

CANNES LIONS

Cannes Lions Green Guide



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After two years of Cannes Lions being hosted virtually due to the pandemic, the eagerly anticipated International Festival of Creativity is returning to Cannes, France, taking over La Croisette once more for five days of celebrations, content and conversations.

Sustainability is top of mind for Cannes Lions this year. While we're at the beginning of our journey, the company is ambitious to deliver an increasingly sustainable festival year on year.

We need your help, however. Progress wise, we know we'll make greater strides if we're doing this together – so we've created this Green Guide in partnership with [isla](#), the independent sustainability body to the UK events industry, to support you to make better decisions for your activity at Cannes Lions.

Before you get started

Our aim is to support you in making informed choices, so whether you're having design conversations with your suppliers or planning your menus, you're doing this in the most considered and impactful way.

In this guide, we explore key themes of waste and materials, greener menu design, engaging your stakeholders and inspiration on what you can do now and what you can learn from Cannes Lions 2022 to take forward in future experiences.

Wherever your supply chain partners are in their journey, just like you they're bound by limitations in time, knowledge and resources, so throughout this guide we provide key questions to ask, and guidance on how to consider sustainability, so that you can help your supply chain help you!

Plan, procure, progress

You'll make the most of this guide if you follow these three Ps! The guide is set up to help you think about how you're **PLANNING** your experience so that you can ask the right questions to **PROCURE** in a way that supports best practice and helps your **PROGRESS** in your environmental activities moving forward.

