

LIVING SUSTAINABLY: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO ECO- FRIENDLY CHOICES



Abstract

In today's fast-changing world, the need for sustainable living is more urgent than ever. Environmental degradation, climate change, and dwindling resources are putting the planet's future at risk, making it essential for individuals and communities to adopt eco-friendly habits. Sustainable living takes a comprehensive approach, aiming to reduce environmental impact, promote social fairness, and maintain economic sustainability for current and future generations. This guide will provide a wide range of practical tips, strategies, and solutions to help you incorporate sustainable practices into all aspects of daily life.

Getting Started

Healthy People, Healthy Planet is a celebration of the connection between humanity and the environment in which we live, with a focus on the food that keeps us going. You'll find practical ways to make an impact on an individual and global scale, starting with what you put on your plate and beyond. When you take small steps toward sustainability in your everyday life, you're acknowledging this truth, no matter how small the gesture. Luckily, environmentally-friendly and sustainable options are becoming more and more widely available. This means it's increasingly accessible to make choices that are respectful of the planet you and all living beings —call home.

1. What is Sustainable living?



In the broadest sense, sustainability refers to the ability to maintain or support a process continuously over time. In business and policy contexts, sustainability seeks to prevent the depletion of natural or physical resources, so that they will remain available for the long term.

How Sustainability Works

Accordingly, sustainable policies emphasize the future effect of any given policy or business practice on humans, ecosystems, and the wider economy. The concept often corresponds to the belief that without major changes to the way the planet is run, it will suffer irreparable damage.

As concerns about anthropogenic climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution have become more widespread, the world has shifted to embrace sustainable practices and policies, primarily through the implementation of sustainable business practices and increased investments in green technology.

3 Pillars of Sustainability

The idea of sustainability is often broken down into three pillars: economic, environmental, and social—also known informally as profits, planet, and people.

In that breakdown, the concept of "economic sustainability" focuses on conserving the natural resources that provide physical inputs for economic production, including both renewable and exhaustible inputs.

The concept of "environmental sustainability" adds greater emphasis on the life support systems, such as the atmosphere or soil, that must be maintained for economic production or human life to even occur. In contrast, social sustainability focuses on the human effects of economic systems, and the category includes attempts to eradicate poverty and hunger, as well as to combat inequality.

In 1983, the United Nations created the World Commission on Environment and Development to study the connection between ecological health, economic development, and social equity. The commission, then run by former Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, published a report in 1987 that has become the standard in defining sustainable development.

That report describes sustainable development, or the blueprint for attaining sustainability, as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Corporate Sustainability

In business contexts, sustainability refers to more than just environmentalism. Harvard Business School lists two ways to measure sustainable business practices: the effect a business has on the environment, and the effect a business has on society, with the goal of sustainable practice being to have a positive impact on at least one of those areas.

Corporate sustainability emerged as a component of corporate ethics in response to public concerns of long-term damage caused by a focus on short-term profits.

This view of responsibility encourages businesses to balance long-term benefits with immediate returns, and the goal of pursuing inclusive and environmentally sound objectives. This covers a broad array of possible practices. Cutting emissions, lowering energy usage, sourcing products from fair-trade organizations, and ensuring their physical waste is disposed of properly and with a smaller carbon footprint would qualify as moves toward sustainability.

Companies have also set sustainability goals such as a commitment to zero-waste packaging by a certain year, or to reduce overall emissions by a certain percentage. Many corporations have made such sustainability promises in recent years. For example, Walmart Stores, Inc. (WMT) has pledged to reach zero emissions by 2040.

