



**Sustainable
United Nations**

GREEN MEETING GUIDE 2009

Roll out the Green Carpet for
your Participants

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

I.C.L.E.I.
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

IAM 
 **LADP**

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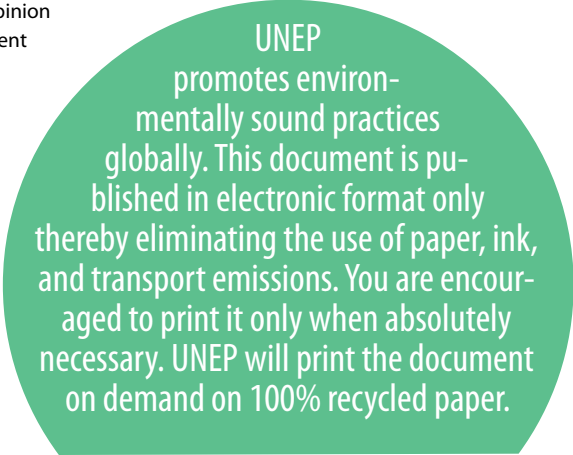
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The guide was written by Marta Anglada, Simon Clement (both ICLEI Sustainable Procurement Team), Francesca Schraffl and Monika Zimmermann (both ICLEI International Training Centre). The work builds on the extensive experiences of ICLEI's Greening Events Initiative (www.iclei.org/itc/greening), which is aimed at supporting host cities of small and big events as well as conference service providers. Reference documents can be found on this webpage.

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The guide is available online at: <http://www.unep.fr/scp/sun>

Foreword

The environmental footprint of meetings large and small is gaining increasing attention world-wide from the Olympic Games to a concert in a local town-hall - the United Nations is no exception. Indeed the UN, with its global, regional and national activities is perhaps one of the most active conveners of meetings in the world - from the General Assembly in New York to small groups of experts gathering in, say, Africa, Asia or Latin America.

Thus, the UN has a special responsibility to set trends in this respect and to assist others in becoming green conference and meeting organisers within the context of their national or local circumstances.

While travel to and from locations will generate greenhouse gas emissions and the running of an event consumes paper in printing and generates waste, the ability of those managing a meeting to meet the highest environmental standards possible may vary with budgets and economic and technological circumstances.

In 2007, the United Nations' Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for a joint UN effort to use energy more efficiently and to eliminate wasteful practices. Indeed reducing the environmental footprint of our meetings should be an essential and very visible element of such efforts.

Many UN organisations have now responded to the Secretary-General's request and others are putting in train policies and plans in order to achieve green operational goals including more environmentally-friendly meetings.

Building on these experiences, the United Nations Environment Programme has produced this Green Meetings Guide in partnership with other organisations and experts, to share the lessons learnt, and to propose clear and easy steps for replication in other gatherings within or outside the UN system.

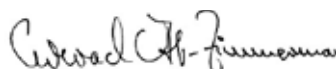
What the guide recommends for UN meetings will certainly also apply to meetings held by any other organisation. Local governments across the world, for example, are also responsible for hosting and arranging a very large number of meetings each year. This guide will provide a valuable tool for helping them to organise these meetings in a sustainable manner.

The Guide focuses in particular on the most common type of meetings: small and medium sized meetings with up to 200 participants. It is structured to support those individuals and teams who are responsible for the organisation and the logistics related to the event. Its two core sections - "Green meetings: what to know" and "Green meetings: what to do" - will give the readers both the elements to explain the background and justification to organise a green meeting, and a practical checklist to guide the implementation phase.

Roll out the green carpet for your participants!



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Purpose and structure of this guide

This guide is designed to assist organisers and hosts of small- to medium-sized meetings of up to 200 participants in **greening their meetings** - from partners meetings to small conferences. It is applicable to all organisations, not just those within the UN system.

The Guide consists of five different elements:

Section 1: “Green meetings: what to know”

- **Part A: Introduction** - an introduction to the concept of greening meetings, and the benefits this can bring to the organisers, especially UN organisations.
- **Part B: Management and Communication** – guidance on management and communication aspects of greening meetings.
- **Part C: Greening your meeting** – an overview of the key environmental impacts of a meeting, and how these may be minimised - especially venue selection, accommodation, catering, local transportation, logistics.
- **Part D: Climate neutrality** – proposals for offsetting greenhouse gas emissions generated by a meeting, especially through the impacts of long-distance travel in order to leave a positive “Climate Legacy”.

Section 2: “Green meetings: what to do”

- **Part E: The Greening Meetings Checklist** - detailed greening recommendations for the day to day preparation of a meeting.



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Section 1

Green Meetings: What to Know

A

Green Meetings: Why and What? An Introduction

A.1 United Nations' Commitment to Sustainability

Greening UN meetings is a significant and highly visible contribution to the sustainability goals of the United Nations

We, the Heads of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, hereby commit ourselves to moving our respective organisations towards climate neutrality in our headquarters and United Nations centres for our facility operations and travel.

Statement of the Chief Executives Board for
Co-ordination of the United Nations,
26 October 2007

- The United Nations organisations are responsible for a huge number of meetings each year - ranging from small meetings of 10 people, up to large events with several thousand participants (e.g. UNFCCC "Conference of the Parties").
- These meetings take place in all parts of the world - in regions varying greatly in terms of environmental priorities, experience and infrastructure.
- Any gathering, such as a meeting or conference, has negative environmental implications - arising for example from participants travelling to the meeting; heating and cooling the venue; the materials provided to participants; the catering for their meals and accommodation. They consume natural resources (energy, water), generate waste and cause local air and water pollution, and contribute to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions.

"....I would like to make a public commitment... We need to work on our operations, by using energy more efficiently and eliminating wasteful practices.

That is why, today, I am asking the heads of all UN agencies, funds and programmes to join me in this effort. And I am asking all staff members throughout the UN family to make common cause with me."

Ban Ki-moon
UN Secretary General, 5 June 2007

A.2 What is a green meeting?

Guiding principles¹:

A green event is one designed, organised and implemented in a way that minimises negative environmental impacts and leaves a positive legacy for the host community.

In the international debate, “Greening events” include health and social concerns which should also be taken into consideration when aiming for a ‘sustainable’ event. These issues are partly dealt with in this guide, although the main focus is on the environmental aspects.

