

# Green Light For Business

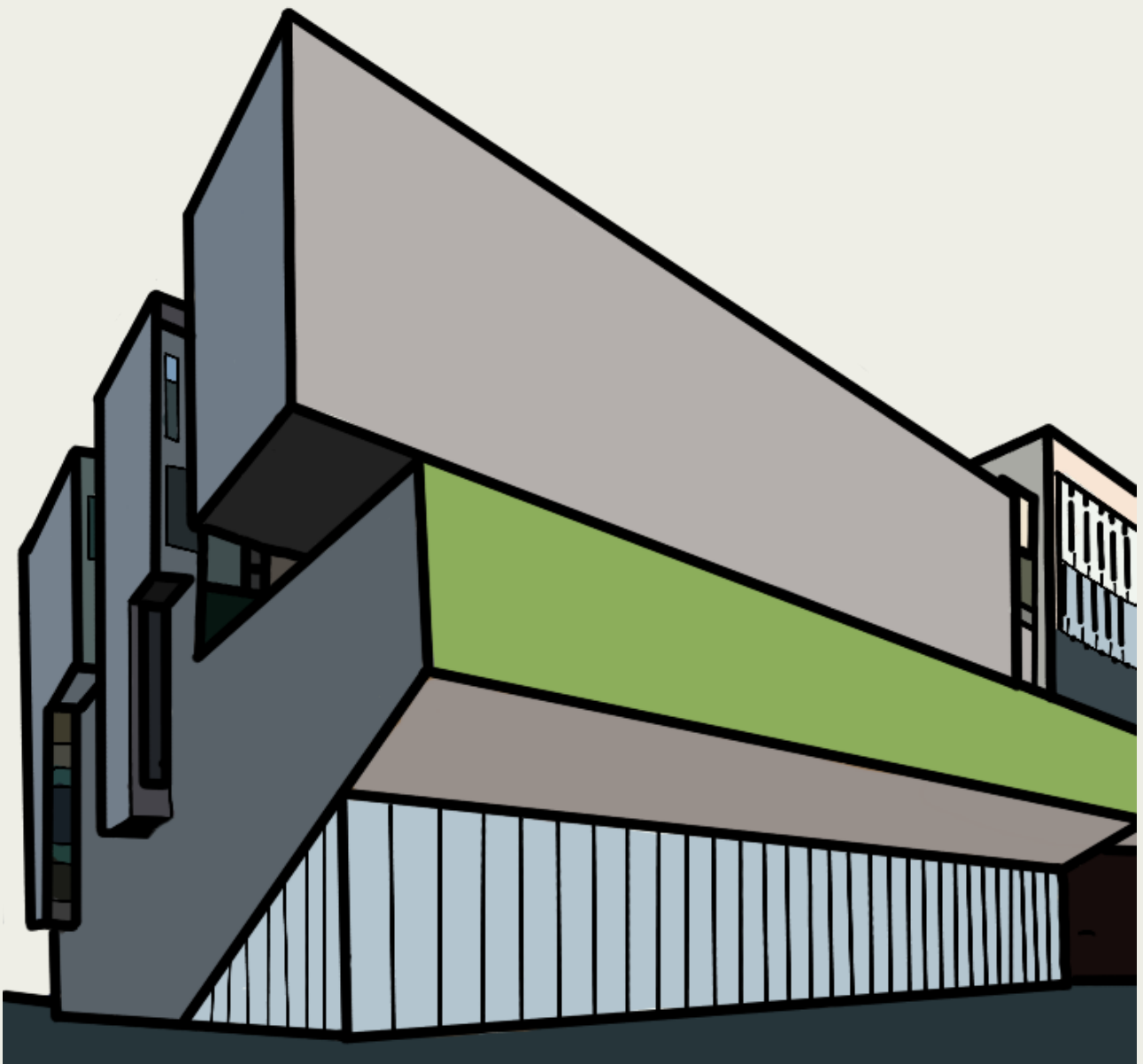
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## Plastic Free x Bocconi

In support of Plastic Free Onlus association, Università Bocconi has participated in a day of plastic collecting, which has taken place on Saturday, November 20th 2021.

The criteria that our University has been pursuing for some time now, while engaging the entire Bocconi community, include environmental awareness, sustainability, and a strong commitment to lowering consumption.

Students, professors, staff, members of Green Light For Business - on a voluntary basis - have cleaned up three urban green areas located nearby our University: Parco Ravizza, Parco della Resistenza and Parco delle Memorie Industriali.

After an introductory briefing in each park, the participants reassembled at the end of the event with what they had collected: fifty waste bags, one fire extinguisher, and one baggage, all in the context of a strong environmental commitment feeling. "We are honored by this collaboration with Bocconi University for these events that took place in the three parks around the campus with students, teachers, and staff," says Antonio Rancati, secretary general of Plastic Free Onlus. Given the numerous green solutions implemented on campus in recent years, we hope that this collaboration will pave the way for many more events aimed at raising awareness of the use of disposable plastic and, more importantly, of the one that becomes microplastics in rivers and the sea, eventually ending up in the food chain, causing serious harm to us all".

