

Sustainability concept 2025

With around 85,000 visitors every year, the Afro-Pfingsten Festival transforms the whole of Winterthur into an intercultural interaction zone during the Afro-Pfingsten Festival. Whether with concerts, markets, workshops, art, film, parties, readings, Family Day and much more - together we celebrate the diversity of Afro cultures! We only have this one world. That's exactly why it's important to take care of it. Caring about diversity but also about a sustainable lifestyle. Afro-Pfingsten focuses on intercultural encounters through a diverse program, but the sustainable action of the festival in all areas should not be forgotten.

We prioritize gradual sustainability as a cornerstone of our mission, ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy the Afro-Pfingsten Festival. Sustainability for us extends beyond environmental preservation; it encompasses the sustainability of our presence and impact within the festival ecosystem. Cultural sustainability is central to our ethos. Firstly, we strive to pass on cultural heritage to the next generations while fostering diversity and social engagement. Collaborating with various organizations, we host workshops aimed at fostering and promoting a sustainable cultural exchange. Secondly, we endeavor to support marginalized artists from other continents, particularly those facing barriers in touring around Europe. Many African artists encounter significant challenges accessing the European music industry, contrasting with the ease European artists experience when touring Africa. We actively address these disparities, seeking to understand and dismantle the root causes through workshops, panels, and discussions with festival attendees. Our aim is not only to facilitate opportunities for African artists but also to reshape the European music industry to be more inclusive. We prioritize booking local African artists who travel to Europe for concerts, enriching their experiences and knowledge to benefit the African music market.

This approach fosters development within the African music industry rather than draining talent to other markets. Furthermore, our stages and venues serve as platforms for showcasing the rich musical cultures and lifestyles of the African diaspora to European audiences. By promoting cultural diversity, we aim to inspire visitors to contribute to a more pluralistic society.

And now?

Until 2020, the Afro-Pfingsten Festival did not have an overarching Sustainability concept but tackled individual areas along the way. During the Corona period, we took the time to immerse ourselves in the topic and took the first steps towards a general sustainability concept, which consisted primarily of ecological aspects. As part of the preparations for the 2022 festival and under new management, sustainability was expanded to include social and cultural responsibility as well as the aim to reach an economical sustainability. This also created new conflicting objectives with the area of ecology that now need to be addressed. This means also after the 2022 festival and 2023 the existing concept was evaluated and further expanded. To us Sustainability remains an ongoing journey, one in which we are continually evolving and learning. While our desire is to implement changes more rapidly and extensively, we often find ourselves constrained by limited resources and occasional gaps in knowledge. This reality drives us to continuously



educate ourselves, engage with fellow organizers, participate in workshops, and review relevant studies and recommendations. Yet, the complexity of the subject ensures that there is always more to explore and understand, leaving us perpetually unsatisfied.

Each year, we confront new challenges head-on, assessing the effectiveness of previous initiatives, adjusting them as needed, seeking additional resources, and carefully weighing our options. With a rich history spanning over thirty years, and a festival schedule that includes five out of eight days programmed for 24 hours, the Afro-Pfingsten Festival embraces sustainability in its broadest sense. This includes not only environmental preservation but also social responsibility, financial stability, and cultural preservation.

We actively address these multifaceted issues, striving to strike a balance that serves our community and the broader world as best as possible.

Ecology

Ecological considerations are an ongoing challenge for us, as we strive to strike a delicate balance between fostering diversity and upholding social responsibility. The Afro-Pfingsten Festival is a celebration that embraces the richness of diversity, reflected in our nearly 250 vendors who bring varied perspectives, capabilities, values, and wishes to the event.

Recognizing that there is ample room for improvement within our own operations, we are currently prioritizing efforts to lead by example for our partners. Concurrently, we endeavor to guide our partners' actions through gentle, yet effective measures, clear communication, and a deep understanding of their perspectives.

We know: Wherever there is celebration, waste is created!

- In 2019, 2 tons of waste were produced on the 3 market days in the old town and an additional 1 ton during the 5 festival days at the concert & supporting program location at the time. We as organizers of the festival, our artists, our visitors and our 250 market vendors left behind this mountain of rubbish.
- What type of waste is created? A few examples: plastic dishes, leftover food, items brought by guests, packaging materials, printing materials, decorative materials, etc.
- At the festival 2022 under the new management and with a different perspective on sustainability the waste was already reduced to 1 ton, including recyclable waste as well as significant reduction in co2 due to traveling and logistics, not counting in the compensation, financed by a partner.

Our aim since 2024

- Reducing general waste again by providing more knowledge to our vendors and staff members
- Assessment of the goods and services offered by the market vendor applicants
- Better recycling methods by implementing more possibilities to separate waste
- Reduce of water toilets throughout the market area by using more KompoTois

- Reducing Co2 in different areas (mostly traveling internationally and local logistics)

Economics

As a non-profit organization we strive for a balanced budget. But there will always be years that are economically more difficult than others. That's why we create provisions with any profits so that we can survive in the long term. We would also like to invest in the further development of Afro-Pfingsten. We handle our financial resources carefully and are aware of our responsibility and role. We work transparently and communicate our figures openly. We are fair and present the facts transparently when submitting applications for financial support. We value suitable, sustainable and long-term partnerships and select our partners with this goal in mind.

Diversity and inclusion

We see ourselves as part of a pluralistic society in a networked, diverse and globalized world. We want to actively shape this future by organizing a unique, innovative festival with an intercultural interaction space that is open to all interested people. We want to offer an environment that is as barrier-free and as safe as possible for everyone.

Concrete measures in 2025

- Further training in the area of racism, discrimination and intersectionality for the team and members of the association
- Expanded program on social and cultural issue such as panels, workshops and other offers
- Working towards more inclusion for people with disabilities
- Workshops for people with special needs, working with local institutions to bring in afro-cultures and enhancing the exchange and experience
- Collaborating with specialist to learn and enhance our program
- Supporting activities internationally for people with special needs (eg Magic Eyes band)
- More wheelchair accessible toilets
- More information about access to the different venues
- Updated booking guidelines
- Facilitating touring for acts by providing documents, arrangement etc.
- Better signage for venues
- Enhance Multilingualism in our communication
- Enhance Awareness service

Cultural sustainability

Cultural Sustainability entails taking good care of other cultures that are attending the festival to make sure these people are heard as an integral part of the festival. We wish to ensure their return to the next event with strong ideas and willing to contribute more as they feel comfortable and included in the process rather than simply a tool to make music.

What can you do?

- Use public transport to get there or come by bike
- Try out the vegan dishes from our market operators, we're sure the selection will get better and more varied every year
- Use the trash cans and dispose of your trash (and even chewing gum) correctly.
- Be considerate when dealing with your fellow human beings and the environment.
- Be helpful but also take care of yourself.
- Be aware of your alcohol consumption and respect your boundaries.
- Familiarize yourself with our awareness measures and support us so that everyone can feel comfortable.
- Report your observations to us and share your thoughts
- constructive criticism.

This way we can sustainably improve. THANKS!

Vision Statement

- We see our future in offering a collaboration platform to courageous people in an inspiring environment. We believe that through critical thinking, meaningful, value-adding solutions are realized that consistently put people at the center.
- We want to play a leading role in shaping this future by planning and implementing a unique, innovative festival with intercultural interaction points, especially touching upon traditional and modern African cultures.
- Our special ability lies in the organization of a contemporary, sustainable festival that fosters critical thinking and problem solving through creativity and a pioneering spirit.
- We trust and rely on transparent interactions and communication with audiences, patrons, participants and our team.