

# Together without plastic



CREATING HABITS  
THAT PROTECT  
THE PLANET



**sunce**



# About Waste

**Waste** is any substance or object that the holder discards, intends to discard, or is required to discard.

The amount of waste in the world continues to grow due to the increase in population, urbanization, and consumption habits. Despite progress in waste management systems, major challenges still remain.

- Each European produces an average of about 190 kilograms of packaging waste per year.
- In 2022, the average European consumed 14.9 t of raw materials.

Increasing consumption leads to larger amounts of waste, and the biggest challenge today is plastic.

## PLASTIC – Useful, but...

During the 20th century, plastic became a symbol of progress — but also a symbol of overconsumption.

Plastic is one of the most used materials today. It can be found everywhere — in packaging, clothing, vehicles, electronics, and everyday items.

Thanks to its durability, low cost, and ease of production, plastic has become an inseparable part of everyday life.

However, because of its durability, plastic hardly decomposes in nature and remains in the environment for hundreds of years.

Today, there is almost no part of the planet without plastic. It can be found in the seas, water, air, soil, and even in food.

More than 80% of marine litter originates on land — through rivers, stormwater, poor waste management systems, or improper disposal — and plastic makes up the largest part of it.

This poses a threat to human health, animals, and the economy, especially tourism and fisheries.



“

**If everyone lived like the average European, we would need almost three Earths.**

**That is why it is important to reduce the use of single-use plastics and choose reusable items bottles, cups, containers, and bags. Every such choice helps protect the environment and reduce the amount of waste.**

The solution is not to completely avoid plastic, but to use it responsibly and switch to reusable products such as cups, bottles, bags, and food containers.

# Circular Economy





The traditional, linear economic model is based on the principle of “take – make – use – dispose (waste).” Such an approach consumes large amounts of raw materials and energy, while generating increasing amounts of waste.

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption that involves:

sharing, renting, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible.

In this way:

- the life cycle of products is extended
- materials remain in the economy for as long as possible.

When a product reaches the end of its life, its materials — thanks to recycling – are kept within the system and can be usefully reused, creating additional value.

This approach reduces the need for new resources and the amount of waste produced.



## LINEAR ECONOMY

TAKE



MAKE



USE



WASTE



## RECYCLING ECONOMY

TAKE



MAKE

RECYCLE

USE

WASTE



## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

TAKE



MAKE

RECYCLE

RETURN

USE

REPAIR

REUSE



That's why it's time to change  
the way we produce, consume,  
and think about waste.





## Sustainable businesses

An increasing number of businesses in the Republic of Croatia are focusing not only on profit but also on responsibility towards the environment, the community, and future generations. Introducing sustainable practices into business operations not only reduces the negative impact on the environment but also brings long-term savings, increases efficiency, and strengthens customer trust, thereby building a positive brand image.

To encourage the adoption of sustainable business practices, we have developed a [catalogue of good practice examples](#) as part of the [AWASTER](#) project.

## Benefits for businesses

Companies that apply the principles of the circular economy gain numerous benefits:

- **Environmental** – reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, energy consumption, and waste.
- **Social** – strengthening of a positive image and cooperation with the local community.
- **Economic** – resource savings, innovation, and access to new markets.





# Examples of good practice



## Kava<sup>2</sup>



At the [specialty coffee shop Kava<sup>2</sup>](#) in Split, customers are offered a lower price for takeaway coffee if they bring their own cup. Although paper cups are often considered a better option, most of them actually contain a thin plastic lining that prevents recycling, meaning they are not a true solution either.

## Heritage Hotel FERMAI MGallery Split

**Heritage Hotel FERMAI** in Split has eliminated single-use plastics and switched to reusable solutions and natural materials. Food waste is also a major challenge for the hospitality sector, but this hotel has addressed it by adjusting its menu and portion sizes.





## Makarun

Makarun Restaurant in Split has embraced zero-waste principles, making full use of every part of its ingredients. Anything that cannot be used is composted, and the resulting compost helps the restaurant grow some of its own vegetables.



## Sustainability is my vibe festival in Split

At the Split market, Suncе organized the festival "Sustainability is my vibe. Visitors enjoyed food prepared according to zero-waste principles, served in reusable dishes with reusable cutlery. Refreshments were also provided for all attendees in reusable cups.







