

Preamble

This document was created by the Environmental Working Group of IETM with the aim of helping cultural professionals to reflect on their practices from an ecological perspective and tailor their work accordingly. As IETM is a global network, the Working Group acknowledges that its members have differing needs and capacities. Therefore, instead of the prescriptive approach that environmental guidelines often take, the Group decided for a more open-ended format, a set of questions that help each member to interrogate the sustainability of their work while leaving room for differences.

I. Awareness / Measurement

How do we know where to start our journey to sustainability if we do not know which of our actions are the most environmentally harmful, and which ones are regenerative? Can we prioritise our social impact without instrumentalizing our artistic practices and curbing artistic freedom? This section gives you prompts and resources to reflect on your level of awareness and your options for measuring your impact.

- Is environmental impact a consideration in your work?
- When you have to choose between different priorities, where do environmental considerations lie in comparison to other priorities, such as finances, time, efficiency and comfort? Which areas of your work are you making these decisions? (Examples: travelling, touring, catering, choosing energy providers, bank accounts)
- Are you actively seeking to learn about sustainability? Do you know where to look for useful resources, knowledge-exchange programs and training opportunities? Do you know people who could help you with this?
- Do you know which elements of the cultural sector create the highest carbon footprint?
- Are you measuring your environmental impact and carbon footprint?
- What are the values that guide your practice?
- What positive actions are you already taking? Are there aspects of your work that are sustainable but you have not considered / valorised them so far from an ecological perspective?
- What resources do you have / need?
- How can your organisation support you to go further in sustainability action (For instance, can they provide time, finances, training)?
- How do you move away from experiencing environmental commitments as something peripheral and difficult instead of something central and essential?

Resources:

The main factors in the cultural sector's carbon footprint and tips to reduce them:

- The Shift Project: [Eco-guidelines for networks](#)
- Creative Carbon Scotland: [Green Arts Charter](#)
- [The Theatre Green Book](#)
- Creative Carbon Scotland: [Green Arts](#) and [Resources](#)
- Julie's Bicycle / IFACCA: [D'Art Report 34b – The arts and environmental sustainability: an international overview](#)

- Digital Footprint¹: <https://www.kaspersky.com>

CO2 Calculators

- The Shift Project: [CO2 calculators comparison](#) (Creative Green Tools, Claim Expense, EcoPassenger, Trees for All, Atmosfair)
- [Sustainable Culture NOW](#) (Denmark – Danish language)
- Arviva – SEED: [French language CO2 calculator](#) & [Green Alternatives for the Cultural Sector](#) (French)
- Julie’s Bicycle (UK): [Julie’s Bicycle](#) (English)

II. Degrowth and Redistribution

Can you trace the influence of the dominant, growth-addicted global economy on your practice? Are you participating in alternative, circular economies of sharing and upcycling? Are you taking steps to reduce the environmental harmful practices of your organisation? This section gives you prompts and resources to reflect on how, through redistribution, less can become more, for more people.

- Do you understand the concept of degrowth?
- Is it time for your organisation to grow or to degrow?
- Is your model about purchasing new materials for each production or about hiring, sharing and recycling materials?
- Are you aware of who around you still need growth (economic, professional, personal)? How can you support them?
- How do you redistribute resources? How does that work in an international context?
- If you generate profit, where does it go?
- How are you creating awareness about people's needs who still need growth? How do you make space for those who need it?
- Are your events helping your audiences to channel their motivation into action?
- Are you directing collaborators and audiences to resources that they can learn more from and to organisations (e.g. local networks, NGOs) that need their help?
- How do/could you redistribute resources?
- How do power relations function in your organisation, both internally and externally? How does this affect your climate action?

¹Explanation of digital footprint: ‘A digital footprint – sometimes called a digital shadow or an electronic footprint – refers to **the trail of data you leave when using the internet**. It includes websites you visit, emails you send, and information you submit online. A digital footprint can be used to track a person's online activities and devices.’ <https://www.kaspersky.com>

The term digital footprint is not always used in relation to carbon and resource footprint but there is growing awareness about and research into this supply chain of seemingly ‘magical’ resources, including satellites and data storage are significantly contributing to the Climate Emergency.

Resources:

The role of culture in social transformation

- Creative Carbon Scotland: [culture/SHIFT](#) and [Library of Creative Sustainability](#)

Literature on degrowth

- Jason Hickel: What does degrowth mean? A few points of clarification
- Degrowth Library: <https://degrowth.info/en/library>
- Bendell, Jem & Read, Rupert: Deep Adaptation: Navigating the Realities of Climate Chaos

Podcasts on degrowth & circular economy

- Economics for Rebels: [Less is more for more – Degrowth, sustainability and equality \(Jason Hickel\)](#)
- Utopia is Now – [Degrowth: A Brief Introduction to Post-capitalism \(Timothé Parrique\)](#)

Examples of degrowth projects:

- <https://doughnuteconomics.org/tools-and-stories>
- <https://degrowth.info/en/international>
- <https://degrowth.info/en/get-involved/regional-working-groups>
- Secret Hotel - Under Forest²

