

A close-up photograph of two hands, likely belonging to farmers, holding a handful of dark brown coffee beans. The hands are weathered and show signs of manual labor. The background is dark, making the beans stand out.

LIFE IS BETTER FILTERED

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# THE SCHOOL OF EXPERTISE

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## SERVING COFFEE SUSTAINABLY

REACHING A SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURE FOR THE SECTOR

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LIFE IS BETTER  
**FILTERED**

Serving coffee sustainably

# AN ECO-COFFEE INDUSTRY: THE STORY SO FAR

**Sustainability in the coffee sector isn't a new concept, the industry as a whole is dedicated to creating a sustainable supply chain – from the beans right through to the coffee served.**



**What is new is the significant shift in consumer's expectations and awareness of the climate crisis. Once viewed as a 'nice to have', putting the environment before profit is now expected and this goes beyond recycling packaging and removing single-use plastic straws.**

For suppliers in the coffee industry, continually improving on sustainable practices to pass the benefits down the supply chain to operators and meet consumer demand is an ongoing challenge.

To help navigate this period of change and support the industry in creating a sustainable future, at BRITA Professional we've conducted in-depth, independent research on the views of 500 coffee operators on the biggest barriers to sustainability.

Using this research and together with leading industry experts, this toolkit provides practical solutions and advice on how to balance sustainability challenges with other business priorities, as well as highlighting potential gains that can be made from making the right sustainable choices.

