

# CATALOGUE

**GREEN STANDARDS  
FOR ADVERTISING FILMS**

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**Sustainability is now far more than a trend and has instead become an important factor in our personal lives and within the industrial sector. The advertising film industry is changing as well and now produces increasingly with the aim of preserving resources and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.**

**These Green Standards for Advertising Films are intended as a guideline for green production rookies as well as for professionals. They are adapted to the circumstances and structures of producing advertising films and therefore provide a guideline for all producers of advertising films.**

**Within this framework, each department is invited to make a positive contribution in the interests of greater (ecological) sustainability. Communication with all stakeholders is a vital element of this and fosters understanding, awareness and motivation to embrace more sustainable production.**

This transformation will take time, and we are now encouraging everyone to take a first step towards sustainability: even the smallest step impacts our environment and cultivates awareness among all those concerned.

Infrastructures and external circumstances can complicate the process, but we would still like encourage people to make the most of the opportunities within the given framework. With these Green Standards, the advertising film industry is adopting a very clear position in the interests of long-term change - to create a green and sustainable sector.

The **Green Standards** are intended to motivate stakeholders to **improve** continuously and identify innovative solutions that drive sustainability in the film production process. Doing so may engender a culture of learning and innovation that minimises the environmental impact of the film industry, while contributing to greater productivity and efficiency at the same time. Moreover, the aim is also to consider content-related aspects such as the promotion of (ecologically) sustainable behaviour and the avoidance of pictorial and linguistic reproduction of environmentally harmful images or messages through 'green storytelling'.

These **Green Standards** are intended as a catalogue and reference work and are based and oriented towards the Green Standards for German Cinema, TV- and Online/VoD Production issued by the Working Group for Green Shooting. They are designed to enable the responsible producers to assess their own impact in conjunction with the scoring and evaluation system. Once completed, the scoring system reveals accomplishments, points to areas where there is room for improvement and makes completed projects comparable.

**After publication, these Standards will enter a test phase which will end with an evaluation in spring 2024. We would now encourage all advertising film and post production firms to test and use the catalogue and scoring system and then to share their results and feedback.**

# 1. GENERAL POINTS

**Upstream measures involved in green production are summarised under Point 1. Setting objectives, writing them down, sharing them with all stakeholders and then analysing the results are indicative of a holistic mindset and help us to internalise understanding of green and sustainable work.**

## 1.1. SUSTAINABILITY CONCEPT/MISSION

**Each production should define in advance - in collaboration with the agency and the client if necessary - which sustainable measures can be taken individually for the project and which goals they are intended to achieve.**

The concept offers guidance during preparation and shooting and lay a foundation for evaluating the success of the measures and identifying improvements later on. This concept should be clearly defined and communicated to the client and agency in advance (refer also to 7.1. Briefing).

## 1.2. GREEN CONSULTANT (CERTIFIED)

**A certified Green Consultant** provides advice during implementation of the measures and completes the ecological-sustainable work in all phases of production.

Targeted assistance and solutions can support the production: for in calculating the carbon footprint, writing the report and identifying suitable contacts and service providers.

## 1.3. CARBON FOOTPRINT (ACTUAL)

**The final carbon footprint can be used to calculate benchmark values and establish the facts:** which areas of production emit the greatest amounts of greenhouse gases? The carbon footprint specific values if offsetting is on the agenda. A detailed, upstream 'TARGET footprint' is not recommended. However, it can be advisable in some cases to determine potential 'hotspots' (air travel, for instance) and to identify potentials savings.

## 1.4. REPORT (EXTENDED FINAL REPORT)

A written record of the planned and then implemented measures associated with the **carbon footprint** and other future opportunities helps every production company to understand what it means to adopt green and sustainable working practices. A detailed report can address individual, particular measures and their impacts and then create benchmark values.