Best practices on resource sharing:

- <https://theatregreenbook.com/sustainableproductions-toolkit/informationsharingtouring/>
- <https://www.creativescotland.com/resources-publications/research/archive/2023/report-into-shared-storage-and-asset-management-systems-in-scotlands-cultural-sector>

III. Climate Justice

Environmentally damaging activities such as fossil fuel extraction are tightly linked with the short-term interests of the current political and economic elite, while the direct effects (e.g.: pollution) and indirect consequences (e.g.: climate change, drought, sea level rise) are disproportionately affecting low-income countries and socially and economically disadvantaged individuals³. Therefore, successful climate mitigation and adaptation is only possible if it is combined with social justice measures. Do you recognize how the link between climate change and social justice manifests in your context, be that your country, hometown or workplace? This section will give you prompts to reflect on who you can support and what structural changes you can make to promote climate justice.

- Who is underrepresented in your work and on your stages? (who is excluded)
- Who is managing ideas and controlling resources? (power & privilege)

²Secret Hotel's upcoming performance on the forest and its soil ("Under Forest") uses the following materials for an element that each audience member will use: Old traditional Danish textiles, found at 2nd hand online markets, together with a yoga center's obsolete mats, and bark from willow trees. When, one day we do not tour this any longer, only the already salvaged yoga mat parts must be thrown out. The rest can naturally recycle through decomposing or through another upcycling of the textile leftovers.

³London School of Economics: What is meant by climate justice?

<https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/explainers/what-is-meant-by-climate-justice/>

- How do you consider Climate Action and redress imbalance of justice/power in your work?
- What meaningful relationships do you have to poorer parts of the world / to disadvantaged people in your society? (exchange & translocality)
- Do you have an awareness of the historical and contemporary inequalities of resources, payment levels, representation and human rights in your country, your part of the world and on a global level?
- Do you have structural support in place to ensure inclusivity, such as a fair and inclusive hiring policy for employees and artist commissions?
- Do you have infrastructural support in place to ensure inclusivity, such as a policy on accessible venue choices to empower the full participation of people with disabilities?
- How can you go beyond a purely physical understanding of accessibility and make your events engaging for people from various social and cultural backgrounds?

Resources

- George Monbiot: Regeneration: How to Feed the World without Devouring the Planet.
- Articles by Malcom Ferdinand
- Glen Sean Coulthard: Red Skin White Masks. Rejecting The Colonial Politics of Recognition
- First nations perspectives
- Tyson Yunkaporta - [Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World.](#)
- Angele Alook, Emily Eaton, David Gray-Donald: The End of This World – Climate Justice in So-called Canada

IV. Care & Healing

What actions can we take to protect our natural environment, take care of the biodiversity we currently have and help regeneration? How can we actively contribute to reversing environmental and social degradation? How can we make care, mildness, and respect integrated values in our decision-making, planning and work processes? This section gives you prompts and resources to reflect on the practices of care and regenerative actions you can take as a cultural professional.

- What does care mean for you, in regards to relations, place, creatures, the more-than-human?
- Who is already suffering from the climate crisis, who needs care?
- Human-centred scheduling: rather than focusing on what you need to achieve, how do you focus on the journey and how it impacts the people working on your “products”?
- What do you need to be able to engage with this issue on the long-term? How do artists and collaborators sustain sustainability?
- How do you care for your local environment (community & nature)?
- What are your spheres of influence? How can care manifest in relation to yourself, to your colleagues and collaborators, to your audiences, to nature?
- How can your care for the environment manifest in your choices on a production level, be that your choice of materials for set design, catering, or toilet paper?
- Does your project/work/practice have a regenerative effect on the planet? (some possible dimensions include: mental, community, social, environmental)
- How can you take the means of healing into your own hands? (For instance, can you create your own funds for offsetting & redistribute it within the network?)

- How can you tackle and positively disrupt social segregation in ways that can heal?
- What do you dismantle to build the new?
- What role do you think the performing arts can play in the transition to a low carbon future?
- How can you use the creative skills you have to help address the Climate and Ecological Emergency?
- How do you make sure to also take care of your own sustainable energy – and also care for your own possible feeling of being overwhelmed by the situation we are in and are facing?

Resources

- Article on Human-centred design: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-climate-change-requires-us-re-think-human-centred-mona-chammas/>
- Network focusing on healing practices for the planet: <https://healthplanet.com/>
- Doughnut Economics: [Introducing Redistributive and Regenerative Design](#)
- Roman Krznaric: [The Good Ancestor](#): How to think long term in a short-term world?
- Extinction Rebellion: [Regenerative Culture](#)
- Robin Wall Kimmerer: Braiding Sweetgrass. Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants.
- George Monbiot: Regeneration: How to Feed the World without Devouring the Planet.
- Bruno Latour & Nikolaj Schultz: On the Emergence of an Ecological Class: A Memo
- Minna Salami: Sensuous Knowledge. A Black Feminist Approach for everyone.