

Sustainability at Reading Festival - A Greener Future for Music Events

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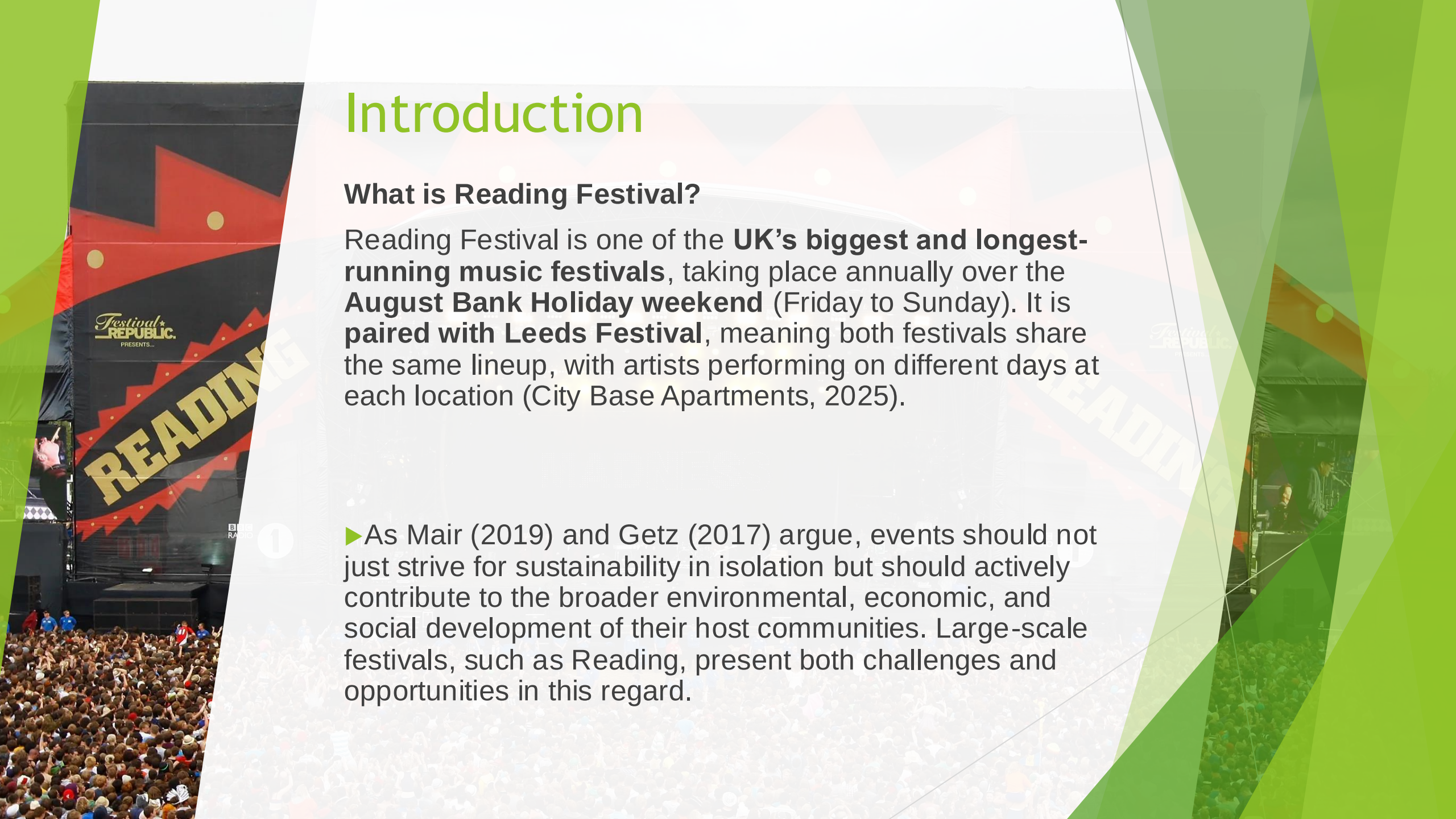


Introduction

What is Reading Festival?

