 10 being the highest)



# Neurodiversity

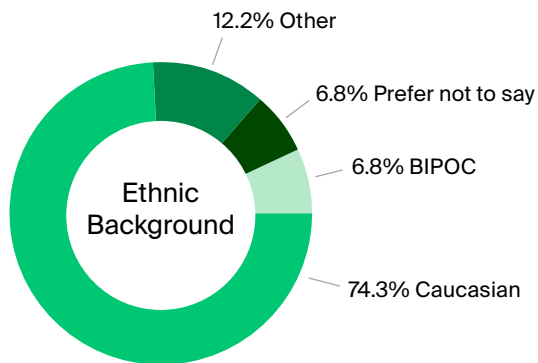
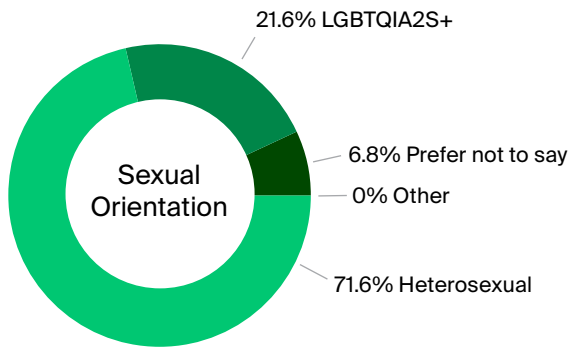
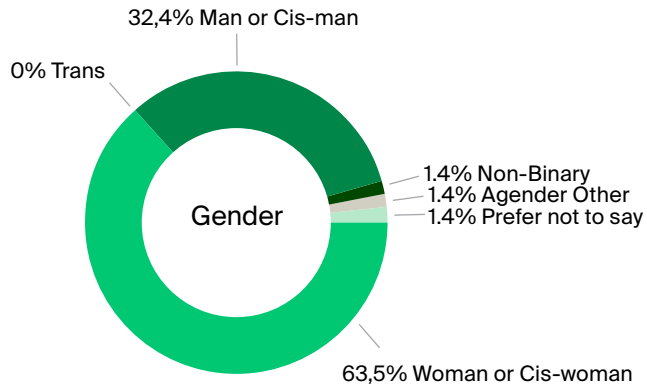
Would you consider yourself neurodivergent? Or would you consider yourself on the autistic spectrum? (e.g. autism, ADHD, dyslexia)



Have you ever heard of or been provided information about specific neurodivergent conditions (e.g autism, ADHD, dyslexia) and their strengths?



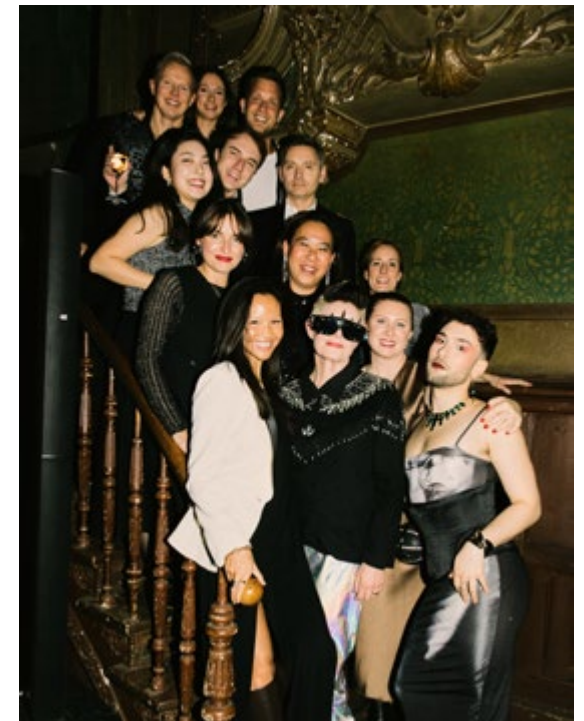
# I identify as...



Data: 2023 Culture Employee Survey  
63% participation



Internal events





**Education and Lunch & Learn**

Each quarter, our impact team chooses a topic and invites experts to speak at a Lunch & Learn event for our colleagues.

**Internal Platform**

On Tods, we share our Conscious Journey, DEI inspiration, colleagues birthdays, and events to celebrate. It has become a source of inspiration and information where anyone can share local recommendations and travel tips.

**Creating an Internal Impact Team**

Our impact team meets monthly to align on internal sustainability initiatives. Each member acts as an ambassador, spreading the word to their teams and, in turn, telling Design Hotels what their team needs to be successful.

**Employee Benefits**

Employee benefits include discount for trains and subways in Berlin, sport activities, travel goods, and free hotel stays.

**Meet-Ups**

We get together for work and private gatherings, including Summer week and Winter week, monthly breakfasts to celebrate colleagues' birthdays at the HQ, and bimonthly after-work drinks.

**Book Giveaways**

In 2023, we gifted all employees the "Be a Better Traveler" book by Juliet Kinsman to inspire our team to be role models for conscious travel.

**Celebrating Pride**

For Pride month, we organized roundtables, guest speakers, a screening, performances, and a booth at Berlin's CSD parade.

**Healthcare**

While we have established health insurance standards in many of the countries we operate in, we are still aiming to cover our employees with a custom-made health offer in the US, together with the strong network of Marriott International.

**Remote Work**

When it comes to flexible and new ways to work, the pandemic has made us a better version of ourselves. Focusing on the impact and outcome of our people's performance, we allow a high level of freedom to choose from where and when to work (while strictly following local labor laws).

# How would you describe your personal interest in sustainability?

**64.30%**  
Enthusiastic

**32.90%**  
Neutral

**2.90%**  
Not enough knowledge

**0%**  
Against

## Accessibility

For us, “Accessibility” has a social and an environmental dimension. In the social dimension, we strive for designing inclusive spaces, being mindful of the needs of a diverse workforce, and building a workplace reflecting that ambition. In the environmental dimension, accessibility is our main driver when it comes to allowing access to our virtual and physical platforms (e.g. online workshops or events such as Arena\*) with a minimal environmental footprint, continuously working towards a reduction of our CO2 emissions which largely consists of business travels.

### Takeaway

Since 2023, we have incentivized low-emission commutes to work and are looking into opportunities to redesign our travel policy to further reduce our environmental footprint through business travel. We are happy to report that a high percentage 89% of employees commute to work by bike, foot, and public transport.

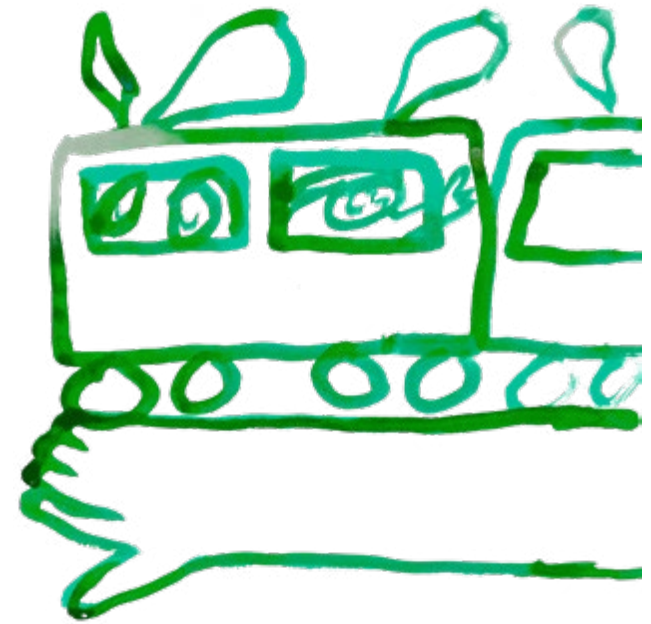
## What modes of transport do you usually use to get to work?

