

 Sustainable-ish

# Impact Report 2021

# A Word From The Owners

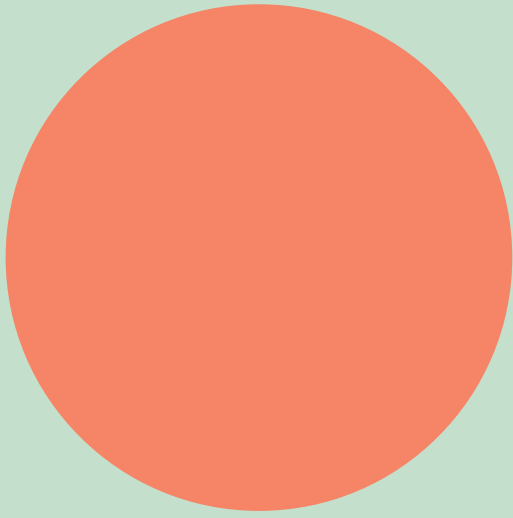


This is the first year we have decided to report on all of our sustainability efforts and activities. And it is disappointing not to achieve all that we set out to do, but being open and transparent about it is a big part of the process, and being ambitious is our default setting even during a very difficult period for a travel company.

To be honest the latter part of the year in 2021 was focused on survival as a company, which meant the attention of our tiny and reduced team was focused on trying to keep the doors open so some of the projects we had hoped to complete were side-lined.

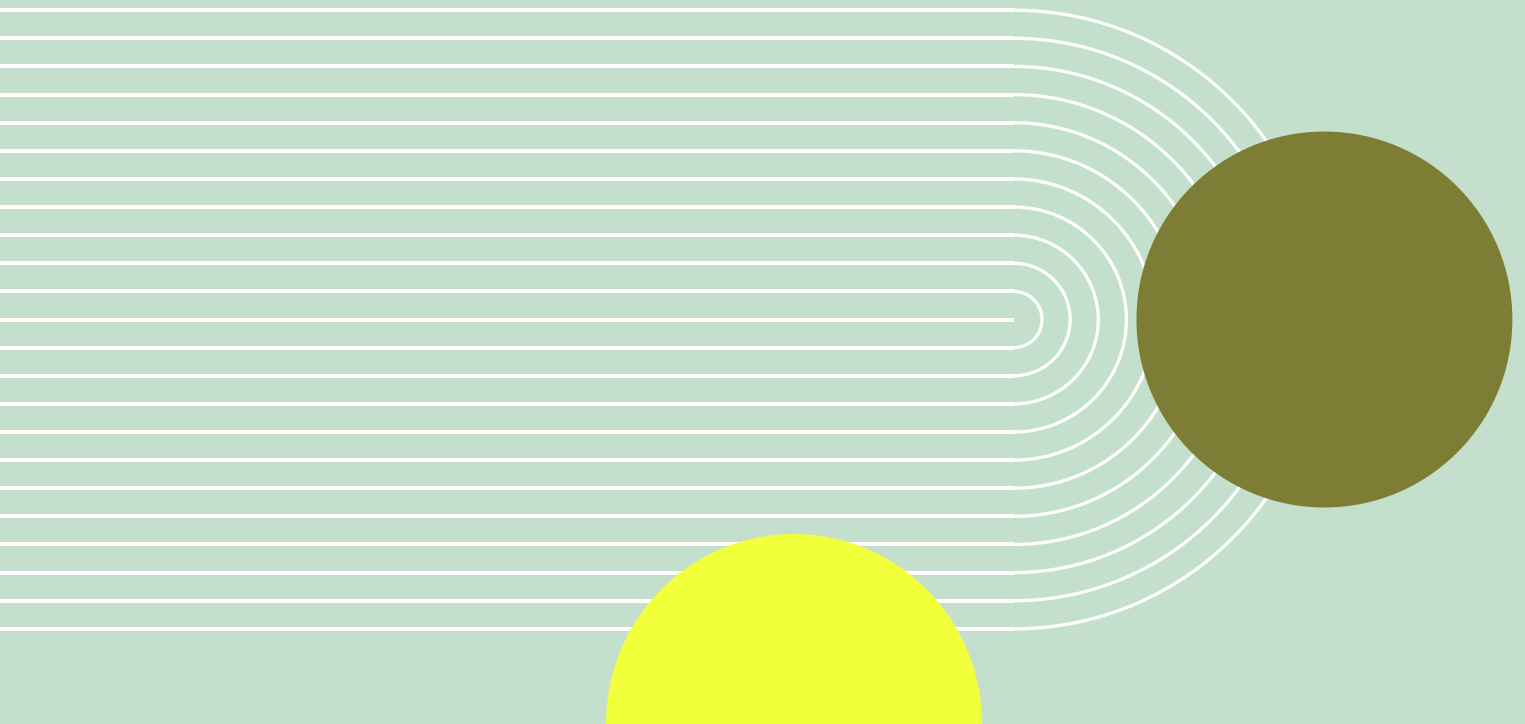
But the wonderful thing about reporting and reviewing is to remind ourselves of all that we have achieved. It's easy to just remember the things we didn't achieve but doing this report has made us very proud to be working with such an inspirational bunch of people, with Natalie Fox as our sustainability ringmaster, we have made some great steps in 2021 and set the foundations for more positive change in 2022.