## 2. ENERGY

**Moving away from fossil fuels and switching to electricity from renewable sources are important steps on the way to becoming an environmentally sustainable company. On average, using energy from renewable sources cuts CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by 94% compared to the German electricity mix (source: Klimaktiv, 03/2023).**

### 2.1. RENEWABLE ENERGIES IN OFFICE SPACES FOR PRODUCTION

### 2.2. RENEWABLE ENERGIES IN OFFICE SPACES FOR SERVICE PRODUCTION

**All premises used by production/service production should use energy from renewable sources.** It is advisable in this context to pay attention to the origin of the renewable energies and to avoid selecting seemingly 'climate-friendly' offers (electricity from nuclear power, providers who also mine coal etc.). **'100% renewable energy'** comes from certified providers and potentially also from the use of proprietary photovoltaic systems.

### 2.3. RENEWABLE ENERGIES IN POST-PRODUCTION

Post-production is an important factor in creating a holistic mindset and for factoring in individual impacts. **In this case as well, the procurement of electricity from renewable energy sources is an important step towards green and sustainable business.** The percentage share on specific days and their electricity sources are measures, as this area often involves multiple stages and hence the procurement of electricity from different sources.

### 2.4. RENEWABLE ENERGIES IN THE STUDIO

Depending on availability, a studio should be leased that obtains its electricity from renewable sources.

### 2.5. RENEWABLE ENERGIES IN THE STUDIO

**The top priority for on-location shoots is to procure stationary power from renewable sources.** But even a stationary power connection with electricity mix significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions compared to a diesel generator. Eliminating the use of a generator also reduces soot particles and prevents noise pollution.

### 2.6. GENERATORS

**Generators should not be used as a rule.** Where this is not possible, electricity storage systems should be used that are charged with electricity from renewable energies, depending on availability. Hybrid gas generator and electricity storage systems charged with mixed electricity should be considered the next best option. Sadly, these kinds of alternative electricity supply systems are not always available. If a diesel generator is deployed, it must comply with the most recent exhaust gas standard STAGE IV or V standard, or – if a system of this kind is not available – at least Stage IIIA with particle filter.

### 2.7. ENERGY-EFFICIENT LAMPS

Incandescent lamps and halogen spotlights (artificial light) should be avoided as far as possible and more energy-efficient lamps, such as LED spotlights, used for shoots in the studio and on location. Incandescent lamps and halogen spotlights should never be used as light sources below 2 kW. The scoring system considers the relative number of lamps and hence acknowledges each energy-efficient lamp as a step in the right direction, even if their performance varies greatly.

## 3. TRANSPORT & ACCOMMODATION

**Travel & transport account for the lion's share of CO2e emissions in the production of advertising films. On average, these factors are responsible for 65% of all greenhouse gas emissions** (source: AdGreen 2022). **It follows, therefore, that the greatest savings can be achieved in this area and that it presents the opportunity to adopt a holistic mindset from the get-go - creative decisions have significant influence on travel and logistics. This aspect should be included in brainstorming right from the start.**

### 3.1. SHOOTING IN GERMANY (DOMESTIC)

**Sustainable production begins by avoiding transport and travel.**

International productions will inevitably lead to more travel for the client, agency, production staff and cast - and hence to more CO2e emissions. This fact should also be reflected in the plans prepared by the agency and client. A decision to shoot domestically - and ideally in a single region - is one of the most crucial points to encourage environmental sustainability.

### 3.2. FLIGHTS

**Flights should be avoided in all cases in favour of train travel.** This applies to all persons involved in production. Furthermore, travel outside of the production budget (e.g. by crew, agency and client) should also be based on the standards in order to ensure that work is completed with a holistic perception of sustainability.

### 3.3. USE OF VEHICLES WITH REDUCED CARBON EMISSIONS

Electric, hybrid and CNG vehicles reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, nitrous oxides and soot particles and are therefore preferable to diesel and petrol vehicles. This applies to cars, minibuses, vans and trucks rented for more than half a day during production (no short-term rentals).