The Sustainable United Nations (SUN) unit in UNEP believes that a green event is one organised in such a way that:

- emissions of greenhouse gases, such as CO₂, are minimised, and unavoidable emissions are compensated for,
- natural resource consumption (including water and energy) is minimised and demand is adapted to available local resources,
- waste generation is avoided where possible and remaining waste is reused and/or recycled,
- biodiversity, water, air and soil resources are protected,
- minimal environmental damage is caused while preparing and implementing the meeting,
- the local community benefits economically, socially and environmentally both during and after the meeting, with local sustainable development encouraged to the extent achievable,
- the above principles are applied in purchasing goods and services for the meeting, the selection of the venue, transportation, catering and accommodation arrangements,
- the awareness of participants, staff service providers and the local community in sustainability issues is increased, with the greening aims and measures communicated clearly to all,
- local hosts, regional and national authorities, sponsors, citizens groups, NGOs, business and technical experts are involved to the extent possible in order to comply with and support the above - stated principles.

Every year over 80 million people around the world attend a meeting or conference and even more attend trade shows or exhibitions.

<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/greenguide.pdf>

¹ Based on the principles developed at ICLEI's Greening Events Symposium in Barcelona, September 2004.

Some major recent examples of event greening:

- The Olympics in Australia, 2000
- The World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, where the term “greening legacy” was created
- The 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany
- ICLEI’s World Congress 2006 in South Africa
- ICLEI’s ‘Accelerating Now’ in Melbourne, 2007
- IUCN World Conservation Congress in Spain, 2008
- The FAO Conference on World Food Security in Rome, 2008
- International Ozone Gathering in Doha/Nairobi, 2008



The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), in Johannesburg in 2002, generated 322.59 tonnes of waste and 136000 tonnes of carbon emissions, equally to approx. half of the waste collected each month from the Johannesburg Inner City and half of South Africa’s daily fossil fuel related carbon emissions. The event used approximately 25 tonnes of paper, 11800kl of water and 2485MWh of electricity (enough to serve 672 South Africans for one year) over a ten day period.

The event launched the ‘Greening the WSSD Initiative’; the outcomes and the positive legacy left by the initiative have been collected and described in ‘Guidelines for event greening – Leaving a greening legacy’, produced by DACEL, GEF, UNDP and IUCN.

A.3 Why green your meeting?

Greening your meeting will reduce the direct environmental impact of it, but should also leave a positive and lasting legacy to the local community. A number of opportunities and benefits can be identified, for the organisers, the participants, the service providers and for the host/local region.

- **Costs savings** - Conserving energy, reducing waste, purchasing local products and simply consuming less can save money. Even though some green products might be more expensive than normal ones (at least at the initial purchase), applying greening principles will often and in the long-term reduce costs (e.g. less printed material, less waste to be collected...).

- **Positive reputation** - A green meeting is a very visible demonstration of your organisation's commitment to the sustainability principles of the United Nations. A targeted communication/PR strategy will raise the profile of the meeting and attract participants, as well as serve as an awareness raising tool.
- **Environmental innovation** - Greening efforts promote innovative technologies and techniques which help to use resources more efficiently.
- **Awareness raising** - Each meeting is a unique opportunity to raise awareness among participants, staff, service providers and the local community about the benefits of greener products, buildings, services etc. and hence foster sustainable behaviour and encourage people to make responsible decisions.
- **Social benefits** - If planned and implemented carefully, the meeting can benefit the local region, through providing jobs, benefiting regional suppliers, promoting better working conditions, and act as a catalyst for encouraging environmental best practice across the region.
- **Influencing decision-making** - By sharing standards and introducing new ways of behaviour, other actors and organisations can be motivated to introduce environmental and social improvements in their own meeting organisation.
- **Spreading best practice within the organisation** - Many of the measures and management practices which should be introduced in greening meetings can also be relevant in the day-to-day operations of the organisation, and can be a good "piloting" opportunity, such as serving Fair Trade drinks, or off-setting the CO₂ emissions of your staff's travel.



Although the small- to medium-sized meetings covered by this guide might not have the scale of impacts (positive or negative) of large meetings, these impacts will be significant and help to spearhead broader action. Greening actions can be important in raising awareness and bringing about wider organisational change. Regardless of size, it should be standard practice for every meeting to be a green meeting.

The media coverage of the "Greening the WSSD" initiative reached approx. 5 million people, worth an estimated US\$ 600,000 in advertising.

Leaving a greening legacy, Greening the WSSD, produced by DACEL, GEF, UNDP and IUCN

A.4 Key instruments for success

Successful green meetings are achieved through an optimal combination of:

1. **Influencing decision-making:** To maximise success, you need to ensure sustainability is considered throughout the decision-making process. Try to ensure that location and service providers are selected according to their compliance with green criteria and/or influenced towards it. Top management support for greening is critical.
2. **Awareness raising:** Making staff, service providers and participants aware of green aspects in good time means they will be prepared to act responsibly. People need to know why greening is important, to be motivated to behave accordingly.
3. **Access to sustainable products, services and techniques:** Access to appropriate sustainable technologies and practices increases the potential options for greening. At the same time, meetings can increase demand and a market can be created. Once available, these products and services will be used far beyond meetings.
4. **Communication:** Communicating all aspects in a way that all involved, including participants, are proud about achievements and results, and ensuring that information is provided before, during and after the meeting is crucial in ensuring success and a lasting legacy.
5. **Measurement:** Measuring the environmental footprint and quantifying the achievements of the meeting will build credibility and provide data on which future meetings can be improved. It also provides case studies and figures for PR and Communications purposes.
6. **Procurement:** As in any situation, during a meeting our consumption decisions have major environmental implications. Those responsible for procurement must consider how to minimise the environmental impacts (and maximise the social benefits) of the products and services purchased for the meeting (e.g., catering services, paper for printing, electricity used to power the venue).



Event organisers in many countries, in Germany in March 2009, apply greening events criteria and request standards and guidelines.



B.1 Management principles

- Greening a meeting is a **continuous process**. It involves incorporating sustainable development principles into all levels of meeting organisation and implementation - from the start of planning to well after the meeting has taken place.
- Greening meetings is a joint **learning process** – most UN organisations will be responsible (at least partly) for the organisation of frequent meetings. Lessons can be learned from the success of greening measures introduced, and continuously improved for each meeting, as a general greening strategy of an organisation.
- For bigger meetings, it can be useful to develop a “**greening**” **awareness strategy** for staff, participants and the public, integrated into the overall promotion and communication strategy for the meeting. The success of the greening strategy, and its potential wider impact in the region, will to a large extent depend on the awareness and commitment of those involved.
- When planning the meeting, an **Action Plan** illustrating goals, responsibilities and deadlines should be drafted and serve as a reference document throughout the whole organisation of the meeting.
- Appropriate **monitoring, reporting, benchmarking and evaluation procedures** for greening activities should also be established, to assess achievements, learn lessons and improve for the future, and also as a marketing and communication tool to promote the organisation.



