

Sustainable Events: Celebrating, but the Right Way

Fairs, soccer tournaments, exhibitions, trade shows and festivals: around three million events are held each year in Germany. The environmental track record of these major events has been rather poor so far. At the same time, the number of organizers and operators who are committed to climate-friendly events is increasing. This year, sustainability remains an integral part of *Wacken Open Air*, the world's largest heavy metal festival. The mega-event for metalheads will be held from August 1 to 3, 2019, in the village of Wacken in Germany's federal state of Schleswig-Holstein.

From recycling of the tents left behind to the use of solar energy and food sharing: with the theme 'Metal 4 Nature', *Wacken Open Air* has been committed to more sustainability and climate protection for several years now. In the *Wacken Future Factory*, a new ideas workshop set up in 2019, fans, musicians, sponsors, experts and the organizer team will continue to promote these topics and jointly shape the future of the festival. One of the key aspects this year is Cradle to Cradle (C2C). This forward-looking approach refers to a circular economy without waste, in which durable and consumable goods are repeatedly recycled as new products or nutrients. For example, a used sleeping bag can be turned into a new sleeping bag after recycling – and not into a low-quality plastic product that will end up back in the garbage sooner or later. On the first day of the festival, professor Michael Braungart (developer of the Cradle to Cradle design concept), Markus Diem and Niklas Jonas (both experts from EPEA GmbH - Part of Drees & Sommer) will show fans and visitors in the *Wacken Future Factory* how completely recyclable C2C products can reduce waste, CO₂ emissions and the consumption of resources.

Holger Hübner, the founder of *Wacken Open Air*, explains why approaches such as C2C are important for events like Wacken: 'We have the great fortune that a festival can act as an amplifier to shift people's awareness. This is a privilege that involves responsibility. We believe that small steps can lead to major changes. Ultimately, however, we can only fulfill our responsibility together with our fans. That's why we're creating an open forum for everyone involved, in the form of the *Wacken Future Factory*.'

Moving More Together

Even though there are already some forerunners, and movements such as *Fridays for Future* have increased awareness of the need for more sustainability and climate protection, there is still a lot of catching up to do. Due to the thousands of fans and visitors that come together, large-scale events

such as fairs or festivals have an enormous impact and can produce much more movement than an individual.

‘It's important that it isn't limited just to individual measures. In order to improve the sustainability of major events quickly and noticeably, we need a comprehensive approach that links the individual solutions to the best possible effect. The technologies, methods and concepts that are needed, such as Cradle to Cradle, are already available,’ says Arne Sebastian Fritz, Head of Sports and Entertainment at Drees & Sommer.

More information about the program is available at: [Wacken Future Factory](#)

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EPEA: Circular Economy powered by Cradle to Cradle

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