



SIX SENSES

JOURNEY TO PLASTIC FREEDOM

82 SOLUTIONS FOR HOTELS

CONTENTS

This booklet is designed to be used by any hotel team member, with the intention of sharing lessons learned throughout the Six Senses journey to plastic freedom. This journey is not complete, and no hotel is perfect. Each step forward is an important one.

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WELCOME

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Sea Going Green is a sustainable tourism consultancy, based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands with a mission to alleviate the negative impacts that tourism is having on the (marine) environment. Having provided sustainability strategies to leading luxury resorts, yachting and cruising collectives in many different corners of the world, the consultancy has played a formative role in catalyzing the industry's plastic-free transformation. The consultancy focuses on working with both the private and public sector within tourism to facilitate sustainable tourism development, with a primary focus on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Contributors from Sea Going Green included CEO, Ally Dragozet, along with COO, Melissa Novotny

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FOREWORD

Jo Hendrickx | Founder, Travel Without Plastic

How hotels - and the travel industry at large - address and overcome their 'plastic problem' goes way beyond what and how much can be recycled. As Six Senses realized early on when they fully engaged with removing as much of the material as they could from their operations, it's more than a matter of waste management. Ensuring plastic freedom becomes a permanent operating standard means challenging and changing established purchasing practices in partnership with suppliers and embedding new behaviors within teams. It also requires the kind of leadership that is willing to embrace the test-learn cycle, and to make transparency a critical element of the journey.

Plastic is such a ubiquitous material in our lives - and in the life of a hotel - that eliminating it requires effort and commitment, which won't always be immediately successful. But what Six Senses has shown is that by involving everyone, being willing to try new things, and learning from failure, creates momentum and establishes a circularity that benefits the bottom line, staff, communities and ultimately, the planet.

This Playbook has been written to show hotel owners how to start their own journey to plastic freedom, and what can be achieved. We invite you to put the lessons Six Senses has learned into action.





INTRODUCTION

The world woke up to plastic in a big way during 2016.



Suddenly, the term ‘single-use plastic’ was on everyone’s lips, including our own. We’d already introduced reusable glass bottling facilities at our properties in 2003 and removed nearly two million plastic bottles a year from our operations. We’d been using refillable ceramic containers in our guest bathrooms as standard since we opened our first properties in the mid-1990s. We had banished the last plastic straw. But we started to ask ourselves how we could go further.

Could plastic be completely eliminated?

Sustainability is a defining characteristic of what luxury means to us: providing our guests, hosts and partners with the peace of mind to trust that every detail has been considered, and local communities and ecology respected. Although we still had some unnecessary plastics in our properties, processes, and supply chain. To be true to ourselves, and to bring our definition of luxury to life, we needed to step back from convenience and embrace innovation.

We knew that we couldn’t simply recycle our way out of the plastic pollution problem. In 2019 only nine percent of all plastic sent for recycling was effectively recycled, with most exported to other countries to process or finding its way into the oceans¹. If plastic waste was still washing up in the communities which our hosts called home, and to which our guests would travel for a dream holiday,

a more radical approach was needed. To make a truly impactful difference, it was clear that the solution to the plastic problem was one of sustainable purchasing rather than just waste management.

Since starting our journey to plastic freedom, full of ambition and purpose, we’ve continually challenged ourselves to do better. It has sometimes felt like an overwhelming task. Just look around where you are now to see how present plastic is in our everyday surroundings. But as the saying goes, nothing worth having comes easily, and by approaching the problem with pragmatic positivity, we are learning how to push the limits.

With this Playbook, we’re inviting you to join the movement and contribute to making a plastic free future a reality for everyone. Read on to discover more about the challenges we faced and how we overcame them, and the innovations pioneered by our Six Senses ‘Plastic Heroes’. We’re proud of the changes we’ve made, and that we’re among the first signatories of the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative, led by the UN Environment Program and UN World Tourism Organization.

Our goal now is to share what we’ve learned, and to inspire and empower other hospitality brands on their own journey to plastic freedom. Eliminating plastic seemed like an impossibility when we started, but this Playbook will show you how it can be done.

**Jeff Smith | Vice President of Sustainability
Six Senses**



1,122,248
Coffee Capsules

IS

Enough To
Fill 112
School Buses



Taking The First Step



When we opened our first property in 1995, we were proud of our reputation as eco-pioneers in the hotel and hospitality industry. Our commitment to tie together the strands of wellness and sustainability within our DNA was sincere, and we were determined to bring that vision to life in our hotel and guest experience. But they say hindsight is 20/20, and in looking back we can see now that although our intentions were good, we were naive to the true scope and scale of the challenge that commitment demanded.

Take plastics. Although the innovations we've introduced, like ensuring all Six Senses properties bottle their own drinking water on site instead of using single-use plastic bottles, meant we were already doing more than most, we knew we could do better. But how ... and where to start?

The map charting the terrain before us was blank, and although there were sources of information to which we could refer none could answer the questions we'd set ourselves: what were our limits, and how do we find them? We realized quickly that this journey would be complicated, and each step required careful consideration before being taken. To plot the best path to plastic freedom we needed to first understand where we were starting from. This meant going to our hosts - the term we use to describe each other as employees of Six Senses - and asking them to help us fill in the blank spaces on our map.

We first needed clarity on how much plastic we used, where, and why, in our hotels. The logical means to do so was to build up a detailed plastics-use inventory across the entire Six Senses group. This would be no easy feat when you consider we had 10 operating locations spread across eight countries at that time. We started small, initiating a pilot Plastic-Free Inventory Project in 2016 at Six Senses Laamu, the only resort on that Maldivian coral atoll. Before that could even begin, we needed to answer questions our hosts there raised: 'What is plastic?'. 'Where does plastic come from?'. 'Why isn't recycling good enough?'. In a world where plastic was so ubiquitous it had become invisible, we quickly learned that defining what it was would be critical if we were to eliminate it.

