



Channel 4

Sustainable Production Principles



Overview

At Channel 4 we are committed to driving meaningful change and building a greener, more sustainable TV and Film industry. Our Sustainable Production Principles are here to guide you in reducing the environmental impact throughout production.

- Sustainability Support on Productions
- Sustainable Travel Plan
- Prioritising Local Crew and Kit
- Prioritising Renewable Energy
- Ditching Diesel
- Consider Catering Choices
- Avoid Single Use
- End of Life Planning for Sets, Costumes and Props
- Zero Waste to Landfill
- Accurate Carbon Data

It is Channel 4's expectation that all producers will work to embed these principles during all stages of production. By integrating sustainable practices and fostering active engagement from cast, crew, and production teams from the outset, we can continue to create outstanding content while safeguarding our planet for future generations.

SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORT ON PRODUCTIONS

Getting expert advice from a green consultancy or sustainability advisor is beneficial and should be considered regardless of the size of the production or company. This support could include help with best practices to capture carbon data, advice at the production planning stage, or practical support on set – or a combination of services tailored to the production's need.

For all high-carbon-impact shows, including dramas and films, Channel 4 expects productions to have dedicated sustainability support, with any costs factored into the initial budget. This will be discussed with producers at the commissioning stage.

This support could take the form of a green consultancy engaged by a financier or the parent production company, in-house sustainability resource, or support hired specifically for that production.

We appreciate that the level of affordable sustainability support may vary depending on individual production budgets. Please speak with your Channel 4 Production Finance Manager or the Film4 production team to discuss this.



CREATE A SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PLAN

Travel & Transport are the biggest sources of emissions in our industry. Therefore, it is vital that we consider the implications of travel to location(s) and keep asking how we can minimise the impact. Creating a sustainable travel plan for cast and crew not only allows for clear and consistent guidance but also brings many benefits.

Whether you formalise guidelines in a document or keep it as your north star, a sustainable travel plan for cast and crew should:

- Eliminate any unnecessary travel
- Build time into the schedule to travel responsibly
- Observe albert domestic flight policy
- Review exclusive travel from cast agreements/ contracts and remove where possible
- Electrify land travel where possible
- Consider mobile EV charging
- Choose lower carbon travel solutions such as plane to train, business to economy, petrol to electric vehicles.
- Consider shared travel arrangements such as group shuttles or car pooling

PRIORITISING LOCAL CREW AND KIT

In order to reduce travel and transport, consider the availability of local crew and kit when choosing a filming location and/or crewing up, especially for international shoots. It may be possible to train crew, especially for more junior roles, that are based near to the location to reduce the need for large numbers to travel.

PRIORITISING RENEWABLE ENERGY

Switching to renewable energy is one of the easiest cuts we can make that has the biggest impact. Check whether the buildings that the production inhabits e.g. production offices, post house, storage, and accommodation are on a renewable tariff and opt for ones that are. Similarly for studios and hired locations, prioritise those that are on a renewable energy tariff and can avoid the use of generators by using a mobile UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply). When generators are unavoidable, productions should aim to conduct a power assessment—either through the supplier or a power management specialist—to accurately determine power requirements, helping to minimize carbon impact and associated costs.

All productions should adopt the power hierarchy:

- └ Use mains
- └ Use batteries
- └ Use hybrid technology (battery and generator)
- └ Use Certified HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil)



WE'RE DITCHING DIESEL

We ask that UK based productions use Certified HVO to comply with incoming legislation and society's need to move away from fossil fuels. Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil is derived from animal, plant or algae remains. It is 100% renewable, biodegradable and non-toxic, causing less pollution and helps to improve air quality.

With the potential to cut emissions by 90% compared with diesel¹, Certified HVO is a **transitional** fuel and is a drop in alternative that can be used in *most* diesel engines and generators. It can also be topped-up with diesel in an emergency.

For international shoots, prioritise Certified HVO where possible.

CONSIDER CATERING CHOICES

Beef has the highest carbon impact so ideally eliminate it. If that's not possible, consider the frequency of its use. Aim for locally sourced, sustainable produce which prioritises alternatives to red meat. For those productions that are not catered but which food has a substantial footprint, we ask that efforts are made to encourage low carbon options, such as vegetarian alternatives.

