

# Singita One Planet Action Plan Progress Review - 2021

June 2022

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## Report Overview

Reporting period	2021
Reviewer	Benjamin Gill
Result	Global Leader
 <div> <div>One Planet Living®</div> <div>Global Leader 2022</div> </div>	

## Summary of Singita – Southern and East Africa operations

Singita is a company that operates 15 eco-tourism lodges and camps in Southern and East Africa. Preserving large areas of wilderness for future generations, while benefitting local communities, lies at the heart of its business.

Singita is a conservation brand, financially supported by a number of commercially operated lodges within the reserves that are under Singita's stewardship. Singita partners closely with non-profit Funds and Trusts, which focus on community development and biodiversity management.

Singita's operations in the Serengeti in Tanzania have been applying the One Planet Living principles since 2012 and separate reports on its progress are regularly produced. This report covers all existing Singita operations outside of Tanzania, which are predominately in Southern Africa (South Africa and Zimbabwe), but it also includes the Rwandan project. The projects included are:

- All existing Singita lodges and conservation partners in South Africa:
  - o Singita Sabi Sand (SSS): Boulders, Ebony and Castleton Lodges
  - o Singita Kruger National Park (SKNP): Lebombo and Sweni Lodges
  - o The Singita Lowveld Trust (SLT)
- Singita lodges and conservation partners in Zimbabwe:
  - o Singita Pamushana Lodge and Malilangwe House (SPM)
  - o The Malilangwe Trust (TMT)
- Singita lodge in Rwanda, Singita Volcanoes National Park (SVNP):
  - o Singita Kwitonda Lodge and Kataza House
- All Singita support companies and their buildings
  - o Singita Management Company (Cape Town) (SMC)
  - o Singita Style, Design and Procurement (Johannesburg) (SDP)
  - o Singita Mauritius - Reservations office (SMIL)

The Malilangwe Trust is a wholly Zimbabwean, non-profit organization with a focus on harmonizing biodiversity conservation, community development and commercial tourism. Singita Pamushana lodge is situated within the Malilangwe Reserve, Zimbabwe.

The Singita Lowveld Trust is the South-African based non-profit organization supporting biodiversity conservation and community development in South Africa.

## 2021 Highlights

Singita had a number of incredible achievements in 2021 including:

### Rhino Relocation

Singita's conservation partner in Zimbabwe, the Malilangwe Trust, has been [nurturing the rhino population](#) within the Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve since 1994 and the population is now at carrying capacity. In 2021 it worked with the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust to relocate 10 rhinos into the Gonarezhou (Zimbabwe's second-largest national park).

As all the rhino at Malilangwe are carefully monitored, the rhinos were selected to have a maximum chance of becoming a stable and viable population in Gonarezhou.

This has helped to bring rhino back to a new national park in Southern Africa and to protect the future of this magnificent animal.

(Photo credit: Singita)



### Covid response

Singita's Covid response over the last two years has highlighted its deep commitment to the community. In 2021, senior staff salaries were reduced, but junior staff salaries were initially maintained, then reduced by less than for senior staff. Throughout 2020, there was no loss of staff across any of the Lodges covered in this report, and staff returned to full salaries in August 2021. At the same time, the Singita Lowveld Trust provided support to local communities, donating materials and raising funds to support over 11,500 people.



### The Singita Community Culinary School

A new school was built, and launched in Rwanda in 2021, with the first intake of 10 students joining in August. Students learn about the sustainability aspects of cooking, conservation, and managing their own garden for food production. On completion of the course, students will be supported in finding employment.

(Photo credit: Singita)

### Carbon offset levy

Singita has calculated the carbon emissions its operations, and used this to estimate the average emissions per bednight. Since August 2021, a levy has been applied to all guest bookings to fund initiatives to offset these emissions.

Singita has partnered with various projects across the four regions it operates in to ensure that the offset will take place locally and also bring social benefits to the local community. For example:

- In Southern Africa, a cookstove project supports communities to cook more sustainably and safely through a simple, innovative alternative to an open flame.
- In East Africa, protection of the vulnerable forests supports hunter-gatherer communities, wildlife, and climate change prevention.
- Furthermore, guests are given the opportunity to offset their own flights and separately, Singita is also offsetting for all its own business flights.

## **1. Message from Luke Bailes - Singita Founder and Executive Chairman**

It has been two extremely challenging years for the travel industry. All things considered, this year is looking positive for Singita, bearing testament to the abiding nature of the incredible experiences offered to our guests. In this post-pandemic era, travellers are questioning if there is a philanthropic component to tourism and what sustainability credentials operators have. People are travelling far more consciously and are demanding a sustainable experience, and it is important for operators to ensure that they are delivering what they are saying.

The pandemic period was an innovation incubator for sustainability at Singita. It required us to look closely at all resources to be as efficient as possible, whilst ensuring any waste was minimised. We also tapped into our local markets, found new ways to reach people with our conservation message and deepened our wellness offerings. This latter focus included our staff, as we are acutely aware of the mental health challenges of today's world.

During the pandemic, the impact on travel resulted in delays or slow-downs of some new planned sustainability projects. However, our commitment to sustainability ensures that we meet a renewed set of One Planet Living targets over the next few years to 2025. Our dedication to conservation is unwavering and we have also committed to the UN's Global Goals for Nature. These are going to be very challenging to meet, but are imperative to the long-term survival of the wildlife and wilderness that sits at the heart of the Singita purpose. We are especially grateful to our partner Funds and Trusts, and together we have an incredible opportunity to be a beacon of hope and inspiration for environmental regeneration and community resilience.

We have witnessed how very resilient Singita can be, and I am confident that Singita can meet the environmental and human challenges in its path. We are proud to continue to be a leading example of sustainable eco-tourism and a member of the One Planet Living community.

## 2. Message from Ben Gill – One Planet Communities Technical Manager

As the world slowly returns to a new post-pandemic normal, the urgency of the climate and ecological crisis is still struggling to generate the focus and traction that is required. The picture is far from positive: carbon emissions have rebounded above the slight dip caused by the Covid-19 travel restrictions and lockdowns; the latest IPCC report on climate change essentially states that we will miss our target of restricting temperature increases to 1.5°C; and most of the scientists behind the report believe that the world will experience catastrophic climate related impacts in their lifetimes<sup>1</sup>.

The messages from this are relatively clear – mitigation is no longer enough, we must regenerate the planet and adapt for changes, and we must address this with an unprecedented urgency. Set in this context, Singita exemplifies the challenges we face globally – the company is doing some quite exceptional work in the areas of conservation and community development but is falling short in reducing its carbon footprint. But we no longer have any leeway – we need to be excelling in all areas to tackle the climate crisis.

The relocation of 10 rhinos from Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve to the Gonarezhou National Park is just one very visual, and extremely heart-warming, way that Singita and its partners are working to help conserve our iconic species and ecosystems. The work undertaken to protect land, develop new land management techniques and engage with communities, are fantastic examples of the regeneration work we need to support our ecosystems to recover.

Conversely, while the delays in committing to zero-carbon targets and implementing the necessary strategies are quite understandable given the technical challenges, up-front financial cost and staff time required, they are just as important as the regeneration work. Additionally, the Covid pandemic highlighted the vulnerability of a business model reliant on air travel. Reviewing the implications, risks and potential opportunities of new models will be imperative to the resilience of the company.

Singita's incredible conservation and community work, as well as the steps taken to manage waste, source sustainable materials and influence its stakeholders, make them a true leader in sustainability. Nonetheless a strong commitment and clear strategy to address carbon emissions is essential to retaining this leadership position.

