

Sustainability report

2024

Published: 2025-01-28



Introduction: A Few Words from the Owners

At Essem Design, we understand the importance of addressing the challenges of our time—particularly the need to protect our planet for future generations. As owners, we are committed to preserving the environment by creating products that are designed to last. Our sustainability efforts go beyond product longevity and extend to every step of our process—from the initial design and material selection to production, delivery, and warranty.

Our commitment to sustainability is demonstrated by our adherence to environmental certification ISO 14001:2015 and quality certification ISO 9001:2015. We maintain a culture of continuous improvement and actively monitor environmental trends to adapt our practices and meet the evolving needs of our stakeholders.

We are equally dedicated to social sustainability. Our workplace in Anderstorp, renovated and moved into in 2018 and expanded in 2024, reflects our commitment to fostering an inclusive and inspiring environment where employees can thrive personally and professionally. We encourage a healthy lifestyle through activities such as weekly workout classes and offer generous healthcare benefits to our team.

We support long-term relationships with suppliers who share our values of equality, fairness, and good working conditions. Our code of conduct, based on the UN's principles for social sustainability, is communicated clearly with our suppliers to ensure alignment and compliance.

In accordance with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we analyze and optimize our impact to ensure our efforts support global sustainability initiatives. Through our actions, we aim to create lasting value for our customers, employees, and communities, all while striving for a more sustainable future for our planet.

As a family-owned business, we are committed to making a meaningful difference for both the environment and society, with every product we design and produce.

Robert Bladh

Frida Bladh

Sten-Roger Bladh

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Design





Nostalgi since 1937 – Just different wallpapers.