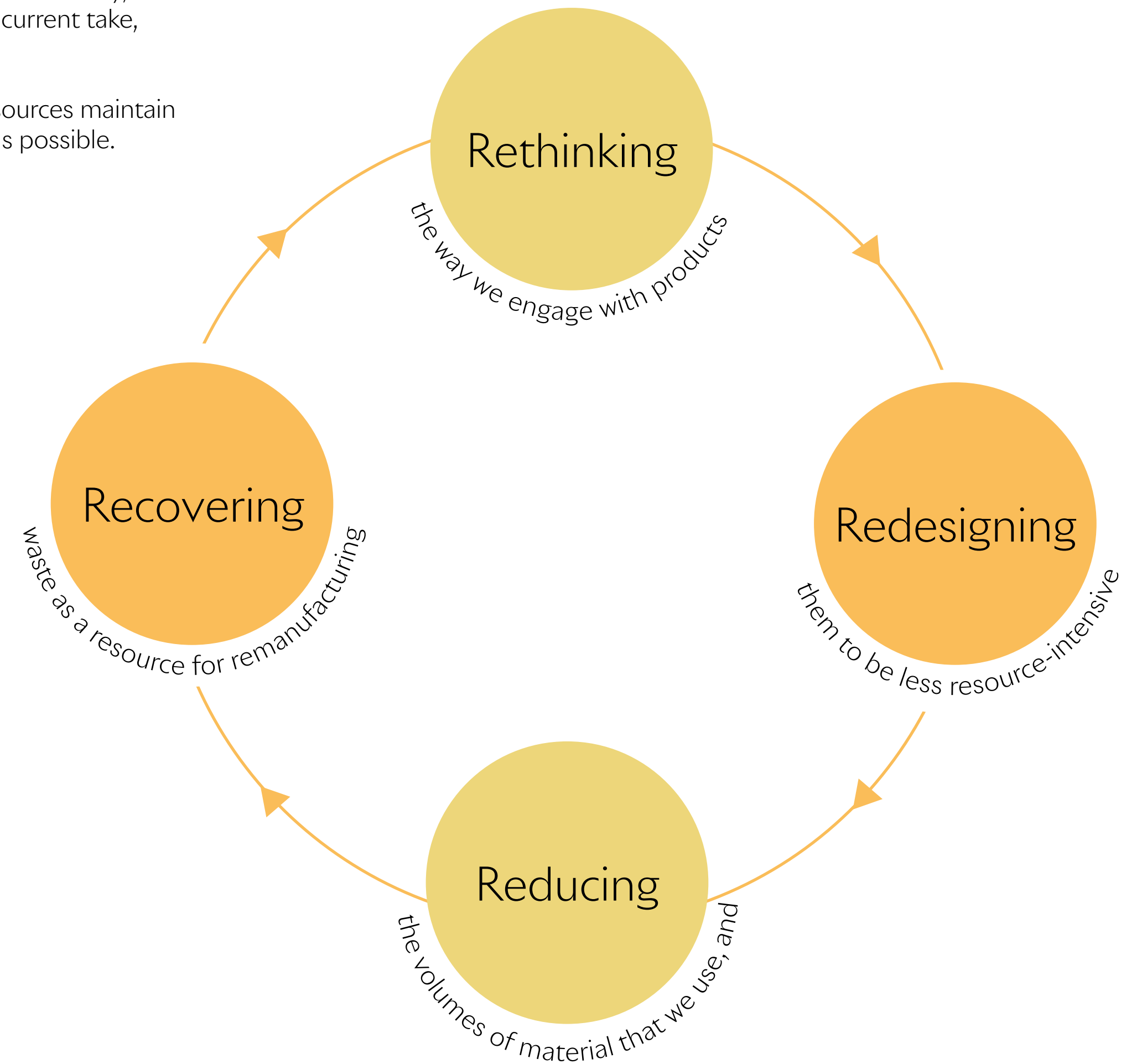


Working in
collaboration with
your supply chain
partners

The Circular Economy

As the name suggests, the Circular Economy (CE) is modelled on the natural order of circularity, creating fewer problems than our current take, make, waste economy.

The aim of the CE is to ensure resources maintain their maximum value for as long as possible. In practice it's about:





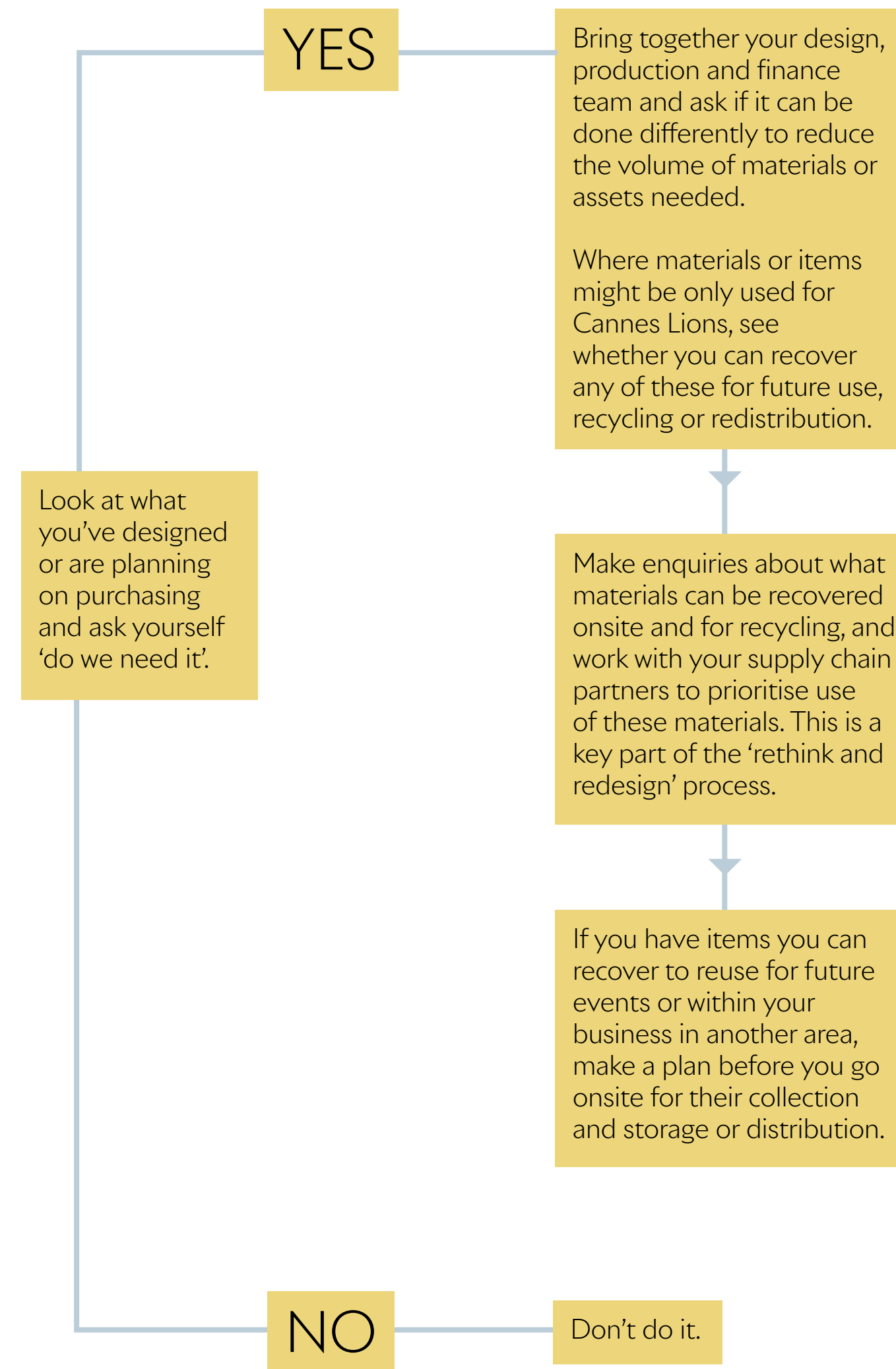
Although the CE is a bit more complicated than this when you get really into the detail, by focusing on minimising impact by rethinking what you need, redesigning to reduce and minimise potential waste, and aiming to recover as much as possible for future reuse, you'll be practising circular economic thinking.