Singita's journey from a high-end tourism company to a conservation pioneer has been highly impressive, and it continues to shine as a Global Leader in One Planet Living. A focus on zero carbon would see it become an exemplar of sustainable development.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02990-w>

### 3. Summary of progress and recommendations

This is the fifth review of Singita's One Planet Action Plan and, while there is a lot of comparability to the data gathered in previous years, there are some discrepancies due to increased accuracy of the data and evolution of the indicators being used.

Singita has been on a path towards sustainable operations for many years and a range of projects and initiatives are already bearing fruit.

	Substantially or entirely completed, or a high degree of certainty over delivery
	On track for a long-term target
	Substantially incomplete, behind schedule or doubt over delivery

One Planet Living Principle	2021 Outcomes	Progress
Health and happiness	Health wellness programme continues	Medical care access and support activities are impressive
	Support staff mental health	Plan developed
Equity and local economy	Support gender equity by increasing female employment	On track – around 50% in most tourism lodges
	Maximise number of black staff	On track – group level is 97%
	Maximise lodge spend on local goods and services	Returning to pre-Covid level
Culture and community	Promote local culture to guests	Negotiations ongoing
	Promote a culture of sustainability	All staff receive basic training and support
	Support Early Childhood Development (ECD)	17 ECDs all meeting good practice standards
	Support skills and employment through the SCCS	30 graduates, 95% of alumni in employment
Land and nature	Contribution protection of key biodiversity areas by 2030.	SVNP expanded and other opportunities assessed
	Launch the Singita Conservation Foundation (SCF) to maximise impact	SCF Launched
	Reduce poaching	Zero poaching of lions, elephants, or rhino on Singita concessions
	Engage with guests through Conservation Rooms	On track – SSS planned for 2022, SKNP 2023
Sustainable water	Reduce losses through leaks to 5%	20% at SSS, unreported elsewhere
	Reduce potable and absolute water use – annual 10% reduction	Approx. 9% reduction
Local and sustainable food	Promote local produce – 60% local target	Estimate 15% is local
	Manage animal protein	Salad bars for staff; RSA lodges new menu has reduced meat consumption
	Limit food waste	Menu design and chef behaviour geared at minimising food waste
Travel and transport	Vehicle fuel consumption – stabilise at 2019 levels	2019: 398kl 2021: 358kl – approx. 10% reduction
	Full EV Fleet by 2030	Plans to trial an electric vehicle at the South Africa Lodges in 2022
	Carbon offsets of staff air travel	Strategy in place – offsetting of 800t CO <sub>2</sub> eq
Materials and products	Prioritising sustainable construction	One Planet Living integrated into refurbishments
	Increasing local procurement	No redesigns/refurbishments in 2021.
	Implementing sustainable packaging	Plastic wrap for pallets eliminated, replaced with reusable cargo nets and strapping
	Paperless guest experience	Hard copy suite collateral eliminated
Zero waste	Recycling Programme Quality	On track
	> 90% recycling rate (2022)	Approx. 92%



	Plastic reduction	Plastic water bottles and other single-use plastics all but eliminated – now targeting vegetable/kitchen packaging
Zero carbon energy	Carbon offset of Guest stay	In place
	Carbon offset of Support Offices	In planning phase
	80% solar at off-grid, 30% solar at on-grid existing lodges by 2025	SKNP is achieving 80%, no other projects are close to the target
	Renewable energy for new developments	PV 15% of primary building energy for electricity. Commitment that new projects will factor in renewables in assessment

Singita has been using One Planet Living for over five years and has made significant progress in integrating sustainability into all of its operations. The development of new targets is a positive step in maintaining progress and engagement. Nonetheless, reviewing the carbon footprint of Singita (Figure 1) shows that there has been a limited reduction in carbon emissions.

For Singita to remain a Global Leader in One Planet Living, it is imperative to see progress in reducing carbon emissions particularly from electricity use, transport and flights.

### 3.1. Bioregional's recommendations

Having reviewed all the information provided, Bioregional believes that Singita remains a Global Leader in One Planet Living. Nonetheless, Bioregional has specific recommendations relating to some of the One Planet Living principles, which we believe need to be addressed in the coming year. These are summarised below.

#### Start a process to re-imagine the tourism business model

One high-level recommendation is to review the tourism business model from a climate risk perspective and start re-imagining tourism. Mitigating carbon emissions and adapting to climate change will have unprecedented impacts on all industries, especially those that depend upon long haul air travel. Anticipating and planning for these impacts will increase the company's resilience.

#### Review of targets

In general, the newly refreshed outcomes and targets drawn up in 2021 are well aligned with the One Planet Living Goals. The main area of concern is around Zero carbon energy. While offsetting can help reduce emissions offsite, to be a true sustainability leader an organisation must be aiming for true zero-carbon buildings. The current targets are not aligned with this and so ideally should be reviewed.

#### Zero carbon energy

A clear strategy for minimising emissions is required, which should involve an ongoing focus on reducing demand, maximising onsite renewable energy, and identifying offsite solutions. It is acknowledged that purchasing certified renewable energy is currently not an option in many areas of Southern Africa, but a clear strategy for rapidly reducing emissions can still be developed.

#### Water

More detailed water monitoring is still required to be able to track and report on leaks.

#### Retrofit

The development of the Minimum Quality Standard is an excellent step in minimising the impact of all retrofit and new development. These can evolve over time to really drive down the embodied carbon of all construction.

#### Travel and transport

Initiatives to continue working without flying developed during Covid should be reinforced to lock in those savings. Additionally, the increased focus on use of electric vehicles needs to be aligned with the renewable energy strategy.

#### Culture of sustainability and food



Exceptional customer service and style are ingrained into the way that Singita staff think. Sustainability needs to become second nature in the same way. Only then will staff truly support Singita in delivering its One Planet Living vision. This has started with a commitment to adhere to Singita's sustainability protocols being incorporated into all job descriptions. Nonetheless this process can go deeper and all departments can play a key role in this by: integrating One Planet Living into performance reviews and targets (Human Resources), integrating into morning meetings (Lodge Managers) and putting sustainability 'markers' in all project management procedures.

## 4. Singita's One Planet Action Plan

In committing to its [One Planet Action Plan](#) Singita is aiming to create a benchmark for sustainable tourism for the 21st century demonstrating how conservation, local economic development and high-quality tourism can reinforce each other.

Singita's Southern African operations are complex as they are, in effect, both a business and three communities combined; more than 320 staff and their families are provided with accommodation onsite. Furthermore, the success of the tourism operations is directly linked to the success of the conservation and community development work that Singita undertakes or supports.

By becoming a One Planet Living community, Singita is pledging to 'operate within global environmental limits' and committing to this principle as the foundation of how the company conducts its business. Singita has demonstrated this in several ways:

- Outreach to influence conservation in the region and tourism globally
  - Continuing to partner with Panthera to support leopard conservation
  - Founding member of the Lionscape Coalition
  - Participation in Vulture Safe Zones Alliance (with [Endangered Wildlife Trust](#)) and Birdlife's critical bird monitoring in the Greater Kruger system.
  - Training of all guides as first responders in poison interventions in the Greater Kruger (with Endangered Wildlife Trust)
- Increasing the awareness of conservation and environmental issues among key stakeholders
  - Guests: Development of conservation rooms to increase engagement
  - Academic: TMT's resident ecologist is continuing her PhD on rhinos, and another TMT support is undertaking a PhD in Leopard ecology.
  - An SKNP Guide is completing an Honours in Environmental Management.
  - Supply chain: ongoing data collection survey and system developed for use by Singita's interiors supplier Cecile & Boyd. This provided increased education at Cecile & Boyd and beyond.
  - SVNP featured in the Built Environment Virtual Pavilion at COP26
- Transforming existing operations to a sustainable One Planet Living level, which is now built into the Minimum Quality Standards.
- Operating new camps and lodges in line with One Planet Living principles – such as at Singita Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda.