Leitfaden zur umweltgerechten Organisation von Veranstaltungen. Published for the EU-Presidency of Austria, 2007.

B.2 Step-by-step guide to implementation

The following steps should be followed in “greening” a meeting in an efficient way.



Step 0 - Do we really need a meeting?

Do people have to be here in person for this meeting? Have all other options such as teleconferencing, videoconferencing and net-conferencing been addressed? For smaller meetings this should always be considered first, as well as for those with just a few delegates required to travel. This can help to not only reduce waste and consumption at the meeting, but it will also reduce greenhouse gas and other air emissions associated with travel. If the only option is a face-to-face gathering, then all efforts must be made to ensure that the impact is minimised.

Step 1 - Selection of venue/host

Greening principles should be included in the list of criteria for selecting the host city and/or venue, if applicable. Preference should be given to hosts/venues, which comply with the recommendations given in [Section C](#) (Key environmental impacts of meetings). During the negotiation phase with hosts/venues, your commitment to greening meetings should be clearly communicated. If the main meeting organisation tasks are with the host, then the organisation conveying the meeting should offer assistance in greening to the host - for example putting an expert at their disposal as required. It is advised to fix the principles and required activities in the respective host agreement.

Step 2 - Getting started

One person should be given responsibility for “greening” the meeting in accordance with the Guiding Principles introduced in [Section A](#) (Greening meetings – why and what? An introduction), possibly with a team set up to assist in implementation. If specialist staff is required, this should be secured. To ensure a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved, these can be outlined in a clear Action Plan, which may also include progress benchmarks, a timeline, and appropriate monitoring actions. Greening efforts should also be publicly communicated at an early stage.

Step 3 - Organisation & Implementation



For all aspects of the organisation and implementation of the meeting - from communication with participants and speakers, to arranging transport, catering and accommodation - greening measures should be applied. The concrete activities are outlined in the Greening Meetings Checklist below, and introduced in Sections C & D (Key environmental impacts of meetings & Climate neutrality at meetings).

Step 4 - Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

Measuring effectiveness and impacts through monitoring and evaluation allows you to improve greening activities during the implementation of the meeting and to do even better in the future. After the meeting, communicate the successes and lessons learned from greening the meeting to staff, participants, the public and organisers of future meeting, for them to follow.

B.3 Communication



Communicating your goals and plans with all relevant actors effectively is central to the success of your meeting.

Many of the measures to be applied will require the co-operation of others - the host, the venue, the participants, the service providers etc. Furthermore, awareness raising can be one of the biggest benefits of greening meetings - so make sure all are aware of what

you are doing and why.

1. Communication within the organisation and with the host

- Effective greening will typically require high-level support and good co-operation, both within your organisation and with any host partner. Getting the co-operative participation of operations staff, service providers and sponsors is much easier with such high-level support for the goals and measures you propose.
- Therefore early communication of your aims and proposed measures is vital. The goals and contents of your greening Action Plan should be communicated to all within the organisation and the host partner at all decision-making levels, particularly those with specific responsibilities.
- As the host organisation may well know more about what is possible locally than you, involve them in developing your greening Action Plan and ask them to take the lead in greening the meeting, if they are willing to do so.



UNEP Governing Council 2007, Nairobi. Old carousel refurbished and equipped with monitors where participants could listen to awareness raising videos on sustainable resources.

2. Communication with participants



<http://www.worldwaterforum5.org>

The Green Forum Initiative has been established to examine and address the environmental impacts of the preparatory process of the World Water Forum, March 2009.

- The goal of organising green meetings, together with the proposed measures, should be communicated to participants (and, if possible, the general public) at an early stage. This can act as an incentive to actually achieve the environmental goals that have been set.
- Meeting related material, especially invitations and web presence, should make participants aware of all the greening efforts and the contributions expected from their side.
- A space in the meeting venue (e.g. market place) should be used by the local host and organiser to exhibit and promote their meeting greening activities.
- Use meeting-related activities for making all involved aware of the sustainability goals and respective opportunities for the local community, as well as for visitors/participants.

- Offer special awareness-raising programmes for employees and volunteers. Use the potential of volunteers for transferring awareness and knowledge to visitors.
- Create awards and other incentives for service providers and individuals, especially for developing innovative solutions.
- Include results from the greening aspects in your meeting reports.

3. Communication with service providers

- A considerable part of organising a meeting involves procuring goods and services: the greening strategy should therefore address procurement issues as well.
- Greening criteria should be included in the bid, whenever applicable, and in the following contracts between the organisers/host and the service providers.
- If a selection is not possible (e.g. because a venue has a pre-selected caterer), all those involved in procuring goods and services should be clearly informed about the greening requirements and needs and asked to follow the recommendations given in this guide.
- Specific greening criteria should be shared with the providers, who should adhere to them, as far as the local context allows.
- The greening team/person should be available for support to the service providers, if needed, and continuously monitor the adherence of the services to the given criteria.



Forum of the Cultures Barcelona, 2004.
A special reusable cup was produced not only to reduce waste but also as a symbol of the event.

B.4 Measuring, monitoring and reporting

Monitoring

Monitoring the environmental impacts of your meeting is not only important in assessing the effectiveness of your greening measures, but also in communicating achievements to the outside world, and in providing a baseline against which to compare the environmental performance of similar future meetings. Communicating with and motivating suppliers and staff is also easier when supported by clear monitoring data.

From the start of the organisation of the meeting to the end of any follow up work, quantitative data should be collected on:

- **Resources consumed (by weight):** Paper, water, food etc., together with the percentage by weight which can be considered sustainable (e.g. recycled paper, organic or fair trade food, tap water etc. – according to the recommendations outlined in the Greening Meetings Checklist).
- **Waste generation and disposal:** The total quantity of waste generation, ideally divided by type of waste (plastic, paper etc.) and the percentage represented by the different disposal options – reuse, recycling, compost, landfill/incineration.
- **Energy consumption:** Total energy consumed, by fraction - gas/ electricity/oil/coal/biomass, together with the percentage (if any) of electricity generated by renewable sources.
- **Travel:** Overview of the distance travelled and method used (air, rail, road) by participants.



This is an example of what we are used to: conference material table with a lot of paper waste.