**Sarah Taylor**  
Managing Director of BRITA

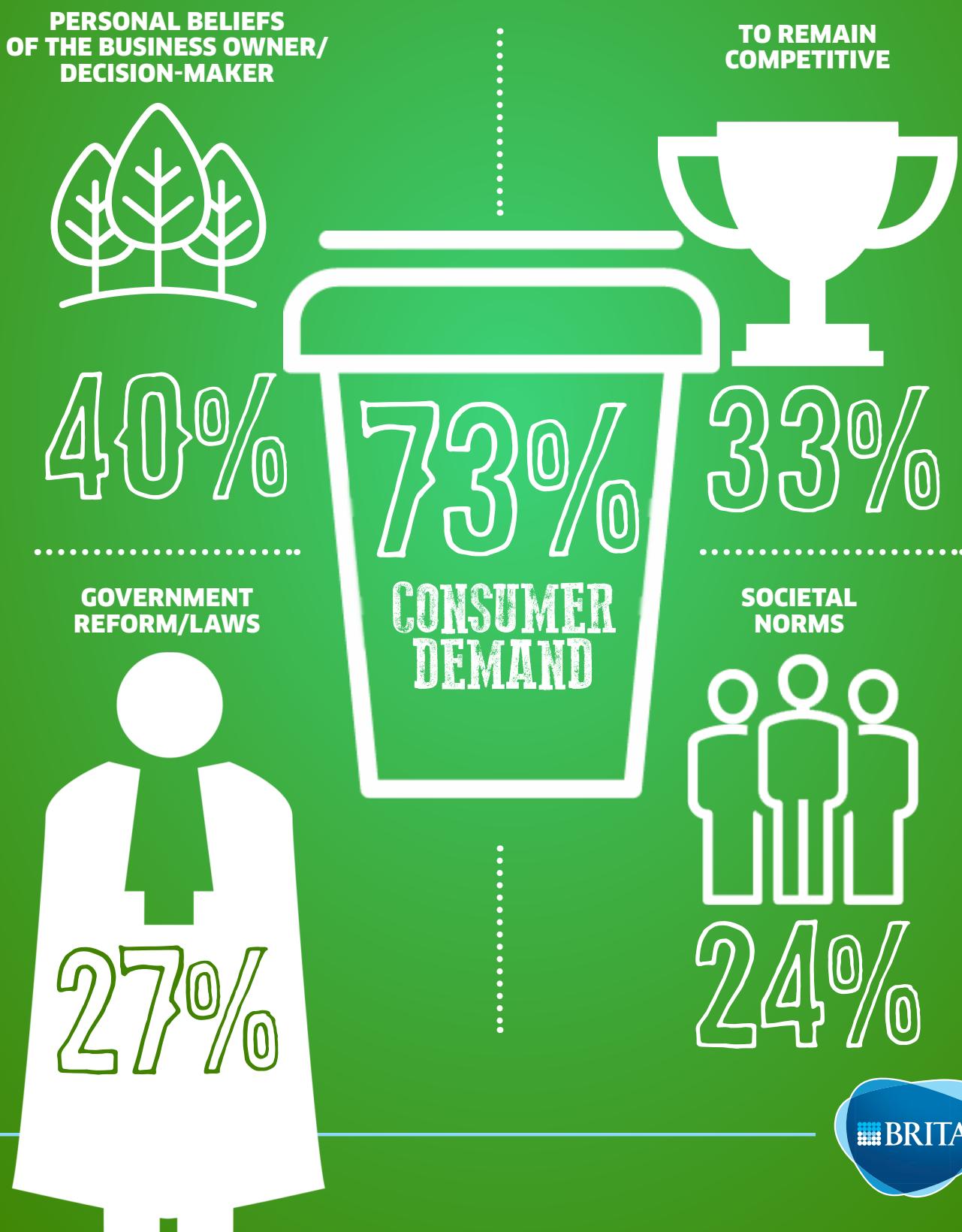


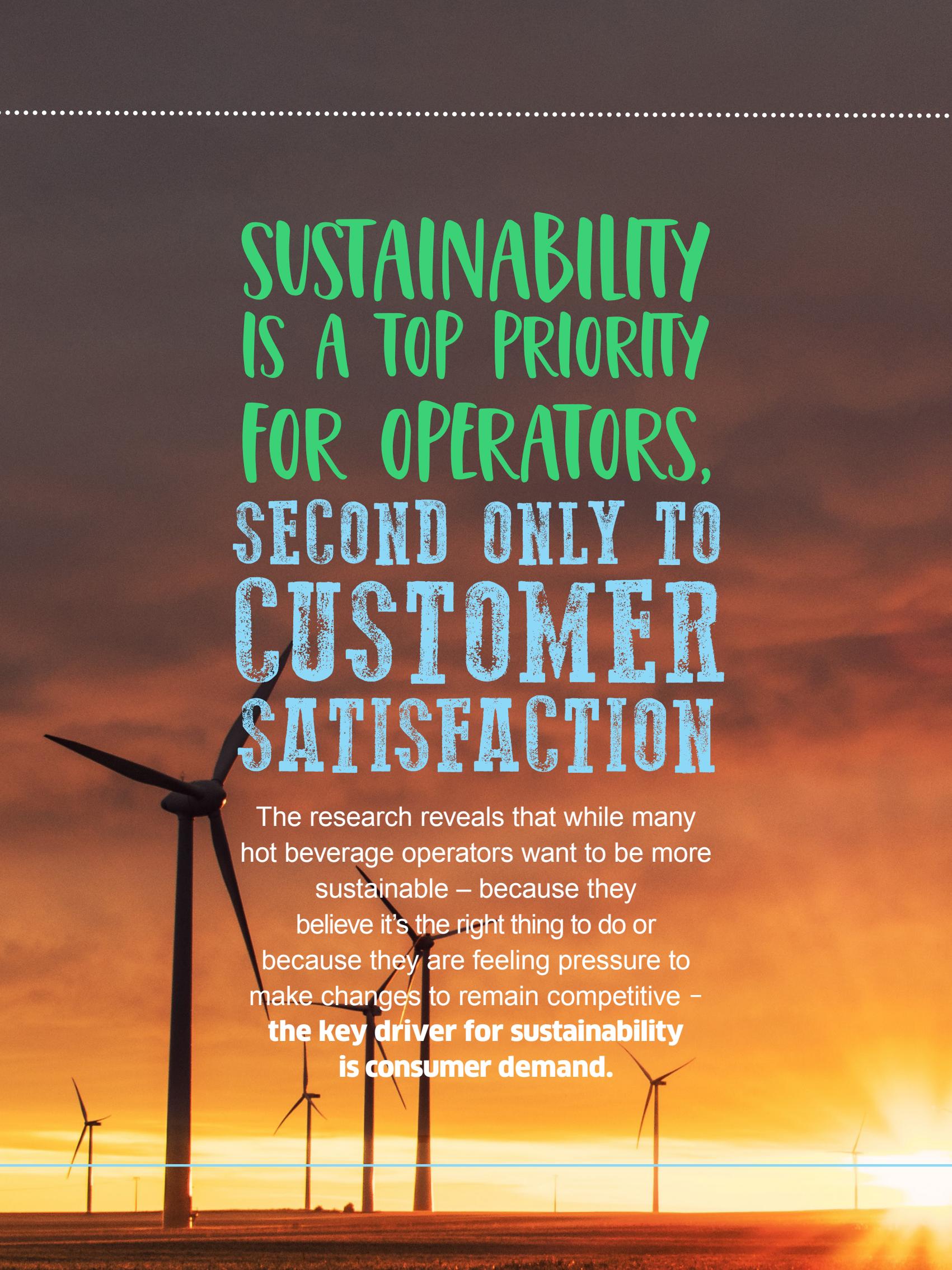
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# WHAT'S INFLUENCING THE SUSTAINABILITY DRIVE?