Plastic is made from a non-renewable resource (fossil fuels) and lasts forever. Every piece of plastic that has been created in the past has either been burned and released toxic chemicals into the atmosphere, or is still on the planet in either its original form or having broken down into microplastics.



In researching the answers, we discovered that much of the pollution from plastic occurs during production, extraction, use, and disposal. By the time we recycle, much of the environmental damage is already done. We discovered that the reason the Great Pacific Garbage Patch in the North Pacific Ocean was at that time three times the size of France was because only a fraction of plastic produced and consumed globally is recyclable. And we discovered that plastic never decomposes, it only gets smaller, turning into tens of thousands of pieces of microplastic per item and transforming into toxic chemicals that ultimately enter the food chain.

Every question posed by our hosts revealed new information. It gave us the answers and clear definitions we needed to launch our approach across Six Senses, and informed our plans for group-wide training, measurement, and process implementation.

In 2018, we launched our group-wide and intentionally over ambitious Plastic-Free 2022 initiative, with the intention to remove as much plastic from our operations as possible.

The exercise enabled us to count over five and a half million plastic items that we could focus on removing, equivalent to providing every resident in Singapore with one item each. The baseline audit also formed the basis of six micro-training units on plastics, microplastics, and plastic solutions designed to increase awareness of the environmental and human health impact of plastic use among all Six Senses hosts.

To our initial surprise, the exercise also showed an increase in plastic use across our properties, despite several large eliminations already having taken place such as the removal of plastic toothbrushes. In reality, though, this was an indication of our success. By increasing awareness about the use of plastic in our hotels, reporting had improved. Our hosts had simply started to 'see' all the plastic that was invisible before.

This Playbook has been written to provide you with actionable ways in which you can reduce plastic in your own properties, based on real life alternatives and solutions to 82 common plastic uses that have been developed and implemented at Six Senses hotels around the world.

The Four Main Areas Of Our Operations

Below, we've broken out the four main areas of our operations - Housekeeping & Laundry, Food & Beverage, Spa & Wellness, and Back of House. For each, we have listed out how plastic was being used, the standard of change we seek to reach, and solutions to 82 common plastic items that have been tested and implemented by our hotel teams. For each area, we're also sharing the stories of some of our Plastic Heroes, and their personal involvement in our journey to Plastic Freedom.

Housekeeping & Laundry

Plastic had dozens of different uses for our Housekeeping team, from the shaving, dental or washing amenities in guest bathrooms to the bags we used within the bins in their bedrooms. Indeed, it was so ubiquitous that it would be easy to think of it as indispensable. Six Senses Housekeeping teams work hard to maintain the faultless standards of cleanliness, order, and tranquility that characterize all of our properties. Asking them to do that without a material that made their life easier, efficient and safe, was a huge challenge. But, thanks to the training they received and the ongoing campaign to ensure the message of why we were working to eliminate plastic remained visible, it was one they met with enthusiasm and creativity. Indeed, Housekeeping hosts have been nominated as Plastic Hero of the Month on six occasions, with 15 of their solutions implemented.

Category	Objective	Plastic Item	Solution Implemented
Personal care amenities	Eliminate Plastic	Shower Cap	Cotton Mesh
Toothbrush and accessories	Eliminate Plastic	Dental kit packaging	Cardboard packaging
		Toothpaste	Toothpaste tablets in aluminum or glass container in each bathroom
		Toothbrush	Bamboo and / or wooden toothbrushes
		Toothpick	Wooden toothpicks in cardboard packaging
		Dental floss	Glass tube with bamboo/ cotton or other natural material fiber floss
Plastic bag	Eliminate Plastic; Including those used to carry dry waste and those in use in guest rooms, landscaping, housekeeping pantries and food waste. Six Senses has a 'zero waste to landfill' goal, so plastic bag usage in those areas should be reduced to a minimum	Coffee recycling bag	No longer used
		Garbage bag	Reduce waste at the source (i.e. packaging waste) Washable bins, Washable & reusable tarpaulin bags for wet waste, Upcycled pillowcase for dry waste Compostable bag (Only if compostable onsite)
		Net bag	Cardboard box, Reusable plastic tray
		Sanitary bag	Paper bag
Housekeeping paper products	Eliminate Plastic	Paper towels	Cardboard packaging (Bulk)
		Toilet paper	Paper wrapped
Shaving kit	Eliminate Plastic	Razor	Wooden handle and stainless-steel blade
		Shaving cream	Shaving soap in wax paper, Shaving cream in aluminum container
		Shaving kit packaging	Cardboard packaging
Swabs and pads	Eliminate Plastic	Cotton pad packaging	Cardboard packaging
		Cotton swab packaging	
Complimentary water	Eliminate Plastic	Plastic bottles	Refillable glass water bottles

Housekeeping & Laundry Plastic Heroes



Mohit
Six Senses Zighy Bay
Plastic Hero: February 2021
Mohit from Housekeeping created this cool plastic free Minion soft toy using recycled linens to be placed in a Guest villa to celebrate a special birthday – just one of the many cool & plastic free items Mohit has created!



Itziar
Six Senses Ibiza
Plastic Hero: April 2021
Convinced the 3rd party laundry company to deliver their linen in reusable containers instead of single use plastic wrapped linen, making Six Senses Ibiza the first hotel on the island to receive their laundry zero waste packaging!



Thao
Six Senses Ninh Van Bay
Plastic Hero: October 2021
Reduced the need for new plastic items by upcycling broken and damaged items into new ones, such as reading lamps.