Basic information such as the number of participants duration in days etc., should always be provided for reference, together with quantitative data on resources.

Benchmarking and evaluation

To assess the relative “greenness” of your meeting, and consequently the success of your measures, it is necessary to have a baseline against which to compare.

- **Recording as a first step towards benchmarking:** As every meeting and every situation is different it is not possible to provide quantified benchmark figures here, but it is important that you keep a record of your own collected data in order to assess future activities.
- **Learning by doing:** Collecting data may well not be straightforward, and may require establishing new procedures and practices. Again, this is a learning experience – it is important to evaluate data collection and potential improvements.

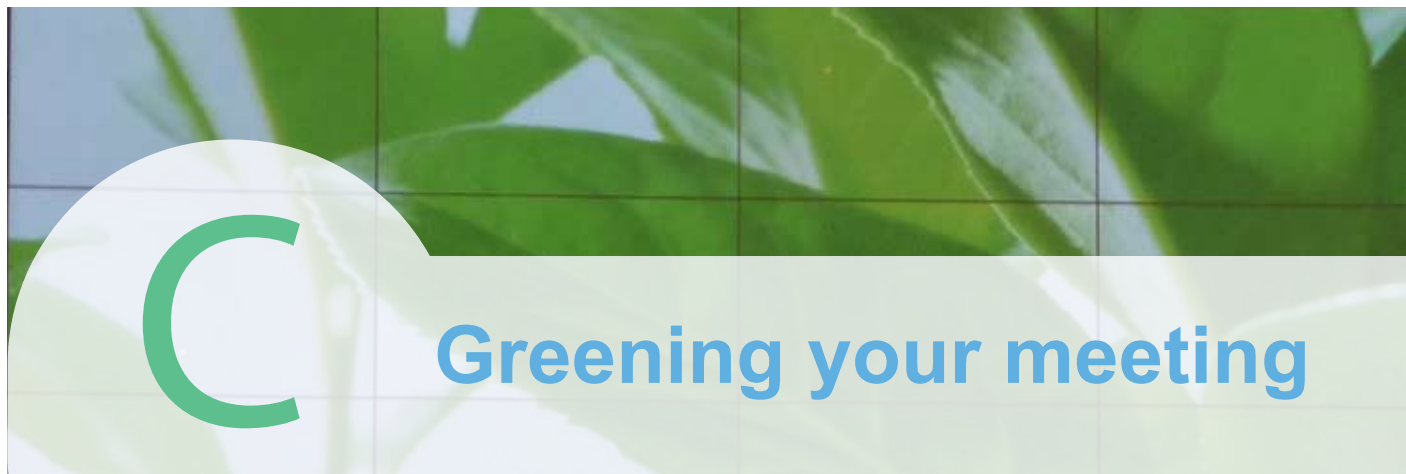


- **Learning from evaluation:** Once benchmarks have been established, the evaluation of the greening measures can be more precisely carried out. Even without benchmarks, however, it is highly recommended to have a full evaluation round, getting the input of all those involved in greening measures, to assess what worked, what didn't, and ideas for the future.

Co-operation and data exchange is key: To try and monitor and improve performance across the UN system, environmental impact data collected should also be sent to the SUN team at sustainable.un@unep.fr. See the assessment and monitoring section at the end of the [Greening Meetings Checklist](#).

Reporting

As noted throughout this document, raising awareness is as important as the greening measures you undertake yourself. Interesting and key data on environmental impacts should be included in any meeting reports, and communicated as widely as possible. Even if results are not as good as expected, including information is a useful educational measure.



This section considers the main potential environmental impacts of a meeting and how these may be addressed. As meetings are different and so are the locations and regions of the world, the following section also addresses these differences if they influence the greening measures that can be taken.

A short introduction is given to each topic. The full detailed recommendations, including more advanced ones, can be found in the accompanying Greening Meeting Checklist. The main elements of meetings' organisation are:

- Selecting the venue (C.3)
- Accommodation (C.4)
- Catering (C.5)
- Setting up the meeting (C.6)
- Local transportation (C.7)
(long distance travel is dealt within Section D – Climate neutrality at meetings)
- Exhibitions (C.8)



The 73,000 people attending the 2004 championship football match between Manchester United and Millwall, in the UK - their travel, food, and beverage consumption, their waste products, and a proportion of the stadium's infrastructure - yielded an ecological footprint of 3000 hectares. Travel made the largest contribution: 43 million kilometres, an average of 591 kilometres per person, nearly half of which was by private car. Greater use of public transit will substantially reduce these negative environmental impacts.

<http://www.globalurban.org/GUDMag06Vol2Iss1/Roper.htm>

C.1 Reducing environmental impacts – Overview

Environmental target	How?
<i>Reduce energy use, and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select venues and accommodation that implement energy efficiency measures, comply with green building standards and/or use renewable energy sources. • Choose location and venue minimising local and long-distance transportation needs for participants and products. • Where long-distance travel is unavoidable, offset GHG emissions. • Apply energy-saving office practices during the organisation and hosting of the meeting.
<i>Reduce materials consumption and waste generation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise materials provided to participants and used by service providers (e.g. caterer), before, during and after the meeting. • Avoid the use of disposable items, use pre-used/recycled and reusable/recyclable products and reduce packaging needs to a minimum. • Separate and recycle waste where possible.
<i>Reduce water use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select venues and accommodation that implement water conservation practices and use water efficient appliances. • Minimise the distribution of bottled water to participants where possible.
<i>Reduce indirect environmental impacts to air, water and soil</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the need to transport food and other products and prefer local organic food. • Use products manufactured with or containing fewer harmful substances, such as chlorine-free paper or non-toxic cleaning products.

C.2 Adapting your greening strategy to regional realities

When using this guide, two key questions need to be considered:

1. Which parts of the meeting organisation can we influence?

The selection of the host city, the venue, the accommodation etc. can make a major difference to the potential negative impacts of the meeting, and on the opportunities and approaches you can take for greening. However, for many UN meetings there may be limited control over these decisions.

Where you do not have control over one of the aspects presented in this section you should:

- a) Focus on the areas where you do have control.
- b) Pass on the recommendations for the other areas to the responsible organisation, or offer expert assistance. If the venue, with attached accommodation and catering services, is already determined by a host city or organisation, then pass the relevant recommendations on to the host, or discuss them directly with the venue/hotel/caterers to see what can be achieved locally. The process should be monitored by the team in charge of greening the meeting to make sure that all efforts are made to make the meeting as green as possible.