45%

Biking or walking

51%

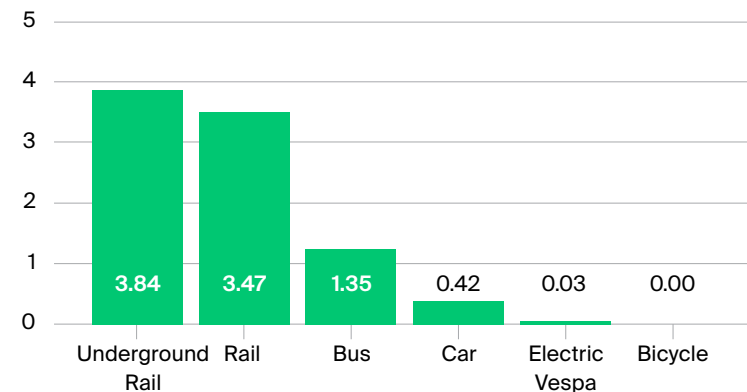
Public transport



### Creating new policies for responsible work travel

We offer a corporate local public transport ticket (BVG Eco-Ticket Berlin) in Berlin, discounted by Design Hotels, as well as benefits with national carrier Deutsche Bahn. Now that business travel has returned, we are working to further incentivize train travel, minimize or combine trips, and offer offsetting options for essential travel.

Employee commuting emissions (tCO2e)



“43% of people state that a hotel’s sustainability credentials are important or very important to them.”

— 2023 Consumer  
Community Survey

## Recreation

Recreation is possible when we are mindful of ourselves, our environment, and the communities we live in. In 2022 and 2023, we launched several well-being initiatives for our employees and engaged in communal activities such as the World Cleanup Day, Pride, and fundraising for #StandWithUkraine. Through our work, we aim to design a culture that empowers our employees to recreate for themselves and others. We believe that a strong company culture comes from our co-workers coming together regularly to listen to each other, have fun, and do good.

### Takeaway

In 2022, we were able to support a range of initiatives, using our internal resources and leveraging our community of employees and member hotels. In the wake of the Ukraine war in 2022, we helped to raise over 75,000€ for grassroots organizations on the ground and encouraged our people to invest their (paid) free time in volunteering for Ukraine-related humanitarian causes. It is one of our goals in 2024 to increase the opportunities to engage in company-supported volunteer work. We have recently created a host of activities and resources to help employees on the topic of mental health and well-being.



#### Well-being

We want to establish a long-term, sustainable commitment for employees to live, work, and feel well. Since 2023, we offer regular yoga and meditation classes etc. at the HQ.

#### Mental Health

To support mental health and well-being, we offer an employee assistance program through our partner LifeWorks. We have also organized panel talks on World Mental Health Day, roundtable discussions and created an open resource for mental health related topics.

#### Our Events

All our events, such as sales gatherings and our annual member conference, Arena\*, have well-being elements.

#### Crisis Management

We support humanitarian efforts via exposure on our channels and to our community in countries where we have member hotels.

# 76.1%

The respect and well-being of all people comes first at this company. +2.9% compared to 2022

# 69.2%

This company has a strong commitment to making a positive social impact (volunteering, advancing human rights) in the communities where we do business) +6.9% compared to 2022

#### Organizations

We are members of the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, Leaders for Climate Action and Conscious Travel Foundation.

#### Volunteering

We are working to engage employees to do more volunteer work for a social or environmental initiative of their own volition, for which they get a day off, as well as for initiatives that we as a company support.

In 2022, we offered an additional day to support staff members who wanted to take part in projects that benefited Ukrainian refugees.

#### World Clean-Up Day

In 2023, we organized a street and digital clean-up drive across our global offices.

#### Standing With Ukraine

We joined Kyiv's Bursa Hotel and Berlin's Wilmina Hotel to host a dinner and art exhibition that raised over €75K for grassroots organizations in Ukraine. We also donated the profits from the online sales of Taste and Place: The Design Hotels Book to organizations suggested by our member hotels in Kyiv.

#### #Hospitality Helps

We encouraged our hotels to join #HospitalityHelps, an organization that provided temporary hotel accommodations to Ukrainians forced to leave their homes as a result of the war.

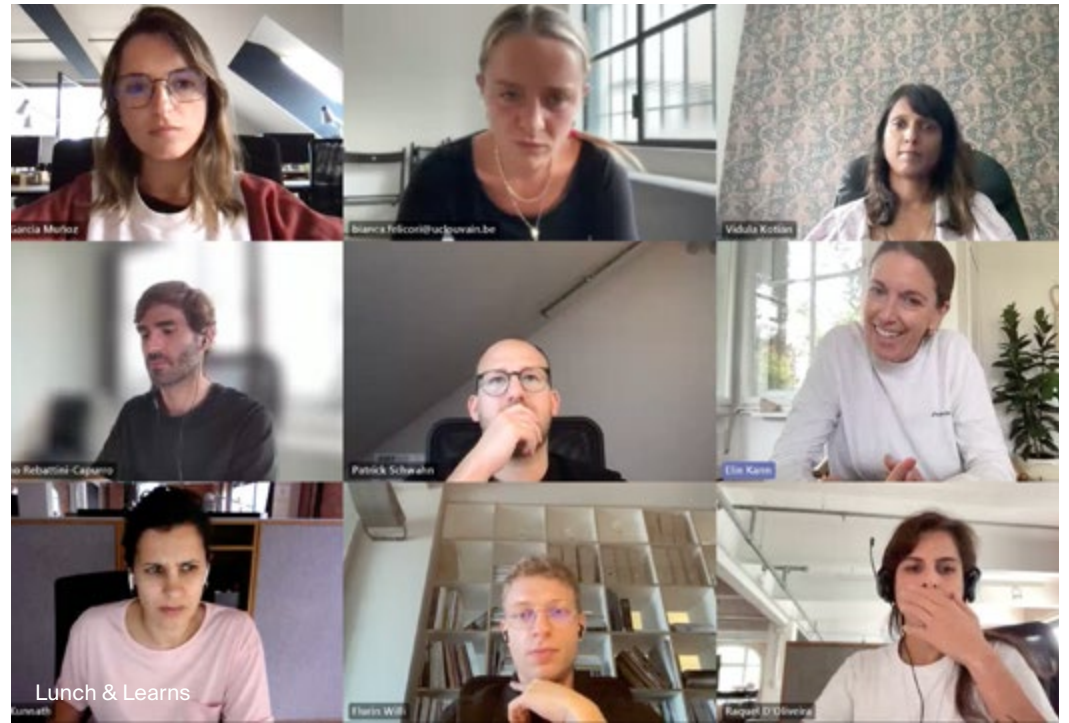




Office yoga



Pride



Lunch & Learns



Standing with Ukraine



World Clean Up Day



## Culture

Design Hotels is not only a member space, it is a community in which we connect, develop holistic impact-driven initiatives, and create meaningful experiences that inspire. In order to translate our ambition into action, we have launched different formats to engage our member hotels and consumers on topics of sustainability such as our Culture Journal and our collaborative project like "The Good Traveler". We want to inspire the next-generation architects, designers, and hoteliers to have a conscious mindset in their careers.

### Takeaway

In 2022, we launched new publishing formats to engage with member hotels and inspire our community of travelers while increasing our focus on sustainability. We have increased the coverage of sustainability-related topics on our Journal to 40%. Our collaboration with EARNT to offer limited-edition stays to raise awareness about plastic pollution was fully booked within minutes. These are just some of the efforts we have made to align with the preferences of our travelers who rank "sustainability" as the second most important criteria when choosing a hotel, according to our latest Community Survey.



### The Good Traveler

The good traveler is a considerate and respectful traveler who moves with the lightest of steps possible and equips both mind and body for their journey. To get closer to this goal, we have started a mental packing list to share. It is a guide that we intend to keep working on, as best we can, one step at a time. In 2023, we invited a range of contributors, such as Juliet Kinsman, Demi Anter, and Katie McNoulty, to explore how to put these tenets into practice through different mediums. [Read more](#)

### Podcast

We are working with The Conduit, a collaborative community of people committed to creating a just, prosperous and sustainable future, to launch a podcast series highlighting some of the owners of our Conscious Hotels. [Read more](#)

# 40%

of the content on our Culture Journal covers sustainability topics. [Read more](#)

“Inspire the next generation of architects, hoteliers, travelers and hospitality makers that travel can be a force for good.”

