

ADGREEN

2023

Annual Review

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# From the Chief Executive



**Stephen Woodford**  
Chief Executive, Advertising Association

The advertising industry, like many others, is facing a stark reality: our traditional production practices leave a significant environmental footprint. From the carbon emissions of travel and equipment use to the waste generated on set, creating arresting visuals can be extremely carbon intensive.

This reality was made evident in AdGreen's inaugural annual review last year, which marked the first time industry data on production emissions had been shared. We were finally able to understand the potential scale of the impact from global production and, crucially, identify the most tangible opportunities for reduction. Delivering a second year of data feels even more significant, as the true power of carbon measurement lies in the ability for us all to track progress. Comparing year-on-year data will allow us to spot patterns, iron out inconsistencies, and identify priorities, while drawing from a much larger project pool.

In our 2022 Annual Review I shared my hope that 2023 would see a significant leap forward for sustainable advertising production practices. The substantial increase in completed projects, which has nearly tripled within a year, speaks to this growth. Measurement of emissions has become part of the day-to-day for some organisations, with sustainable advertising production no longer a fringe concept, but an imperative for businesses looking to connect with their audience and protect the planet. However, we know we are still only capturing a small percentage of productions happening across the industry and have a long way to go before we truly understand the impact of advertising production.

Consumers are increasingly demanding sustainable products and services, and they expect this to be reflected throughout the operations of the brands they engage with. Brands that prioritise sustainability are rightfully conscious of the environmental impact of the advertising that is used to promote their products. And this demand is not just coming from customers, but also employees. As we all face the reality of the climate crisis our expectations as individuals to see positive action from our companies, and our sector, will continue to grow.

**Continues on the next page**



We should not underestimate the power of our industry as a force for positive change. Embracing this opportunity isn't just the right thing to do for the long-term health of our planet; it's also essential for the long-term health of our industry. As the Chief Executive of the Advertising Association, I am only too aware of the talent crisis facing our industry, with a particular skills shortage among entry and mid-level roles, as people leave to pursue alternative careers and companies struggle to recruit. Young people care deeply about the social and environmental impact of their industries and companies, and 90% of marketers in the WFA Planet Pledge study expressed a belief that we need to drive more ambitious sustainability agendas with a bigger and more timely impact. To compete with other industries, we need to show real, tangible progress; embracing sustainability can have numerous business benefits that go beyond carbon reduction.

I am delighted to see the AdGreen community grow and spread its influence, and I'm confident that it won't be long before carbon measurement moves beyond the consideration phase and becomes a business imperative for all within our industry. We must seize the opportunity to place our organisations, and our sector, at the forefront of the global response to the climate crisis, and use our creativity, innovation and reach to bring other industries along with us.



# From our Global Director



**Jo Fenn**  
Global Director & Founder, AdGreen

In the three years since we launched the carbon calculator, we have seen significant upheaval within the advertising industry. Marketing budgets are being repeatedly tightened, the workforce has reduced, and the continuous development of technology demands our attention. It is heartening to see that despite these challenges, the move to sustainable content creation is gaining momentum and solidifying its place within the core strategy of organisations.

It is crucial we keep pushing ahead because we are now at a tipping point. 2023 was the warmest year on record, with extreme weather causing floods, wildfires, storms, and crop failure around the world. Concentrations of carbon dioxide are at their highest level in four million years, while emissions of carbon dioxide continue to reach new heights. As an industry we need to remind ourselves of the urgency of the situation when the environmentally conscious choice seems to demand more time, effort, or perhaps budget. We cannot make decisions in isolation; we need to acknowledge the part we continue to play in this global crisis.

Reducing the amount of carbon being emitted can sometimes feel like an insurmountable challenge. Given that emissions are believed to have surpassed a record 36.8 billion tonnes in 2023 and the threshold of 1.5°C will be “passed for all practical purposes” in 2024, the scale of the task is daunting. However, there are many reasons to be optimistic that it can be achieved. The speed at which those of us in advertising can respond to real world events, and use our creative power to influence and inform, gives us the potential to be an incredible force for good, and a key player in the fight against climate change. What we choose to say, as well as how we choose to say it, needs urgent consideration.

**Continues on the next page**



Sustainability is not a buzzword, and we can't assume that it will continue to feature on the agenda without a concerted effort on our part. We need to challenge ourselves to only support positive progress that benefits people and planet first and foremost. It requires a collective effort from all of us working across brands, creative agencies, production companies, suppliers, and trade bodies to ensure we continue the conversation.

In 2023 we saw an increase in companies that were willing to speak publicly about their successes, and their failures. The Campaign Ad Net Zero Awards are a clear indicator of the shift within advertising, with a 17% increase in entries from 2022, spotlighting organisations proudly sharing their planet positive work and demonstrating how creativity and sustainability can go hand in hand. Sharing best practices, knowledge, and resources across the industry, while acknowledging that there is not a straightforward fix, is key. Collaboration will help us all accelerate our progress to reach net zero.

This year's report records a 1.5 tCO2e increase in average completed project size, from 2022 to 2023: a 32% rise. We expect such year-on-year rises to continue before average emissions start to fall, as we see larger projects completed, which are representative of the big budget work being made by the industry. These figures are crucial, as we can't accurately measure our progress without knowing where we are starting from. Understanding the data will push us to adapt and refine our strategies. Regulation requirements, such as the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive coming in 2025, will see many companies expected to deliver comprehensive sustainability information alongside their financial information. For an industry obsessed with data points, carbon reporting has been noticeably absent from our metrics, and there is limited time remaining to rectify this before it becomes law.



This may sound alarming, but we are here to help. I understand we are asking many of you to add to your already significant workloads, but I want to assure you that we are doing our part to make carbon measurement as simple and efficient as possible while retaining robust reporting capabilities. We are making significant upgrades and improvements to the carbon calculator, speeding up the data gathering and entry process, while keeping the focus on our end goal: to support the sector to reduce carbon emissions generated by advertising production. We also appreciate this data needs to be comparable with the measurement of operational emissions, which is where standardised emissions frameworks come in – a key consideration of our work. We are here to support the industry by providing the means to confidently measure emissions and guiding you through this unfamiliar process.

Moving toward a sustainable future demands courage, concession, and collaboration. This is even more true in production, a naturally collaborative process which follows long-established practices. I hope this report serves as a roadmap, sharing inspiration from those who have taken the lead, and showcasing the support we can provide as you move through your sustainable production journey.

The business imperative for sustainable production will vary from company to company, but at AdGreen we believe there are several key reasons for organisations to embrace sustainability which we detail in this review. The learnings shared by other AdGreen users will not just benefit the production side of your business but can inform and improve an organisation's wider operations.

The use of our carbon calculator, sustainability training and reduction resources, can support your organisation to:

- **Build your business**
- **Get ahead of regulation**
- **Save money**
- **Create new job opportunities**
- **Motivate & inspire your team**
- **Set, meet & exceed key targets**

To find out more about how these can be achieved, go to page 33.

# 2023

**1300+ individuals**

attended our on-demand sustainable production training



**900+ individuals**

attended AdGreen workshops and presentations



**Launch of AdGreen US hub**



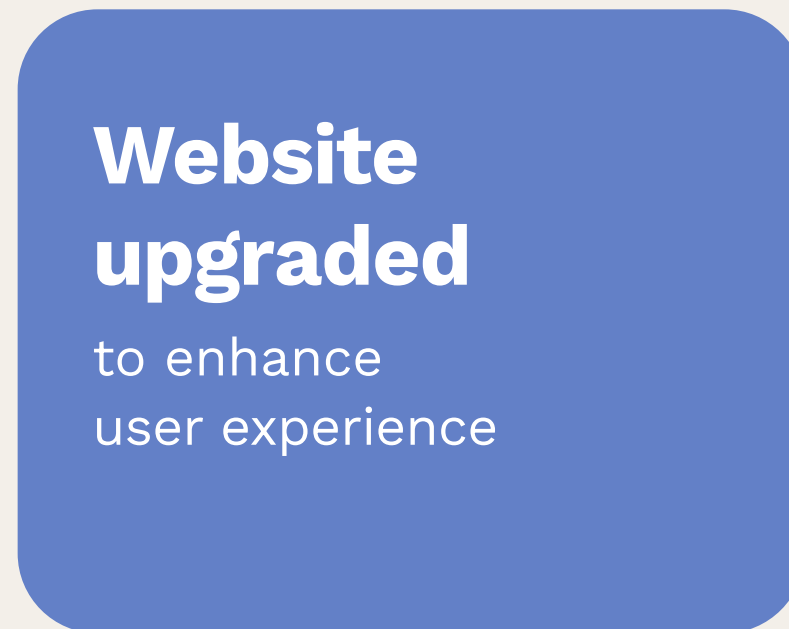
**2773 projects**

created in the carbon calculator



**Website upgraded**

to enhance user experience



**3 new resource guides**

created for our users



**Sustainable Ad Production masterclass**

delivered for APA members



**800+ registrations**

for AdGreen hosted events



# Highlights



# Advisory Board

In 2023 Diageo and MSQ Source joined the AdGreen board. We would like to thank our advisory board for their continued support.

**ADVERTISING  
ASSOCIATION**

**adam&eve**DDB°

**AOP**

**APA**



**dentsu**

**DIAGEO**



**L'ORÉAL**

**msq**



# 5 facts

## about 2023's data

1

**60.2% of all emissions**

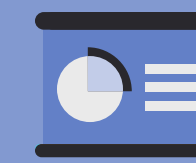
recorded by users resulted from air travel



2

**6.2 tCO2e**

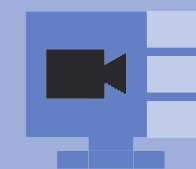
was the average size of a completed project



3

**13.9 tCO2e**

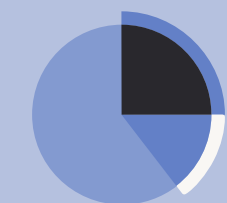
was the average project size for productions with a budget over £50k per shoot day



4

**1424 projects**

were completed in the carbon calculator\*



5

**0 kg - 397.4 tCO2e**

was the range of project sizes

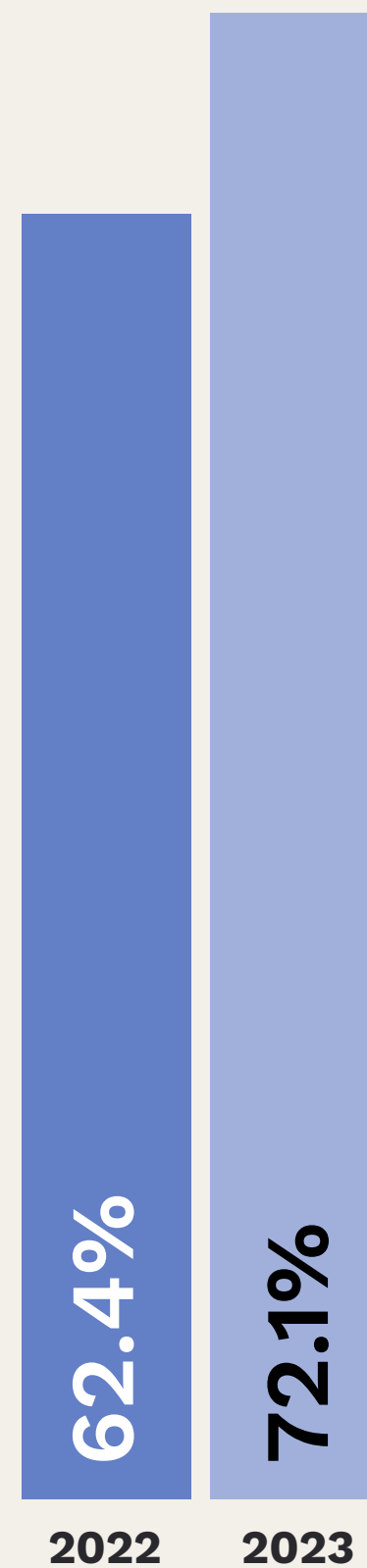


\*with budgets attached



# How does 2023 compare to 2022?

## TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT



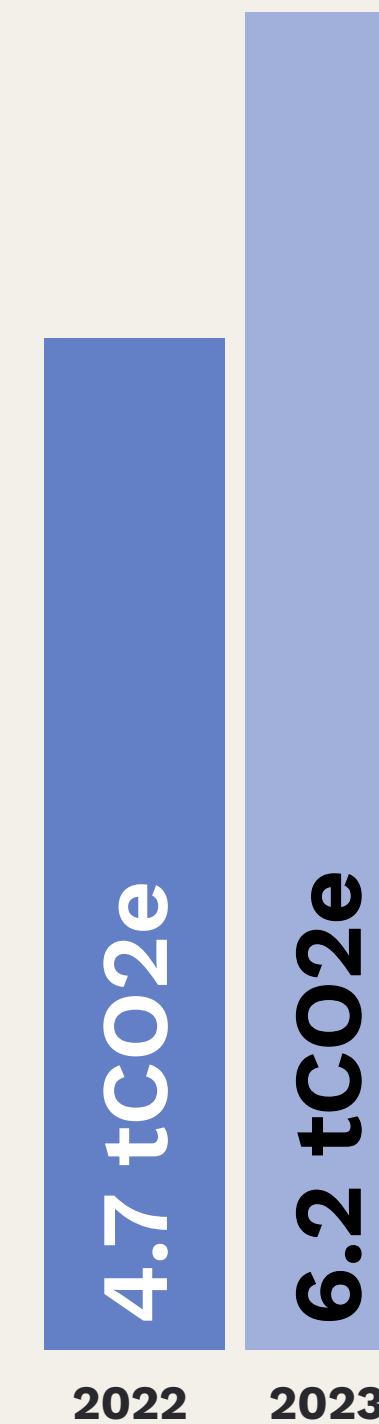
Upgrades to our reporting system in 2023 allowed us to analyse data on specific activity areas, such as air travel. While it is not possible to compare this detailed data point to 2022, we can see that overall, the percentage of emissions attributed to travel and transport increased by 10%. Given that air travel made up 83% of all travel and transport emissions in 2023, it is likely that this activity area was largely responsible for the rise.

## THE NUMBER OF COMPLETED PROJECTS



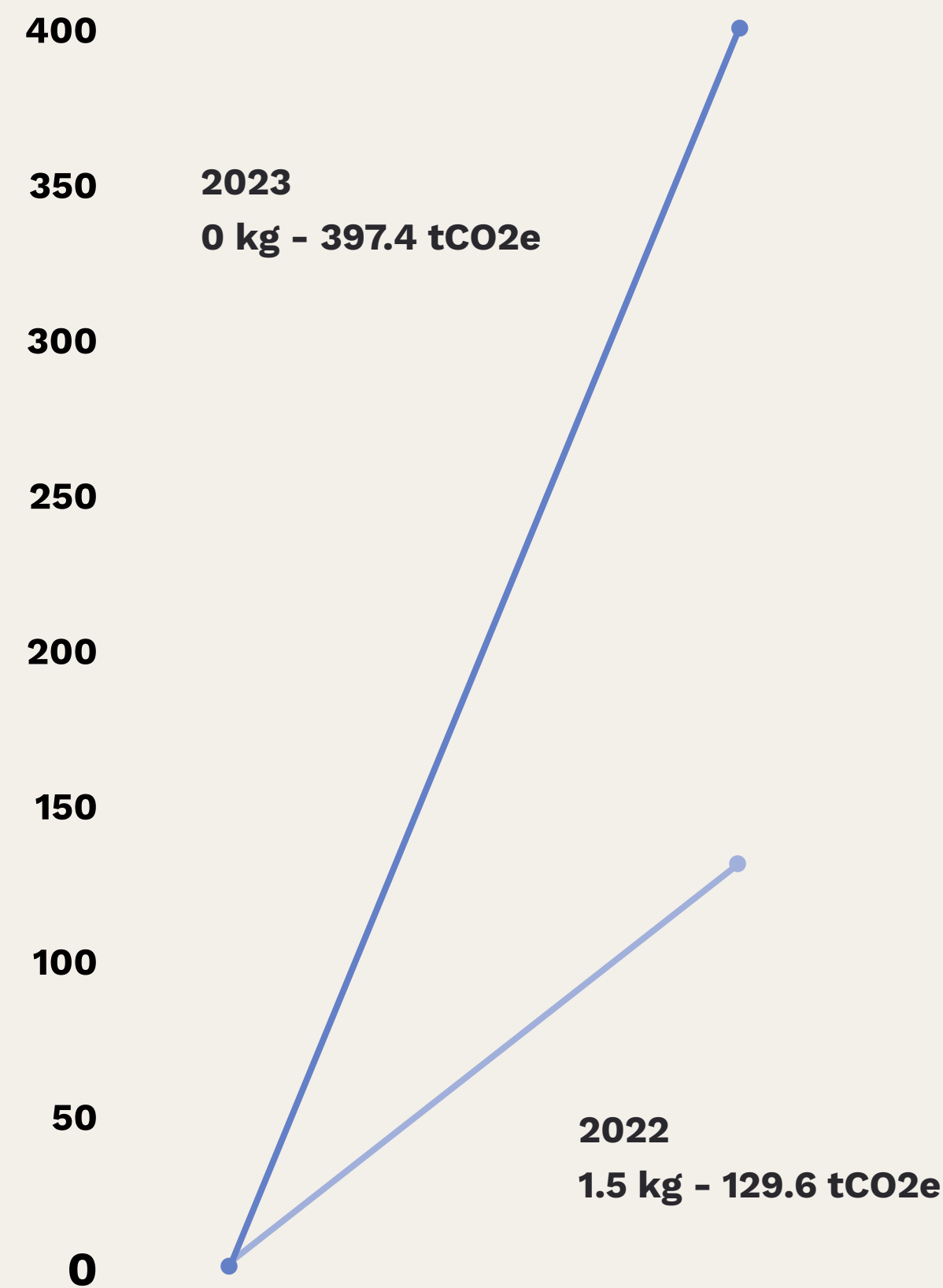
The number of companies completing projects has doubled within a year, resulting in nearly triple the amount of productions measured in the calculator. This signifies the value of carbon measurement across the industry, with uptake from both new and existing users.

## THE AVERAGE SIZE OF A COMPLETED PROJECT



The average project size has increased by 1.5 tCO2e. This jump was predicted, due to a handful of projects pulling up the average, and it's exactly what we were hoping to see. While this may seem counter intuitive, as we drive to reduce emissions across advertising, we are very aware of the fact that larger productions are happening on a regular basis, and we want to make sure these are captured in the calculator. After all, we can't measure progress without an accurate picture of where we are starting from.

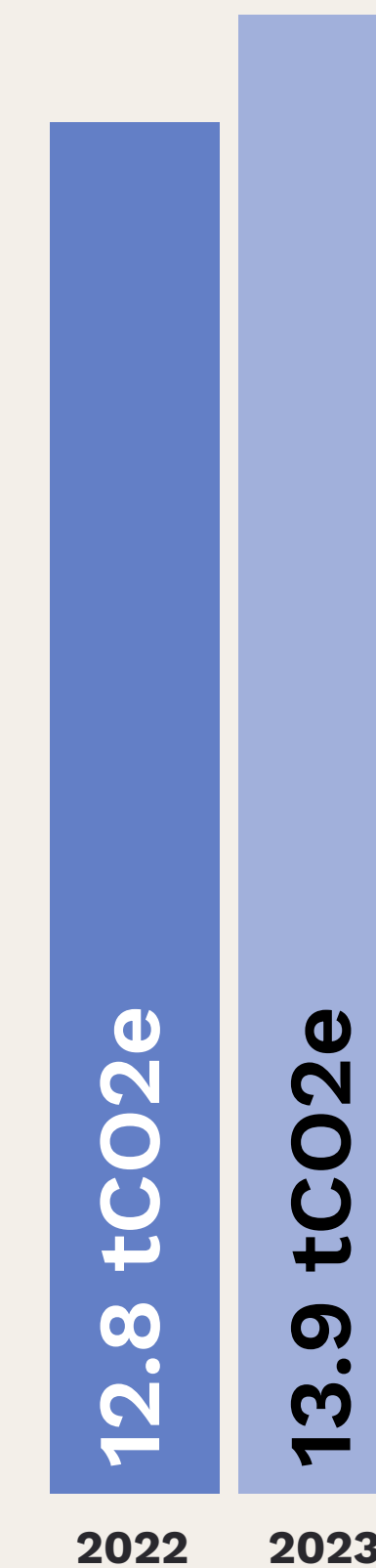
# How does 2023 compare to 2022?



## PROJECT RANGE

While we have seen a similar percentage of completed projects over 100 tCO2e in 2023 (1%) as we did in 2022 (0.8%), **the project range shows us a drastic increase in the largest project**, which is three times larger than in 2022.

And it is likely that we will see even larger projects in the years to come.



## THE AVERAGE PROJECT SIZE FOR PRODUCTIONS WITH A BUDGET OVER £50K PER SHOOT DAY

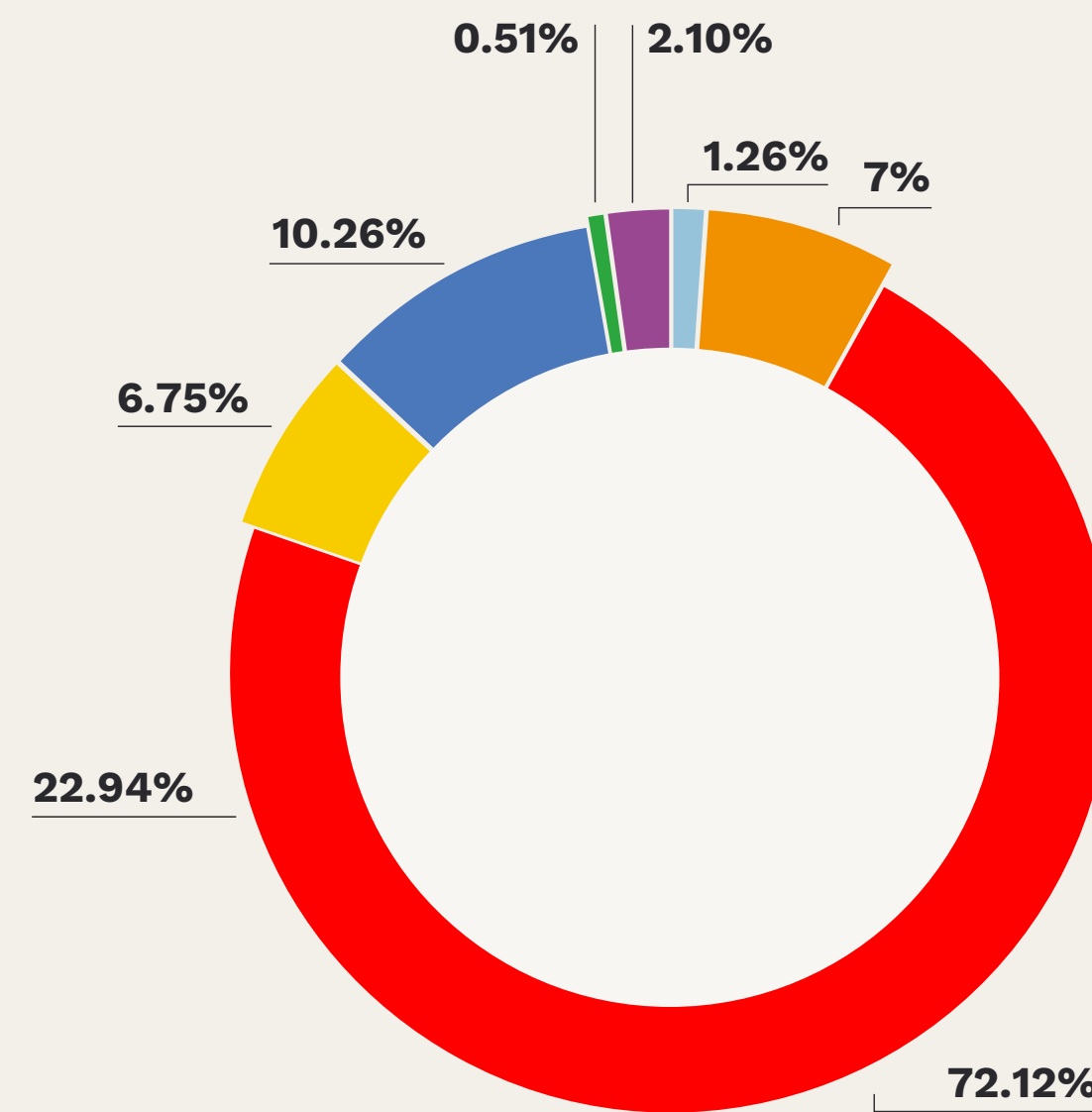
There is often a direct correlation between an increased financial budget and an increased carbon budget. With a higher spend comes an opportunity to opt for activities which are potentially more carbon intensive, such as business class flights. But is is also an opportunity to invest in new technology and offer suppliers more time to source reduced carbon options.