– *Ed, Sofie & Kit*



## *Sustainable-ish*

*By doing something, making public pledges and commitments, by reviewing, improving, reducing, measuring and compensating we will become sustainable-ish.*



# Contents

<b>How We're Making An Impact</b>	5
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<b>Our Sustainable-ish Plan</b>	6
---------------------------------	---

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<b>2021: Year In Review</b>	7
1. Good Health & Well Being	8
2. Responsible Consumption & Production	10
3. Climate Action	14
4. Life Below Water	19

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<b>Secondary Sustainable Development Goals</b>	25
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<b>Now What</b>	26
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<b>What's the plan for 2022?</b>	27
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*“It’s easy to just remember  
the things we didn’t  
achieve but doing this  
report has made us very  
proud to be working with  
such an inspirational  
bunch of people.”*

# How We're Making An Impact



## What this report is about...

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- 1** Starting somewhere.

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- 2** Identifying our priorities.

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- 3** Doing SOMETHING.

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- 4** Keeping track of what we do.

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- 5** Making mistakes and learning from them.

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- 6** Connecting with other folks that can help us achieve our goals.

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- 7** Creativity, collaboration and care.

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- 8** Being part of a global network framework, that allows us to sync our goals with global sustainability targets.

# Our Sustainable-ish Plan

We don't see how a travel company can actually be sustainable. And feeling like we are always failing could make it easy to give up. We accept that sustainable travel is a process, not an actual goal and that keeps us working towards being the very best that we can be.

Making real change starts now. We are using the UN's Sustainable Development Goals to structure a plan that allows Soul & Surf to develop in a Sustainable-ish way - using our business as a vehicle to add more than it takes.

## Our 4 Primary Goals

1  Good Health & Well Being

Experiences that are rooted in goodness.

2  Responsible Consumption & Production

Waste reduction.

3  Climate Action

Climate Action Plan.

4  Life Below Water

Ocean education and activism.



