



# SUSTAINABLE EVENTS ACTION PLAN

## 2022-2024



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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The events sector is of vital importance to Brussels, the capital of Europe. Its activity creates local jobs which cannot be relocated, offers perspectives to the cultural sector, and reinforces the attractiveness of the City while allowing people to share moments of conviviality.

Almost 3,000 events take place every year in the City of Brussels. These can be events organised directly by the City, events subsidised by the City or events which have been given permission to take place in the public space.

While the contributions of the events sector are undeniable, numerous studies show that the impact of the events sector on our society and our planet is not neutral.

The events organised by the City of Brussels bring together thousands and even millions of people. This means that these people move around and consume food and drink. There may be issues of accessibility or harassment, just to mention a few challenges.

## **Fortunately, we are not starting from scratch.**

Several initiatives have already been taken during previous legislatures to limit the negative impact of events on society and the planet. One very visible example is the systematic use of reusable cups. For example, this measure has prevented the production of several tonnes of plastic waste.

New ambitious measures have also been implemented in the framework of this legislature: the implementation of anti-harassment actions, the banning of the use of single-use plastic, the roll-out of access to free drinking water, the provision of dry toilets, the introduction of selective sorting, the installation of facilities for people with reduced mobility, and the use of reusable dishes. And many other things besides, such as the creation of a sustainability unit within the Brussels Major Events team to coordinate all these actions internally.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

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**Unfortunately, all these efforts will not be sufficient to meet the forthcoming challenges.**

We need to go further in questioning practices, and above all in changing behaviour. As a public authority, it is essential that we aim to be exemplary in the way we design and organise our events.

This approach is all the more essential since it takes place after two years of the health crisis which brought a large part of the events sector to a standstill. The issues of social inclusion and respect for the environment have not disappeared with this global pandemic - far from it!

As business picks up, it is important not to miss the turning point for the "world of tomorrow."

**The City of Brussels "Sustainable Events Action Plan" is presented to you in this context.**

This strategic document aims to plan the commitments of Brussels Major Events by supporting them with measures and a timetable. This is an action plan designed for a three-year period (2022-2024) in order to initiate a rhythm of two action plans per municipal legislature. This schedule should be broken down into annual action plans setting out the resources needed to achieve the objectives set.

Since it is impossible to do everything at once, choices among themes have been deliberately made. Priority has been given to the thematic axes through which our actions will have the most virtuous impact: social inclusion, mobility and food.

This dynamic is part of the legacy of the Brundtland Report, adopted by the UN in 1987. This report is at the origin of the concept of sustainable development and its three pillars: social, environmental and economic. This was exactly 35 years ago, at the initiative of Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland.

Since the beginning of this legislature, the City of Brussels has made no secret of its ambition to make the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals a priority.

Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

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**Brussels is a world city. It has the great ambition to become a world reference for sustainable events.**

**The City of Brussels wants to be at the forefront of this transition, so that it can serve as an example and become a source of inspiration both at home and abroad.**


This ambition will be constructed in collaboration with the sector. The City of Brussels wishes to work together with the actors in the world of events, those who make Brussels move and who contribute to its influence.

This is a long-term and long-haul task. Sometimes we will have to make do with the solutions which already exist. Sometimes we will have to invent them.

We owe this to both present and future generations.

**Delphine Houba**

Alderman for Major Events and President of the Brussels Major Events association.



## 2. WORK

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### 2.1. Events sector


The **event activity**, covering the design and organisation of events, is by nature fleeting and collective. It generates significant impacts on society, the environment and the economy.

It is essential to act to ensure that events can be designed in a more sustainable way.

The **event actors** involved in this activity are:

1. Organiser - City (main contractor)
2. Suppliers / Providers
3. Shops
4. Public
5. Partners / Sponsors

Sustainability expertise and innovations are explored at the most local level possible in a collaborative and co-constructive manner in order to unite the whole sector around common goals.



## **2. WORK**

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### **2.2. Themes**

To achieve this transition objective, our action consists of finding alternatives and sustainable solutions through various themes. This process requires the application of a specific methodology planned over time.

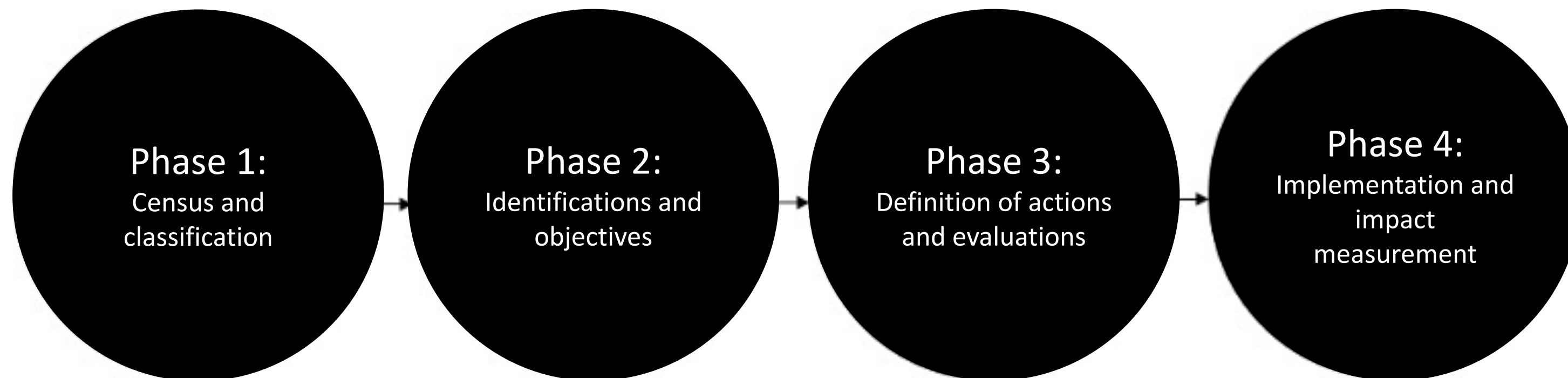
We have identified the main event themes relevant to the action of the City of Brussels:

- 1) Social inclusion**
- 2) Mobility- Transport**
- 3) Energy - Water**
- 4) Food**
- 5) Waste**
- 6) Communication**
- 7) Signage**
- 8) Locations**
- 9) Design - Planning**
- 10) Decoration - Furniture**
- 11) Consumables**
- 12) Sanitation and cleanliness**
- 13) Merchandising - Giveaways**
- 14) Operation of the Brussels Major Events association**


## 2. WORK

### 2.3. Methodology

The **methodology** developed for the implementation of this transition is divided into four phases:







## 2. WORK

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### **Phase 1: Census and classification**

Preliminary phase of information gathering, inventory of measures already taken by each department of the BME, history, etc.