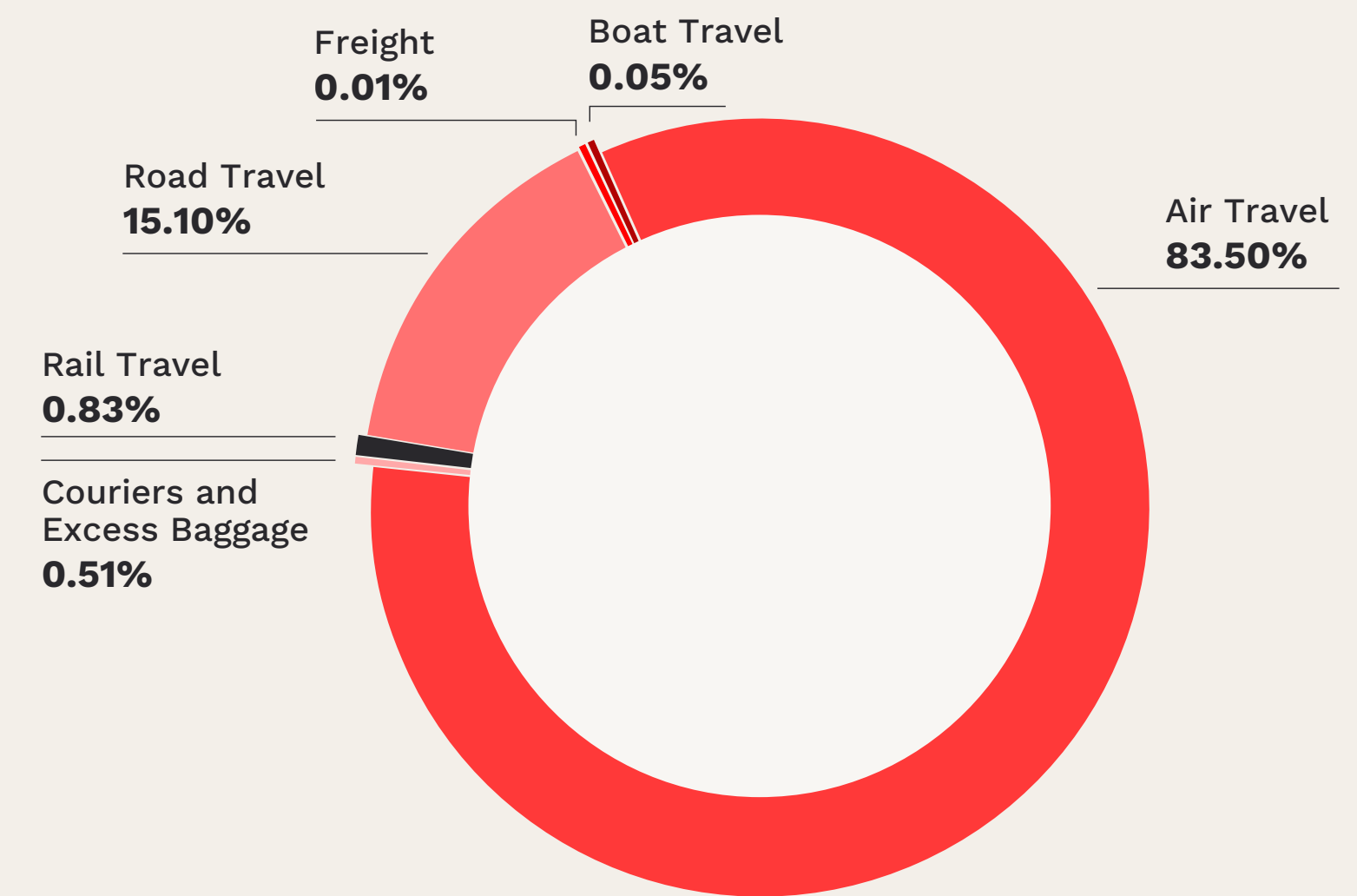
# Which activities have the highest impact?

Just as last year, you'll see that travel and transport activities emitted the most tCO2e for the projects recorded, followed by powering spaces such as studios, locations, hotels, and post production suites.

Materials comes next, and disposal is a very small piece of the pie. Travel and transport was the highest impact area in 52% of all projects, down from 55% in 2022.



Activities across projects

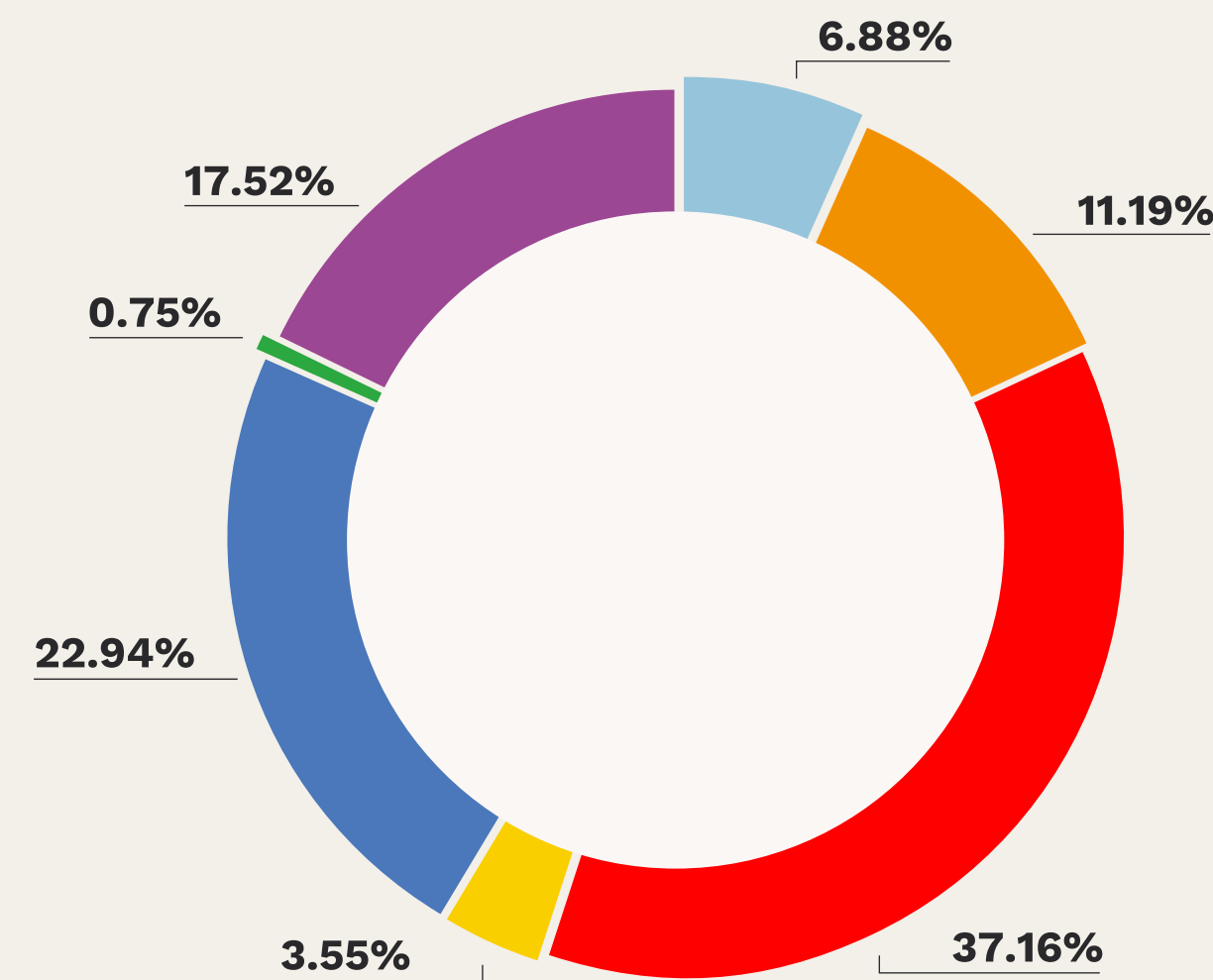


Travel and transport across all projects

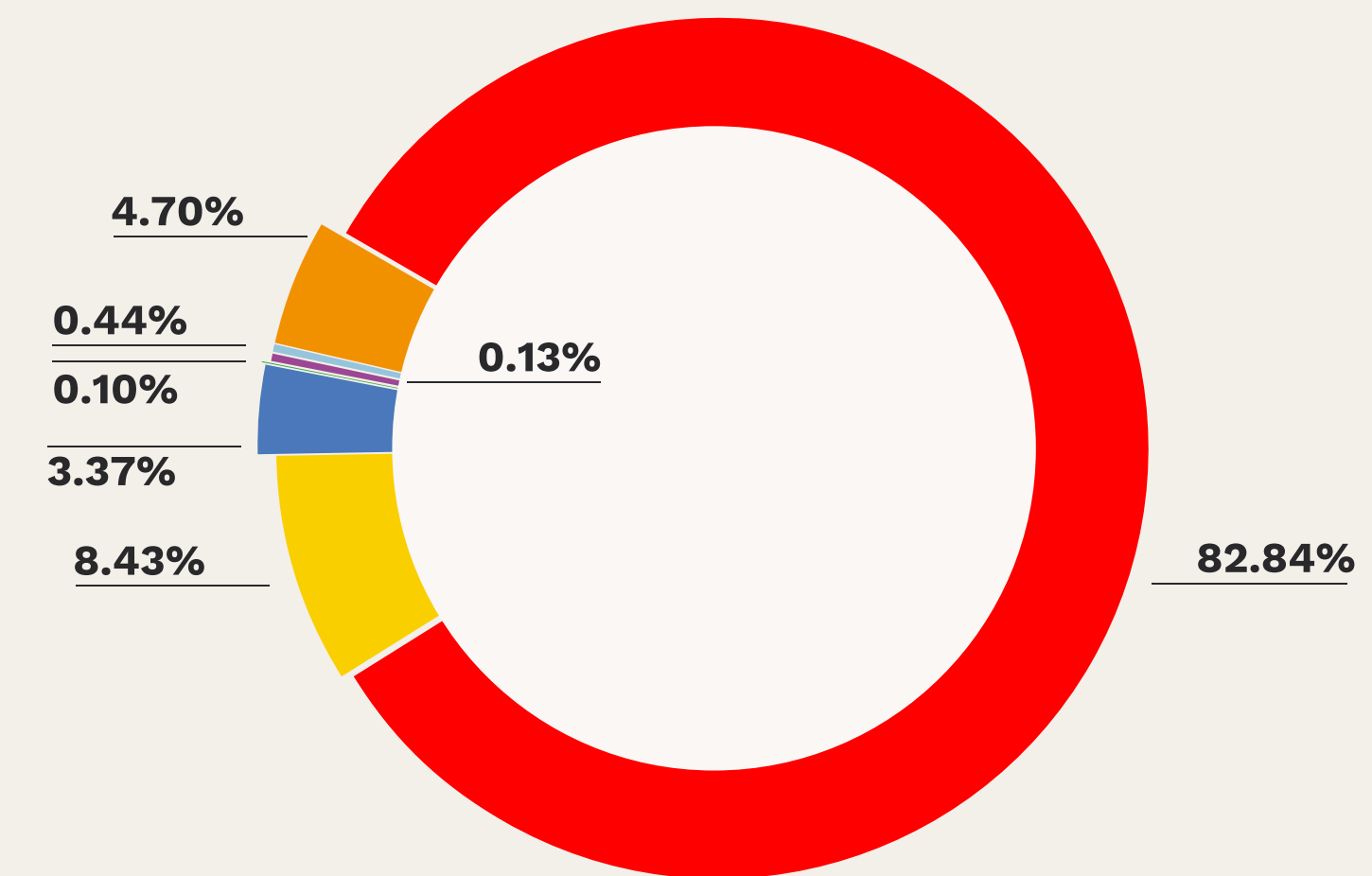
# Which activities have the highest impact when looking at project size?

The order of activity areas by emissions size follows across the subsets we've looked at, albeit in slightly different proportions.

We can see here that as the project size increases, so too does the proportion of emissions attributed to travel and transport.



Activities across projects  
1 tCO<sub>2</sub>e and under



Activities across projects  
100 tCO<sub>2</sub>e and over



# Our training reach in 2023

Over 1300 individuals completed our on-demand sustainable production training in 2023. We'd like to applaud these companies where the whole production team, or entire company, completed AdGreen training in 2023.

**OLIVER**

The company with the **highest number of trained employees**

## ALL EMPLOYEES ADGREEN TRAINED IN 2023



Earth Angel



Imagine



JPH Visuals



Maidstone



Murphy Cobb



RAW Productions

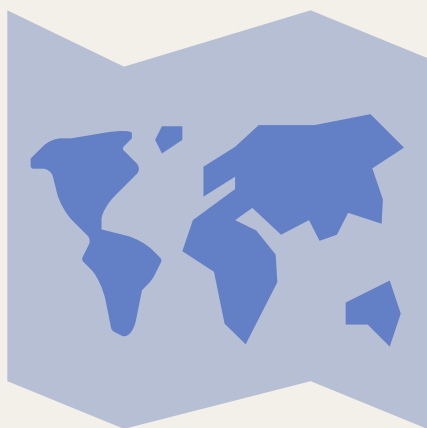
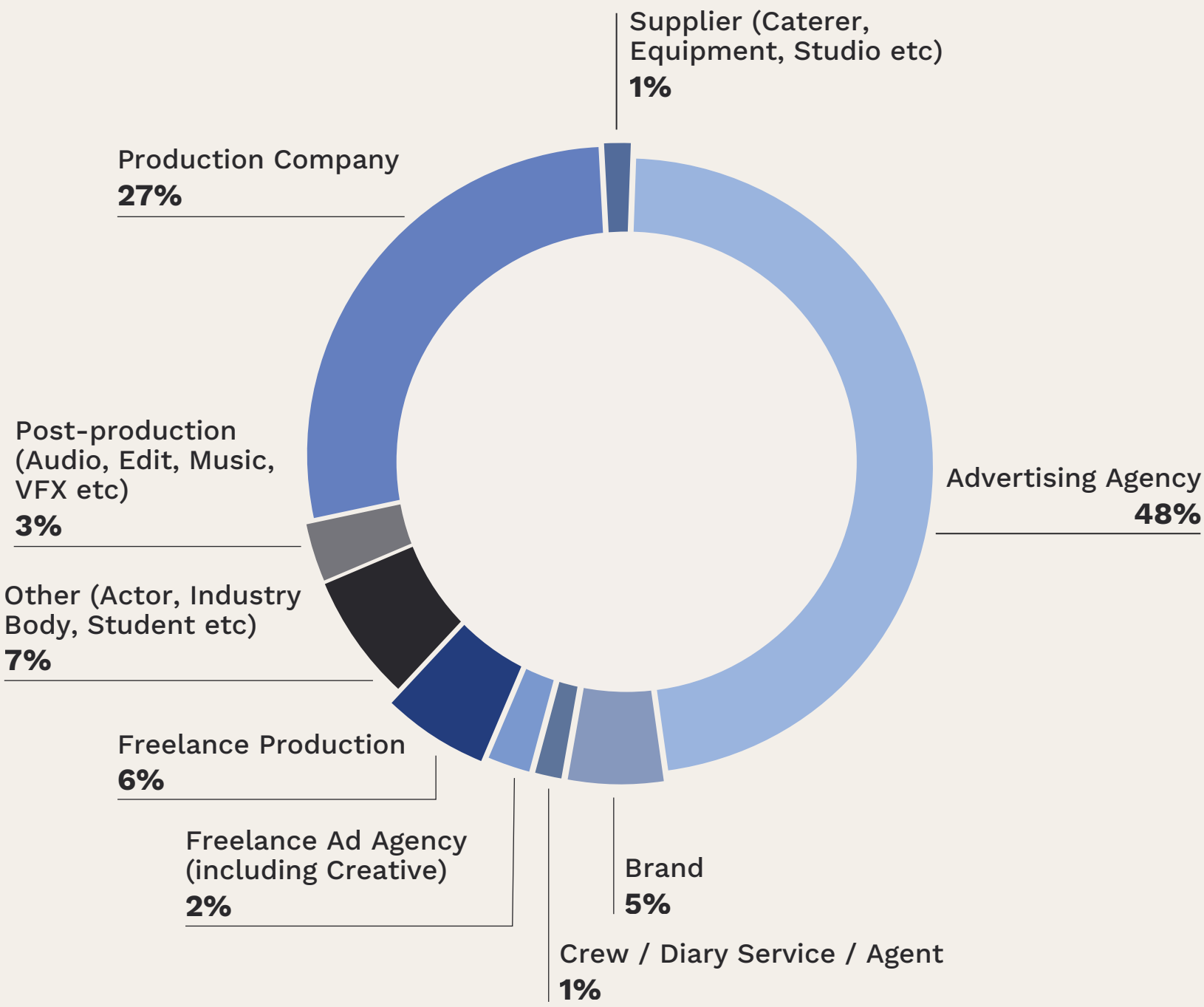


Something



Southwest

## TRAINEES BY COMPANY TYPE



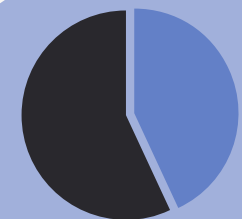
**ATTENDEES FROM 48 COUNTRIES COMPLETED THE SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION MODULE**

# How much are organisations using the carbon calculator?

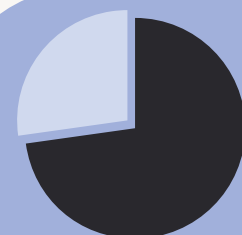
We have seen a significant increase in completed projects over the last year thanks to the dedicated efforts of our users, and improvements to our carbon calculator and reviewing process.

There has been a rise in the number of companies completing projects, which has doubled since 2022, as well as the number of projects being completed by top users. The 5 leading organisations, which completed the largest number of projects in 2023, managed to surpass the amount completed by 2022's top 5 companies by 79%.

These figures clearly demonstrate that not only are we seeing more companies embrace the use of the calculator, but that early adopters have seen considerable benefits to understanding their carbon impact, and have therefore increased the number of projects they are measuring.

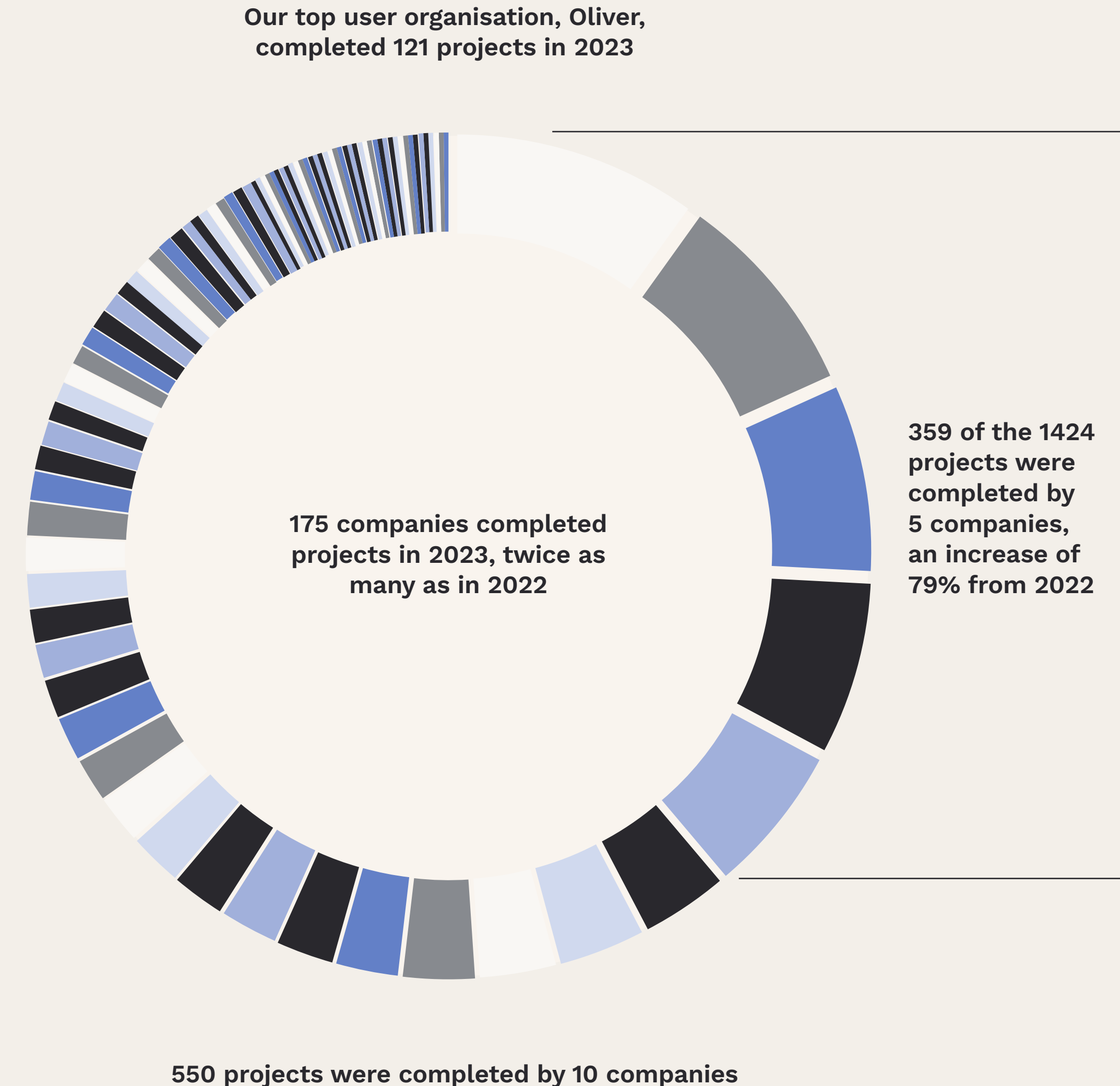


**57% of Top 30 UK Creative Agencies**  
contributed to projects, up from 47% in 2022



**73% of Top 30 UK Production Companies**  
contributed to projects, up from 40% in 2022

Usage of the carbon calculator varies between contributor companies (creative agencies, production and service companies). 175 companies were responsible for creating all 1424 projects in 2023. 68 companies completed just 1 project.

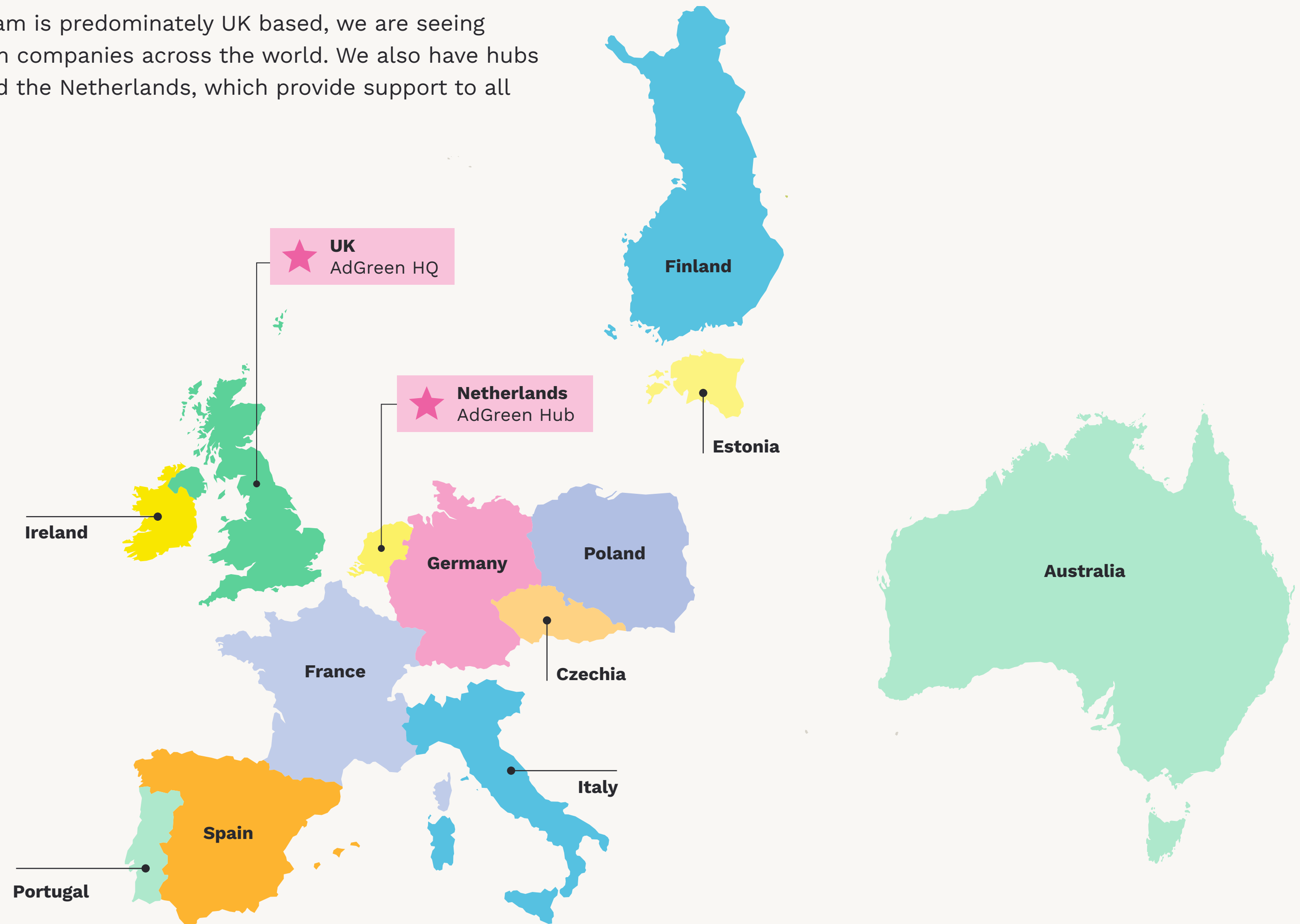




# And where are these organisations?

The AdGreen carbon calculator is a global tool, supplying 309 electricity emissions factors for different countries and states. This allows users to accurately measure their production regardless of the location.

