

## Flow Festival has launched another innovative environmental project

Flow Festival has launched an environmental research project with D-mat, an expert company for a sustainable future, to examine the overall ecological effects of the festival. The resulting product of the study will be a carbon and material footprint calculator tailored for the event industry. The study's first calculations suggest that the climate impact of the food served at Flow halved compared to 2019 due to dropping red meat and poultry from the menus. Additionally, Flow's ambitious work towards improving the accessibility and equality of the festival continued in 2022.

Ever since 2009, Flow Festival has counted and compensated for its carbon footprint and is one of the world's first festivals to go carbon neutral. In 2021, the festival launched a ground-breaking research project with [D-mat](#) to evaluate the festival ecosystem's overall environmental impact and develop new tools for more sustainable festival production. *"Counting and compensating merely for the carbon footprint is no longer enough because a festival production's overall burden on the environment is much more complex, and climate change is only one of the numerous environmental challenges we face,"* Flow Festival's chairman of the board, **Tuomas Kallio**, states.

The research is run by D-mat, an expert company founded by one of the leading experts in resource efficiency and dematerialisation in Finland, **Michael Lettenmeier**. It is supported by Finland's sustainable growth program, funded by European Union's NextGenerationEU financing. During the project, an extended calculation of the festival's carbon footprint is executed, including the indirect emissions behind the production's service chains, e.g. the production of the metal parts in the equipment, all the way from the mines to the festival area. Additionally, the material footprint of the whole festival is calculated, which helps to evaluate the festival's consumption of natural resources and to understand its comprehensive ecological effects. Through the results, an even more holistic understanding of the environmental impacts of the different aspects of the event can be formed, and new solutions to decrease the climate impact and use of natural resources will be created. As the project's resulting product, Flow and D-mat will develop a carbon and material footprint calculator for the event industry, thus helping the entire field to gain more information and decrease its emissions and impact on the environment.

The study's first total calculations will be finished by the end of this year, but encouraging initial estimations have already been made regarding the festival's food consumption. Flow's decision to drop red meat and poultry from its menus has proven to be an efficient environmental act: the climate impact of the food consumed at this year's festival was nearly fifty per cent smaller than in 2019, and 50 % of the dishes sold at Flow 2022 were vegan. The carbon footprint of the food consumed by festival visitors decreased dramatically: this year, the footprint was 54 300 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e, while in 2019, it was 88 800 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e. This means that the carbon footprint this year was 34 500 kg smaller than in 2019, even though the number of food consumed and visitors increased. The environmental savings are equivalent to over 150

000 kilometres driven by car. Additionally, the material footprint of the food consumed decreased by over 25 % from 2019.

Flow will also compensate for its emissions at the end of the project. Flow and D-mat strive to determine if compensation of the material footprint is possible in addition to the carbon footprint compensation and how that can be done in the most efficient way possible.

Following the principles of Sustainable Flow, the festival's other environmental work also continues. In 2022, the festival once again educated its restaurants with the [Sustainable Meal](#) guidelines, and all restaurants had a special sustainable dish on their menus, following sustainable catering practices. All of Flow's energy production needs were covered by renewable energy sources, and all waste produced was sorted and recycled. Since 2012, Flow Festival has been using the [EcoCompass](#) environmental management system, and in 2022 the certificate was audited and updated. Flow also continues to support the protection of the Baltic Sea. A total sum of 6 726 euros was donated to the [John Nurminen Foundation](#), collected by voluntary contributions through ticket sales.

Flow's responsibility program is not limited only to the environment. This year, Flow took new steps to improve accessibility and equality at the festival. Flow consulted [Riesa Consultative](#), an expert organisation on accessibility, to improve the festival's accessibility according to their instructions. In addition, social and healthcare services provider Mehiläinen brought their [Pääasia](#) lounge to Flow. In the lounge, visitors could get support for various situations and emotions emerging at the festival from mental health professionals free of charge. The Finnish Red Cross' first aid station, roving first aid workers, and preventive substance abuse care workers were also present at Flow.

Flow Festival continues to work for an equal music industry and is committed to the [equality principles](#) of the Finnish music industry. The festival is also a part of the European [Keychange](#) initiative that strives to improve the position of underrepresented genders in the music industry. Additionally, Flow continued its collaboration with [Startup Refugees](#), a non-profit network supporting refugees and immigrants with employment and entrepreneurship.

Read more about Sustainable Flow here: <https://www.flowfestival.com/en/festival/sustainable-flow/>.

Flow Festival 2023 takes place in Suvilahti, Helsinki, on the 11th–13th of August, 2023.

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