### **Phase 2: Identifications and objectives**

- Qualification of the objective
- Quantification of the volumes affected by challenge of the measure
- Identification of the themes involved
- Quantified definition of the objective
- Definition of the means allocated to the implementation of the measure
- Selection of the fields of action according to the themes and interlocutors concerned

### **Phase 3: Definition of actions and evaluations**

- Definition and costing of measures
- Planning/reverse planning of the means to be implemented.
- Communication of measures and stakeholder engagement

### **Phase 4: Implementation and impact measurement**

- Implementation and implementation of measures on the ground
- Evaluation of the quantified results of the measures
- Communication of the results

The phases described are addressed **by theme**.



## 3. SUSTAINABLE EVENTS MEASURES

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### 3.1. Various levels of implementation

The sustainable measures included in this three-year action plan are assessed according to their degree of implementation: partial/full, seasonal/annual, etc.



**Preparatory phase:** Preliminary study, test on a particular segment or in a limited number of events.



**Partial application:** Pilot project, measure applied in a partial manner on the scale of an event or season.



**Full application:** Measure fully implemented, extended to all events of the season or year and perpetuated

### 3.2. Brussels Sustainable Events logo

With its three intertwining coloured shapes, the SHARE logo represents the three sustainable pillars (ecology, society and economy), the sharing of expertise and the federative character of the event for all sustainable actors of the event sector. The baseline "The Brussels Sustainable Events Meeting" further clarifies the meaning.

The Brussels Sustainable Events logo is used on many communication media to highlight the sustainable aspect of the City's events in general. Using the three coloured shapes (the intention of which has been explained), this logo makes the link with SHARE and is constructed in such a way as to evoke that of Brussels Major Events, the municipal non-profit organisation in charge of organising the city's events.





## 3. MESURES EVENEMENTS DURABLES

### 3.1. Différents niveaux de mise en œuvre

Les mesures durables reprises dans le cadre de ce plan d'action triennal sont évaluées en fonction de leur degré de réalisation : partielle/totale, saisonnière/annuelle, etc.



**Phase préparatoire** : Etude préalable, test sur un segment en particulier ou pour un nombre restreint d'événements.



**Application partielle** : Projet pilote, mesure appliquée de manière partielle à l'échelle d'un événement ou d'une saison.



**Application complète** : Mesure totalement mise en place, généralisée à l'ensemble des événements de la saison ou de l'année et pérennisée.

### 3.2. Logo *Brussels Sustainable Events*

Par les trois ensembles colorés qui s'entrecroisent, ce logo représente les trois piliers du développement durable : social, environnemental et économique.

Apposé sur différents supports de communication de l'asbl Brussel Major Events, ce logo permettra de mettre en exergue l'aspect durable des événements de la Ville de façon générale.