### 4.1. Update of the 2020 plan

In Singita's original action plan, all goals and targets were set for 2020 therefore, during 2021, new goals and indicators were established – the two sets of goals are shown in the table in the appendix. Mostly this process has strengthened the targets and goals, though there are a few areas with a potential backward step.

Reviewing these changes, the most noteworthy points are:

- The commitment to sustainable fish and sustainable cleaning products has been dropped. In both cases these goals have broadly been achieved so are no longer relevant as a headline indicator,
- Conversely, in zero carbon energy there is no longer a specific energy reduction target and the renewable energy targets have been downgraded. It is understood that these are being reviewed and it is recommended that they are strengthened significantly.

## 4.2. Role of Bioregional

One Planet Living is a framework and an initiative developed by Bioregional that grew out of the experience of developing the pioneering BedZED eco-village in south London, UK in the early 2000s. Today there are One Planet Living communities and destinations in Europe, North America, Africa, and Australia.

Bioregional supported Singita to develop its One Planet Action Plan for its Southern Africa operations in 2016. Bioregional continues to provide technical support and to undertake an annual review of Singita's progress in implementing its Action Plan.

## 5. Carbon footprint

A carbon footprint was undertaken by an external company in 2012. This has been used as a driver to internalise the data gathering and calculations within the organisation.

As Singita has improved its data monitoring, there has been an apparent increase in the carbon footprint. While in some areas this is real, in other areas it is actually due to improved data gathering.

The graphs in **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** show the carbon footprint from 2013 – 2021, with only the years since 2016 being genuinely comparable, though refrigerant gas data may not have been fully captured in those years. The first graph shows carbon footprint by scope and the second by location.

Defra (the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) emission factors for the year in question are applied to the relevant resource quantities. For this analysis the conversion factor for fuels includes both the direct emissions of burning the fuel as well as the estimated emissions of extracting the fuel and delivering it to site. Defra has redefined these as the 'Well to Tank' as opposed to Scope 3 emissions. Flight emissions include 'radiative forcing' to account for the greater greenhouse effect impact of gases injected higher into the atmosphere. These factors have been included here to provide as complete a picture as possible of the carbon impact.

7,250 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>eq emitted in 2021

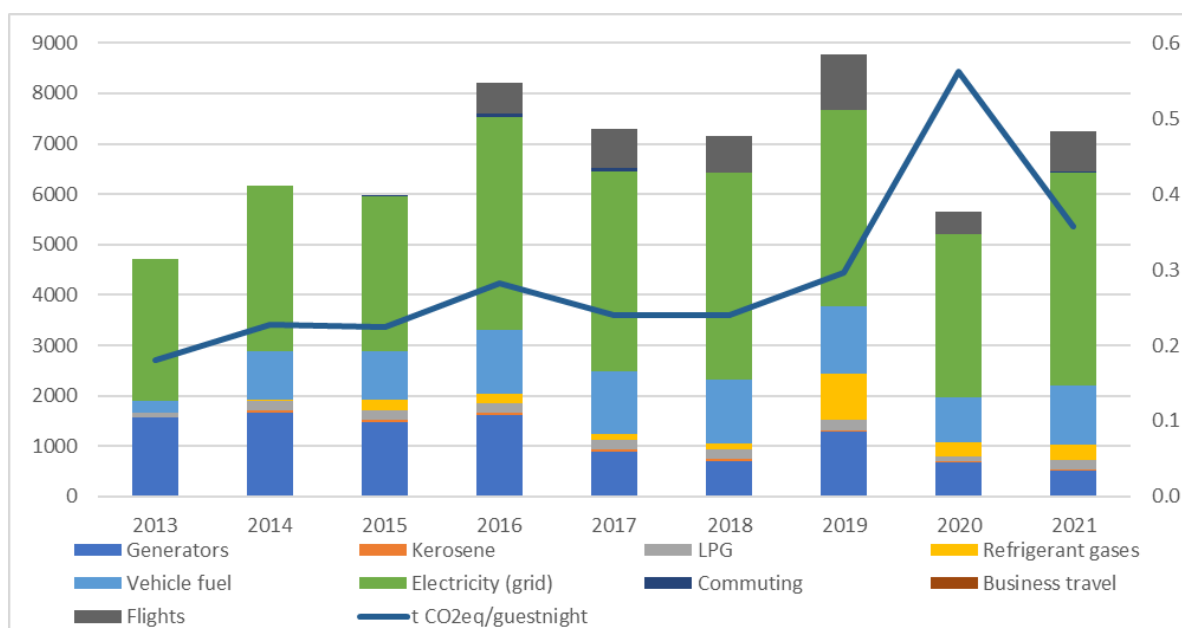


Figure 1. Total carbon footprint (tco2eq) by emission source – calculated by Boioregional with data provided by Singita

Given the disruption in travel and tourism in the last two years, direct comparisons over years do not provide a clear picture of progress. Some observations include:

- 2021 emissions are back at 2019 levels, though per guest night emissions are 20% higher. While this is to be expected as the emissions are not particularly responsive to occupancy levels it would be good to see more progress,
- SVNP carbon footprint is just 7% of total, and while its emissions per bed-night are approximately half that of SPM and SSS they are nearly 50% higher than SKNP – highlighting the importance of a zero-carbon energy strategy.

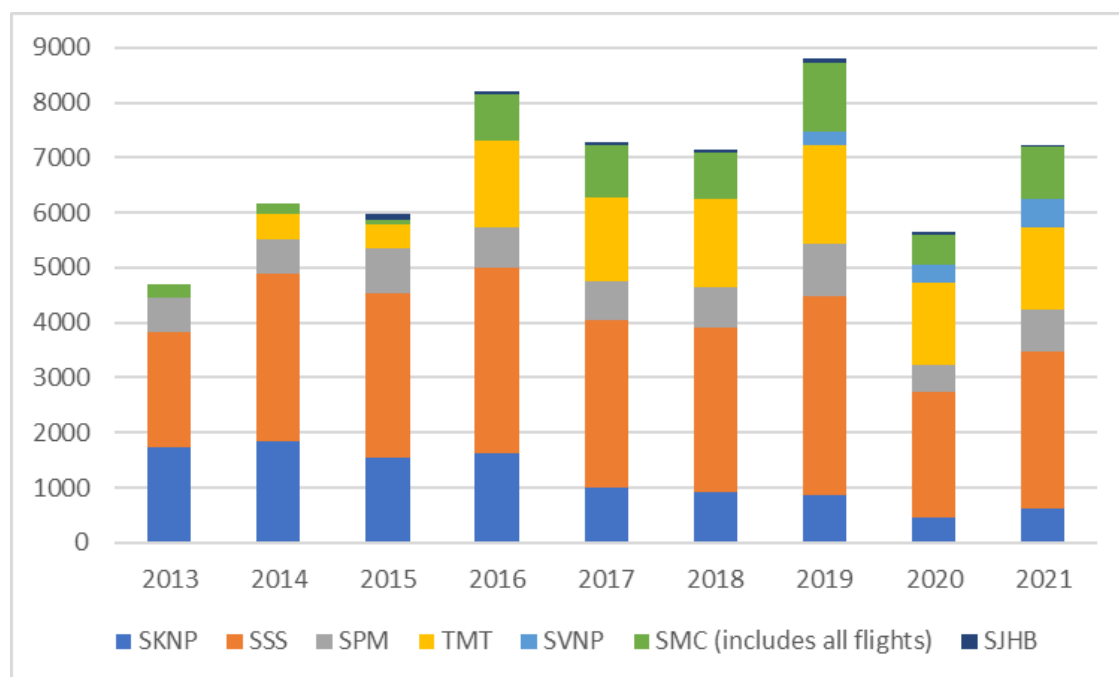


Figure 2. Total carbon footprint (tco2eq) by location, with all staff flights included in SMC

## 6. Review of progress against the One Planet Action Plan

This section reviews the progress against the targets set out in the 2016 One Planet Action Plan using the principles of Bioregional's One Planet Living framework.

