

HAUSER & WIRTH

# CLIMATE ACTION TIPS



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# Hauser & Wirth supports the development of meaningful and industry specific responses to the climate crisis.

Climate Action Tips have been compiled by Clíodhna Murphy, Global Head of Environmental Sustainability at Hauser & Wirth, and Laura Lupton, co-founder of Artists Commit, Galleries Commit and LHL Consulting.

The following organizations have been instrumental in evolving the resources, tools and research driven reports that have aided the development of Hauser & Wirth's approach to environmental sustainability:

[Gallery Climate Coalition](#)

[Art to Acres](#)

[Julie's Bicycle](#)

[Art/Switch](#)

[Ki Culture](#)

[Galleries Commit](#)

[Artists Commit](#)

We believe only action will create the change we need.

This is why we have compiled Climate Action Tips. Our teams at Hauser & Wirth have resources on all the topics mentioned here.

Read on to learn more.



# Build the movement - artists have the power to make a difference

## COLLECTIVE ACTION

### Why it matters

Community, collaboration and collective movement building are critical to co-creating a truly sustainable art sector.

One artist studio or gallery cannot shift the dial, but collective action amplifies our efforts, builds a movement and contributes to climate resilience.

### Did you know?

Artist and political activist Gustav Metzger instigated Remember Nature in 2015, a global day of action to highlight waste, extinction and the protection of nature with creative practitioners. The anniversary of this event takes place on 4 November 2025.

[Learn more here](#)

### 'How does art engage the politics of climate change?'

'There is a way to understand climate change as a progressive political critique of culture that through criticism can change the contours of art's domain. In the same way that many other political critiques of culture such as racism, feminism, Marxism and post-colonial theory have.'

—Charles Gaines in panel Environmental Justice, Collectives and Art's Changing Shape at Sustainability in Action 2023, Los Angeles, organised by Hauser & Wirth

### QUICK TIP

Use existing networks like the [Gallery Climate Coalition](#) and [Artists Commit](#) to share your actions and learn about how to join the movement





**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:**

**Charles Gaines in Sustainability in Action 2023 panel discussion**

# Collaborate and question - artists can open the door to climate action



Back to Earth, 2022, Installation view. © readsreads.info. Courtesy Serpentine

## COMMISSIONS & EXHIBITIONS

### Why it matters

Working with presenting partners is one of the key moments when artists have the most leverage to catalyze climate action within the sector.

Letting your presenting collaborators know that the climate impact of the project is a priority for you at the start of the conversation can strongly influence environmental responsibility.

### Did you know?

Sustainability was at the core of [Back to Earth](#) at Serpentine. The team used existing structures and reused the materials from disassembled parts of the preceding exhibition, to minimise waste build and reimagine exhibition making. Almost all artwork was produced locally and inks and papers involved in printed materials were selected to prioritise recycled processes

[Learn more here](#)

### What to do

- Ask your collaborators about their climate policies. How are they adapting to become less energy intensive? How are they changing the way they transport artworks? What are they doing to reduce the carbon footprint of their buildings? Are they incorporating biodiversity into their infrastructure?
- Learn about MoMA's approach to evergreen gallery walls [here](#) in the Circular Museum series. Frequently changing temporary exhibition architecture and furniture are wasteful aspects of exhibition production. Can you collaborate with your presenting partners on ways to reuse existing materials?
- For many artworks, restrictive climate control parameters are unnecessary. Can you advocate for turning off the HVAC or widening the temperature ranges. Can new BIZOT standards be used in loan agreements?

### QUICK TIP

Durational and long programming can have climate positive consequences – advocate for longer presentations



Henri Matisse, Olympia, 1907. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.