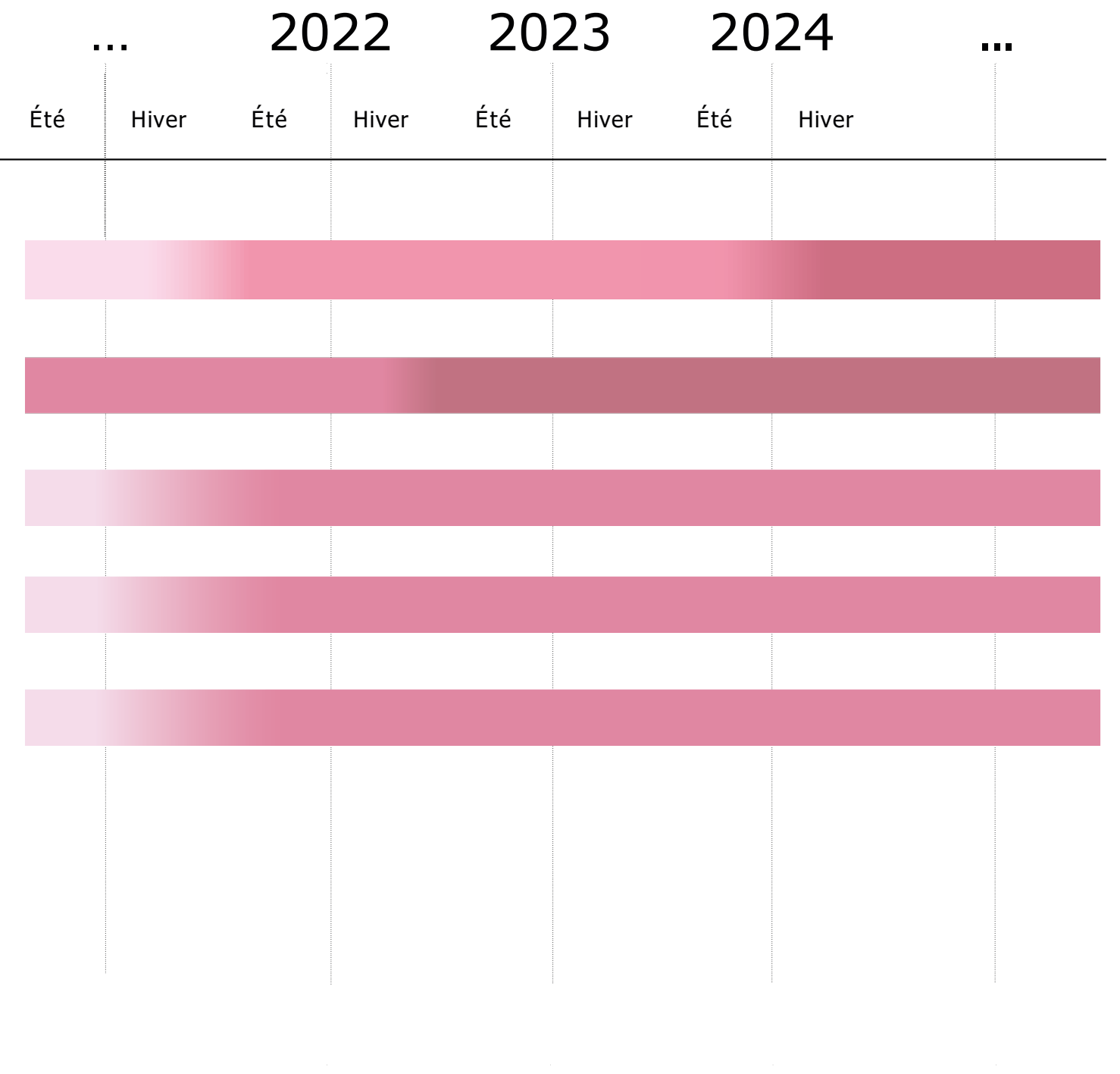


# 1) Social Inclusion

|   | ... |       | 2022 |       | 2023 |       | 2024 |       | ... |
|---|-----|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|
|   | Été | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver |     |
| 1. Promote the organisation of free activities for the public   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 2. Consult the local association network and the relays established in the districts before the events  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 3. Organise citizen meetings with local residents before and during events (planning, mobility, etc.)   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 4. Establish a procedure in case of sexual harassment or violence according to the anti-harassment plan of the City of Brussels with a particular focus on women, LGBTQI people and an intersectional perspective |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 5. Provide a safe space at the venue  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 6. Visibly identify a support person who is present at all times as the event takes place   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 7. Create spaces for young children (Baby Corner type)  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 8. Facilitate public access to drinking water   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 9. Provide space for awareness-raising or solidarity actions by third-party organisations   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 10. Form a dedicated team to ensure compliance with sustainable measures on the ground  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 11. Offer free access to paying activities to beneficiaries of city services (OCMWs, neighbourhood centres, youth centres, etc.)  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |
| 12. Provide for a reduced-fare policy for students, senior citizens, unemployed people, etc.  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |



# 1) Social Inclusion



13. Generalize the use of neutral and inclusive modes of expression in communication (inclusive writing, gender-neutral wording, etc.)

14. Organize periodically an informal meeting with the actors of the sector to exchange good practices and solutions (SHARE)

15. Establish collaborations with a view to socio-professional integration

16. Conduct an inclusive employment policy, in particular through adapted work companies

17. Accessibility of event websites and mobile applications to people with disabilities (AnySurfer label)



## 2) Mobility - Transport

### Public mobility

1. Establish a mobility plan for the public, the teams and VIPs
2. Install free and secure bicycle parking at event venues
3. Establish a soft mobility plan in consultation with the districts
4. Raise the profile of shared soft mobility
5. Establish precise and spatially-limited locations for the shared mobility offer in order not to obstruct passage
6. Choose only locations which are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and by public transport
7. Align event timetables with the public transport offer
8. Develop partnerships with public transport companies for events which end late
9. Raise the profile of parking facilities near the event to avoid on-street parking
10. Raise the profile of carpooling platforms to reach or leave an event
11. Encourage partnerships with taxi companies which have procedures in place for safe return home
12. Promote the mobility of local residents in the context of events which are invasive for the districts





## 2) Mobility - Transport

### *Staff mobility & Logistics transport*





# 3) Energy et Resources

1. Eliminate the use of generators and favour connection to existing electrical boxes
2. Generalise the use of LED lights for lighting and decorations
3. Decrease the energy consumption of traders
4. Reduce of the length of electrical cables to avoid line losses and increase the number of electrical boxes
5. Eliminate outdoor heating systems
6. Give preference to the least energy-consuming installations
7. Réuce the hours of decorative illuminations
8. Limit the number of screens on the ground
9. Include activities which require little or no energy in the programme







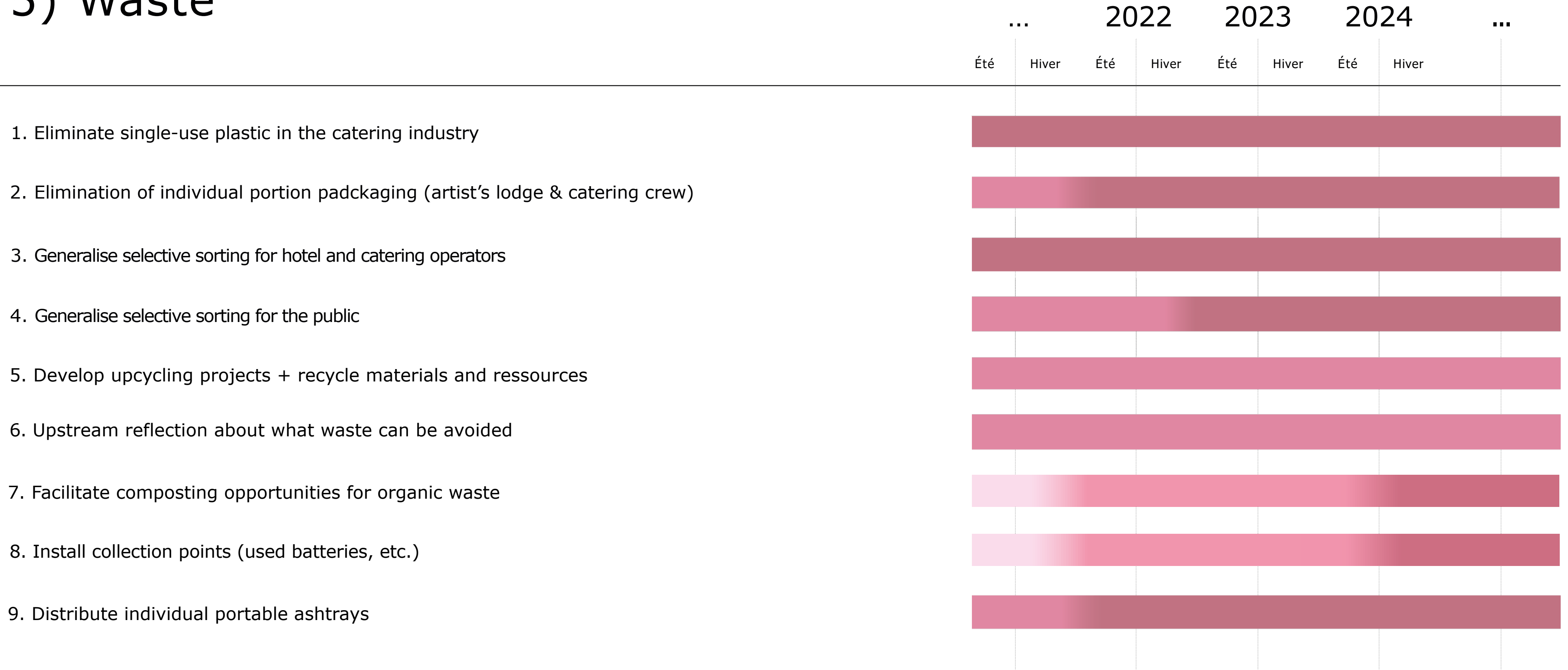
## 4) Power supply

(Traders, own exploitation, catering crew, etc.)

