



SUSTAINABLE COUCH - FAQ

What is Sustainable Couch?

It is a project that aims to bring together some aspects of ecological, economic and social sustainability to the hospitality exchange experience.

What sustainability are we talking about?

Sustainability is a widespread, yet very powerful word. Literally it means: the capacity to endure. Sustainable Couch refers to the definition of sustainable development as formulated in the Brundtland report of 1987. It equally refers to the three pillars of sustainability, where ecological, economic and social aspects have to be considered simultaneously in order to achieve real sustainability.

Why “couch”?

A couch is the symbol for *hospex* - hospitality exchange networks worldwide, connecting millions of travelers. Its members can offer and receive free accommodation through the website. Well-known hospex are CouchSurfing, Hospitality Club and Be Welcome, connecting over 2 millions members.

How does Sustainable Couch work?

Sustainable Couch connects hospex members who want to:

- get information on more sustainable ways of living and traveling;
- share information from their experience in projects and communities;
- promote the concept of sustainable couch by sharing their stories;
- get active in proposing sustainable hosting and surfing experiences;
- have fun while making the world a more sustainable place!

How did Sustainable Couch start?

Back in **late 2008**, **Massi**, an Italian guy living in Vienna and working for a local NGO, wanted to find a way to combine his passion for environmental and social topics with his very active role as a couchsurfer, hosting people at his place and organizing local events. This is what happened since then:

2009: in November, Massi created the “[Vienna Sustainability Group](#)”, which gathered a few dozen of engaged Viennese couchsurfers. Together, we organized many local sustainable activities, such as fair-trade dinners, the FREE BOX, cycling events, and in June 2010, several activities for the Vienna Calling Event.





2010: inspired by this success, Massi decided to develop a more complex project combining hospitality networks with the general topic of sustainability.

2011: in March the website www.sustainablecouch.org went online. Since April, a regular newsletter has been sent every month.

2012: to celebrate the 1st anniversary, a questionnaire was sent out to all the members, in order to involve them more in the project. As the results show, most of the members identify this **main role for Sustainable Couch: increasing awareness regarding sustainability-related issues within hospex networks.** The most important goals to achieve are **spreading the word** about Sustainable Couch and **deepening the engagement of the existing community.**

2013: In April, the Sustainable Couch website registered its 500th member, and we compiled a map showing our members from all over the world here:



What comes next?

Based on the feedback of the community, we think **it is time to bring Sustainable Couch to the next level.** We want to offer more to our members, and bring them closer together, **to form a truly global community.** To achieve this, we want to:

- publish the newsletter in various languages, so you can share it with non-English speakers;
- spread the word in every hospex network, so it becomes easier to find fellow sustainable couch members while traveling;
- encourage members to form local communities in real life, so it becomes easier to offer sustainable couch experiences to travelers;
- collect your stories related to sustainability and hospitality exchange, so we can feature inspiring stories in our website and newsletter;
- involve more members in the Sustainable Couch team, so that managing this community remains easy and fun!

For further information, please contact us: info@sustainablecouch.org