

# IMPALA SUSTAINABILITY GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS April 2021



## PRACTICAL SUSTAINABILITY GUIDANCE FOR IMPALA MEMBERS

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## Overview

IMPALA's voluntary guidance is adapted from advice prepared and shared by AIM, with thanks to [IMPALA's sustainability task force](#), [AIM](#), [Julie's Bicycle](#), [Key Production](#), [Music Declares Emergency](#)

This is intended to be a practical guide for members. Please adapt and use as you see fit.

**If you do only one thing** - switch to a clean energy supplier.

### What you can do now

Make environmental sustainability a priority in your business.

Nominate someone on your team who is responsible for greening your activity.

Put in place an [environmental policy](#) and action plan with a [net zero target](#) by 2026 and an ambition to be climate positive by 2030.

For example, you could commit to IMPALA's targets for the sector - a [net zero target](#) by 2026 and an ambition to be climate positive by 2030, as outlined in our [sustainability programme](#). You can also use our undertaking for individual companies [here](#) and in [annex](#). You might also want to read to IMPALA's Climate charter [here](#).

See carbon negative announcements by [Beggars Group](#) and [Ninja Tune](#) and discover how they intend to reach their targets in the coming years.

Make opportunities for members of your teams to get involved.

Climate literacy training: Tell your team that training will be available as part of this programme. Share examples of your sustainability work with the IMPALA membership to map what is already happening in this area and learn from each other.

Carbon accounting: Think about joining IMPALA's pilot with Julie's Bicycle to develop a specific tool for record labels to record the carbon footprint of your operations (see more below about carbon accounting).

### What you can do in the next year and beyond

#### Energy:

Switch to a renewable energy supplier or ask your landlord to switch.

Find out if your suppliers are sourcing renewable energy.

Get an energy efficiency assessment carried out on your building. Explore potential to install solar panels on your office and/or home. Install a battery to make best use of the electricity generated. Replace gas boiler with air source heat pump and mechanical ventilation system. You'll need to get an energy assessment carried out on your premises by a professional.

#### Carbon accounting:

This allows you to record the carbon footprint of your operations. The benefits of carbon accounting are:

- Creating a baseline from which to reduce your emissions.

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- Getting a clear understanding of where your largest impacts are in order to make the most effective reductions.
- Allow you to measure the improvements that you are making as a company and as an industry in a quantitative way that plugs into the science.
- The process encourages different parts of your business to engage with sustainability.

#### **Carbon accounting tools:**

- As mentioned above, Julie's Bicycle are working on a record label specific tool as part of the IMPALA sustainability programme, ask to join the pilot IMPALA is launching [krogozar@impalamusic.org](mailto:krogozar@impalamusic.org)
- Julie's Bicycle Creative Green Tools already existing (not adapted yet for record labels): <https://juliesbicycle.com/reporting/>
- Greenhouse Gas Protocol's tool: <https://quantis-suite.com/Scope-3-Evaluator/>

#### **Travel:**

Track your business travel and calculate the carbon emissions.

Develop a green travel plan publicising the public transport options to your office.

Encourage staff to cycle and walk to work where possible, could you offer a cycle purchase discount scheme and cycle safety training? Some cities offer tax incentives for electric bikes, research local schemes.

Set up a staff car sharing scheme if public transport / walking / cycling is not possible.

#### **Company vehicles:**

- Reduce use of company cars where possible (especially those that run on fossil fuels)
- Use bicycles, public transport or electric hire cars where possible.
- Avoid purchasing new vehicles particularly those that run on fossil fuels (the manufacture of new vehicles creates significant footprint whether electric or otherwise.)

Staff work flights - reduce unnecessary travel, use video conferencing.

Staff holiday flights - offer staff extra holiday to give them the time to take trains instead of flying for their holidays. Offer subsidies to staff to take trains rather than planes on their holidays.

