



Press release - Chamonix (France), Friday 5 July 2024

Environmental Action: Innovative and Concrete Solutions Developed by HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc to Minimise Environmental Impact

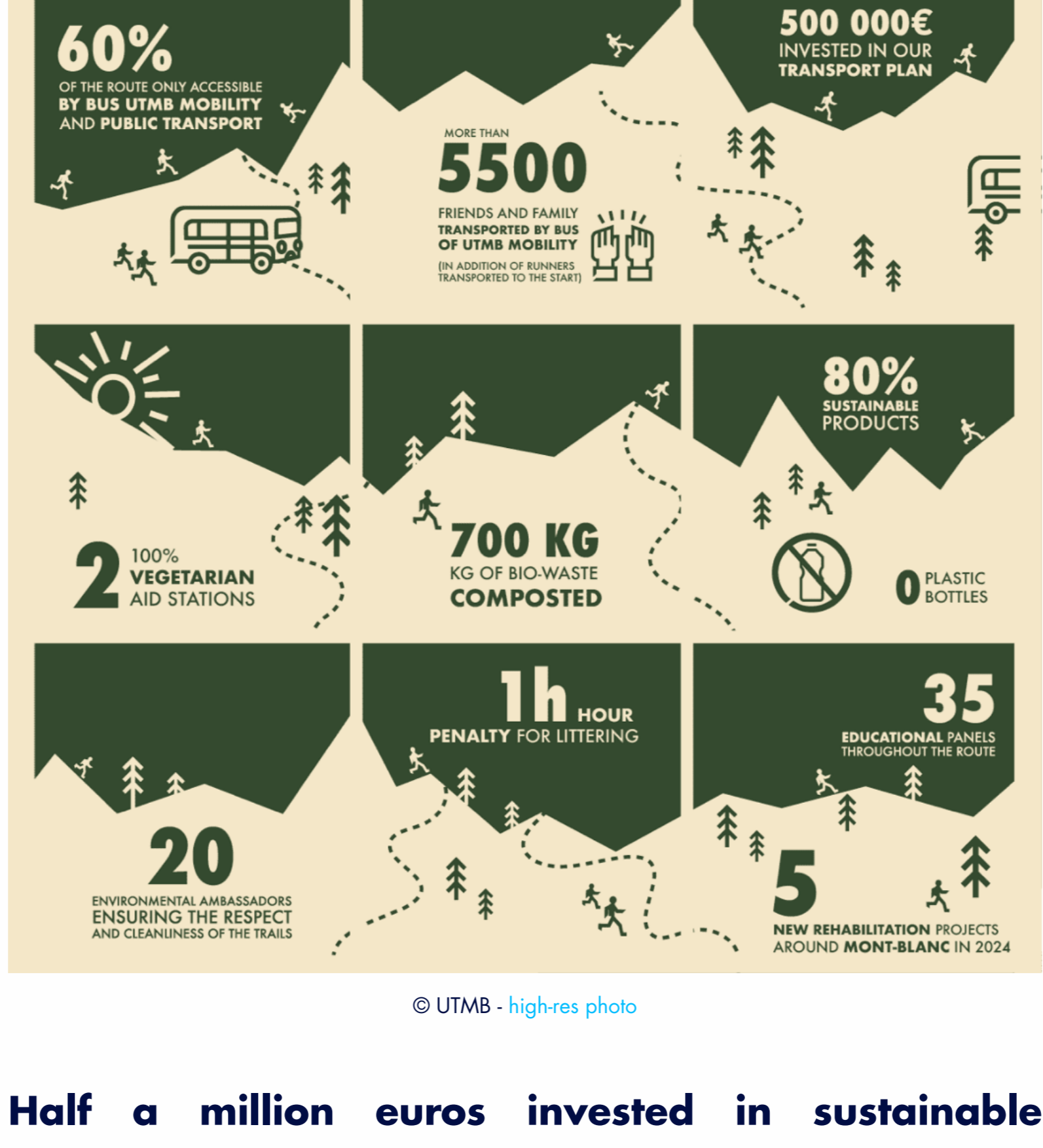
- Two vegetarian-only aid stations established and 80% of products locally sourced
- Half a million euros invested this year to optimise environmentally-friendly transportation
- Exclusive partnerships with TGV Lyria and Alpytransfers to support participant travel.
- 20 environmental ambassadors covering 800 km of trails to raise awareness and support participants.