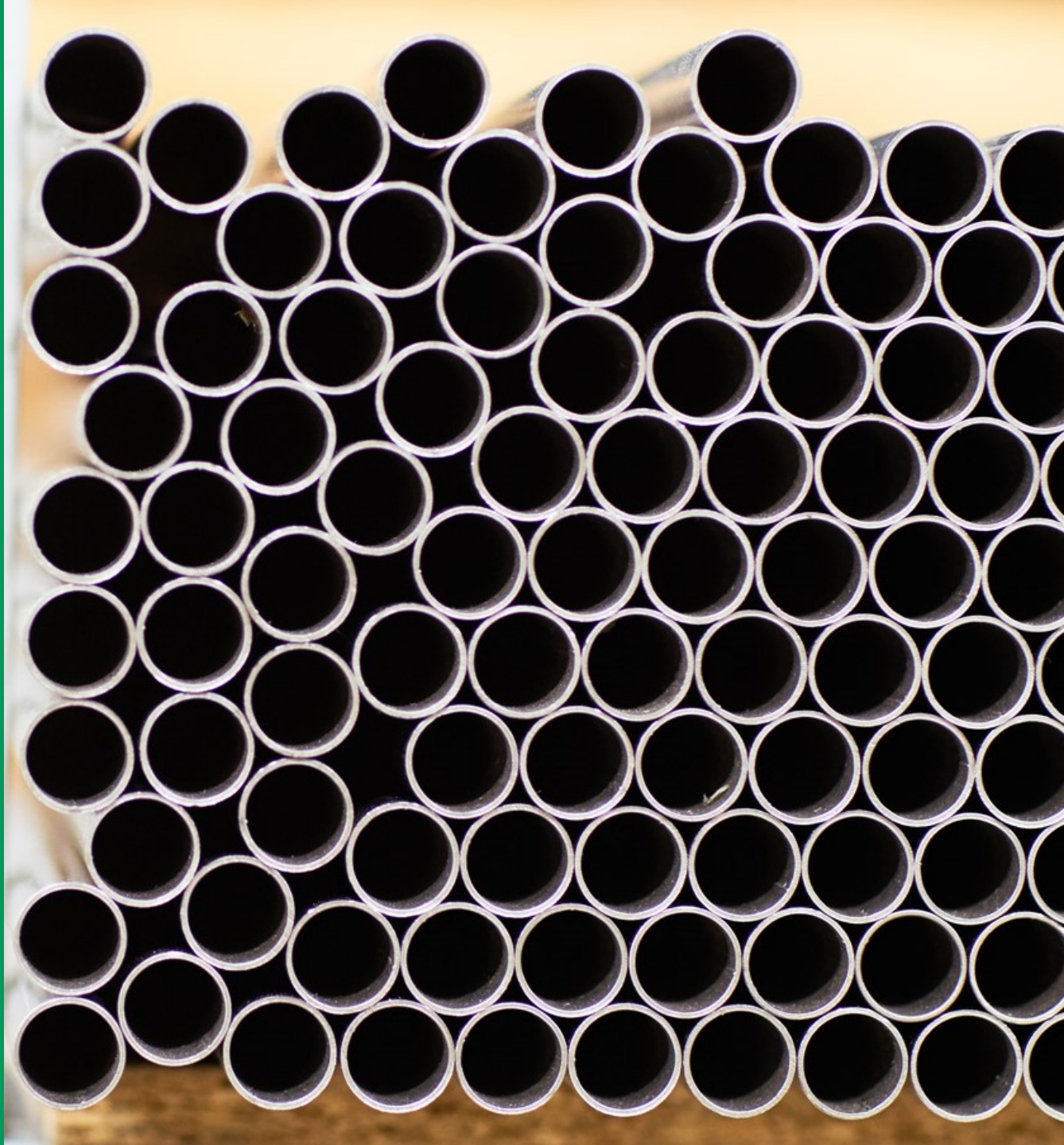
Design

Sustainability starts at the design stage. This is where we lay the foundation for function, material selection, production, packaging, and transport. Our goal for every product is to create functional classics that will last for generations—products that we recognize from our childhood and that our grandchildren will take pride in. Take the Nostalgi hat rack, for example, designed in the 1930s. Back then, sustainability was not something that was talked about, it was simply taken for granted.

When developing new products, material selection is key. We prioritize durable, functional materials with minimal environmental impact, ensuring that every decision supports sustainability at every stage of the product's life.



Material





Material

The Nostalg hat rack has been made from recycled aluminum from start. For us, aluminum is the ideal material because it is one of few metals that can be recycled indefinitely without losing quality. We are constantly working to increase the proportion of recycled materials in our products.

We also believe in giving waste materials a second life, which sometimes leads to the creation of new products. For example, both our Gustav hook strip and Ulrika wall storage are partly made from recycled materials.

Of the materials we do not produce ourselves, 82% are sourced from Sweden, which is 14% more than the previous year. Additionally, 53% of all the materials we purchase are produced in our immediate vicinity, an increase of 7% from last year. As part of our purchasing strategy, we prioritize having control over the manufacturing process with our suppliers to ensure the highest possible quality and to minimize transportation.

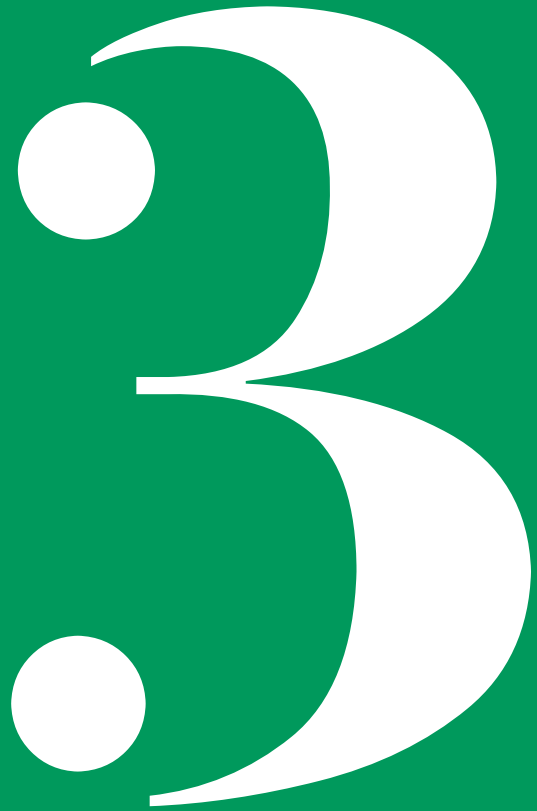
We are members of NPA in Sweden, as well as similar organizations in Germany, Finland, and Norway. This membership enables us to take on producer responsibility for recycling packaging, a practice we embraced well before it became a legal requirement in Sweden. Our product packaging is made from 70% recycled fiber and is specifically designed to facilitate easy sorting and recycling.

Last year, we increased the amount of recovered steel in the pipes used for producing our Classic products, from 30% to 70%.

It is important that our material choices contribute positively to the global supply of clean water.