The three events were organized with the goal of engaging especially young people, who in recent years have shown a strong interest in and dedication to the safeguarding of the environment.

As Giacomo Levoni, head of the Green campus section of our association has said: "This event represents for us an opportunity to get together, have fun, and at the same time do something that has a positive impact on the areas around our campus and at the same time to raise awareness among a number of young people, but not only, on environmental issues".

Moreover, this event demonstrates our university's environmental dedication. "Since 2012, the Sustainability Committee at Università Bocconi has been tasked with promoting and coordinating projects and initiatives that have as their own goal sustainability and sustainable development, including adherence to the Plastic Free Onlus event. The Sustainability Committee is made up of faculty, staff members, and students. This emphasizes the commitment to reduce plastic consumption, as well as energy, water, paper, and other resources. It is hoped that it will promote increasing awareness in the Bocconi community about the importance of making a difference and bringing about positive improvements for people and the planet. Because it's time for us all to stick together," adds Francesco Perrini, president of the Sustainability Committee and director of SDA Bocconi Sustainability Lab.

# What's on your mind when you think of carbon footprint?



**Bartolomeo Galli**

**W**e constantly hear about the impact of companies on the environment with their emissions, but we often lose sight of the impact our individual actions can have. By now, the concept of Carbon Footprint should be part of our lives, which is the parameter used to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions associated with each individual, but this value can result incomprehensible. So how can we change our lifestyles if we don't really understand the impact of our choices? And how can we really calculate the emissions produced by our actions to choose the best option for us and the environment? Any action we take generates emissions, but often we are not able to reconstruct the entire process that leads to the finished product or the services we are offered. For example, it is now widely known that consuming meat is harmful in terms of the environment, consumption of natural resources, and also harmful in terms of health. But is switching to a vegetarian diet always the best possible solution to respect the environment? Paying attention to the small details here can play a key role, because variables such as the seasonality of foods, where they come from, and how they are grown can undo our environmental efforts if we're not careful.

One fact we often forget is that every action we take generates emissions. Even the smallest ones. Even the ones that are little talked about. For example, we're bombarded with information about the transportation industry, but we're less aware of how damaging the internet can be to the planet. A page like the homepage of the Bocconi website can generate more than 600 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> in a year. A single search on the web generates 7 grams of carbon dioxide, which added worldwide in a year can generate a frightening amount of greenhouse gases, while a single e-mail of 1 Megabyte emits in its sending a dose of about 19 grams of CO<sub>2</sub>.

A first solution can be to use the dark mode, since much of the energy consumption is due to the brightness of the screens and limit the white and too bright colors can make a big difference, especially if the change concerns the site of a search engine loaded, open and visited every day by millions of users.

Another solution may be to save the sites we visit most frequently and type them directly into the search bar, to avoid unnecessary searches.

As mentioned above, it can be difficult to really understand the scope of these

photo credit: Pixabay, pexels.com



numbers, since we can't see the real effects that our actions produce. However, there are tools that can help us - thanks to some comparison meters - to better understand the impact in terms of emissions of the choices we make. AvantGrade.com - for instance - makes use of a tool called Karma Matrix (<https://www.avantgrade.com/quanto-inquina-il-tuo-sito-web>), an algorithm based on artificial intelligence, which quantifies the ecological performance of one or more web pages, weighting 23 factors of efficiency of the sites against the world median. There are also tests to calculate one's carbon footprint. These tests can be very important to give us an idea of our real impact on the planet's environment and help us improve those aspects of our lives that can be particularly polluting. In addition to improving

our habits, perhaps even creating green hobbies, such as taking care of plants in our home - which help improve the quality of the air we breathe - it is possible to offset our impact on the planet. On an individual level, you can find platforms that, through forest protection (<https://www.ran.org/>), climate progress projects (<https://offset.climateneutralnow.org/>) and tree planting (<https://zeroco2.eco/en/>) even in developing countries, give you the chance to offset your negative impact on the climate and the planet. There is no single way to become eco-friendly, each of us can make many different choices to reduce our carbon footprint and do good to the ecosystem. However, it is necessary that each of us becomes aware of the consequences of his actions and try to improve those that may be more harmful to the environment.





# Q&A

with **Dr. Claudia Tebaldi**



Dr. Claudia Tebaldi is a Staff Scientist in the Climate & Ecosystem Sciences Division of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. She is also the Climate and Atmospheric Process Program Domain Lead and Technical Co-Manager / Staff Scientist for CASCADE.

Dr. Tebaldi has been working on climate change science since the early 2000s. She is a statistician by training and has always focused on problems primarily centered on characterizing the uncertainty of future projections, with particular attention to regional and extreme changes, and on observation-based detection studies. Over time, her research has shifted increasingly toward impact risk analysis.