Henri Matisse, The Oyster Eater, 1905. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

# Emissions calculation + CO2 of fabrication = carbon based donation

## Artwork Ingredient List

"Time Unfolding" / 2023  
 Artist: Thomas J Price  
 Client: Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles



AIL Calculation   Summary	
Total tonnes of CO2e of project	
<b>6.493</b>	
General Details	
Name of Project	"Time Unfolding" Sculpture by Thomas J Price
Carbon Accountant	Gilbert Guaring / Chris Roque
Project Manager	Brenna Board
Location of Installation	Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles
Hours Taken to Complete Audit	20
Carbon Summary	
Materials	5.212
Waste	0.010
Transportation – Materials	0.059
Electricity – Direct	0.246
Fuel & Gas	0.222
Flights	0.000
Packaging	0.098
Transportation – Install Site	0.647
Life	0.000

**"Time Unfolding"**

- A comprehensive understanding of the ingredients that went into the production of one sculpture.
- The sculpture was produced by UAP's Rock Tavern foundry for Hauser & Wirth LA.
- The artist was Thomas J Price.
- The ingredient list was produced by UAP | Urban Art Projects

**"Time Unfolding" Ingredient Facts**

Average weight for one 9ft figure  
**Sculpture Weight** **682 lbs (0.31 mt)**

Amount per Sculpture  
**CO2e Emissions (metric tons)** **6.493**

**% of sculpture\***

<b>Transport of Materials to Production Site</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
<b>Materials used in Production</b>	<b>80.3%</b>
Recycled Bronze	
PMMA (poly (methyl methacrylate))	
Wax Runners	
Patina and Patina Wax	
Zircon Sand	
Colloidal Silica	
Foundry Cement	
<b>Electricity used in Production</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
<b>Fuel and Gas used in Production</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Packaging</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
<b>Waste</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Transport to Install Site</b>	<b>9.9%</b>

\*This represents the percentage of CO2e emissions from the Sculpture using the Artwork Ingredient List with emission factors taken from DEFRA, ICE DB V3.0, NGAF and NGV Global.  
 \*\*For reference, one Ford Mondeo, medium spec's emissions are around 17 tonnes – so one sculpture is less than half on emission levels.

Minimizing Waste

Optimization of all inputs

Opportunity to Recycle Sand Need Investigation

All covers Scope 1 and Scope 2 of Production

Future AIL will include Water and Plastic

UAP

## FABRICATION

### Why it matters

The choices you make fabricating a new work impact the entire life cycle of that object's future. How does it need to be packed, shipped, stored, and displayed?

As the artist, your decisions now can allow not only for low impact fabrication, but for the possibility of low impact future care of the work.

### Did you know?

[UAP fabricators](#) have developed an artwork ingredient list to calculate the carbon footprint of production.