ACCORDING TO COFFEE OPERATORS, THE BIGGEST INFLUENCES  
ON THEIR BUSINESSES' SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ARE:





# SUSTAINABILITY IS A TOP PRIORITY FOR OPERATORS, SECOND ONLY TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The research reveals that while many hot beverage operators want to be more sustainable – because they believe it's the right thing to do or because they are feeling pressure to make changes to remain competitive – **the key driver for sustainability is consumer demand.**

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THE TOP PRIORITIES  
FOR BUSINESSES ARE:

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



SUSTAINABILITY



THIS, COUPLED  
WITH THE FACT THAT  
ALMOST ALL

97% 

A large icon of a steaming coffee cup is positioned next to the percentage value.

OF HOT BEVERAGE  
OPERATORS BELIEVE  
THAT SUSTAINABLE  
CREDENTIALS ARE  
IMPORTANT TO THEIR  
CUSTOMERS -  
WITH AROUND  
TWO-THIRDS

 64%

A large icon of a person silhouette is positioned next to the percentage value.

SAYING THEY ARE  
'VERY IMPORTANT' -  
EXPLAINS WHY  
CONSUMER DEMAND  
IS SUCH A KEY DRIVER  
FOR BUSINESSES'  
SUSTAINABILITY  
FOCUS.

**The predicted rise in consumer demand and ‘call-out culture’ is having a ripple effect throughout the entire coffee supply chain.**

**Just as consumers are only willing to spend their hard-earned money at environmentally conscious businesses, coffee operators are favouring suppliers that can provide solutions to the sustainability challenges they face.**





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In today's 'information age' suppliers and operators alike need to look at how their sustainable initiatives can not only go further and provide greater benefits, but also how they clearly communicate these to their customers and their customer's customers.

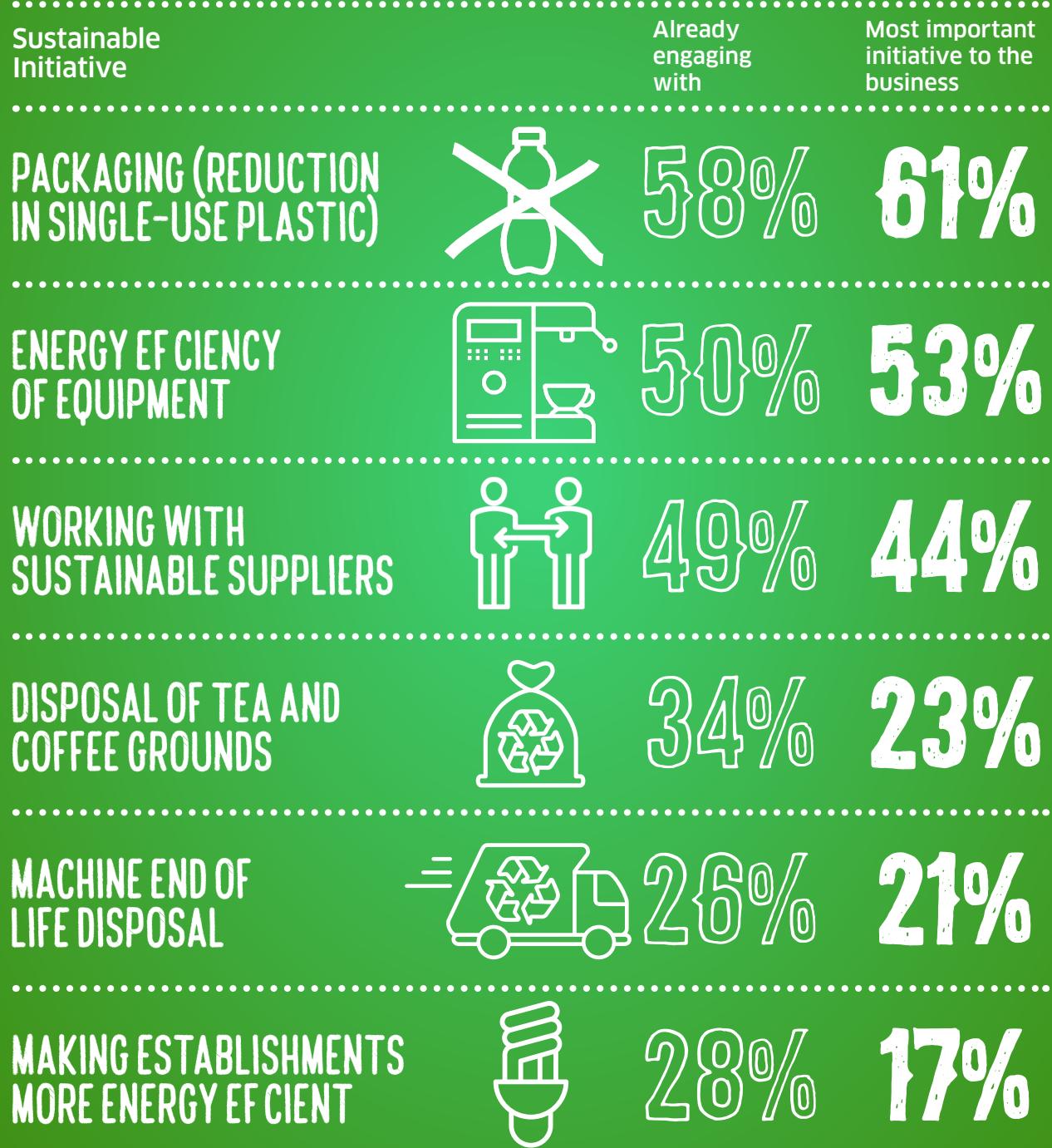
It's not out of the question to consider that in a few years' time, people will look at the sustainability credentials of a product or service they're purchasing before enquiring about the price. In order to prepare, hot beverage suppliers and operators need to start providing this information now.