AVOID SINGLE USE

Opting for items destined for single use is usually based on convenience and appearing as the cheaper option. Plan in advance and consider your choices wholistically. Single-use plastic is ubiquitous but there are many swaps to be made in all departments. See guide for more info on avoiding single use plastic.

END OF LIFE PLANNING FOR SETS, COSTUMES AND PROPS DECIDED IN PRE-PRODUCTION

We need to embed circularity into our productions and consider where all the materials used throughout the production, are going to end up. Let's ditch the take - make-waste mentality that has been driving behaviours in the film & TV industry and treat everything as a potential resource. Not only because we're destroying Earth's finite resources but also of the carbon and money associated with buying something new and getting rid of the old and/or barely used.

We expect productions to plan and budget to responsibly manage the lifecycle of sets, costumes and props. This is also relevant for long-running series, where de-rig costs may need to be moved from series to series to ensure materials are retained and reused effectively. Productions can not only reduce waste but may also achieve cost efficiencies over time.

All productions should identify key materials, favour hiring or procuring materials second hand, talk sustainability before set designs have been drawn up with the ambition to embed modularity and ease of dismantling when finished, and make sure there is a working inventory (asset register) from day one to ensure that all materials can be reused, repurposed or recycled effectively, either throughout the production or on wrap.

¹ [Alternative Fuel Assessment Green D+ HVO – Supply Chain Sustainability School](#)
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ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL – Follow the waste hierarchy

The Carbon Trust defines Zero Waste to Landfill as at least 99% of generated waste is diverted away from landfill. This means that all waste produced is either reused, recycled, composted or sent to energy recovery (incineration).

Channel 4 encourage all productions to aim for Zero Waste to Landfill and ensure this intention is included in their contract with any waste removal company they engage. The key to Zero Waste to Landfill is to reduce waste at source and production should make efforts to do this with all materials, including catering. For all catered productions, a food waste and/or repurposing company should be considered.

CAPTURE & REPORT ON ACCURATE CARBON DATA

Whilst there has been excellent progress in the uptake of the albert calculator by production companies, the priority now is ensuring the accuracy of the production data. We expect:

- Executive / Series Producer/ Head of Production to sign off the draft and final footprint, understand data requirements from the outset and collaborate with the Heads of Department from the beginning of production.
- Accounts to facilitate an auditable trail and outline expectations on the purchase orders / invoices to easily access the data required from the various suppliers.

HOW CHANNEL 4 WILL SUPPORT PRODUCERS

We understand that the journey to decarbonising production is complex. We need to work together to achieve our ambitions to reduce our production emissions by 25% by 2030 and ensure we consider biodiversity and nature restoration on our shoots.

What you can expect from working with Channel 4:

Commissioning Conversations

Sustainability will form part of our commissioning process. During discussions, we'll collaborate with you to identify the sustainability measures relevant to your production to ensure appropriate support and resources are built into your plans and budget. We will talk about specific challenges and opportunities to minimize the environmental impact whilst maintaining the creative ambition.

Editorial Specification / DRS Confirmation Form

All productions are required to measure their production footprint through albert and actively reduce where possible. Producers are required to input an estimated carbon footprint in the Ed Spec and confirm their aim to be albert certified, ensuring emissions are tracked and best practices are adopted. Producers will be expected to enter the actual carbon emissions of their productions on the DRS Confirmation Form at the end of their production.

Access to Resources

We'll provide access to tools, resources, and expertise, including the albert Toolkit to help you embed best practices into your production.



WHO TO CONTACT

If you have any questions or need additional support, please contact:

- The **Channel 4 Sustainability Team** at fsingler@channel4.co.uk for guidance on implementing sustainable practices.
- Your **Channel 4 Production Finance Manager** for budget-related queries.
- The **albert team** at info@albert.org for calculator and certification support.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- [Albert](#)
- [albert Academy](#)
- [albert domestic flight policy](#)
- C4 Albert cheat sheet
- [Carbon Trust : Zero Waste to Landfill.](#)
- [Screenskills](#)