Energy & Production





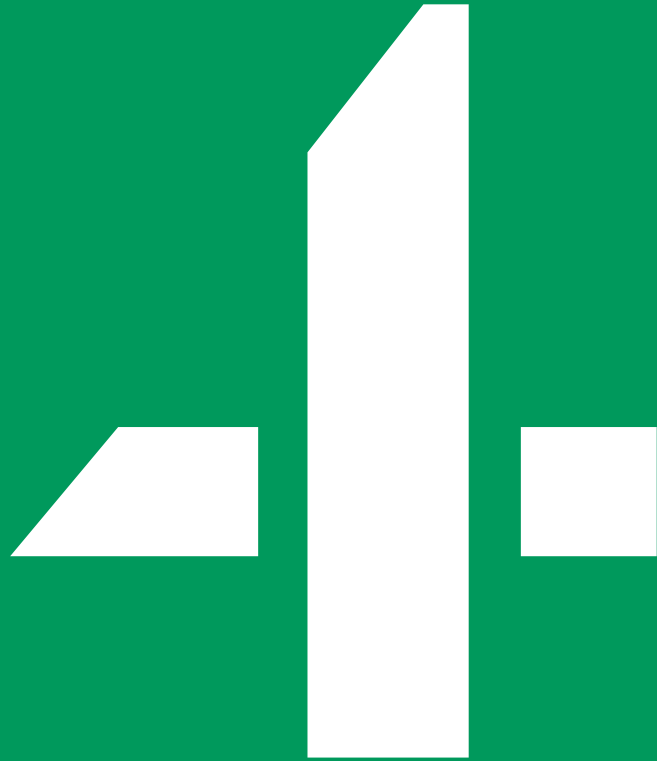
Energy & Production

Our electricity production from solar panels is as large as our annual consumption. Additionally, the electricity we purchase comes from green energy sources. Our premises in Anderstorp are heated using geothermal energy, and all lighting is provided by energy-efficient LED lamps.

We constantly review the need for resources. As our business grows, we expand our facilities in a sustainable manner. For instance, in 2021, we added a storage area for components that do not require heating, allowing us to increase storage capacity without increasing energy use. In 2024, we further expanded our production area with modern, energy-efficient buildings, focusing on creating a comfortable working environment for our staff.

To meet the environmental requirements of the future, we drive hybrid cars charged with green electricity.

Transport





Transport

To minimize the transportation space for each product, we actively work on developing and refining our packaging. New products are designed to be easily disassembled and, wherever possible, shipped in flat packages. Our goal is to transport as little air as possible. Once the products are unpacked, we ensure that the packaging is easy to sort and recycle.

We monitor return rates and are pleased to report that only 1.5% of the items sold through our e-commerce are returned. All returns are handled directly at our factory in Anderstorp, where we inspect the product's condition. If suitable, we offer these items at a discounted price via our "Archive" section on the website. We continuously work to reduce returns by updating and reviewing product information—such as descriptions, images, and technical details—on our website. This ensures our customers have the best possible experience before and after their purchase.

We partner with reliable carriers that operate modern fleets, prioritizing low environmental impact and complying with Swedish laws and regulations. They also ensure good working conditions for their employees.

To further reduce transportation, we consolidate shipments and use pick-up points to minimize delivery distances.

Product life cycle





Product life cycle

The product life cycle is at the heart of our sustainability approach. We focus on designing products that are easy to maintain, repair, and upgrade, ensuring they stand the test of time. While our products come with a 10-year warranty, our goal is for them to last for 20, 30, or even 100 years.

We also offer spare parts through our website and provide customer support to assist with restoring older products. Our commitment to longevity means our products can be used for generations, reducing the need for new resources and minimizing waste.

We are also members of Byggvarubedömningen, a platform for producing non-toxic, sustainable products.





The Classic hat rack was formerly called the Essem rack and has been manufactured since the 1950s.



Product life cycle

In 2024, we launched our first reuse project with a real estate company in Gothenburg. We rescued 25 classic hat racks—each over 50 years old—and restored them to like-new condition, demonstrating the power of quality craftsmanship and sustainable design.

For us, sustainability means creating products that are designed to last. This allows us to embrace circularity—reuse, repair, and restore—giving our products even longer life spans.

Hi Magdalena Holm, Sustainability Manager at Essem Design

Tell us a bit about the background of the project?

We've had the idea of reuse for a while, so we were of course happy when we were asked to bring the shelves back – not everyone thinks it should be possible to restore them. We've been working on our sustainability profile for a long time, and with a growing trend in this area, it felt perfect to try something like this. It has already provided lessons for the future and the hope is that we will be able to make this an integrated part of our offer.

What are the benefits of restoring and the specific project?

Materials make up the majority of our emissions. By sourcing old Essem products we both get back materials that we can reuse and at the same time can help the real estate company reduce their waste.

Were there any particular challenges with this project?

The challenge is that it is very resource intensive in terms of man hours and each shelf has different refurbishment needs. Some of the shelves were as old as 50 years and in quite bad condition. We dismantled them, removed old and damaged paint, replaced plastic parts with new ones, and the result was new shelves that will last another 50-60 years.



100%

of all aluminum is recyclable. The material does not lose quality no matter how many times it is recycled, and it can be recycled endlessly.

5%

of the energy required to extract aluminum is needed to recycle the metal.