	Substantially or entirely completed, or a high degree of certainty over deliverability
	On track for a long-term target
	Substantially incomplete, behind schedule or doubt over delivery

Where Bioregional has specific recommendations, these are in the summary at the start of this document.

The targets set in the original Action Plan were for 2020, and so these will need to be updated in the coming year. This report therefore compares the progress that Singita made in addressing those initial 2020 targets, which is particularly useful this year as obviously many activities were put on hold due to the Covid pandemic.

### 6.1. Health and happiness

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
HH1	Health and Wellness programme continues	Minimum of one activation per month in each region	All staff have access to medical care. > 1 monthly activity per site
		100% COVID vaccination rate	On track
HH2	Support Staff Mental Health	Staff Mental Health Assessment score extracted (RSA 2022; other regions thereafter)	Staff surveys sent and due to be finalised 31 March 2022

#### 6.1.1. Key achievements and challenges

- Across all sites, protecting staff mental health throughout the Covid pandemic has been a major focus. It has also helped to bring staff together with many staff noting how they had expanded their connections with a wider range of staff.
- With the implementation of the health and wellness programme there has been a focus on slowing down and meditation.
- As part of Project Guest all mini bars have now been reset as healthy mini bars, with all products containing sugar removed. A guest can still get a sugar-based product (such as carbonated soft drinks), but it has to be requested. This has been well received by guests.
- The Early Childhood Development (ECD) Support Programme continues to provide support for the teachers and provide resources to the youngest children and babies up to two years of age.

### 6.2. Equity and local economy

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
Eq1	Gender Equity: Female Employment	Upwards of 50% female employment in Tourism divisions, 25% elsewhere	SKNP: 49% SSS: 55% SPM: 27% SVNP: 46%
Eq1	Diversity: No. of black people employed representative of Black Economically Active Population (BEAP) at country level by 2025	99% Black Staff - Tanzania 91% Black Staff - RSA 99% Black Staff - Zim 100% Black Staff - Rwanda 97% Black Staff - Group	See baseline – current performance very good

Eq3	Lodge Spend on Local goods and services	Increase spend on local goods & services by 10% p/a year on year; SPM 5%; RW 10%	Returning to pre-Covid levels – see table
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Figure 4 shows the trend in local procurement at SSS and SKNP and the breakdown at SKNP. There are several key points to draw from this. Firstly, that while local procurement rose in 2021 it has not returned to 2019 levels – though 2019 was a low year for SSS. Additionally looking at the breakdown of local spend at SKNP it shows that close to 50% is uncategorised and over 45% is fixed costs – transport, waste collection and student support. While these fixed incomes support economic resilience for the local population, the goal is to reduce waste management and transport expenditure.

Therefore, to increase the local procurement, a better understanding of what the uncategorised spend is required, so that attention can be put on areas where increasing local procurement is both possible and beneficial.

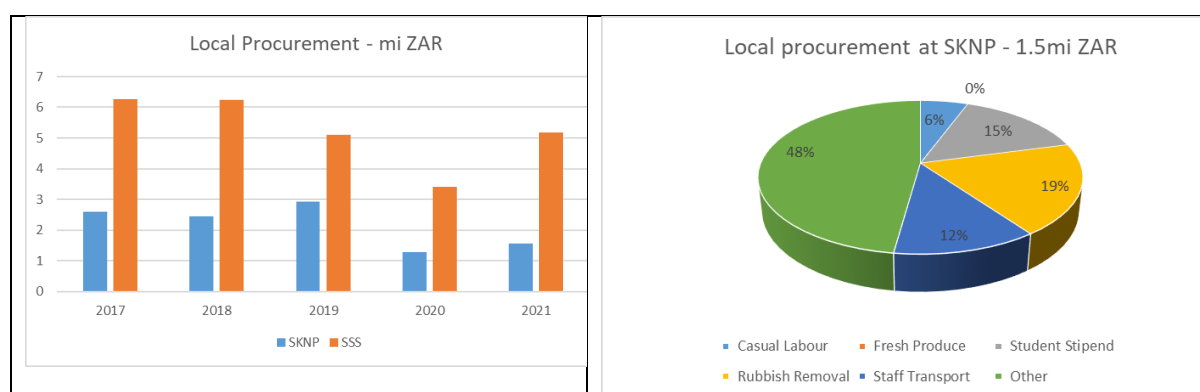


Figure 3. Local procurement at SSS and SKNP

### 6.2.1. Key achievements and challenges

The highlight of 2021 was certainly the launch of the Singita Community Culinary School (SCCS) in Rwanda – see case study.

Additional activity in the year included:

- The ongoing growth and success of the handicraft market at SVN, P,
- The SCCS at SKNP continues to support the students in maximising their culinary skills and gaining employment thereafter. At SKNP there has been a reduction in the number of students, but they will be provided accommodation onsite – giving them a deeper experience,
- There were no employee redundancies at SPM despite there being no guests for over a year,
- Salaries returned to pre-Covid levels in August,
- Upskilling of Guides by incorporating them into conservation work, including: the Vulture Safe Zone, Panthera and rhino de-horning work. This brings them closer to conservation efforts and expands their experience,
- Male to female ratios are relatively unchanged, close to 50% at SKNP, SSS and SVN, P, with a lower percentage at SPM due to the large number of game scouts,
- Employment figures: Groupwide there is a steady increase in the number of local and black staff, with over 97% of black staff group wide,
- Singita has an Employment Equity committee made up of employees from SMC, SSS and SKNP who meet quarterly.

### 6.3. Culture and community

2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
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CC1	Cultural promotion (guests)	Cultural activities available at each Lodge (post Covid)	Negotiations ongoing with the local service provider on guest tours. Regular performances by local musicians/dancers
CC2	Promote a culture of sustainability	OP champions & staff OP engagement in each region	All staff receive induction and ongoing engagement is run at each location
CC3	Maximise positive outcomes from the Early Childhood Development programme	100% of SLT's 17 existing (2020) ECD centres have achieved good practice site status by 2025	See baseline
CC4	Maximise positive outcomes from Singita Community Culinary School for students...	SCCS: Increase number of graduates to 42 per year by 2025.	30 graduates with a strategy in place to reach 42 by 2025
	...and employment opportunities for alumni.	SCCS: >85% target alumni employment rate	95% in employment

### Singita Community Culinary School in Rwanda

During 2021 the Singita Community Culinary School (SCCS) in Rwanda was built and launched. The school is in Musanze, the local town, based in an existing hospitality training facility that had ceased to operate. Reusing this space and building minimised the impact of the construction, with the process managed remotely to minimise flights. All materials, apart from essential kitchen items, were sourced locally.