### Further Forecast

The Further Forecast explores undocumented social and cultural shifts that will define the year ahead in travel. "Eco-Urgency" is a movement we delve into in chapter six—sharing the latest research and developments in biophilic design, ecological restoration, and solar technology. [Read more](#)

Ranking of the type of travel content our consumer community is most interested in:

- 1 Architecture, art, and design
- 2 Food and Drink
- 3 New hotels
- 4 Destination guides
- 5 The stories behind hotels
- 6 Sustainable hotels
- 7 Events and cultural programming
- 8 Favorite spots of people I follow
- 9 New travel trends



# Culture

## Design Hotels x Gary Benchehib

### Consumer Campaign

We teamed up with EARNT in London to offer our community a chance to earn limited-edition stays and experiences at Design Hotels accessible by train from London, while raising awareness about plastic pollution by picking litter from the Thames, an initiative inspired by Gary Benchehib from Sungai Watch.

### Press Tour

We visited Gary in Bali with a group of ten top-tier journalists to launch Sungai Watch's latest venture, Sungai Design. Here, we showcased the pioneering new techniques Sungai Design has devised to transform waste plastic into high-end furniture and unique artworks.

### EARNT

A UK-based organization that asks consumers to donate their time to society and the planet to earn exclusive access to in-demand experiences and products.



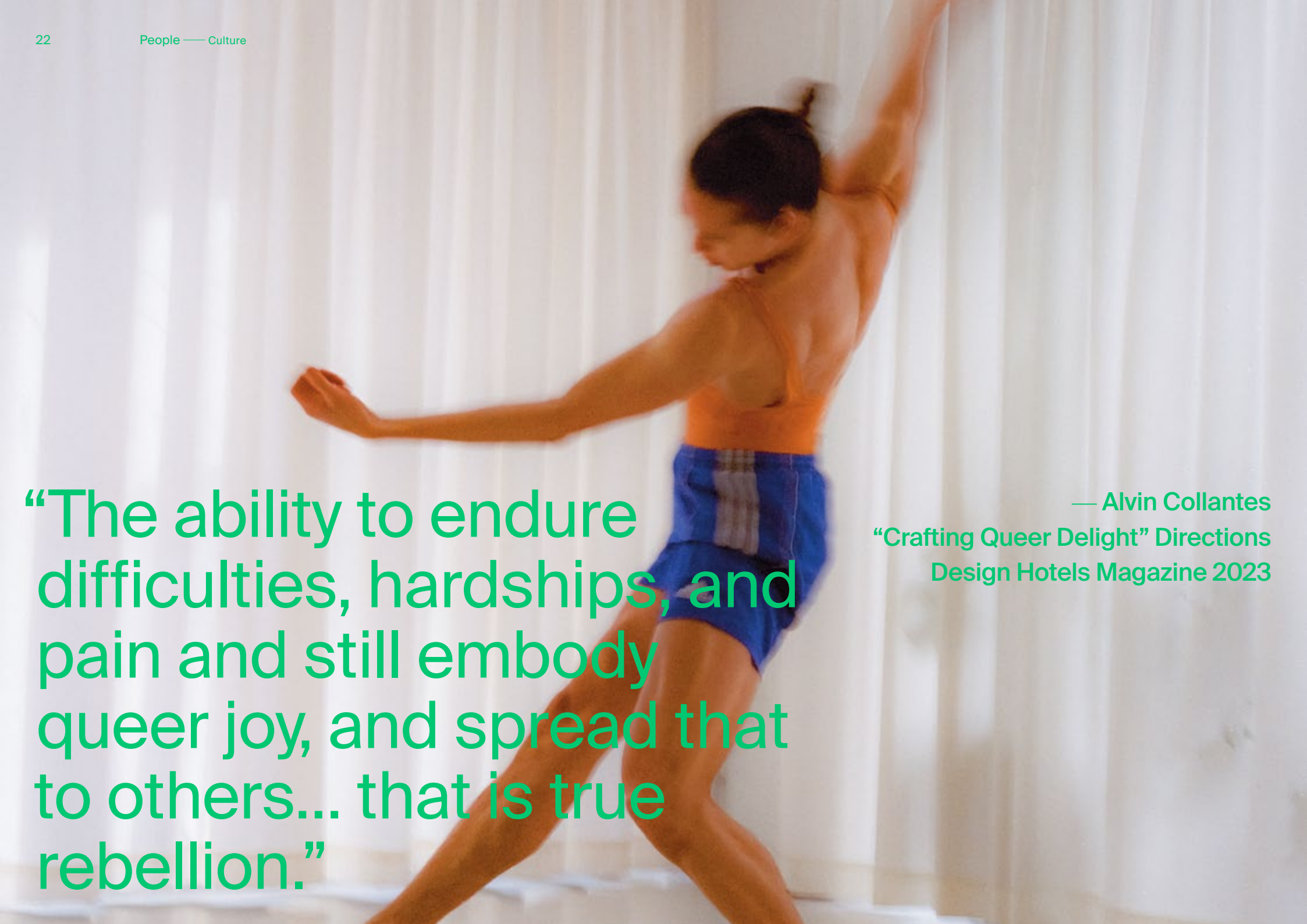
Gary Benchehib



“Society’s efforts over the next decade will likely determine the fate of a large portion of the planet. The breakdown of our climate and ecosystems – and the looming extinction crisis – are no longer fringe issues. Carbon reduction and sustainability imperatives are driving innovation in hospitality, architecture, and urban development, while acting as a catalyst for the creation of new businesses and products, innovative processes, and dining concepts.”

— Further Forecast,  
Design Hotels  
Trend Report 2023



A photograph of a person with dark hair tied back, wearing a blue and orange outfit, captured in a dynamic dance pose. The person is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with their right arm raised high and their left arm extended forward. The background consists of white, vertically pleated curtains. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting the person's form.

“The ability to endure difficulties, hardships, and pain and still embody queer joy, and spread that to others... that is true rebellion.”

— Alvin Collantes  
“Crafting Queer Delight” Directions  
Design Hotels Magazine 2023

**71%** of sales events in EMEA in 2022 had a sustainability focus

## Communication

Storytelling is one of the most powerful tools we have to inspire our community on the many ways travel can be a force for good. In addition to crafting our own stories, we work with external contributors, like industry thought leader Juliet Kinsman, and arrange content exchanges with like-minded brands, such as Trippin, to bring a variety of viewpoints into the topic sustainability and diversity. In 2022, we also asked the question "What is the environmental impact of our central communication platform, our website?"

### Takeaway

In 2022, we reviewed the main touchpoints through which we communicate, such as our website, our publications, and our events to identify actions that improve our environmental footprint. We calculated the CO2 emissions of our website and our annual event Arena\*, which helped us quickly implement small-scale actions and plan for bigger, strategic measures in the future. In everything we do, we consider our teams vital in driving change across departments and emphasize communication and education through workshops and tools when driving positive change.

#### Our Conscious Journey

We aspire to help our Community—our readers, travelers, hotels, and the people who make them—find more meaning from their travels through telling our own and our hotels story. [Read more](#)

#### Sustainable Hotels

Once tagged as a "Conscious Hotel" on our website, these hotels can be found by our users under the "Sustainability" filter, where one can read all about the hotel's practices in our "Our Conscious Eye On" series. [Read more](#)

The "Our Conscious Eye On" stories help travelers discover our most sustainable hotels and dive in-depth into their philosophy and initiatives. [Read more](#)

#### Our Platform designhotels.com

In 2021, we changed hosting company and switched to Microsoft Azure. Azure aims to be fueled by 100% renewable energy by 2025 and Water Positive, Zero Waste and a Net Zero Deforestation by 2030.

Sustainability is a strong consideration when we're planning any developmental changes on our website. We try to reduce the need for Javascript and other technologies that may increase energy consumption on users' devices. We also optimize image and video content on our website and newsletters to further reduce the energy consumption of users' devices.

#### Online Store

We offer the option to offset emissions when shipping from our online store.

#### Publications

We use our publications to explore sustainability themes in greater depth and push the conversation forward. We produce our book and magazine locally and print on eco-friendly paper.

#### Our Events and Experiences

Through our Conscious Event Guidelines, workshops and tools, we educate our team on how to plan and execute carbon-reduced events. In 2022, we brought in a consultant to help us audit Arena\*, our largest annual gathering, and produce a report. 71% of sales events in EMEA in 2022 had a sustainability focus.

#### Partners

We choose responsible partners for our in-person gatherings, community initiatives, and brand activities whenever we can.