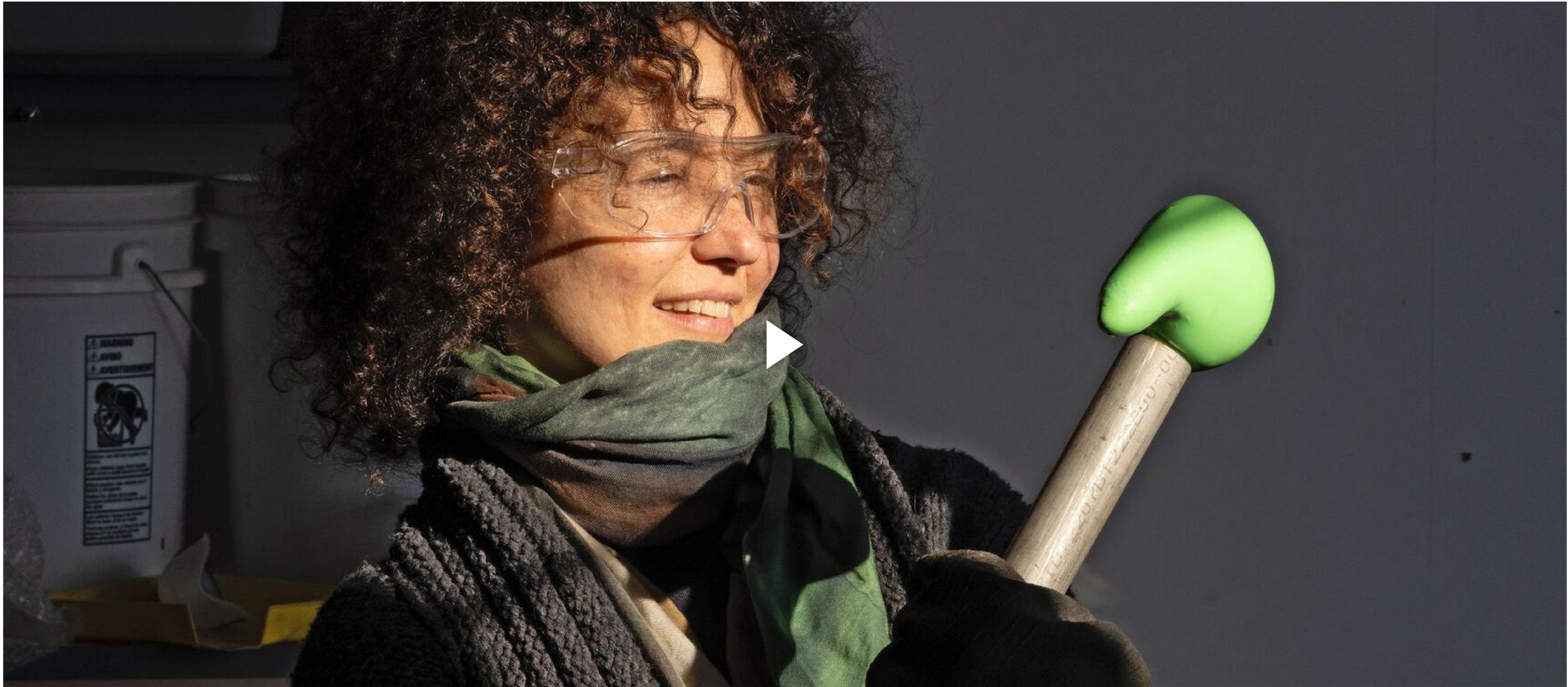
To the left is an example—use this as a template for discussions with your chosen fabricator.

### What to do

- Fabricate locally
- Ask fabricators if they use clean energy and if not now when?
- Choose low impact or recycled materials
- Use a material decision tree: Are you fabricating for permanence, disassembly, or transport —> this guides material and fabrication choices
- Identify ways to reduce transportation, packaging and travel needs during fabrication

### QUICK TIP

Use a vendor checklist and ask for green design proposals when hiring fabricators to collaborate with you.



**STUDIO SPOTLIGHT:**

## Mika Rottenberg and Plastic Reuse

# Art world carbon emissions equivalent to the country of Austria



## EMISSIONS

### Why it matters

The science is clear: greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are a number one driver of global temperature rise. The art sector is joining global efforts to cut GHG emissions by a minimum of 50% by 2030.

Reducing emissions requires first measuring the impact of our routine activities to understand our highest impact areas and make informed choices.

### Did you know?

The Art World emits about 70 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) a year. That's about the same as the total emissions of Austria.

### What to do

- Track annual emissions, starting with energy, travel and artwork shipping
- Track emissions on an exhibition or project basis and establish carbon budgets, akin to a financial budget
- Fabricate work with intentionally low impact shipping and climate control requirements.
- Set reduction goals & plans
- Make a Strategic Climate Fund contribution for unavoidable emissions

### QUICK TIP

The Gallery Climate Coalition has an [art sector carbon calculator](#) that easily calculates priority emissions in art specific activity.