Reading Festival is one of the **UK's biggest and longest-running music festivals**, taking place annually over the **August Bank Holiday weekend** (Friday to Sunday). It is **paired with Leeds Festival**, meaning both festivals share the same lineup, with artists performing on different days at each location (City Base Apartments, 2025).

► As Mair (2019) and Getz (2017) argue, events should not just strive for sustainability in isolation but should actively contribute to the broader environmental, economic, and social development of their host communities. Large-scale festivals, such as Reading, present both challenges and opportunities in this regard.



What is our goal?-

Our goal is to integrate sustainability principles into every aspect of Reading Festival's operations, addressing environmental, financial, and social sustainability challenges. By doing so, we aim to create an event that not only provides unforgettable experiences but also sets a benchmark for responsible and sustainable practices.

Reading festival can achieve this by:

- ▶ Reducing its environmental footprint
- ▶ Ensuring financial sustainability
- ▶ Maximizing social impact





Key areas we will cover:

- Waste management and recycling.
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy use.
- Water conservation measures.

Sustainability Event Practices- Angelika

1. London 2012 Olympics

- **Sustainability Initiatives:**
 - First-ever 'zero-waste-to-landfill' Olympics
 - Use of sustainable construction materials
 - Low-carbon transportation options for attendees

Inspiration for us:

- Enhance waste management systems
 - Promote public transport
 - Use sustainable infrastructure and eco-friendly materials
- (Sustainable London, 2012)

2. ICC Wales

- **Sustainability Initiatives:**
 - Strong focus on reducing carbon footprint
 - Advanced waste management strategies with high recycling rates
 - Commitment to local sourcing and minimizing food waste

Inspiration for us:

- Increase recycling efforts with clearer waste segregation
 - Implement sustainable food sourcing and reduce single-use plastics.
- (ICC, 2025)

Water Conservation Measures- 5years ago

- Single-use bottles



- Overflowing bins



- Basic water system



Water Conservation measures- now

- Water refill station



- Rainwater tanks



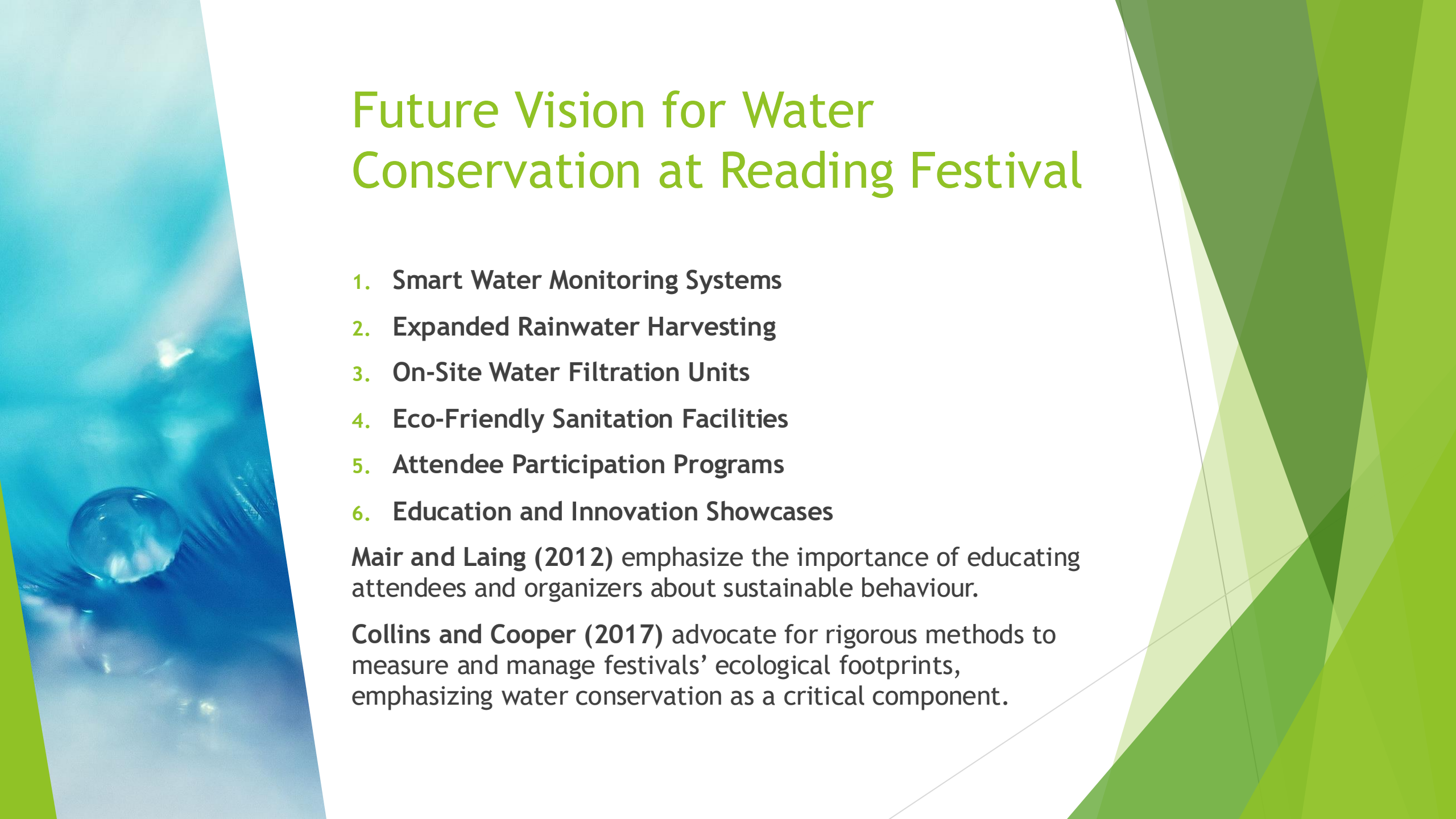
- Signage encouraging water conservation