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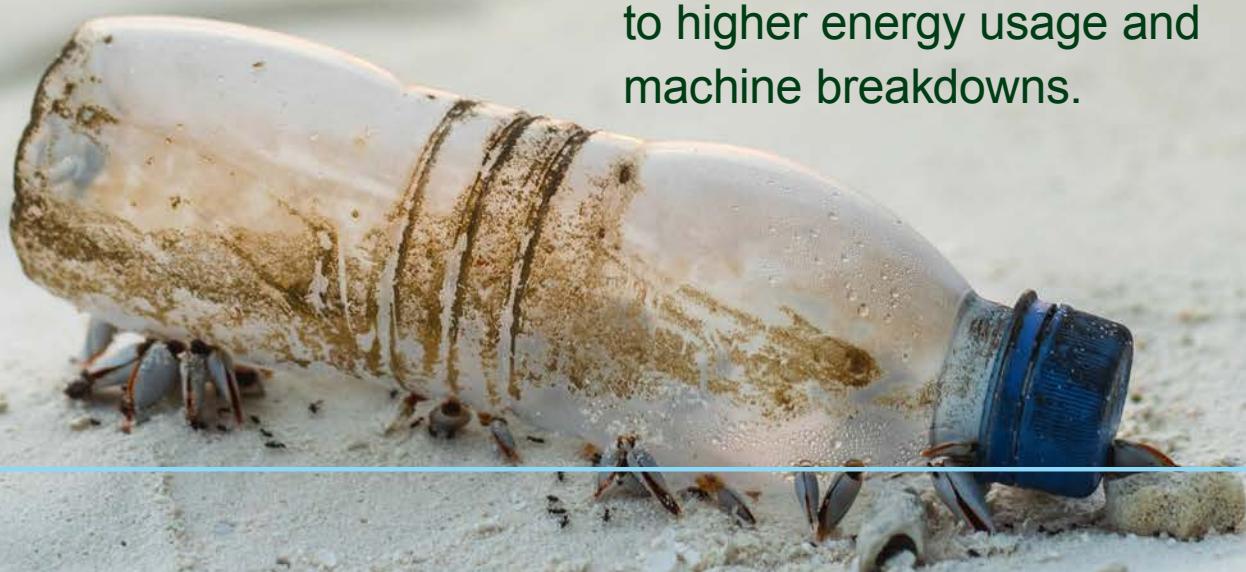
# WHICH SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES REALLY MATTER?