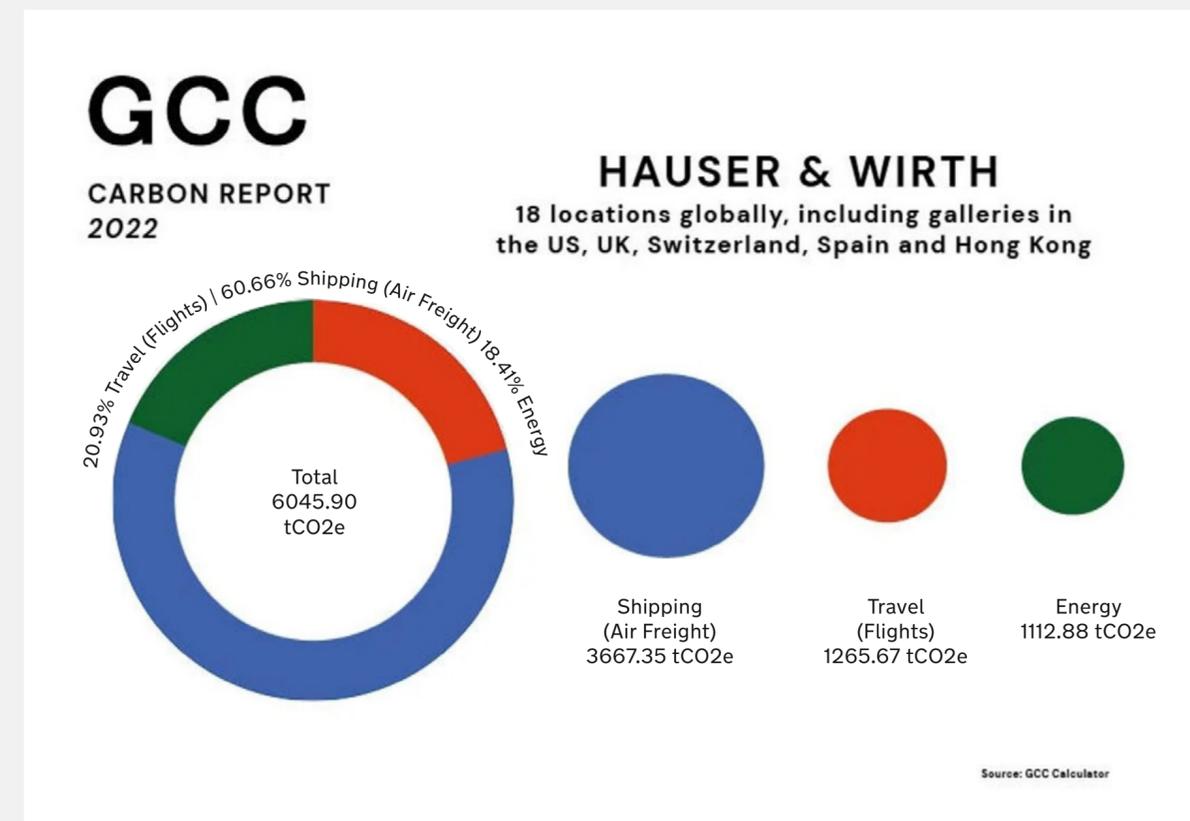
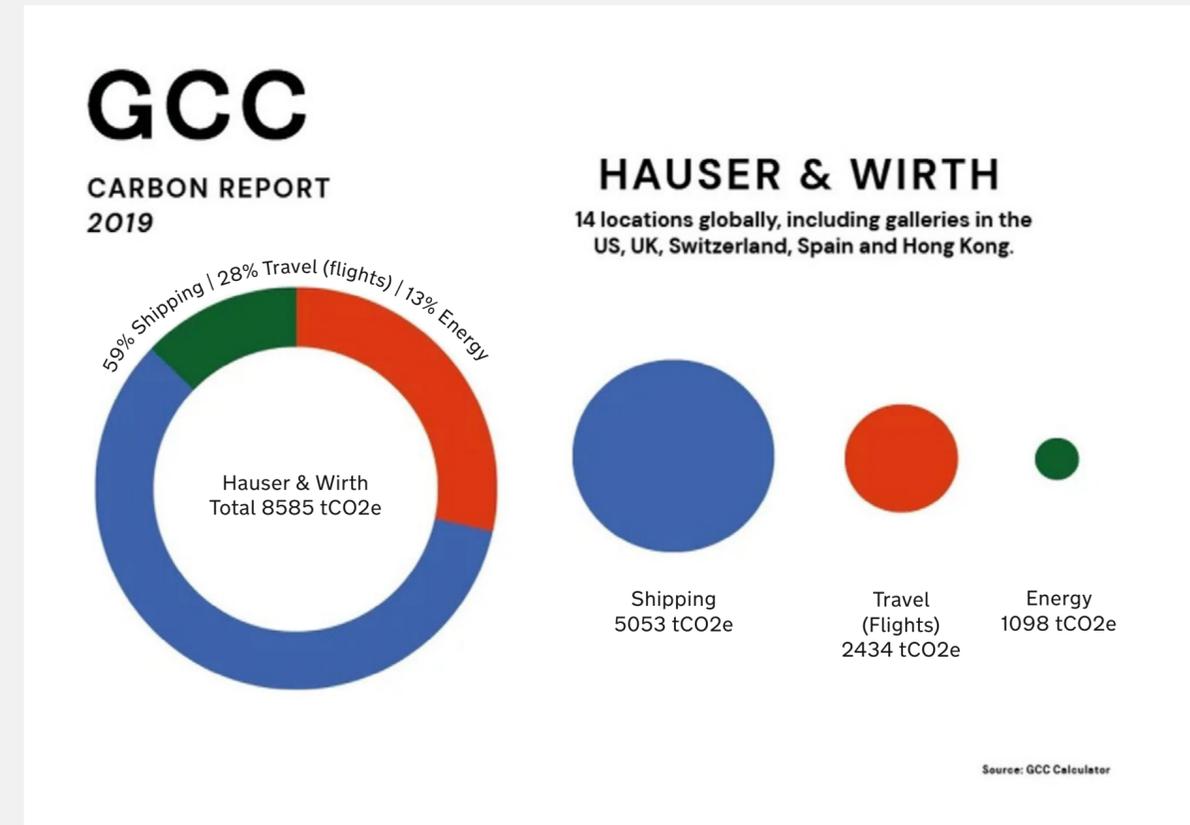
# Measure & Reduce

