



**SOUL  
& SURF** Sustainable-ish

# Impact Report 2023

# A Word From The Owners



As some kind of steadiness comes back to our business and our sector we can start to focus more on our on ground locations and their individual performances and look at what we can improve upon

Our Sustainable-ish goals are just goals. Some areas we could not get around to due to the age old restrictions of time & money. Yet we had some unexpected and unplanned success in other areas by simply working from a different location

As ever some of our 2023 goals have been rolled over to 2024, some to 2025 and new goals added where the lessons we learned have shown us areas we can improve.

Using the school report cliché; Soul & Surf tried hard, but they could do better.

– *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.*

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*“Using the school report  
cliche; Soul & Surf tried  
hard, but they could  
do better.”*

# How We're Making An Impact



## What this report is about...

- 1 Starting somewhere.
- 2 Identifying our priorities.
- 3 Doing SOMETHING.
- 4 Keeping track of what we do.
- 5 Making mistakes and learning from them.
- 6 Connecting with other folks that can help us achieve our goals.
- 7 Creativity, collaboration and care.
- 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.**



# 2023

Year In Review





# Good Health & Well Being



## Experiences that are rooted in goodness

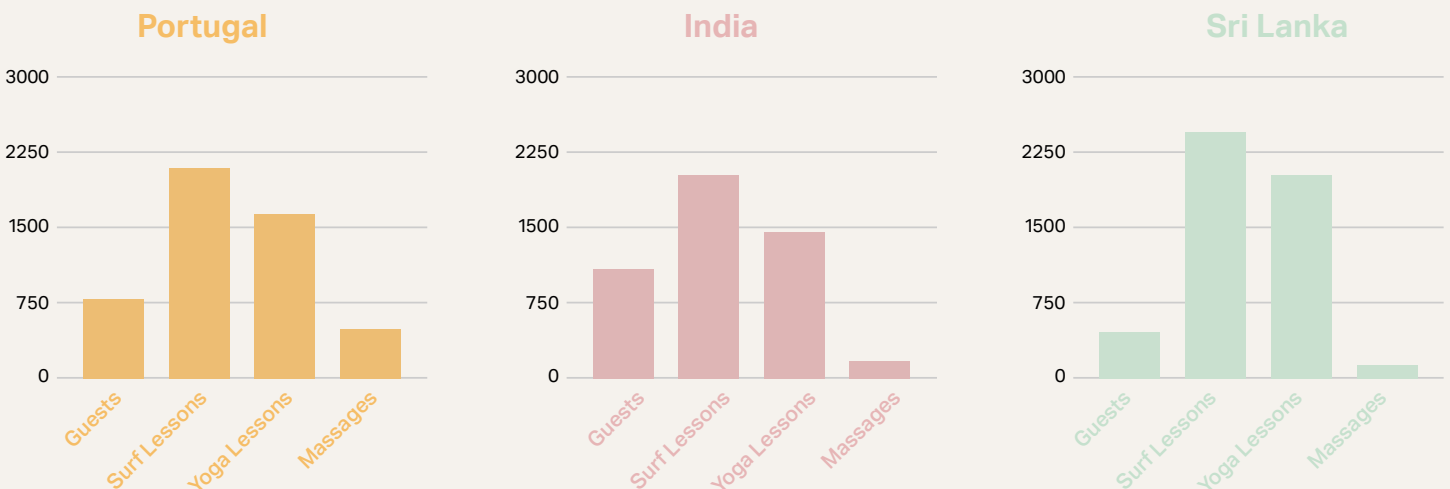
Surfing, yoga, meditation, therapies and sunshine food. It's what we do. Soul & Surf are committed to delivering experiences that are rooted in goodness.

Throughout 2023 we continued working towards our Sustainable-ish plan. And promoting and enabling good health and wellbeing is what we do and we did it.. more than 2022.

In 2023 we also opened our independent Surf School so we could accommodate non guests, from May 2023 we have had an extra 162 guests taking lessons which means an extra 162 people taking part in a beach clean before they take to the water..

## Metrics

2023 saw the strong return of travellers to Sri Lanka and India following the pandemic and political effects of previous years. It was great to share our love of these beautiful countries with like minded people again. Portugal had another strong summer where a greater interest in surfing shone through with a very successful first year of our Soul & Surf School.