In events, big-ticket items like large format graphics and smaller items like props to dress a space can all be re-thought in the context of the CE.

Whether you're in the design phase or making a purchasing decision, by applying the 'circular model' you can evaluate the full impact of your activity and take accountability for your choices.

Follow the process below to see if you're thinking in a circular way.

Rethinking & Redesign



Reduce

Now you've thought about how you can design with fewer resources in the first instance, opt for products made from recycled materials, this reduces the supply of virgin materials which may just end up in landfill or being incinerated.

Ask your delivery partners what recycled materials might exist to replace those you know you need to use; there is an increasing number of quality and affordable alternatives to graphic materials. You can look at [isla's Better Print Buying Guide](#).

Recover

Wherever possible, you want to avoid sending materials or assets to waste - whether that's landfill or incineration. In both scenarios the resource is lost when it could be used again, either by someone else or through recycling into new product.

It's important to remember that just because a material is recyclable, doesn't mean it will actually be recycled. This process needs to be managed onsite, whether that's by supply chain partners or part of the project management team. Materials may need to be separated into different waste streams to ensure they're recycled.

Where you have good quality products that aren't waste, but that you definitely won't use again, we recommend these are donated via our partner [Green Bee](#).



What will you know if you follow this process?

What materials you're using and what waste streams are available.

What can you do with this knowledge?

Make a plan to ensure that the materials or assets you're using are managed correctly at the end of the event.

What will this mean if you put a plan in place?

That you're practising circular economy principles!

Questions to ask your supply chain partners and venue managers

- What kind of recycling streams are available and can we use materials that can go into these to avoid waste to landfill or incineration?
- Can we design this to be easily separated during de-rig so that it can go into the right recycling stream?
- What kind of recycled materials are available to use in our designs?

Answers to listen for...

- Clear information about the recycling streams available (i.e. plastic, wood, metal) and whether these are onsite or offsite.
- How waste is separated on and offsite to ensure that your planning efforts aren't ineffective, and if staff are suitably trained to ensure this is happening.
- Whether the materials currently being proposed in design can go into these streams.
- Suggestions for suitable alternatives that can go into the recycling streams available and how this could / will be managed.



Plastic

The devil you know (or don't!)

Did you know, “eco-plastics” are often not very eco after all? ‘Biodegradable’, ‘bioplastics’ and ‘compostable’ materials are only a better option if you have the right waste management system available!

You may have the best intentions in mind when choosing materials labelled ‘bioplastic’, ‘biodegradable’ or ‘compostable’, but if there is not a waste stream in place for them, it may in fact be better to use a recyclable plastic-based material that is curbside recyclable, than an ‘eco-material’ that requires a specialist waste management service that isn’t available!

When we are talking about “eco-materials” what do we really mean? You may have come across certain ‘eco’ plastics which market themselves as biodegradable or compostable - these materials fall into three main categories:

‘What is ‘curbside recyclable’?’