# 2021

Year In Review





# Good Health & Well Being



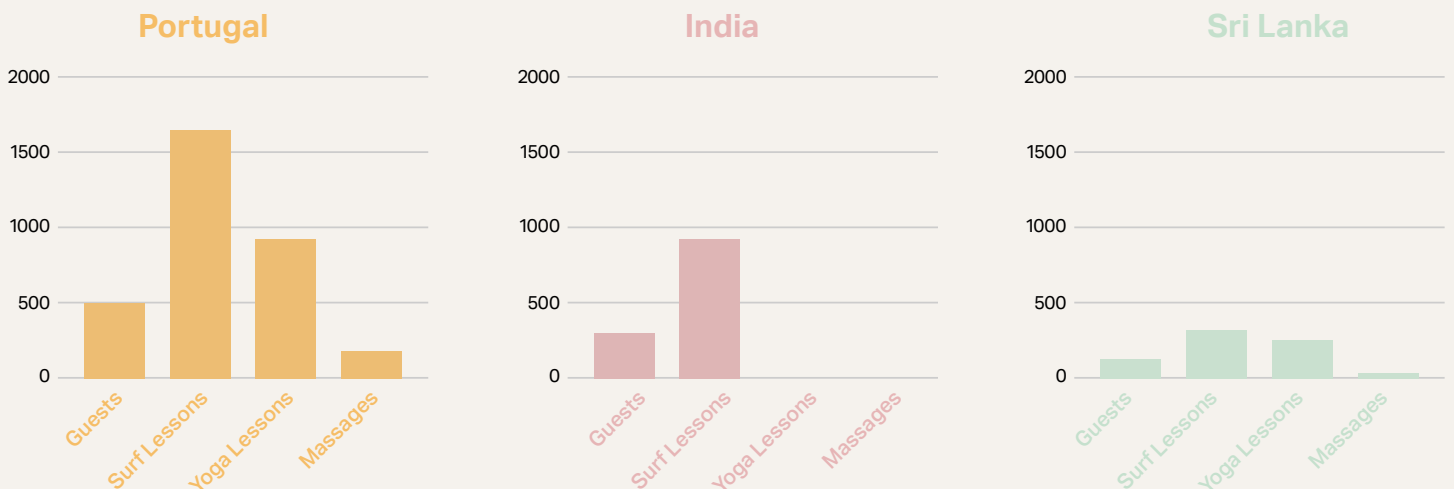
## Experiences that are rooted in goodness

Surfing, yoga, meditation, therapies and sunshine food. It's what we do. Soul & Surf are committed to delivering experiences that are rooted in goodness. Doing that during a pandemic has had some added challenges. Still, throughout 2021 we said we would start working towards our Sustainable-ish plan.

Making sure we still had a business was part of that plan, along with adapting to the ongoing obstacles of lockdowns, travel restrictions and Brexit. We might have scaled down our rooms but we still had plenty of guests show up and support us. A huge thank you to everyone that did.

## Metrics

This is an unusual year. Due to Covid-19 we only ran from June to November in Portugal and were not able to offer yoga or massage at all in India, and only opened in Sri Lanka in late November.



## Testimonials

We all know that Soul & Surf isn't about numbers - its about guest experience. We pride ourselves on delivering exceptional retreats... with soul. We love to hear what our guests think, as well as listen to the feedback that allows us to improve. Here's a sample from 2021:

### Surfing

*"Great instructors! Wonderful waves! Loved the additional surf theory lessons. Just great!"*

*"The surf team were fantastic and really worked hard to both teach / support everyone and make the experience enjoyable."*

*"Fab instructors and kit! Very helpful and fun. Waves were perfect for beg / intermediate."*

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### Yoga

*"Great to wind down after surfing and I definitely improved in balance and flexibility. Very therapeutic with lovely teachers."*

*"Delivered in very down to earth style, Great variety. The Shala is the perfect place for yoga too."*

*"Loved it - different yoga sessions each day."*

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### Massage

*"Amazing massage- muscle relief & soul relief!"*

*"Enjoyed it 100%"*

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### Food

*"The food was absolutely phenomenal - particular thanks to Fran who made such beautiful vegan treats."*

*"Food was utterly amazing. Every single meal. So impressed."*

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### Stay

*"The best thing about a holiday at soul and surf is that they seem to know what you need more than you do. Which means you can truly switch off, safe in the knowledge that you'll be fed nutritious food that's still delicious, there's things to do if and when you want them but there's also plenty of time and space to happily do nothing if you prefer and there's always great, like minded company around."*

*Our stay was above all peaceful, full of laughter and nourishing for the soul. Mornings spent surfing on beautiful coastlines, afternoons by the pool and evenings doing sunset yoga and eating amazing food with amazing people.*