|   | ... |       | 2022 |       | 2023 |       | 2024 |       | ... |  |
|---|-----|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|--|
|   | Été | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver |     |  |
| 1. Generalise the use of reusable tableware for drinks (reusable cups, glass)                             |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 2. Generalise the use of reusable or biodegradable tableware  |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 3. Collection and donation of surplus food to the charitable sector                                       |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 4. Generalise the use of reusable tableware for meals (ceramic or other washable material)                |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 5. Favour businesses with sustainable practices (local channels, circularity, crafts, etc.)               |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 6. Systematically offer a vegetarian or vegan option to the public and to the teams working on an event   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 7. Generalise sustainable catering (short circuit, organic, labelling, etc.)                              |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 8. Offrir systématiquement une option végétarienne ou végane aux équipes qui travaillent sur un événement |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |
| 9. Carry out awareness-raising activities on waste (chewing gum, cigarette butts, etc.)                   |     |       |      |       |      |       |      |       |     |  |



# 5) Waste



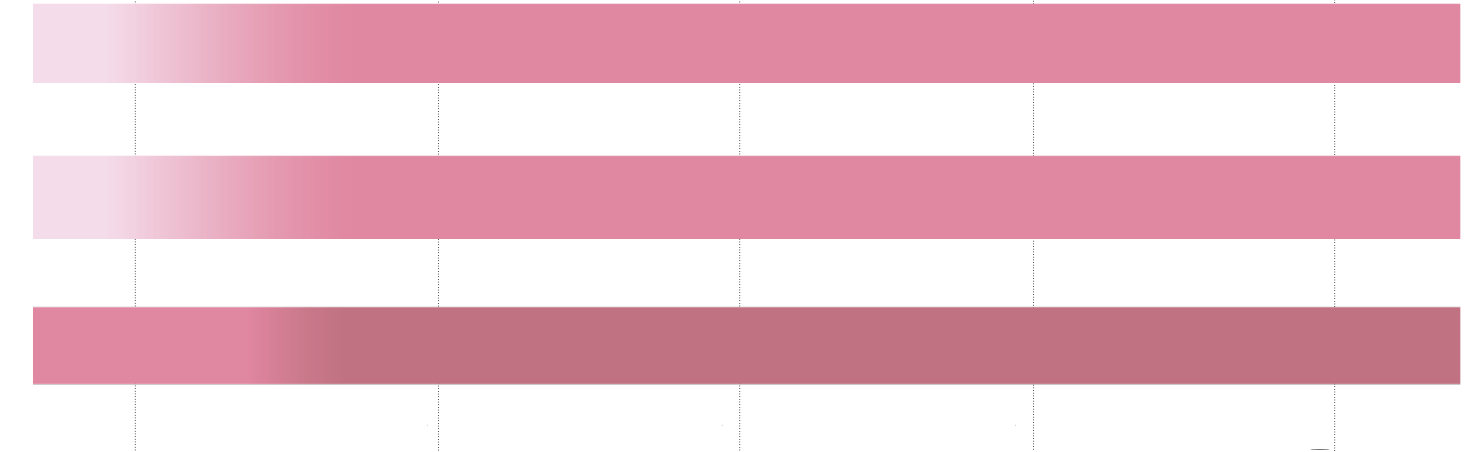


# 6) Communication

(identité visuelle, promotions...)



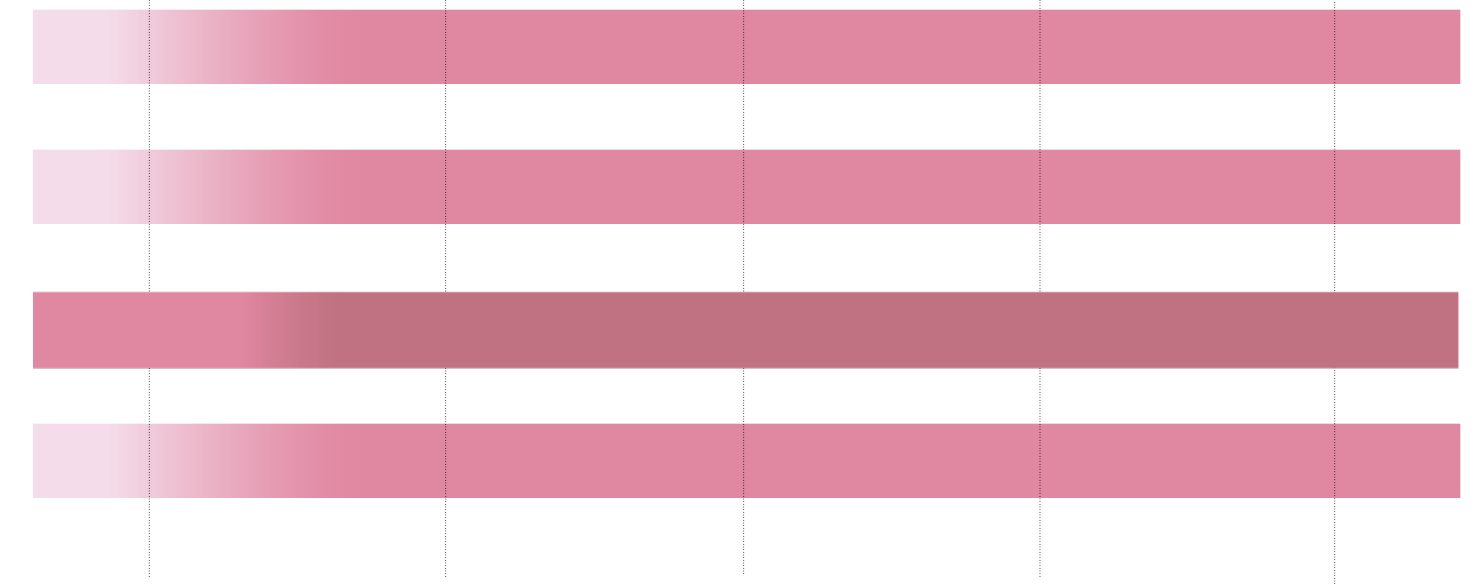
1. Reduce physical media in communication campaigns (paper, screens, etc.)
2. Actively raise awareness of sustainable issues among the public, service providers, suppliers, partners and traders
3. Inform the public about the sustainable actions implemented at the event



# 7) Signage



1. Use reusable media (removable, repairable)
2. Reduce printing on single-use physical media
3. Promote the printing of durable content
4. Define sustainability criteria for partners' communication media





## 8) Locations

(existing indoor spaces, outdoor public space)