## 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 2023:

### Surfing

*"Before I came to you, I wasn't sure if I wanted to continue surfing. Recently it had become too frustrating. After a few days with you, I have rediscovered the joy of surfing and the happiness it brings me. They gave great tips and I loved that you wanted soul surfers instead of competitive surfers. The beach clean up, box breathing and body surfing were also new experiences for me and I really enjoyed them."*

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### Massage

*"Emilie is truly a healer. My massage with her helped me to release so much tension and pain I had been carrying (both physical and emotional) and her warm and maternal energy was so soothing. I wished I'd had an opportunity to work with her again during the week!"*

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### Yoga

*"All retreat classes were amazing. Bronagh was a fantastic teacher, she really took us on a journey through each of the elements. Every class was both physically challenging and spiritually rewarding."*

### Food

*"The quality of the food was above and beyond expectations (which were already high after reading your website). If you would ever decide to write a cookbook, I would be amongst the first ones to buy it"*

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### Stay

*One of the reasons I came to Soulandsurf is because of their sustainability ethos. I have been following them on Instagram for a while, and coming here I can see it is not just for marketing reasons that they post about sustainability, but that s&s actually cares. There are many measures they take to leave a smaller footprint on the world. For instance, there are no plastic bottles, but there are water stations where we can refill. There are metal straws with the drinks and they encourage us to keep our towel and not wash it daily, and there is a basket next to the beach entrance with a sign to 'take 3 for the sea' to encourage cleaning the beach. But I can also see a social responsibility, where Soulandsurf are investing in their local staff as well and the local community - through residential waste collection. All of this really adds something to my stay for me. It genuinely makes me feel better when I stay at a place like this where they care'*





# Responsible Consumption & Production



## Waste Reduction

As part of our Sustainable-ish plan we are working towards zero waste and a circular economy. Clearly, this is a big challenge so first we needed to figure out exactly HOW to do that. Here's our thinking:

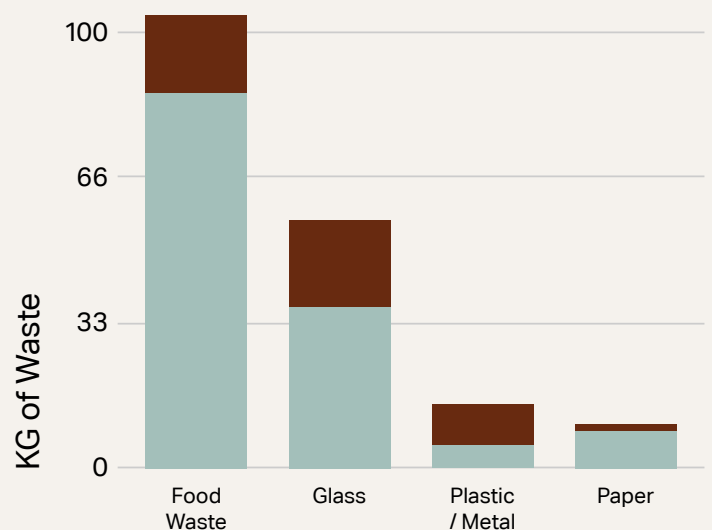
- Through auditing & analysing our waste on each site where we operate.
- Creating waste reduction plans for each site, then educating and training teams.
- Create a waste reduction programme for our customers to follow.

In 2022 we did our first waste audit in Kerala whilst we had 32 guests. This serves as our baseline understanding for our waste production in Kerala.

In 2023 we had an increase in guests which saw an increase in waste, this was to be expected but it has given us a great starting point to make changes for the future.

## Metrics

- Soul & Surf Kerala Audit 2022  
32 Guests
- Soul & Surf Kerala - 7 Day Waste Audit 2023  
25 Guests Onsite + 7 Guests on PY



## Composting

Whilst plastic waste is notoriously bad for the environment - made from the waste product of fossil fuels production (ethanol), never degrading with 8 million tons of it ending up in the ocean per year - our waste audit in Kerala showed that food waste was our number one, which is similar to our Portuguese location.

In India and Portugal our food waste is collected separately to all our other waste and taken to be composted and in some instances used for food at a local pig farm.

Our aim for the next year in Kerala is to find out if we can make our own compost on the property and find partners in the region where we can deliver our compost weekly.

In Sri Lanka things have been a little harder but we are working hard to find options for our food waste to be separated and used for compost or local farms in the same way.