*Thanks for the reset and recharge!"*





# Responsible Consumption & Production

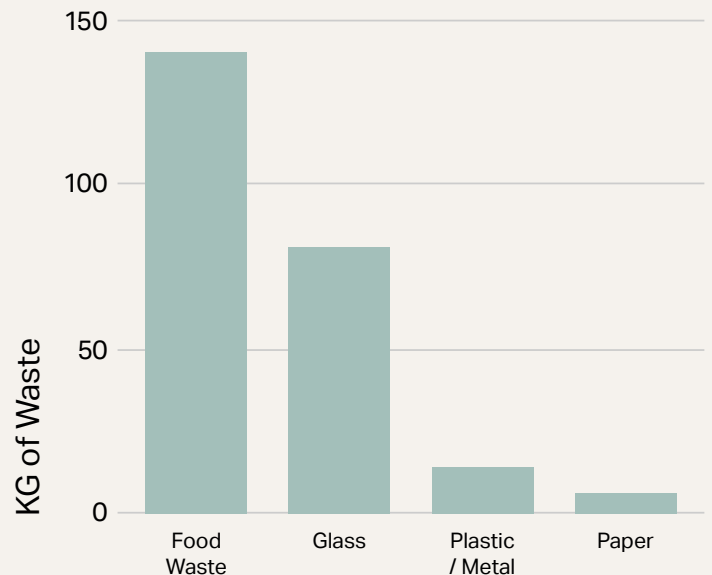


## Waste Reduction

For our Sustainable-ish plan we wanted to start working towards zero waste and a circular economy. But we realised this takes quite a lot of work, we first needed to figure out exactly HOW to do that.

- Through auditing & analysing our waste on each site where we operate.
- Creating waste reduction plans for each site, then educating and training teams.
- Create a waste reduction programme for our customers to follow.

We did our first ever waste audit in Portugal whilst we had 10 guests. This serves as our baseline understand for our waste production.



## Setting Up Systems

Having 3 locations, all with different waste management systems, different teams and different national waste protocols means that we are continually learning. The waste hierarchy is the model we use to understand our waste systems.

- Reduce biggest outflows
- Monitor and report changes
- Work on other waste flows



## Composting

Whilst plastic waste is notoriously bad for the environment - made from the waste product of fossil fuels production (ethanol), never degrading and 8 million tons of it ending up in the ocean per year - from our first audit in Portugal we discovered food waste was our No 1. type of waste. We attempted a couple of ways to deal with it, and unfortunately making our own compost didn't work out.



## Partners

Thankfully, just down the road in Bensafrim, surfers Rupert and Peggy own a small holding where Rupert runs his project: **The Compost Revolution** (TCR). From May until November 2021, Soul & Surf we were averaging sending 3 buckets week to TCR - each bucket weighing approx. 20kgs. That's 60kg diverted from landfill per week. From our 2020 figures, that's reducing our non recyclable food waste an average of 42.86%. We started with raw food scraps only but the plan is to scale up in 2022.





*By partnering with The  
Compost Revolution we  
reduced our food  
waste by over*

**40%**





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# Climate Action



## Climate Action Plan

Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is our primary goal when it comes to Climate Action, but whilst there are no better alternatives we will compensate for the pollution caused by our holidays. Soul & Surf is collaborating with Mossy Earth to offset any emissions we cannot reduce. We began in 2020 by planting trees for every customer, small steps.

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## How Many Trees?

Figuring out a way is to offset emissions is quite a mission in itself, despite there being a multitude of measurement tools and certifications.

We initially found there is no perfect way of doing it, because everything is always fluctuating - how many guests we have, where they come from, how they reach us, how many activities they do with us (like surfing) and where that surfing might take place.

So we settled on an equation (for now) to at least get some roots in the ground and we intend to improve things as we go along.

So... how many trees did we plant in 2021?



2021  
How Many Trees?

**818  
Trees**





## Partners

Mossy Earth restore ecosystems, promote biodiversity and mitigate the impacts of climate change. They are not only interested in increasing tree cover, but look for projects that take into account species diversity and functionality, how trees can provide ecosystem services like soil stabilisation and water purification, and their role in providing habitat for local flora and fauna.