*NB in regard to hybrid cars: plug-in hybrids are only purposeful and more sustainable if they are used on regional routes. Long distances with plug-in hybrids increase fuel consumption due to the weight of the empty battery.*

### 3.4. DIESEL VEHICLES

**All diesel vehicles used should comply with the EURO6 emissions standard.**

### 3.5. SHORT-TERM CAR SHARING

**Car sharing is used during productions in many cities, sometimes for short distances only.** Vehicles rented within a car sharing arrangement should be electrically powered. All rentals below four hours are classified as short term.

### 3.6. TAXI

**Green taxis should be given priority if taxi trips are unavoidable.** This request can be communicated to the taxi company or booked as an option in standard apps.

### 3.7. SIGNIFICANT INVOLVEMENT BY EXTRAS: LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT, BICYCLES, CARPOOLS

**In general, the crew and cast should use public transport or bicycles whenever possible.** However, when there is significant involvement by extras – so more than 10 persons – at least 75% of them should travel to the set by public transport or bicycle. Carpools should be formed if the location is not accessible by local public transport.

### 3.8. HOTELS WITH GREEN POLICIES

**Hotels that have adopted green policies pay attention to resources and energy consumption.** Their measures go further than the frequently encountered towel policies. They may include 100% electricity from renewable sources, waste separation, LED lighting, organic and regional food and the elimination of disposable products. Serviced apartments are classified as hotels.

### 3.9. APARTMENTS

**Apartments and holiday homes represent the most sustainable forms of accommodation, as guests can control their own use of lighting, appliances and heating.** It is therefore advisable to select an apartment/holiday home for longer stays. This does not apply to serviced apartments, which are classified as hotels.

**Let's make  
a positive contribution to our  
environment together!**

## 4. CATERING

**The impact of food selection on agriculture and hence the entire ecosystem is often underestimated. Certain foods promote monocultures and the use of pesticides in farming, which in turn has major negative impacts on soils and ecosystems.**

**Although these effects cannot be measured in greenhouse gases, they should always be considered in the selection of food. In addition, it is important to avoid food wastage and the thoughtless disposal of products.**

### 4.1. REGIONAL PRODUCTS

Where catering is organised by an external company, it should be sourced as much of the basic foodstuffs (fruit, vegetables, eggs, milk, meat) as possible from regional farmers (radius of 150 km around the production location).

### 4.2. ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Food should be sourced from organic farming whenever possible. Organic farms protect the soil, their immediate environment and bodies of water. Here, it is important to look out for the EU organic logo or other, stricter labels such as Naturland, Demeter or Bioland.

### 4.3. TEAM INCLUSION

**Eating and mealtime habits are always an emotional issue.** It is therefore important to brief the team about the catering arrangements in advance and to raise their awareness for green nutrition. Green consultants can provide important information in this regard and communicate the exact environmental impact of selecting particular meals. An important factor in this regard is to get the team involved and to accommodate their needs. It may be sensible to conduct a survey of their eating habits.

### 4.4. MEALS DURING THE SHOOT (DACH)

**Whenever possible, on-shoot meals should be prepared without meat products and ideally without animal products.**

The score refers exclusively to catering during the shoot, but the choice of food during preparations and post-processing should also be factored in.

### 4.5. MEALS DURING THE SHOOT (OUTSIDE OF DACH)

**Whenever possible, meals during international shoots should also be prepared without meat products and ideally without animal products.**

The score for this criterion refers exclusively to catering during the shoot, but the choice of food during preparations and post-processing should also be factored in.



#### 4.6. TAKE-AWAY AND RESTAURANT VISITS

**Some production companies order food before, during or after production or take meals in restaurants.** The packaging for take-away food accounts for a very significant quantity of waste and should be avoided as a matter of urgency. Large restaurants have been required to offer reusable packaging since 2023. It can be requested using the standard ordering apps or directly at the restaurant. Visiting a restaurant automatically eliminates the packaging.

#### 4.7. DISPOSABLE TABLEWARE

Disposable tableware produces a significant quantity of waste during production and is usually made of non-biodegradable materials. **It is therefore essential to avoid altogether the use of disposable plates, bowls, cups and cutlery.**

Also included in this category are items made of bamboo and corn starch etc.