While the AdGreen team is predominately UK based, we are seeing projects originate from companies across the world. We also have hubs in the UK, the USA and the Netherlands, which provide support to all AdGreen users.



# Creative agency superusers

We've seen creative agencies make significant progress in 2023, increasing their use of the carbon calculator and measuring projects across the year to gain a better understanding of their impact.

Increasingly we hear from agencies who are building sustainability into their production processes, and requiring it from their partners. Those working at agency level have considerable power to propose change to the advertisers they work with, as well as influence suppliers, so they have a pivotal role to play in the industry shift.

This is why we want to celebrate these agencies, and the individuals working there, who are taking the lead. They have completed the highest number of projects in 2023, and are able to now use this data to inform their productions going forward as well as develop longer term reduction strategies.

**OLIVER**

**1. Oliver**



**2. Havas London**



**3. Hogarth UK**

**dyson**

**4. Dyson [Advertising Agency]**

**////CRAFT**

**5. CraftWW Manchester**



**6. Makerhouse**

**PROD  
IGIOUS.**

**7. Prodigious France**



**8. CNNIC Create**



**9. Prose on Pixels**

**SAATCHI & SAATCHI**

**10. Saatchi & Saatchi London**

# Production and service companies superusers

Production and service companies are a crucial part of the move to sustainable advertising, and are responsible for the majority of data gathering and inputting. While creative teams or advertisers may have the best intentions to reduce carbon emissions on shoots, if production teams are not given the time and resources to make necessary changes to achieve this reduction, then this can present significant challenges.

We'd like to assure the production community that we are doing our part to make the process of measuring as quick and simple as possible, with significant improvements coming in the next few months.

The production companies listed here completed the largest number of projects in 2023, and we'd like to applaud them for taking on the task of embedding carbon measurement into their work.



1. Locate Productions



2. CheerfulTwentyfirst



3. Raw Production



4. Papaya Films Poland



5. Biscuit Filmworks



6. Spindle



7. Outsider



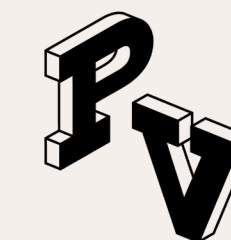
8. Big Sky Productions Ltd



9. Lobster Creative



10. Cult LDN



10. Park Village



We're incredibly proud to be recognised as one of the most active production companies in our efforts to reduce emissions from our productions. AdGreen has been an invaluable resource, offering a simple and effective system to help us offset every one of our productions domestically and internationally as well as guiding our active carbon offsetting efforts throughout the entire production process. It's become part of our DNA and we'll continue to strive to become the greenest Lobster we possibly can.

**Simon McDowell**

Executive Creative Producer, Lobster

It's great to be on this list and be part of a group of production companies trying to affect change in our industry - well done to all the producers here at Locate Prods who made this happen. We put a lot of effort into producing work in a way that reduces our impact on the planet and this isn't easy in the fast paced nature of our industry.

**Angus Light**

Producer & Co-Founder, Locate Productions

AdGreen allows Hurricane to align our environmental values with our clients in real terms. Reducing carbon and creating positive productions is the only way Hurricane now works

**Andy Chivers**

Head of Production, Hurricane

AdGreen's carbon calculator has transformed our production approach. By measuring carbon footprints across diverse locations and studios, including advanced VFX technology, we've established a baseline that guides our creative strategy. It's now ingrained in our process, shaping future creativity and production with excitement and purpose.

**Lucy Moore**

Head of Broadcast, McCann/CraftWW Manchester

AdGreen's calculator tool is easy-to-use and continually improving - giving us confidence in our efforts to track and offset our carbon emissions. Doing so keeps our impact on the environment at the forefront of minds, helping us to challenge common-practices and seek more sustainable alternatives.

**Rory Ford**

Producer, The Big Sky

Our practices on set, inspired by AdGreen, such as mindful recycling, minimising food waste, and donating unused food, have been embraced by our staff and implemented in the office.

**Biscuit Filmworks**

**Insights**

# Carbon in context

Measuring carbon emissions, and understanding the figures, is a new part of life for most of us. While we may be comfortable with a financial budget, we are likely to be much less familiar with a carbon budget, or know how to instinctively understand the carbon cost of everyday items and activities.

We've included items and activities throughout this review to give you some context for the carbon footprints we are sharing.

All stats have been taken directly from, or derived from, the 2022 edition of The Carbon Footprint of Everything by Mike Berners-Lee.

**20 gCO<sub>2</sub>e**

1 hour online meeting  
(per laptop involved)



**288 gCO<sub>2</sub>e**

An oat milk latte  
(add 110 gCO<sub>2</sub>e for a  
disposable cup!)



**270 gCO<sub>2</sub>e**

250g of local,  
seasonal asparagus



**3.2 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e**

250g of asparagus  
airfreighted from Peru



**28 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e**

A low energy 5w bulb on  
for a year in a UK house



**570 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e**

A 100w bulb on for a  
year in a UK house



**522 gCO<sub>2</sub>e**

A cow's milk latte (add 110  
gCO<sub>2</sub>e for a disposable cup!)



**3.5 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

Return economy flight from  
Los Angeles to Barcelona



**7 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

The global average  
annual footprint



**13 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

The average annual  
footprint of a UK citizen



**21 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

The average annual  
footprint of a North  
American citizen

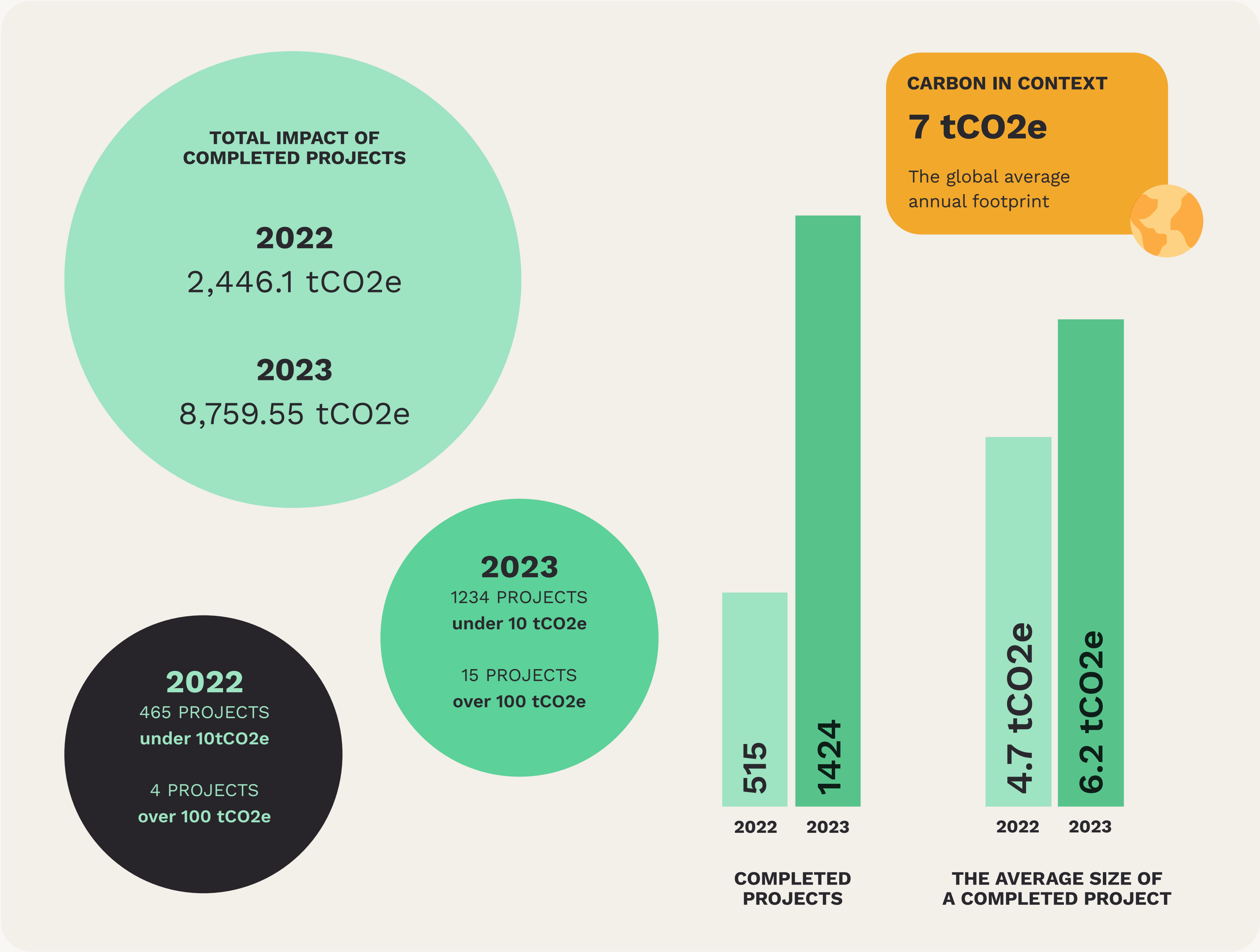




# The big picture

We have seen almost triple the number of projects completed in 2023 compared to 2022. While the number of projects emitting over 50 tCO2e has stayed consistent at 2%, these larger projects have pushed up the average project size to 6.2 tCO2e, and increased the total emissions by 3.5 times.

But these larger projects are exactly the ones we want to see. These are the projects which often represent key ad moments across the year, and absorb a significant portion of ad spend for brands. These projects have the potential to inform the biggest reduction of emissions going forward, as they often represent traditional practices, be it numerous locations requiring air travel, intricate set builds, or large numbers of cast and crew.



# Shoot days

We are often asked what the average footprint per shoot day is, so that those working on a production can understand what is ‘normal’ as they start a project.

We have previously shared that 2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, plus travel, is a good baseline, which the data from 2023 confirms. As we can see there has been an increase from 2022, where the average emissions were 2.2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per shoot day.

While there has been a slight increase this year, we think it is important to stress that this is likely to continue growing year on year, as larger projects are recorded in the calculator. Much of our current data comes from smaller productions, and these projects are utilising much less travel than we might associate with typical advertising production. This is why it is important to understand the impact of your travel from the start.

AVERAGE EMISSIONS PER SHOOT DAY

**3 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

AVERAGE BUDGET PER SHOOT DAY

**£150,950.54**

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SHOOT DAYS

**2.5**

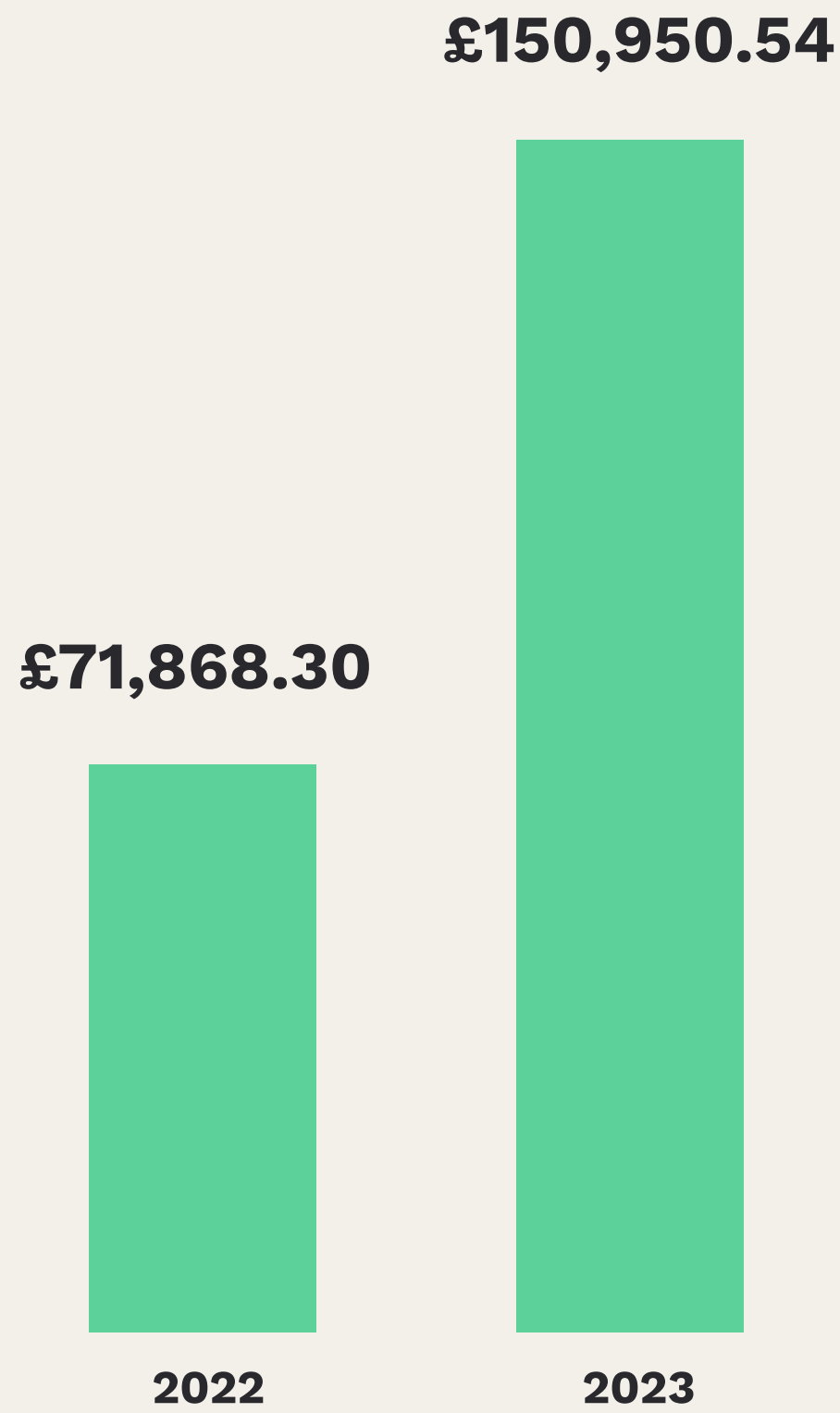
\* based on 1167 projects

**CARBON IN CONTEXT**

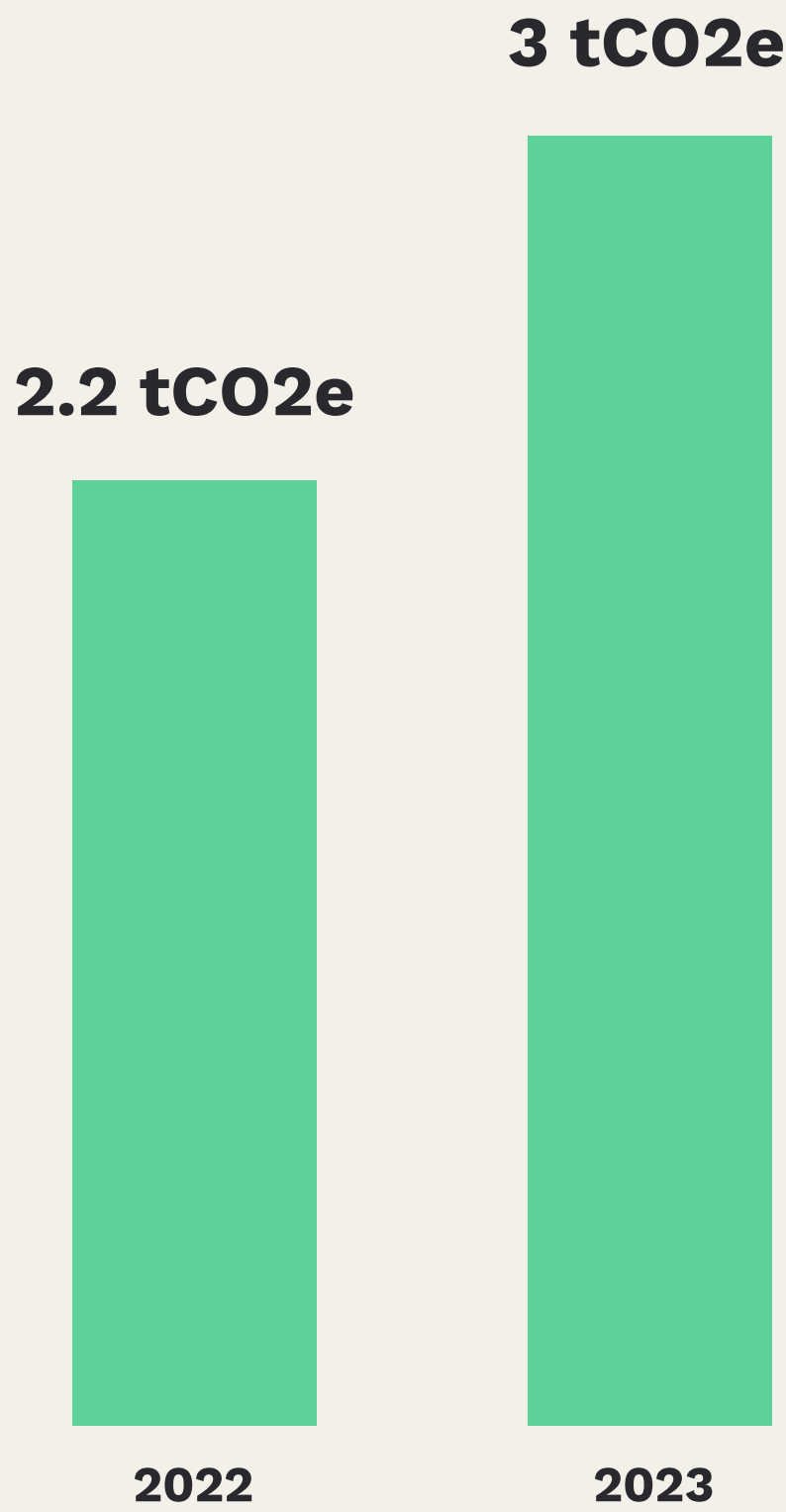
**3.5 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

Return economy flight from  
Los Angeles to Barcelona

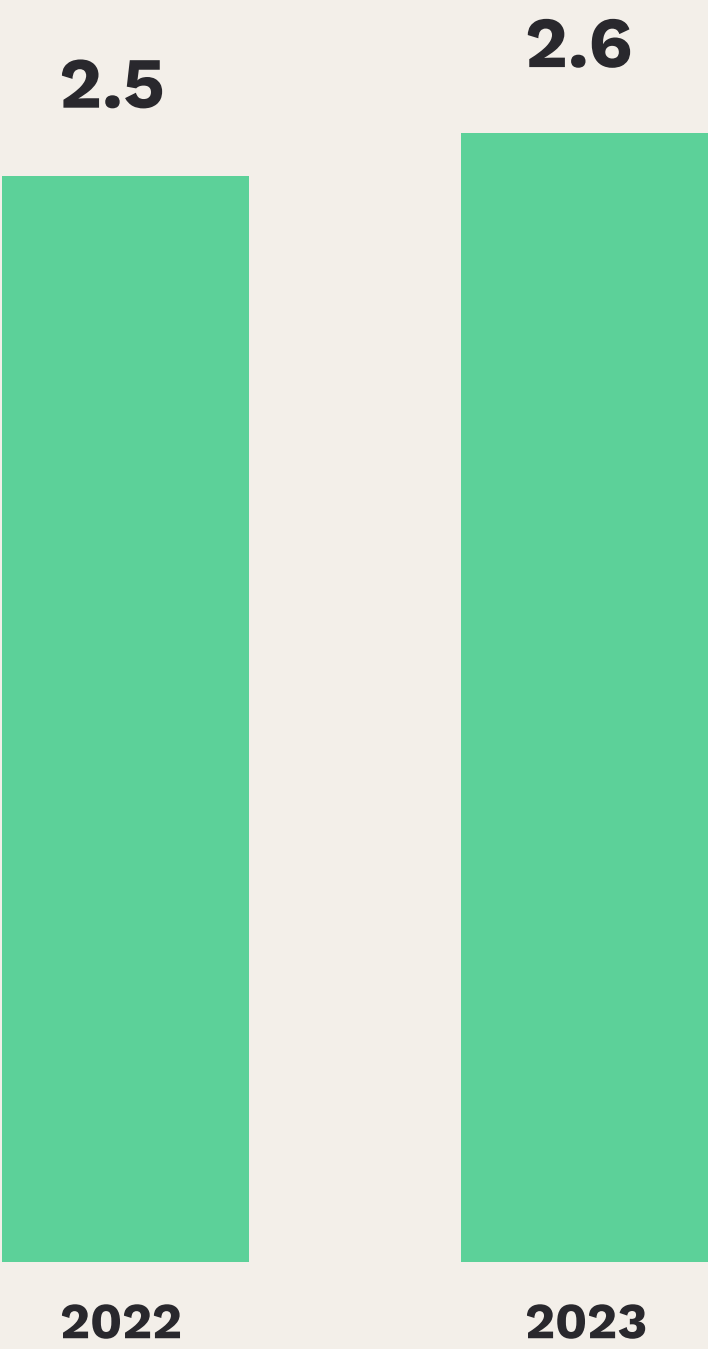




AVERAGE BUDGET  
PER SHOOT DAY



AVERAGE EMISSIONS  
PER SHOOT DAY



AVERAGE NUMBER OF  
SHOOT DAY



# Budgets over £50k per shoot day

If you are working on large scale projects, then 13.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per project is the figure to remember and reference against your own shoots, rather than the 6.2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e average across all productions.

This figure shows us that, unsurprisingly, a larger budget often equates to a larger carbon footprint. But don't be disheartened if you are working on this scale, as it is also on larger shoots where you can make significant carbon savings.