# Conscious Event Arena\* 2022

As a travel and hospitality platform, it is our responsibility to be critically aware of the environmental impact of our own activities. Once a year, you—the visionaries of our hotels—come together for Arena\*, to explore what lies in store for the future of purposeful travel. We know that an in-person event of this scale, with 300+ guests, requires intention, planning, and dedication to making it as sustainable as possible. While we can't avoid emissions, especially from global travel, the act of tracking and analyzing our actions provides understanding on where we were the most and least effective. That's why we devote our time and energy into ensuring that we lessen our own impact on the wider environmental systems we inhabit.

## Audit Objection

We brought in a B Corp-trained expert to conduct a carbon footprint analysis of Arena\* for the first time.

The three objectives of the calculation were to:

- 1 Better understand the carbon emissions from Arena\*
- 2 Establish a baseline for future analyses
- 3 Create event guidelines so we can build more sustainable events in the future

## Scope

To calculate the event's carbon footprint, we and our sustainability consultant focused on four primary impact metrics:

- 1 Participant travel
- 2 Venue utilities (energy and water)
- 3 Food and drinks
- 4 Communications

**Location:**  
Cretan Malia Park,  
Crete, Greece

**Event Dates:**  
18–20 May 2022

**Attendees: 265**  
hoteliers, partners,  
speakers, Design  
Hotels colleagues

**From:**  
35 countries

**Total Carbon Emissions:**  
285.31 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

With every  
conference or  
event, there are  
two main impact  
areas: venue  
and travel.

## Accessibility

Participant travel made up more than 97% of the event's carbon footprint. Other key impact areas were small, as the venue maintains exemplary practices in environmental management.

## Waste

While some participants perceived food waste to be high, the venue minimizes waste through proper waste management, including monitoring, separating, and composting.

## Energy & Water

Energy and water consumption were kept to a minimum through water-saving devices and practices as well as geothermal and renewable energy use

## Products & Produce

The menus featured local ingredients whenever possible. Some participants mentioned that gifts and packaging could have been better screened for sustainability criteria.

## Culture

The theme, Circle Back Circle Forward, focused on circular thinking and economies. Four keynote talks, four panels, and one workshop explored sustainability topics.

## Measure & Communication

The digital communications reflect only a fraction of the printed communication material, especially when emails and the website run on renewable energy.

## Carbon Emissions

The analysis revealed what was to be expected: Participant travel made up more than 98% of the event's carbon footprint.

## Offset

In 2022, we calculated Arena\*'s carbon footprint to 187 tCO<sub>2</sub>e due to the consideration that 30% of the event participants offset their flight emissions voluntarily, according to a participant survey we conducted after the event. Moving forward, in order to ensure comparability and transparency, we will not consider offsetting activities when communicating our progress in the reduction of emissions.

While carbon offsetting should always be considered a “last resort” rather than a “free ride,” we had a budget of €4,000 to offset most emissions created by participant travel. We choose Kariba Forest Protection to be our offsetting project in partnership with Southpole. The project is based in Zimbabwe and the Volume mitigated is 196.00 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.





95% of the program at Arena\* 2022 was focused on sustainability-related topics.



# Conscious Event Arena\* 2023

Following last year's Arena\* in Crete, we created a Sustainability Event Audit to trace our carbon footprint and establish a baseline for future analyses. From this, we were able to produce our Conscious Event Guidelines, an open-source document that outlines the myriad ways we can make our events more sustainable. In sharing this information freely and publicly, we hope to empower others on their own conscious journeys.

We are not required by legislation to audit our own events but as a travel and hospitality platform, we believe it is our responsibility to be critically aware of the environmental impact of our own activities.

## Audit Objectives

The four objectives of the calculation were to:

- 1 Report Arena\* 2023 CO2 emissions
- 2 Analyze Arena\* 2023 efforts against our Conscious Events Guidelines
- 3 Compare Arena\* 2023 results with 2022
- 4 Improve our Conscious Event Guidelines for 2024

## Scope

- 1 Business Travel
- 2 Purchased Goods and Services
- 3 Electricity
- 4 Mobile Combustion
- 5 Waste Generated in Operations

**Location:**  
Berlin, Germany

**Event Dates:**  
4-6 October 2023

**Attendees:**  
320 hoteliers,  
partners, speakers,  
Design Hotels  
colleagues

**From:**  
41 Countries

**Total Carbon  
Emissions:**  
401.20 tCO2e

**Conclusion:**  
At Arena\* 2023, we had 55 more participants and from six additional countries than the previous year. This resulted in a significant increase of Carbon Emissions caused by the business travel metric plus a different scope of activities was tracked.

## Accessibility

Choosing to host Arena\* in a major city like Berlin ensured better accessibility for attendees with multiple direct travel options. This decision also eliminated the need to fly for location scouting, aligning with our commitment to reducing carbon footprint. We provided shuttle buses to transport the attendees to the venues.

## Waste

We proactively considered the afterlife of products used for the event, reducing, re-using and recycling where possible, e.g. reducing printed paper assets, repurposing decorations, and using certified compostable paper for the coffee cups.

## Water

Guests were encouraged to drink filtered tap water with reusable glass bottles provided by our partner Leogant, during the main conference day and evening.

## Products & Produce

We meticulously assessed production items, favoring sustainability. Examples include digital programs, reusable shared menus, reusable glass bottles, and thoughtful gifts like the La Bottega x Design Hotels toiletries bag.

## Culture

The aim of our program was to create a diverse lineup of talent & topics. Given the international nature of Berlin, we were able to capitalize on local talent with varying backgrounds and perspectives, striking a balance between quality, equity, and sustainability.

## Measure & Communication

Increased awareness around the topic of sustainability via production team, partner hotels, and guest briefing.

## Carbon Emissions

The analysis revealed what was to be expected: Participant travel made up more than 97% of the event's carbon footprint.

## Offset

While carbon offsetting should always be considered a "last resort" rather than a "free ride," we had a budget of €4.000 to offset most emissions created by participant travel. We choose Amazon Basin Protection to be our offsetting project in partnership with Southpole. The project is based in Brazil and the Volume mitigated is 220 tCO2e.

Choosing to host Arena\* in a major city like Berlin ensured better accessibility for attendees with multiple direct travel options.