In 2021 we:

- Signed up to the UN's Climate Neutral Now pledge.
- Joined and committed to the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency group.
- Began a partnership with Mossy Earth to offset business emissions.



An aerial photograph of a river with a large, dark, circular whirlpool in the foreground. The water is a mix of light blue and green, with ripples and reflections of light. The text is centered over the image.

**(Our Simple)  
Climate Action Plan**

**MEASURE**

**REDUCE**

**OFFSET**

**CAMPAIGN**

## 2021 Climate Targets

To be completely honest, our 2021 goals were seriously curtailed by the second year of Covid travel restrictions, the shrinking of our UK company team to the bare minimum in order to survive and our limited remaining resources doing all we could to keep the company afloat. Many of our 2021 goals have been rolled over to 2022 and in some cases 2023.

### Targets Achieved

In 2021 we measured our UK business emissions, including all our team's travel.

*Total Emissions = 59.08 Tonnes CO2e*

In 2021 we will offset the remaining UK company emissions.

*Total Offset = 204.5 Tonnes CO2e by planting 818 Trees*

In 2021 we worked from home as much as possible to cut local commutes significantly.

*We cycled to co-working spaces if working away from home.*

In 2021 we offered online courses and retreats to our customers as an alternative to travel.

In 2021 we did waste audits and waste reductions plans to reduce waste.

*Mainly in Portugal and Kerala. We did not open in Sri Lanka until the very end of the year.*

In 2021 we signed up to the UN's Climate Neutral Now pledge.

In 2021 we joined and committed to the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency group.

In 2021 we began a partnership with Mossy Earth to offset business emissions.

In 2021 our team's travel itineraries will be optimised and fewer flights, direct where possible and longer stays will be prioritised to reduce air travel as much as possible.

### Targets Not Achieved

In 2021 we will encourage & reward customers for travelling to Soul & Surf by train in Portugal and India.

In 2021 we will inform and encourage travellers to take direct flights and use airlines with the most modern and efficient fleets.

*For most of 2021 long haul travel was restricted, our main destination was Portugal.*

In 2021 we will do waste audits and waste reductions plans in each location to reduce waste.

*In Sri Lanka we didn't manage to do this in 2021.*





# Life Below Water



## Ocean Education & Activism

The ocean is our life source, as surfers, and humans, we depend on its health and vitality.

As a business we:

- Continue to donate 1% of gross income to Surfers Against Sewage through 1% for the Planet.
- Support Take 3 for the Sea marine litter and 30% of the Ocean Protected by 2030 campaigns across our platforms.
- In 2021 we began to add Ocean education, literacy and activism into our surf programme, integrating “Life Below Water” targets into the soul surfing experience.
- Our Sustainable-ish campaigns highlight the Sustainable Development Goals we are working towards, but we focus on Ocean Education & Activism, as we believe it’s the most relevant and important to us, and our guests.

## New for 2021 The Soul Of Surfing Programme



We began updating our surf school teaching in 2020, because we had the time (Covid) and because we felt it was high time for a revolution.

We have developed the Soul of Surfing as framework which integrates, what we believe to be, the four pillars of “soul surfing”:



We have produced some resources to go deeper into these topics, and are developing more as we speak and will give our guests access to this content beyond the beach lessons and their stay:

**Posters / Toolkits / Presentations.**

Slowly, we are adopting these these teachings across all of our locations and teams.

# Resources: The Soul Of Surfing

**Blue Health: The 7 Principals**  
How to incorporate Blue Health into surfing?

**Ocean Literacy: The 7 Principals**  
Are You an Ocean Literate?

**Wave Riding: The Soul Surfer Journey**

The posters are arranged in a 3D perspective. The top-left poster, 'Blue Health: The 7 Principals', features a diagram of the human heart and lungs. The middle poster, 'Ocean Literacy: The 7 Principals', shows a person surfing. The top-right poster, 'Wave Riding: The Soul Surfer Journey', has a circular diagram with seven segments representing different aspects of surfing. Each poster includes text and icons related to its theme.

