



SSA Group



Project Summary

SSA Group, who partners with cultural attractions bundling food, retail, and admissions services, has a long track record of sustainability successes. Our work to co-create a Sustainability and Climate Action Plan (SCAP) with SSA deepens their long-standing commitment to our planet by identifying strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience.

SSA operates more than 75 sites in zoos, aquariums, museums, and other cultural attractions across the country. Working with SSA has strengthened our familiarity with operations, waste management, and resource use at zoos and aquariums. Importantly, we leverage that expertise to strategically engage employees in SSA’s vision to have a regenerative impact.

SSA is already a sustainability leader. For example, their sites at the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Houston Zoo, respectively, recently became the first and second AZA-accredited institutions to eliminate single-use plastic packaging in gift shops. By enthusiastically co-creating an actionable SCAP, SSA leadership is aligning around a shared vision and identifying clear next steps to ensure they become a thriving and resilient leader for generations to come.

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Change Management
- Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- GHG Inventory
- Net Zero Pathway
- Organizational Alignment
- Sustainability and Climate Action Planning
- Sustainability Engagement Survey
- Sustainability Resource Hub

PROJECT DETAILS

Date: 03/2022 – present

Relevant Links:

Bloolop: [SSA works with Verdis Group to develop Climate Action Plan](#)

SSA: [Meet our thrive\(3\) strategic partners](#)

Challenges

1. SSA needed to communicate its efforts and successes both internally and externally.
2. Due to operations being spread across so many different sites, it was more difficult to collect the utilities data required to baseline emissions and drive decision making.
3. As a food, retail, and admissions services provider, SSA relies on external industries such as agriculture and manufacturing whose sustainability efforts are outside their control.

Solutions

1. We are providing engagement support throughout the project. One example of this work is a resource-rich website that provides employees with educational materials on climate change and sustainability, progress updates, and opportunities to participate.
2. In order to get a complete picture of SSA's utility usage, we investigated how the data is measured at each unique site type and analyzed our findings to meet their needs.
3. SSA doesn't shy away from the challenge of accelerating sustainability on an industry-wide scale. Recognizing their influential role in a consumption-based industry, they differentiate themselves through responsible procurement and a regenerative vision.

Impact

Through expertly facilitated workshops and interviews, the SSA team better understands the diversity of impacts they can deliver to their partners. This brings clarity and excitement around why they are taking action to combat climate change and creates space for discussions about going beyond sustainability. Strategic engagement drives much of this progress. We value the input of all stakeholders and include them whenever possible via surveys, communications content, and other means. As a result, all levels of the organization are more aligned around sustainability and can better address the related challenges head-on.

Our Expertise in the Zoo and Aquarium Industry

Zoos and aquariums are adopting sustainability goals at a record pace. Verdis is committed to guiding inclusive processes that accelerate climate action at zoos and aquariums, as we have done for over a decade. Our clients include Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium, Dallas Zoo, Seattle Aquarium, and more. We also partner with the Aquarium Conservation Partnership to offer sustainability services to its members. Verdis is a commercial member of the AZA with Steering Committee representation on the Green Scientific Advisory Group.

*"SSA continues to deepen our commitment to sustainability, including in our strategic plan and by investing in additional resources for our stellar team. But the scientific complexities of combating climate change convinced us to seek expert guidance, which led us to Verdis Group. From top to bottom, they are the perfect firm for us. **We couldn't imagine taking on these critical goals without Verdis on our side.**"*

Sean McNicholas, CEO, SSA Group

To learn more, visit verdisgroup.com or connect with us at info@verdisgroup.com.