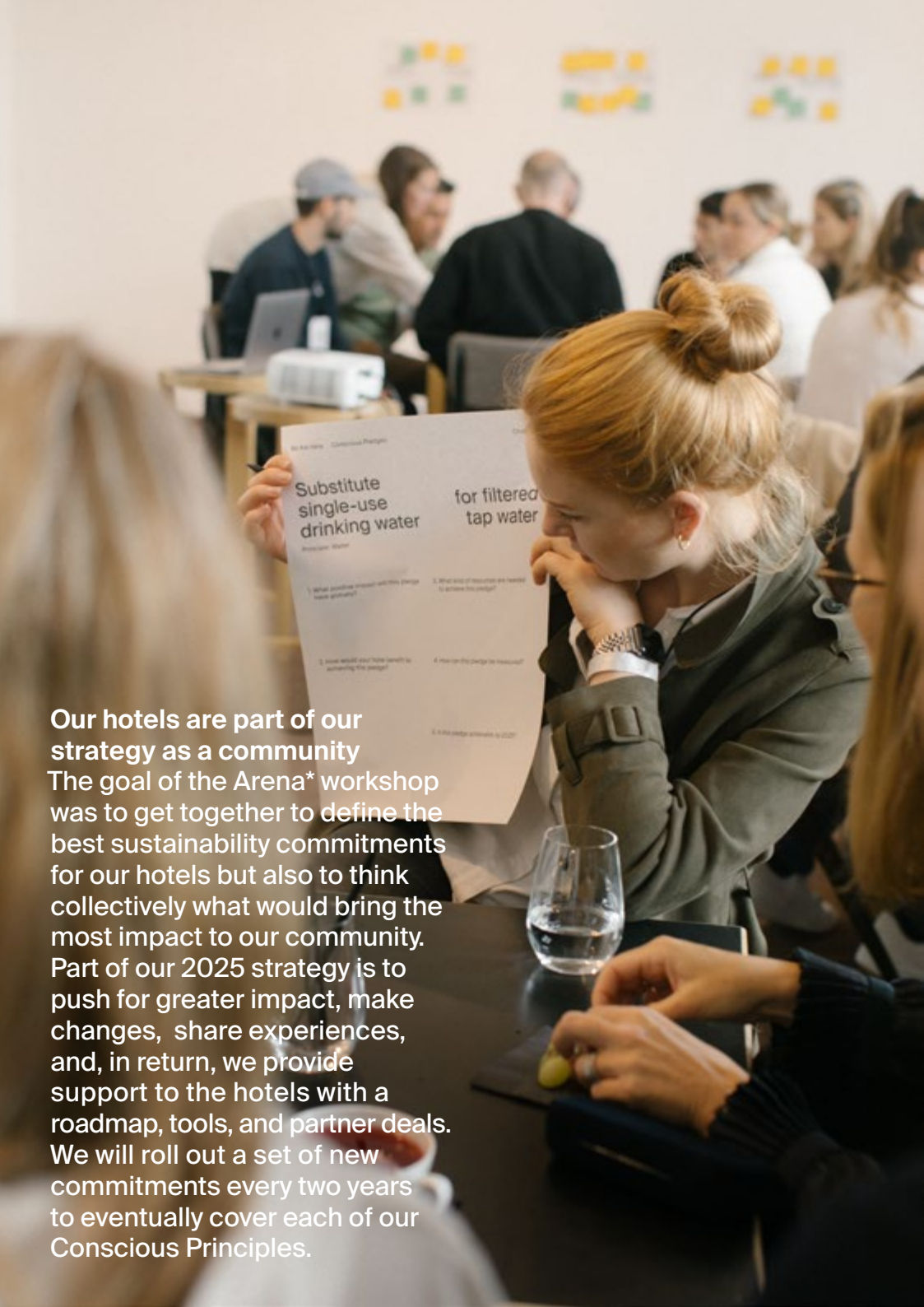
— Design Hotels  
2023 Arena\* Berlin



# Arena\* Berlin Workshop: I pledge Alliance to... a Sustainable Future



**Our hotels are part of our strategy as a community**  
The goal of the Arena\* workshop was to get together to define the best sustainability commitments for our hotels but also to think collectively what would bring the most impact to our community. Part of our 2025 strategy is to push for greater impact, make changes, share experiences, and, in return, we provide support to the hotels with a roadmap, tools, and partner deals. We will roll out a set of new commitments every two years to eventually cover each of our Conscious Principles.





# Conscious Event Guideline Check List

## Guiding the Way Forward

One of the primary goals of this exercise was to create a set of internal guidelines so we can design more sustainable events in the future.

Calling upon the calculations from the analysis, the recommendations from our auditor, participant feedback, and our own observations planning and attending Arena\*, we have created our Conscious Event Guidelines, to steer us when planning all future events— not only Arena\*

### Location & Accessibility

- ✓ Choose a location with sustainable architecture, that fulfills green building standards (e.g. LEED-certified)
- ✓ Consider a destination as accessible as possible in relation to where guests will be traveling from.
- ✓ Reduce damage to grass and outdoor areas to avoid waste and impact on the environment.
- ✓ Encourage the design and build of the event to be based on standard-hire items with minimal construction. Avoid approaches that are not reusable.
- ✓ Reduce site inspections. If you need to travel somewhere, try combining it with other meetings to reduce the number of times you travel.
- ✓ Minimize the number of contributors flying in from overseas; speakers, artists, photographers, videographers, partners etc.
- ✓ Encourage attendees to use public transport to travel to the event. Inform them of the options prior to arrival.
- ✓ Set up a carpool or provide shuttle buses if driving is essential. Use electric or hybrid cars, or cars using alternative fuels, if possible
- ✓ Offer bike racks, bike storage areas, or a bike concierge at the event.
- ✓ Choose DMCs, operators, and airlines that have green policies and actively work to reduce their impact on the environment.

### Energy & Water

- ✓ Choose event partners that use green energy whenever possible.
- ✓ Work with the venue to reduce power and air-conditioning use when not required.
- ✓ Choose generator suppliers that use modern, fuel-saving, environmentally friendly units, such as biodiesel.
- ✓ Exhibitions are a major source of excess power, as equipment is often left on overnight. Appoint a staff member to be responsible for ensuring that lighting and power use is reduced.
- ✓ Venue should take advantage of natural resources where possible, including natural light, tap water, and fresh air.
- ✓ Venue should actively implement procedures that limit unnecessary towel and linen changing.
- ✓ Compensate greenhouse gas emissions associated with the event through the organising entity or the participants
- ✓ Encourage participants to reduce the environmental impact of their flight (combine with holiday, offsetting, using direct flights when possible)

### Products & Produce

- ✓ Provide tap water instead of bottled water.
- ✓ Eliminate or reduce single-use plastics (bottles, packaging, signage, etc.) as much as possible
- ✓ Reduce meat products.
- ✓ Choose local and seasonal F&B.
- ✓ Buy products made from recycled materials when possible.
- ✓ Make arrangements with suppliers for the return of unwanted or unused products and materials, such as printing cartridges, containers, and packaging.
- ✓ Recycle materials from build/stage, etc. after the event.
- ✓ Reducing the amounts of paper used for marketing (e.g. by printing on both sides of the page, minimising the number of handouts distributed, and recycling the folders and brochures on display)
- ✓ Consideration of the environmental and social criteria and labels when selecting gifts for guests/ participants
- ✓ Avoid single use decorative items, for example rented potted plants, or dried flowers versus fresh cut flowers.

### Waste


- ✓ Provide recycling bins where participants can separate waste at the venue and in guestrooms.
- ✓ Ensure recycling is in place at the event location and monitor its effectiveness.
- ✓ Make sure meeting rooms and public spaces have a "waste station" with clearly marked recycling, compost, and trash bins.
- ✓ Ensure excess food is composted or collected and donated.
- ✓ Monitor RSVP and attendance numbers to ensure supply is tailored to the number of guests, thereby avoiding waste.
- ✓ Investigate outlets and avenues for recycling unwanted or excess items, materials, and products to reduce waste
- ✓ Don't offer materials in abundance.
- ✓ Encourage participants to avoid trash and return their name tags and lanyards after the event

### Community, Culture & Content

- ✓ Support local businesses, creators, and initiatives.
- ✓ Participants should get involved in a local activity. Give back to the community (e.g. all team to support a cause at the end).
- ✓ The majority of suppliers should be local so that we integrate with the local community (e.g. using local talent).
- ✓ Create a diverse program of contributors and partners.
- ✓ Be respectful of the communities we enter. Educate the team and participants on local customs.
- ✓ Choose sustainable recreational activities that do not detract from the natural and social environment

### Communication

- ✓ Reduce the amount of printed promotional materials. Supply electronically instead.
- ✓ Livestreaming or recording could allow overseas people to participate without flying.
- ✓ Ensure practices are put in place to encourage recycling and minimal use of resources. Put up signs to help remind and educate participants.
- ✓ Reduce the amount of dead stock with merchandise and gift bags at events.
- ✓ Submit proposals and quotes electronically and reduce handouts in meetings.
- ✓ Look for touchpoints during the event where sustainability efforts can be communicated as transparently as possible.
- ✓ Create a communication plan for before, during, and after the event.
- ✓ Engage the public (through PR for example)
- ✓ Train the organising team and everyone involved in the preparation and execution of the event

A close-up photograph of several overlapping, elongated, blue-green plant leaves. The leaves have a distinct reddish-brown or purple hue along their veins and edges. The texture appears slightly waxy or smooth. The lighting is soft, highlighting the natural colors and patterns of the foliage.

# III Planet

## Energy

At Design Hotels, we are aware of how our energy consumption translates into CO2 emissions. Key drivers are heating and electricity for our headquarters in Berlin. As these emissions can be influenced by our behavior, it is our aim to review and update our office policies to use these resources more efficiently and reduce our consumption in the upcoming years.

### Takeaway

Together with our carbon accounting partner, we have calculated our Corporate Carbon Footprint for 2022 of which energy (Scope 2) for electricity and heating represents 16.6% of our overall emissions. In the past, we were able to reduce our Scope 2 emissions substantially by switching our energy provider. Our office runs on 100% renewable energy, leading to zero emissions. For heating, our emissions amounted to 190.8 tCO2e in 2022.



**100%**  
Renewable  
electricity

**979.652**  
Scope 2 market-  
based energy (kWh)  
by Entity

### Energy and water in the office

We believe in small steps in the right direction and hence have no plastic water bottles and instead provide quality filtered tap water in the kitchens. We regularly remind employees to be mindful of their energy use, in terms of lights, heating, etc. Our office electricity runs on 100% renewable energy.