**Level 1: Becoming a Beginner Surfer**  
Learning to Master the Intimidator

**Level 2: Becoming an Improver Surfer**  
Introducing Intermediate Features

**Level 3: Becoming an Intermediate Surfer**  
Unleash Waves: How To Get More & What To Do On Them

**Level 4: Becoming an Advanced Surfer**  
Mastering Wave Layout, Craft & Surfing Potential

The bottom row of posters is arranged in a 3D perspective. Each poster features a circular diagram with seven segments, similar to the 'Wave Riding' poster, but with different icons and text corresponding to the skill level. The diagrams include icons for 'Ocean Knowledge', 'Surfing Skills', 'Board Skills', 'Physical Health', 'Mental Health', 'Social Health', and 'Environmental Health'. The posters are titled 'Level 1: Becoming a Beginner Surfer', 'Level 2: Becoming an Improver Surfer', 'Level 3: Becoming an Intermediate Surfer', and 'Level 4: Becoming an Advanced Surfer'. Each poster also includes a list of 'Our 7 Blue Health Principles' at the bottom.

## ACTION!

Climate Action and action for the Ocean are linked - the Ocean regulates the climate and Ocean ecosystems help sequester carbon dioxide. By working towards Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water we're also helping to tackle climate change.

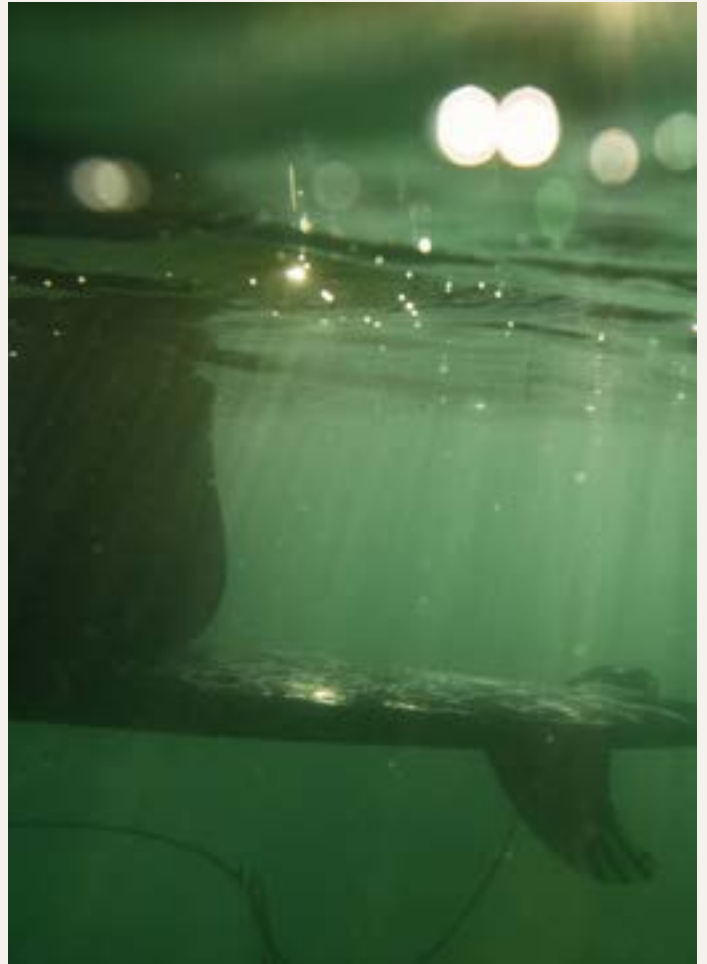


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## Ocean Wave Series

During 2021 we produced a series of Ocean sustainability themed articles. Featuring research on pollution, ocean acidification, biodiversity and surf ecosystems - these articles help to paint a picture of what's affecting the Ocean and also the available solutions.