75%

Of all manufactured aluminum is still in use today.

Social sustainability





We are committed to promoting inclusion and equality in the workplace. We believe in creating an inspiring environment where our employees can thrive. Since moving into our new premises in Anderstorp in 2018, our goal has been to build a workplace that fosters personal and professional growth. In 2024, we expanded our premises further, creating modern, energy-efficient facilities with a focus on providing our staff with a comfortable and motivating working environment.

Many of our employees have ties to sports organizations, and we actively encourage a healthy lifestyle. That is why we offer generous healthcare benefits and organize team activities such as cycling and walking in September to raise funds for various charitable causes.

We have our own code of conduct that is based on the UN's principles regarding social sustainability. We communicate this code with our suppliers and ensure compliance. We carefully select suppliers who share our values, prioritizing those who foster good working conditions and a positive environment for their employees. Our purchasing strategy is based on long-term relationships built on transparency, mutual respect, cooperation, and continuous improvement in both quality and sustainability.

When celebrating with our employees, we prefer to serve organic and locally produced food.





Health care per year SEK 5 000.
Our employees use an average of 92% of it.

Social sustainability

In 2024, we have made several activities to improve social sustainability.

In May, five women from our team participated in Våruset. The company covered their registration fees and contributed to the organization Tjejzonen.

Since December, we have been offering weekly workplace training sessions for all employees, held every Wednesday.

During the year, we conducted a Work Environment Survey (OSA), which had a high response rate. We reviewed the results together with all employees.

Additionally, we performed a safety inspection focused on ergonomics, with the support of Occupational Health Services.

Each month, we hold goal follow-up meetings with all employees, providing a delicious breakfast while reviewing the past month and discussing upcoming activities. This helps us ensure that everyone stays informed and feels included.

Of course, last year also included a well-appreciated Christmas trip with an overnight stay, as well as the annual kick-off event.



Of our 16 employees are:



men



women

Carbon footprint



Three products now got their carbon footprints verified:



Classic Hat Rack

11.3 kg CO₂ eq.



Nostalg Hat/Shoe Rack
Oak/Aluminium

2.86 kg CO₂ eq.



Mama Hook

0.44 kg CO₂ eq.

Carbon footprint

In 2023, we produced an LCA report and Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for our three most popular products.

This marks the first step in measuring our environmental impact.

Learn more in our Environmental Product Declarations (EPD):

[Classic Hat Rack](#)

[Nostalg Hat/Shoe rack Oak/Aluminium](#)

[Mama Hook](#)

Soon, we will be able to provide calculated emissions data for all our products. Stay tuned!



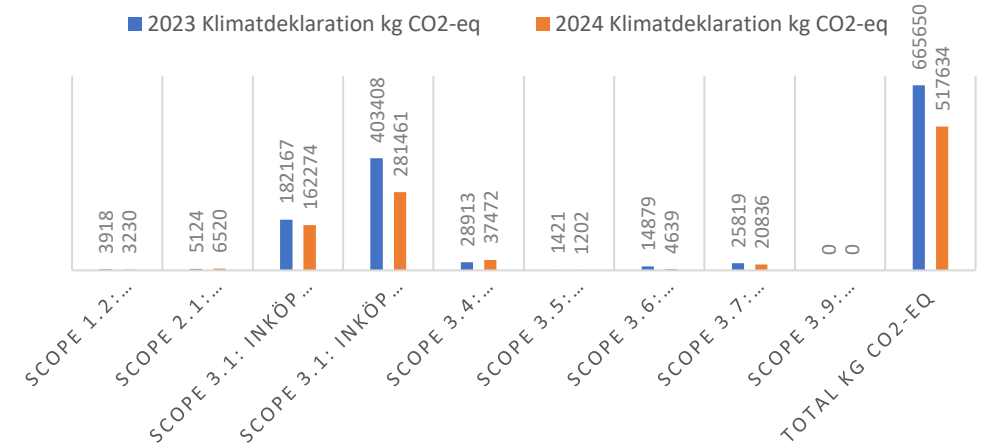


Carbon footprint

While we are taking significant steps to reduce the environmental impact of our products, we recognize there are still areas where we can improve.

To track our progress towards a more sustainable company, we measure our current status by calculating our emissions in Scope 1, 2, and 3, in line with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol. Our goal is to reduce emissions each year, ultimately reaching "net-zero" by 2045. In 2024, we successfully reduced our emissions by **148 tons of CO2-equivalent**.

SCOPE 1, 2, 3 2023-24



The Journey has just begun.

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Feel free to contact us for feedback or for ideas on how we can develop our sustainability work. Email info@essem.se and mark the subject line Sustainability.