Adnyana
Six Senses Uluwatu
Plastic Hero: March 2022
Always carries a green canvas bag to pick up trash, to ensure our resort pathways are kept clean, a golf bag to carry his equipment, and plastic-free containers when sorting garbage. He's known for his 'Say no to plastic' mantra among his fellow hosts.

The story of the plastic razor

Our audit showed us that in 2019 over 48,500 single-use razors and shaving kits were used across our resorts, all using plastic in some form or another. Our solution for switching to a plastic free alternative has been to introduce bamboo or wooden razors with stainless steel blades, and shaving cream or soap presented in aluminum containers or wax paper - all of which are either sourced locally by our hotels (provided the items meet our sustainability specifications) or through one of our preferred suppliers. In some locations, shaving kits are now only provided to guests on an on-request basis.

When combined, those two solutions have not only reduced the total number of shaving kits in use across our hotels to just over 25,000 in 2022, a reduction of 48%, but also ensured that those razors and shaving kits which are being requested are made from natural materials, and can be recycled or reused instead of discarded.



Food & Beverage

Where cost, convenience and durability meet the need to keep perishables fresh and clean in what can be hot and humid conditions, plastic had proven itself to be the go-to solution for storage, transport and preservation. This was the case for our kitchen teams, who must provide our guests with wholesome, enriching and healthy food and drinks every day. Between 2019 to 2022 vacuum sealer bag consumption was reduced by 39,000 bags per year. While we've never been in doubt about the quality and sustainability of the ingredients that go into the dishes we serve, the challenge for our teams lay in how those ingredients could be transported and stored without using single use plastic.

It was also in this area that circularity became a critical success factor in eliminating single use plastic. Even more than any other, given the high volume of consumption of items that were delivered to Six Senses resorts in plastic packaging or containers. By working closely with suppliers, we could develop and introduce innovations which completely eliminated or substantially reduced the amount of plastic being used or going to waste. For example, purchasing teams organized for bulk shipments of ingredients to be delivered to their resort with reusable crates and pallets. This reduced the amount of plastic being used, and ensured what was used can be reused in a single change of process. They replaced plastic jars with glass ones for ingredient storage which could be washed out and used again, began spooning sauces and oils onto dishes instead of dispensing them from plastic squeeze bottles, started using reusable piping bags, replaced plastic cling film with silicone lids and introduced stainless steel containers wherever it was practical.

Innovations like those, along with the 49 solutions they introduced, have seen Food & Beverage hosts nominated as Plastic Heroes on 27 occasions. Other notable examples of their inspirational suggestions include stainless steel containers for nuts and spices, reducing the use of vacuum bags for food storage, buying supplies in bulk, and working with suppliers to introduce reusable alternatives for the transport and storage of ingredients.

Category	Objective	Plastic Item	Solution Implemented
Coffee packaging and containers	Eliminate Plastic	Capsules	Compostable capsule (compostable onsite), Aluminum capsule (recycling program with supplier), French Press/Bean-to-Cup is preferred
		Pack	Aluminum pack (min. 1kg), Paper pack (min. 1 kg), Tin cans
		Sachet	See Coffee Pack solutions above
Food container and storage	Eliminate Plastic	Condiment container	Glass container, Stainless steel container
		Styrofoam ice box	For satellite bar and events: on-brand alternative solutions to store ice i.e., stainless steel or wooden box / buckets
		Mixing bowl	Stainless steel
		Squeeze bottle	Operational change
		Syrup bottle	Homemade or in glass, tin or ceramic bottles
		Takeaway container	Cardboard or recycled paper with wax liner for liquids
		Tupperware	Aluminum, stainless-steel containers, or glass jars
		Ziplock bag	Aluminum, stainless-steel containers, or glass jars
Milk packaging and containers	Minimum one liter Tetra Pak are acceptable but glass bottles are encouraged	Almond	Use existing containers, glass bottles or one liter Tetra Paks shipped in cardboard
		Coconut	
	Minimum one liter Tetra Pak are acceptable Aim to work with a local supplier and implement a circular take-back return program	Cow	
		Creamer	
		Goat	
	Eliminate Plastic	Kefir	
		Powder	Tin can
	Minimum one liter Tetra Pak are acceptable but glass bottles are encouraged	Rice	Minimum one liter Tetra Pak is acceptable, glass bottles & return program with local supplier preferred.
Soy milk			
Bulk orders of a minimum of 5 liter tubs. Aim for in-house production and circular programs with local supplier(s)	Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Produced in-house, glass jar storage or bulk 5 liter purchase
Fruit packaging	A minimum of two-kilogram bags	Dried fruit packaging	In-house dehydration, Paper bags and cardboard boxes, Bulk size bags
	Eliminate Plastic	Fresh fruit packaging	Cardboard boxes, Reusable plastic trays as part of a circular take-back, program are preferred
	Bulks orders of a minimum of two-kilogram bags	Frozen fruit packaging	In-house freezing of fresh fruits, two-kilogram bags
	Eliminate Plastic	Fruit puree packaging	In-house puree