We asked hot beverage operators what the most important sustainability initiatives to their business are versus what they're already engaged with, and the results demonstrate a gap between priorities and practicalities...



**FOR THE MAJORITY,  
THE MOST IMPORTANT  
SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE  
IS THE ONE THEY'RE  
ALSO ENGAGING WITH  
THE MOST - REDUCING  
SINGLE-USE PLASTIC -  
HOWEVER, MANY  
OPERATORS AND  
SUPPLIERS ALIKE  
WANT TO GO FURTHER.**



Improving the energy efficiency of equipment is one of the key ways to do this – particularly in the coffee sector where the equipment is the epicentre of any business – yet only half of professionals have addressed this. To improve the energy efficiency of equipment and ensure it stands the test of time, investment in preventative maintenance is vital. This includes methods such as routine cleaning using environmentally friendly solutions and installing water filters to protect equipment from limescale build ups, which can lead to higher energy usage and machine breakdowns.

As with all issues concerning sustainability, knee-jerk reactions are not what is going to make the difference, it is a change in behaviour. Consumers, suppliers and decision makers have to want to make a difference in their own back yards and change their behaviour because it is the right thing to do.

# BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Establishments eventually change their behaviour because it is good business. The most successful organisations lead from the front to make this planet a better place to live, not to increase profits.

**Tim Sturk**

Founder of Cherry Coffee Training



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*L*

# BARRIERS TO REACHING *SUSTAINABILITY* GOALS

*L*

There are a number of barriers preventing hot beverage professionals from being as sustainable as they would like, which could explain why action does not equal ambition. These barriers include:

## EQUIPMENT

Almost half think their equipment is letting them down by not standing the test of time

47%



## KNOWLEDGE

47% say a lack of knowledge about sustainable practices is making it harder to reach their sustainability goals

47%



## COST

64% say they find it difficult to balance profitability and sustainability within their business

64%

More than a third (37%) say it would be easier for their business to reach its sustainability goals if they had more money to spend



## TIME

Almost a third (29%) say they need more time to focus on sustainability

29%



# **THE ROLE OF SUPPLIERS**

**What this research shows is that the role of suppliers is key in helping coffee operators overcome barriers to sustainability and reach their CSR goals.**

**In particular, there is a lack of knowledge within the sector on how to take sustainability to the next level and, as such, operators will be looking to suppliers to provide this intel.**

If suppliers can ensure that their supply chain is 100% sustainable – through the partners they work with – and that their product or offer has clear sustainable benefits for operators, then they can not only grow their customer base and help businesses improve their sustainability credentials, but also support the wider sector in creating a more sustainable future. The key here is making sure that the service provided makes it as easy as possible for operators to adopt new sustainable initiatives and ways of working, as the research shows that time is a key barrier.



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DESPITE ALMOST HALF

**49%**

OF HOT BEVERAGE  
OPERATORS...

...BELIEVING THAT  
IF THEIR EQUIPMENT  
COULD STAND THE  
TEST OF TIME IT  
WOULD MAKE IT A LOT  
EASIER FOR THEM TO  
MEET THEIR  
SUSTAINABILITY  
GOALS

JUST  
UNDER HALF

**46%**

ARE USING WATER  
FILTERS ON THEIR  
EQUIPMENT TO  
PROTECT AGAINST  
DAMAGING LIMESCALE  
AND UNWANTED  
MINERALS



..... Serving coffee sustainably

A photograph of a man in a striped shirt and cap operating a large industrial coffee roasting machine. He is looking down at the machine, which has a large metal drum and a funnel-like component. Coffee beans are visible falling from the machine. The background shows a wall with vertical panels.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLIER



What's clear from the research is that coffee businesses cannot lessen their impact on the environment without the support and service provided from industry suppliers - whether that's coffee roasters, machine engineers and manufacturers, or waste disposal companies. The good news is that operators recognise the importance of working with sustainable suppliers...



# COFFEE — SHOP —

# 56%

Over half (56%) of coffee operating businesses would pay more for a supplier if it offered a measurable impact on sustainability efforts

Working with sustainable suppliers was the third most important sustainability initiative to businesses (44%) - after reduction in single-use plastic packaging and the energy efficiency of their equipment



# 44%



# 52%

Over half (52%) of businesses think it would be easier to reach sustainable goals if there was more choice in sustainable suppliers

**For suppliers, demonstrating the breadth of their offer and service are the key attributes coffee operators are looking for.**

To help operators develop their sustainable practices even further, they're also looking for suppliers to provide evaluation techniques so that they can easily measure and track the difference their sustainable initiatives are having not just on their business, but on the environment and the sector as a whole.