Before joining Berkeley Lab, Dr. Tebaldi was a staff scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), Climate Central Inc. and the Joint Global Change Research Institute (JGCRI).

Her academic background includes a Bachelor's degree in economics from Bocconi University, which was later augmented by a Master's degree and a PhD in statistics to open the doors to her future work.

**"Your story can be of great inspiration for students interested in research. How did you end up being a leading author for the new IPCC report?"**

After Bocconi University, I enrolled in a PhD program in the US. There I started to work for the National Center for Atmospheric Research. My path was shaped partly by chance and partly by the right mentors who introduced me to the world of international research.

At first I was a contributor to the IPCC report; then I became one of the authors.

The **IPCC** report is very long and detailed; here's a very brief summary of its findings.

## **PAST**

Emissions produced in the past had big damaging effects on the environment

## **PRESENT**

The rhythm of change is unprecedented  
Most of these changes are not easily reversible

## **FUTURE**

The primary and most concrete goal for the future is to reach the net zero balance and stay under the 2 ° C for raising temperatures.

**"What do you think about the effort of the international politics class about the environmental cause?"**

A change in attitude is present, what is needed is to create new policies and put them into action. The political class needs to act fast to minimize the **implementation gap**.

**implementation gap** = gap between promises made by decision-makers and what is actually put into practice

# Q&A

with **Andrea Pesce**,  
founder of **ZeroCO2**



Andrea Pesce is the founder of ZeroCO2, he has always been committed to sustainability issues, dealing with it in the round and spreading his knowledge to others. To develop sustainability is essential to educate and innovate: these are the concepts that have always guided Andrea in his work, in the belief that there can be no sustainable development without education.

ZeroCo2 is a benefit company that deals with reforestation with high social impact in various developing countries around the world. Thanks to this reality it is possible to track our impact and that of our company, a web page, a product or even an event and neutralize it by creating our own forest, designed at the same time to help communities of farmers in poor countries. But his experience doesn't stop at Zero Co2; another important project he founded is Comparte onlus, a non-profit that deals with education and school innovation between Latin America and Europe.

His educational background tells of a degree in International Relations, a field in which he then developed experience in international cooperation in different regions of the world, including Africa and

**"How was zeroCO2 created in such a young and multicultural reality?"**

The start-up zeroCO2 came to life from the collaboration between me and Virgilio, who I met in Guatemala where I was leading an educational project for an NGO.

zeroCO2 deals with reforestation in different countries of the world, including Latin America and Italy.

**"How is transparency and truthfulness of the tree planting activity guaranteed? We know there is an innovative system in place named CHLOE."**

CHLOE leverages digital technologies and allows corporations and consumers to monitor the growth of the trees they plant, from miles away, guaranteeing transparency and traceability of the whole value chain.

Each tree has an ID number, associated with a QR code, which allows for tracking its GPS position and getting regular photo updates.

**"What is meant by life-cycle assessment? We understand it's a service offered to companies that want to offset their carbon footprint."**

LCA is a powerful methodology developed to measure the carbon footprint of a product or a service, at each single stage of its lifecycle, starting from the extraction of raw materials, until its use and final disposal.

The system runs the calculations and returns the environmental impact of any product, including that of a pint of beer!

**"zeroCO2 is not only involved in the environmental cause but also in the social one. What is the overall impact?"**

At zeroCO2, the shared belief is that education is the key driver of sustainable development.

It follows that its approach has always been to empower the communities in the regions where it operates.

By training them on organic and sustainable farming techniques, zeroCO2 aims to provide them with food supply, while at the same time supporting their families' economy.



# Where does food carbon footprint come from?



**Francesca Girelli**

photo credit: Markus Spiske, pexels.com

**F**ood is a necessary part of our life, but have you ever questioned how much your diet impacts the environment?

As in most topics regarding sustainability, the answer is not clear-cut, although many quantitative studies are being conducted lately. To give a definition, a carbon footprint is calculated as the sum of the emissions resulting from every stage of a product's lifetime, mainly greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous dioxide. It is estimated that food accounts for 10-30% of a household's carbon footprint.

The most common belief is that the best way to reduce the environmental impact of food is buying locally produced products, so as to reduce the emissions related to its transportation. This would be a good solution if transportation was responsible for a large share of food's total carbon footprint. Actually, it has been shown in an analysis published on Science that it is not during transport and packaging that food "emits" the most, but instead during production processes: the latter accounts for 68% of food emissions, while transport on average only for 5%.

Emissions differ for each type of food. As we can see in the following graph, the ones that produce most greenhouse gases per kilogram of product are animal proteins, especially meat, but also dairy products.

The reasons behind this are several: the change in land use in favor of pasture, the use of fertilizers – also manure – and the enteric fermentation in ruminants, which all cause large quantities of methane to be released. Among meats, beef is the

most polluting, with 60 kg of GHG per kilogram, while poultry and pork stop at 6 and 7 kg respectively.