Category	Objective	Plastic Item	Solution Implemented
Sugar packaging	Eliminate Plastic	Birch	Glass jar, Paper packaging
	Bulk orders, however, aim for in-house grinding of refined sugar	Caster	Paper packaging, Bulk bags
		Icing sugar	In house grinding of refined sugar
	Bulk orders, however, aim for in-house production of inverted sugar	Inverted sugar	Glass jars
		Palm	Bulk bags
	Bulk orders minimum of 25-kilogram bag	Rock sugar	Paper packaging, Bulk 25-kilogram bag
	Eliminate Plastic	Stevia	Glass jar, Paper packaging , In-house production
		Sugar cane (brown)	Paper packaging
	Minimum one kilogram plastic tubs acceptable	Sugar paste	Bulk one-kilogram tubes
Eliminate Plastic	Sweetener	Paper packaging and glass jars	
Bulk orders minimum of 25-kilogram bags	White sugar	Bulk 25-kilogram bags, Paper packaging, Tin containers	
Soft drinks packaging and containers	Eliminate plastic, In-house pressed or circular program with a local supplier	Juice	Glass bottles, In-house production, Reusable bulk container
		Soda	Glass bottles, Tin cans: 24 can per box minimum, In-house production of "healthier" sodas
	Eliminate Plastic	Water	Refillable glass bottles
		Straws	No straws preferred, Reusable straws (bamboo, stainless steel, glass) Straws from a natural material (lemongrass, paper)
Dairy and eggs packaging	Eliminate Plastic	Butter	Paper wrapping, Aluminum packaging
		Cheese	Operational change, In-house production, Paper wrapped bulk blocks
		Condensed milk	Tin cans and glass jars
	One-liter Tetra Packs is acceptable Aim to work with a local supplier and implement a circular take-back or refill program	Cream	Paper packaging/ box, Tin, Glass, One-liter Tetra Paks
	Eliminate Plastic	Eggs	Paper/ cardboard tray, reusable plastic tray as part of a circular take-back program
Shortening		In house production preferred, minimum 1 kg if purchased	
Gloves	Eliminate Plastic	Food safety gloves and rubber gloves	Compostable gloves or operational change
Vacuum sealer and accessories	Eliminate Plastic	Vacuum sealer bags and vacuum sealer rolls	Stainless steel container

Food & Beverage Plastic Heroes



Dawa
Six Senses Bhutan
Plastic Hero: February 2021
 Dawa led the first ever natural beeswax wrap production in Bhutan, which has since been introduced at all five Six Senses lodges in the country to minimize the dependency on cling film.



Tashi
Six Senses Bhutan
Plastic Hero: October 2021
 Pioneered the decision that straws would only be provided at guests' requests, and that those straws would be made from bamboo, an abundant and naturally regenerative material that surrounds Six Senses Bhutan.



Chef Ali
Six Senses Istanbul
Plastic Hero: April 2021
 Developed new recipes to preserve food and to cease the need for extra preservatives, chemicals, and plastic packaging.



Marta
Six Senses Douro Valley
Plastic Hero: June 2021
 Transformed the property's minibars to be completely plastic free!

Solutions to a clingfilm crisis

Clingfilm was widely used by our kitchen hosts, as it is the world over. When they needed to protect ingredients, produce or store perishables, they'd automatically reach for the roll. Now, our chefs use a range of alternatives, and some have simply banned it from their kitchen entirely. Reusable silicone lids and containers have been introduced for airtight preservation, and chefs have been empowered to think differently if it means plastic could be removed. For example, herbs are freshly cut from our organic kitchen gardens and kept in stainless steel containers with a damp towel laid on top to prevent them drying out - just like in the good old days!

Spa & Wellness

Besides serving food and beverages to our guests that benefit their well-being and health, we also have a large spa and wellness offering to ensure they feel their best when they stay with us. And where there's a Spa, there's usually plastic too. Spa users had become conditioned to expect items like plastic soled slippers as part of their visit, so how could we maintain that level of pampering and luxury, as well as the highest standards of hygiene, with workable alternatives to single-use plastics? Our audit in 2019 showed that 22,747 disposable underwear were being consumed per year.

The use of plastic in Spa & Wellness often overlapped with its use in other areas of our operations such as Housekeeping, so if it could be eliminated in those areas, could it also be eliminated here? What was clear to us was that we couldn't help our guests attain the purity of physical and spiritual health we want for them with the presence of the toxins within plastic in our spas.

Category	Objective	Plastic Item	Solution Implemented
Bath and shower products	Bulk orders of a minimum 5-kilogram bags, Aim for on-site production	Bath salts	In-house production and paper packaging, Bulk size packaging
	Eliminate Plastic	Body brush	Wooden body brush, Plastic-free loofa, on-site grown if possible
	Bulk minimum orders of five-liter containers, Aim for circular take-back programs	Conditioner	Bulk orders of five-liter containers, Circular programs
	Eliminate Plastic	Disposable underwear	Plastic-free disposable underwear, Cotton underwear with paper packaging
	Bulk minimum orders of five-liter containers, Aim for circular take-back programs	Shampoo	Bulk orders of five-liter containers, Circular programs
		Shower gel	
Eliminate Plastic	Soap packaging	Paper wrapping	

Spa & Wellness Plastic Heroes



Tania
Six Senses Ibiza
Plastic Hero: February 2022
 Sourced a supplier for organic and plastic-free feminine hygiene products that are now available to all guests. One standard pack of menstrual pads is estimated to contain the equivalent of four plastic bags, making this a hugely significant swap.



Sothea
Six Senses Krabey
Plastic Hero: April 2021
 Set an example to fellow hosts with her commitment to avoid using plastic items and to find creative solutions to upcycle plastic found on the beaches. She also regularly participates in community work focused on plastic reduction.



Anupam
Six Senses Zighy Bay
Plastic Hero: November 2021
 Anupam successfully implemented these plastic free slippers in the Spa, which will also be entirely recycled onsite!



Vi
Six Senses Ninh Van Bay
Plastic Hero: April 2022
 Pioneered waste separation in the spa areas of her hotel, ensuring that plastic gets properly separated and recycled.