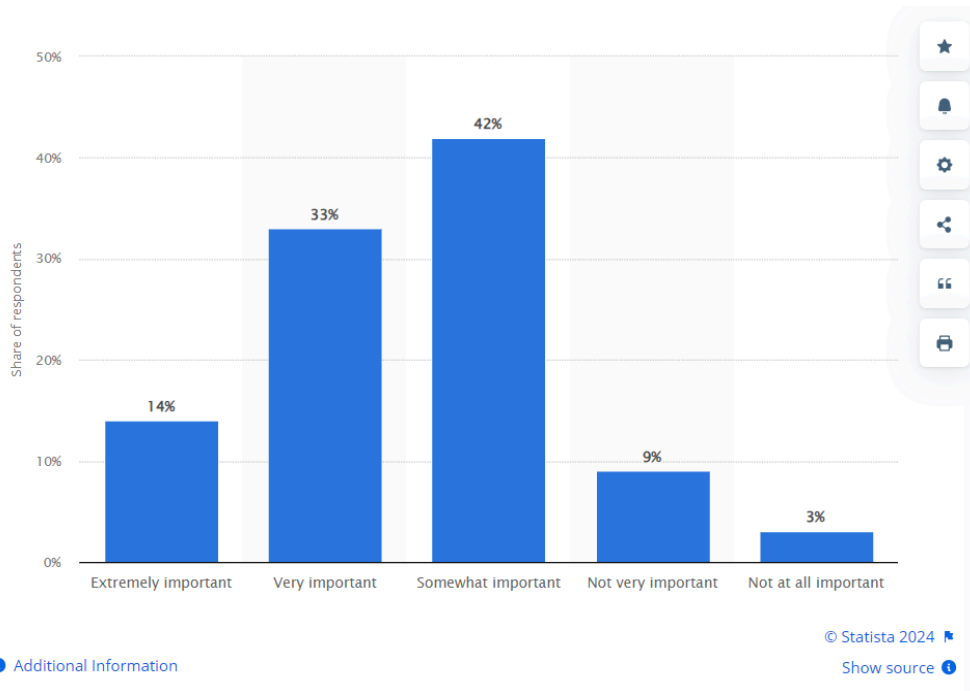
The push for sustainability is evident in areas such as energy generation as well, where the focus has been on finding new deposits to outpace the drawdown on existing reserves. Some electricity companies, for example, now publicly state goals for energy generation from sustainable sources such as wind, hydropower, and solar.

Because these policies tend to generate public goodwill, some companies have been accused of "greenwashing," the practice of providing a false impression that makes a business seem more environmentally friendly than it is.

Cost Cutting

Moreover, many companies have been criticized for cost-cutting measures that make it harder to evaluate their sustainability. For example, many companies might move some parts of their business to less-regulated markets, such as by offshoring production to obtain cheaper labor. This can make it harder to assess the costs of production on workers and the environment.

Sustainability practices "significantly affect" the offshoring activities of multinational corporations, according to an examination of data from 1,080 multinational corporations.



Level of importance of living a sustainable lifestyle among consumers in Australia as of March 2023

Adopting a sustainable lifestyle was considered important to some extent by around 89 percent of Australian consumers, according to a survey conducted in March 2023. Around 14 percent of respondents felt that living sustainably was extremely important. Nonetheless, around three percent of those surveyed indicated that sustainable living was not at all important to them.

2. Sustainable Alternatives to Everyday Lifestyle Staples

Fresh, local produce

Why it matters:

Locally-produced food is an important part of a sustainable food supply and has plenty of personal, community, and environmental benefits.

Many urban and suburban locations rely on food that's transported great distances and often grown in other countries. As we've seen during the pandemic, these complex food supply chains can easily break down in times of upheaval.

Not only does locally grown food empower the local economy and bolster food security. It also cuts down on the emissions and fossil fuels required to transport food over immense tracts of land (and sometimes sea).

Fast-growing fibers

Why it matters

Bamboo is a crop used for wood, fiber, cloth, and plastics that's fast-growing and extremely durable.

A 2022 study noted that bamboo is a low carbon substitute for plastic and paper as well as emissions-intensive materials like steel, cement, and polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic.

Hemp is another fiber crop that's been cultivated for centuries. It's also used to make:

- ❖ paper
- ❖ clothing
- ❖ cloth

Reusable everything

Why it matters

According to 2021 research [Trusted Source](#), humans have produced more than 8 billion tons of plastic since the 1950s and recycled less than 10 percent of it.

The study notes that as plastic breaks down, micro and nano plastics are released directly into the air and waterways.

More than 80 percent of tap water samples worldwide contain microplastics, and they've even been found in the human placenta, an organ that develops inside the uterus during pregnancy.

It's even been estimated that the average person consumes a credit card worth of plastic a week.