# S E R V I C E S \* \* \* O N \* \* \* O F F E R



WHAT ARE THE  
TOP SUSTAINABLE  
INITIATIVES COFFEE  
OPERATORS WOULD  
LIKE SUPPLIERS TO  
FOCUS ON?



1

REDUCING PACKAGING

79%

2

SOURCING SUSTAINABLE FOOD

52%

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3

MACHINE PROTECTION TO HELP  
IT STAND THE TEST OF TIME

51%

5

SOURCING SUSTAINABLE  
COFFEE BEANS

46%

4

THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY  
OF MACHINERY

47%

6

SUSTAINABLE METHODS OF  
DELIVERING PRODUCE

25%



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FROM  
SINGLE-USE  
TO  
SUSTAINABLE

return.  
reuse.  
recycle.

EIGHT IN TEN (82%) BUSINESSES HAVE ALREADY INTRODUCED METHODS TO REDUCE SINGLE-USE PLASTICS IN THEIR ESTABLISHMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES:

**59%**

HAVE ELIMINATED SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CUTLERY



**58%**

ARE ENGAGING IN INITIATIVES TO CUT DOWN PLASTIC PACKAGING



**37%**

HAVE REDUCED SUPPLIER PACKAGING



**79%**

HAVE REMOVED PLASTIC STRAWS



While these initiatives are encouraging, operators are looking to go beyond this to lower single-use plastics throughout their business and supply chain. For example:



46%

LESS THAN  
HALF (46%) OF  
BUSINESSES  
HAVE INTRODUCED  
INCENTIVES  
TO REDUCE  
SINGLE-USE  
COFFEE CUPS



34%

ONLY A THIRD  
(34%) HAVE  
INSTALLED  
FILTERED WATER  
DISPENSERS TO  
REPLACE  
BOTTLED  
WATER



82%

THIS IS DESPITE  
82% SAYING THAT IF  
THEIR BUSINESS HAD  
THE OPTION OF  
SELLING FILTERED  
TAP WATER  
INSTEAD OF WATER  
IN SINGLE-USE  
PLASTIC BOTTLES,  
THEY WOULD DO SO

THE BENEFITS OF DOING THIS ARE FURTHER BACKED UP BY RESEARCH WHICH FOUND THAT 64% OF CONSUMERS WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO RETURN TO AN ESTABLISHMENT FOR FUTURE PURCHASES IF THEY COULD REFILL THEIR WATER BOTTLE. TWO THIRDS ALSO SAID THEY WOULD CHOOSE A BUSINESS THAT OFFERED FREE REFILLS OVER A COMPETITOR.

By investing in a filtered water solution, coffee operators can offer hydration stations which provide unlimited quantities of high-quality, chilled still and sparkling water for consumers to refill at. When you consider that British consumers use an average of 7.7 billion plastic bottles of water a year, yet only 57% of these are recycled, the impact of switching from serving water in single-use plastic bottles to sustainable and reusable bottles is staggering. Not to mention the improvement it can make to businesses' carbon footprint and cost savings from not having to deliver, store and dispose of single-use plastic bottles.

# LOOKING AHEAD

Claire Bowen, Coffeepreneur and co-author of *The Daily Grind* reveals her top predictions for eco coffee in the future

## SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING:

The consumer's buying decisions will become more and more influenced by both environmental and health awareness.

## TOXIC SINGLE-USE PLASTICS:

Single-use plastics will become 'toxic' in the minds of the consumer; with people refusing to buy anything single-use, combined with government intervention to tax or even ban them.