Bulk order solutions

The items that saw the highest level of use in our Spa & Wellness areas, such as shampoo, conditioner, and bathing soap liquids, were also among the most challenging in terms of plastic elimination. Six Senses had only ever used refillable ceramic containers for those liquids in guest bedrooms and our spa facilities, something that has since become a common practice in other hotels around the world. But even so, the containers we used to transport and store the liquids we were putting into those refillable bottles were themselves plastic, and according to our audit, we used over 900 of them in 2019. Our solution was to focus on the number of those storage containers we were using, and to seek to reduce that by increasing their size. One five-liter container uses, and wastes, less plastic in its production than five one-liter bottles. Although both options are plastic, less plastic overall is being used. Furthermore, the economy of scale applies, and ordering in bulk has proven to be more cost effective. In some cases, wastage has been reduced even further through the creation of take back and refill programs with our suppliers, meaning the bulk containers themselves have a longer life span rather than single use application.

As a minimum standard, our hotels must now order refills of shampoo, conditioner, shower gels, and other spa products such as massage oils in bulk containers. It's a solution that has seen us reduce the use of plastic for that purpose by over 73% since 2019.



Back of House

Plastic was the unnoticed go-to material used across our Back of House operations, the unconsidered material which kept our administration, sales, marketing, finance, and executive offices functioning. Even though this area of our operations was out of sight of our guests, the focus on transitioning to being plastic free had to be just as focused as it was in the areas our guests directly encountered. Think of any task, and it was likely that plastic was being used somewhere in its completion. Writing notes in a team meeting? Plastic pen. Pinning a note to fellow hosts in one of our staff rooms? Plastic push pin. Creating name badges for Host orientations? Writing an email on your plastic laptop? Plastic, plastic, plastic.

Where it was practical, sustainable and possible to introduce an alternative, our Back of House hosts led the way in ensuring we did. Quite often they became skilled crafting the alternatives themselves, from candle holders and bedside lamps, to woven laundry carriers and seedling pots. 234,428 plastic stickers and labels were being ordered annually in 2019 and with new proven solutions those are now eliminated.

Category	Objective	Plastic Item	Solution Implemented
Clips, clamps and bands	Eliminate Plastic	Elastic band	Operational change
		Paper clip	Metal paper clip
		Push pin	Metal push pins, Wooden push pins
Stickers and labels	Eliminate Plastic	Labels	Removable gumming sheets (biodegradable), Water soluble labels
		Stickers	Paper stickers, Multi-use stickers

Back of House Plastic Heroes

	<p>Joana Six Senses Douro Valley (Landscaping) Plastic Hero: January 2021 Replaced all bucket, water, and fuel cans with metal ones, and ensured oil is now purchased in five-liter canisters to reduce overall waste volume.</p>		<p>Sharlev Six Senses Shahrut (Purchasing) Plastic Hero: January 2021 Introduced a new function in the Purchasing and Vendor Management software to classify all products entering the hotel and make sure they meet Six Senses sustainability guidelines.</p>
	<p>Tep Six Senses Krabey (Organic Farm) Plastic Hero: January 2022 Ensures the property's organic farm minimizes plastic containers when transferring produce between the farm and resort. For example, eggs are transferred in rattan buckets and vegetables are covered in banana leaves.</p>		<p>Tashi Six Senses Bhutan (Engineering and Maintenance) Plastic Hero: May 2021 Replaced all of the plastic crates used to transport equipment and tools with hand-made reclaimed wood alternatives.</p>
	<p>Sugar Six Senses Qing Cheng Mountain (Human Resources) Plastic Hero: March 2022 Collects discarded paper and card from the property's HR department and creates personalized name cards for the new host orientations eliminating the need for plastic ones.</p>		<p>Tânia Six Senses Douro Valley (Finance) Plastic Hero: October 2021 Receives all orders, identifies where plastic-free improvements can be made, and engages with suppliers to introduce alternatives.</p>
	<p>Nilay Six Senses Kaplankaya Plastic Hero: February 2021 Sourced cloth bags for the Landscaping team, which are now used in their operations.</p>		<p>Vendi Six Senses Uluwatu (Administration) Plastic Hero: June 2021 Introduced a seedling planter used in wedding ceremonies made from fresh banana stalks that are abundant on the property.</p>

Overcoming The Plastic Freedom Myths

It's easy to think of reasons to avoid starting the journey to plastic freedom. It can feel daunting. Plastic is just too easy. The alternatives are expensive to manufacture and source. Some people have other priorities.

There were times when we felt the same way. But here's how we confronted and overcame those myths.

It's not possible

For decades, plastic has relished anonymity in its ubiquity: we've all been so thoroughly surrounded by it, that we've stopped noticing it. The reason for its rapid takeover, however, is not because it was better than the natural materials it replaced, but because items produced from it could be replicated at scale quickly and on demand, and in many cases they weighed less, and were cheaper. The plastic bag we're all familiar with wasn't invented until 1965. We fought both World Wars with virtually no plastics. We can most definitely run hotels without most of the plastic we typically see today.

To remove plastic is to challenge the 'take, use, discard' model of modern consumerism. Not only does the goal require us to recognize just how radically our way of life has damaged the planet in the short span of a single lifetime, but it also requires effort, commitment, transparency and a readiness to share knowledge from which others can learn. This Playbook has been written with that purpose in mind. We want other hotels to take what we have learned from our own journey, and introduce alternatives to the 82 common plastic items we have identified in this booklet.



It's too difficult

There's no way to sugarcoat it, becoming plastic free is difficult. Once awakened to the global plastic problem, it's intensely overwhelming to face up to how much of the material you use, both personally and in a hotel environment. But confronting that is also exciting and rewarding in equal measure. Once you begin your own journey, breaking it down into small, achievable steps, the knowledge you gain along the way becomes power and what once appeared illimitable becomes feasible. You'll probably be surprised to find how many people around you are keen to be part of the solution.