## Product & Produce, Waste

Our approach to product, produce, and waste is based on the understanding that the more local we act, the more we contribute to local communities and the more we reduce our carbon footprint, especially our Scope 3 emissions. This means we advocate for buying local products and produce such as food, beverages, textiles, and arts & crafts as it positively impacts the local economy and promotes cultural exchange while emphasizing the importance of reducing waste, especially by avoiding waste in the first place.

### Takeaway

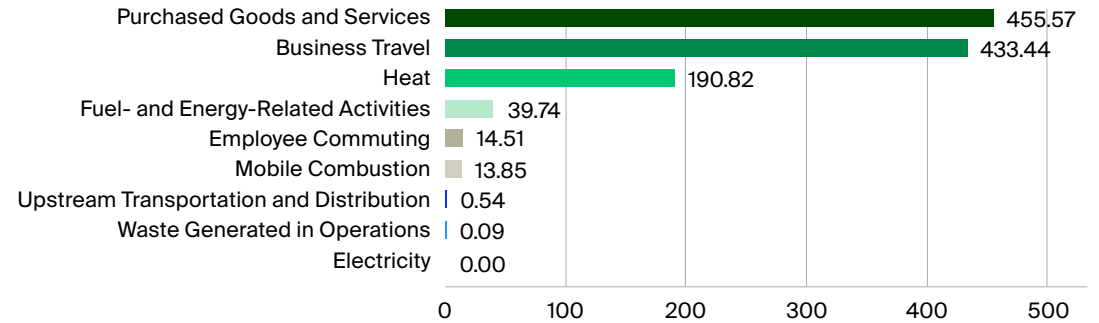
Calculating our Corporate Carbon Footprint provided us with insights on the environmental impact of the products and produce we purchase for our offices and our publications as well as the waste generated through these activities. In 2022, purchased goods and services (456 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and waste (89 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) represented the second largest area of Scope 3 emissions.

### Waste in the office

We have waste separation in the kitchens with the exception of a compost bin for now. We reduce giveaways where we can and encourage minimal printing on paper.



**Our Scope 3 Footprint**  
Total emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) breakdown by category



**Purchased goods and services emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) by top 5 types**



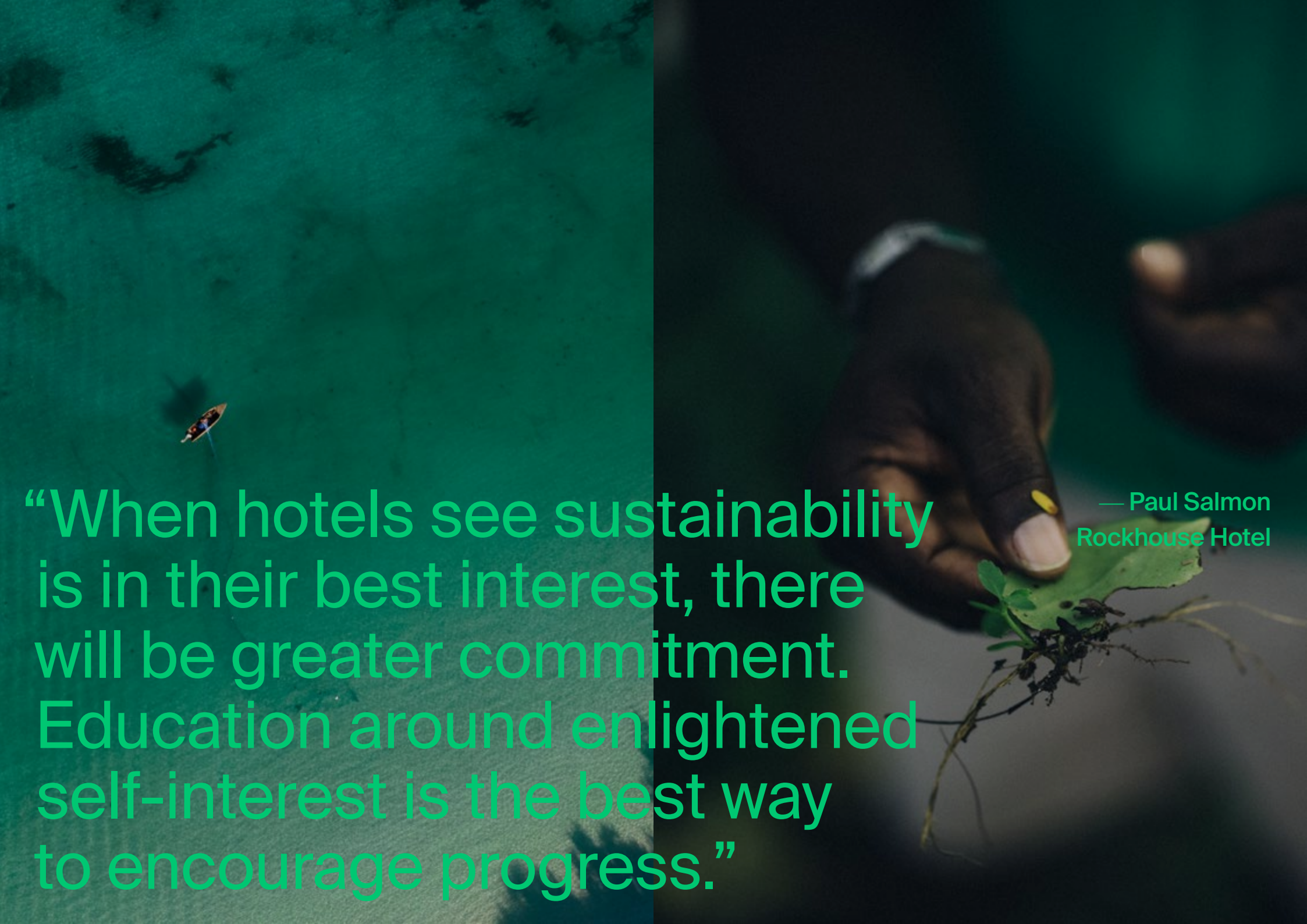




VI

# Our Conscious Hotels





“When hotels see sustainability is in their best interest, there will be greater commitment. Education around enlightened self-interest is the best way to encourage progress.”

— Paul Salmon  
Rockhouse Hotel

## Hotels

We consider our community of member hotels as a living ecosystem that thrives through the many occasions and platforms of reciprocal exchange. On the one hand, we advise our member hotels on areas of improvement, create shared learning experiences, and recommend partners to engage with as they develop their own practices through informed knowledge. On the other hand, we celebrate and incentivize our hotel's conscious efforts with larger exposure and share their experiences with the community. See page 9 in this report for our 10 Conscious Hotel Principles overview.

### Takeaway

In 2022, we focused on how we can enable our member hotels to embrace sustainability as a competitive edge and adopt conscious practices. We are proud to introduce our growing sustainability platform, "Conscious Collaborations", where we help hotels with resources, tools and partners. We also launched our "10 Conscious Principles" that serve as a framework for developing a sustainability strategy and creating impact reports. To incentivize our member hotels, we launched a process to identify and list "Conscious Hotels" on our website and provide extra exposure to those properties that include 7 out of 10 principles.

# 70%

of our consumer community say they would be more likely to book accommodation knowing it was eco-friendly – whether they were looking for a sustainable stay or not”

#### Working with our hotels

Conscious Collaborations is our growing sustainability platform designed to help all our hotels progress on their conscious journeys.

#### Conscious Principles

More than ever before, our community of travelers is asking about the sustainability initiatives at our hotels. As a framework, we have crafted 10 Conscious Hotel Principles – based on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria and the UN Sustainable Development Goals – that attempt to quantify the attributes of an environmentally and socially responsible hotel. It is a good overview for working on a sustainability strategy and creating impact reports, and one that has helped us at Design Hotels with our own practices and as guidelines for event productions, among other things.

#### Sustainable Partners

We share vetted, responsible, and relevant partners with our member hotels, including companies that produce in-room amenities and contacts at sustainability certification and advisory groups.

#### Workshops and Roundtables

In order to facilitate connections for our member hotels with partners, industry experts, and each other, we have launched a series of workshops and virtual roundtables. After each event, we publish a recap under “Resources” so that all member hotels can take advantage of the learnings.