Sustainability is the
key to harmony—
onstage and offstage.

As Getz (2010) notes, festivals
have the potential to lead by
example, inspiring other events to
adopt sustainable practices. By
continuing to innovate, Reading
Festival can solidify its role as a
pioneer in sustainable event
management.





Future Vision for Water Conservation at Reading Festival

1. Smart Water Monitoring Systems
2. Expanded Rainwater Harvesting
3. On-Site Water Filtration Units
4. Eco-Friendly Sanitation Facilities
5. Attendee Participation Programs
6. Education and Innovation Showcases

Mair and Laing (2012) emphasize the importance of educating attendees and organizers about sustainable behaviour.

Collins and Cooper (2017) advocate for rigorous methods to measure and manage festivals' ecological footprints, emphasizing water conservation as a critical component.



Innovative solutions to these challenges

1. Waste Management & Recycling Budget Constraints

- ▶ Implement a volunteer-based waste sorting initiative where festival attendees can earn incentives such as discounted future tickets or merchandise for participating in clean-up efforts. (Arcann Companies, 2024)
- ▶ Partner with waste management companies that offer sponsorship deals in exchange for branding opportunities at the festival.

2. Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Infrastructure Costs

- ▶ Use rental models for renewable energy solutions to minimize upfront costs while testing feasibility (Sunbelt, 2025)
- ▶ Seek grants or sponsorships from companies specializing in green energy to offset initial investment (GOV.UK, 2025)



3. Water Conservation Measures Installation Costs

- ▶ Secure sponsorship from sustainable water brands to install refill stations at no cost to the festival. (Danone, 2024)
- ▶ Implement a deposit scheme for reusable water bottles to encourage adoption while generating additional revenue. (GOV,2025)

4. Sustainable Sourcing for Food & Merchandise - Higher Supplier Prices

- ▶ Bulk purchase from local suppliers to negotiate better prices while supporting sustainability. (Bradshow, 2024)
- ▶ Offer incentives for vendors who commit to sustainable practices, such as lower stall fees or priority placement at the festival.

5. Community Engagement & Inclusivity vs. Financial Priorities

- ▶ Introduce tiered ticket pricing, allowing financially capable attendees to opt for premium-priced tickets that help subsidize discounted tickets for lower-income attendees. (Tournkey, 2024)
- ▶ Work with sponsors to fund accessibility services, ensuring inclusivity without impacting overall festival revenue.

Thanks for listening!

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