The truth is, if you're reading this Playbook, you're either curious about or already committed to becoming plastic free, and you want some tools and advice to help you get there. If the prospect of achieving plastic freedom is holding you back, make a note of your current sustainability victories and see how far you've already come.

We can't afford it

One of plastic's great attractions is its low cost in a system subsidized by big oil companies. Items can be manufactured in huge volumes, shipped around the world, used, and thrown away behind the smokescreen of convenience for just pennies. The same is often not true of its alternatives. The humble bamboo straw for example, requires the right climatic conditions and time for the plant to grow, and harvesting and processing for use in a resort environment, before it can even be shipped. Its per unit weight compared to its plastic alternative also makes it heavier, and therefore more expensive, to move around the world.

However, compared to the 200 years that it takes a plastic straw to break down (having usually been only used once), bamboo straws decompose in just one to two years. They are also free of pesticides and other chemicals in their manufacture that would otherwise find their way into the soil once they're disposed of. If properly cleaned and dried, bamboo straws can be reused up to 200 times. Although they're more expensive to produce and ship (up to 40 US cents per unit, compared to the around two cents for plastic), their longevity makes better financial sense over the long term by bringing their 'lifetime' cost down to just one-fifth of a cent per unit.

The cost of these alternatives adds up. But when compared to the cost that long term plastic is extracting from the global environment, is it a change you really can't afford to make? There are also opportunities for savings. Many single-use plastic items are often just ordered out of habit and can be removed completely, with little to no impact on guests. It's just about thinking through different processes to adapt. The savings from eliminating even seemingly inconsequential plastic items from your regular order list will add up over time and can help fund more sustainable alternatives.

Plastic Straw vs Bamboo Straw



✓ Takes 200 years to break down

✓ Are usually only used once (since they are prone to bacteria growth)

✓ Costs 2 cents per unit

✓ Decompose in 1 - 2 years

✓ Can be reused up to 200 times

✓ Costs 40 cents per unit but their longevity brings the cost down to 1/5 of a cent per unit

We won't get our entire team onboard

Change is difficult. It can slow things down, make a task more difficult, or force the alteration of a whole supply chain. It's natural to expect resistance to new ways of working, particularly if you are asking suppliers to do things differently. Communication, and giving everyone a chance to be a part of the story, is key. Read the following section and get inspired to [Craft An Internal Campaign](#) and get as many team members involved as possible.

The fault lies with the consumer or guest

Customers can be cost and convenience conscious. We live during a time when it is acceptable to expect more for less, and to expect it faster than ever. But that mindset is changing. Study after study shows that we're moving into an age of conscious consumption, where an awareness of the earth's finite resources is driving positive behavior change and there's a willingness to accept that protecting those resources for future generations means doing things differently now.

According to statistics from Booking.com (2023), 80% of travelers confirm that traveling more sustainably is important to them and 43% would be willing to pay more for sustainable travel options. Plastic pollution is such a visible problem, there really aren't many people that don't support efforts to address it. The shift in mindset has led to positive actions, such as 56% of travelers reducing their usage of single-use plastic at home and while traveling.

We're doing everything we can

Your resort may already have an active recycling system in place. You may already reuse materials and equipment as a cost-saving measure. The different teams across your operation might be reducing the use of certain items to cut down your plastic waste. But there is always more that can be done, and keep in mind that plastic pollution takes place from extraction all the way until disposal, so recycling is not enough. It takes leadership, resilience, focus, and collaboration but change through continuous improvement is always possible, and can come from all sorts of places. In our case that change is not just driven by policy but also by inspiration for example Itziar from Housekeeping at Six Senses Ibiza, who initiated a conversation with a local laundry supplier to send fresh linen to the hotel in plastic-free packaging.

We've already switched to bioplastics

Beware the false promises of alternatives that are available. Bioplastics (or plant-based plastics, also known as PLA), for example, don't fully degrade or decompose in the way that might be expected, instead breaking down into the food chain, soil or water in the form of tiny microplastics. Most need industrial processing to break down properly and facilities for this are few and far between, even where PLA products can be separated from other plastics. They might not consume quite as much fossil fuels in their production, but if they aren't processed properly after use, their pollution impact similar to standard plastics. Before switching to an alternative, take the time to fully assess the sustainability claims being made by the alternative you're considering. The most 'sustainable' solution might not be the one you're being sold. For Six Senses, we test new products in our compost bin right at the hotel.

It's easy to switch from common plastic refuse bags to an apparently sustainable alternative manufactured using a bioplastic material. However, despite claims that the product is compostable, the reality is that the composting process can only take place within a specialist, industrial composting facility, and only when all of the contents of the bag are just as biodegradable as the bag itself. The presence of any inorganic material means composting cannot take place.

Craft An Internal Communication Campaign

With any campaign or initiative, it's important to measure and communicate success. What does winning look like for your team and how do you get there? For us this was tricky at first. Year-on-year bulk inventory measurement wasn't the pathway we hoped it would be. The more efficient our reporting, the bigger the problem we identified. We needed an alternative method to measure our progress and communicate success and expectations internally. This arrived in the form of an Ecole Hotelier de Lausanne MGH (Masters in Global Hospitality Business) student group who analyzed our initial inventory and started categorizing the items we had been measuring. The work resulted in our '18 Most Unwanted' list.

This revealed to us that 80% of our 2018 plastic inventory was made up of just 18 categories of items. What had seemed an insurmountable challenge involving millions of individual pieces of plastic had suddenly become a manageable task. If we could focus our efforts on just 18 categories of items, plastic freedom could be within our grasp.