These are the materials that can be put into domestic recycling, and are collected, sorted and managed by a contracted waste management partner.

These partners are often contracted by authorities at a local or regional level.

The materials that are ‘curbside recyclable’ will vary area to area based on what facilities and services different waste management partners can offer.

‘Biodegradable plastic’

is petroleum-based, with a chemical additive which helps it break down quicker than regular plastics (although not necessarily by much!).

This decomposition can leave behind toxic residues and microplastics.

These plastics should not go into the recycling system.

‘Bioplastic’

usually refers to polylactic acid (PLA) plastic, derived from corn, sugar cane and wheat crops.

PLA can be processed into a nutrient-rich fertiliser, when specially processed.

These plastics should not go into the recycling system.

‘Compostable’

materials often require specialist facilities to help the decomposition process.

While there are compostable materials that can go into domestic composting, these are not always well labelled, so it can be difficult to tell the difference between what is and isn’t actually compostable.

These materials should not go into the recycling system.

Why shouldn’t these materials go into the recycling system?

Essentially, they clog it up! Material recovery facilities, that process large volumes of different materials, are machine-led industrial systems that are designed to process very specific types of materials.

Biodegradable, bioplastic and compostable materials are often indistinguishable from regular plastics, but cannot be recycled in the same way. This means they cause congestion and challenges in the material recovery stage (the bit before it’s recycled) and then contaminate the actual recycling process.

Often, material recovery specialists will end up sending lots of potentially recyclable material to landfill or incineration because it is too contaminated by non-recoverable materials.

That isn’t to say that these alternative plastics and materials can’t be part of the solution, but you’ll need to plan correctly for them. If you don’t, using them could be more detrimental than using regular plastic.



What can you do about this?

- **Make your purchasing choice based on your available waste stream**

Find out whether the waste partner available can process these materials and, if so, make sure that the right bins are in place to collect these (see Avoid Contamination).

If your waste or supply chain partner can't manage alternative plastics or materials, then avoid using them.

Look at reusable options in the first instance, and if you can't use reusable items then PET (Polyester) plastic is the most easily recycled and may be a better option.

- **Avoid contamination**

If you're already committed to alternative plastics or materials, make sure there is an individual waste stream in place to collect these separately to regular plastics.

As they cannot be recycled, and often look and feel similar to their more common counterparts, without separate bins in place they are likely to be placed in the regular plastic recycling stream, causing contamination - driving up the time, costs and emissions associated with processing.

- **Make it clear**

You'll need to engage your guests in making sure they put their waste in the right bins - clear signage, with pictures, at eye height is the best way to help your guests help you, and the environment!

Questions to ask...

- What materials can you collect and process? Can you collect and process bioplastics or compostable materials?
- How should these materials be segregated from other waste and recycling, and can you help us to ensure we're doing this correctly?

Answers to listen for...

- What materials are most easily processed by your waste management partner.
- If your waste management partner doesn't ask you to segregate materials before they collect them, it is unlikely that they are correctly processing them and they're likely to be going to landfill or incineration.



Food for thought

Greener, kinder catering...

Tackling the climate crisis requires a shift in global consumption habits and science has proven that diets low in animal products and high in fruits, vegetables and pulses are better for our bodies and our planet.

In addition to designing plant-based menus, look at how you can reduce food waste by using 'root to shoot' principles and creating smaller portions to reduce the likelihood of food waste.

Root to shoot

Use as much of an ingredient as possible to limit the amount of produce wasted. For example, keep skins on potatoes to create rustic fries, or using the green tops of carrots to make pesto instead. 2.5 billion tonnes of food goes uneaten each year - about 40% of all food produced contributing up to 8% of global emissions!

Cutting out one beef dinner per week, over the course of a year saves the equivalent emissions of two round trip flights from London to Nice.

60% of global biodiversity loss is due to land cleared for the farming and agriculture of meat-based diets.

The single biggest, and simplest, change we can make is to reduce our intake of meat to just one or two portions a month!

1/3 Europeans no longer consider themselves full meat-eaters opting for vegetarian, vegan or flexitarian diets

Armed with the right knowledge you can carry green-foods forward into your event menus. Designing nutritious, conscious menus is an easy win for immediate positive impact, and inspiring positive behavioural change.