The school opened in August with the first intake of 10 students who will study for a year, and on completion of the course will be supported in finding employment. The students learn about the sustainability aspects of cooking, with modules in the Singita Standards, conservation, and sustainability as well of the practical experience of managing their own garden for food production.

All guests learn about the project and those that are interested can come and visit, encouraging them to visit the local community too!



Students in the garden...



... and the kitchen (Credit: Singita)

### 6.3.1. Key achievements and challenges

Throughout the year Singita supported the local community with both emergency and recovery support through the Covid pandemic with some notable successes. For example, all 17 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres re-opened in September and stayed open safely. These were among only 4% of national ECD centres able to stay open.

Additional achievements include:



- While community tours at SSS and SKNP continue to be on hold as Singita works with the local community to identify the best delivery partner, work has started developing conservation rooms at each lodge. The conservation rooms will give all guests a much deeper insight into the conservation and community work of Singita.
- Staff engagement is ongoing and strengthened throughout the Covid period.
- The guest experience has placed a greater focus on healing and connection to nature; this has included:
  - Mindfulness and meditation soundtracks,
  - Yoga facilities in every room and yoga classes with more Singita staff qualifying as yoga teachers,
  - Increased focus on the broader sensory experience.

The SLT continued to deliver a range of community activities in the local communities, including:

- Of the 17 Early Childhood Development centres supported by Singita, 17 were able to reopen towards the end of the year due to the Covid training that Singita supported. This minimised the disruption to the children's learning in this crucial stage of their development. These counted among only 4% of all ECDs centres that were able to open nationally and stay open safely.
- The Open Learning Academy which brings digital learning into schools was interrupted by school closures, however the Good Work Foundation, which Singita supports, helped teachers with remote learning and other opportunities to support learning.
- The SLT supported one student in 2021 to attend the South Africa College for Tourism; she graduated successfully.

## 6.4. Land and nature

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
LN1	Contribution to restoration, effective management and safeguarding of key biodiversity areas by 2030	404,236 ha under stewardship restored or effectively management in Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) across Africa	SVNP expanded and other opportunities assessed
	Launch of Singita Conservation Foundation	Singita Conservation Fund is registered and established	Launched
LN3	Reduce poaching	Zero poaching incidents of all species of conservation concern	Zero poaching lion, elephant, rhino on Singita concessions
LW4	Guest engagement: Conservation Rooms at all lodges by 2025	Conservation Room completion in 2022: SVNP in place	On track – SSS planned for 2022, SKNP 2023

### 6.4.1. Key achievements and challenges

Singita has and continues to support conservation and 'rewilding' of large tracts of land across the continent. Notable successes include:

- The [Singita Conservation Foundation](#) was established in Luxemburg with two catalytic seed investment bequests which launched the registration of the Foundation,
- Zero loss to poaching of key species including lions, elephants, and rhinos at the concessions where Singita is managing the anti-poaching (SKNP, SSS),
- Singita continues to support various conservation initiatives including Panthera's 'faux-fur' programme for leopard conservation, and the Lionscape Coalition,
- Singita is continuing to identify and develop openings for new conservation projects, with new projects expected in the coming years,
- SVNP has had a highly successful year:
  - 97 additional hectares have been purchased – expanding the National Park,
  - The nursery continues to produce trees for reforestation, supporting the replacement of all non-indigenous trees onsite, it is also a critical element of the guest experience,



- The conservation efforts have led to elephant jackals, buffalos, and gorillas being seen on the concession
- Increasingly, Singita’s conservation work is looking ‘outside the fence’, for example supporting catchment stewardship to protect the land and rivers neighbouring the National Parks.

#### Rhino relocation by Malilangwe Trust at Pamushana

The successful protection of the rhino at SPM means that the population is now at carrying capacity within the Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve, which can now act as a ‘reservoir’ for other sites. Over the past 30 years Malilangwe has donated over 60 rhinos but 2021 was a very special year in this regard.

The Malilangwe Trust worked with the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust to relocate 10 rhinos into the Gonarezhou (Zimbabwe’s second-largest national park). As all the rhino at Malilangwe are carefully monitored, the rhinos could be selected to have a maximum chance of becoming a stable and viable population in Gonarezhou.

The Malilangwe Trust aims to relocate more rhino in the coming years, supporting the population growth of this magnificent animal.

More information can be found [here](#).

Rhino relocation in progress, and rhinos acclimatising to their new home (Credit: Singita)



## 6.5. Sustainable water

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
SW1	Reduce losses through leaks	5% water losses/ unidentified use	Average unaccounted for water at SSS – 20%
SW2	Absolute water draw reduced	10% reduction on 2019 draw p/a	9% reduction
	Absolute potable water use reduced	10% reduction on 2019 use, p/a. bar SVNP	9% reduction

### 6.5.1. Key achievements and challenges

Water use, both total and treated, is on average 10% lower than in 2019. The reduction is uneven with SSS and SKNP both reducing treated water by 20%, whereas SPM had a 15% increase – despite having 40% fewer guests. Total water at SPM and SSS is approximately unchanged, with the driving force for the reduction being SKNP and TMT. SVNP only accounts for 8% of water consumption. (Figure 4)

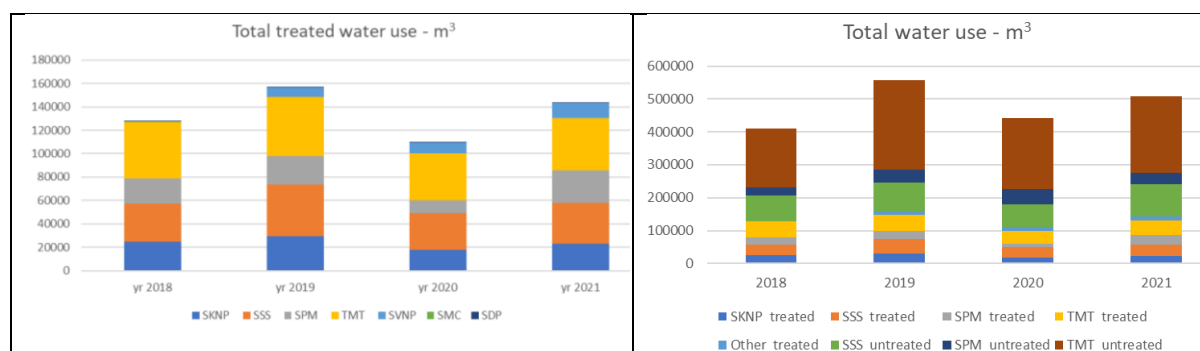


Figure 4. Total treated water and total consumption by location in m³

Average per bed-night water use remains higher than in 2019, which is to be expected due to the lower occupancy. Likewise, the reduction in per person water use is to be expected as staff use less water than guests. Figures for SVNP are still unrepresentative as occupancy has been varied. (Figure 5).