Conference hotel in Nagpur, India. First hotel with solar panels on the hotel roof in this city.

It is highly important that you clearly communicate to the host organisation your commitment to greening meetings and request the host organisation to support and contribute to this commitment, to the extent possible.

For the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), 400 unskilled labourers were trained and employed as waste sorters during the event. Many of them continue to use their skills at buy-back centres in South Africa.

Leaving a greening legacy, Greening the WSSD, produced by DACEL, GEF, UNDP and IUCN

2. Are these recommendations feasible in my region, or how should they be adapted to local conditions?

UN meetings take place in all parts of the world - in regions varying greatly in terms of environmental priorities, experience and infrastructure. It is impossible to give guidance appropriate for all locations and circumstances, so organisers will need to closely consider what alternative solutions are needed and available.

In the accompanying Greening Meetings Checklist, specific regional considerations are highlighted, providing guidance on alternative approaches.

Potential differences between regions:



Recycling Station at the J&B Meeting in South Africa.

- Availability and price of certain products such as recycled paper, organic/fair trade food and drink, ecolabelled cleaning products, etc.
- Availability, scope and effectiveness of infrastructure, such as recycling systems, public transport, internet, telecommunications.
- Experience of local service providers with environmental management and practices.
- Cultural and religious differences.
- Different climate and seasons.
- Lack of understanding of why and how to implement a green meeting.

The City of Cape Town partnered with Green X Electricity in the procurement of green electricity for the ICLEI World Congress 2006. The purchase of green electricity enabled the ICLEI World Congress 2006 to reduce its carbon footprint and lessen its contribution to climate change.

Greening the ICLEI World Congress 2006: Cape Town final report

C.3 Venue

The type of venue selected will clearly depend on the size of the meeting. A small meeting for up to 30 people will probably not require the use of specialised meeting facilities. On the other hand, a meeting for 200 participants will likely require some form of conference centre and this should be chosen with care.

Attention should be given to the following areas when selecting the venue:



- **Location:** The accessibility of the venue to accommodation and the town centre by walking or public transport is central in keeping local transport needs minimised.
- **Energy:** A meeting is highly energy consuming. The amount of energy required can be reduced through the selection of energy efficient buildings that maximise the use of day light, and through influencing energy systems, e.g. air-conditioning.
- **Waste and procurement:** Large amounts of waste are generated during meetings. Preference should be given to venues with appropriate and controlled systems for the collection and recycling of this waste.
- **Management:** The way in which a venue is managed, and the commitment of the operators to environmental improvement is critical to reducing environmental impacts. Preference should be given to venues with environmental policies, management systems and/or action plans in place, including appropriate communication with staff and guests to encourage green behaviour. Ideally, the venue should be certified through an internationally acknowledged system.
- **Catering and cleaning:** The way catering is provided and cleaning services carried out can have a substantial influence on environmental and social impacts. See the [Catering](#) and [Accommodation](#) (for cleaning) sections.

In the selection of the venue, a “behind the scenes” tour of the Cape Town International Convention Centre was conducted by the operations manager. This allowed the event greening team to determine the energy efficiency of the climate control/air conditioning system and other devices, to check that a waste management system was in place and that all public areas were flooded with natural light.”

Greening the ICLEI World Congress 2006: Cape Town final report

The recommendations included in the Greening Meetings Checklist principally focus on specialised meeting facilities, but certain aspects also apply to normal meeting rooms. One way to use these recommendations is to send them to possible venues asking them to tick the criteria they fulfil. Ideally, they should be asked to provide supporting documentation. This information can then be used to make the selection of venues.

Discuss with venue operators the possibilities for improving the areas where the criteria cannot be fulfilled at the moment (i.e. what is not ticked in the checklist). In cases where the organiser is not determining the venue, the recommendations can be provided to the host organisation which should be encouraged to follow the guidelines.

→ Go to the detailed recommendations on the venue in the Greening Meetings Checklist ([page 41](#)).

C.4 Accommodation

There can be significant differences in the environmental performance of different accommodation options in a city. The amount of choice in accommodation for participants will clearly depend on the city, but organisers should aim to identify and recommend the most appropriate places to stay.



Refillable soap dispensers.

Attention should be given to the following areas when selecting accommodation:

- **Management:** The way in which a hotel is managed, and the commitment of the operators to environmental improvement is critical to reducing environmental impacts. Preference should be given to hotels with environmental policies, management systems and/or action plans in place, including appropriate communication with staff and guests to encourage green behaviour.

The more luxurious a hotel is, the higher the consumption of water. On average, hotel consumption of water per guest is 220 litres; this goes up to 520 litres in 4 and 5 stars hotels - the main consumption of water is due to wellness centres, swimming pools and laundry services.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
(FAZ) January 2009.

- **Location:** The accessibility of the accommodation to the venue and the town centre by walking or public transport is central in keeping local transport needs minimised.
- **Energy efficiency and water conservation:** The energy and water that hotels use for their operations are among the key influences on resource consumption during meetings. Preference should be given to hotels with energy and water efficient devices installed and applying environmental practices, such as no second-day sheet and towel change.

- **Waste and procurement:** Large amounts of waste are generated in the operation of hotels from packaging and the use of consumables, the provision of catering services, and many other areas of hotel operation. Preference should be given to hotels, which make efforts to reduce waste (e.g. avoiding disposable products) and have appropriate and controlled systems for waste collection and recycling. In all areas hotels should be encouraged to purchase more sustainable products such as recycled paper, and reduce the quantity of packaging.
- **Cleaning and catering:** The chemicals used in cleaning may have negative effects on both human health and the environment. By selecting appropriate cleaning products and limiting the use of chemicals, significant reductions in negative impacts can be made. Also see [catering](#) section.

Sometimes you may not have much choice when selecting a hotel. In this situation, you can provide the hotel with recommendations and try to get their commitment to comply with them. Here are some further resources to open a dialogue with them or simply to inform them:

The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria : <http://www.sustainabletourismcriteria.org/>

- An Environmental and Sustainability Teaching Pack for the Hospitality Industry;
<http://www.unep.fr/sowingtheseeds/>
- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in the Tourism Sector: Frameworks, Tools and Practices (to understand the impact of the hotel industry):
<http://www.unep.fr/scp/publications/details.asp?id=DTI/1047/PA>

One way to use the detailed recommendations in the Greening Meetings Checklist is to send them to possible hotels asking them to tick the criteria they fulfil. This information can then be used to make the selection of hotels. Ideally, they should be asked to provide supporting documentation.