AVERAGE SIZE OF A COMPLETED PROJECT (OVER £50K PER SHOOT DAY - WHEN CONVERTED TO GBP)\*

**13.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

AVERAGE BUDGET FOR PROJECTS OVER £50K PER SHOOT DAY

**£1,399,777.92**

AVERAGE SHOOT DAYS FOR PROJECTS OVER £50K PER SHOOT DAY

**2.32 days**

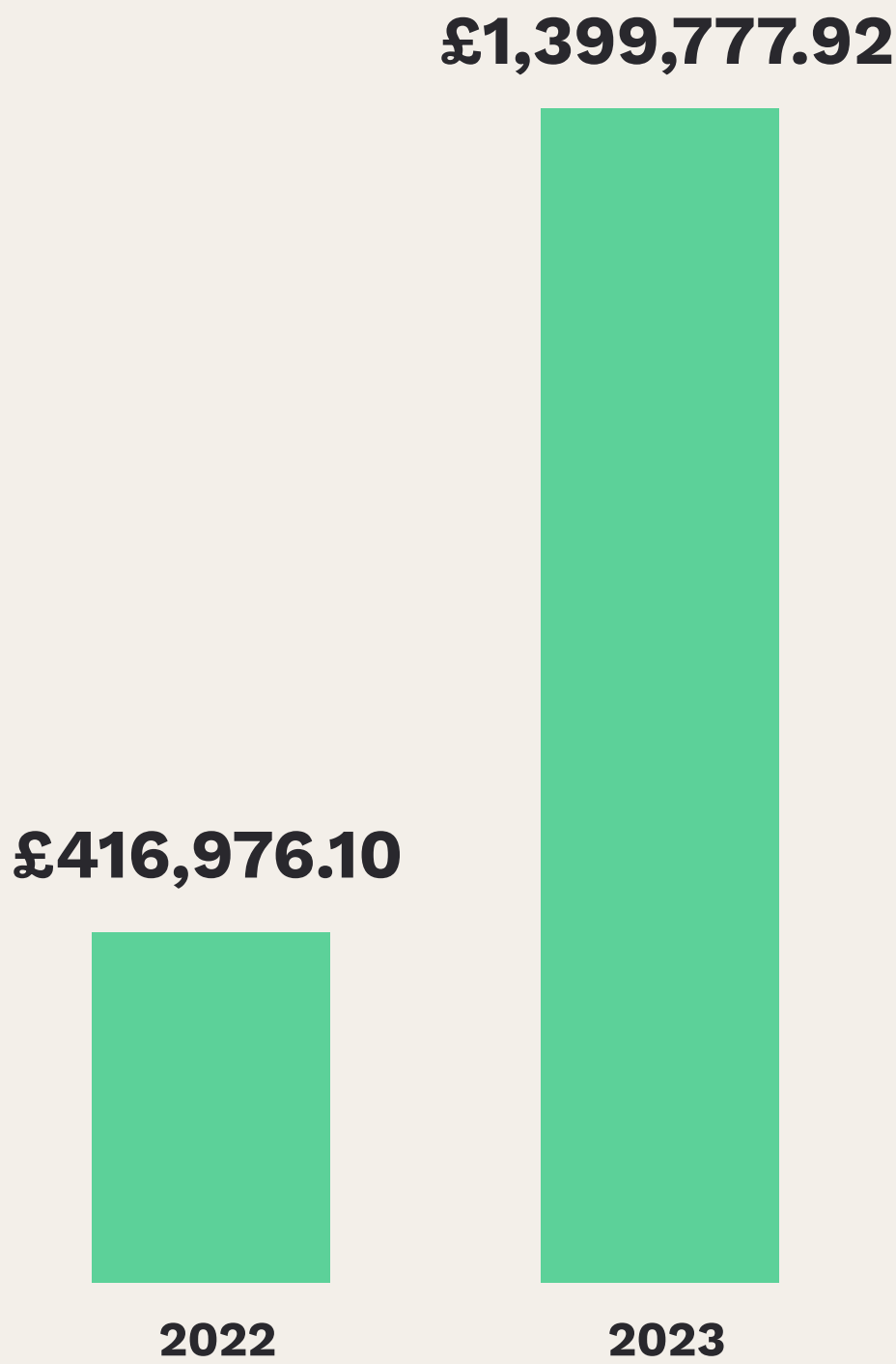
\* based on 523 projects

**CARBON IN CONTEXT**

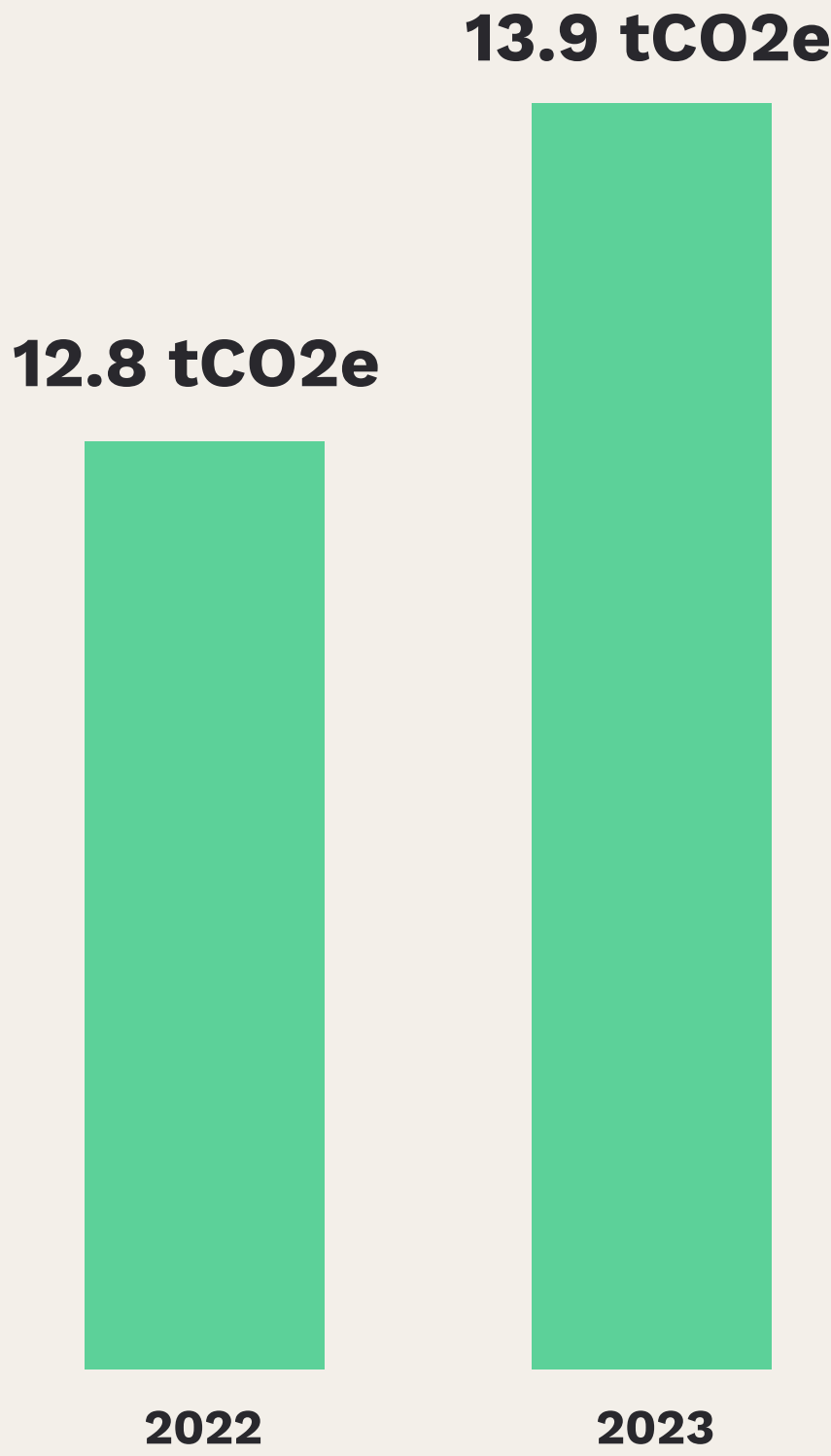
**13 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

The average annual footprint of a UK citizen

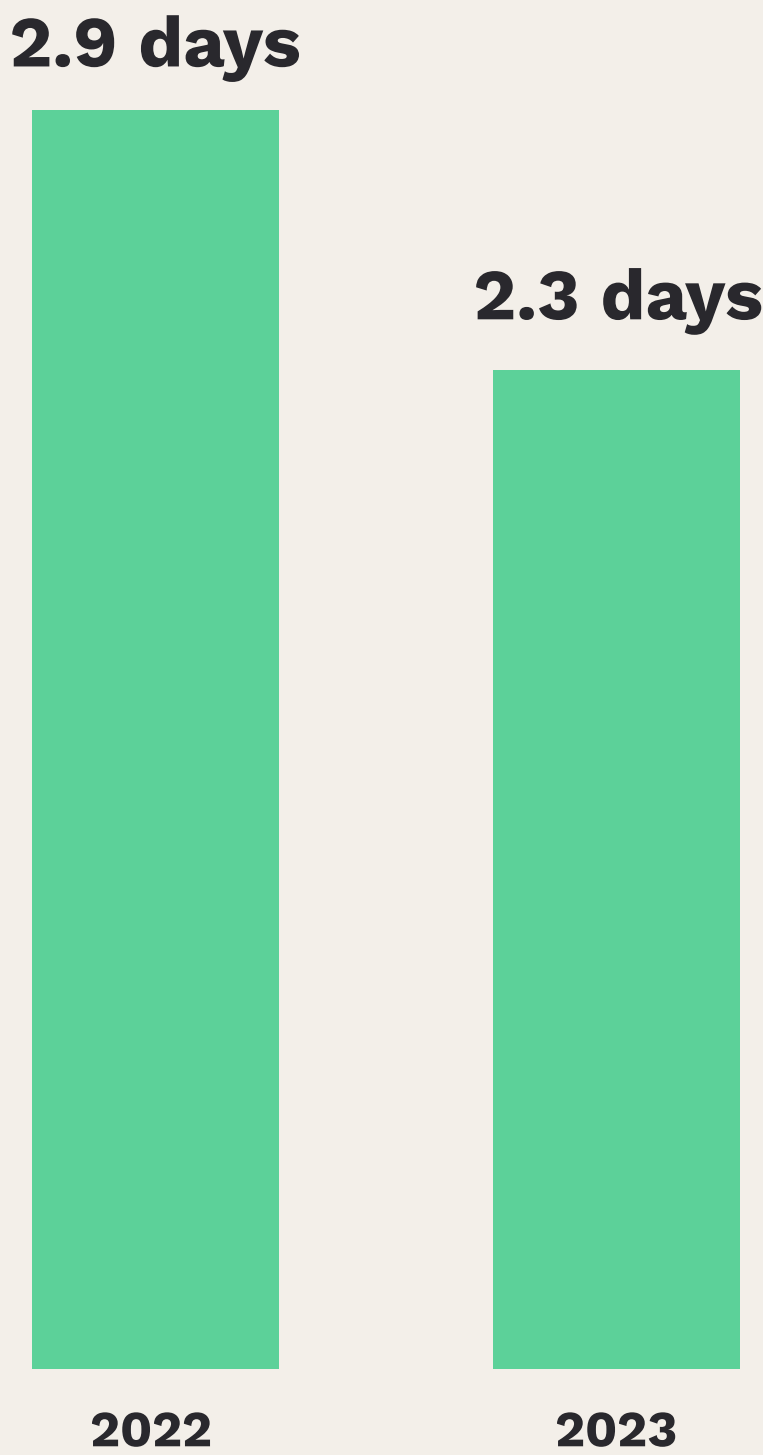




**AVERAGE BUDGET PER SHOOT DAY**  
for projects over £50k per shoot day



**AVERAGE EMISSIONS**  
for projects over £50k per shoot day



**AVERAGE NUMBER OF SHOOT DAYS**  
for projects over £50k per shoot day

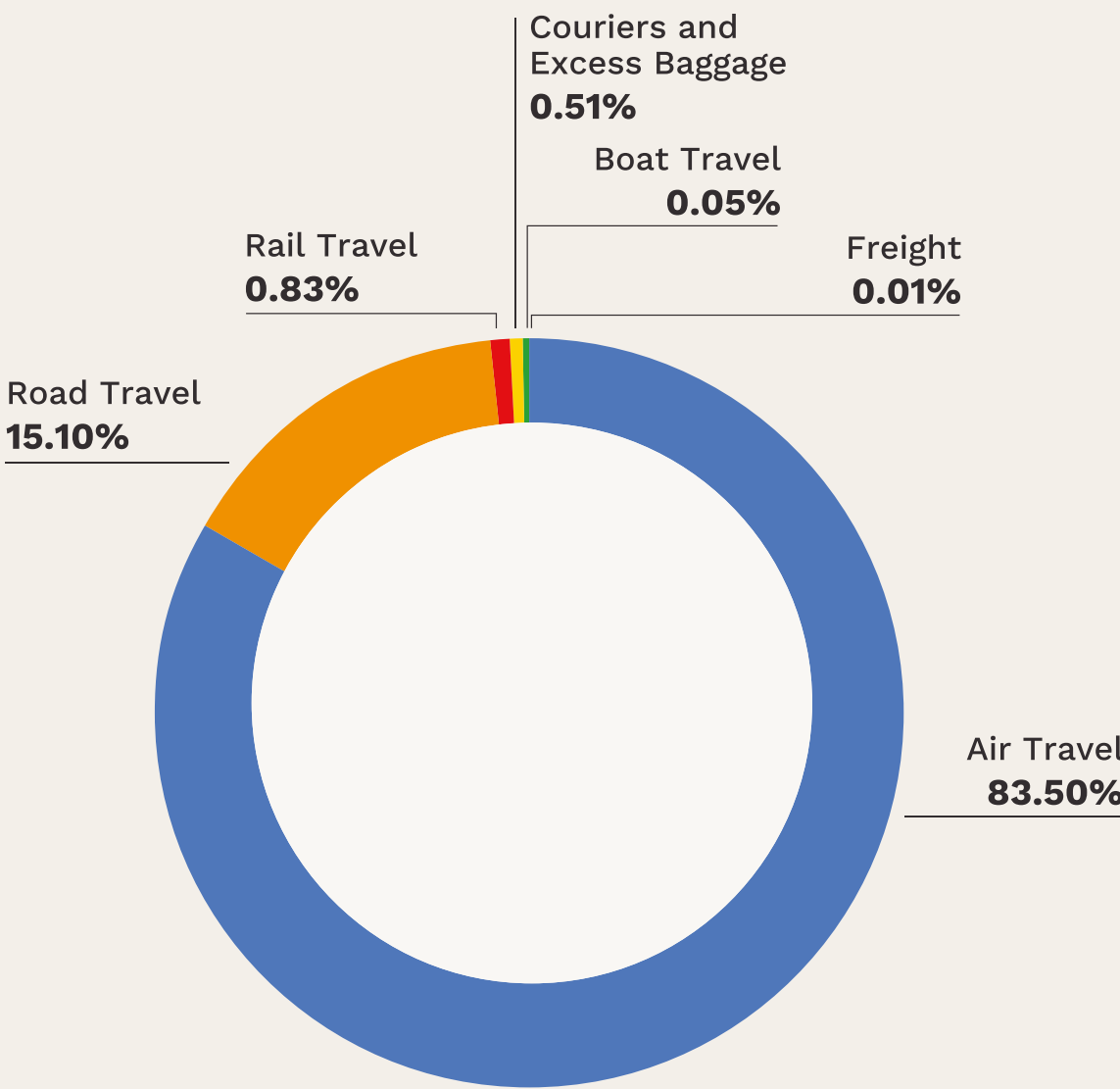
# Ways to reduce emissions

## Travel and transport

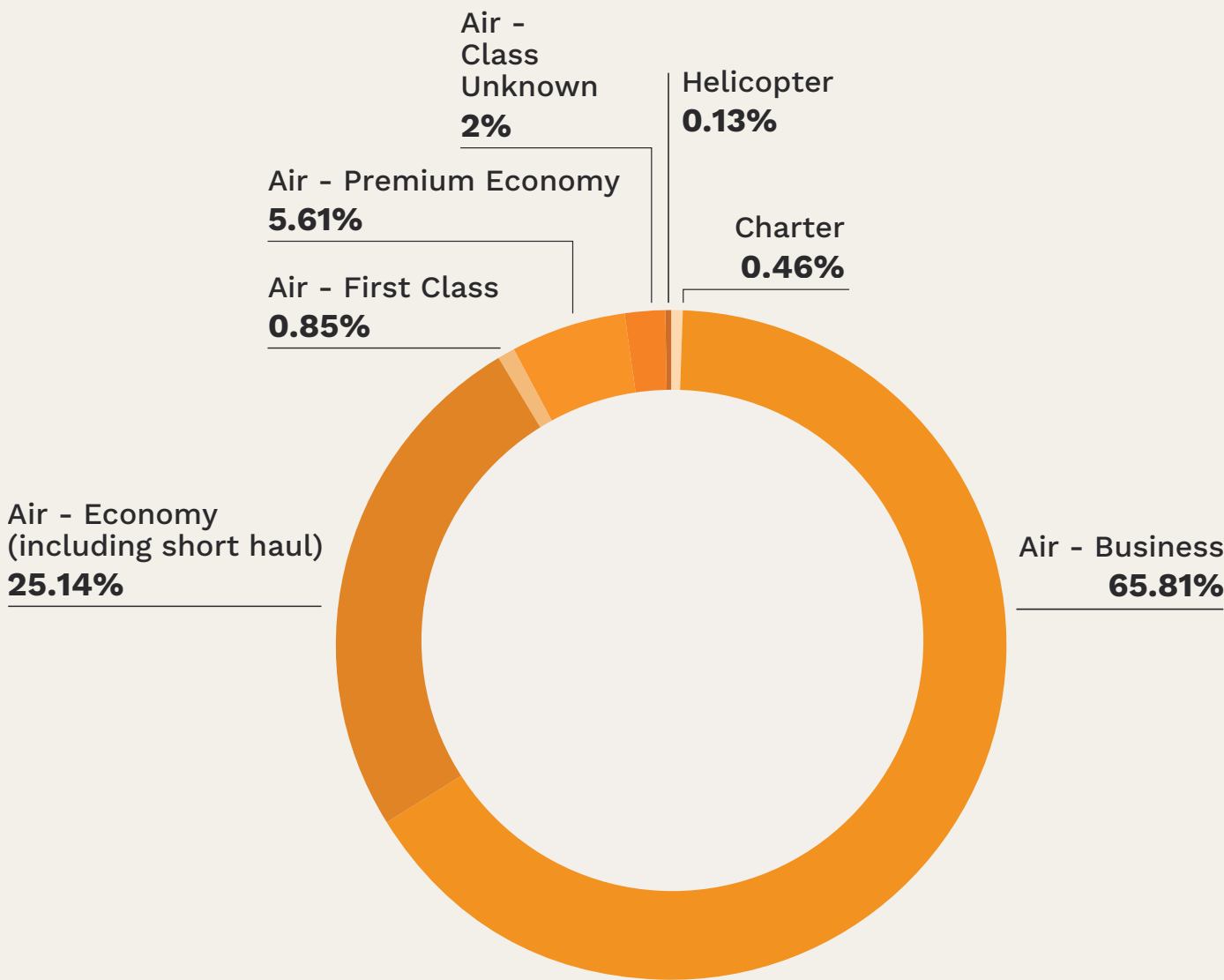
Across all productions, travel and transport is the largest activity area, therefore for many, it's the area to prioritise when it comes to reductions.

We can see from the 2023 data that the majority of transport emissions came from air travel. Flying to a location is an ingrained habit in our industry and one that we need to address. While air travel may be necessary at times, we need to ensure it is not the default option if this figure is to be brought down.

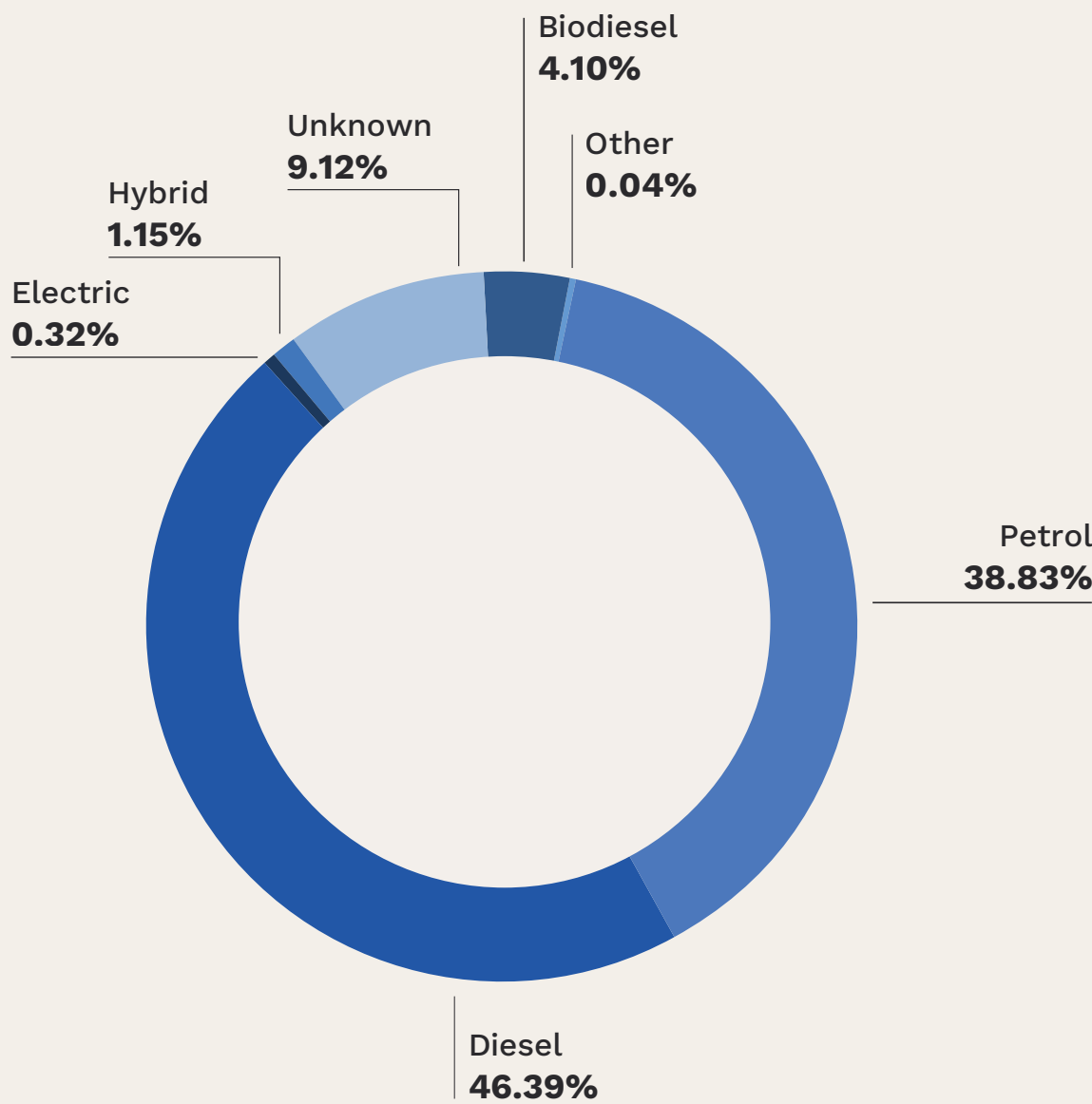
Globally, aviation is responsible for 3.5% of global warming, with only 3% of the global population estimated to fly regularly. In contrast, air travel made up 60% of all production emissions across completed projects in 2023, so it's clear this is a key area for reduction for our industry.



TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT EMISSIONS



AIR TRAVEL EMISSIONS



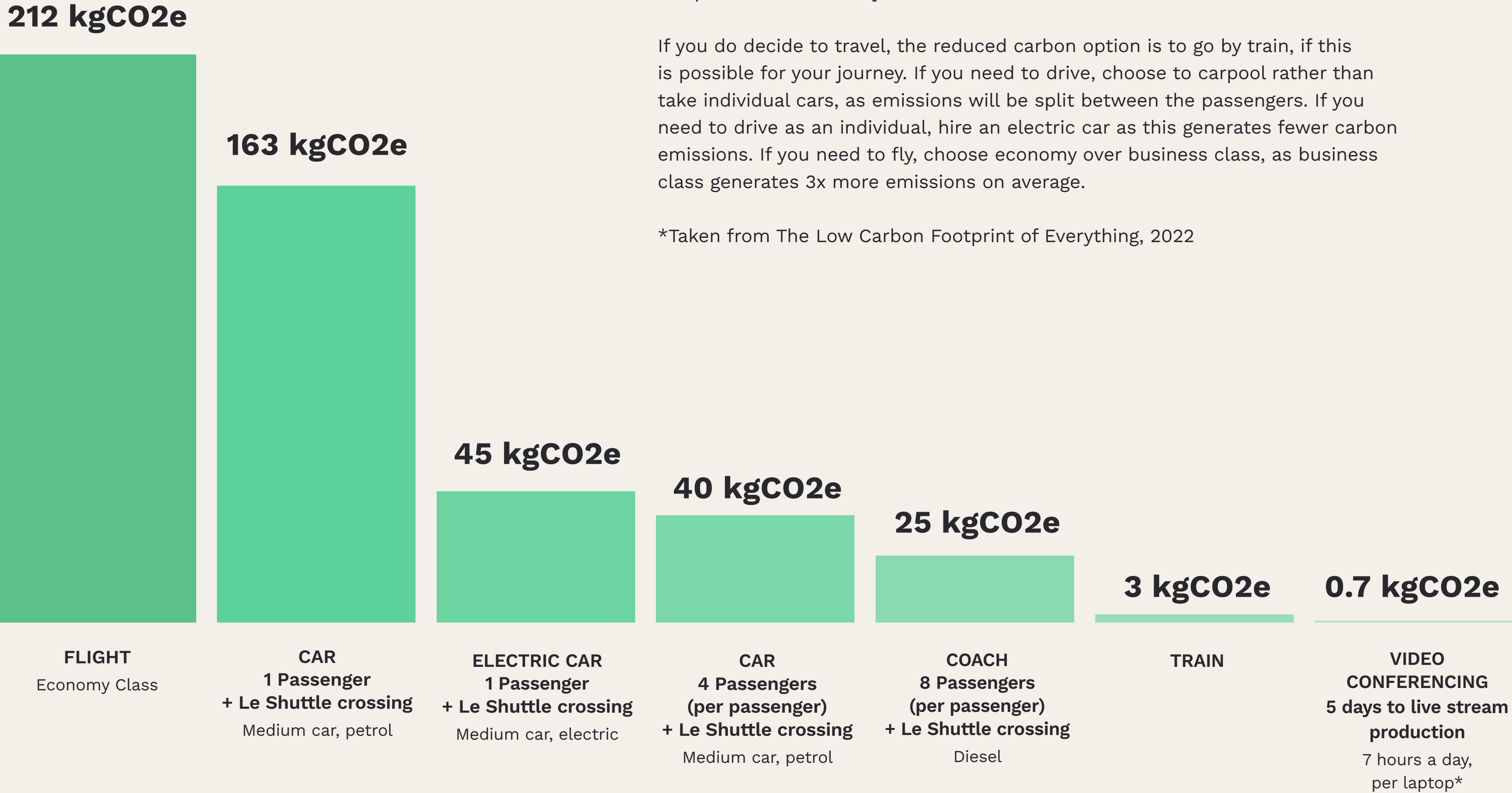
ROAD TRAVEL EMISSIONS



Business class travel  
generates on average

**3x**  
the emissions of  
economy class

LONDON TO PARIS RETURN TRIP



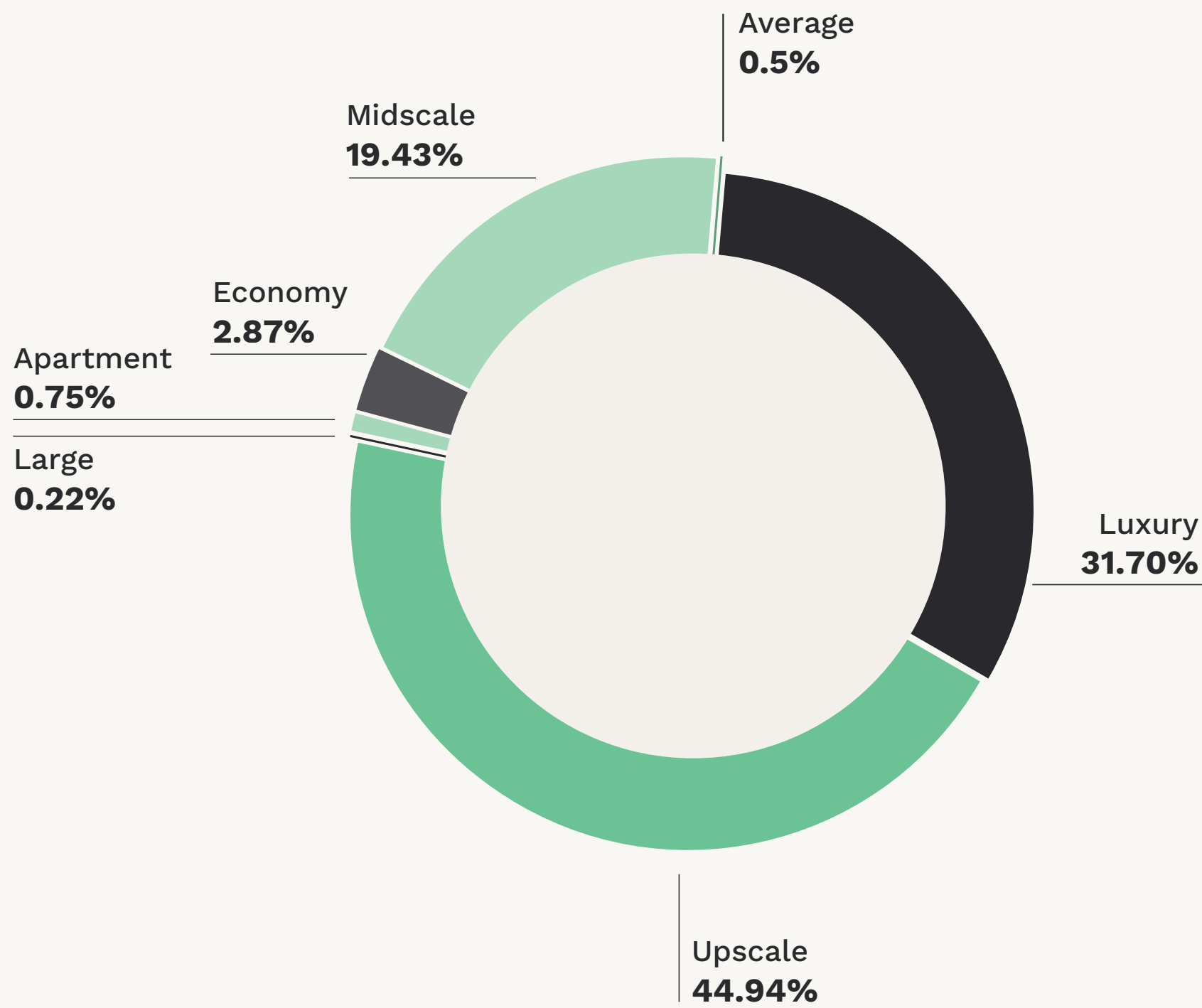
The first thing to ask yourself is, do you need to travel to the shoot?  
Can you make use of live streaming, or daily check ins, to be involved in  
the production remotely?

If you do decide to travel, the reduced carbon option is to go by train, if this  
is possible for your journey. If you need to drive, choose to carpool rather than  
take individual cars, as emissions will be split between the passengers. If you  
need to drive as an individual, hire an electric car as this generates fewer carbon  
emissions. If you need to fly, choose economy over business class, as business  
class generates 3x more emissions on average.

\*Taken from The Low Carbon Footprint of Everything, 2022

# Ways to reduce emissions

## Accommodation



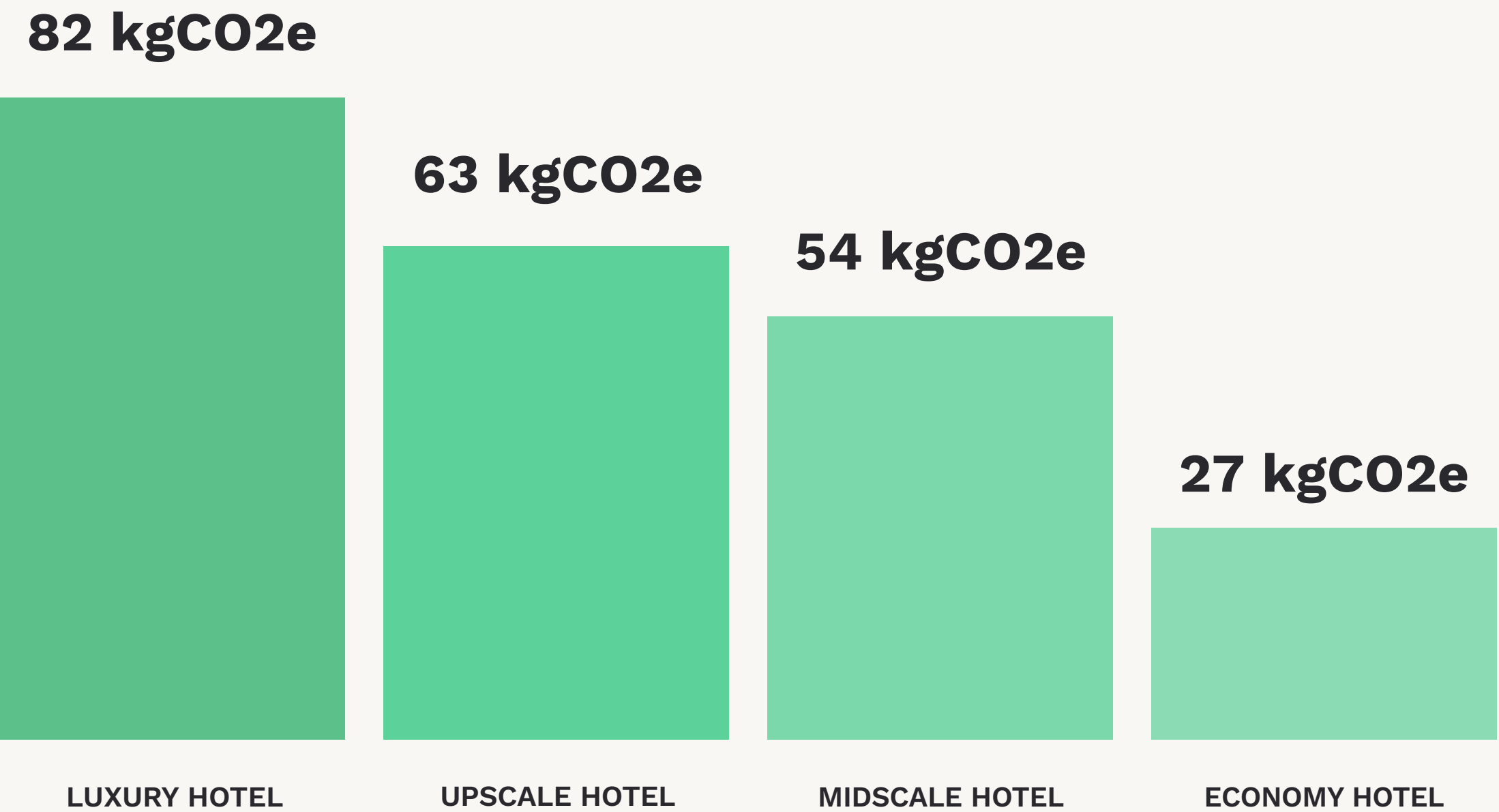
ACCOMMODATION EMISSIONS

Accommodation may not immediately come to mind when you think of the carbon emissions generated by a production, but they should not be overlooked. In 2023, accommodation made up 6.75% of emissions across all projects.

You can see the vast difference between accommodation options below, with a luxury hotel room generating more than three times the amount of carbon as an economy room. This is a perfect example of why it is so important to share sustainability knowledge with all production partners, as it allows you have open conversations about the ways that you can collectively reduce emissions. For example, can you agree with all crew, cast, agency and brand team members to stay in a midscale hotel, over a luxury one?

Accommodation is also an activity area that can be significantly reduced by a change in an organisation’s travel policy. If you choose to work with a crew who are local to the location or studio, then accommodation can be removed from your budgets, both financial and carbon.

### ACCOMMODATION FOR 7 NIGHTS PER ROOM

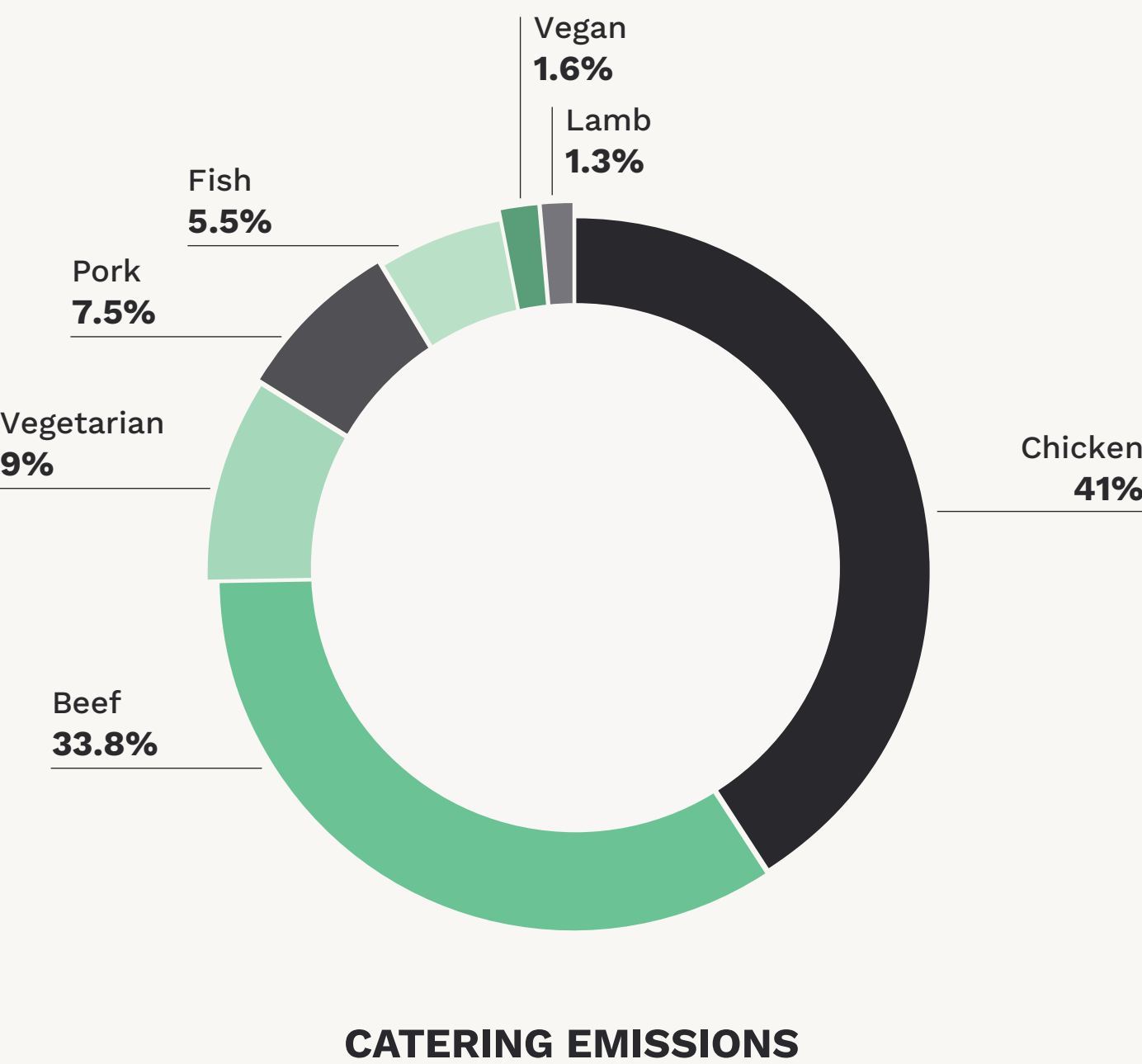


# Ways to reduce emissions

## Materials

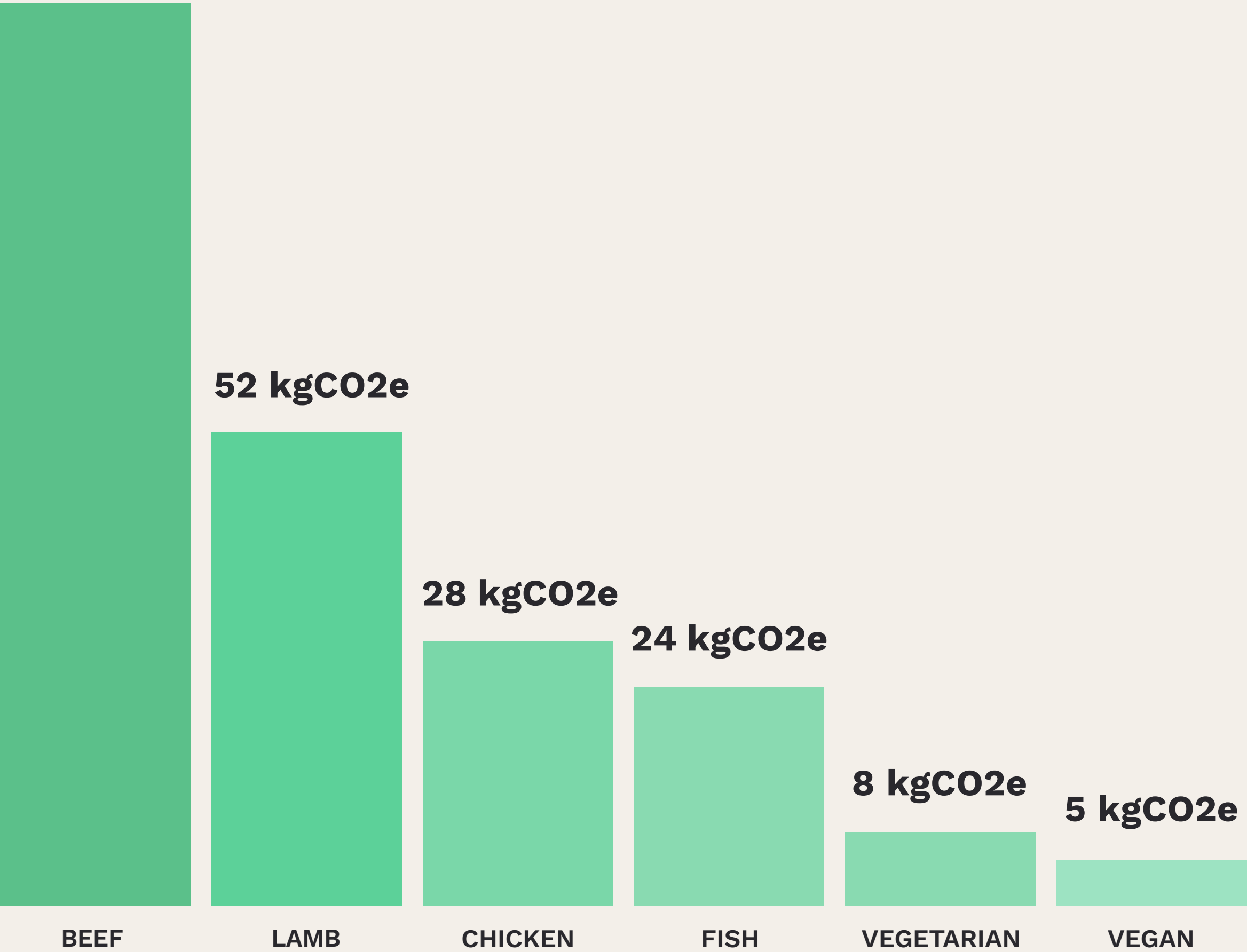
When we look at the materials activity area, there are recurring items which are present on majority of shoots, most notably catering.

This is also an easy area to make a sustainable swap, as it will have no noticeable impact on the production. You will continue to provide the same number of meals, but by switching from beef, to a vegan option, you can reduce emissions by 94%.



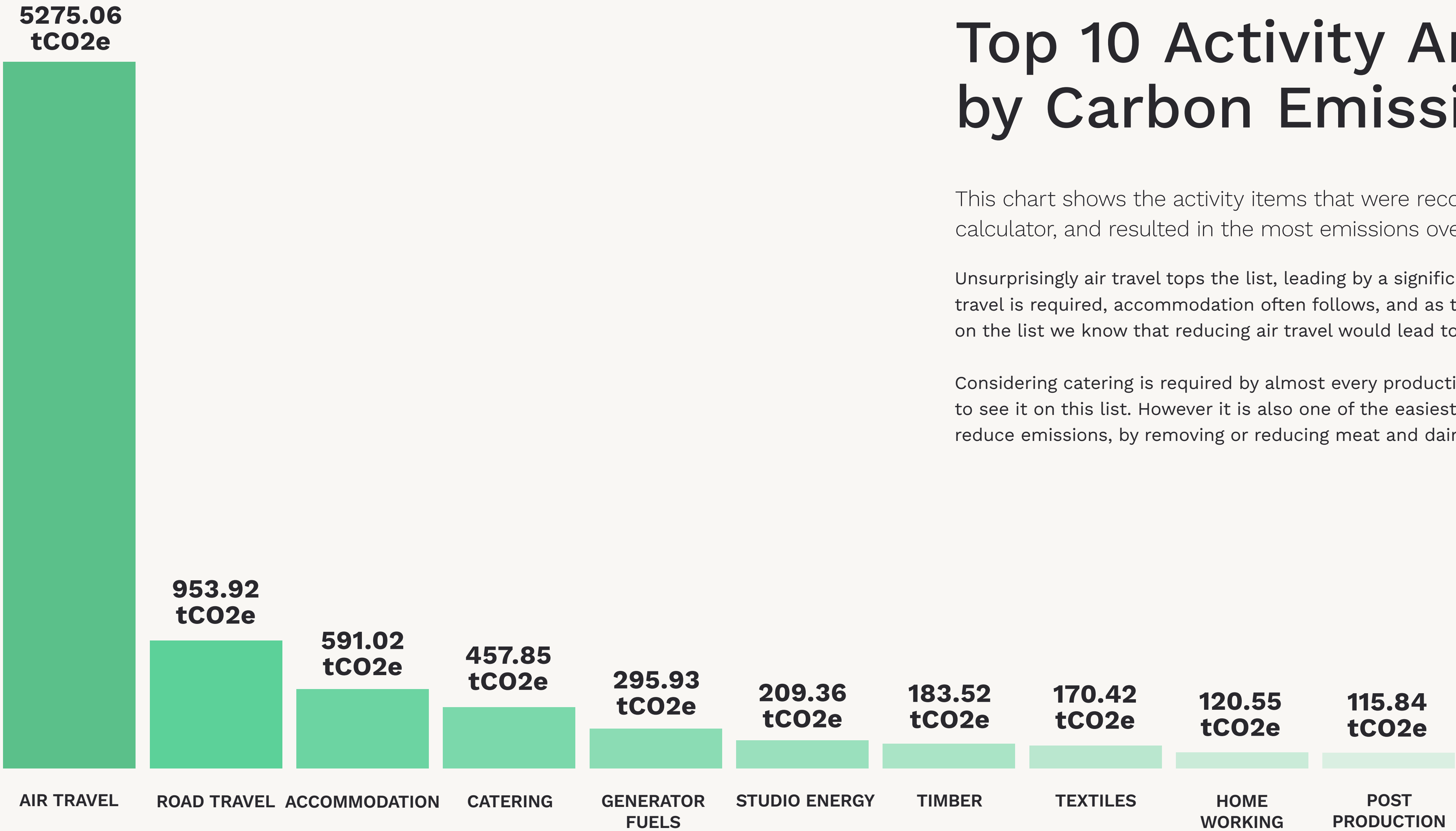
10 MEALS SERVED ON A SHOOT

99 kgCO2e





TOP 10 ACTIVITIES BY CARBON DIOXIDE EQUIVALENT



# Top 10 Activity Areas by Carbon Emissions

This chart shows the activity items that were recorded in the calculator, and resulted in the most emissions overall.

Unsurprisingly air travel tops the list, leading by a significant margin. Where air travel is required, accommodation often follows, and as the third largest item on the list we know that reducing air travel would lead to a reduction here too.

Considering catering is required by almost every production, we would expect to see it on this list. However it is also one of the easiest areas in which to reduce emissions, by removing or reducing meat and dairy based meals.

The Association of Photographer's relationship with AdGreen is essential in providing a key resource to its broad membership, from those starting out in their professional journey to those who are established and would like guidance. Members of the AOP who operate as freelancers, in both stills and moving images and are regularly commissioned by ad agencies, are increasingly considering and adopting sustainable approaches to their business practice.

To support our members to deliver a sustainable approach to their business, the AOP set up a Sustainability Working Group consisting of photographers and producers, tasked with providing advice and resources on carbon reduction techniques. As one of the first activities, the group put on a sustainable in-person event with greater focus on photographers' interests. The sold-out sustainable event was well received, featuring a session dedicated to AdGreen's Low Carbon Future, using AdGreen's Carbon Calculator, and importantly AdGreen's training programme. AdGreen also features in resources we provide our membership and other visitors to our dedicated webpage Sustainability and the Environment, including an 'Easy Green Wins for Reducing Carbon Footprint' document, as well as the AOP's own Carbon Audit Report.

Seeing the level of completed projects using AdGreen's Carbon Calculator increase since 2022 is a positive step. However the evidence of an increase in emissions as a result of this makes it clear more needs to be done to reduce travel emissions overall, including the use of slow-travel as a greener option.

As we anticipate the coming year with an updated AdGreen platform, and an increased focus on the business case for a professional sustainable practice for photographers and image-makers, we know the importance of undertaking this journey to net zero together as an industry, and the essential role AdGreen plays across all aspects of the advertising sector with the resources they provide.

**Isabelle Doran**

CEO, The Association of Photographers

**AOP**

**APA**

Since 2021, 40% of APA members have begun using the carbon calculator, which is a fantastic effort from the production community and demonstrates each company's continuous commitment to reducing their on-set carbon footprint. However, we still need advertisers to make a conscious decision on where to shoot based on the carbon information that they are given at the start of each project from their production partners, otherwise no real change is being made.

We are excited to hear about the future developments that AdGreen has planned with the carbon calculator, which we hope will streamline the measurement process, and make tracking emissions more efficient for our members and the wider community. With their continuous efforts, AdGreen are transforming the industry, and the APA will continue to support both AdGreen and our members in achieving a more sustainable production landscape.

The significant increases in calculator uptake and completion rates last year are very heartening and testament to the hard work and commitment of the AdGreen team, agencies and production partners.

The forthcoming improvements to the calculator are set to be (sustainable) rocket-fuel for this upward trajectory.

I hope that anyone who struggled with the calculator in the past will give the new and improved version a try. Once we get a critical mass of producers using the tool efficiently and confidently then I'm sure we can increase the number of 50+ tCO<sub>2</sub>e projects going through the calculator and into the data set, which is important to get an accurate picture of the industry. We will also be far better positioned as an industry for our clients' Carbon Budgets and Scope 3 reporting obligations as they arrive.

It's great to see Superusers being celebrated. We all know it's the right thing to do, but a little acknowledgement is always motivating.

I'd encourage any agency using sustainability services or consultants to talk to them about how best to integrate your efforts with the national and international picture through AdGreen.

**Eliot Liss**

Head of Production, IPA



ISBA is proud to be a founding supporter of AdGreen. This annual review gives us a useful summary of the big challenges for our industry and how the AdGreen team are working hard to meet the future challenges set by brands and their agency partners.