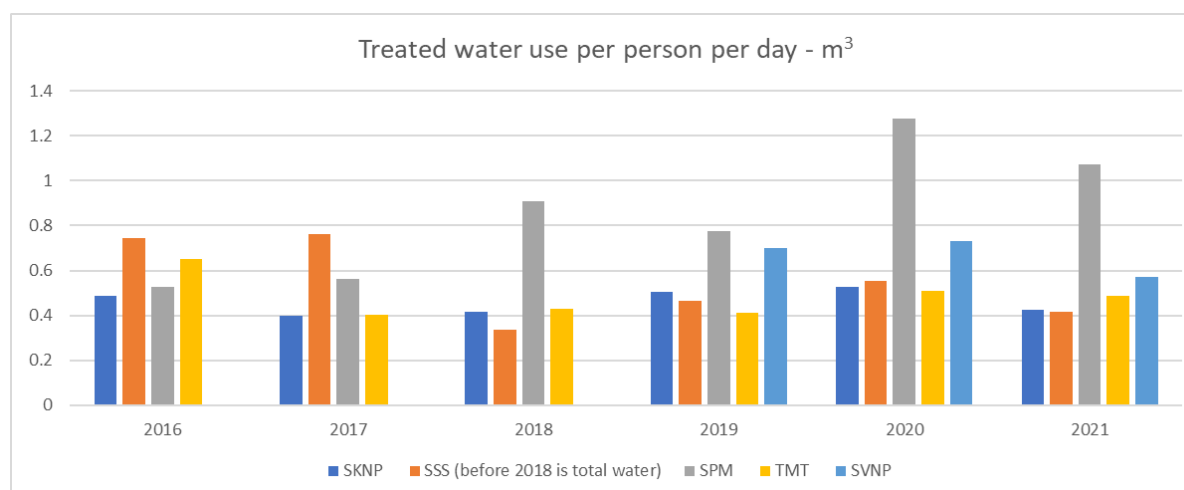


Figure 5. Water use per person per day (m³) at three key locations

The water used in conservation is 2.5 to 3 times larger than the human consumption. This water is used primarily for guaranteeing water availability for animals. The total water use is highly variable, being rainfall dependent. Given the likelihood of increasing drought conditions, it would seem prudent to develop conservation strategies that require less artificial augmentation of local water supplies for wildlife.

## 6.6. Local and sustainable food

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
LSF1	Promote local produce	Upwards of 60% of produce (lodge and/or staff food) sourced from onsite and/or community farms	Chefs' estimate: 15% guest food from within 100 km at SSS and SKNP

LSF2	Manage animal protein	All sustainable and capped at 200g/dish	Salad bars successfully trialled and new menus developed Meat Free initiatives in place
LSF3	Limit food waste	100% of food waste is recycled	100% in Rwanda and Zimbabwe, South Africa Lodges making progress

### 6.6.1. Key achievements and challenges

The health and environmental benefits of a low-meat diet has been driving an increase in the popularity of vegetarian and vegan diets in many parts of the world, and this is clearly reflected in the guest offer at Singita.

Food waste continues to be effectively addressed. In Rwanda all food waste is recycled to local pig farms or to a fly protein project; all food waste is composted in Zimbabwe. In South Africa some is going to pig farms or composted onsite, but the remainder is sent to landfill. At SSS a region-wide plan has been established and this will be a focus for SKNP in 2023.

There has been a progressive shift in the staff food to a more balanced and healthier menu but, in some locations, it remains too high in animal protein from both a health and sustainability perspective. SVNP staff food is a poster child of healthy and culturally sensitive meals. The menu is aligned with Rwandan cultural norms, which tend to be a healthy and relatively low meat diet. The canteen has two meat-free days a week – Meat-free Monday and Wellness Wednesday.

- When operating normally the SSS and SKNP lodge kitchens are receiving approximately 15% of fresh produce from Xicupe Farm, and staff kitchens around 25%.
- Singita continues to support a local vegetable grower David Shilabi to supply a larger range of vegetables to SSS and SKNP.
- The SVNP ‘farm-to-table’ concept has proved popular and about 20% of food comes from the local market and the remainder from Kigali.
- There have been some changes to guest experience at SKNP:
  - Salmon has been replaced with a local trout
  - Breakfast and lunch have been combined into brunch – reducing the meals on offer but giving the guests more time for other activities. This has increased the use of the spa.
- At SKNP, staff meat has been reduced without complaints.

## 6.7. Travel and transport

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
ST1	Vehicle fuel consumption reduction	Maintain 2019 consumption in 2022 onwards	2019: 398kl 2021: 358kl – approx. 10% reduction
ST2	Full EV fleet by 2030	Game viewers within 3 years of commercial availability Rest of fleet within 5 years	SA lodges are trialling a locally produced EV in 2022
ST3	Carbon offsets of staff air travel	100% Staff air travel offset	Strategy in place – offsetting of 800t CO <sub>2</sub> eq

### 6.7.1. Key achievements and challenges

Transport accounts for nearly 25% of Singita’s carbon footprint, with vehicle fuel at around 16% and flights 8%. While there has been a 10% reduction in fuel use across the sites, this is most likely linked to lower guest numbers, and it will be important to ensure that steps that have been taken to reduce fuel use during Covid are maintained.

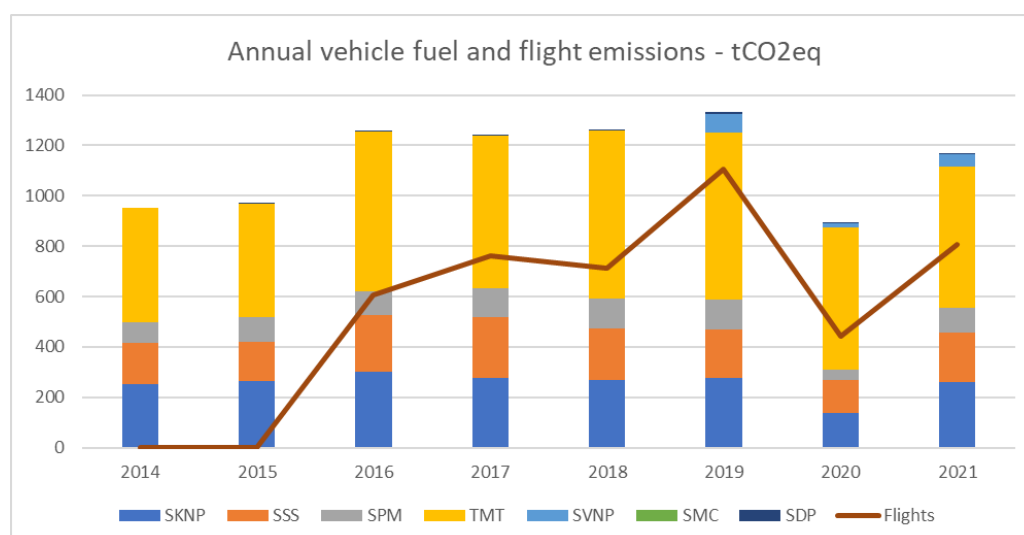


Figure 6. Annual carbon emissions from transport fuel by location

As of 2021 Singita started to offset the emissions from staff travel, though this should be implemented with ongoing initiatives to reduce flying. During Covid much work was done remotely and flight emissions have rebounded in 2021 to above 2018 level. While this is to be expected it is important that there is no return to pre-Covid travel models and that there is a permanent reduction in flight emissions.

The lockdown led to a number of initiatives to reduce the need to travel and many of these have remained in place in 2021, and new initiatives developed:

- At SSS an initiative for 'shopping sharing' for offsite trips and deliveries remains in place, so only one person drives to collect shopping. At SPM they also continue to share trips into town.
- At SKNP senior staff are no longer able to drive in and must take the bus.
- At SPM the number of staff bus trips to the village has been reduced from 35 to 14, halving fuel use.
- The SCCS kitchen built at SVNP was overseen 100% remotely from Johannesburg with no site visits.

The revised targets have placed an increased emphasis on electric vehicles. This will require engagement with suppliers and any outsourced partners – discussions with Primate Safaris in Rwanda have already started. Another key issue will be increasing renewable energy production in line with the increased demand – relying on coal-fired electricity will reduce the benefit of the electric vehicles.