Hard data made Hauser & Wirth aware that shipping of artworks accounts for about 45% of our gallery emissions, travel about 20% and building emissions 10%

## GALLERY SPOTLIGHT:

# Emission Reduction Targets

In line with the Paris Climate Agreement of the United Nations, Hauser & Wirth is reducing our carbon emissions by **at least 50 percent by 2030**. Since making our commitment, we have reduced our emissions by 20 percent and continue to drive actions to accelerate meeting our target. Reductions are happening by switching to renewable energy, transitioning to LED lighting, purchasing electric vehicles and tracking carbon emissions and waste associated with our shipping.



# Reduction & renewables tax credit incentives for green energy investments



## ENERGY

### Why it matters

Energy use in buildings accounts for 6% of global GHG emissions. Small (and often free) changes can result in significant energy savings, and larger changes to buildings can have a dramatic impact, especially over time.

### Did you know?

The Frankenthaler Climate Initiative in the US offers straightforward grants for sustainability focused infrastructure projects in the visual arts. Eligible grantees include non-profit arts organisation. Many of our institutional partners have been recipients.

[Learn more here](#)

### What to do

- Implement no cost/low-cost steps suggestions to reduce energy consumption
- Switch to a reputable green energy supplier
- Identify the most impactful infrastructure improvements for your studio by working with a local energy savings advisor (often free via your local energy supplier).
- Understand local regulations & initiatives, such as the Inflation Reduction Act in the US which provides tax credit incentives for green energy infrastructure investments and clean vehicles.

### QUICK TIP

Scheduling energy-intensive activities (large print jobs, kiln use, power tools) early in the day or overnight reduces grid load at peak hours and can save you money on your energy bill.