#### **Freight:**

- use sea freight rather than air freight to ship to the USA, it takes 3-4 weeks longer but is much cheaper and much lower footprint e.g. [sea-freight shipping agents Woodland, Davies Turner](#)
- Careful planning can help minimise any unnecessary transport e.g., shipping direct to distributors from pressing plants rather than via a distribution centre.

#### **Manufacturing:**

Ask your pressing plant (and other suppliers) for their sustainability policy, in particular:

- Are they compliant with ISO14001 (internationally agreed environmental management system). Also ISO50001 (certified energy management system) and ISO9001 (quality management) accreditation.

- What power supply do they use (electricity, gas), do they use renewable energy? Nuclear?
- Do they have waste reduction and recycling targets in place.

For example, see Optimal's policy and disclosures [here](#).

CDs & vinyl - the most important thing is not to press too many copies, overstocks are expensive to make, transport, store and recycle, and of course all this creates an environmental footprint - keep talking to your distribution network to make the best assessment of quantities required.

Local pressings - manufacture in your own country ideally to minimise transport and transatlantic shipping even if it may cost a little more. If manufacturing in Europe the EU's REACH regulation ensures that the pressings made in the EU are made from PVC made using less toxic chemicals. When speaking to US manufacturers make sure they are pressing in the US not in Europe - many manufacturing brokers in the USA use pressing plants in Europe. Also ask US pressing plants for the provenance of the vinyl raw material they are using.

Material choice:

Use less material where possible - a 140gram vinyl has a proportionally lower carbon footprint than 180gram with regard to manufacturing and shipping, and no loss in audio quality.

Recycled vinyl - 100% recycled vinyl pressings with sound quality comparable to non-recycled coloured vinyl are now available at some plants, and most plants can press on partially recycled vinyl. Generally, these can be produced in black, other specific colours possible depending on availability, or a mix of colours with every copy being different/unique which can be a selling point.

CD jewel cases (which are made from polystyrene) have a high footprint to manufacture and are not easily recyclable. Card sleeves have 95% lower carbon footprint, and they can look beautiful!

Sleeves should ideally be printed on recycled card or if not certified by Forest Stewardship Council or Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) (FSC and PEFC certification ensures that the wood is sourced from sustainably managed forests.)

Avoid mixing materials or using additional processes, which makes it difficult or impossible to recycle sleeves and packaging (including the waste left over from manufacture) for example:

- Use vegetable-based inks and water-based varnishes
- Avoid UV varnishes, laminates or foil finishes
- Avoid CD digipacks consisting of card outer and plastic tray
- Use card fitments to keep box-set contents in place rather than foam fitments

Shrink-wrap footprint is small and using it can reduce returns and resulting additional manufacture & transport footprint, so it's not clear that it is always best to avoid shrink-wrap.

- Consider alternatives such as a more durable PVC dust cover or paper belly band (banderole)
- Or a peelable sticker to seal the sleeve with text e.g: "This record has not been shrink-wrapped to better protect the planet. Please don't return this record if the sleeve has sustained some damage in transit. The records inside should be perfect!"

- Compostable wraps/envelopes are now available, but check with supplier on their toxicity when biodegrading, and the conditions required to biodegrade. These will require the consumer to dispose of them appropriately so they should be labelled accordingly.

#### Mail order:

- Ensure packaging materials for mail order are made from recycled card or FSC / PEFC sourced card, not a mix of plastic and card.
- Use paper sticking tape rather than plastic.
- Offer discounts to mail order customers to retain records which sustain damage to the sleeves in transit. (Another part of stopping the culture of returning records if there is a small dink on sleeve.)