As the 21st edition of HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc approaches, the event continues its commitment to preserving the environment through initiatives and innovative solutions. Year-round, the event organisation focuses on topics such as awareness-raising among stakeholders for more sustainable practices, reinforced action in transportation and waste-management, respect for the territory and commitments through associations and charters.

As signatories of the GESI Charter in 2017 - an initiative supported by the Ministry of Sports, the Olympic and Paralympic Games and WWF France - the UTMB Group continually innovates to minimise its environmental impact while maintaining high-quality organisation and offering a memorable trail experience for all runners.

The GESI Charter structures these efforts through 15 clear commitments covering various aspects such as sustainable mobility, single-use plastic reduction, sustainable food, fighting discrimination and much more. These commitments form the foundation of our environmental strategy and are integrated into all dimensions of the event. For example, Commitment 3 of the Charter targets the reduction of single-use plastics, an area in which we have made significant progress this year.

Updates and new features planned by HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc in 2024.



Half a million euros invested in sustainable transportation

At HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc, over 80% of the carbon footprint comes from transportation, meaning every type of travel option has been considered in order to improve. Efforts increase every year to encourage all parties - runners, companions, organisers, partners, spectators - to use more environmentally friendly transport methods to get to and move around the event.

Optimising arrival at the event: Supporting sustainable transportation

Throughout the year, the organisation actively works to minimise its environmental impact while ensuring an optimal and accessible experience for all participants. Among the actions taken, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc informs and reassures participants that cars are not necessary to reach or move around the Chamonix valley.

This year, the event has established strategic partnerships with TGV Lyria and Alpytransfers to facilitate access by train, including:

- **TGV Lyria:** Journeys from Paris to Geneva starting at €29 (offer valid from June 3 to June 10).
- **Alpytransfers:** Reduced-price transfers from Geneva to Chamonix to ensure a stress-free transition and avoiding car rentals.

€500,000 Investment in transport plan for the event week

This year, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc is once again investing in a large-scale transport plan, aimed at optimising the experience for runners, their companions and spectators throughout the event.

To alleviate road congestion, car access to over 60% of the key sections on the course is prohibited, with these locations only accessible via UTMB Bus shuttles (Les Contamines-Montjoie; Lac Combal; Arnouvaz; La Fouly and Champex-Lac). Following the event is therefore only possible through the UTMB Bus service (with only two municipalities accessible by car). This restriction aims to preserve the tranquillity of natural sites and avoid congested spaces, while ensuring participants and spectators can still follow the event smoothly. In 2023, this reinforced plan transported more than 5,500 people by UTMB Bus.

Through both email campaigns prior to the event and on-site work by designated environmental ambassadors on the ground, the event encourages the use of public transport set up by local authorities.

Optimised aid stations and adjusted waste management

At the forefront of eco-responsible initiatives in sports events, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc is continually committed to reducing its ecological footprint through a series of significant innovations in aid station management and waste.

Two 100% vegetarian aid stations

This year, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc is taking a step further and testing two 100% vegetarian aid stations as a pilot project. At Col de Balme, for the MCC and OCC passages, and at Arnouvaz, on the CCC® and UTMB®, charcuterie will be replaced by local Italian products, namely Farinato, a vegetarian and gluten-free chickpea pancake.

Commitment to responsible sourcing

Emphasis is also placed on responsible sourcing, favouring local and organic products in order to minimise the carbon footprint of the transportation of goods. In 2024, aid stations will consist of 80% regional and sustainable products to limit transportation while also promoting local involvement. Most of these products carry quality labels such as Organic Agriculture, Label Rouge, AOP, or AOC.

Waste reduction

Since its inception, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc has adopted responsible waste management practices. The BYOU (Bring Your Own Utensils) initiative, now extended to many sports, was created and implemented at the event as early as 2006.

For the 20th anniversary last year, the event set up 100% plastic bottle free aid stations, replacing them with water and soda machines. With this measure, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc not only reduced its impact on bottled water transportation but also avoided the use of 13,000 plastic bottles.

Advanced bio waste and recycling management

A leader in organic waste recovery, HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc has set up an advanced bio waste collection system with six actively managed collection points, thus collecting nearly 700 kg of organic waste. The compost is managed by the Chamonix association EcoTriVélo and then sold by the association to farmers in the Arve valley. Additionally, the organisation has established partnerships with local specialised organisations to help improve waste sorting and recycling, such as AREMACS, which raises awareness and assists with sorting management on the sites.