One final point is that Singita's business model relies on air travel and full scope 3 carbon accounting requires these emissions to be measured and addressed. The carbon offset levy starts to provide a mechanism for this, but a broader first step is probably to draw on the experience of the Covid pandemic and undertake a risk analysis of this business model and start to consider how to manage and mitigate the impact and risk.

### Carbon offset levy

In August Singita launched its new carbon offset levy. Having calculated the carbon emissions of operations at Singita this has been used to estimate the average emissions per bed-night, and a levy applied to fund initiatives to offset these emissions.

Singita has partnered with various projects across the four regions it operates in to ensure that the offset will take place locally and also bring social benefits to the local community. For example:

- In Southern Africa, the Climate Neutral Group's Wonderbag project assists communities to cook more sustainably and safely through a simple, innovative alternative to an open flame.
- In East Africa, Carbon Tanzania's Yaeda Valley Forest Project works to protect the vulnerable forests for the benefit of hunter-gatherers, wildlife and climate change prevention.

Furthermore, guests are given the opportunity to offset their own flights, and Singita is also offsetting for all its own business flights.

## 6.8. Materials and products

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
SM1	Prioritising sustainable construction	New guidelines for every new build and any significant refurbishment project	One Planet Living integrated into refurbishments
SM2	Increasing local procurement	% of design products sourced locally: East Africa: 40-50% RSA: 80% Zimbabwe: to be agreed	No redesigns/ refurbishments in 2021
SM3	Implementing Sustainable packaging	100% sustainable packaging of all items leaving PDP warehouse by 2023	Plastic wrap for pallets eliminated
	Paperless guest experience	60-70% reduction in guest paper collateral	Hard copy suite collateral eliminated

### 6.8.1. Key achievements and challenges

- All products have been 'graded' against the ten One Planet Living principles and, by scanning a QR code, all staff can access this information about all products.
- Drawing on the experience of all the development and refurbishment projects undertaken, Minimum Quality Standards have been developed for new projects. This includes sustainability requirements covering energy, water, and product selection.
- Broad agreement to favour lighter weight designs for future projects.
- The new accommodation for the SCCS students was a modular offsite solution, which eliminated the need for cement. It also partly made use of an existing structure that was unused.
- Plastic wrap for pallets was eliminated and replaced with reusable cargo nets and strapping. Research into the replacement of bubble-wrap is ongoing with an alternative identified and being tested.
- Seven items of hard copy collateral were removed from rooms, including: post cards, maintenance cards, eco guides, laundry tags, and departure cards.

## 6.9. Zero waste

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
ZW1	Recycling Programme Quality	Waste audit scores 7/10 or above at all properties, in Qtrly waste audits	To be implemented

ZW2	> 90% recycling rate (2022)	% recycled content/all waste (in kgs)	Approx. 92%
ZW3	Plastic reduction	Vegetable packaging to be 100% plastic free	Plastic water bottles and other single-use plastics all but eliminated

Total waste generated in 2022 increased from 2021 as expected, though the high percentage of recycling remains.

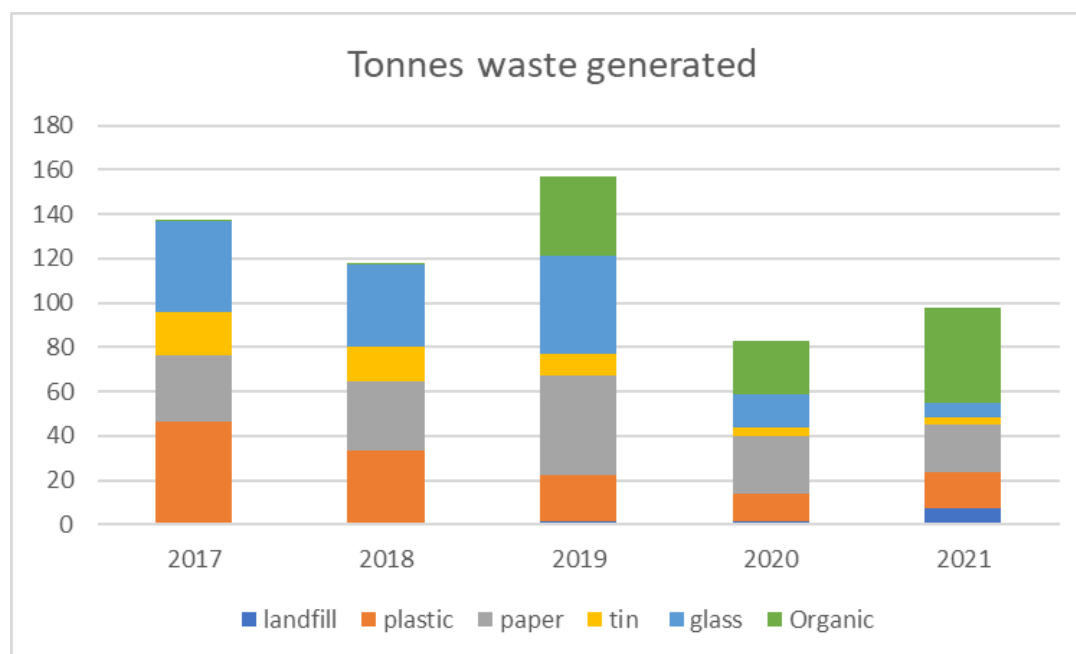


Figure 7. Total quantities of key materials landfilled and recycled by year at SKNP and SSS

### 6.9.1. Key achievements and challenges

- All sites will have at least quarterly waste audit checks and be scored, as has been pioneered at SPM, which continues to set the bar in terms of waste management and recycling.
- SVNPN has started to undertake spot checks of the waste areas and require that it is tidied immediately and is reviewing what alternatives can be used for the plastic sacks in the plant nursery.
- SSS has also tidied and upgraded the key waste management area, as well as installing cameras so that all staff know they must sort waste correctly. It has also engaged with the waste collection team to train it in sorting and recycling, and has provided the waste collector with large 'tote' bags to ensure the waste is kept separate. The wet waste is also being weighed.
- Waste management is also being used as an opportunity to increase staff training and engagement. The position of Junior One Planet Living Champion has been created in each team at SSS to enable more junior staff to be involved and improve engagement and training.
- Similar initiatives have been implemented at SKNP, including the translation of all signs into Shangaan.

## 6.10. Zero carbon energy

	2025 outcome	Target and Baseline	Progress to 2021
ZC1	Carbon offset of Guest stay	100% Guest stay offset	In place
ZC2	Carbon offset of Support Offices	100% of support office carbon offset from 2023	In planning



ZC3	Maximise renewable energy	80% solar at off-grid, 30% solar at on-grid existing lodges by 2025	SKNP is achieving 80%, no other projects are close to the target
ZC4	Renewable energy sourcing for any new developments	2022: establish X% commitment for renewable sourcing for new builds on the principle of maximising renewable energy 2023: TBC X% Renewable energy sourcing for all new builds	PV 15% of primary building energy for electricity

### 6.10.1. Key achievements and challenges

Singita has reviewed its carbon targets, putting an emphasis on carbon offsetting and a minimum renewable energy target. Bioregional uses a very simple definition of zero carbon – energy efficient buildings supplied by 100% renewable energy from on or off-site sources. This approach stems from the fact that delivering zero-carbon building energy is significantly easier than for transport, and any offsetting should be restricted to that area.

Therefore, Bioregional strongly recommends that Singita reviews its renewable energy targets and strategy to aim for a more ambitious level of intervention.

In terms of performance, Singita has been successful in ensuring that its newest projects are efficient, with minimal energy consumption and incorporating energy efficiency. That said, the per bed-night emissions from SVNP are 60% higher than those of SKNP, reinforcing the benefit of installing onsite renewable energy.