This is significant, because plastic has been shown to cause:

- immune and endocrine disruption
- cytotoxicity

- damage to organ function



Ideatech Reusable Storage Bags

Reusable sandwich bags are often more expensive than disposable ones due to their durability, but the budget-friendly Ideatech 20-Pack Reusable Storage Bag Set reduces single-use plastics while remaining inexpensive. While most reusable storage bag sets come in packs of 10 or less, this bundle offers double that, including three different sizes to fit various foods. Throughout one month of testing, these bags were resistant to leaks and stains (although odors did linger for a bit), and the thick PVC and PEVA material kept the contents of the bags fresh and protected.

While we noticed a vinegar-like smell when we first opened them, hot soapy water quickly eliminated the scent. Keep in mind that they aren't dishwasher safe and might be tricky to air dry since they don't stand upright and moisture can get trapped in the corners. Despite this, these bags did an excellent job of keeping foods like herbs, carrots, and cookies sealed and stored.

Australia and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

On 25 September 2015 the Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, joined 193 Leaders and Ministers from across the globe at the United Nations in New York, to welcome and endorse the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda). Australia actively participated in international discussions to design the 2030 Agenda and supported the

involvement of all development actors, including civil society organisations, the private sector, philanthropic organisations and academia.

The 2030 Agenda is both a domestic and international agenda. It is well-aligned with Australia's foreign, security, development and trade interests - especially in promoting regional stability, security and economic prosperity. It also helps Australia in advocating for a strong focus on economic growth and development in the Indo-Pacific region and in promoting gender equality, governance and strengthening tax systems.

Australia will deliver its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the 2030 Agenda at the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2018.



3. How To Make Your Move Eco-Friendly?

Moving household belongings from one place to another is often tedious and stressful. The process requires attention-to-detail planning, proper packing supplies and great moving strategies. While you are busy collecting bubble wrap and corrugated boxes for your items, you may not realise that this can affect the environment. According to the Australian Environment Protection Agency, transportation is one of the country's major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change, global warming, and air and water pollution are key signs of environmental impact. Plus, using plastic-based packing materials and boxes increases plastic waste and causes harm to the environment. Therefore, making small changes and making your move eco-friendly is important. It is good to make smart decisions, even hiring trained

removalists Gold Coast and reducing carbon footprint. Here are some great tips and tricks to help you relocate sustainably:

Plan Your Move in Advance

Making your move eco-friendly is a big decision because you must ditch traditional packing and relocation strategies and adopt sustainable ones. So, prepare your mind and plan things ahead of time to reduce unnecessary waste. Look for options that can protect the environment or minimise plastic bags. For instance: You may toss your old clothes, towels or other items. But, if you think wisely, you can use these things to pack your knickknacks and reduce paper and plastic packing materials.

Host A Garage Sale

This is also one of the best ways to eliminate items you no longer need. Selling at a discounted price can also help you earn extra money and reduce the moving load. Organising a garage sale at least 2-3 weeks before the move is good. So, plan ahead and reduce waste when moving a house.

Donate Pre-Loved Items You No Longer Need

De-cluttering is one of the crucial steps that can help you reduce the entire moving load. You can get rid of unnecessary items, and donating to the local charity is one of the best ways to help underprivileged people and protect the environment. Instead of adding waste to the landfill, you can donate pre-loved items to disadvantaged people. Give your unused clothes, old furniture, books, dishes, old bed linens and much more. Make sure all are in good condition.

Use Old Clothes and Towels to Wrap Fragile Items

There is no denying that bubble wrap, packing paper and other plastic materials; use old clothes, towels and blankets to pack your fragile items. Wrap your plasma TV, lamps, dishes, and other delicate items in clothes to add extra protection during lifting, loading, and transportation. This will save you money on packing materials and reduce plastic waste- which is good for the environment. You can also ask removalists Gold Coast to bring biodegradable packing products for safe and sound removals.

Get Reusable Packing Boxes

Instead of buying corrugated moving boxes, you can reduce your carbon footprint by getting reusable boxes from grocery stores, liquor shops, bookstores, Facebook marketplaces and recycling centres. This will reduce landfill waste and also save you a lot of money. You can also

rent reusable boxes to pack your delicate household items. Many renowned companies offer pick-up and drop-off services once you are done with the boxes.