The hotels with the most recommendations ticked (prioritising the core recommendations) should be selected and recommended to participants. Special deals for participants can also be arranged with the selected hotels, which is a good incentive for hotels to comply with environmental requirements.

During the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly in 2008, 100% of all hotel properties used environmentally responsible cleaners, had recycling in place, implemented towel/sheet reuse, did not replace amenities after one night, and did not use polystyrene.

2007 / Meeting Strategies
Worldwide, Inc

Discuss with hotel operators the possibilities for improving the areas where the criteria cannot be fulfilled at the moment (i.e. not ticked in the checklist) – this would encourage them to improve their operations over time.

→ Go to the detailed recommendations on accommodation in the Greening Meetings Checklist ([page 43](#)).

C.5 Catering



Most meetings require some form of catering - from informal snacks to formal dinners. Catering covers all aspects of the provision of meals and refreshments for participants and staff, including procurement of food, handling of the waste produced by catering services and the traffic generated by their transportation.

Attention should be given to the following areas when considering catering:

- **Food & drink:** The environmental impacts of the food and drink we consume can vary hugely depending on what it is, where and how it was produced. Special attention should be given to local and seasonal produce. Encourage organic products as well as, vegetarian, healthy food and fair trade ones. If possible, use tap water for drinking, prefer bulk dispensers to individual containers and make sure the caterer knows the exact number of participants in time, to avoid food waste.
- **Waste:** The consumption of food and drinks may generate large amounts of paper, plastics, organic and other waste. Try to avoid using disposable items, cut down on packaging and ensure appropriate collection and recycling/disposal of waste.
- **Other:** Other aspects which can be considered include the environmental policy/management system of catering service providers, cleaning techniques, and the energy and water efficiency of catering equipment used.

The 2002 Forest Leadership Forum in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, had over 1,300 participants from 45 countries. Through green measures, organisers avoided the use of more than 80,000 disposable plates, cups, napkins and utensils.

<http://www.ec.gc.ca>



Tap drinking water next to the entrance door of the UN conference centre at the UN congress in Nairobi.

The recommendations presented in the Greening Meetings Checklist are intended both for organisers who carry out the catering themselves and for those who are contracting out the catering services to a private company or the venue. If they are contracted out the organiser can request that the company follows these recommendations within the contract.

Raising food animals requires more energy, water and other inputs than growing grains or vegetables. Therefore it is important to try to provide vegetarian menus.

→ Go to the detailed recommendations on catering in the Greening Meetings Checklist (page 49).

C.6 Setting-up the meeting

Sometimes organising a green event can be constrained by time and budget. However, efforts to green the event can still be done within the operations and logistics of the event, leading to a successful event.

The way in which the meeting itself is planned and implemented will have a substantial effect on its overall environmental impact - from how registration and communication with participants is handled before the meeting, to the materials participants receive

during the meeting, and the way the meeting rooms are set up. All these activities can be implemented in a way that the use of resources and overall impact on the environment is reduced to the minimum.

For logistical issues, the organiser will need to check with the venue early on to make sure that the recommendations are achievable. Depending on the venue, the meeting organisers may have limited influence on the equipment used or systems in place. In these cases, the recommendations may be discussed directly with the venue operators if time allows.

The following aspects should be considered during planning:

Before the meeting - communication with participants and registration

- **Paper use:** Through maximising the use of email in pre- and post-meeting communication with participants you can minimise the amounts of material to be printed and sent, given that participants are not printing out all themselves. Invitations, announcements and other useful documents should be created in a way that they can conveniently be sent via email, uploaded on the website and easily read on the computer screen (short and light documents); if it is necessary to print them they should be produced in a way that even printing is less harmful, reducing the text and the number of pages, choosing fewer colours etc...

“During the ICLEI World Congress, the provision of waste segregation facilities during the exhibition meant that instead of 546.88 kg being disposed of to landfill, only 183.60 kg was.”

Greening the ICLEI World Congress 2006: Cape Town final report.

- **Registration process:** The registration process and the related communication should be electronic, allowing participants to register via email. The UN High level Committee on Management Procurement Network (HLCM PN) currently uses an online system called “Regonline” (<http://www.regonline.com>) but other online systems in other languages can also be found.
- **Awareness raising:** The behaviour of the participants can greatly effect the overall impact of an meeting. Emphasise the green nature of the meeting and their own responsibilities beforehand.

Materials for the meeting

- **Minimising materials:** The materials used for a meeting should be reduced to what is strictly necessary. The meeting should be as paperless as possible, in favour of electronic devices, such as memory sticks or CDs and, when possible, the availability of some computers connected to the internet. Promotion material, delegate bags, signs (flags, banners...) and gifts should be minimised.
- **Sustainable materials:** All materials produced or bought for the meeting like as gifts, delegate bags, banners and similar should be produced using more sustainable materials such as organic or recycled material.

Make sure that the purchased gifts are useful and will not be simply thrown away after the event.



Participants bringing back their badges after the Green Building Council of South Africa Conference, 2008.

- **Re-use:** As much material as possible should be re-used from other meetings and/or reusable for future ones (e.g., banners, stands...).

Setting up and running the meeting:

- **Green office practices:** By following some basic rules you can help reduce environmental impacts. For example, always print on both sides, collect waste paper for reuse as scrap, turn off lights and equipment when not in use, ensure separate waste collection. At the beginning of the meeting remind both staff and participants that they should follow certain rules to help greening the meeting.

→ Go to the detailed recommendations on setting up the meeting in the Greening Meetings Checklist ([page 56](#)).

In November 2008 the “International Ozone Gathering” took place in Doha/ Nairobi, being the first paperless large-scale UNEP meeting ever. Delegates were issued with laptops and given lessons on how to minimise paper. A special software was utilised which allowed delegates to share and amend papers during the six day meeting. The initiative is expected to save greenhouse gas emissions linked with the shipment of conference documents and publications to and from meetings.

More info from: marco.gonzalez@unep.org

C.7 Local transport

Note: Long distance travel is dealt with separately under Section D: Climate Neutrality at meetings.

Over the course of a meeting participants will likely undertake a number of trips within the local region or city - travel between the arrival/departure points (airport, train station), the venue, the hotel and the town centre. Although not as significant as international travel, the length of these local trips and the type of transportation used has an impact on both CO₂ emissions and on urban air pollution from vehicle exhausts.