All you need to do is think local, think seasonal (and think vegetable!)



Why seasonal?

The Mediterranean climate make this area the perfect place to grow fresh produce.

The majority of consumers believe in the importance of food seasonality and claim to shop seasonally, yet only a small minority recognise when fruits and vegetables are actually in season.

Increase the prevalence of seasonal ingredients on your menus and use this as an opportunity to promote seasonal eating habits, which has a positive impact not just at your event but in your guests' future choices too.

Eating seasonally can reduce the carbon footprint of your food, save water and provide nutrient rich ingredients due to the increased freshness of produce. So do a bit of digging yourself and find out which foods are seasonal to event locations.

Why local?

The Cote d'Azur may be known for its pale rosé but the French Riviera also has some of Europe's finest produce.

Sourcing ingredients from closer to the event location not only reduces your food transport emissions, but supports the local economy, whilst celebrating what the province has to offer.

Try setting a minimum target around food sourced within a certain radius of the venue, such as a 75-mile menu. Not only does this help reduce food miles, but it also supports local producers and growers.

Local, seasonal food for Cannes in June

Fruit:

Apples, pears, peaches, cherries, figs, apricots & plums.

Vegetables:

Fennel, broad beans, courgettes, artichoke, summer squashes.

Questions to ask your catering partner

- Do they work with a network of local farmers and suppliers and can they offer certified organic or fair trade produce?
- Are there any local delicacies and ingredients in season which can be celebrated and used to focus menu design?
- What practices do they implement to reduce food waste and how can these be applied for your event?

Answers to listen for...

- Food waste prevention practices like using odd shaped ingredients, relationships with small scale producers and growers, partnerships with food redistribution partners or charities, chefs trained up in food waste prevention techniques.
- Passion when talking about local growers and partners and celebrating local cuisine and foods, and excitement at being asked to respond to a brief focusing on this area.



Engaging your guests and internal stakeholders

Engaging your stakeholders

Engaging your guests

The good news is that most individuals want to do something about climate change! According to a Deloitte survey of more than 10,000 consumers in 2020, two thirds of consumers surveyed expressed that recycling and reusing, reducing single-use plastic use and tackling air pollution were of their top three concerns.

When responses were compared across countries, reducing carbon emissions was a near-universal priority.

In the same study, it was found that 55% of consumers want brands to create awareness around problems such as climate change. Cannes Lions, celebrating the power of communications, is a perfect opportunity to shout about all the steps you're taking to address climate challenges!

Getting your message across

Pre-event comms are a great place to start engaging your guests. By talking about your ambitions in pre-event communications, you can get guests involved in supporting, and being excited about, more sustainable practices before they even arrive at your event. Examples of this include things like sharing a dinner menu in advance and asking guests to pre-order. Not only can you talk up your delicious, local and seasonal menu, but you can prevent food waste by knowing exactly what you need to order in advance!

Brand Ambassadors are a great asset! Approachable, personable and trained to represent your brand, make sure you include awareness of what actions you've taken to reduce the impact of your experience in their pre-event training. If you've got specialist waste segregation bins, BAs can engage with your guests to guide them in supporting your waste management practices. If you've designed a plant-based or local menu, BAs can highlight this to guests and raise awareness about this, inspiring intrigue and interest.

QR codes are a low effort and low impact way of sharing creative communications about your activities, big and small. Making these shareable on social media also helps to further amplify your message and spread awareness.



Engaging your internal clients

One of the biggest barriers to delivering a more sustainable event can be a lack of appetite from clients and stakeholders to release the budget necessary to enable certain reduction measures.

But what's great is that not every reduction measure will cost more money! Smart planning can be just as effective at reducing environmental impact, and can help you find additional budget within your existing allocation:

- Plant-based options are often cheaper, or cost-equivalent.
- Working with local suppliers can save on overseas shipping costs.
- Reducing the volume of materials and products you're purchasing will create savings which can be redistributed to other measures which may cost more - like specialist waste contractors or carbon measurement.
- Electing not to give out physical SWAG, immediately saves unnecessary spend on often unwanted items.

Where you do need to access additional budget, aligning your event's sustainability objectives with your brand's ESG strategy or environmental commitments will make it much easier to communicate to your clients and internal stakeholders about why you are asking for this.