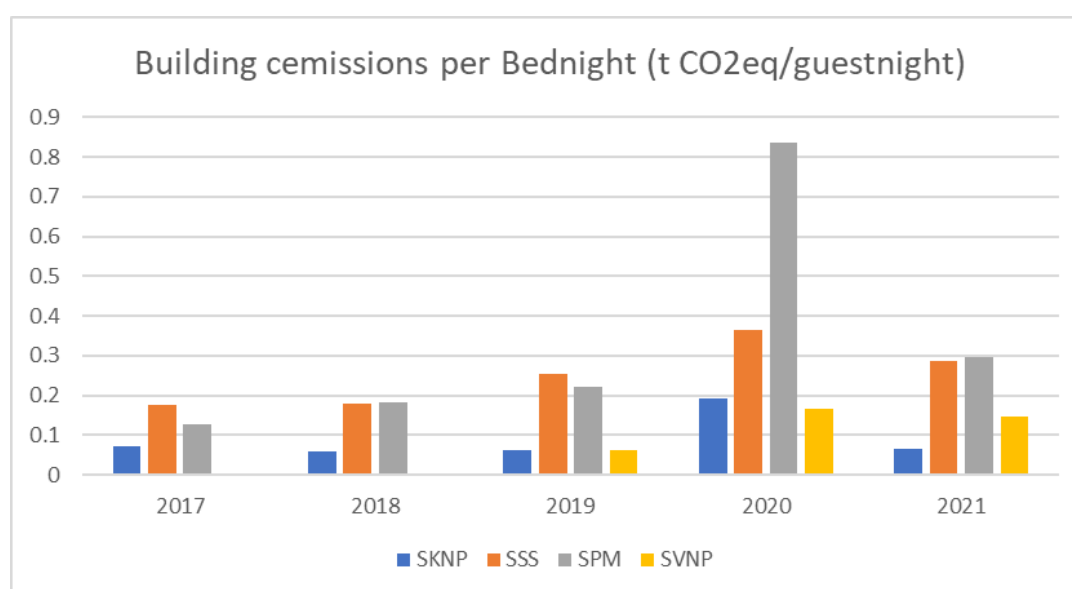


Figure 8. Building carbon emissions (tco2eq) per bednight (All building scope 1 and 2)

The challenge remains the legacy projects at SSS and SPM where large scale renewable energy is required to match existing demand. A strategy has been developed for SPM, and the increasing unreliability of the grid is increasing the financial viability of the project. The project was put on hold during Covid but is being assessed again and likely to go ahead in 2022. A renewable energy strategy for SSS is more challenging due to the highly subsidised rural electricity tariff the project currently benefits from.

Refrigerant gases fell in 2020 and have remained at that level in 2021 – hopefully this is a permanent trend. Minimising the use of refrigerant gases, and therefore air conditioning units, will be critical to keeping this figure down.



SKNP remains a beacon of sustainable energy, but it is imperative that Singita brings its other projects in line with this standard if it is to continue to be seen as a sustainability leader.

## 7. Message from Andrea Ferry – Singita Sustainability Coordinator

Another year has passed since the first property in the Singita stable joined the One Planet Living Community in 2012. In 2021, we found our sea legs in the choppy waters of the pandemic. Towards the end of the year, we could see light at the end of the tunnel as normality returned to our properties and we could once again delight our guests. Although we would never wish this to be repeated there were many lessons learned and the resilience of our staff and our product has been proved.

Our community teams continued their incredible work in communities and our partner Funds and Trusts' conservation teams did not let up in their efforts to protect our wilderness areas and be the guardians of its wildlife residents. This work did not stop when our guests stopped travelling; nor did Singita's commitment to One Planet Living. Sustainability is well inculcated into our culture, and staff have shown innovation in bringing new projects into being, even in the year that was 2021. The staff villages and back-of-house areas are greener and more well taken care of than ever; we are growing more produce on site than in prior years and our focus on wellness has deepened, benefitting staff and guests alike.

Resource consumption continued to be down most of the year but did an uptick as operations started gearing up again. We got more comfortable with virtual meetings, which will continue to be used and therefore reduce unnecessary travel and therefore carbon. A significant exercise in the year was the renewal of our One Planet Living goals for 2025. The efforts needed to reach zero carbon are daunting, especially coming out of two years of depressed revenue that could have been invested in renewable energy projects. However, we will continue to focus on this and drive things forward. We acknowledge that there is little time left to mitigate against runaway climate change, and with our 100-year vision it's imperative we pull out all the stops to ensure we can still keep this as a genuine ambition - indefinitely.

I would like to thank the many Singita staff, suppliers, partners, and supporters whose actions make us the sustainable brand we are. I admire their passion and energy to continue working on change even in very difficult circumstances. I am so proud of the achievements reflected in this report and I hope you, the reader, are inspired to make changes, even if they are small, for a better world.

## 8. Appendix

In Singita's original action plan all goals and targets were set for 2020, therefore during 2021 new goals and indicators were established – the two sets of goals are shown in the table below. Mostly this process has strengthened the targets and goals, though there are a few areas with a potential backward step.

Significant changes are highlighted in red.

One Planet Living Principle	2020 Outcomes	2025 Outcomes
Health and happiness	Improvement in staff health and engagement	Health Wellness programme continues Support Staff Mental Health
Equity and local economy	Maximise local recruitment	Support gender equity by increasing female employment Maximise number of black people employed representative of Black Economically Active Population (BEAP) at country level
	Support development of local businesses	Lodge Spend on Local goods and services
Culture and community	25% of guests to participate in a community activity	Promote local cultural to guests
	Promote a culture of sustainability	Promote a culture of sustainability
	Improve local education and teaching levels	Support Early Childhood Development Support skills and employment through the SCCS
	Maximise contribution to Singita Lowveld Trust (SLT)	Singita Conservation Foundation
Land and nature	Maximise area under management	Contribution to restoration, effective management and safeguarding of key biodiversity areas by 2030.
	Maximise anti-poaching and conservation efforts	Use Singita Conservation Foundation to maximise conservation and community impact Reduce poaching Conservation Rooms at all lodges by 2025
	Encourage environmental care within local communities	
Sustainable water	Reduce losses through leaks to 5%	Reduce losses through leaks
	Reduce extraction of water from boreholes	Reduce and control absolute and potable water use
Local and sustainable food	Increase local expenditure	Promote local produce
	All fish to be sustainably harvested	
	Improvement in staff diet	Manage animal protein
		Limit food waste
Travel and transport	20% reduction in fuel	Vehicle Fuel consumption reduction Full EV Fleet by 2030
	Reduction in business flights	Carbon offsets of staff air travel

One Planet Living Principle	2020 Outcomes	2025 Outcomes
Materials and products	Prioritising sustainable construction and fit-out materials	Prioritising sustainable construction
	Only sustainable cleaning products	Increasing local procurement
		Implementing sustainable packaging
		Paperless guest experience
Zero waste	90% reduction in plastic waste	Recycling Programme Quality
	> 90% recycling rate	> 90% recycling rate (2022)
		Plastic reduction
Zero carbon energy	30% reduction in energy use	
	100% renewable energy	Carbon neutrality/net zero achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carbon offset of Guest stay</li> <li>- Carbon offset of Support Offices</li> <li>- 80% solar at off-grid, 30% solar at on-grid existing lodges by 2025</li> <li>- Renewable energy for new developments</li> <li>- Carbon commitments (carbon neutrality)</li> </ul>