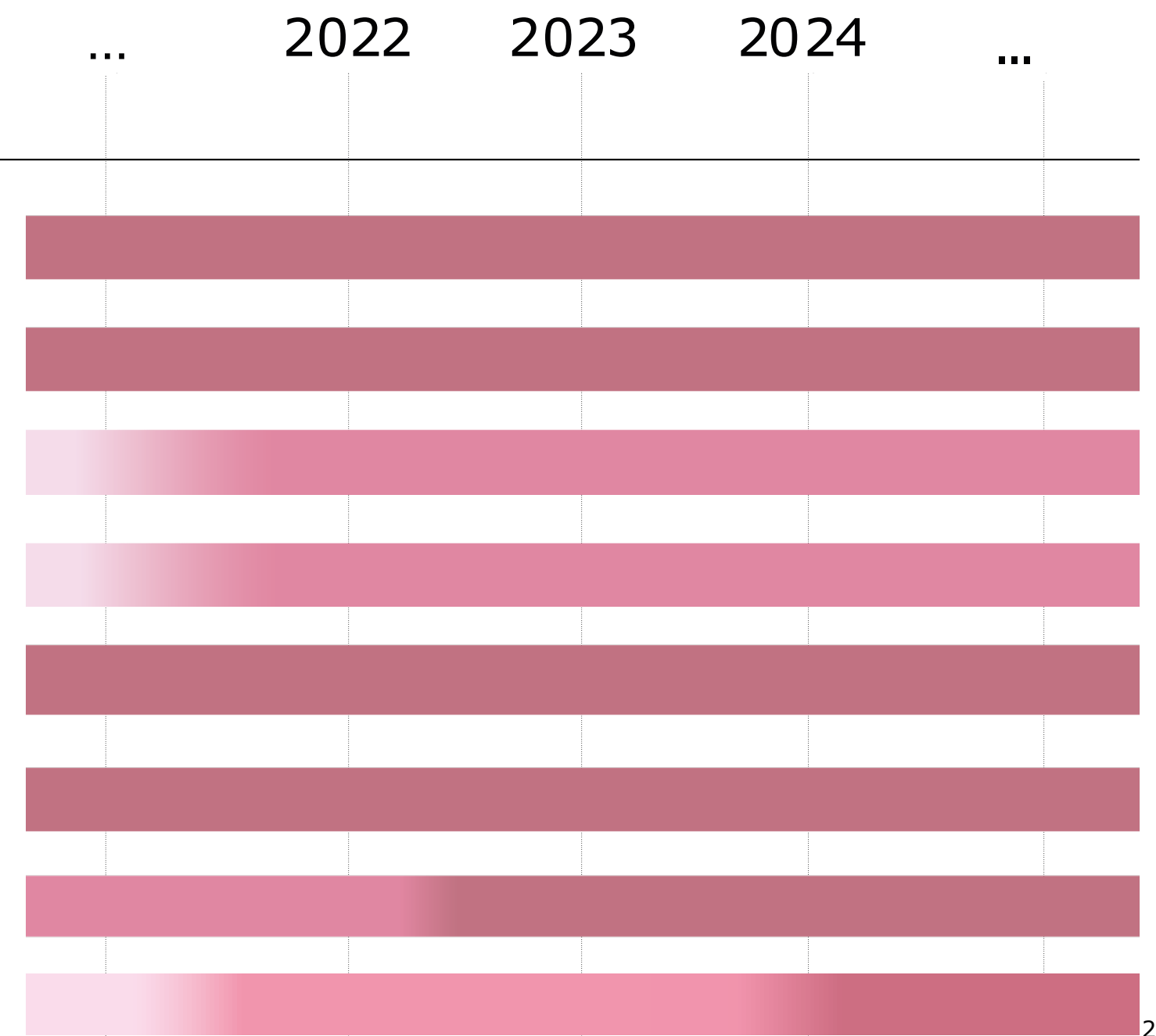
1. Give priority to indoor and outdoor locations with existing infrastructure, (electricity, water etc.) for equipment and decoration (enhancement of public space)
2. Encourage the use of buildings defined as sustainable (passive buildings, solar panels, etc.)
3. Promote or take measures to facilitate access to places accessible to people with reduced mobility



## 9) Design - Planning

(artistic performances, events, activities, etc.)

1. Involve neighbourhood committees, youth centres, local clubs, etc. in the planning process.
2. Promote the Brussels and Belgian cultural and creative sphere in the artistic programming (TO BE CHECKED AT THE LEVEL OF LEGAL PUBLIC PROCUREMENT)
3. Ensure gender parity in planning
4. Design planning which reflects the diversity of society
5. Schedule workshops and events to raise awareness of sustainable development (solidarity, upcycling, food, etc.)
6. Minimise polluting components from fireworks
7. Design inclusive programming for all audiences (people with disabilities, etc.)
8. Measure the ecological footprint of events

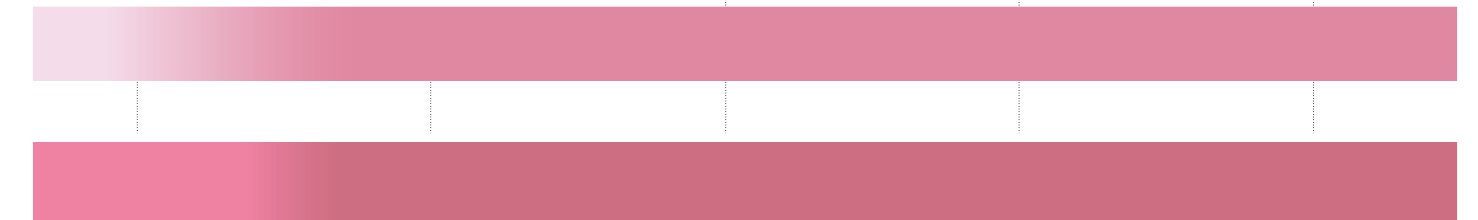




## 10) Decoration - Furniture

| ... |       | 2022 |       | 2023 |       | 2024 |       | ... |       |
|-----|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| Été | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été | Hiver |

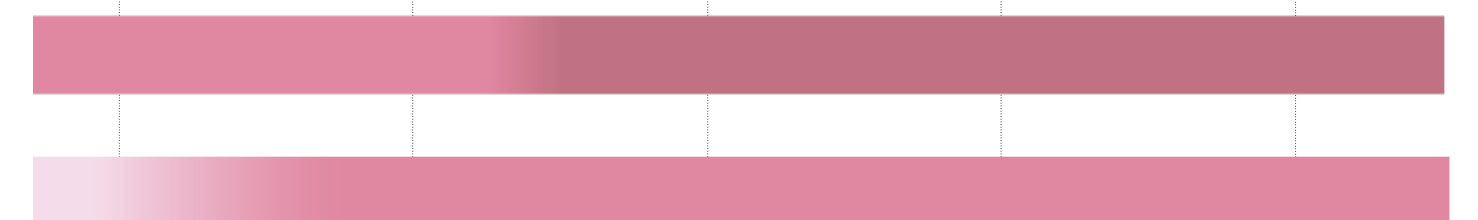
1. Promote recycled, reused and upcycled furniture and decoration
2. Systematically give a second life to the tree in the Grand-Place