With more than half of consumers asking brands to create awareness around climate change, tying sustainable event solutions into the marketing and communications strategy around your experience and activity, where consumers are directly interacting with your brand, should be a no-brainer for budget release!

Ditch swag in favour of digital donations.

Did you know that the average conference attendee discards or contributes to over 4 pounds of waste everyday? Cannes Lions has partnered with Givsky this year to provide a sustainable alternative to material swag at the festival. The Givsky platform can create turn-key links or QR codes that clients can easily scan to opt-out of taking swag and instead trigger a donation to the nonprofit. All donations and clients who opt in to donate will be captured in Givsky, so you have insight into the clients who prefer to have a more sustainable solution - saving you money and a lot of waste to our environment. To find out how you can use Givsky tools during Cannes Lions, reach out to info@givsky.com.

Ways to use Givsky at Cannes Lions



Support a cause that is important to your prospect

Response rates increase by 100% when professionals utilize impacting communities in need into their outreach to connect with prospects.



Showcase your company's values

Corporations who showcase that they are socially responsible have shown up to a 20% increase in revenue.



Create a more sustainable way to connect

On average, more than 40% of conference and event material ends up wasted and in landfills and on average every conference attendee discard or contributes to over 4 lbs of waste every day.



Making progress and planning for the future

“Do what you can, with what you’ve got, where you are”

It’s important we don’t let perfection be the enemy of progress or we’ll never get anywhere! If we wait until we have the perfect solution, we’ll never get started.

Transforming our expectations, behaviours and culture is a process, and every event stakeholder has the opportunity to be a part of this. Live events will always have an impact on the environment, but there are many ways in which we can minimise these impacts and create lasting positive change.

Alongside taking immediate action, the best way you can help improve your environmental performance is to learn from what you’ve done! Keeping track of what you’re doing and the choices you’re making is critical to supporting post-event debrief, reporting and learnings to move forward. Just like marketing metrics and ROI will be assessed for each event for future improvements or setting targets, measurement and data can be used to assess sustainability for further improvements too.

Capture data on:

Types and volumes of materials you’re using and how much is being recycled, reused, redistributed or going to general waste. Your supply chain partner should be able to provide a report on type and volume of materials used, and your waste management partner (if different) should be able to provide you a report on how much waste is going where. Make sure you let your supply chain partners know you want this information before your event goes live so they can incorporate this into their planning and post-event wrap up.

Number and type of meals ordered, volume of food ‘over-catered’ and food wasted during preparation and waste from the plate. Your catering partner should be able to supply this information to you. Food waste during preparation and on-site isn’t always standard practice, so talk to your catering partner about whether they capture this information in their facilities and whether they can capture this when preparing food on-site. Your waste management partner may be able to offer food-waste bins as part of their services, and if so they’ll be able to provide a report on volumes for you.

How your teams are travelling, how your contracted staff are travelling and where everyone is staying. Capturing data on mode of transport, mileage and number of trips means that you can easily calculate the carbon footprint of travel associated with your event teams and partners. This data can easily be run through a carbon calculator to work out your carbon footprint, and this can be offset.

Include this information as part of your post-event debrief or reporting and detail what you’ve learned. For example, it might be really easy for you to plan to reuse elements of your design at future events which makes it a no-brainer to do it again, or you might find that different materials are much easier to come by than expected.

Capturing these learnings to share with your stakeholders, celebrating the wins and proposing solutions for the future, will make it much easier to create buy-in for climate positive activities in future experiences and activations!



Closing statement

We hope that you find this guide a great place to start for thinking about how we can all take part in more sustainable event practices.

If you're looking for more in depth support, we recommend you speak with our partners [isla](#), who can provide practical guidance, resources, and support to events and experiences teams.

If you're interested in measuring the carbon impact of your events and experiences – including your festival footprint – we can recommend their carbon measurement and reduction platform [TRACE by isla](#). Additional free guidance on sustainable event deliveries is also available via isla's best practice framework [proseed](#).

We'd be grateful to hear your feedback and thoughts on implementing sustainability at the festival, too, so don't hesitate to get in touch. Knowing what you've found useful helps us curate this information and improve this guidance for the future to create an increasingly sustainable festival, year on year.