STUDIO SPOTLIGHT:

## Larry Bell and Solar Power



## TRAVEL

### Why it matters

Travel – in particular long-haul and business-class travel – is a major producer of GHG emissions for the art sector. Revising approaches to travel for exhibitions and production can have big, climate-friendly impacts

### Did you know?

Reduce Art Flights (RAF) is a campaign created by Gustav Metzger in 2008, to implore that the art world to diminish its use of planes for transport of people and artworks. [Listen further here.](#)

### What to do

- Opt for low-emission transport options: electric cars, trains, or public transit
- Use NERD criteria for flights: NEWER aircraft; ECONOMY seats; REGULAR sized plane; DIRECT flights
- Talk to collaborators about travel priorities early on in projects
- Plan projects virtually

### QUICK TIP

Economy seats often have 25% of the carbon emissions of a first class seat.

For example: round trip flight JFK → LHR:  
First class: 6.6 tCO<sub>2</sub>e  
Economy: 1.66 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

# Consolidate & plan - ocean shipping reduces emissions by up to 98% of air freight



## TRANSPORT

### Why it matters

Shipping, especially air freight of gallery artworks, constitutes a major source of our GHG emissions.

Planning ahead to take advantage of shuttles, sea freight, and other low emission shipment options, not requiring couriers, and reducing packaging weight through consolidation can result in major carbon savings.

### Did you know?

Studio Olafur Eliasson is writing a no-fly rule into contracts, transporting its artworks by train and remote installing them via video calls in a bid to become carbon neutral in the next decade.