#### Listing as a Conscious Hotel at Design Hotels

##### Certified Hotels

If a hotel has been awarded one or more of the major sustainable certifications—e.g. B Corp, Green Key, EarthCheck, LEED, standards recognized by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)—we automatically consider it a “Conscious Hotel.”

##### Not Certified Hotels

###### Step 1: Form

If not, a hotel can be listed if they fill out our Conscious Hotel Form and achieve at least 7 out of 10 Principles.

###### Step 2: Assessment

The form is evaluated by the internal Design Hotels Conscious Committee. If necessary, a follow-up interview is conducted by the team to gather more details on the hotel's initiatives.

###### Step 3: Implementation

Once tagged as a “Conscious Hotel,” users can find these hotels under the “Sustainability” filter and can read all about the hotel's practices in our “Our Conscious Eye On” series.

# 7/9

We asked our consumer community what is important to them when they travel. Sustainability was ranked 7 out of 9 options.



“There is always room for improvement and just by connecting and doing this exercise you have reminded me that I need to get active on how to find sustainability certification audits. I really need to get this started. So, thank you for that reminder!”

— Christiane Wassmann  
Rastrello



8 North America

30 Europe

3 Caribbean

1 Middle East

4 Asia

1 South America

Africa 2

Australia/Pacific 1

300

Portfolio

50

Conscious Hotels listed  
on [designhotels.com](https://www.designhotels.com)

35

Conscious Eye On articles

## Hotels Highlights

While all our hoteliers consistently strive to care for not only their guests but also their communities and our planet, the following 8 members of Design Hotels stand out for their dedication to maintaining and consistently improving their conscious operational philosophies. More information on all our conscious hotels can be found [here](#).

### Europe

#### Cretan Malia Park Crete, Greece

Cretan Malia Park's holistic approach to sustainability focuses on well-being, environmental responsibility, and preserving local history and culture. When renovating the hotel's existing building, architects used sustainable and often local materials like wood and stone. At the resort's three restaurants, ingredients are handpicked from the onsite organic vegetable and herb garden or sourced from local farms to serve a conscious selection of Creta dishes, forging a connection to the island's ancient cultures. And through the Phæa Farmers project, staff farmers are supported during low season and guided toward more sustainable land use and organic farming methods.

#### Cervo Mountain Resort Zermatt, Switzerland

At Cervo Mountain Resort, nearly 95% of energy requirements for hot water and heating are covered by geothermal energy and the remaining 5% are sourced from natural gas. Cervo also repurposes all its heat waste, and solar panels line the balconies of accommodations. Guests are encouraged to not bring a car—Zermatt is, in fact, car-free—and are given the opportunity to offset their trip's carbon emissions at check-out. Plus, the chefs source products from within 150 kilometers of Zermatt wherever possible, and where this is not possible, they opt for sustainable and organic suppliers.

#### ION Adventure Hotel Selfoss, Iceland

At Ion Adventure Hotel, 100% of energy needs are met by a local geothermal energy provider and all its hot water comes from the ground via geothermal springs. Another particularly impressive achievement is in the property's sustainable water system: all graywater undergoes a rigorous filtration process; first it passes through several layers of cleansing and is then filtered through lava to be reused in 50 years. Due to the hotel's remote location, a connection to the surrounding community is also essential—all products for the restaurant and other necessary services are sourced from and provided by local farms and businesses.

#### Stamba Hotel Tbilisi, Georgia

Stamba Hotel developed the region's first urban vertical farming project, Space Farms, an initiative focused on cultivating locally sourced, sustainably produced food across seven stories of racks with 200 square meters of surface. The produce is handpicked and directly integrated into Stamba's restaurants. Space Farms also utilizes 75% less water than traditional farming methods. Beyond this effort, Stamba also meticulously preserved the original structure, façade, and historical details of a former Soviet publishing house during its renovation, and the hotel's interiors feature repurposed, reclaimed, and vintage items, emphasizing a commitment to sustainable design.





Stamba Hotel



Cretan Mallia Park



ION Adventure Hotel



Cervo Mountain Resort



“It is our duty to provide travelers with enough information so that they can make informed choices. How far are we willing to go for our ecosystem that we love and cherish so much?”

— Veronica Reed, Carlota

## North America

### Rockhouse Hotel Negril, Jamaica

Rockhouse Hotel has pioneered sustainable practices for 25 years with extensive measures to conserve water and energy. Guests are given reusable water bottles for water-filling stations found throughout the property; there is an onsite organic farm, plant nursery, and wood workshop; and Rockhouse even makes its own candles and spa products. This dedication extends to the social side through the Rockhouse Foundation, which, since 2004, has invested more than USD 7 million in building, renovating, and expanding six public schools in Negril, where guests can also volunteer.

## South America

### Carlota Quito, Ecuador

Created by Renato Solines and Veronica Reed, Carlota is housed in Solines's grandmother's home, originally built in 1905. During the restoration, the couple salvaged 90% of the building, including walls, flooring, doors, and windows. They used the home's original furniture whenever possible and built new pieces with reclaimed wood. Efficient appliances and LED lighting are used throughout the hotel, which also generates 10% of its energy consumption through an onsite solar energy system. Beyond this, Carlota has become a cultural beacon in the community, hosting events, exhibitions, and salon talks, and sources food from local, organic producers.

## Africa

### Zuri Zanzibar Zanzibar, Tanzania

The world's first EarthCheck Gold-certified hotel, Zuri Zanzibar was constructed using materials sourced on-island and showcases local craftsmanship in wooden floors, doors, and roofs. The resort has its own water wells and desalination plant, and it also carries out numerous social projects in partnership with local organizations. With “Keep Kendwa Clean!”, for example, the hotel placed waste collection points around the local village and continues to provide funding to the waste-management company Zanrec to operate the project and create a healthier environment for the community. Organic bathroom amenities and conscious décor are provided through partnerships with other local social enterprises, such as Mwani Zanzibar and Chako.

## Asia

### Patina Maldives, Fari Islands Fari Islands, Maldives

At Patina Maldives, Fari Islands, plant-based cuisine is found in all restaurants, with many ingredients coming directly from an on-island organic permaculture garden—and those sourced off-island are accredited by EarthCheck or the International Pole and Line Foundation. Even the drinking water is produced and bottled on-island. The kids' club is fully solar powered, and there are organized staff and guest beach clean-up days. Plus, for every stay, 10 kilograms of marine plastic is collected, cleaned, and repurposed by Parley for the Oceans. To inspire the next generation of ocean awareness, Maldivian children can even become certified PADI scuba divers for free.



Rockhouse Hotel



Carlota



Zuri Zanzibar



Patina Maldives, Fari Islands



V

Closing



Material/Activity (lbs, kgs, km)

Transaction (\$, €, £)



Emissions Factor



Emissions Estimate

## Key Takeaways

Together with our carbon accounting partner, we have calculated our Corporate Carbon Footprint in Scope 1, 2, and 3 for our Berlin headquarters from January to December 2022. The carbon emissions from our 300 member hotels have been excluded from this scope, as we do not own, manage, or grant franchises to our hotels, rather we are a member community.

### Methodology

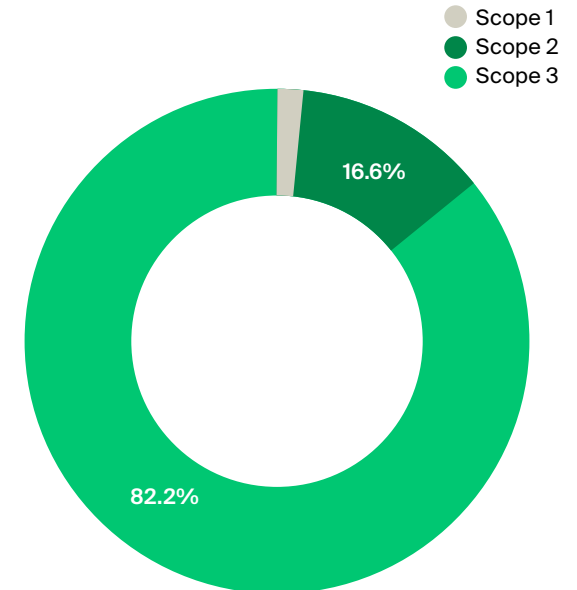
Our footprint calculations follow the Greenhouse Gas Protocol’s guidance. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is the most widely used standard on how to calculate and present emissions for sustainability reports. The underlying data for our emission estimates is a mix of material and activity data as well as transaction data for which our partner has identified emission factors:

In Scope 1, direct emissions result from our company vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are represented by indirect emissions resulting from electricity and heating consumption. In Scope 3, we calculated other indirect emissions in our upstream value chain. Here, our supply chain makes up more than 80% of our emissions, of which more than 90% are represented by purchased goods and services and business travel.

