

## **Sustainable Innovation 2023**

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### **Holistic Footprint Assessment of and Footprint Calculator for a Music Festival.**

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Flow Festival is a leading European music and arts festival held yearly in August in the Finnish capital of Helsinki. The festival has a strong emphasis on sustainable and value-based event production. Flow is an internationally acclaimed festival with a content-driven program hosting around 150 acts in 2022, from the biggest stars in current music to indie favourites, cult classics and experimental music and arts. The festival is known for its responsible values, outstanding culinary selection, spectacular festival area, and ambitiously sustainable festival production. Flow is driven by the idea that creating a high-quality, comprehensive festival experience and working towards a more sustainable future can and should be mutually inclusive. The festival has assessed and compensated its carbon footprint since 2009, in addition to other numerous other parts of its ambitious environmental programme.

This paper presents the results of the newest steps in the sustainability assessment of Flow Festival. To tackle more holistically with the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, the overconsumption of natural resources, etc., the festival has enlarged its assessment from a relatively rough carbon footprint calculation towards a holistic assessment of the festival-related material and carbon footprints. In addition to the consumption and infrastructure of the festival itself, the assessment covered also, for instance, the trips of artists and visitors to and the consumption of visitors at the festival. The footprint assessment identified the hotspots in terms of climate impacts and natural resource use. Based on these hotspots, a number of relevant options for footprint reduction were co-created and their footprint reduction potential was quantified. Based on the large overview provided by this assessment, a festival footprint calculator was developed that counts both material and carbon footprints of festivals. The assessment and the calculator development were implemented by the footprinting consultancy D-mat Ltd. in cooperation with the whole festival organization and the University of Helsinki.

The results show that relevant hotspots were identified, amongst others, in the fields of both artist and visitor travelling, as well as the equipment used for the festival, the latter especially in terms of material footprint. Although the energy efficiency of festivals' equipment has increased over time, the growing amount and size of equipment remains a challenge. Therefore, despite of ambitious earlier work, there is a still remarkable footprint reduction potential to be released. The new footprint calculator can provide a tool for sensitizing the music and festival sector on a broader basis, thus contributing to a remarkable footprint reduction of people's leisure activities.