

Literature & Books Tools & Resources EU response Greening

A new study explores the sustainability of the bookselling sector

CREATIVESUNITE

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Rise Bookselling published a study that examines the key areas in which booksellers can focus and work on to run a more sustainable and eco-conscious bookshop.

The European and International Booksellers Federation (EIBF) and its RISE Bookselling network members take climate change seriously. They have commissioned research into the best practices that booksellers can utilise to run a more sustainable, eco-conscious bookshop.

The research collates international best practices for sustainability in the bookselling sector. From rethinking energy suppliers and reusing pakcaging material, to conducting an energy audit and engaging with other parts of the book value chain. RISE Bookselling aims to provide booksellers with practiccal tips to help them conduct their business in a more environmentally friendly way.

When you begin looking at how bookshops can reduce their environmental impact, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the number of issues, the strength of resistances and the real obstacles.

The vast majority of booksellers are already seeing the consequences of climate change in their daily work. Many express concern about the future of this issue. This theme has also been high on the agenda at national booksellers' conventions in almost all countries in recent years, illustrating the issue's importance for the industry.

This report presents many steps individual bookshops can take to reduce energy and resource consumption and cut waste.

That must not however hide the fact that a genuine ecological transition cannot be achieved through environmental gestures alone. It must be implemented across a whole production and consumption system.

Environmental issues cannot be examined in isolation from

other, interacting issues. Protecting the planet's liveability also means protecting social relations and fighting inequalities.

The book ecosystem is a perfect illustration of this idea: how could we reduce environmental impacts without addressing the concentration of wealth and the productive apparatus in the hands of a few large companies, and without challenging the sharing of value between all actors, from authors down to booksellers?

Many authors, publishers and booksellers seek to advocate alternative ways of working. However, the economic model of the book ecosystem is essentially based on mass producing increasing numbers of objects, the life cycle of which becomes shorter every year.

Many studies in recent years have looked at the book sector's ecological transition. However, they have focused primarily on the publishing sector (upstream in the value chain) rather than bookshops (downstream). This report seeks to make up for that.

Read the full report here