The discussion surrounding the carbon footprint of fish, instead, is more complicated. It was once considered more carbon friendly than many other animal proteins, but recent research published on Nature has highlighted the polluting role of bottom trawling, which consists in dragging heavy nets across the seabed to catch fish. The issue behind this is that seabed sediments act as carbon sinks, and with this kind of trawling, they are churned up and release CO<sub>2</sub>. Being it the most common method of fishing in the world, the paper estimates it is responsible for 2% of total global carbon dioxide emissions.

Therefore, when compared to grains and vegetables, the difference in carbon footprint becomes significant: most plant-based products emit as much as 10-50 times less than animal-based ones.

What could help us reduce the environmental impact of our meals? By a strictly environmental point of view, limiting and even cutting out all animal derivatives seems like the best choice, as showed by the numbers presented above. However, it is always fundamental to remember that becoming vegetarian or vegan is not a simple step and must be considered and planned carefully from a nutritional standpoint. Finally, another crucial piece of advice is: don't trash your food! Even though it might seem trivial, 1.3 billion tons of food are wasted every year, causing an estimated 3.3 billion tons of GHG to be released in the atmosphere.

# What you need to know about circular economy



**Micol Di Menna**



photo credit: Alena Koval, pexels.com

**T**he circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which implies sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. The aim of it is to extend the life cycle of products and reduce waste to a minimum.

It is opposed to the traditional linear economic model, based on a take-make-consume-throw away pattern, in which the products are intentionally designed to have a limited lifespan to encourage consumers to buy continuously. Indeed, it became clear that this model is no longer sustainable, since the world's population is growing and with it grows the demand for raw materials, but their supply is limited! Moreover the extraction and use of raw materials increases energy consumption and CO2 emissions, resulting in a major impact on the environment.

For this reason, implementing this model could reduce by a lot total annual greenhouse gas emissions and in addition, it could save companies money and eventually boost economic growth! Lastly, also consumers benefit from this revolutionary model, having the possibility of buying more durable and innovative products that will increase the quality of life and save them money in the long term.

## **How does it differ from recycling?**

Recycling deals specifically with the end of the life cycle of the product while the circular economy addresses potential problems right at the source.

In fact it's the consequences of decisions made at the design stage that determine around 80% of environmental impacts, for this reason we need to ensure that products and materials are designed, from the outset, to be reused, repaired, and remanufactured!

## **Which are the leading countries in circular economy?**

In recent years Europe's policies on circular economy have continued to grow and gain importance. Finally, in March 2020, the new Circular Economy Action Plan was approved, as part of the Green Deal. It focuses on design and production providing measures for businesses, public authorities and consumers to adopt a sustainable model.

But beyond these policies, each European country has its own circular economy regulations, leading to approaches remarkably different among them. The most progressive country is the Netherlands, in fact the Dutch government has the ambitious project to become a country 100% based on circular economy by 2050. It is followed by France, which has the most favourable legislation on circular economy and eco-innovation, and Italy!



# Circular Creativity: current trends in the luxury fashion world to give a new longer life to clothes



**Giorgia Laguzzi**



photo credit: Karolina Grabowska, pexels.com

**S**ustainability is the challenge each company is facing today especially in the fashion industry, being the latter one of the most polluting worldwide. Luxury brands are in principle better equipped to address this challenge as they have always aimed at offering durable pieces, whose superior price is justified by superior quality that guarantees their value in time, making them literally timeless. However, to keep up with the needs of current customers, who require continuous innovation to share into the social landscape, some luxury brands have started to speed up their business models, by shortening their cycles and dropping more often new collections. Still, considering the increasing awareness towards sustainability of environmental conscious consumers, it is no surprise that some trends and patterns have started to develop so as to satisfy customers' sense of novelty without compromising companies' sustainability. Such trends are linked to the idea of circular economy or as I like to call it, circular creativity, which allows for a greater use of existing products and a decrease in waste, with the aim of slowing down the production and consumption pace.

## **1. Re-sell**

In their continuous search for distinction through unique products, responsible customers have begun to rediscover the

exclusive value of vintage products. Such products in fact are characterised by the scarcity of availability in the market, and such uniqueness has definitely contributed to increase their attraction power. Thanks, also to the development of fashion marketplaces and luxury second-hand selling and buying platforms, pre-owned - also often labelled as pre-loved - items are flourishing and finding new legitimization within the luxury world alimentering a business which according to BCG is expected to count between 10 and 20% on the overall luxury market by 2030. Buying a vintage piece is no longer just a way to save money but also a more socially accepted mean to avoid unnecessary waste while enhancing the potential for a recognised product differentiation. This spontaneous consumer trend has pushed some luxury companies to invest in and even acquire independent second-hand platforms in order to systematically monitor the phenomenon and have a full picture of their own customers. Currently one of the most – if not the most – popular and used app for luxury second-hand clothing and accessories is with no doubt Vestiarie Collective. Founded in France in 2009, the vintage app has recently communicated to have raised 178 million euros, becoming the 11th French “unicorn”.