Attention should be given to the following areas to minimise transportation impacts:

- **Location:** The proximity and accessibility of the principle meeting locations (venue, accommodation, town centre and transport nodes) should be a priority in reducing the need for lengthy trips.
- **Communication and information for participants:** Participants should ideally travel by foot, bicycle, or public transport (bearing in mind local safety concerns). Providing appropriate information for participants (such as maps, timetables and clear instructions) can help to encourage this. Low-emission transport can also be specially arranged for participants.

→ Go to the detailed recommendations on local transport in the Greening Meetings Checklist ([page 62](#)).

C.8 Exhibitions

For meetings with associated trade fairs or exhibitions, it is important to have a strategy to address the impacts of these activities, as they are very visible to participants and can create a great deal of waste.

Attention should be given to the following areas to minimise transportation impacts:



Separated waste collection at the IUCN World Congress 2008 in Barcelona, Spain.

- **Materials:** A great deal of material is often provided by exhibitors (and frequently later discarded by visitors). Exhibitors should be encouraged to minimise the amount of promotional material at the stands. Any material should be as sustainable as possible, i.e. following the guidance in the section on setting up the meeting.

- **Energy efficiency:** Rather than having energy intensive stands, exhibitors should be encouraged to minimise lighting and other energy requirements.
- **Waste management:** A considerable amount of waste is generated at exhibitions, including the packaging of display materials and stand constructions, as well as discarded display material and disposable carpets. Therefore exhibitors must be required to follow strict waste collection rules, according to local collection systems, and should be encouraged to reuse or if not possible take back at their own costs all discarded publications and materials.

Organisers should communicate with exhibitors early to inform them of the meeting's green strategy and ways in which they can reduce their environmental impact. Conditions on appropriate sustainability practices can be included in the conditions of participation.

→ Go to the detailed recommendations on exhibitions in the Greening Meetings Checklist ([page 63](#)).



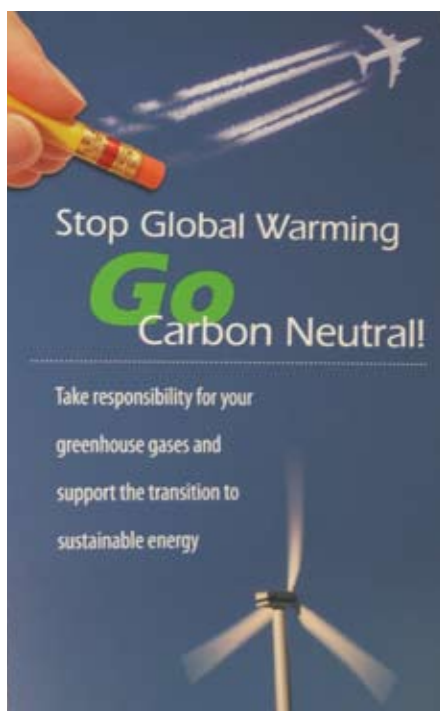
Exhibition material which can be folded and easily re-used. World Urban Forum, Vancouver 2006.



A meeting or conference can be considered climate neutral when all possible efforts have been made to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions arising from the organisation of the meeting and when carbon offsets have been purchased to compensate for the unavoidable emissions.

In targeting this goal, the most important step is firstly to minimise the GHG emissions caused by holding the meeting (from the travel for getting participants to the meeting/venue, to the energy used for catering etc.). The recommendations included in the Greening Meetings Checklist are aimed at achieving this.

Offsetting GHG emissions should not be seen as an easy way to avoid reducing emissions. No matter how good your offset approach is the most effective way to target climate neutrality is to **reduce your GHG emissions to the absolute minimum.**



Nevertheless, no matter how “green” your meeting is, not all GHG emissions can be completely avoided. The remaining GHG emissions must therefore be compensated by offsetting them through GHG reduction measures elsewhere. This compensation that contributes to achieving the goal of a climate neutral meeting, can be done by purchasing “carbon offsets”. When one purchases offsets, one is investing in projects that result in emission reductions elsewhere that would not have occurred in the absence of the project. The following section provides some general information on how to carry out this offsetting.

The Environment Management Group (EMG) of the United Nations has developed common guidance to support the different UN entities in achieving climate neutrality, which is available on <http://www.unemg.org>.

How to achieve a climate neutral meeting?

When aiming to achieve a climate neutral meeting, it is necessary to:

- Identify the meeting-related sources of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)
- Devise and implement strategies to reduce these emissions to the minimum
- Calculate the remaining GHG emissions that could not be avoided
- Collect/allocate offset money corresponding to the remaining GHG emissions
- Compensate the unavoidable GHG emissions by investing the collected funds through the purchase of offsets

In June 2008, for the FAO Conference on World Food Security in Rome, the FAO decided to offset a significant portion of the GHG generated by the conference for delegates from countries most vulnerable to climate change. The GHG considered were those related to return air travel, ground travel to and from airports, stay in Rome, and energy use for the conference facility.

Air travel related emissions were calculated using the Atmosfair calculator (www.atmosfair.de). Emissions from ground travel between Rome's airport and the venue were estimated using the route calculation function of the website for the municipal transport company and the average emissions indicated by them. The UNDP's Human Development Report 2007/2008 was used to calculate other emissions associated with an assumed three-day stay in Rome by all delegates.

The estimate per delegate per day was based on the average per capita emissions in Italy in 2004. The funds were provided by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and were used to purchase CDM-Certified Emissions Reductions from a small-scale hydro-electricity project located in Honduras.

D.1 Identification of GHG sources

The main sources of GHG emissions relating to meetings are:

- a) transport for staff and participants (both long-distance and local),
- b) energy consumption of the venue, accommodation sites, and office facilities (used in meeting preparation and implementation), including waste and water management,
- c) the “carbon footprint” of products and services used in putting on the meeting.

For a specific meeting the relative importance of the different GHG sources will vary. For example, depending on whether participants come from the region or from across the world. Typically long-distance transport is the most significant source of GHG emissions for any meeting.

D.2 Reduction of GHG emissions

Once the relevant emission sources have been identified, approaches can be developed for minimising these. Ideally, these approaches should be included within a well-developed Action Plan, as outlined in section B2 ([Step-by-step guide to implementation](#)) of this Guide.

All the sources mentioned here are dealt with in recommendations included in the Greening Meetings Checklist below. However, given the nature of many UN meetings, special mention is given here to long-distance travel arrangements.



The **emissions caused by long-distance travel** can be reduced firstly by avoiding unnecessary trips, in favour of tele- and video-conferences, as previously mentioned in the guide ([Section B2](#)). When such travel cannot be avoided, the modes of travel with lower GHG emissions (CO₂ equivalents per kilometre) should be encouraged.