*See our journal.*



## Sea 7 Summit

The G7 summit mobilised UK organisations to speak up about Ocean issues to world leaders.

Watch the film here:

<https://vimeo.com/582450549>

We joined our friends at Finisterre and made a short film, which was showcased at their online event: *Sea 7 Summit*.



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## Beach Clean Ups

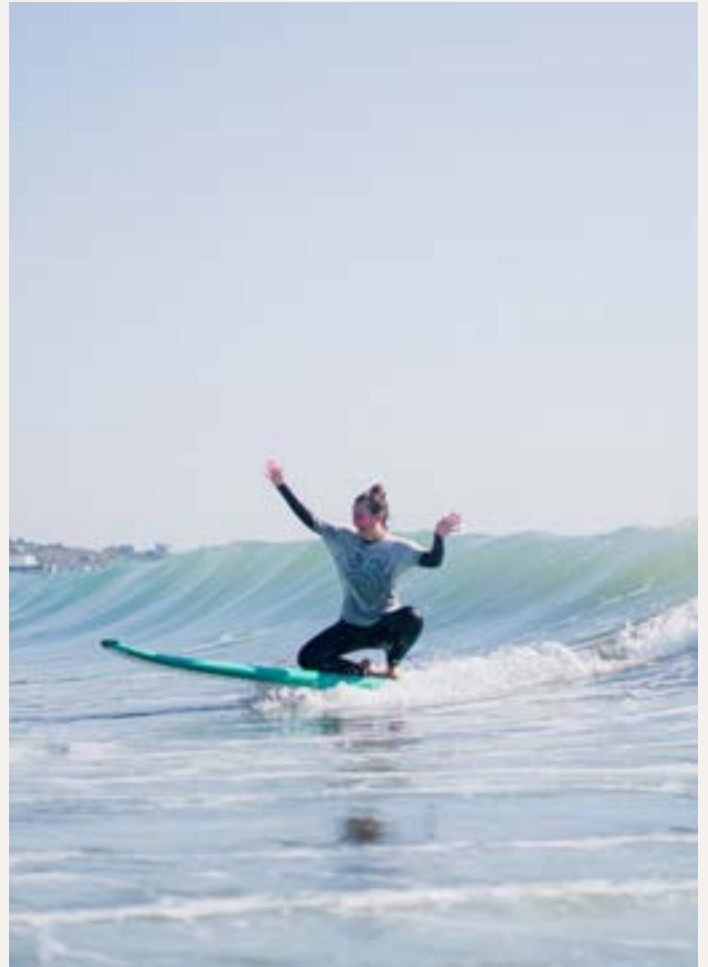
We also joined local efforts to clean up marine plastic out of surfing beaches. Nat Fox held a special microplastics workshop for Sagres Beach Clean at Cordoama beach.





## Feedback

“I LOVED the holistic approach to surfing and how this sparks curiosity and love for the ocean and all the energy it possesses. The approach of learning how to navigate the ocean’s energy instead of “mastering” it, was really helpful and valuable for anyone who has been injected with that fast-paced Western way of approaching any type of physical activity as a manageable skill instead of a joy and journey.”



# Secondary Sustainable Development Goals

This year we have focussed on our primary goals, but we're still keeping an eye out and developing partnerships so that we can work towards our secondary goals:



## Quality Education

Help promote, support and develop surfing for women in India & Sri Lanka where there are cultural barriers around girls and women playing in the ocean.