## 2. Rent

A second interesting answer to environmental overexploitation, comes from applying the “pay-per-use” concept - which is widely spread and characterised our daily consumption – to the luxury fashion world thanks to rentals.

Satisfaction especially for millennials and Gen Z consumers more and more often comes from a real time posting on social medias to show their life to their followers. This translates into always having something new to share, which in turn has changed the approach that such customers have towards luxury clothing and accessories: they do not necessarily need to own them, they just want to access and use them when desired. For this reason, rental has become a new viable business model also for luxury companies. Moreover, through rental, luxury brands are able to expand their audience, by making it more accessible, and allowing also people who would generally not be a customer of luxury brands, to experience and familiarize with the products. Studies have shown that such an effect has allowed in the long run the creation of a stronger brand loyalty. Furthermore, renting luxury items does not affect the perception of status that each customer feels when displaying them, especially when consumers already own some similarly positioned items. For this reason, environmentally conscious consumers have started to buy luxury iconic timeless pieces while opting for rental for short-term trends. Instagram influencers and content

creators such as Valentina Ferragni supported luxury rental and have shown their personally rented items for “big events”. In particular, “Revest” and “Rent the Runaway” are two of the most well-known and most used luxury rental websites.

## 3. Repair

If on the one hand, it is true that younger generations are intrigued by the idea of experience luxury goods, on the other hand it is also true that permanently owning them will never not be attractive. So, what can be done when our luxury items are old and damaged? What is the alternative to leaving them at the bottom of our wardrobes? In one word, repair (the last of the “3Rs triad”), an action aimed at increasing the life of an existing item. A growing number of luxury brands that are committed to ensuring the longevity of their items, have in fact opened up a “repair” department within their facilities, allowing customers to bring their ruined goods that need to be brought back to life. The idea behind it is the old expression that a well repaired item can be as “good as new” and, considering that a luxury item by definition is supposed to be timeless, this initiative can be seen as a sort of lifetime guarantee for the clients. Among the repair pioneers, a notable mention must be given to Brunello Cucinelli who, through the years, has performed such services for free. Evident is also the effort of Hermès whose repair policy is to examine every product, no matter the size, the age or the level of damage.



# It's like packaging, but designed for nature



Diego Riva



It's no secret we have a problem with packaging waste and pollution. 82.2 million tons of packaging waste are produced every year. Roughly the equivalent of 600 thousand blue whales. Thinking about these figures the questions came spontaneously. How did we end up in this situation? Why is packaging designed to be waste? What are the main industries doing to tackle the issue?

Our journey starts in the early 1900s when packaging was pictured by people through the iconic character of the milkmen. Bottles of glass were considered by the dairy companies as assets and packaging, in general, was made to be durable. The more durable the packaging was, the lower the cost per client. In time, packaging started to incorporate the idea of disposability. As such, it began to be considered as "cost of goods sold" for companies. The cheaper the package the lower the cost per client. For this reason, the main objective was to make it less costly, thinner, and lighter, reducing materials but at the same time reducing quality and life cycles. Mono-use plastic became a reality and waste started to accumulate and pollute the environment.

A huge problem in the field is the consumer hesitancy to pay more for sustainable packaging. To change this behaviour and accomplish the goal of circular economy, a cradle-to-cradle

design approach is the first step on the line.

There are four main radically different trends the industry is experimenting with:

- **Reduce:** The diminishing use of plastic and the increase usage of Post-Consumer Resin (PCR) in packaging materials are just some of the many ways the industry is trying to reduce the impact on the environment. The implementation of Extended Producer Responsibilities (EPR), the use of plastic aerosols or the design of removable shrink sleeves account for most of recent innovations. Another big trend is the application of a "filling economy" in order to avoid invisible waste, in other words, the maximisation of space used in packaging transportation or in actual products. However, "plastic" is a big family of materials therefore, reducing its use might not be enough to solve the whole issue.
- **Recycle:** To achieve a sustainable circular economy in packaging production it is important to address the missing link between waste and new packaging. This issue is mainly related to sorting. Right now, most recycling is actually downcycling: it reduces the quality of a material over time. To tackle this issue, a huge step was taken into this direction by a new innovative solution called "HolyGrail 2.0". With partners from P&G, PepsiCo or Henkel, to name a few, the pioneering project proposes the

standardization of tracer/watermark sorting. It means the use of “invisible” QR-code imprinted into the packaging or the mould itself, to trace the materials of a particular product at its end-life. This will enable easier and more efficient sorting but could also evolve into fast checkouts for retailers. Indeed, there would be no more need for barcodes! When the product would reach the landfills, it would be easier to assess which materials it contains and ultimately use them to put plastic back into the system.