#### A good example of manufacturing engagement:

##### [Optimal media](#)

- 65% of electricity generated by renewable energy sources
- put in place CO2 calculators for CD and vinyl, providing calculations of personalised footprint to their customers
- avoiding shrink-wrap, CD jewel cases, etc.
- for summary of overall policy, options for customers see [here](#)

See what else Optimal media is doing to make their manufacturing more sustainable here:

[Sustainability: Regional nature protection project | optimal media \(optimal-media.com\)](#)

[Re-Vinyl: 100% Recycling Vinyl Record | optimal media \(optimal-media.com\)](#)

#### Digital footprint:

- For servers or server space you use for your own websites - switch to servers that use 100% renewable electricity
- Use appropriate opportunities to ask the digital service providers if they have sustainability policies or information about the energy used to run their services, e.g., for:
  - Streaming like Spotify, Apple, YouTube, Bandcamp - or ask your digital distributor for information
  - Digital marketing services like Facebook etc.
  - Online business applications (e.g., for accounting, digital marketing)

#### Banking & pensions:

Moving your money is one of the most effective things you can do. Switch to a greener bank and pension scheme:

- Switch your banking to a bank that doesn't invest in fossil fuels.
- If you can't switch (e.g., these more ethical banks don't offer int'l currency accounts yet), then ask your bank and pension supplier for their sustainability policy and ask them to divest from fossil fuels - every little bit of lobbying helps!
- Switch funds on deposit to a greener bank
- Switch your pension to a sustainable scheme.

#### Waste management and recycling:

- Aim to reduce the amount of waste you produce by not purchasing single use items

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- Set up a paperless office to reduce the amount of paper that is printed for meetings
- Track the amount of printing that you do in the office, use printers that need logging in to retrieve print.
- Carry out a waste audit to see what you are throwing away and see if there is anything you can do to avoid / reduce this
- Ask for waste and recycling information from your waste supplier
- Find out what your local recycling rate is and aim to match it.

Recycling overstocks and returns - most paper sleeves, discs and plastic packaging can be recycled, ensure they are recycled not incinerated. Ask your warehouse / distributors how your overstocks and returns are being dealt with and ask for a Waste Transfer Note for any stock that's been disposed of. [Ecosafe](#) in the UK are a good option for recycling overstocks.

#### **Merchandise:**

Ask your supplier for their ethical & environmental policy - these suppliers have been recommended: [Rapanui](#), [No Sweat](#), [Teemill](#)

#### **Mobile Phones:**

Replace batteries on mobile phones where possible rather than buying new. Refurbish laptops in rather than buying new. [Fairphone](#) is probably the most sustainable smart phone on the market

#### **Communications:**

Set up a green team who can focus on key areas and motivate each other.

Get involved in campaigning organisation and/or local environmental groups e.g. [Music Declares Emergency](#), [Climate action network groups](#), [Extinction Rebellion](#), [Fridays for Future](#), [Greenpeace](#), [Friends of the Earth](#)

Socials - use your social platforms to raise awareness of the climate crisis and related issues.

#### **Offsetting:**

Carbon offsetting is a process by which you can 'balance' out your carbon footprints by funding negative emissions (adsorbing carbon from the atmosphere) or emissions reductions elsewhere, for further info see [Julie's Bicycle](#) or [Gold Standard](#).

Offsets can be used to balance any of your emissions, from office heating, business travel, manufacturing, distribution etc. But paying for offsets is not the same as reducing your impact - it is better to reduce the pollution you create than to pollute and then attempt to clean it up - and for example, a tree planted today to balance yesterday's emissions will take years to do the job. So, you should reduce your emissions as much as possible before turning to offsets and offsetting definitely shouldn't be the only thing you do.

The carbon footprint to be offset varies according to the footprint of each activity. And the amount of money to be spent to balance each tonne of carbon depends on the offsets you choose, and the accuracy and reliability of any given offset scheme.

For example, one tonne of carbon currently varies between €7.50 / tCO<sub>2</sub>e and €25 / tCO<sub>2</sub>e depending on the activity and the carbon emissions produced. The cost per tonne of carbon is expected to increase to €140 per tonne in 2050 in order to meet EU climate ambitions.