## 11) Consumables

| ... |       | 2022 |       | 2023 |       | 2024 |       | ... |       |
|-----|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| Été | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été | Hiver |

1. Identify reusable, recyclable, biodegradable fastening systems
2. Provide compostable or reusable tape



## 12) Sanitation and cleanliness

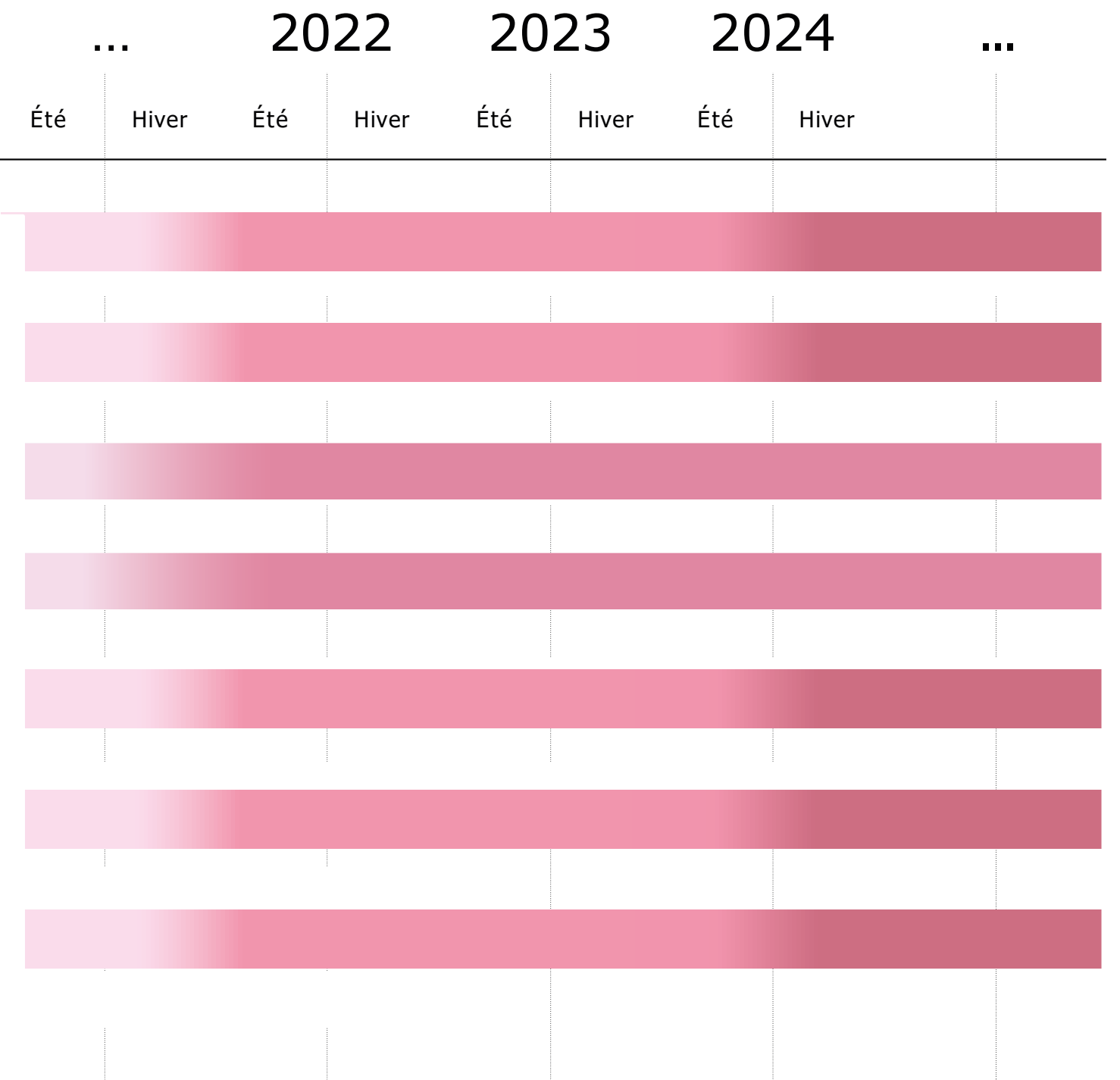
| ... |       | 2022 |       | 2023 |       | 2024 |       | ... |       |
|-----|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| Été | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été  | Hiver | Été | Hiver |

1. Use dry toilets
2. Use booths with more health and environmentally-friendly components
3. Promote visibility of sanitary facilities to discourage uncivil acts