# 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 continue to 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. In 2023 we moved our Portugal contributions to Mossy Earth's Kelp Reforesting project in 3 locations off the coast of Portugal. In Cascais, Peniche and the Berlengas area.

## Our aim to offset emissions

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 have found there is no perfect way of doing it, because with our business the variables are.. really variable. We just make sure we over compensate, by quite a long way. And we also make sure we don't just pay for carbon offsetting off the shelf. We partner with Mossy Earth to ensure we support projects which promote biodiversity, enhance the local area and almost offset carbon as a by-product.

### So... how many trees did we plant in 2023?

We have planted 1564 trees in 2023.

### And how much Kelp?

We planted 435.5 sqm



# Trees & Kelp

2022:

**2004  
Trees**

2023:

**1564  
Trees**

**435.5  
sqm of Kelp**



## Our 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.



**The Lanka Environmental Fund (LEF)** is a non-profit organisation dedicated to environmental conservation and sustainability efforts in Sri Lanka. Founded with a vision to protect and preserve the island nation's rich biodiversity and natural resources, LEF actively engages in various initiatives aimed at fostering environmental stewardship and promoting eco-friendly practices.

As part of our 1% for the planet pledge, we have partnered with The Lanka Environmental Fund as one of the companies we donate 1% of our total revenue to each year.



An aerial photograph of a coastline. The left side shows deep green water, while the right side shows a wide, golden-yellow sandy beach. The water and sand have a textured, rippled appearance.

(Our Simple)  
**Climate Action Plan**

**MEASURE**

**REDUCE**

**OFFSET**

**CAMPAIGN**



## 2023 Climate Targets

Wow! We actually did pretty well didn't we? Time to up our game and our targets for 2024 and beyond now.

### Targets Achieved

**In 2023 we will continue to measure our UK business emissions, including our team's travel.**

*Total Emissions = 6.88 t CO2e*

*Last year = 46.3 t CO2e*

*We made an unexpected huge saving by living and working in Sri Lanka rather than the UK in 2023.*

**In 2023 we will continue to work from home as much as possible to cut local commutes significantly.**

**In 2023 we will offer online courses and retreats to our customers as an alternative to travel.**

**In 2023 we will encourage travellers to take direct flights and use airlines with the most modern and efficient fleets.**

*We encourage customers to use the "Greener Flights" filter on SkyScanner.*

**In 2023 we will continue to train our local staff on our sustainable-ish goals to ensure we work together.**

**In 2023 we will expand our long-stay discounts to all locations to encourage long trips and less of them.**

### Targets Not Achieved

**In 2023 we will do waste audits and waste reductions plans in Sri Lanka, Kerala & Portugal to reduce waste.**

*We were able to complete 1 audit in Portugal and India but none were actioned in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately without the time, resources and local support we were not able to make any improvements.*

**In 2023 we will follow our waste reductions plans in Sri Lanka, Kerala & Portugal to reduce waste.**

**In 2023 we aim to connect with and support local protection/conservation organisations in India.**



## Targets Achieved

## Targets Not Achieved

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In 2023 we will work hard to be as plastic free as is possible in all locations.

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In 2023 we will provide more sustainable travel tips and ideas with our customers pre-booking and pre-arrival.

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In 2023 we will offset any remaining UK company emissions through Mossy Earth membership, which also supports biodiversity projects.

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In 2023 we will continue to also offset our customer's stay on-location through one-tree-per stay planting with Mossy Earth.

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In 2023 we will begin to support Mossy Earth on their local Portugal project re-wilding kelp forests. Planting 1 m2 of kelp per customer per week in Portugal.

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In 2023 we will commit to sharing our progress, ideas, successes and failures so that our peers and customers can hopefully learn from our progress and our mistakes.

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## What else did we do in 2023?

We were able to achieve the majority of our targets for 2023, but this is not just a box-ticking exercise, it's journey. With that mindset, we are always on the lookout for new initiatives and ways we can improve and raise awareness with our guests and our local communities.