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Activity	At €8 / tCO2e	At €25 / tCO2e	At €100 / tCO2e
1 short haul economy flight	€4	€12	€47
1 short haul economy flight	€6	€18	€70
1 long haul return economy flight (e.g. USA)	€13	€42	€167
1 long haul return economy flight (e.g. USA)	€54	€167	€669

### Offsetting record manufacture:

The footprint of each CD or vinyl record manufactured depends on the specification of each product, and the amount of carbon offset by each scheme varies depending on the success and management of each project. In addition, you may want to build in a cost of repairing climate damage as well as only offsetting the carbon produced, so the process is complex. But in order to simplify the process and prevent accurate carbon and environment accounting delaying action, we recommend using these amounts as a rough but fairly generous guide to the amount you should invest for offsetting (*note these prices are kept in GBP as that is the original currency of the calculation*):

- 140gram LP/12" disc + sleeve = £0.13 (twice for a 2LP etc)
- 180gram LP/12" disc + sleeve = £0.17 (twice for a 2LP etc)
- CD + card sleeve = £0.05 (twice for a 2CD etc)
- 7" vinyl and sleeve = £0.05
- Allow additional amounts for bulky packages

Calculate the number of pressings you have made and the offset price required for the total number of units manufactured, then choose project(s) from [Gold Standard website and make donations accordingly.](#)

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

**Questionnaire to send to suppliers** - get them thinking about sustainability too!

- do you have an environmental policy or action plan that you can share with us?
  - do you have a key contact we can speak to about sustainability?
  - do you hold any environmental certification or awards?
  - do any of your products hold environmental certifications?
  - is your business powered by renewable electricity? What source?
  - do you have sustainability information from your main suppliers?
  - do any of your suppliers use air freight to deliver to you?
  - can the shipping agents you use provide carbon footprint information for shipments you make for us?
  - do you have any ideas on how to reduce the impacts of your activities that we can work together on?
- (for manufacturing) do you have carbon footprint information per unit produced?
- (for transport) do you have carbon footprint information per unit shipped?
- (for financial services) do you hold investments in fossil fuel extraction or distribution?



## APPENDIX 2

### IMPALA CLIMATE DECLARATION FOR INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES

April 2021



For individual IMPALA member companies to individually commit to (voluntary basis - possibly 'opting in' opens up access to the IMPALA Creative Green Tools platform). These commitments support the overall IMPALA commitment for net positive by 2030 and concrete steps to achieve the interim target of net zero by 2026.

As a member of IMPALA, I support climate action in the sector and commit to:

1. Contribute to the ambition of the European independent recording sector to be climate positive by 2030 and aim for an interim target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions from my operations, business travel, manufacturing, and physical distribution by 2026.
2. Measure and reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from my operations, business travel, manufacturing, and physical distribution.
3. Publicly disclose my greenhouse gas emissions and progress against my environmental targets on an annual basis, and report back centrally to IMPALA.
4. Source (and/or generate) renewable electricity for my office and other owned/leased buildings by 2026.
5. Require that all my manufacturers are powered by electricity sourced from renewable sources by 2026.
6. Require that all my key suppliers & distributors have their own environmental policy and Science-Based Target initiative compliant target in place by 2022.
7. Enact a sustainable procurement policy that includes a requirement for all paper and card used in my physical manufacturing to be 100% FSC certified (+/or a target for recycled content) by 2022.
8. Take action to reduce the environmental impact of my business in other areas, such as pension investments.
9. Dedicate at least one day on social media per year to highlight climate and environmental issues, and support artists who are speaking out on these themes.

**APPENDIX 3  
MORE INFO ON IMPALA'S PROGRAMME AND CLIMATE CHARTER**

Find our full sustainability programme [here](#). This page will be regularly updated, follow it for more sustainability news and documents.

You can also follow us on social media:  
[Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#)

Our climate charter is summarised below, and you can also see the full version [here](#).