So, in 2020, we doubled down on this list of 18 categories and rolled out an internal communication campaign with a recognizable 'USA cowboy' theme: the '18 Most Unwanted'. Activations took the form of a series of short teaser video clips that were released to hotel teams in advance, showing cowboys gunning down plastic bandits. 'Wanted' posters were designed, printed, and shipped to all hotel locations for display in host lounges and common areas. Then when all was ready, we launched the '18 Most Unwanted' campaign over a video call, with each hotel holding live in-person launch events.

The '18 Most Unwanted' formed the basis of both a new tracking strategy, focused on plastic use within these specific categories, and the focus of a group-wide internal campaign designed to enthuse and engage our hosts. Across all 18 categories, they have devised 82 implementable solutions, which shows that with initiative, intention, and compassion, every small step we're taking is driving the change we wanted to make.

Six Senses is committed to eliminating the remaining unnecessary plastic from our resorts and hotels by 2022. With priority on single-use plastics, we will go beyond that 100 percent virgin plastic sourcing.

18 MOST UNWANTED

- 1 COFFEE.
- 2 TOOTHBRUSHES & ACCESSORIES.
- 3 FOOD CONTAINERS & STORAGE.
- 4 PLASTIC BAGS.
- 5 STICKERS & LABELS.
- 6 COTTON PADS & SWABS.
- 7 MILK.
- 8 FRUIT.
- 9 VACUUM SEALER & ACCESSORIES.
- 10 GLOVES.
- 11 HOUSEKEEPING PAPER PRODUCTS.
- 12 HAIR TREATMENTS & PRODUCTS.
- 13 SUGAR.
- 14 SHAVING KIT.
- 15 CLIPS, CLAMPS & BANDS.
- 16 BATH & SHOWER PRODUCTS.
- 17 SOFT DRINKS.
- 18 DAIRY & EGGS.



Engage Your Supply Chains

We knew from the outset that our suppliers would be critical stakeholders on our journey to plastic freedom. From freshly washed towels to teabags, hundreds of items we ordered into our hotels came wrapped in plastic, were contained in plastic, or were made from plastic. If we hoped to be plastic free, it was vital the people and companies supplying those items understood and shared our desire to do things differently and our commitment to circularity through collaboration.

All hotel purchasing teams and key suppliers received a letter, translated into the local language that outlined our aims and reasons for starting our journey to plastic freedom. We explained our vision, encouraged them to suggest alternative products or packaging solutions and invited them to share our pledge to eliminate plastic whenever we could.

We had a very positive response and learned we weren't alone in our concern that plastic was negatively impacting the environment and communities around our hotels, and the well-being of our hosts and guests. Suppliers were open to implementing alternatives to plastic, and where those weren't immediately obvious, collaborated with us on developing workable solutions.

It's an ongoing partnership, and to this day we continue to finetune the progress already made and share our mutual success on the way.

Celebrate Plastic Heroes



We knew from the outset that our drive to eradicate plastics required the support, energy and creativity of all of our hosts, from the front line to the boardroom. When we started on our journey to plastic freedom, we had over 4,100 hosts, working in 13 different locations across the world, in dozens of different roles. The challenge we faced was how to harness the power of that human capital when it was already hard at work maintaining our award-winning resorts and customer service.

In addition to our '18 Most Unwanted' campaign, we also gamified tackling the issue of plastic removal by encouraging friendly competition between our properties to see which could remove the most, fastest. An elimination score card displaying their progress in the race towards the finishing line of being plastic free was shared on a quarterly basis. Each property was assigned a 'cowboy' avatar along with particular examples of excellence in the shape of our Plastic Heroes.



Plastic Hero of the Month

This month, we recognize Tania from Six Senses Ibiza. Tania from the spa department found a plastic-free and organic supplier for feminine hygiene products that will be offered very soon.

Congratulations Tania!



Scan the QR code to view all the winners in the past.





Our Plastic Heroes

To say that the efforts made by the Plastic Heroes has been a defining element of our mission would be a huge understatement. Phasing out plastics quickly became so much more than a collection of ideas without actions. Thanks to their efforts and enthusiasm, what was initially a concept rapidly grew into a tangible, sustained, and collaborative quest characterized by extensive research, incredible innovation, unwavering commitment, and a growing sense of pride.

From Six Senses Bhutan, five lodges in the world's only carbon negative country, to Six Senses Ibiza, the first sustainable BREEAM certified resort in the Balearics, our hosts worldwide have discovered more meaningful and measurable ways to uphold our industry-leading sustainability vision than we could ever have imagined possible. Additionally, analysis of the nominations that we received helped confirm what we already thought we knew. The creative imagination of our hosts spreads throughout every department in the entire organization.

Embedding New Behaviours

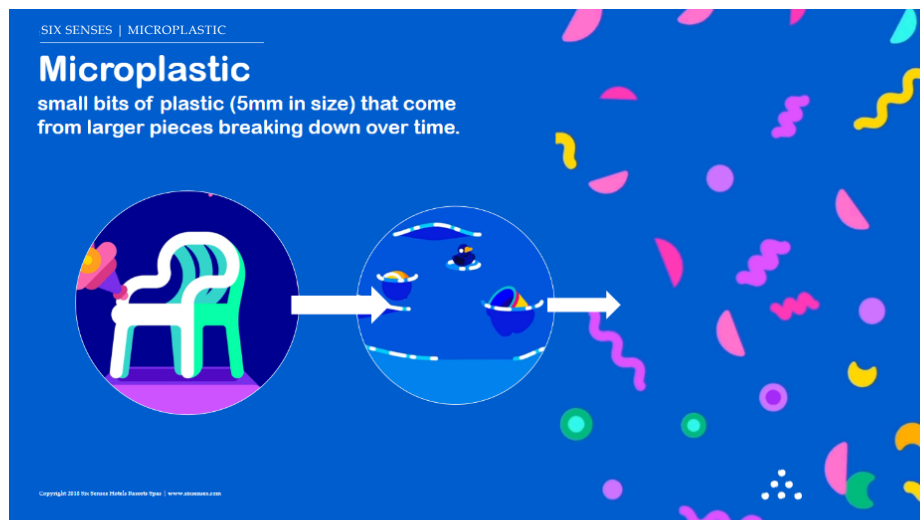
Changing our behavior as individuals, teams and an organization was critical to ensuring long term commitment. This meant ensuring the innovations introduced by our hosts, and systemic solutions that were implemented weren't just one offs, and that best practice became standard practices.