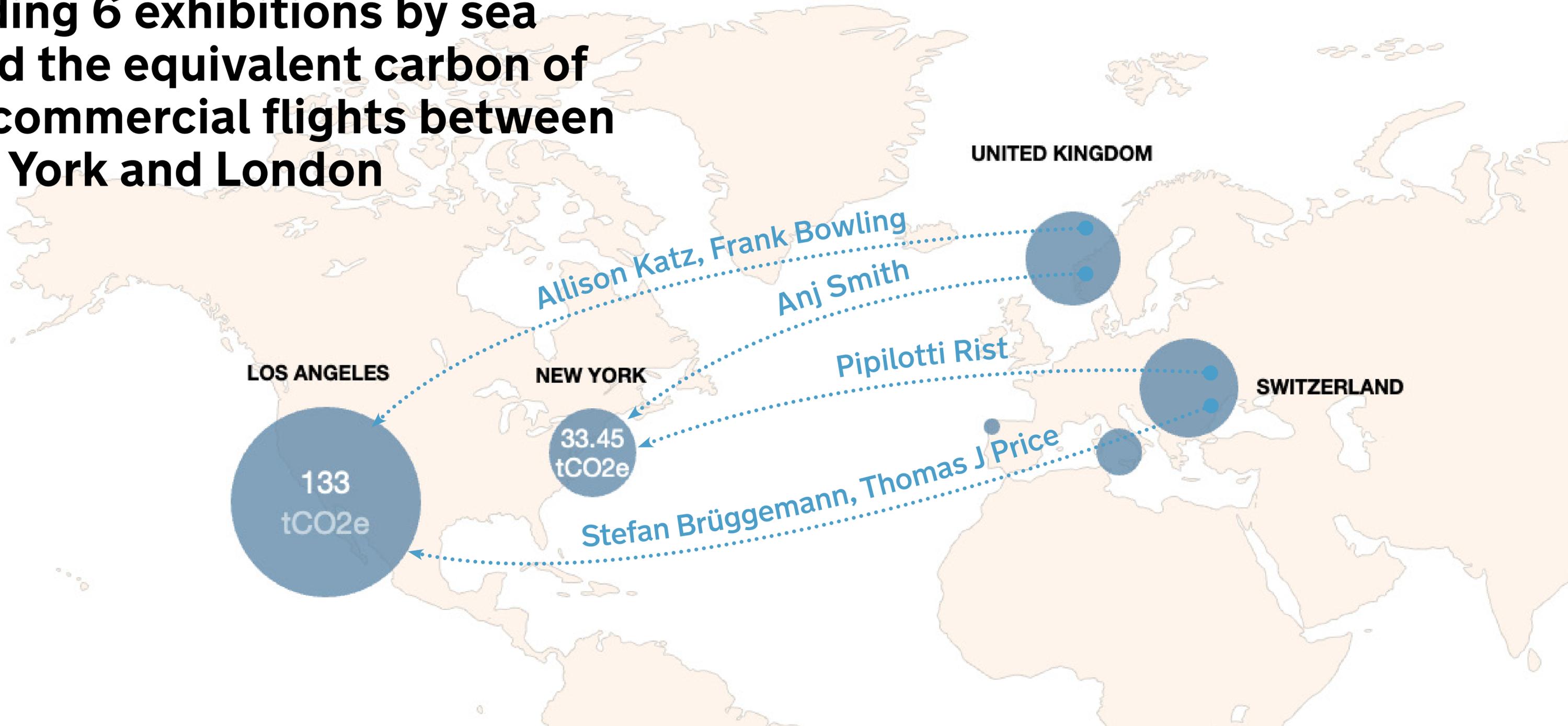
### What to do

- Request the gallery team consolidate and group shipments from your studio using fewer crates
- Prioritize sea and road freight over air freight
- Use zero or low-emissions vehicles for low-emission
- Plan ahead to minimize overall transportation needs; fabricating locally or strategizing where work ultimately needs to end up can reduce the number of trips a work takes.

### QUICK TIP

Shipping a work by sea freight instead of air can result in as little as 2% of the total GHG emissions. Routing from NY > UK by ocean takes 2 weeks.

# Sending 6 exhibitions by sea saved the equivalent carbon of 100 commercial flights between New York and London



GALLERY SPOTLIGHT:

[Sea Freight Shipping White Paper](#)



**‘I’ve always recycled things in my work, which is a tradition of many artists that I have loved’  
— Pipilotti Rist**

## WASTE & MATERIALS

### Why it matters

Reducing waste to landfill protects ecosystems, and reduces GHG emissions. According to a [recent report](#) plastic producers have known for more than 30 years that recycling is not an economically or technically feasible plastic waste management solution. To actively address this issue in our sector the research points at minimising and reusing packaging materials.

### Did you know?

Pipilotti Rist has long practiced sustainable methods in her work. ‘I’ve always recycled things in my work, which is a tradition of many artists that I have loved,’ she says in a discussion on her approach to sustainability at her MoCA LA show with Johanna Burton. [Learn more here](#)

### What to do

- Create material afterlife checklists & design for end of life in planning stages
- Participate in material-reuse networks
- Purchase material locally
- Prioritize reusable and recyclable materials and minimize plastic use
- Set up studio composting
- Learn about local waste, recycling, and compost policies

### QUICK TIP

For artwork movement, switch to moving blankets or card/paper packaging that are curbside recycled. Our gallery team have created a reusable wrap for artwork transport – get in touch to learn more about using in your studio.

Minimize & circularity - our gallery team created a reusable wrap for artwork transport





**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:**

**Pipilotti Rist introduces Sustainability in Action in Somerset, 2022**

## Further resources

### Calculate

- Gallery Climate Coalition industry specific [carbon calculator tool](#)
- STiCH [carbon calculator](#) for materials commonly used in studios
- [Julie's Bicycle carbon calculator](#)
- Complete a Climate Impact Report independently or with the support of Artists Commit, which can provide a mentor and funding: <https://www.artistscommit.com/submit-climate-impact-report>