Utilise Storage Units For Your Belongings

Reduce the need for corrugated boxes by using portable storage items. Leave clothes in the dresser or pack bed linens in a suitcase. You can also pack your books and other supplies in desk drawers and containers and save the planet. You can also make your new home energy efficient by reducing utility and water consumption.

Consciously Toss Unwanted Food

A lot of food gets wasted during the moving process. You don't need to toss everything. Instead, you can donate sauces, oil and canned foods to local shelters on the Gold Coast. Pack these food items and look for reliable charity organisations where you can easily donate such stuff.



Look For Recycling Options

You can't overlook the accumulated trash when preparing a house for a relocation. You might have bottles of household cleaners, empty shampoo bottles, cans and other plastic waste. Throwing everything into the landfill leaves a carbon footprint and pollutes the environment. So, think wisely and recycle your household belongings. For instance:

Find the best recycling centre for paper waste

Recycle your old electronic devices, such as mobile phones, computer, DVD player and much more.

Search for local recycling centres.

Hire an Eco-Friendly Moving Company

It is always good to let professional Gold Coast removalists handle your much-loved possessions throughout the process. If you have decided to hire a company, research and look for eco-friendly or green options. Many responsible and reliable companies practice sustainable moving habits to save the environment and keep your items intact. They even use green moving trucks to reduce pollution. Tip: You can also opt for the backloading option if you have only furniture or fewer items to relocate.



Reasons Sustainability Is Beneficial For Business—Not Just The Environment

Reviewing the recently published Fortune 500 ranking of America's biggest companies, it was impressive to see that almost all of them had corporate social responsibilities, or CSR, listed in their core objectives. Having spent most of my career in corporate America with large corporations, I once cynically viewed social or environmental impact as a check-the-box task for HR manuals, annual reports or website marketing.

Sustainability is constantly and heavily promoted by the largest product and service companies in the world, such as GE, Apple, Amazon, Tesla and Whole Foods. There are also many independent companies attacking key initiatives such as reduction of carbon emissions (Entergy), elimination of plastic waste (FloWater) and elevated use of alternative powers (8minute), as a few examples.

Let's take a look at five reasons sustainability is good for business.

Attracting And Retaining Employees

These past two and a half years of the Covid-19 era have been marked with what has been called the "Great Resignation," a time marked by historical numbers of employees choosing to leave their employer for a variety of reasons, including companies not having a CSR agenda. In fact, about a quarter of both Gen-Z and millennial employees have asserted that a company having a sustainability agenda has influenced them to stay. It is a sense of pride to be part of these organizations. Time, cost savings and resource deployment of various departments are also very significant in not requiring companies to endure the recruiting, rehiring and retraining of new talent.

Value Creation, Cost Reductions And Innovation

Successful companies look at sustainability from a point of considering how they can leverage it to have better returns on capital both operationally and commercially. When companies apply the right methodologies against their sustainability goals, they find ways to use their resources more efficiently, discover costs and supply chain savings, are often able to reduce packaging or service costs and, in many cases, find innovative opportunities to increase profits on their sustainable products.

Brand Reputation And Consumer Demand

These types of initiatives can have a positive impact on the expansion of the consumer base, a brand's reputation in the marketplace and customer loyalty. Products and services offered as "sustainable," alongside very clear and precise marketing, have proven to increase sales and reach and capture a growing audience that cares for their health and the environment. Such marketing also positions the company for positive publicity and potential partnerships with other sustainably focused brands.

New Opportunities And Emerging Markets

Entering new markets is a two-pronged approach, first in providing products and secondly by providing services at a lower margin in markets that provide share or entering markets that have not been touched but show demand. Having a sustainable product or service in one market can also help lead to a referral to another market prime for expansion. All of this equates to new sales for the organization.

Most Sustainable Types of Seafood, According to the Seafood Watch

You may have noticed the word "sustainable" now comes up more often regarding seafood consumption. Between environmental impacts like pollution, global warming, and overfishing, marine populations have rapidly declined over the last few decades. To help bring these issues to light, the researchers at Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch work year-round to update their recommendations of the most sustainable fish to consume in order to best protect these delicate and stressed ecosystems.

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What are the most sustainable types of seafood?

The most sustainable picks range from farmed favorites such as tilapia and arctic char, to wild-caught stars like albacore tuna and rockfish. Keep in mind that Monterey Bay Aquarium's list is updated roughly once a month, so be sure to check back frequently to see if there's been any movement in the rankings.