- **Reuse:** A substantial barrier, when we think about sustainability, is the idea of reusable packaging. For both consumers and manufacturers, it is hard, nowadays, to conceive the possibility of using a package multiple times. An interesting case-study that challenges this common notion is LOOP, by TerraCycle. The project aims at moving consumer goods (FMCG). For example, a Häagen-Dazs reusable ice-cream pint that keeps your ice cold or a Cascade refillable bottle for dishwasher detergent. These are just a small fraction of the vast selection of Loop products. The company aims at combining an interesting new design with better features and affordable prices. They can do so by educating the consumer to return the used steel package to the same or a similar retailer than where they bought it at first. However, it is important to keep in mind that not all products are convertible into this new way of thinking

packaging. Therefore, the company plays only a little part into the sustainable packaging evolution.

- **Reform:** A challenge we still need to solve efficiently in the years to come is the redesign of material used for packaging. The idea of reforming the way packages are made is crucial if we need to translate from a Net Zero goals mentality to a positive environment influence one. Interestingly, most packaging can be designed as biological nutrients. The idea is to assemble a product with materials that can be tossed on the ground or biodegrade after their use, providing nutrition for other forms of life. A perfect example that matches this philosophy is Mushroom Packaging by MycoComposite™, a solution that uses only hemp herds and mycelium to create efficient and decomposable packaging. However, these types of technology are experimental and need to integrate with the fast-paced environment of the modern economy. Although the industry is shaping more and more around the idea of sustainability, there is still a long road ahead, and the challenges posed by it are difficult to overcome. The upcoming years represent an exciting and innovative journey for the industry due to the unexploited potential of green packaging. For this reason, it is important to keep in mind that there is no such thing as right or wrong material but only right or wrong packaging.





# Q&A

with **Arianna Scroppo**,  
marketing specialist at **Too Good To Go**



Too Good To Go is a community of waste warriors fighting food waste all together: In this way they define themselves. How? Through the Owner's application Too Good To Go, which they use to connect the people, the consumers, and the business owners. When did this project start? The app was born in Denmark in 2015 with the commitment to save food, raise awareness about the issues inherent to food waste and preserve the environment. In Italy, it arrived a few years later, in March 2019, and since then it's been growing constantly and adding new projects to its portfolio (it has officially launched in more than 80 cities with 18,000 participating stores, 6,200,000 boxes sold and more than five million registered users.)

It's a chain that improves the food waste consciousness and gets saving perfectly good, surplus food from your local stores. And the benefits from this system are two: it's always a surprise at a great price and - more important - it's a good deed for the planet!

Its mission is to inspire and empower everyone to take action against food waste to turn this vision into reality and implement their ethical business model works alongside 4 groups of stakeholders: Households, Businesses, Public Affairs, and Education.

**"Although your fame precedes you, would you tell us about your reality, where you started from, and how your business model works?"**

TooGoodToGo is a Danish startup that was created in 2015 by a group of young adults and students worried about food waste.

We developed a free smartphone app to assist grocers and restaurants in selling their excess food.

Customers select a restaurant or supermarket, place and order for a "magic box" of discounted surplus food, and then pick it up from the store.

**"Do you notice any difference between Northern and Southern Italy in terms of attitude and behaviors towards food waste?"**

The difference in attitude and behavior regarding food waste between Northern and Southern Italy is technological, as less individuals in the south are familiar with how the app works.

**"Are you considering offering a vegetarian/vegan mystery box?"**

We don't want to impose restrictions and specify that just a certain sort of food can be included in the mystery box. However, you can currently filter for the type of restaurant you're looking for, such as vegan/ vegetarian.

**"We have seen that you are very committed to creating a community that supports your purpose. Can you tell us more about your community, known as *The movement*?"**

TooGoodToGo encourages anybody in this fight, and it has just launched "The Pact" in Italy, which has been signed by major players such as Unilever, Carrefour, and Nestle.

We communicate in a direct way that anybody can understand.



**"How do merchants respond when you propose your service? Is there any kind of resistance or do they immediately understand the potential of your application?"**

Because the platform is easy to use, it is simple to encourage grocery businesses to join the community; this may be our most valuable asset. The only problem with finding new potential partners is that some of them may be unfamiliar with how to use apps.

**"How do you look for and approach merchants? Is there any specific characteristic you look for, or any requirement?"**

We have a sales department that focuses on expanding the business by contacting firms directly.

We invite any store with a surplus of food to participate; we are not searching for special in-store features because we feel that all products can be saved.



**"In recent years there has been an increase in awareness of sustainability issues. How has this impacted your business?"**

In March 2019, TooGoodToGo was launched in Italy, where the issue of sustainability was already well-known in the media but not widely discussed. Despite this, the app's launch was a huge success, and we grew quickly as many restaurants closed due to the epidemic.

Unfortunately, when it comes to Greenwashing, determining whether or not a company is genuinely helping the environment is difficult.