Those brands who are already engaged with AdGreen are reaping the benefits of the carbon calculator's analysis, and are able to make informed decisions about the carbon impact of their advertising production. This analysis, and understanding of the changes that they can make, is enabling brands to make granular, project-by-project judgments to drive down their carbon emissions in production and improve the sustainability of their marketing operations.

As ISBA members become increasingly engaged in environmental sustainability issues, AdGreen's information guides and training modules provide valuable resources for the industry.

We're looking forward to seeing AdGreen go further as it further expands its network of supporters and delivers updates to the carbon calculator tool. With more projects moving through the calculator, AdGreen is building a vital dataset to build a picture of industry action, solutions and future challenges.

It is never too late for brands to join this journey – the worsening climate emergency only underscores the need. We look forward to working with the AdGreen team to get more brands directly involved. While reminding us that there is serious work to be done, this review highlights the positive change that is taking place.

**Stuart Macnaughtan**

Head of Public Affairs and Sustainability, ISBA



**The**

**business case**

**for carbon  
measurement**

In the three years since we launched the carbon calculator we have worked with hundreds of businesses looking to understand carbon measurement, and how it can support a move to net zero.

While many companies may have begun this journey due to an overwhelming desire to take positive action, we know this is not the only incentive. We have identified six overarching benefits that carbon measurement can bring to your organisation, although we are certain there are many more beyond this.

Incorporating carbon measurement into your company strategy can support you to:

- **Build your business**
- **Get ahead of regulation**
- **Save money**
- **Create new job opportunities**
- **Motivate & inspire your team**
- **Set, meet & exceed key targets**



# Build your business

## BUSINESS CASE ONE

**78%**

of multinational corporations will remove suppliers that endanger their carbon transition plan by 2025.

**Standard  
Chartered, 2021**

## Retain and win accounts

With budgets being tightened, and competition for briefs as high as ever, there has never been a better time for companies to demonstrate the added value they can bring to a production. Moving beyond what is seen on screen to spotlight a commitment to best practice on a production could give your organisation the edge when it comes to pitching for, or retaining, clients.

With many agencies and production companies still in the early stages of carbon measurement, becoming an early adopter and showcasing your expertise could unlock work opportunities that may have previously been unattainable.

## Pioneer a new approach

Working sustainably does not mean that creativity must be stifled. On the contrary, incorporating environmental considerations into the brief can spark new ideas. As an industry we are comfortable working to a brief to deliver world-class concepts, so we must make sustainability part of the brief.

Some brands have shared their sustainable production approach with the industry, by creating behind the scenes footage to accompany their campaigns or sharing case studies. Bupa showcased how they used virtual production to travel to four locations for their 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People' campaign without leaving London. While others have taken this even further to share the process of sustainable production with the consumer. Tea brand TAZO made their entire campaign, 'The World's First Regenerative Ad', a BTS look at what goes into ad production, and showcased the innovative ways that they minimised carbon emissions.

Embedding a carbon reduction strategy using the AdGreen calculator as the measurement tool has enabled us to create a data-led approach both for our organisation, and to help clients re-engineer their production process to create the behaviour change required to drive real results. A key component is to create the framework that will support these new working processes; this has opened up an important dialogue regarding the importance of a structured, client-led implementation strategy. It is encouraging to see more and more progressive brands pushing this to the top of their agenda and investing accordingly, and we have already seen the benefit to our business of being able to position ourselves as a knowledgeable partner for our clients as they look to develop a carbon measurement strategy.

**Traci Dunne**

Global Director of Industry Relations, APR

Our dedicated efforts toward active carbon reduction and offsetting through AdGreen has not only strengthened our commitment to environmental responsibility but also helped foster relationships with a growing number of new clients. This commitment has enabled us to align with specific environmental-sustainability criteria, leading to more opportunities and ultimately contributing to an increase in our workload.

**Simon McDowell**

Executive Creative Producer, Lobster



# Build your business

**47%**

of consumers have stopped buying products/ services that have a negative environmental impact on the environment and society.

**Kantar Research  
Global Issues  
Barometer**

Over 2023 we have seen increased enquiries from both existing and new clients, which we can directly attribute to our ongoing work in sustainability - this has in turn lead to us winning new business.

Our hope is that this will only increase over the next few years as brands and agencies start to place more importance on reporting and reducing their scope 3 emissions. It's also created opportunities to reach out to varying clients that we wouldn't have considered previously.

**Angus Light**  
Producer & Co-Founder, Locate Productions.



## Display your badge

With budgets being tightened, and competition for briefs as high as ever, there has never been a better time for companies to demonstrate the added value they can bring to a production. Moving beyond what is seen on screen to spotlight a commitment to best practice on a production could give your organisation the edge when it comes to pitching for, or retaining, clients.

With many agencies and production companies still in the early stages of carbon measurement, becoming an early adopter and showcasing your expertise could unlock work opportunities that may have previously been unattainable.

Find the badge **here**

## Demonstrate climate credentials to the consumer

For brands, there is an opportunity to demonstrate your climate credentials as an organisation through your advertising, which should go hand-in-hand with low carbon production. We have seen this numerous times, from KitKat resurrecting their 1989 rollerskating pandas advert in 2022 to promote their new recyclable packaging, to Patagonia's 'Don't Buy This Jacket' stills campaign from 2011, featuring a simple shot of a bestselling item with copy that implores consumers to buy less. Sharing a sustainable message with a less than sustainable visual to accompany it could open an organisation up to claims of greenwashing, so ensuring that the message and approach are aligned is essential.



# Build your business

## Spotlight your work

Over the last few years we have seen an increase in the number of industry awards asking for evidence of carbon measurement as part of the entry process. In some cases, specific sustainable production categories have been established to celebrate those leading the way. This provides a unique opportunity for early adopters to cement their climate conscious credentials. For award categories where carbon data is recommended to support an entry, it could be an opportunity to set the creative concept apart from other applications.

The number of industry awards which are requesting, or suggesting, the inclusion of carbon measurement data as part of the entry process continues to grow.

### Cannes Lions

### Creative Circle

### British Arrows

### Sky Footprint Fund

### Ad Net Zero Awards

### Channel 4 Diversity in Advertising Award

### Sky Footprint Fund

The Sky Footprint Fund is a £2 million media fund to support brands that are committed to driving a more sustainable future. For the third year running our Global Director, Jo, joined the judging panel to select the five finalists. Alongside the sustainable products they are making, entrants are asked to show a commitment to measuring and reducing emissions from their productions. This is a clear example of the positive impact of carbon measurement, as this award is only open to those organisations who can demonstrate a considered production approach.



### From Cannes Lions

Cannes Lions is a proud member of Ad Net Zero and as part of this, we want to support the industry's drive to reduce the carbon impact of developing, producing and airing creative work to real net zero by 2030.

Introduced last year, all entrants are encouraged to provide information that outlines their CO2 emissions as part of the production process, using AdNet Zero's five-point Action Plan as a guide. This information is not compulsory but will be used by LIONS to establish a benchmark of current practices. New for this year we are opening up the option for entrants to share their responses to the sustainability and DE&I questions with the Jury. In doing so, we hope to encourage those making progress in these areas to share their success and to ignite conversations in the Jury room.

"We introduced these questions because we hope to uncover and shed light on the progress-driving work being created by creatives and brands across the world - the work that's making a real difference right now. This will help us understand current practices that are happening at a local level - within teams and specific pieces of work - so that we can establish a collective understanding for the creative community moving forward." Simon Cook, CEO, LIONS

# Get ahead of regulation

## BUSINESS CASE TWO

**29%**

of marketers are working towards measurable objectives in conjunction with recognised external standards, sustainability consultants, NGOs or industry groups.

**WARC's 2024 Marketer's Toolkit survey**

Mandatory environmental reporting regulations have been increasing steadily since the 1990's, but with 2030 and 2050 net zero targets getting ever closer, new requirements will be even stricter. Understanding the full picture of the emissions you are responsible for now will give you an advantage when it comes time to declare them.

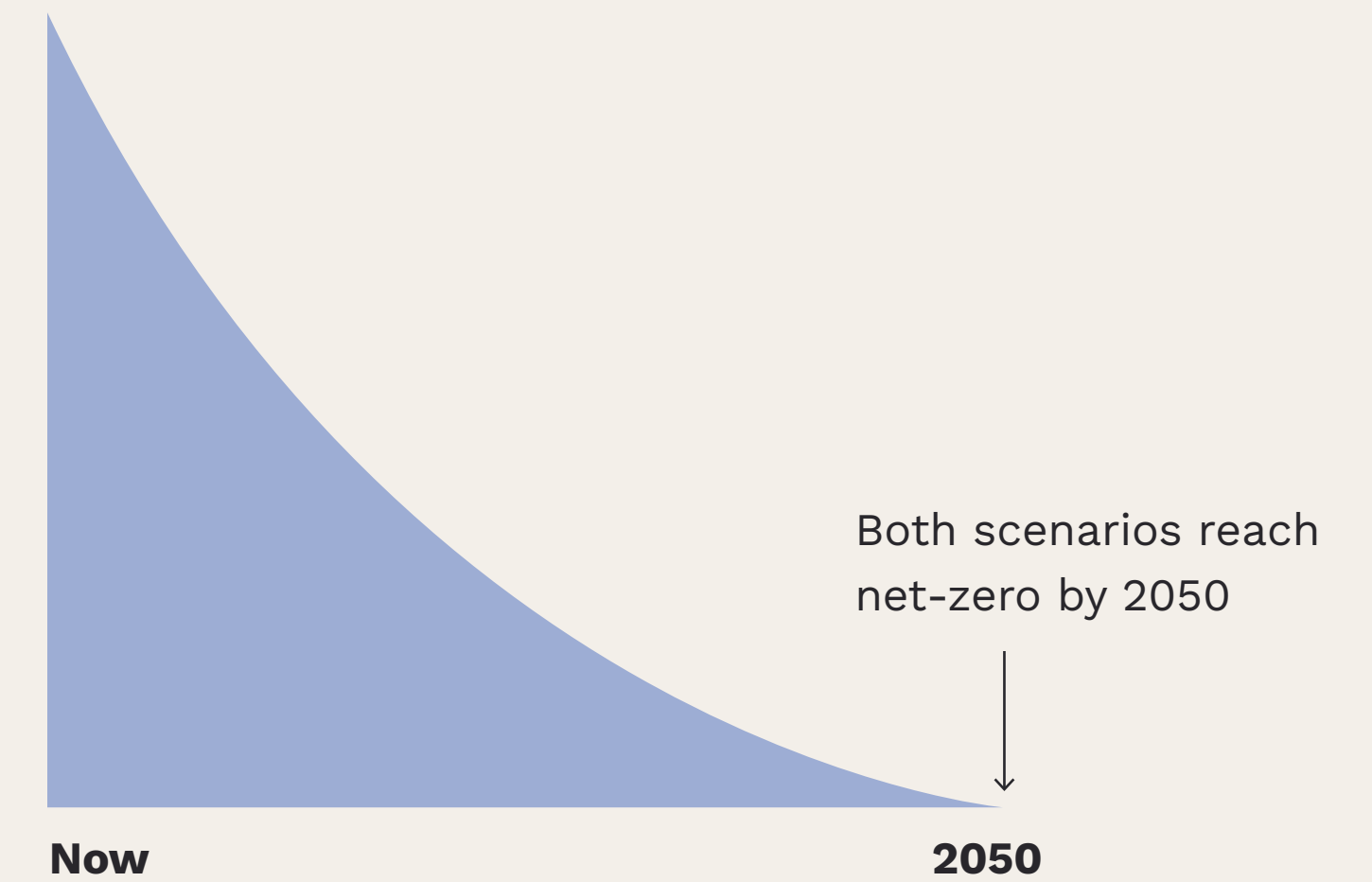
Working steadily to reduce emissions from this point onwards will also emit fewer emissions overall than continuing to operate as you are, before drastically cutting emissions ahead of deadlines.

AdGreen has allowed us to go beyond regulations and report requirements by generating detailed and more in-depth carbon reports leading to greater transparency in our carbon use.

**Zoe Atkinson**  
Office & Sustainability Manager, Spindle

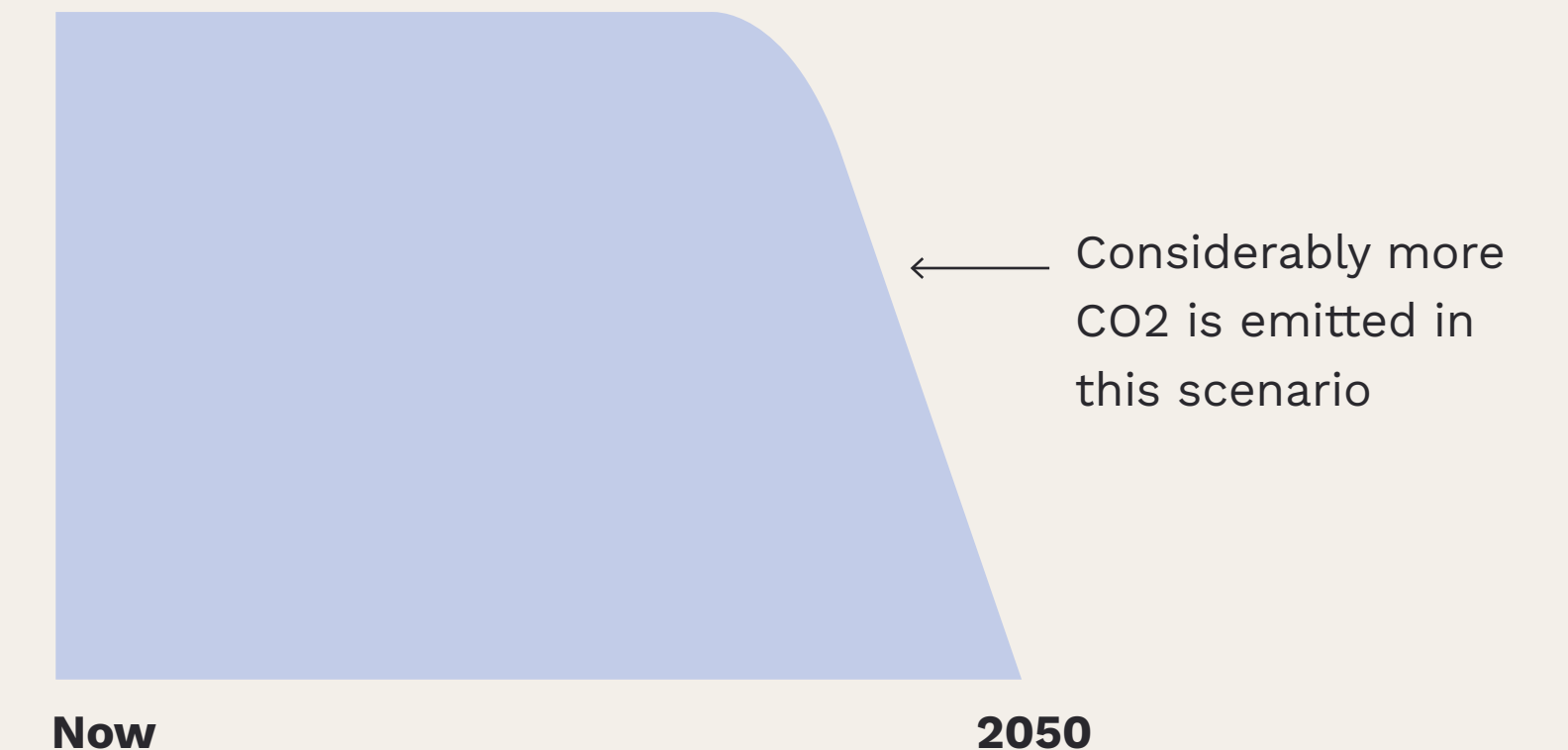
### Steady emissions reductions

Annual CO2 emissions



### Delayed emissions reductions

Annual CO2 emissions



# Get ahead of regulation

65%

of Chief Experience Officers (CxOs) said the changing regulatory environment has led their organization to increase climate action over the last year.

Deloitte CxO Sustainability Report

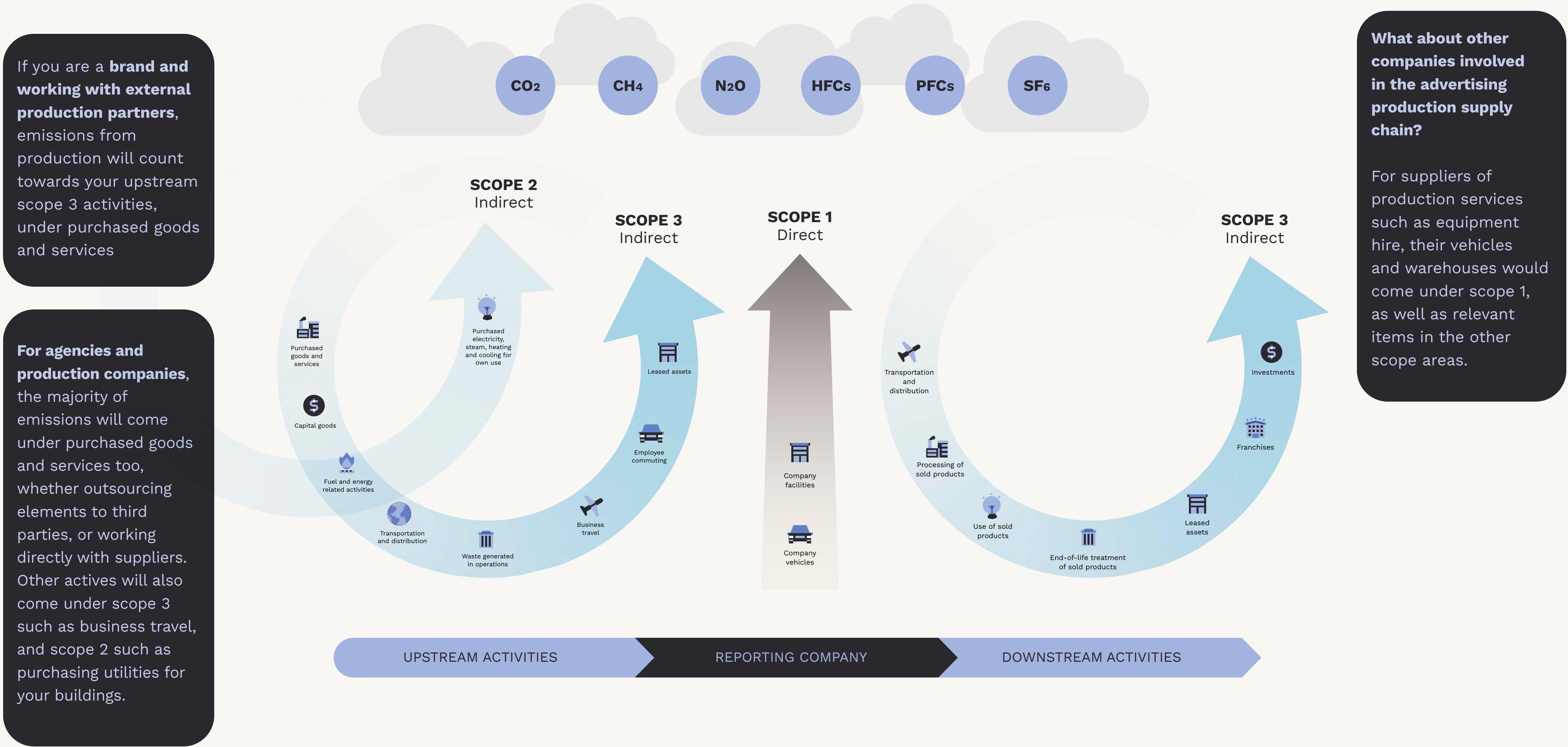
## Adopt measurement tools

Ensuring that the emissions data generated by the AdGreen carbon calculator is robust is a primary focus for our team. In early 2024, our Global Director, Jo Fenn, began working with PWC to design an AdGreen owned carbon factor framework, building on the existing version which has historically been provided by BAFTA's albert. This project's output will go live alongside large-scale upgrades to the carbon calculator, currently being developed. The upgraded tool and corresponding framework will support increased adoption across the sector in key markets by both speeding up the data entry process and ensuring more complete project footprints. This in turn will support the industry in preparing for upcoming reporting regulation requirements.





SCOPE 1, 2 AND 3 EMISSIONS FROM A PRODUCTION



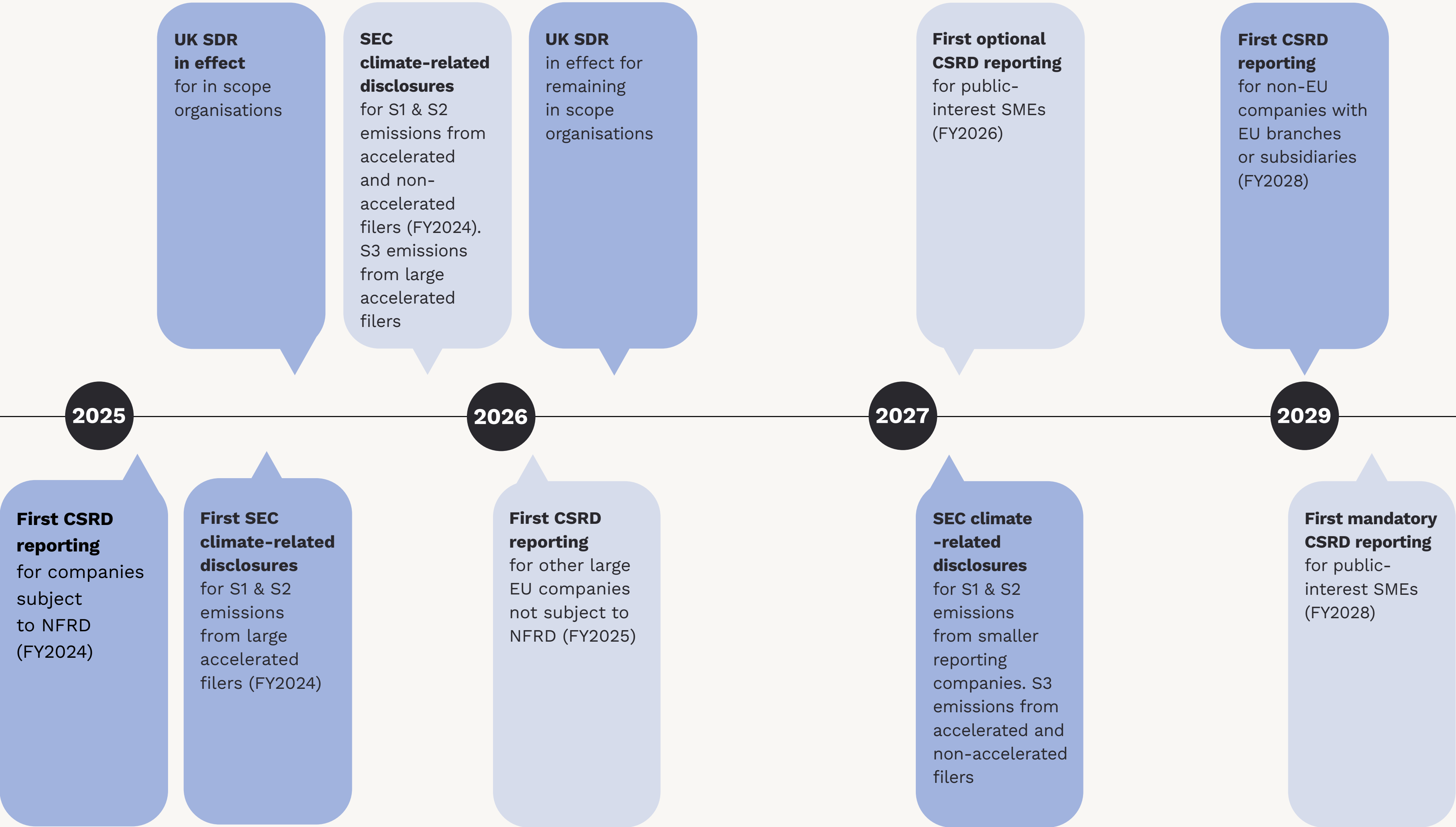


# Get ahead of regulation

## Reporting timeline

**CSRD** = Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

**NFRD** = Non-Financial Reporting Directive



# Save money

## BUSINESS CASE THREE

Strong environmental social and governance credentials drive down costs by

**5% to 10%,**

as these companies focus on operational efficiency and waste reduction.

**Buying into a More Sustainable Value Chain Report, McKinsey & Company 2021**

WARC have predicted that ad spend in 2024 will top \$1 trillion for the first time ever, but we know this comes at a time when production budgets are being tightened. While we need to be cautious with how we allocate our spend, it should be reassuring to know that sustainability initiatives don't have to work in conflict with company growth.

There is often a perception that sustainability equals spend, especially in production. But the more sustainable option is not, by default, the more costly. As is the way across production, the more time that is afforded to pull a production together, the bigger the opportunity to make considered choices.

## Bring your financial and carbon budgets together

We know that many agencies, brands, production companies and suppliers are cautious after a turbulent few years of economic instability, which may have resulted in less work, and a reduced budget for campaigns that do go ahead. Cost savings may already be a priority for your organisation, but there is no reason that this should work against your carbon reduction goals.