### Read

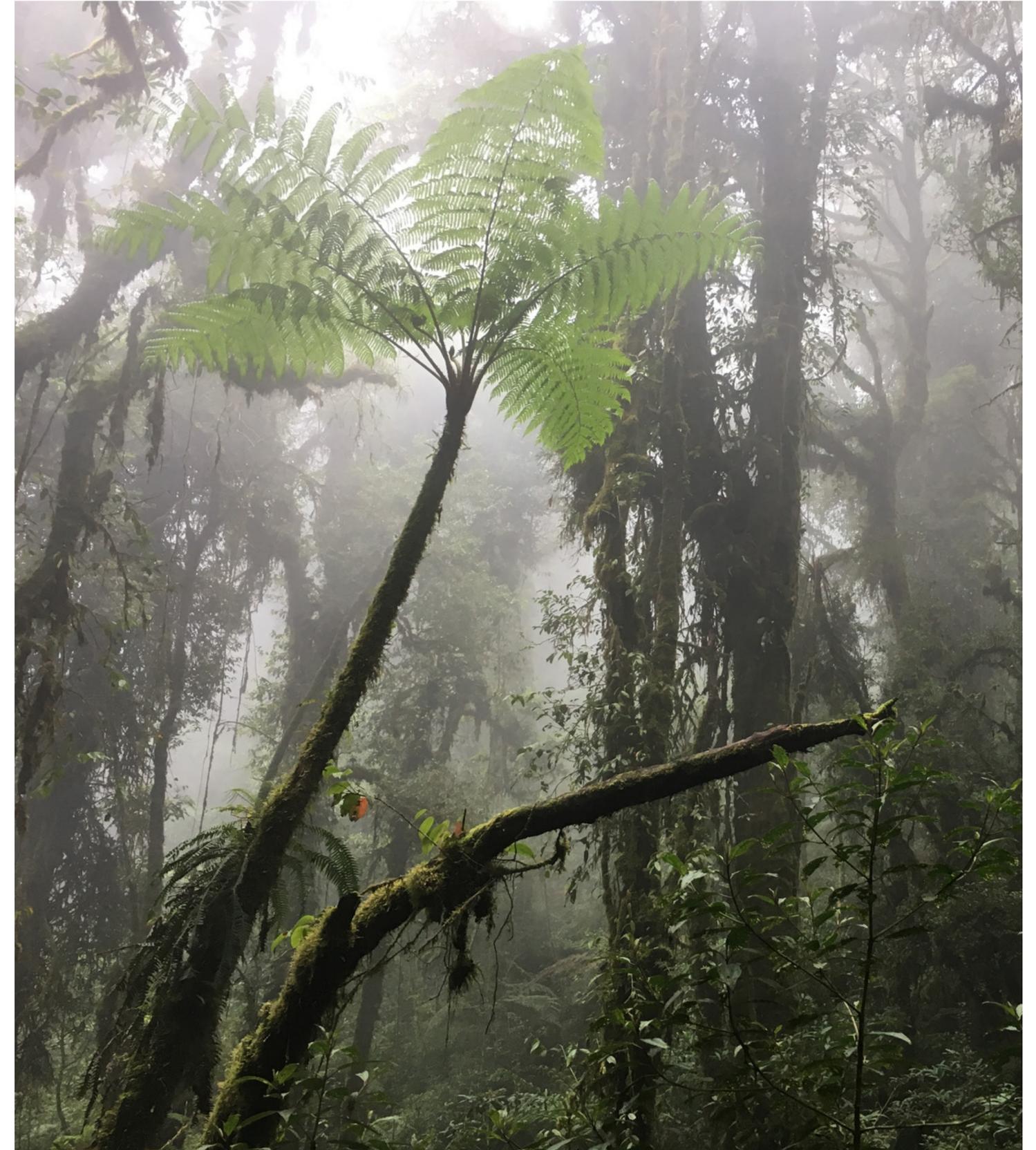
- Read [Helen Mirra's Matter Rider](#) for sustainable exhibition production

### Watch

- [Circular Museum](#) webinar series

Donate to Strategic Climate Funds for emissions that cannot be avoided

- [Art into Acres](#)
- [ClientEarth](#)
- [Murmur](#)



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