Education and individual responsibility in waste management

A founding principle set by Jean-Claude Marmier at the creation of UTMB is the prohibition of littering. To support participants in responsibly managing their personal waste (wrappers, fruit residues, etc.), the organisation provides garbage bags at race-bib collection. Penalties are applied for littering, with any non-compliance with these rules resulting in a one-hour penalty. This educational approach ensures that all participants understand their role in preserving the natural sites along the course.

Committed partners

Recently, the UTMB® World Series circuit and HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc partnered with Nàak, the nutrition and hydration brand for trail and ultra-distance runners. From choosing sustainable proteins and responsible sourcing to the company's B Corp Certification, Nàak always acts with the preservation of the mountain playground in mind, creating a positive impact for future generations. All products are made with sustainable proteins and non-GMO ingredients. The brand also collaborates with the organisation to reduce plastic packaging: in 2024, 69% of the bars offered will be in bulk.

A wonderful playground to respect and preserve

Environmental Ambassadors: Guardians of Nature

Throughout the week, 20 volunteers called Environmental Ambassadors will play a particularly important role: to train, raise awareness, and support the respect for Nature. They are present with participants at a dedicated stand during the race-bib pickup, and throughout the races, covering over 800 km of trails ready to help runners understand and respect environmental protection measures. They are also in contact with mountain communities and shepherds through which the trails pass.

These ambassadors, who traverse the entire course twice throughout the event, are also responsible for enforcing the regulations, ensuring that non-pollution principles are adhered to, and sanctioning violations when necessary.

Signage for education

HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc has developed specific signage throughout the course to ensure all runners contribute to preserving the alpine landscape while enjoying their race experience. These signs educate and inform:

- About the need to reduce noise and sudden movements near animals to avoid frightening them.
- To limit the use of poles in certain areas to protect trails from erosion.
- To close gates after passing through pastures to secure animals.
- To strictly stay on marked trails to minimise impact on wildlife and flora.

The Environment Commission: A continuous commitment to sustainability

The Environment Commission, created in 2006, is a fundamental pillar of the event's environmental commitment. Composed of volunteers and association representatives, this commission evaluates the event's impacts, maintains and rehabilitates trails, and proposes continuous improvements. After each edition, it conducts an assessment and implements concrete actions to further reduce the event's ecological footprint.

In 2024, the four new projects are:

- **Bertone:** Cleaning water drains, creating steps, creating a path to limit multiple trails.
- **Col Chavannes and Hauteluze:** Trail rehabilitation.
- **Les Houches:** Creating steps, widening, and stabilisation.

The preservation of trails does not only meet the needs of the race, and we sometimes act on preserving and maintaining routes that are not used. We thus contribute to preserving the surrounding mountain landscape.

These efforts are coordinated through the association 'Les Amis de l'UTMB', which also supports other significant local projects. For example, in 2023, the association allocated €5,000 to finance solar panels for the Eduardo Camardella Bivouac.

For all HOKA UTMB Mont-Blanc commitments, [visit this link](#).

Note to editors

About UTMB® World Series

UTMB® World Series is the world's ultimate trail-running circuit that unites the sport's biggest stars and passionate runners through the best, leading international events in the most stunning locations. Built on a passion for the mountains with sustainability at its heart, UTMB® World Series gives all trail runners the chance to experience the UTMB® adventure across the world with events taking place across Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. It is the only place where runners can begin their quest to HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc, where the prestigious UTMB® World Series Finals will be held. Launched in May 2021 through the collaboration between the UTMB Group and The IRONMAN Group, the UTMB World Series circuit brings together many of the best international trail-running events on the planet. For more information, visit <https://utmb.world>.

About UTMB Group

Since the creation of HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc in 2003 by a group of passionate friends, UTMB Group has been the driving force behind the development of trail running. The HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc is the sport's pinnacle event, and every year, 10,000 runners earn their place on the start line. UTMB Group also pioneered the LiveTrail® technology, an innovative digital service that supports the management of endurance races. Revered by hundreds of thousands of athletes, UTMB® has become a global, premium, and leading brand. In May 2021, UTMB Group partnered with The IRONMAN Group to launch the UTMB® World Series, which brings together many of the best international events on the planet to provide exclusive access to the sport's pinnacle event, HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc. The UTMB® World Series is built on the founding principles of HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc: surpassing oneself; fair-play; respect for people and the environment; and solidarity. Find out more at <https://utmb.world>.

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