You will see from the examples shared here that it is entirely possible for the sustainable option to be the more affordable one too, which could be the catalyst a company needs to consider a reduced carbon approach. If you can reduce a financial budget, while cutting a carbon budget, then this could be the perfect incentive for an organisation to rethink the traditional production model. For organisations that use offsetting, reducing the carbon footprint will also save money when the time comes to offset any unavoidable emissions.

There are obvious examples, such as air travel, which demonstrate that cost savings that can go hand in hand with carbon savings.

### LONDON LHR TO NEW YORK JFK



\*BA Website, 14th March at 15:35, return 21st March at 11:15

Aiming to reduce our carbon using AdGreen has caused us to save money in many areas, whether it is by cutting out unnecessary materials such as plastic bottles, opting instead for refillable water coolers or by cutting down on travel costs by using crew local to the area that we are shooting. If we are shooting abroad and flights are required, we fly out the directors and producers only, opting for economy over business class. Also on a more personal level by reducing office travel costs by choosing to host the majority of meetings online rather than in person, and also promoting a working from home culture.

**Zoe Atkinson**  
Office & Sustainability Manager, Spindle

# Save money

**69%**

of business leaders believe that transitioning to net-zero offers an opportunity to increase growth in the long-term, and when viewed through that prism, net-zero spending should no longer be considered a burdensome operating cost, but rather an investment in the future.

**Baker McKenzie,  
Race to Net Zero  
Report 2022**

## Reallocate spend

At times it may be a case of reallocating your spend, rather than reducing it, to take your environmental aims even further; for example, the money you saved on opting for economy flights over business class could be put towards hiring electric cars over petrol.

It is a case of supply and demand. The more demand we show for “green” alternatives, the cheaper and better they should become. If you are in a position to invest in lower carbon options when they do present a higher price tag, then you will be accelerating the availability of these items for the rest of the industry.

## Strive for reusable creativity

Another angle when it comes to saving money is to spend wisely. Investing in highly creative and well executed campaigns, with a focus on quality over quantity, could see your money go further. Most of us will instantly recognise Coca-Cola’s Christmas “Holidays Are Coming” campaign when it airs each year. With an impressive lifespan of 29 years, 44% of Brits say it marks the official start of the holiday season. This is a perfect example of a production budget that has been very well spent. Planning your campaign with longevity in mind is an important part of sustainable content creation. We need to rethink our approach, and avoid single-use creativity where possible.

There may be times when the saving is not significant, as you want to ensure that the low carbon option is just as appealing as the traditional one. This hotel comparison is a prime example, where both options provide a 4 star accommodation in central New York, for approximately the same price, but with a significant carbon difference.

### NEW YORK HOTEL



\*booking.com, 14th March - 21 March, 1 bedroom



# Save money

## Understand your options

Comparing different activity items in the AdGreen carbon calculator will provide you with the data to support your decisions. As you can see in this example from The Styling Bank, opting to hire an outfit rather than purchasing one provides an 83% cost saving. Choosing to browse a clothing hire shop, over ordering wardrobe items online, also mitigates the risk of your returned items heading straight to landfill, which can be the case with many online and high street retailers. Collaborate with your team and suppliers to question every item and activity, and investigate alternatives, to better understand your options.

### THE STYLING BANK CLOTHING RENTAL FOR NATIONAL RAIL

Items	RRP	Weekly Hire
Vintage Lee Denim Jacket	£75	£12
Turquoise Sweatshirt	£60	£8
Pink Roll Neck Jumper	£45	£10
Total	£180	£30





# Create new job opportunities

## BUSINESS CASE FOUR

The median LinkedIn hiring rate for workers with at least one green skill is

**29%**

higher than the workforce average.

**LinkedIn Global Green Skills Report 2023**

With innovation comes new opportunities. Many organisations have already introduced sustainability specific roles, and the demand for green skills continues to grow. But these are not contained to environmental and social governance only roles; a combination of industry experience and environmental knowledge could propel an individual towards new opportunities. Demonstrating an interest in the topic can put employees on the radar of those recruiting for green roles.

## Develop job roles

In the same way that organisations can get ahead of upcoming regulation by implementing planet first processes now, employees can get ahead of an increasingly climate conscious workforce by upskilling before mandatory training and role changes comes in.

We have heard a lot in the last year about AI entering the advertising industry and taking over existing roles, as is often the fear when new technology emerges. The response that is often given to this concern is that it isn't AI itself that will replace humans, but those humans with the ability to utilise and manage AI that will. Whether we agree with this statement or not, it is a useful example as we look to the "greening" of existing roles. It is highly likely that everyone working in advertising will need to understand, and potentially mitigate, the carbon impact of their role in the near future. You can decide now to join this development, and incorporate it incrementally into your role, to be part of this necessary change.

The integration of AdGreen's carbon calculator into our production workflow has significantly enhanced our team's capabilities and commitment to sustainability. From pre-production to wrap, this tool has become integral to our key tasks, allowing us to effectively gather data and compare it with past or similar projects. The comprehensive training and support provided by AdGreen have empowered our employees to utilise the calculator effectively, resulting in a considerable upskilling of our team. This integration has fostered a positive culture of change within our organisation, driving us towards more sustainable practices and reinforcing our dedication to reducing carbon emissions in our productions.

**Sophie Needham**  
Senior Producer, RAW Production

As part of our group requirement, I was hired by Outsider as the Sustainability in Production Lead to oversee and spearhead our sustainability initiatives, and in doing so this has created a stronger dialogue within our company about sustainable issues and practices, inspiring new thinking, teamwork around the issues, and thus culture.

**Maitee Leonie**  
Sustainability in Production Lead, Outsider



# Create new job opportunities

**65%**

of marketers are currently running education and training to drive greener behaviour from employees, with a further 18% planning to start this in 2024

**WARC's 2024  
Marketer's Toolkit  
survey**

## Take AdGreen training

The AdGreen 'Sustainable Production' training module first launched in 2020, and for some users this would have been their first introduction to a low carbon approach to ad production. Initially developed based on the BAFTA albert training, in 2022 it was updated based on our experience delivering training for the ad industry, and moved to an on-demand platform to better support our global audience. We continue to offer this training completely free for anyone working in ad production, as we have seen first hand the positive impact that comes from sharing this knowledge, and providing companies with a collective starting point as they try to understand their carbon footprint. We always advocate for training to be the first step in your carbon measurement journey, as understanding the context of why this work is needed, as well as the part our industry has to play in combating the climate crisis, provides the drive to make the necessary changes.

## Understand carbon measurement

Following on the training by registering for the AdGreen carbon calculator can give your organisation a practical tool to put this learning into action. Understanding the "carbon cost" of everyday production activities is new for many of us, but it is becoming a necessary skill. As a company this gives you an opportunity to build sustainability into your CPD offering, and create a carbon-literate workforce, that is ready to work with carbon conscious clients. As an individual, becoming knowledgeable in this area can set you apart within your organisation, with "green skills" in high demand, or open up career opportunities elsewhere.

### A review of our online training

★★★★★ Insightful, easy to understand and retain overall information....I learned many new things and actionable steps to reduce my carbon footprint. I also liked learning about AdGreen – it shows small steps can lead to industry-wide change in behaviour and practice.

**Tina Olajide**

Email & Web Editor, OLIVER



AdGreen Training  
Sustainable Production

Climate Science  
and Key Climate  
Terminology

WEDNESDAY. AUGUST 14 1912.

### Science Notes and News.

#### COAL CONSUMPTION AFFECT- ING CLIMATE.

The furnaces of the world are now burning about 2,000,000,000 tons of coal a year. When this is burned, uniting with oxygen, it adds about 7,000,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere yearly. This tends to make the air a more effective blanket for the earth and to raise its temperature. The effect may be con-

# Motivate & inspire your team

## BUSINESS CASE FIVE

**20%**

of UK office workers would turn down a job if environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors were deemed lacking, with 46% of workers wanting their employers to demonstrate climate and social commitments.

**KPMG 2023 Report**

In 2023, the Advertising Association shared that there had been a 14% decline in the advertising and marketing workforce from 2019 to 2022, with a particular skills shortage among entry and mid-level roles. There is a clear issue with both recruitment and retention in our industry, and while there will be many other factors at play contributing to this, we believe there is one area that is often overlooked: environmental sustainability. Working for an organisation which aligns with an individual's values is becoming an increasingly important criteria for employees, and a focus on sustainability is becoming a non-negotiable for many entering the workforce.

## Build trust in our industry

The creative power of advertising has been shown time and time again. As the Advertising Association has shared, in the UK every £1 invested in advertising generates £6 of GDP. Yet according to the 2023 Ipsos Veracity Index, just 16% of the population trust advertising executives to tell the truth. There is a clear gap between the potential that our industry has to encourage behaviour change, and the perception by the public of how this power is used. This is an important area to address if we want to encourage new recruits at all levels.

## Retain talent

While positioning our industry as a force for good may support an increase in hiring, we will just as easily lose these individuals if they don't see this work being followed through. Last year the Advertising Association carried out the second All In Census, the only industry-wide survey gathering data from over 18,500 advertising and marketing professionals. Of those respondents that were likely to leave the industry in the next 12 month, 19% were doing so for a career change. We should be mindful of every opportunity to keep talented individuals in our sector, and provide a positive work environment.

Our production team have shown considerable interest in carbon measurement since we began using AdGreen, and this has instigated further discussions about sustainable production practices that could be implemented. It has also fed into our recruitment process as we now share our work with AdGreen during interviews, which consistently elicits a positive response from applicants. Introducing carbon measurement has been noticeable in improving team morale, as it is a tangible demonstration of Hogarth's commitment to sustainability.

**Dee Butler**

Head of Integrated Broadcast Operations, Hogarth



# Motivate & inspire your team

## More than half

of CxOs said employee activism on climate matters has led their organisations to increase sustainability actions over the last year.

**Deloitte CxO Sustainability Report 2023**

## Start the conversation

There is a real opportunity to harness the knowledge and enthusiasm of the advertising workforce to further our collective environmental sustainability aims, with 93% of marketers believing that brands have a responsibility to help people live more sustainably (according to the WFA). If you want to encourage conversation among your team, the first step is to put environmental sustainability on the agenda of every meeting. By doing this you are giving attendees permission to address concerns, offer solutions and share knowledge, reinforcing your company-wide commitment to this issue. It supports the idea that sustainability isn't a topic that operates independently, but rather should be considered in conjunction with each business decision that is made, and that achieving your aims requires a collaborative approach.

## Communicate honestly

There is a real concern for many organisations that they could be accused of greenwashing, greenhushing or both. Being unsure of what to communicate is a common problem, and applies just as much to internal communications as external. There have been numerous stories of employees advocating for change within their organisations, and calling out behaviour that seems to contradict the organisation's public stance. We believe that when it comes to climate comms, honesty is the best policy. We can't be expected to get it right each time, as this is a new process for many; but choosing to communicate this openly, rather than over exaggerate achievements or avoid the conversation altogether, will foster a more open dialogue within your team.

What initially started as a business wide commitment to Ad Net Zero, swiftly transformed into a testament to the positive impacts of embedding sustainable practices for our producers. It taught us that embracing a more sustainable mindset and taking small, consistent steps forward (just start!) can lead to better ways of working and build momentum for deeper, longer term change. The level of engagement from our production team has been truly inspiring. They've not only embraced sustainable best practices but have become advocates, leading conversations and expanding their creative repertoire to incorporate sustainable production approaches. This has had a halo effect, sparking enthusiasm among our colleagues and clients alike. They've taken the initiative to train and scale AdGreen sustainable production practices in other markets, fuelling an enthusiasm for positive change and invigorating other key initiatives, such as our work on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) frameworks in production. This newfound passion has not only enhanced team morale but has also contributed to improved retention and hiring sustainably-minded individuals into the team. As we look ahead to 2024, our ambitions are even greater. Stay tuned for what's to come!

**Fiona Rees-White**

Group Head of Integrated Production, OLIVER



# Set, meet & exceed key targets

## BUSINESS CASE SIX

**48%**

of sustainability leaders believe there is a gap between their corporate ESG strategy and the aspirations expressed by leadership and the reality on the ground.

**Baker McKenzie Race to Net Zero Report 2022**

Reducing emissions in one area of your business will reduce your emissions overall, and it is possible for all companies involved in a production to make carbon savings which will affect their operational emissions. For example, if you are a post-house, moving to a renewable energy tariff to meet a production brief will result in lower operational emissions for your organisation; if you are a supplier, opting for HVO fuel in your vans to support a low carbon shoot will reduce your scope 1 emissions; and as a brand, choosing to join a production remotely will lower your overall travel emissions.

## Apply learnings

The learnings that are gained in one area of your business can lead to reductions elsewhere. A travel policy created for a production team could be adopted by an organisation to reduce operational emissions more widely, and change behaviour in other departments. Understanding the carbon impact of one contained aspect of your business, such as production, can provide repeated opportunities to trial new approaches, before implementing them elsewhere.

## Set reduction targets

Many organisations will have mandated environmental targets which will also apply to their production work. Having a complete understanding of what is happening across your productions will make it easier to take practical steps to meet these goals. We can get an idea from this annual review of what is happening across the industry, but if your organisation doesn't utilise much travel for shoots, or already runs on renewable energy, then you will need to look at your own data to make informed choices of where reductions can be made. Measuring projects in the carbon calculator, and analysing the data to look for consistent carbon hot spots will simplify this process.

## Instil a collective responsibility

You can make achieving ESG goals a collective effort, by instilling a sense of ownership in employees to meet your sustainability targets. If an organisation can make hitting reduction targets a collaboration across the entire company, then adopting new practices and approaches will inevitably become easier. This is also crucial to reach net zero, as a 90% emissions reduction is only possible if everyone is reassessing their behaviour and actions.

Alongside sustainability leads, there are two departments that can greatly support a carbon reduction across production, and ultimately across an organisation; procurement and creative. Ensuring that procurement teams know to prioritise long-term value over short-term cost will accelerate an organisation's reduction plans. Working with suppliers at the earliest possible stage to bring them on board with a carbon strategy will allow for steady progress to be made, and will ultimately reduce the supplier's carbon footprint too.

When it comes to advertising production the role of creatives may be the most important, as we look to minimise carbon emissions. According to BAFTA's albert, a production manager can only remove 15-20% of the carbon from a project's carbon footprint. This is because creative concepts may have unavoidable carbon emissions written in. If a shoot requires flying to a sunny beach in January, wardrobe and catering for a cast of 30, or a large timber set, then there is only so much a production manager can do to mitigate this impact.

# Set, meet & exceed key targets

**41%**

of organisations say they have no view of their Scope 3 emissions and no plan in place to tackle them.

**Baker McKenzie Race to Net Zero Report 2022**

## Utilise industry initiatives

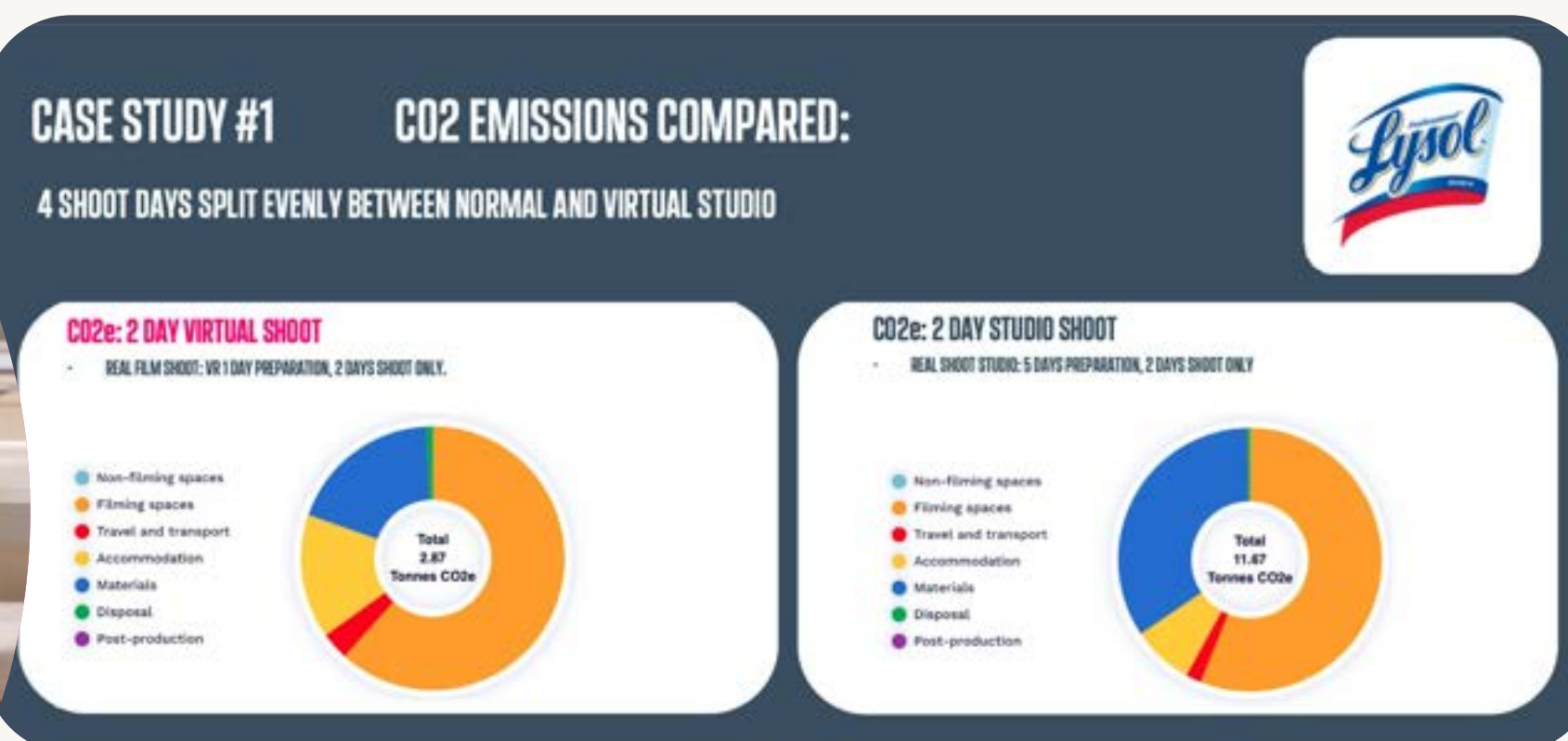
Reducing carbon emissions from production related activity is an essential part of the industry Action Plan for Ad Net Zero. As part of the annual Campaign Ad Net Zero Awards, Ad Net Zero has included a 'Best Practice in Sustainable Ad Production' category, highlighting the work being done by production companies to measure and minimise emissions, and develop innovative technology to do so. This approach was evident in the 2023 winning campaign by Reckitt and MCA who adopted cutting-edge Virtual Production to create more effective and sustainably produced ads. This method delivered impressive CO2 emissions savings, up to 75% per shoot day compared to traditional video productions. It is evident from examples such as this, that a reduction in emissions on set can support an organisation's overall reduction of carbon emissions, whether it be a small or large part of the wider picture.

## Innovate with consideration

As new technology emerges and the industry innovates its processes, the first question that needs to be asked is "how does this support our sustainability aims?" Adoption of new tools without careful consideration could undo the good progress that companies have made, with the internet's greenhouse gas emissions predicted to make up 14% of global emissions in 2040. By 2020 the emissions from IT had already matched those of the aviation industry, a sector that we are all too aware needs urgent transformation.

Digital advertising can have a significant footprint when you take into account extensive versioning, the server load required by programmatic advertising, and the impact of cloud storage to store the work indefinitely. It also allows for more content to be created quickly. This is why a move to renewable energy is crucial, to allow us to innovate without causing further damage.

As demonstrated by Reckitt, virtual production can deliver reduced carbon advertising, without a compromise on quality. But while it is often seen as a solution to mitigate carbon intensive travel, we need to consider the energy required to design and store virtual production assets, as well as the equipment needed. Tech advancements can certainly support a carbon reduction plan, but we should proceed with caution, and be ready to adapt our approach as new information emerges to ensure we are working in the most sustainable way possible.





# Set, meet & exceed key targets

## Create a carbon budget

There may be times when the carbon intensive option is unavoidable, in the same way that the expensive option may be. In these situations it can be helpful to think of your carbon budget as you do your financial one, to understand your total spend. Setting a carbon total for the year, or across a campaign, can inform how you allocate your “carbon spend”. If you find you’ve generated considerable carbon emissions on one project, perhaps through multiple flights, large crews or a lot of equipment, then you could approach the next campaign with this in mind, and adapt the creative concept to limit the amount of carbon generated.

The data that we have been able to pull from AdGreen’s carbon calculator has been instrumental in us reducing the carbon footprint of our average shoot production by 9% last year. We share this data with our suppliers - it allows us to create a more collaborative approach to sustainable production than ever before.

**Ravi Pau**

Operations Manager, Havas UK

The AdGreen training and resources have been instrumental in fostering sustainable practices within our organisation. We are deeply committed to continuously reducing our environmental footprint through our production work. Each production provides unique learning opportunities, ensuring that our efforts are tailored to every project’s specific requirements. The knowledge gained from one production positively influences future projects, ultimately leading to noticeable improvements in our environmental impact.

**Biscuit Filmworks**

# AdGreen in



**action**



## CASE STUDY

# MARS

Mars recycles iconic adverts to deliver a strong message on climate action.

In 2023 Mars launched a unique campaign aimed at raising awareness for their Net Zero Roadmap, by ‘reusing’ recognisable advertisements, with an updated message. The campaign, titled “Healthy Planet Productions”, was a first-of-its-kind for the company, and used a playful approach to drive consumer awareness of a serious topic.

Their research showed that 69% of adults wanted businesses to focus on tackling climate change as much as, or even more than, economic issues. With this in mind, they decided to extend their sustainable approach to noticeably incorporate the production itself. The campaign features iconic adverts, with new graphics and audio overlayed over the existing ads, and shares Mars’ intention to cut greenhouse gas emissions across their supply chain.

The campaign reduced production emissions by repurposing content, and removing the need for travel, filming and set. Carbon avoidance was a key consideration in the decision-making, and influenced the creative development, with more sustainable animation techniques selected over carbon-intensive alternatives.

While it is not always possible to use pre-existing content in a campaign, there were numerous actions the agency took which are easily replicated on any production. These included working with climate-conscious production companies, selecting certified green energy studios, utilising remote voice-over recordings, and providing plant-based catering.

**Agency: Revolt**

**Production Company: Blinkink**

Overall, they reported a 98% reduction in emissions, using the AdGreen carbon calculator to measure this approach, compared to a traditional production methods.

It was also one of the highest performing ads with a climate message seen by System1, achieving a four-star rating.

This campaign was only made possible by the collaboration between marketers, sustainability experts, legal/regulatory experts, agencies, production companies, suppliers and the brand.

### Watch the ad

This M&M’s ad is a brilliant example of many of the principles we have uncovered in recent research on how to create powerful environmental ads. From tapping into humour, to making positive change easy (Mars is doing all the work!), using much-loved Fluent Devices and picking the right context for airing (during COP). The result is a brilliant 4 Star Rating, which not only lands it in the top 5% of all ads tested by System1, but also means its performance is considerably above the average of environmental ads from the past three years, which sits at 2.7 Star.

**Chiara Manco**

Creative & Media Partnership Director, System1

**System1**

Mars is reusing old ads to talk about climate action!



## CASE STUDY



PepsiCo partner with AdGreen to combine the highest creative ambition with the lowest carbon impact.

Across 2023, the PepsiCo production team implemented tools to reduce the carbon footprint of their advertising productions. Using the AdGreen carbon calculator, they collected tangible data across a year to identify and reduce production emissions, which enabled them to scale a sustainable production model.

By analysing their own data, PepsiCo identified that travel and transport made up the largest percentage of emissions, which aligns with AdGreen's findings across all productions in 2023. Interestingly, the second largest activity area was materials. Having this clear overview meant that PepsiCo could create a tailored reduction strategy, to target these carbon intensive areas.

Their reduction strategy in 2023 included choosing to shoot local, keeping 85% of productions within Europe. For a Rockstar campaign this meant choosing Barcelona over Los Angeles. The number of individuals from agencies and the brand travelling to productions was also reduced, by implementing a fully remote shoot for Mirinda, only sending team leads to a Mountain Dew production, and working with local agency attendees elsewhere. Studios which ran on renewable energy were selected where possible, and a preference for re-using materials was communicated to the art department.

By creating a Sustainability Checklist, PepsiCo have established a clear and concise approach for the brand team to follow at the start of each production.