To do so, our Sustainability and Training teams collaborated on the creation of a dedicated program to educate hosts on exactly what plastic is, how it's used within our operations, and how that use is contributing to both the long term harm of the communities our hotels reside in, and means we are not living our own definition of luxury.

The training course was made up of six interactive modules, each lasting around 30 minutes. Whenever feasible, hosts completed the modules via in-person training to help facilitate engagement and to foster a sense of empowerment when what had been learned was put into practice. When in-person participation wasn't possible, the course could be completed online.

Module Name	Module Content Summary
What is plastic?	Polymers and synthetic polymers, types of plastic and their everyday uses (from Polyethylene terephthalate to polystyrene), and identifying them in their resort workplaces
Microplastic	Tiny plastic fragments, their origins and locations, why it is dangerous, and methods to reduce it.
Plastic and human health	How the waste from the production of plastics enters and moves up and into the human food chain through chemical runoff and the process of biomagnification, and what harm that can cause.
Plastic and wildlife	How plastic affects all ecosystems regardless of location, how big of a problem it is, and solutions to help animals or wildlife avoid plastic.
Plastic and marine life	Plastic entering oceans every year, where it comes from and how it gets there, effects of plastic on marine life and how it affects humans, and solutions to prevent plastic from entering oceans.
Plastic solutions	Plastic waste is a problem and needs to be addressed at a global level, solutions are required at many different levels (government, company, hosts), call for action to find solutions to the plastic problem at property level.

All Six Senses hosts are expected to complete the training, and all newly recruited hosts are required to complete the modules within their first year. 'Refreshers', which revisit key aspects of the original training and allow hosts to update their knowledge of plastic freedom best practices, form part of their ongoing Learning & Development program, alongside subjects like Health & Safety, Cyber Security, and Brand Orientation.



Reporting And Transparency

The credibility of our commitment to be plastic free, and therefore the ongoing engagement of our team in its delivery, rested on the transparency with which we charted our progress. If we didn't show and share how we were being good to our word and eliminating plastic across all areas of our business, it was reasonable to assume that our hosts and the public would question our commitment.

Having completed and shared the results of our initial audit of plastic items in 2018 and used it as the basis for a strategy that focused on the '18 Most Unwanted' items in 2020, we used those results as our reduction baseline as the initiative gained momentum. Cross referencing data from purchase orders with our 2019 inventory, as well as evidence sourced directly from our properties and the work of our hosts as they vied to become that month's Plastic Hero, provided us with the information we needed for quarterly reports shared across our group to show internally how the solutions being developed and implemented were helping to contribute to our goal. Individual initiatives and innovations were also communicated back to all properties via updated product specification sheets, and regular online and in-person meetings were held so best practice was shared and adopted, particularly among our Purchasing teams who are at the sharp end of negotiating or renegotiating supplier contracts.

To help us achieve accuracy and transparency, Six Senses is a signatory of the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative, and we annually report our progress through those independent channels.



The Timeline Of Our Journey



1995

Refillable ceramic dispensers for shampoo, conditioner, and shower gel introduced from day one as standard in guest rooms.



2003

Drinking water production and reusable glass bottling facilities introduced at every resort. The result: around **1.8 million** fewer plastic bottles are in circulation every year.



2016

Plastic straws eliminated and replaced with paper, bamboo, or lemongrass - or no straw at all!



2017

Earth Lab launched; a dedicated place where guests and hosts can learn handy life hacks, such as making do-it-yourself compost, chemical free detergent, or lip balm using homegrown and organic herbs. All in plastic free packaging, of course!



2019

Supplier take back and return program launched, introducing a circular delivery model, which eliminated **29,497** unnecessary plastic packaging items.



2020

All bathroom amenities switched to plastic-free packaging, including toothpaste kits, hair essentials, and more.



2021

Plastic stickers eliminated, removing around **234,428** items from annual circulation.



2022

All plastic coffee sachets removed, saving around **33,215** pieces of plastic from landfill.



2023

All single-use plastic egg packaging eliminated. To date, **94%** of our resorts now receive eggs in plastic-free packaging.



By sharing the hurdles we face, and actionable best practices we are using to overcome them in this Plastic-Free Playbook, we're inviting you to consider, begin, or continue your own plastic-free journey. We're better and stronger together. Let's take this further, one step at a time.

Conclusion

Being environmentally and socially responsible can be successfully married to uncompromising luxury, efficient operations, profitability, an outstanding guest experience, and high levels of staff satisfaction and engagement.

On our journey to plastic freedom, we've challenged our suppliers to rethink processes and products and move to more circular solutions, and empowered our people to have ownership and agency over how those solutions are implemented.

Where switching to a plastic alternative hasn't been possible, we're confident that we're mitigating the impact of its use by making circularity our go-to alternative.

For example, we've introduced reusable crates with a long lifecycle rather than recycling packaging materials for which there isn't a non-plastic alternative. Once considered the solution to environmental harm, recycling is some way down our list of actions and thanks to the training all of our hosts receive, plastic avoidance is now embedded into our operations, and will always be our goal.



SIX SENSES