**"You are a young company, but the operations are spread in many different countries. Is there any difference in how countries approach food waste? How do you manage the degrees of difference across countries?"**

We have a significant difference in how we tackle food waste because we work in different nations. In comparison to Italy, Spain, and Portugal, northern European countries are more progressed in this area. Only Italy and France, on the other hand, have laws regulating food waste. In Italy, however, food waste is addressed from a social rather than an environmental perspective.



# Transitioning towards sustainable agriculture



**Lia Maffini**



photo credit: freestocks.org

It is undeniable that, in the context of fast increasing climate change, biodiversity loss, and water shortages, global agriculture must transition quickly and firmly toward sustainability.

Farmers and academics have fortunately devised a well-studied road to this transition: agroecological agricultural systems that replicate natural ecosystems by developing tightly integrated energy, water, and nutrient cycles.

Agroecological systems replace fossil fuel and chemical-intensive management, this is a further step forward that is obviously very significant and has been underestimated. As a result, the biggest agricultural sustainability issue may be replacing nonrenewable resources with environmentally competent people in ways that establish and maintain attractive rural lives.

It seems a fair and applicable solution, yet many countries are running in the opposite direction. The USA for instance, is substituting knowledgeable people with non-renewable resources, damaging both the environment and local economies.

## **A deeper look into agroecological farming**

Agroecological farming practices are the result of extensive research carried out by both farmer and researchers to lead towards a sustainable transition in agriculture. As addressed before, current agricultural practices not only harm the environment but also people.

The agricultural practices currently in place, based on monocultures of input-dependent crops provide little room for adaptive resilience of many local

communities in face of climate related disasters. With the adoption of agroecological practices, farmers can reduce their environmental imprint and reliance on resource-intensive external inputs by switching from large acreages of single crops to diversified cropping and livestock systems that imitate natural ecosystems. Also, the mentioned agricultural practices ensure farmers more flexibility to adapt to market changes.

## **Transitioning towards agroecology**

The transition can be seen as a process divided into four separate steps:

### **1. Improving efficiency in the use of resources**

This first step is to optimize biological processes, since this decreases the demand for exogenous inputs that have a harmful influence on human and environmental health. Products and practices that are less harmful to the environment are substituted.

### **2. Transforming the agricultural production system to be more resilient and sustainable**

To address the core causes of issues such as land degradation, loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and water shortages, agricultural production methods must be redesigned. The innovative methods boost biodiversity, recycle waste, and provide variety to landscapes.

### **3. Strengthening the markets**

The transition to agroecology is only possible and sustainable if markets are adapted to incentivize farmers.

### **4. Building an enabling environment for more**



sustainable food systems. Integrated legal frameworks, regulations, and governance mechanisms enable the transition to more resilient and sustainable food systems by creating an enabling environment.

### **Barriers to becoming a sustainable farmer**

The transition comes with costs and obstacles. Therefore, the main priority should be that of reducing barriers to entry. One of the biggest challenges is acquiring adequate land, with access to water. Moreover, before farmers can harvest their first crop, they must invest millions of dollars in equipment, running expenditures, and suitable storage and post-handling facilities. Farmers must also undertake upfront

investments in soil health and ecosystem function, such as cover crops, compost treatments, and hedgerows, to improve soil health and ecosystem function. However, the economic gains may take years to materialize, and farmers may experience early production risks because of moving to new techniques.

They should be open to the possibility of employing scale-appropriate technologies that are consistent with agroecology and that can eliminate some of the repetitious and physically harmful jobs, allowing employees to concentrate on applying their ecological talents. It is also true that labor-intensive agriculture can create job possibilities in rural areas that are sparsely inhabited.







# Goooders. The living proof that you can be “green” without compromising your style as a fashion icon

photo credit: Ron Lach, pexels.com

**T**oday words like “sustainability” and “CSR” are in vogue. This explains why many well-known companies, especially in the fashion industry, camouflage their unethical affairs through greenwashing. However, in the twenty-first century, it is not that easy to fool the so-called digital natives (take note!), as we hold the world, literally, just a click away. Understanding whether a company has turned green simply because it was the next fashionable thing to do is easy to discover, but if a brand was operating in a sustainable way before the #sustainability wave invaded your Instagram feed, then this is a good sign! When the concept of Goooders was initially developed, being sustainable was definitely not at the first place in a CEO’s mind and, for this reason, we had the honour to interview Eva Geraldine, the founder of the lifestyle concept Goooders, whose mission is “to redefine what it means to wear our values, look fantastic, help ethical brands thrive and save the planet at the same time”. Eva Geraldine knows what she is talking about when it comes to the fashion industry. Her background as a stylist and fashion editor in New York City built up her flawless taste and this is probably the reason why at Goooders you will never find an out-of-date item. The issue with the fashion industry, as Eva pointed out, is that, especially in the past, it

lacked awareness and consciousness for what concerned environmental and ethical issues, but on the other hand, sustainability-conscious shops did not offer fashionable items. Consumers had always to deal with this sort of trade-off, which did not maximize their welfare, and, from an economic standpoint, it did not increase demand. Goooders has been the solution to this gap in the market as it offered to customers greener alternatives, always considering the aesthetic factor. Moreover, the concept developed by Eva focused for the first time on the consumer.