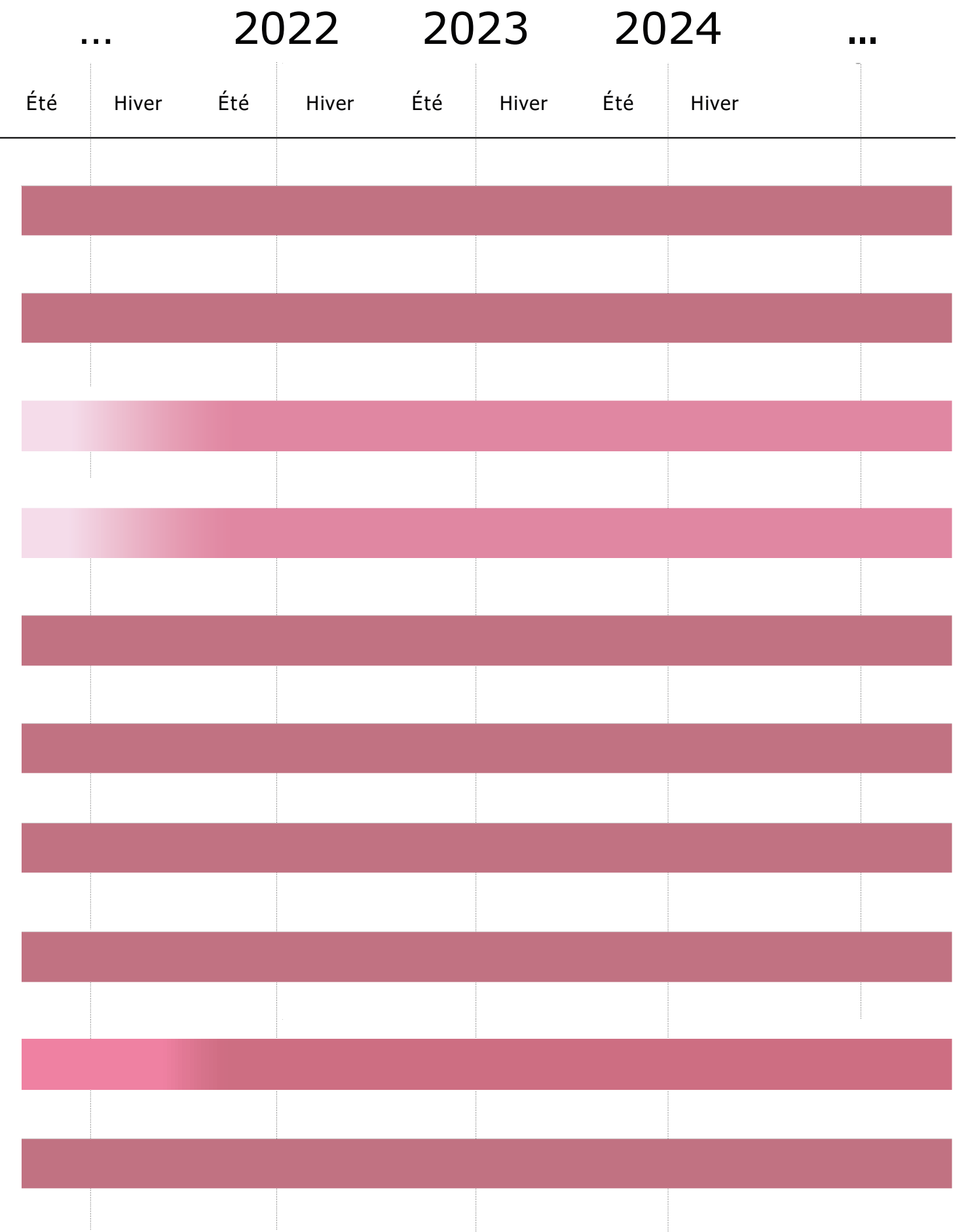
# 13) Merchandising – Giveaways



1. Reduce the quantities of items produced (pre-order system)
2. Give preference to items which respect ambitious environmental and social standards
3. Reduce diversity in the supply of goodies
4. Direct sponsorship & media partners towards sustainable goodies and merchandising alternatives
5. Produce durable items for reuse
6. Organise donations of "dormant" stocks to associations active in the field of re-use
7. Recycle or reuse waste resources from partners and/or previous events



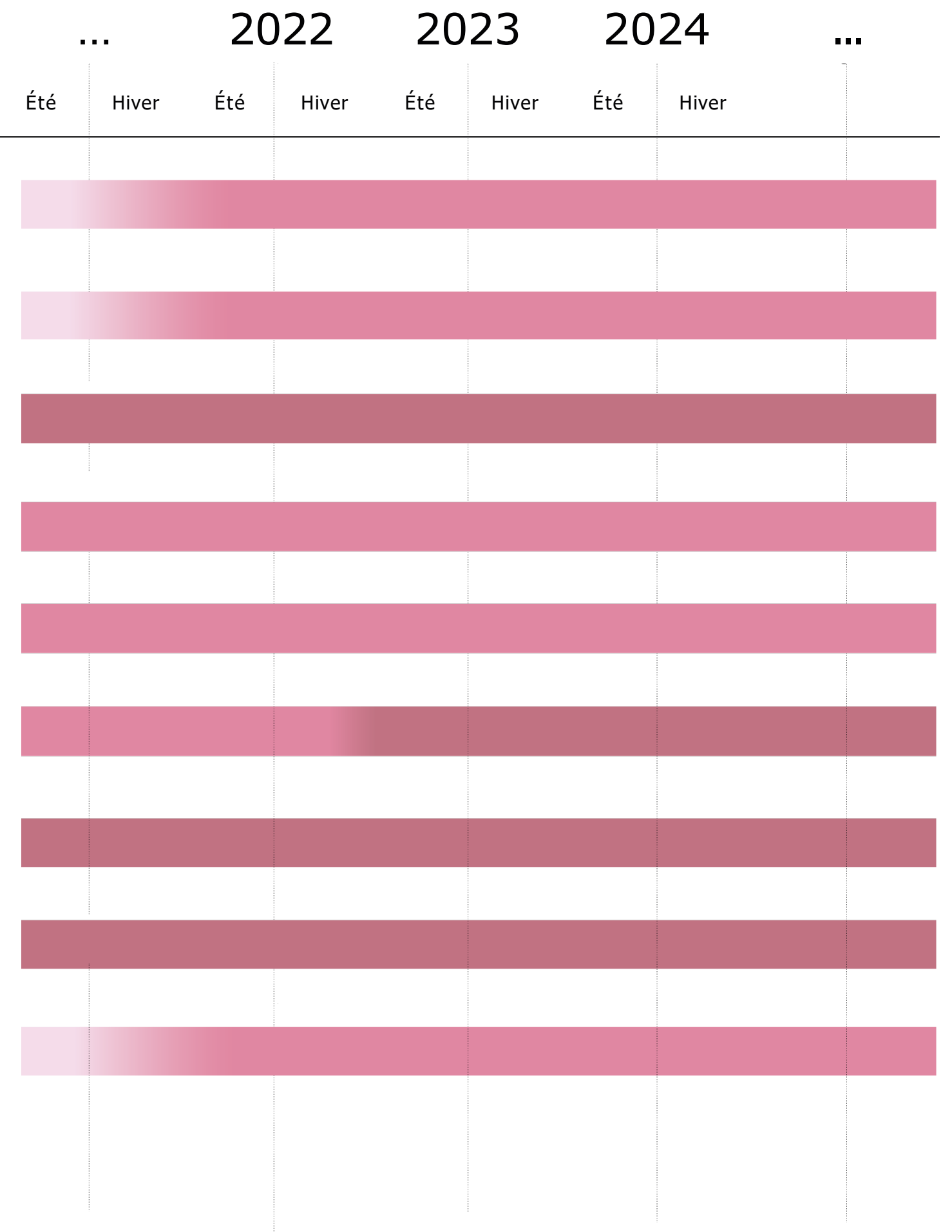
# 14) Operation of the association Brussels Major Events





# 14) Operation of the association Brussels Major Events

- 11. Training staff on preventing sexual harassment and violence
- 12. Generalise the presence of clauses respecting ambitious social and environmental standards public procurement
- 13. Refuse to work with a bidder who has been convicted of human rights violations
- 14. Encourage carpooling within the team
- 15. Limit the ecological footprint when travelling abroad: give preference to train travel, compensate travelling by plane, etc.
- 16. Promote co-parenting leave within the team (especially among male staff)
- 17. Strive for a team which reflects the diversity of society
- 18. Create a sustainability unit within the team to take a cross-cutting look at the activity as a whole (planning, logistics, use of resources, etc.)
- 19. Use qualitative and quantitative evaluation tools to measure the impact of the measures implemented (academic studies, satisfaction surveys, etc.)







