Sustainability

Rental is an inherently sustainable model. By renting equipment, companies and individuals can contribute to a more sustainable world in various ways.

Rental contributes to sustainable development

Many European rental companies put significant efforts into their own Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). An increasing number of them are participants in the UN Global Compact[1], supporting the ten principles with respect to human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption and annually reporting their progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Rental companies today are actively working on their contribution to the SDGs. The goals where rental companies are making the most significant impact are:

- SDG 3: Health and well-being
- SDG 4: Education
- SDG 5: Gender equality
- SDG 8: Economic growth and employment
- SDG 12: Sustainable consumption and production
- SDG 13: Climate action

Read the report: ERA CSR KPI Guidance Framework.[2]

1   https://www.unglobalcompact.org/participation
2   https://erarental.org/publications/csr-kpi-framework

Rental is circular

The rental industry by definition operates in a circular business model. It fulfils all of the circular economy principles and, by doing so, minimises the negative environmental impact of equipment.

Shared usage
- Construction companies and other rental customers can access equipment when required, improving efficiency;
- Rental asset management leads to a more frequent, hence more efficient, use of equipment.

Repairability
- Rental companies contribute to a product design that facilitates maintenance and repair activities;
- Rental companies focus on spare parts management;
- Rental companies ask for increased information on product repair from the equipment manufacturers.

Resource use
- Rental companies search for equipment to offer the most sustainable option to their customers;
- Rental companies provide theoretical and practical training to their customers to optimise the use of equipment.

Reusability
- Components of dismantled equipment can be reused.

Recyclability
- Rental companies take care of their equipment through repairs, when it is still possible, and recycling, when it is at the end of its life cycle;
- Rental companies use their bargaining power to demand equipment suppliers limit the use of non-recyclable material and take responsibility for end-of-life management by collecting, reusing or recycling equipment.

Rental contributes to lower carbon emissions

An independent research study commissioned by ERA on the carbon footprint of construction equipment has demonstrated that the rental business model stimulates the efficient use of equipment and that this efficient use lowers the total carbon footprint. Depending on specific user practice, this can lead to significant reductions, in the range of 30% and sometimes up to 50%.

The researchers of the study built a calculator to determine the carbon footprint of the use of construction equipment, based on various parameters. The parameters with the biggest influence on the carbon footprint of equipment are:

· Intensity of use - maximising the utilisation rate could reduce the amount of equipment required
· Using the right equipment for the job
· Transportation - shorter distances and higher load factors
· Maintenance - allowing extended lifetime

Read more about the study: Carbon Footprint of Construction Equipment.[3]

3 https://erarental.org/publications/carbon-footprint-of-construction-equipment/

The ERA Equipment CO2 Calculator is a tool that estimates the carbon footprint of construction equipment over its entire life cycle...

ERA Equipment CO2 Calculator

Any equipment stakeholder (such as equipment owners, rental companies, contractors and public authorities) interested in establishing the carbon footprint of construction equipment precisely can use the ERA Equipment CO2 Calculator.

It is a tool that estimates the carbon footprint of construction equipment over its entire life cycle and provides the carbon footprint of a piece of equipment per hour of use. Expressing the results per hour of (active) use enables comparisons across different types of equipment and over a wide range of ownership scenarios.

The ERA Equipment CO2 Calculator can be used to evaluate a single ownership period of one piece of equipment and, thus, to determine the climate impact of entire fleets of equipment or of the total carbon footprint of all machines on a given construction jobsite.

The calculator's results can be used, for example, to:

- Investigate which part of the life cycle has the largest contribution to the carbon footprint of equipment;
- Compare different equipment use scenarios and get insight into the effects of measures to reduce the overall footprint;
- Evaluate the effects of alternative fuel consumption.

The ERA Equipment CO2 Calculator is freely accessible here[4].

4   https://equipmentcalculator.org/en/co2/new

Rental companies work with sustainable supply chains

Because rental companies cannot offer their services without first acquiring the equipment, it is necessary to ensure that this equipment has been manufactured in a sustainable and responsible manner. Many European rental companies already assess their suppliers according to sustainability criteria.

ERA has developed a framework that helps rental companies to define minimum sustainability requirements and aspirations for all suppliers. These common requirements relate to the areas of:

- Human rights and working conditions
- Health and safety
- Responsible sourcing of components and raw materials
- Environmental performance
- Business ethics
- Product sustainability performance

The framework provides rental companies with a tool to demonstrate to customers and public authorities a harmonised approach to sustainability in their supply chains. Furthermore, it gives suppliers clear guidance on what rental companies require from them in terms of the sustainability of their products and operations.

Read more about the ERA Sustainable Supplier Framework here[5].

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5 *https://erarental.org/sustainable-suppliers*

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