Another good reason to be part of the Goooders community is that the products, and tips, that you will find on their website are based on the three founding principles of the company: beautiful, meaningful and sustainable. In fact, Goooders’ idea is to inspire people to live more consciously, by acquiring products that are sustainable and have a storytelling behind them. T-shirts, bags, skincare and all the items available for e-commerce are the results of projects that Goooders carries out with different communities. Jewelleries are mostly produced by a community of women in Burkina Faso, another community of Indian women who have been scarred with acid make turbans, while many other items are

produced with the help of “Cooperativa Alice”, a cooperative which helps women in jail to get reintegrated in the society.

When we asked Eva about the distribution channel of the company, she explained to us that during the pandemic, Gooders has opened its e-commerce channel, since, before Covid-19, the brand used to sell solely through pop-up stores placed in luxurious hotels. The pandemic allowed Gooders to increase its customer loyalty, by permitting those consumers already aware of the brand to continue purchasing online, but also to increase notably its customer base and brand awareness. As Eva specified, Covid did something good in terms of sustainability, as it allowed people to rediscover their need to stay in contact with nature, supporting the environment which had, with the pandemic, some breath of relief.

It would be legitimate, then, asking why businesses continue to misbehave, in terms of ethics and sustainability, when they could simply implement more environmentally and community-friendly policies. One of the most significant reasons is that, in Italy, the State does not provide any kind of aid or support for these types of businesses. The State favours the start-ups/companies involved in sustainable tech or basing their business model wholly on sustainability. A “hybrid” brand like Gooders, which focuses on sustainability but also (being a for-profit) sells items is still hard to identify for the Government and, consequently, do not receive any support. This mechanism disincentivizes companies willing to be greener, canceling out all the efforts made to raise awareness of sustainability. The idea that should be conveyed is that any improvement/effort is more than welcomed, as the long-term aim is always the same: safeguarding our planet and its citizens. However, due to numerous limitations and criteria nowadays there are



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still many businesses that do not receive facilitation and face several financial threats.

Before leaving Eva, who at the moment of the interview had just returned from Africa where she was taking care of new projects, we asked her the greatest advice she would give to a Bocconiano. Her answer was simple but meaningful: “Always keep in mind what your mission is. If your mission is to be sustainable, never make a compromise, but reason, instead, in terms of it, as your mission will be the guideline to go through the ups and downs of your path”.

If you want to learn more about Gooders community, here is the link of the website: <https://gooders.com/> and their IG page: @gooders\_





# UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021

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**N**ations agreed to new economic incentives at COP26- a global United Nations summit about climate change that took place in Glasgow between 31st October and 12th November 2021 - essentially facilitating the transfer of emission reductions between countries while also incentivizing the private sector to participate in climate-friendly solutions. Similarly, Parties agreed on non-market alternatives to enable greater international collaboration on mitigation strategies. In terms of market mechanisms and non-market approaches Countries agreed to the implementing rules for three factors that will aid Parties in achieving their projected emission reductions and adaptation goals as outlined in their Paris Agreement national climate action plans (Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs).

The first two of these tools entail collaboration that will result in the transfer of emissions mitigation from one country to another, from the one that has achieved the reduction to the country that will achieve it. The measures are intended to encourage and facilitate private sector participation.

Countries can collaborate on mitigation and adaptation, as well as sustainable development and poverty reduction, using non-market means.

For each of the three instruments, decisions on implementation rules were made.

First, guidelines were created for cooperative approaches, which accept the transfer of emission reductions between parties in bilateral agreements. This allows countries to connect their mitigation programs, such as pollution trading systems.

Second, the new UNFCCC Mechanism, which credits emission-reducing initiatives, was given rules, modalities, and procedures to follow. This allows a corporation in one country to decrease emissions there and have those reductions recognized so that it can sell them to a company in another country. They may be used by the second company to satisfy its own emission reduction targets or to assist it in achieving net-zero status.

Finally, the Parties agreed on a work plan to assist non-market approaches that will be implemented between now and the end of the year. The work program assists many countries, institutions, and stakeholders in developing collaboration in a variety of sectors, including the development of sustainable energy sources.

The implementation of the guidelines allows the private sector to begin new mitigation strategies, including the implementation of mitigation projects under the new UNFCCC system.

Furthermore, many activities that were previously carried out under the Kyoto Protocol's clean development mechanism will be able to shift to the new UNFCCC system using the regulations created to facilitate this transition. Parties can be more ambitious in their activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to climate change with stronger collaboration. This might be accomplished by making meeting their NDC more cost-effective, allowing them to explore going farther in mitigation than their NDC anticipated, or by having more adaptation action as a result of emission reduction efforts.



**GREEN LIGHT  
FOR BUSINESS**

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