## CARBON FOOTPRINT MEASUREMENT:

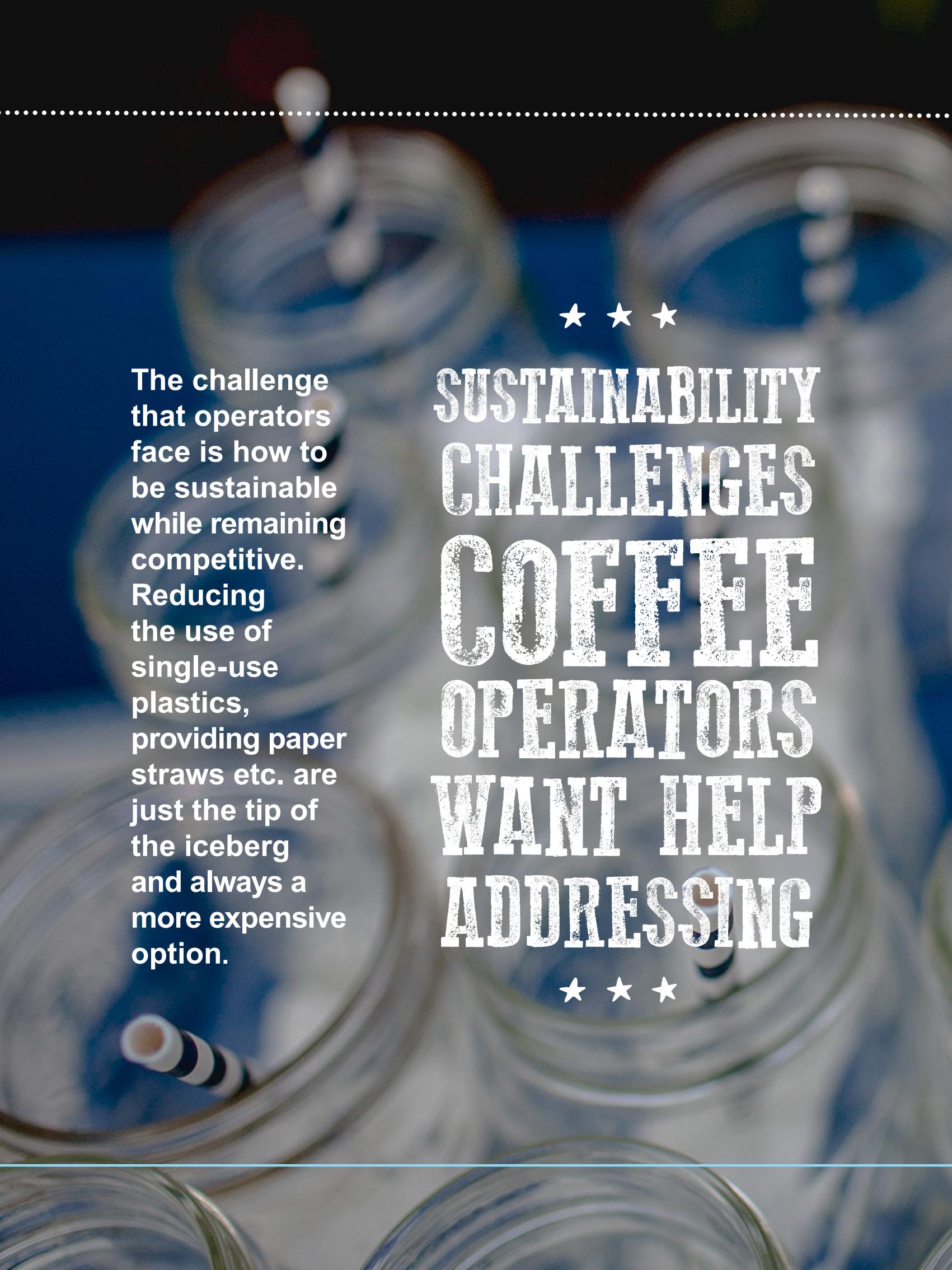
The measurement of the carbon footprint of everyday items will improve transparency and empower the public in their buying decisions, forcing suppliers to act ethically.



**TIM STURK, FOUNDER OF CHERRY COFFEE TRAINING,  
SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON THE SINGLE-USE  
PLASTIC DEBATE**

**Any discussion on sustainability in the coffee supply chain includes the topic of single-use plastics. We have seen dramatic shifts within the coffee sector to reduce and eliminate single-use items but really, we have only scratched the surface.**

Initiatives include the introduction of re-useable cup schemes across multiple sites, cup lending programs, sustainable packaging and biodegradable coffee bags, but there is more to be done to eliminate single-use plastics from the entire supply chain. If you think that just five years ago this issue wasn't on the agenda, but look at the reaction and outcome it has created, proving just how powerful it can be when the industry comes together to create change.



The challenge that operators face is how to be sustainable while remaining competitive. Reducing the use of single-use plastics, providing paper straws etc. are just the tip of the iceberg and always a more expensive option.



# SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES COFFEE OPERATORS WANT HELP ADDRESSING



**There is a lack of information; therefore, transparency, which hinders the decisions around sustainability a coffee shop owner needs to make.**

For example, it's impossible to compare the energy efficiency or the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of a coffee machine as the data is either not available or in an inconsistent form.

The industry and suppliers need to make it simple for operators to make sustainable decisions; like choosing a two head over a three head coffee machine and on-demand grinders. Keeping to maintenance schedules, selecting coffee grown with organic fertilisers and reducing the number of deliveries per week will all help coffee shops reduce their carbon footprint and become more sustainable.

**Claire Bowen**

Coffeepreneur and co-author of The Daily Grind

# 1 INFORMATION IS KEY

Whether you're communicating to customers or you're a supplier to coffee operators, you need to be communicating and providing information on your sustainability efforts and the benefits these provide, not just to the end user, but to the supply chain and the wider coffee industry.



## OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABILITY



## TOP THREE TAKEAWAYS



## THE PLIGHT TO REDUCING SINGLE-USE PLASTICS IS ONLY JUST BEGINNING

Reducing single-use plastics is the biggest sustainability initiative coffee operators want to tackle and many have made waves by switching to paper straws, for example. However, there is a need to go beyond this and implement methods of removing single-use plastics from the supply chain that help to change consumer purchasing habits around items such as single-use plastic bottles.

## THE ROLE OF SUPPLIERS HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT

Operating sustainably is an ongoing challenge for coffee operators and they're looking to suppliers in the industry to help them make and measure changes. Operators can only go so far individually, but if the industry comes together then long term eco advancements can be made.

# SUMMARY

## OPERATING AS SUSTAINABLY AS POSSIBLE IS SOMETHING WHICH COFFEE BUSINESSES CAN NO LONGER IGNORE

**Whether you're a supplier to the sector or an owner of a coffee outlet, continually lowering your business' impact on the environment is something which will become common place over the next few years.**

From conducting research into the main barriers to sustainability and speaking with experts in the field for this report, it's clear that there is a demand for greater information and transparency from suppliers. In order to help operators improve their CSR credentials, they're looking to work with suppliers who can not only provide a service which enhances

their sustainability, but also those which have ensured their own supply chain is environmentally friendly and can provide practical measurement methods to demonstrate the benefits.

- With consumer demand and awareness increasing, now is the time to invest in long term sustainable solutions – such as methods of ensuring the energy efficiency of coffee machines – as opposed to focusing on 'quick fixes', which have higher short term associated costs.

**Sarah Taylor**  
Managing Director BRITA

Serving Coffee Sustainably

**IF YOU WOULD  
LIKE TO GAIN MORE  
ADVICE ON FINDING  
THE RIGHT WATER  
FILTRATION OR  
DISPENSER SOLUTION  
TO IMPROVE THE  
SUSTAINABILITY OF  
YOUR BUSINESS AND  
ENSURE YOUR COFFEE  
EQUIPMENT STANDS  
THE TEST OF TIME,  
PLEASE CONTACT A  
BRITA PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERT AT  
[BRITA.CO.UK/  
PROFESSIONAL](http://BRITA.CO.UK/PROFESSIONAL)  
OR CALL  
08447 424990**



**BRITA WAS FOUNDED MORE THAN 50 YEARS AGO AND IS ONE OF THE  
LEADING EXPERTS IN THE FIELD OF WATER FILTRATION.**

BRITA Professional's products are designed to produce the best filtered water for food and beverages by reducing particles, metals, minerals and chlorine that have an unfavourable impact on the taste, appearance and aroma of the final product. BRITA filters – which are part of BRITA's zero to landfill initiative and don't produce water wastage or use electricity – improve machine longevity by reducing limescale build-up and deposits of unwanted minerals. By guarding against potential damage, businesses can not only improve the reliability and sustainability of equipment, but also cut down on energy costs.

BRITA fully acquired Vivreau UK in 2016. Today, BRITA Vivreau is the global leading innovator in the manufacture of environmentally positive purified drinking water systems, supplying a wide range of products dispensing chilled still, sparkling, ambient and boiling water.

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**LIFE IS BETTER FILTERED:  
WHAT'S COMING UP**

Want to hear more tips and advice from industry experts?

Look out for our next phase of exciting activity. In 2020, 'Life is Better Filtered' will be launching the Business Vitality initiative.

Watch this space!

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BRITA IS PROUD TO WORK WITH



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FILTERED**