Understanding the details of our carbon footprint was an important milestone as we have now established our CO2e emissions baseline, which provides an essential benchmark for developing our emissions reduction strategy and measuring the success of our activities in the upcoming years.

# 1.149 ktCO2e

Total emissions 2022  
 Scope 1: 13.85 tCO2e  
 Scope 2: 190.8 tCO2e  
 Scope 3: 943.9 tCO2e



Total emissions % breakdown per scope (1, 2, 3)

## Next Steps

### People

People are at the heart of every business. Especially as a company in the hospitality industry, we are aware of the responsibility that comes with developing a people-centric organization and working together across borders. This is why we are always striving to improve and continue to foster a people-first culture.

Over the past years, we have worked to build a more inclusive culture, improve the overall employee experience and continue to facilitate a supportive environment where people are encouraged to reach their full potential. While we are proud of our achievements, we are also aware of the key drivers of the future that will influence how we keep and attract talent: demographics, artificial intelligence (AI), and people experience (EX). Our mission is to attract top talent from any “Gen” and amplify our offering about purpose, pay, development, and benefits towards the needs of each group. As a fundamental game-changer, AI will tectonically shift our way of working at Design Hotels in terms of human resources and organizations. To provide a more detailed outlook, we

have set up three primary focal points to work on in 2024 and 2025. First, we aim to establish a team dedicated to Diversity & Inclusion in close conjunction with HR. The team will review existing recruiting policies and processes and develop a strategy to improve on both counts. Second, we want to explore opportunities within the socio-economic development of a destination to foster more awareness about how hoteliers, travelers, and local communities can interact and create activities that are mutually beneficial. Third, we want to focus on reducing emissions of business travel, which constitutes the biggest share of our emissions. We aim to do so by reviewing our travel policies and implementing incentives to encourage other means of travel.

An overarching question that will continue to guide us, also in 2024, will be “Can travel be a force for good?” We want to contemplate what makes a good traveler and invite our community to help us find answers and ways to inspire each other to travel better.

### Planet

The hospitality industry generates a substantial ecological footprint, so embracing sustainable practices is not only an ethical responsibility but also a strategic necessity for the long-term viability of our industry. As a company that collaborates with over 300 independent hotels in 60 countries across the globe, we are aware of our inherent role and drive sustainable changes through inspiration and engagement with our community.

In 2022, we laid the foundation for our climate strategy. After calculating and understanding our carbon footprint for both our main annual event, Arena\*, and our daily operations, we have identified our baseline emissions. Now, our task is to develop our Net Zero journey and set science-based targets aligned with national and global climate goals. We are committed to reaching net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by no later than 2050 while acknowledging the need to prioritize the reduction of our emissions before considering offsetting measures.

We aim to enhance the data quality of our carbon accounting and improve data monitoring processes. To create a culture of mindful practices, we will finalize and implement rules and guidelines around recycling practices and general office care.

We seek to deepen the engagement with our member hotels. We support hotels that are just starting their sustainability journey, with the right focus, tools, and partners. We also work with hotels advanced in their sustainability journey to help them achieve relevant certifications, such as EarthCheck, B Corp, LEED, etc. We want to support them in realizing lighthouse sustainability projects that have the potential to create a positive ripple effect.



# Glossary

## Carbon Accounting

Carbon accounting is the process of measuring how much carbon dioxide equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e) an organization (company, state, etc.) emits.

## Carbon Footprint

All of the greenhouse gas emissions (both direct and indirect) associated with a specific product or activity.

## Scope 1

Scope 1 emissions are direct GHG emissions that a company generates while performing its business activities. This includes generation of electricity, manufacture and processing of materials, waste processing, and transportation using the company's own vehicle fleet.

## Scope 2

Scope 2 emissions are the indirect emissions generated by the production of purchased energy.

## Scope 3

Scope 3 emissions (also known as value chain emissions) are all indirect emissions that occur in the value chain of a company and are not already included within scope 2. These emissions are a consequence of the company's business activities, but occur from sources the company does not own or control. Scope 3 emissions include the following:

- Emissions generated in the company's supply chain, such as extraction, production, and transportation of purchased materials and fuels.
- Emissions generated from the use of sold products and services.
- Emissions generated from waste disposal. This includes the disposal of waste generated both in operations and in the production of purchased materials and fuels, as well as disposal of sold products at the end of their life.

## Offsetting

Carbon offsetting is the process of balancing a business's carbon emissions by removing a proportionate amount of carbon from the atmosphere. In theory, there's nothing wrong with this. In fact, carbon removal is the necessary final step of a company's net zero journey. In practice, however, the term "carbon offsetting" has become associated with low-quality activities, which can be much less effective than the businesses that purchase them believe. This leads companies to unintentionally "green-wash" by only compensating a fraction of their carbon footprint.

## Net zero

Net zero is a state in which the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere is counterbalanced by removing an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases. In a system that has reached net zero, the total amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere will remain constant. In practice, net zero is most often discussed in relation to companies and countries, which set net zero targets to guide their GHG reduction efforts. But reaching net zero can also be a goal for individual people, industries, geographic regions, or the entire planet.

## Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e)

For any greenhouse gas, the carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) is the mass of CO<sub>2</sub> which would warm the earth as much as the mass of that gas. CO<sub>2</sub>e provides a common scale for measuring the climate effects of all greenhouse gases.

## Greenhouse gas (GHG)

A greenhouse gas (GHG) is a gas that absorbs and emits radiant energy within the thermal infrared range, causing the greenhouse effect and thereby global warming.

## Our Conscious Collaborators

We collaborate with vetted, responsible partners for our internal practices, people, and member hotels. We've collected resources, partners, and fellow hotel recommendations that align with our 10 Conscious Principles. We believe it is vital to share our collective knowledge, support projects that do good work, and tell stories that highlight ways to be a Good Traveler.

AXOR

Bananatex

BASIMUM

Cafezal

Christian Näthler

Demi Anter

EARNT

EarthCheck

Gary Benchehib

Hejhej

Julia Watson

Juliet Kinsman

Karry Schwettmann

Katie McKnoulty

KITRO

La Bottega

Leaders for Climate Action

LEOGANT

Madeleine Dias de Rezende

Marriott Serve 360

Marso Living

Mono

Normative

Notpla

Saira Hospitality

SapoCycle

Sophie Lovell

Southpole

Steph Cusack

Sungai Watch

Sustainable Hospitality Alliance

Telus Health, formerly Lifeworks

The Conscious Travel Foundation

TUTAKA

Under The Open Sky

UNICEF

Weeva

World Central Kitchen

## Methodology

### **Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHGP)**

Normative's calculations follow the GHGP's guidance. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol is by far the most widely used standard on how to calculate and present emissions for sustainability reports. Regardless which reporting standard a company follows (CDP, GRI, etc.) – the Greenhouse Gas Protocol lays the foundation of how to calculate and present a company's emissions

Normative helps businesses reduce their carbon footprints by offering science-based carbon accounting software and tailored advice from net zero specialists.

### **2023 Commute Survey.**

Design Hotels colleagues.  
Conducted in May 2023.

### **2023 Engagement Survey.**

Design Hotels colleagues.  
Conducted in June 2023.

### **2023 Design Hotels Consumer Survey**

Design Hotels' readers.  
1,789 Participants.  
Conducted in June 2023.

### **2023 Culture Employee Survey.**

Design Hotels colleagues.  
Conducted in November 2023.

## Contact

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Stijn Oyen, Michel Miserez  
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We welcome feedback and  
comments from our stakeholders.  
Your input is crucial as we con-  
tinue to evolve on our impact  
journey.

If you'd like to know more about  
anything we've discussed in this  
report, then please get in touch:

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