Reusable deposit bottles (glass and PET bottles, no 25ct bottles/cans), water dispensers or reusable bottles filled with tap water should be used for drinks.

#### 4.8. SNACKS

**Occasional snacks keep everyone energetic and can improve the mood of the team.** So if they are necessary, it is important that snacks are obtained from companies that have committed themselves to ethical and green policies.

It is advisable to consider providing snacks in the form of regional fruit and vegetables. Bulk purchases should be considered in order to prevent additional waste.

THE TIME  
IS NOW!

## 5. MATERIALS

**Decisions on which materials to use during production - as well as for general office supplies at the production company - can include environmental aspects.**

**Materials that are recyclable or biodegradable should be prioritised. This means that they should already be part of the loop or reusable, i.e. can be returned after use.**

### 5.1. PAPER

Paper and associated wood resources are finite and should not unnecessarily consume resources for single use. It is therefore important to select recycled paper with waste fibre content of at least 90%. This applies to all ways in which paper is consumed such as copying paper, toilet paper, kitchen paper, envelopes and paper towels etc

### 5.2. USE OF PROPS/SECOND-HAND PURCHASES

**The use of props from available stocks is a more sustainable option and should always be considered before deciding to buy new ones.**

One of the automatic benefits is that neither disposal nor storage need to be planned after use. Buying second-hand items also preserves resources and should always be preferred to the purchase of new inventories. Doing so reduces the need for new resources and promotes a closed loop economy.

### 5.3. REUSE OF SETS (AND THEIR PARTS)

Reusing sets is a sustainable policy that can help to reduce large quantities of waste and preserve resources. Sets can sometimes be used for future productions instead of tearing them down and throwing them away after use. Here, also, there is a variety of channels that can be contacted initially before purchasing new materials.

### 5.4. AVOIDING DISPOSABLE PRODUCTS/PLASTICS IN SET DESIGN

**The avoidance of disposable plastic is an important measure in every department to reduce the environmental impact of plastic waste.** Props and set construction tools that are made of plastic should be replaced with reusable alternatives. It is therefore imperative to check all designs and concepts to see whether disposable plastic is really necessary in the equipment and set construction. This includes, for example, also fast-food packaging, drinking straws, stirrers, cotton wool or balloon sticks.

### 5.5. USE OF RECYCLABLE/BIODEGRADABLE MATERIALS

**The use of recyclable or biodegradable materials for set construction should be prioritised, especially if the set will not or cannot be reused.** Polystyrene should be avoided altogether. There are now many materials that are recyclable or biodegradable, among them: wood and cardboard, as well as ecological paints, varnishes and adhesives. The selection of some materials must be considered important, also to protect the health of the crew. When constructing the set, it is also important to ensure that the individual materials can be separated later on. By doing so, materials can be properly disposed of or returned to the recycling loop (refer to 6.4. Separating Decorations).

## 5. MATERIALS

### 5.6. NEW WOOD WITH THE FSC OR PEFC LABEL

The use of new wood with the FSC or PEFC label is a sustainable way to promote forest conservation and sustainability. The FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC labels (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) are certifications that guarantee that the wood comes from responsibly managed forests and that certain environmental and social standards have been met.

### 5.7. USE OF STYLING PROPS/SECOND-HAND PURCHASES

The use of styling props can help reduce the environmental impact of the fashion industry and promote appreciation of sustainable fashion and the reuse of garments and accessories. The closed loop economy is again the focus in this regard.

The costume department should therefore check in advance what is already available and can be borrowed or purchased second-hand.