# 4. ANNEXES

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## 4.1. For more information...

### City of Brussels

The City's ambition for the sustainability of its events responds to an existing framework reflected in particular by:

The **Climate Plan**, which aims to combat climate change. This is a tool developed in two stages: the carbon footprint and the action plan.

<https://climat.bruxelles.be/en>

**Agenda 21**, an annually evaluated action plan which sets out the City's cross-cutting priorities for sustainable development. It breaks them down into concrete actions organised into 5 objectives:

- [Modern and effective governance](#)
- [Responsible management of natural resources](#)
- [Urban and harmonious development](#)
- [Strengthened social cohesion and solidarity](#)
- [A dynamic employment and economic development policy](#)

The **Equality Plan** for the City of Brussels: [Action Plan for Equality of Women and Men | City of Brussels](#) The **Nothing Without My Consent Plan**:

[NOTHING WITHOUT MY CONSENT.pdf \(brussels.be\)](#)

### Brussels-Capital Region

At the regional level, **Brussels Environment** provides a charter to develop an event sector which takes into account the principles of sustainable development.

[https://environnement.brussels/sites/default/files/user\\_files/doc\\_charteevenementdurable\\_fr.pdf](https://environnement.brussels/sites/default/files/user_files/doc_charteevenementdurable_fr.pdf)

Our partner **VO-EVENT**, who has developed its event Toolkit: Circular Toolkit: <https://www.circular-event.eu/>

# 4. ANNEXES

## UN & Global Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable cities and communities is Goal 11 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly :

### OBJECTIFS DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE



The City of Brussels is committed to sustainable development in order to reconcile the economic, social and environmental aspects of human activities.

As part of the [General Policy Program 2018-2024](#), the objectives which will be determined in the presented plan will lead to the implementation of concrete actions to meet them, in accordance with the Regional Sustainable Development Plan (RSDP):

[www.bruxelles.be/plan-de-developpement-durable](http://www.bruxelles.be/plan-de-developpement-durable)

From the website <https://sdgs.be/en> where you can find all the initiatives relating to the objectives of sustainable development, you can also take inspiration from the guide for organising a sustainable event from the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development: [Is your event sustainable? | Federal Institute for Sustainable Development \(belgium.be\)](#)

And its Checklist: [checklist for the organisation of a sustainable event | FISD \(developpementdurable.be\)](#)

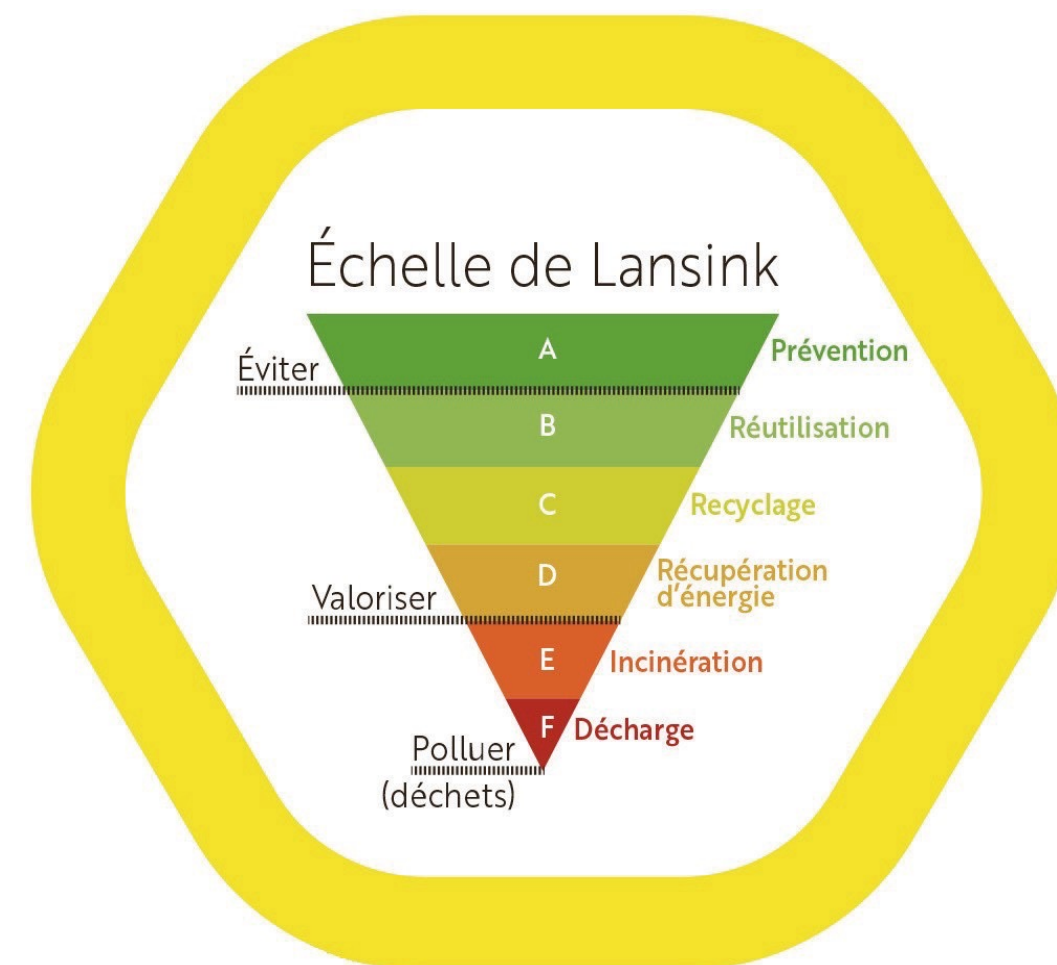
# 4. ANNEXES

## 4.2. Exemple d'outil d'évaluation

### Here is an example of a waste and resource management assessment tool.

Measures can be assessed using an appropriate tool such as Lansink's ladder, which establishes a hierarchy of recommended measures to save resources and limit waste. It can be used as an indicator to assess the sustainable circular measures taken.

This scale is a reference tool based on the most virtuous solutions and is composed of several levels:  
Lansink's ladder: Avoid Reuse Pollute (waste) Prevention Reuse Recycling Energy recovery Incineration Landfill



Graphic source: <https://www.autreterre.org/la-mode-ecologique-selon-terre-asbl/>

Lansink's ladder (original): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waste\\_hierarchy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waste_hierarchy)