## Gender Equality

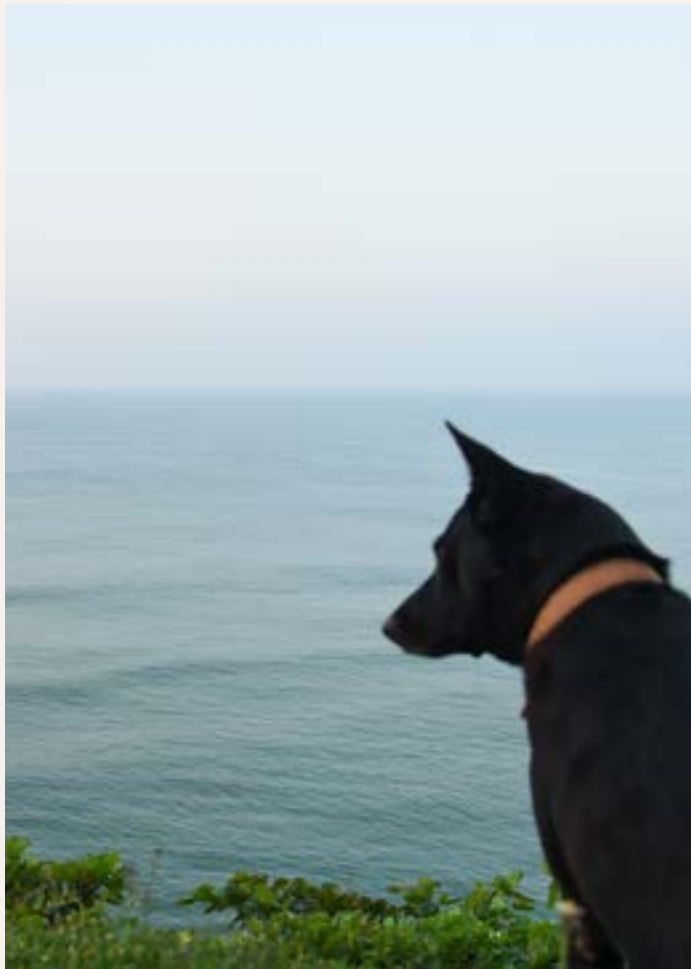
Follow the diversity, equity and inclusion model and use our Soul & Surf voice and platform to support social justice, inclusivity and diversity within our communities.



## Decent Work & Economic Growth

It's what we do. Continue to promote sustainable tourism which supports local communities and economies.

# Now What?



With 2021 done and dusted, we are now looking towards the next year and how we can reach our current targets, adjust and amend if needed and if possible, increase the impact we are having.

Through developing our Sustainable-ish Plan we found there ARE tangible ways we can be more sustainable and that sustainable solutions actually do exist.

2021 was just the start, and we hope to see you at one of our retreats in 2022 and beyond, so you can be part of the solution too.

*– Ed, Sofie & The Whole Soul & Surf Team*

# What's the plan for 2022?

This year, now that we are getting back on our feet after Covid, we plan to develop what we started in 2021 in achieving our 4 main sustainable goals and we aim to find partners to make progress on our secondary goals.

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## 2022 Climate Action Plan

*In 2022 we will...*

- Continue to measure our UK business emissions, including all our team's travel.
  - Continue to offset any remaining UK company emissions through Mossy Earth membership, which will also support biodiversity projects.
  - Also offset customers stays on location through one-off tree planting with Mossy Earth.
  - Encourage guests to offset their travel with Mossy Earth.
  - Optimise our team's travel itineraries and take fewer flights, direct where possible and longer stays will be prioritised to reduce air travel as much as possible.
  - Continue to work from home or cycle to work to cut local commutes significantly.
  - Encourage & reward customers for travelling to Soul & Surf by train in Portugal and India.
  - Inform and encourage travellers to take direct flights and use airlines with the most modern and efficient fleets. We will encourage customers to use the "Greener Flights" filter on Sky Scanner.
  - Continue to offer online courses and retreats to our customers as an alternative to travel.
  - Follow our waste reductions plans in Portugal and Kerala to reduce waste.
  - Do waste audits and waste reductions plans in Sri Lanka to reduce waste.
  - Commit to sharing our progress, ideas, successes and failures so that our peers and customers can hopefully learn from our progress and our mistakes.
  - Continue to train our local staff on our sustainable-ish goals to ensure we work together.
  - Connect with and support local protection/conservation organisations in India and Sri Lanka.
  - Create a special line of T-shirts that helps support the Mossy Earth / ReGeneration Surf kelp restoration project in Peniche.
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