### PepsiCo pre-production checklist

- ☐ Onboard the agency and production house with AdGreen at the beginning of a project
- ☐ Avoid writing scripts which demand travel where possible
- ☐ Ask agencies and production houses to think on multi use locations/cities
- ☐ Plan for on set practices in advance
- ☐ Make use of local facilities as much as possible
- ☐ Seek out suppliers with sustainable credentials
- ☐ Check the digital asset management (DAM) to establish if required content already exists, to improve both sustainability and productivity

### PepsiCo production checklist

- ☐ Utilise remote production
- ☐ Select studios and locations running on renewable energy where possible
- ☐ Consider energy efficiency on set, e.g. LED vs tungsten
- ☐ Reuse and recycle where possible
- ☐ Reduce the number of individuals travelling and the class flown
- ☐ Be mindful of how waste is disposed of, e.g. provide recycle and composting stations and encourage crews to bring own water bottles
- ☐ Choose local catering businesses to reduce carbon footprint of food transportation
- ☐ Take a digital first approach to reduce paper waste
- ☐ Partner with sustainable suppliers



## PepsiCo post-production checklist

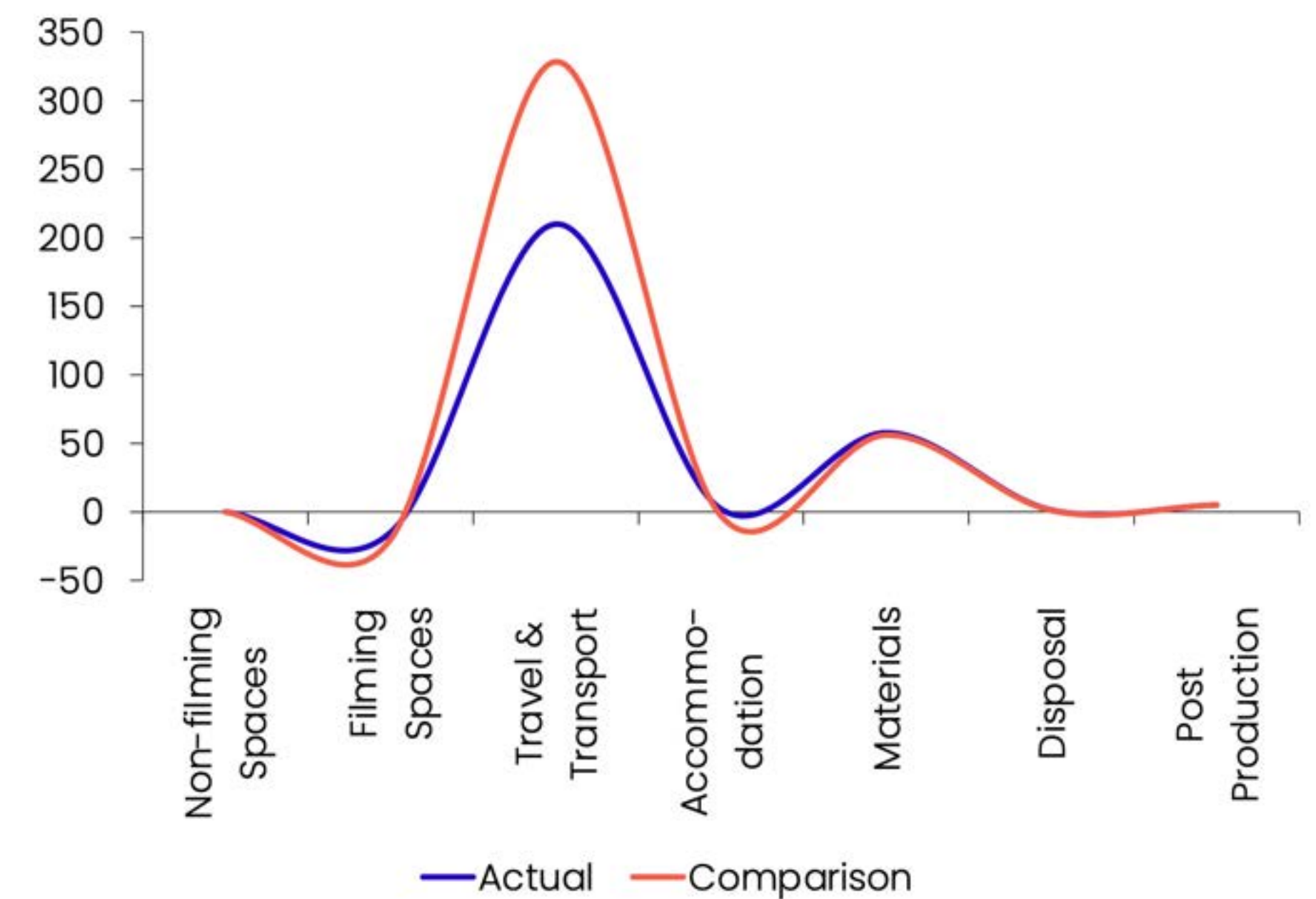
- ☐ Enquire about post-production facilities powered by renewable energy
- ☐ Consider methods of file transfers i.e. digital or green couriers for transporting drives
- ☐ Complete the production footprint in the AdGreen carbon calculator and analyse the resulting data

By adopting sustainable practices, like minimising long-distance travel for shoots, PepsiCo have reported a reduction in measured carbon emissions of approximately 22% across 2023, compared to traditional production methods.

PepsiCo aim to create a carbon-literate production workforce, who incorporate sustainability & production craft in the agenda when approaching a new project. They may be one of the first brands to publicly share the work they've done to assess their production footprint across a year, but we hope this will encourage others to follow their lead, and declare a commitment to creating more sustainable content in the future.



## Actual Data vs Comparison Data CO2 Emissions



PEPSI DATA 2023

IN THE NEWS

# ADWEEK

SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

## How Agencies Cut Climate Impact in Ad Production

AMV BBDO is using AdGreen's carbon calculator tool



Switching to virtual production can cut emissions by 95%. iStock/Getty Images



PREMIUM

By Kathryn Lundstrom

JANUARY 5, 2024



Experience [ADWEEK House at Cannes](#), June 16-19. We're celebrating 45 years of reporting with Now and Next—a creative opportunity for brands to define who they are and their future in the industry. [Register](#).

“

Using virtual tools and curbing flights can cut emissions in ad production by up to 95%, according to agency AMV BBDO, which uses AdGreen's carbon calculator. AdGreen offers free training and tools to help reduce the emissions generated by advertising production.

Anecdotal insights from agencies using the calculator show that ad production can reduce its impact on the climate by opting for more virtual shoots and fewer flights, as long as sustainability is brought into the conversation earlier in the planning stage.

“We've been trying to push producers into using the AdGreen calculator preemptively, rather than retrospectively,” said Mark Graeme, executive producer of Red Studios at AMV BBDO. “Otherwise, it's just an admin tax. You're documenting, in a detailed fashion, the harm you've already caused.”...

“

...All AMV BBDO producers get free training through AdGreen on climate basics, how to use the carbon calculator, where hotspots exist and how virtual production can help.

With client U.K. retail chain Currys, AMV BBDO has used virtual production on about six shoots. Bringing in virtual backdrops allowed the agency to create fantastical scenes without leaving London.

“That's a nice journey to go through with creatives because everyone is naturally skeptical [of virtual production] and a bit nervous to start with,” Graeme said. “Once you do it, you [realize] actually this was great, and we enjoyed that. That was easy.”

AMV BBDO also virtually produced a film for healthcare client Bupa's sustainability strategy, with clips that appear to be shot in the desert, Arctic, rainforest and a city. Cutting travel meant that the carbon footprint of the project was roughly 95% lower than it would've been using traditional production, based on calculations using AdGreen's tool.



**Next**

**Steps**

# 5 things to do next

## 1 Take our training

Sign up for our free ‘Sustainable Production’ training module

[Sign up now](#)

## 2 Calculate your carbon

Register for a carbon calculator account

[Register now](#)

## 3 Complete your campaign

Understand how to use your budget as a guide when entering project data

[Watch video](#)

## 4 Download your data

Download and analyse your production data

[Download now](#)

## 5 Read our resources

Read the resources guide best suited to your company and role

[Read now](#)

# Compare your own

Each organisation using the calculator is able to download data about the projects they are working on using the ‘EXPORT TO CSV’ button on the calculator’s project view.

A new feature for 2023 was the introduction of a detailed report, which allows users to view the carbon emissions associated with specific activity items, such as air travel, accommodation options, and catering choices.

Organisations can now make the same analyses of their own data, to see how they compare to the AdGreen 2023 findings.

[Learn how to export your data](#)

## Your Projects

Here are all of the projects you're assigned to. Click on the project's name to see more detail. You can also search and filter to find what you're looking for more easily.

Search project name/ID

FILTERS: 

NONE

Showing 1-10 of 27 projects

EXPORT TO CSV



# Use your influence

Everyone has the ability to influence those around them and encourage positive behaviour change.

2013 research by Erica Chenoweth, a political scientist at Harvard University, showed that it only takes 3.5% of the population actively participating in a movement for success to be inevitable. We can often underestimate our potential to influence others, but in the words of Greta Thunberg, “no one is too small to make a difference”.

When we look at the power of influence, those at all levels within our industry have at the ability to encourage change through our work – whether this is aimed at those within our sector to adopt new industry practices, or public facing with the aim of changing consumer behaviour.

The Advertising Association’s 2022 report on UK advertising’s spend highlighted that the Government became the UK’s largest advertiser during the Covid-19 pandemic. As they shared, “cover wraps in our print media informed the nation with ‘Stay Home’ public health messages; direct mail brought testing kits and essential deliveries to households up and down the country; and billboards showed the everyday heroes in our NHS.” This is a clear example of advertising being used to support behaviour change, and this being achieved within strict perimeters due to the lockdowns happening at the time. The consistent spend across the pandemic indicates that these campaigns were successful at sharing the message, and eliciting the desired results.

While at AdGreen we focus on reducing emissions from ad production, choices that you make behind the scenes can often support a change in what is seen on screen too, expanding your impact.

Advertising can respond rapidly, capture attention, and provoke thought. We all need to consider how we can use our influence to instigate change, for ourselves, for those around us, and for those we reach through our work.







**About**

**us**



# About us



**Stephen Woodford**  
Chief Executive,  
Advertising Association



**Jo Fenn**  
Global Director



**Donna Head**  
Managing Director



**Sophie Broadbent**  
Account Manager



**Cat Long**  
Carbon Calculator  
Manager



**Lauren McGee**  
Comms & Events Manager



**Tobi Oludipe**  
Team Assistant

## ADGREEN NETHERLANDS



**Tobias Wilbrink**



**Marty Keizer**

### AMBASSADORS

- Arthur Herpel**
- Bernd Out**
- Els Rientjes**
- Jacques Vereecken**
- Jasper Fraikin**
- Johanneke Hagenbeek**
- Maarten van Hemmen**
- Jan Peter Pellemansk**

## ADGREEN US



**Emily Plunkett Fleischer**  
U.S. Director





# Industry partners



## Get Set Hire

Providing behind-the-scenes equipment to TV commercials, dramas, film productions, photoshoots, and events, Get Set Hire have an extensive range of high-quality, useful shoot essentials - all delivered with a helpful and friendly round-the-clock delivery service.

### Get in touch

Sustainability has always been a big part of Get Set Hire's ethos, but what that means in practical terms is continuously evolving. In the early days Get Set Hire focused on supporting AdGreen with the handy swaps, such as supplying paper over polystyrene cups, making recycling bins standard on film sets, and introducing water coolers instead of plastic bottles. We've been counting the numbers ever since, and have hired out 23,283 water cooler bottles so far which equates to 884,754 plastic bottles being saved from the bin!

We've come a long way since then, working in all areas of our organisation to reduce our operational emissions. We've done the easy low-hanging fruit, moving to 100% renewable electricity, implementing recycling, and even building a green wall out of upcycled pallets!

One of the biggest emission-reducing changes we have made so far, is to move our owned fleet to run on HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) which comes only from waste material. HVO fuel emits approximately 90% less CO2 than regular diesel, it also has reduced fine particulates and a reduction in many other greenhouse gases too, meaning we are contributing less to road pollution, as well as reducing our impact on the planet. We have been offering battery power solutions as a sustainable alternative to generators since 2020, first with the Volstack and now with the handy, portable 2.1kWh Instagrid and the amazing, easily mobile 10kWh Orb.

We have recently worked with AdGreen to create 'The Carbon Calculator Info Sheet'. This one-pager is sent to customers with their quotes, and provides a clear breakdown of the Get Set Hire resources the customer has requested and the relevant measurement, ready for entry into the calculator. The page aims to make filling in the Carbon Calculator quicker by providing the information needed up-front.

In addition to all the practical changes we have implemented to reduce our operational carbon emissions, we have been supporting natural carbon sequestering projects since 2021 through Mossy Earth. If you are looking for a production supplier with a sustainability-first approach, we'd love to hear from you.

### **Bryony Harrison-Miller**

Communications & Sustainability, Get Set Hire



# AdGreen timeline

**Jo begins working with BAFTA's albert** to understand learnings from TV and film production which can be applied to advertising

**AdGreen launches a website** offering reduction resources and printable signage

**AdGreen is acquired by the Advertising Association**, and forms an advisory board made up of key industry stakeholders

**AdGreen launches free sustainable production training**, based on the format created by BAFTA's albert

**Get Set Hire** come on board as an **Industry Partner**

**AdGreen The Netherlands launches**, providing support and reviewing capabilities for the Dutch content industry

**AdGreen collaborates with Green The Bid** to support carbon measurement for the US production sector

**AdGreen releases the first annual review**, sharing a year's worth of carbon data, collected from the calculator, with the industry

**AdGreen begins a collaborating with GARM** as they develop an emissions framework for media planning and buying

AdGreen starts development on significant **upgrades to the carbon calculator**

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

**Jo Fenn launches AdGreen as a grassroots sustainable production project**, advocating for on-set recycling and a reduction in single use plastics

**The first AdGreen hosted event** is held at The Mill, bringing together suppliers, production teams and crew

**AdGreen begins conversations with the industry trade bodies**, the IPA and ISBA, to develop support for the ad industry

**AdGreen collaborate with Ad Net Zero** to develop guidance for Action 2: Reducing Emissions from Advertising Production

**AdGreen launches the carbon calculator**, built on a framework provided by BAFTA's albert and adapted for the advertising industry

**AdGreen releases a new on-demand training module**, made available to a global audience

**AdGreen expands into the U.S.** to encourage carbon measurement across the American market

**AdGreen hires one of the UK's leading consultancies** to build a bespoke framework for the advertising industry

# Appendix

# What you shared with us

This is the second year that we have been able to share an insight into the carbon impact of advertising production. During 2023, the advertising production community completed 1424 motion, stills and/or audio projects with a budget attached. The insights exclude projects where a budget was omitted, unless stated otherwise.

It is hoped this overview of 2023's completed projects will give organisations a sense of the current industry baseline. Of course this is early days when it comes to carbon measurement, and as the use of the calculator increases, so too will the insights available.

## A FEW NOTES BEFORE WE GET STARTED

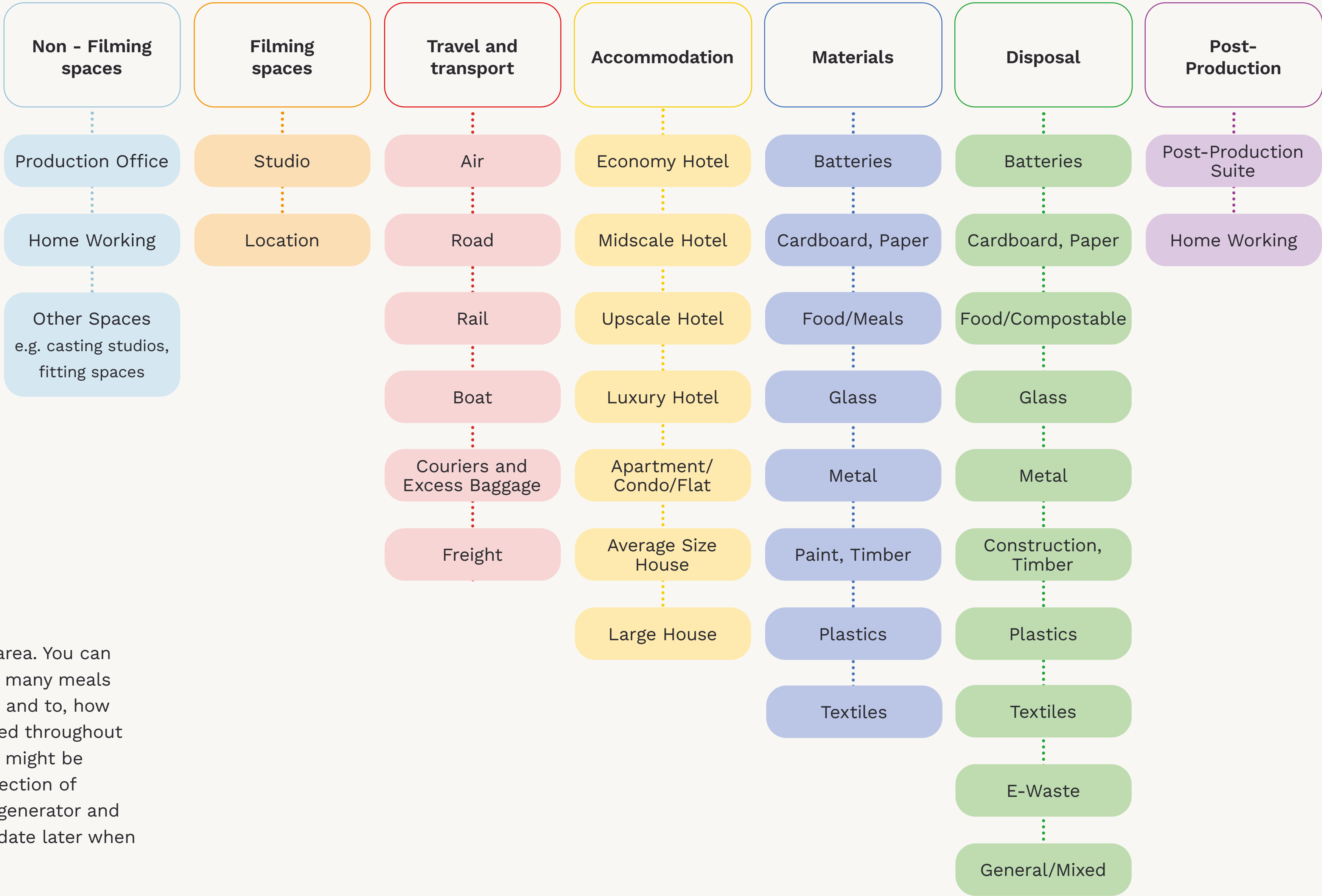
- Completed projects analysed are those with a last edited date between 1st January and 31st December 2023. These projects all have a brand assigned, and a budget recorded
- In line with our new reviewing policy, only projects with a budget over £50,000 in total (or equivalent in other currencies) AND a total footprint of at least 2 tCO<sub>2</sub>e were reviewed (and returned for adjustment if necessary) by AdGreen for errors and omissions

### READ THE REVIEWING POLICY

- The carbon calculator dataset comprises of activity information provided by contributor companies (Advertising Agencies and Production Companies) about their productions
- Data was exported on 1st January 2024. N.B. Completed projects may be deleted by the project creator/Principal Production Partner (PPP) admin(s) at any time
- The carbon calculator presents carbon output in Metric Tonnes (t) of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), with 1 Metric Tonne (t) = 1000 Kilograms (kg). This is not to be confused with Imperial and US Tons. N.B. 1 Metric Tonne = 0.984 Imperial Tons = 1.102 US Tons)
- Where budget averages have been given, completed projects not originally recorded in GBP have been converted using rates from xe.com as of 31st December 2023
- Mean average: the number you get by dividing the sum of a set of values by the number of values in the set
- Median average: the middle number in a set of values when those values are arranged from smallest to largest
- A project's origin is defined by the country of the organisation acting as the PPP
- Page 11: 2022 data included projects with no budgets attached. 2023 data includes projects with budgets attached



# Activity areas

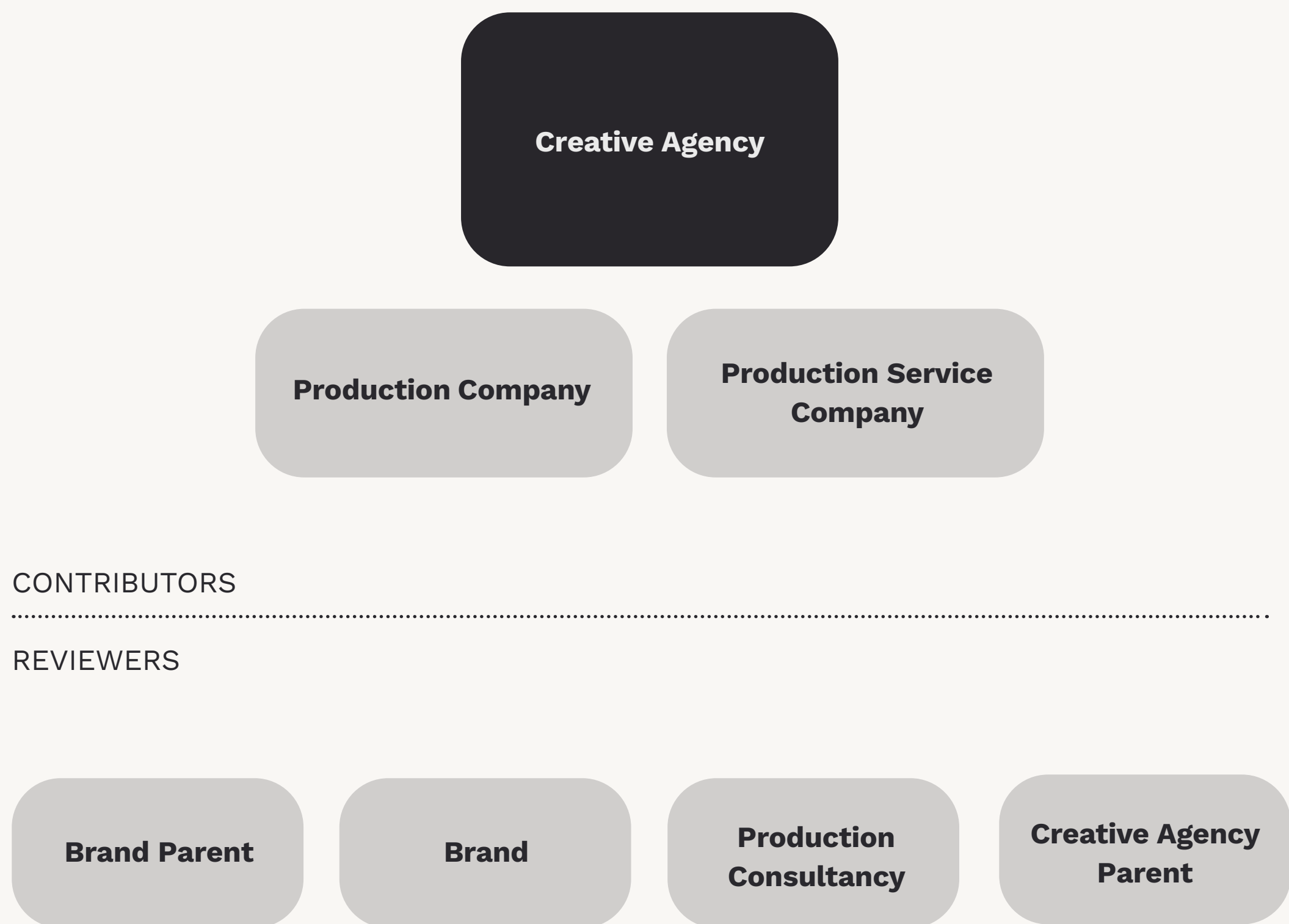


## REMIND ME - WHAT GOES WHERE?

This chart shows which activities come under what area. You can easily enter information about things you know: how many meals you’re budgeting for, where you’re flying people from and to, how many days you’ll be in post. Benchmarks are also used throughout so you don’t necessarily need exact information that might be difficult to get hold of early in your production. A selection of activities can also be input by GBP spend, including generator and transport fuel, timber and flights. You can always update later when you have more details.

# User types

## REMIND ME - WHO DOES WHAT?



### Principal Production Partners (PPPs) are a type of contributor.

They are the principal supplier of production services to the advertiser. Usually the **PPP** is a creative agency but it could also be a production company, if working direct to client.

PPPs set up new campaigns and assign reviewers: the brand, and production consultancy.

PPPs set up projects within the campaign, add the activity forms for the line items in their budget, and invite third party production companies (TPPPs) so that they can contribute too.

### Third Party Production Partners (TPPPs) are another type of contributor.

They are not the principal supplier of production services to the advertiser. Usually the TPPP is a production company or production service company.

Once the TPPP has been assigned to the existing project by the PPP, they add activity forms for the line items in their budget. Not been assigned? Give them a nudge!

TPPPs can also assign other TPPP companies to the project, so that they can contribute too.

### Reviewers are those not involved in organising any activities for the project.

Reviewers are assigned to campaigns by the PPP.

Reviewers do not create campaigns or projects, and do not add any activity forms. They solely view the footprint information, so that they can be part of the conversation.

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