- **Farmed Chinook Salmon**

A crowd favorite, chinook salmon, farmed in New Zealand using freshwater net pens, are considered a "Best Choice." However, when opting for wild-caught, Seafood Watch recommends purchasing pink salmon (caught in Washington with lift nets) or sockeye salmon (also caught with lift nets during the early summer run). Unfortunately, most of the salmon caught on the U.S. West Coast and in British Columbia, Canada, fall into the

"Good Alternative" category, which the Seafood Watch classifies as "buy, but be aware there are concerns with how they're caught or farmed."

- **Farmed Clams**

Another top contender on the "Best Choice" list? Clams farmed worldwide using bottom culture methods. According to the Seafood Watch, these mollusks are considered highly sustainable because farming plankton-filtering species, like clams and mussels, causes minimal environmental impact. However, the researchers point out that Pacific geoduck clams cultivated on the seafloor in Washington and British Columbia, Canada, fall into the "Good Alternatives" category, as this variety needs to be enclosed with plastic tubing while they are farmed.

- **Farmed Whiteleg Shrimp**

Whiteleg shrimp farmed in the United States ranks highly on the "Best Choice" list with a score of 7.01. Shrimp farming methods include indoor flowthrough raceways that use linear containment structures where wastewater leaves the facility, undergoes treatment, and recirculates back into the raceway. The Seafood Watch points out that the U.S. shrimp farming industry operates on a small scale; thus, environmental impacts remain minor.

- **Farmed Tilapia**

Generally, Seafood Watch deems tilapia farmed in Peru (using raceways) and in Ecuador (in ponds) safe options. Other "Good Alternatives" include tilapia from Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, Indonesia, and Taiwan. However, they strongly recommend against any tilapia farmed in China, which may be fed feces from livestock animals.

- **Farmed Arctic Char**

Arctic Char (also known as alpine trout), farmed in the U.S., Canada, and Iceland in raceways, is considered a sustainable purchase. On the downside, cultivating this species requires a large quantity of marine-based ingredients to feed the stock. Additionally, Seafood Watch expresses worry regarding byproducts from the farming process, such as effluent and chemicals, which are considered a moderate concern for the environment.



Ways to Live More Sustainably

We take a look at some ways to live more sustainable

Global warming is becoming a more pressing issue as time goes on. Our environment and atmosphere is harmed depending on the decisions we make. Swapping daily tasks and products for more sustainable/eco friendly alternatives can reduce the effect we have on the environment. Here we count down 10 ways we can live more sustainably.

Save Water

Cutting down on water usage not only reduces your affect on the environment but also saves you money. Having a water butt in your garden allows you to water the garden without using water from the tap. Reusing water after cooking or cleaning to water plants decreases your water usage.

Grow your own produce

Most produce is imported to supermarkets which increases fossil fuels usage, growing your own vegetables saves money and decreases the effect on the environment. Some imported produce creates water and air pollution in the areas it's grown.

Eat less meat

Climate change is highly affected by the meat industry, this is from the production as well as the transportation. The industry also has a large effect on landscapes because of the plots needed to house these animals. Eating meat alternatives is better for the environment and fights against pollution.

Go paperless

The production of paper has a big impact on the environment and climate change, from the tools used to remove the trees, to the equipment used to make the paper. As well when paper is disposed of and begins to decompose it emits carbon dioxide. Some ways to reduce paper usage is too switch to online applications, send emails instead of letters, and read books through an online source



Reduce energy usage

Using a high amount of energy can add to carbon emissions and increase climate change. Using less energy can reduce this, such as turning lights off, turning unneeded plugs off, and using non-electric alternative appliances. To reduce the effect of your energy usage you can switch to a sustainable energy provider or install solar panels.

Conclusion:

Sustainable living isn't just about personal choices—it's something we all need to take seriously if we want to leave a better planet for the future. By making small changes, like reducing waste,

saving energy, choosing greener transportation, and buying ethically, we can really make a difference. Each of us can play a role in cutting down our environmental impact and promoting fairness. It's about working together to build a more sustainable, resilient world. Let's commit to living greener and making sure future generations have a healthy planet to call home.

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