## The Split biking tour

The Split biking tour is a public event that, in 2025, welcomed 216 cyclists and around 300 attendees at the party in Ćardin — all without single-use plastics and with minimal waste. Reusable cups helped significantly reduce the amount of waste the event could generate.



## Advent in Split

2024 Advent in Split featured reusable cups and a deposit system for the first time. Visitors could pay a deposit to use reusable cups instead of single-use ones and receive a refund upon returning the cups to the bar. In this way, Advent, one of the city's largest public events, significantly reduced waste generation.





## Public events on Dugi Otok 2025

During the 2025 tourist season, the Sali Tourist Board introduced sustainable solutions at major events on Dugi Otok. Festivals such as Saljske Užanci, the Moto Tour, the triathlon, and the Art Colony were held using reusable cups, significantly reducing the amount of waste generated.



# How to organize a plastic-free event?





A public event without single-use plastic means an event where no form of disposable plastic is used and, as much as possible, every form of single-use material (such as paper, cardboard, wood, etc.) is avoided in order to promote the circular economy. The organization of such an event also takes into account all other environmentally responsible principles and promotes responsible behavior among participants.

The goal of organizing these types of events is to reduce the negative impact on nature and the environment and to raise awareness among organizers and visitors about ways they can contribute to environmental protection.

## Legal framework

According to the Waste Management Act (NN 84/21), which is aligned with Directive (EU) 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment (Single-Use Plastics Directive – SUP Directive), the use of the following single-use plastic products is prohibited:

- cutlery (forks, knives, spoons, chopsticks)
- plates
- straws
- balloon sticks designed to be attached to and support balloons
- beverage stirrers
- food containers made of expanded polystyrene, such as boxes, with or without lids, used to hold food
- beverage containers and cups made of expanded polystyrene, including their caps and lids.

# Solutions for reducing waste

To reduce the amount of waste and protect the environment, it is important to always choose reusable cups, dishes, and cutlery. Such solutions are not only more environmentally friendly, but also more cost-effective in the long run.

Every time we avoid using single-use plastics, we take a step toward a cleaner, more responsible, and more sustainable shared environment.





**Make a list of all  
necessary items  
and remove  
everything  
unnecessary!**

# Find reusable solutions:

Instead of single-use materials, use durable, long-lasting ones:

- **Hard plastic (PP)** – lightweight, durable and easy to maintain.
- **Glass** – strong, long-lasting and fully recyclable.
- **Ceramics** – durable, aesthetically appealing and suitable for serving.
- **Stainless steel (inox)** – resilient, hygienic and ideal for cups, bottles, and utensils.



**Cups:** implement a deposit system or encourage participants to bring their own cups.

**Straws:** avoid them entirely or use metal/bamboo alternatives.

**Bottles:** use large returnable glass bottles whenever possible, or large plastic gallons.

**Cutlery:** use reusable or wooden utensils.

**Bags:** encourage the use of cloth or other reusable bags.

**Decorations:** make them from natural materials.

By choosing reusable solutions, you reduce waste, conserve resources, and contribute to more sustainable business practices and communities.



Find more information and examples:



## Logistics

- Provide space for washing and storing reusable items.
- Set up containers for separate waste collection.

## Collaboration and communication

- Clearly explain to your team during meetings why plastic is being avoided.
- Coordinate communication with visitors.
- In staff guidelines and public communication, clearly emphasize that the event is “plastic-free.”



**Start the change today  
– choose reusable over  
single-use!**





## Need help?

With years of expertise, Sunce can guide and inspire stakeholders to embrace environmentally responsible practices, offering practical tips for running sustainable events.

For more information, reach out to us at  
[info@sunce-st.org](mailto:info@sunce-st.org)

# sunce



# Interreg



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## Italy – Croatia

---



**GOVERNMENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**  
Office for Cooperation with NGOs



The AWASTER project is co-financed by the European Union and the Office for Associations of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. The views expressed in this brochure are the sole responsibility of Sunce and do not reflect the views of the EU or the Office for Associations of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

# sunce