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*Here are a few extra things we did that we want to shout about...*

- Continue to complete waste audits and waste reductions plans in Sri Lanka, Kerala & Portugal to reduce waste.
- Begin to research new ways to reduce waste and work with local companies to recycle and upcycle in Sri Lanka, Kerala & Portugal .
- Continue to encourage & reward customers for travelling to Soul & Surf by train in Portugal
- Begin to encourage customers in Sri Lanka and India to travel from the airport or other areas by train or bus.
- Continue to provide more sustainable travel tips and ideas with our customers pre-booking and pre-arrival.
- Begin to sell reusable water bottles in our onsite shops to encourage customers to stop buying plastic bottles.
- Begin to gift Soul & Surf tote bags to all guests to use instead of plastic shopping bags.
- Continue to 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 train our local staff on our sustainable-ish goals to ensure we work together
- Continue to offset any remaining UK company emissions through Mossy Earth membership, which will also support biodiversity projects.
- Continue to offset customers stay on location through one-off tree planting with Mossy Earth
- Continue to encourage guests to offset their travel with Mossy Earth
- Begin to connect with and support local protection/conservation organisations in India and Portugal.
- Continue to share our progress, ideas, successes and failures so that our peers and customers can hopefully learn from our progress and our mistakes.



# 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 partner with Surfers Against Sewage as part of our pledge to donate 1% of our total revenue to the 1% for the planet programme.
- Support Take 3 for the Sea marine litter and 30% of the Ocean Protected by 2030 campaigns across our platforms.
- In 2023 we continued to include 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.

## 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. We now run Soul of Surfing beach sessions and hotel based workshops and talks several times a week in all our locations.

Slowly, we are improving and developing 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 fan-like pattern, overlapping each other. The top-left poster is 'Blue Health: The 7 Principals', the middle one is 'Ocean Literacy: The 7 Principals', and the top-right one is 'Wave Riding: The Soul Surfer Journey'. Each poster features a central circular diagram with seven segments and a list of seven principles at the bottom.

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

**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 Shape, Craft & Surfing Potential

The bottom four posters are arranged in a fan-like pattern, overlapping each other. They 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 features a central circular diagram with seven segments and a list of seven principles at the bottom.

## Beach Clean Ups

In Portugal, Kerala and Sri Lanka we ask guests to clean the beach before each surf lesson and in Sri Lanka we have signs on the beach for 'take 3 for the sea' to encourage guests to pick up rubbish when visiting the beach. Wees on which we operate and recycle whatever plastic we can.



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## Feedback

*“It has been such a nice experience with the surf sessions. I liked the routine you guys created including cleaning up the beach, doing a breathing exercise and an extensive warm-up.”*



# 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?



Phew, we managed to speed through a lot of our targets in 2023 and have therefore added a whole heap more for 2024 and worked out some new longer term targets for 2025 and beyond.

We have also connected with a new sustainable tourism project in Sri Lanka which will help us to improve waste management, recycling and composting and have found a local ocean activist charity in Portugal which we hope to start working with in 2024.

Slowly, surely.

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

# What's the plan for 2024?

This year we will continue built upon the areas we started in 2023 in achieving our 4 main sustainable goals, we have found new partners and are looking for more to make progress on our secondary goals.

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## 2024 Climate Action Plan

*In 2024 we will...*

- Continue to measure our UK business emissions, including all our team's travel.
  - Begin to measure our local team and our freelance staff's work travel.
  - Continue to be as plastic free as is possible in all locations.
  - Continue to expand our long-stay discounts to all locations to encourage long trips and less of them.
  - Continue to 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.
  - Continue to complete waste audits and waste reductions plans in Sri Lanka, Kerala & Portugal to reduce waste.
  - Begin to research new ways to reduce waste and work with local companies to recycle and upcycle in Sri Lanka, Kerala & Portugal.
  - Continue to encourage & reward customers for travelling to Soul & Surf by train in Portugal.
  - Begin to encourage customers in Sri Lanka and India to travel from the airport or other areas by train or bus.
  - Continue to provide more sustainable travel tips and ideas with our customers pre-booking and pre-arrival.
  - Begin to sell reusable water bottles in our onsite shops to encourage customers to stop buying plastic bottles.
  - Begin to gift Soul & Surf tote bags to all guests to use instead of plastic shopping bags.
  - Continue to 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 train our local staff on our sustainable-ish goals to ensure we work together.
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- Continue to offset any remaining UK company emissions through Mossy Earth membership, which will also support biodiversity projects.
- Continue to offset customers stay on location through one-off tree planting with Mossy Earth.
- Continue to encourage guests to offset their travel with Mossy Earth
- Begin to connect with and support local protection/conservation organisations in India and Portugal.
- Continue to share our progress, ideas, successes and failures so that our peers and customers can hopefully learn from our progress and our mistakes.