### 5.8. AVOIDING DISPOSABLE PRODUCTS/PLASTICS IN COSTUMES

Avoiding disposable plastic in all departments can contribute to reducing the volume of plastic waste in the environment or the dependency on fossil fuels in the manufacture of plastic. **In the costume department among the items that must be avoided are microplastics in detergents and disposable clothes bags or plastic bags in procurement.**

### 5.9. AVOIDING DISPOSABLE PRODUCTS/PLASTICS IN HAIR & MAKE-UP

**The use of green products in make-up is recommended.** Some make-up brands have adopted sustainable practices, for instance by relying on recyclable or biodegradable packaging. A few even offer refillable containers for their products as a means of reducing the use of disposable items. Other disposable cosmetic products such as cotton pads or disposable applicators can be replaced with reusable alternatives, including: reusable cotton pads made of fabric or cotton and make-up applicators in washable silicone, bamboo or wood instead of plastic. It is also important to raise awareness among the cast as well.

### 5.10. COSMETICS WITHOUT ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS

**Cosmetic products that eschew animal experiments should be given preference.**

Many countries have already banned or restricted the use of animal experiments to test cosmetic products, as these practices often cause significant suffering to the animals and may have an unnecessary impact on the environment.

Many companies have also committed themselves to eschewing animals experiments in the development or manufacture of cosmetic products.

**The principle of waste avoidance applies at all times. Unavoidable waste of any kind should be properly separated and disposed of to enable its recycling and reuse or to ensure it is and reused or disposed of in a way that is less harmful to the environment.**

### 6.1. RECHARGEABLE BATTERIES

**Power packs are far more environmentally friendly than disposable batteries, as they last longer and therefore save vast quantities of resources.**

All areas must therefore use power packs: from sound equipment and technical props to various kinds of battery-powered office equipment.

### 6.2. STUDIOS AND OFFICES

### 6.3. WASTE SEPARATION - MOTIFS

**Effective waste separation represents is an important step towards creating a more sustainable working environment in studios, offices and on location.**

Separate bins for paper, plastic, glass, residual waste and organic waste should be made available and marked accordingly. In addition, care should be taken to separate paper/glass/plastic or yellow bag/metal/organic waste/wood and residual waste and to ensure its disposal in the respective premises of the individual departments. Hazardous waste should be treated separately and disposed of properly.

### 6.3. SEPARATING DECORATIONS

**Recycling is one way to ensure the green disposal of set structures.**

Set structures can consist of various materials, including wood, metal or plastic.

These materials should be separated and recycled. But in order to enable an effective recycling process, it is important to ensure that the material is clean and free of foreign bodies prior to disposal.

**Reuse or return must be considered as well and planned in advance.**

## 7. COMMUNICATION

**Everyone in production must be involved in the process and suitably motivated in order to create a new mindset and achieve enduring change. This is why clear communication in all directions must be an integral part of every production. 'Step by step' is the right approach, in which every person and each success counts.**

### 7.1. BRIEFING

**Everything begins with a clear mission expressed by the client and agency - in which we ideally work together right from the start.** Furthermore, the cast and crew must be informed at an early stage about the green production plans.

### 7.2. CLOSED-LOOP ECONOMY

Providing education on the closed-loop economy is the most important factor in achieving sustainable working practices. This must also address the concerns that each department has regarding green production. A holistic adoption of sustainable working practices can only be achieved by changing our mindsets and consumption habits.

### 7.3. SCHEDULING

**Green and sustainable working practices are still in their infancy and by no means standard in everyday shooting routines.** This is why each schedule must provide informative links and green links to draw attention to these aspects at all times. The project itself must also reflect these aspects.

### 7.4. FEEDBACK TO THE TEAM

**Providing the team with feedback about what has happened is an important way of expressing appreciation for their work.** It is necessary to communicate to every person on the set what has been achieved and what positive effect each individual action has in order to promote long-term change in the direction of more sustainable work.

### 7.5. TRANSPARENT PR

Should the client and/or agency decide to issue public reports on the successes of the green and sustainable production, the manner in which the communication takes place must be transparent. **Facts and figures must be explained, underpinned with evidence and disclosed. The risk of 'greenwashing' must also be eliminated.**

**GREEN** IS THE  
NEW **NORMAL!**  
BE A  
**TRANSFORMER!**