Shorter trips can often be done by train or coach, which, for the same distance, on average generates one third of the GHG emissions compared to air travel. In many cases, when high-speed rail connections are available, train is also the fastest mode of transport from city centre to city centre. Overnight train transportation should be taken into account as well.

Travel by road generates emissions in the range between train and air travel. The type of car also has an influence: smaller cars are often lighter, more fuel-efficient and have lower emissions; hybrid cars, when available, offer a good low-emission alternative to petrol or diesel cars. Encouraging participants to share cars can also be effective in reducing overall emissions.

Even when flying remains the only option, the class chosen has an impact on emissions. First class and business travel generate respectively three and two times as much GHG emissions as economy class, due to the space allowance in the aircraft. Direct flights should be preferred as the number of take-offs and landings increase the emissions. The selection of aircraft types also has some impact - modern aircraft, such as A380 and B787, are more fuel efficient and have lower per passenger emissions than comparable older types of aircraft for the same distance and with the same passenger load.

When organising meetings in Vienna, UNOV/CMS (United Nations Office at Vienna/Conference Management Service) distributes to participants a brochure about Vienna's greenings initiative and environment-friendly restaurants and cafes.

UNOV/CMS actively contributes to minimising travel to meetings by organising tele-conferencing, net-conferencing and video-conferencing on a regular basis. In addition, when travelling staff receive a ticket confirmation that includes information on the emissions related to their trip.

D.3 Calculation of remaining GHG emissions

Calculating the emissions caused by a meeting is a complicated undertaking, both in terms of collecting data and in calculating the consequent GHG emissions.

Transportation is typically the most significant source of meeting-related emissions, and several tools are available for calculating the GHG emissions relating to this. Ideally such a tool should cover all possible modes of transport and include local as well as international travel. The organiser may have to decide what the default mode of transportation for participants is likely to be from the airport to the venue/accommodation sites (bus, train, taxi etc.) for use in calculations.

There are two different approaches to calculating/estimating the travel-related GHG emissions for participants:

- a) Individual calculation: A calculation is made for each person and each trip. This calculation can be made and documented by the travellers themselves (e.g. on a travel reimbursement form) or by the organisers, according to the home city of the participants. In some cases, however, the trip can actually be rather complex and the calculation can differ according to route and class, as mentioned above.
- b) Estimated calculation: If for any reason a real calculation is not possible, e.g. in the cases when organisers do not know where participants come from, such as in the cases of public meetings and meetings without travel reimbursement procedures, the organisers

For the UNECE 2007 Environment for Europe Conference, organised in Belgrade in 2007, the estimated emissions amounted to 3,000 tons of CO₂ equivalents, including those caused by air travel, local transport, energy consumed and waste generated. The offsets were paid for by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union and were used to finance renewable energy projects, identified by UNECE together with the Carbon Neutral Company.

can make assumptions on the number of participants coming from different geographical areas and estimate the related average GHG emissions. The result would be an average emission rate. The advantage in this case is that this average rate (here defined as “flat rate”) is much easier to calculate and can be communicated in advance to participants, who can then already decide whether they want to offset or not. The disadvantage however is that train users and long-distance travellers are financially dealt with in the same way, so there is no incentive to use more sustainable means of transport.



The GHG emissions related to staff travel can be calculated on an individual actual basis, since the organiser is likely to have the necessary travel information.

To make the calculation itself, a number of tools are available. The general reference site for these is www.ghgprotocol.org. Some agencies have their own calculators for carbon emissions from air travel: for instance UNEP has developed a calculation tool for its own travel (this calculator will be available on www.unep.org by mid 2009), whereas UNON DCS uses ICAO's carbon emission calculator. In addition, all carbon offset providers incorporate a calculator for travel (also sometimes including ground transport and/or hotel stays) on their website. These calculators can thus be used regardless of the selection of the provider. UNEP and UNON calculators do not include emissions other than CO₂. For other GHG emissions related to surface travel (train and car) information is available from the GHG Protocol site.

Calculating **non-transport related emissions** for meetings is more challenging, and options will depend on the availability of data. With regards to **energy use** for the venue, accommodation sites and office facilities it may be possible to obtain data from utility records, with the co-operation of the facility managers. Energy data would need to be divided into fractions (electricity, gas, oil, coal, with appropriate reductions for renewable energy sources). Depending on data availability an average daily rate would need to be calculated and multiplied by the number of days a particular facility was occupied for the purposes of the meeting (including hotel rooms and office facilities). Where possible, data on water consumption and waste generation should also be collected. Where direct figures are not available it may be possible to use estimates or average national figures for energy consumed. Once these figures are collected, the corresponding CO₂ emissions would also need to be calculated (which may vary considerably from region to region depending for example on the energy mix for electricity generation). Tools may be available at the national or regional level for making these calculations.

Assessing the carbon footprint of the **products and services** purchased/employed for putting on the meeting would likely not be possible to include in such a calculation, as accurate and comparable life-cycle analysis data would not be available. However, the recommendations presented in the Checklist are aimed at ensuring that the most sustainable products and services are used.

The EMG is currently developing a calculator for assessing the GHG emissions of UN operations, based on the methodology used by the GHG Protocol of the WRI/WBCSD² (which is compatible with the new standard ISO 14064 for GHG accounting). Several UN offices already use the tools provided by the GHG Protocol. Once developed, the EMG guide should provide a useful approach for meeting organisers to use.

² World Resources Institute and World Business Council for Sustainable Development

D.4 Offset financing

The offsetting of non-avoidable GHG emissions requires a financial payment. In this field, a number of experiences exist in the UN and different approaches have been adopted.

Collection of offsetting money for participants

There are two main ways to collect the money necessary to purchase the offsets for participants:



Information booth on greening the event to inform participants, at the IUCN World Congress. October 2008, Barcelona, Spain.

- payment directly by the participants, in a mandatory or voluntary way
- payment by the meeting organiser on behalf of the participants

When participants pay for the offset directly, the following options apply:

- a) Mandatory individual compensation at registration - based each actual individual trip. In the light of the planned shift towards electronic registrations for UNEP meetings, it should be possible in the future to provide a calculator on the same page that would provide an offset figure in real time.
- b) Mandatory flat rate at registration - participants are charged an estimated average offsetting fee.
- c) Voluntary scheme offering an opt-in choice, which gives participants the opportunity to offset their emission, if they wish.
- d) Voluntary scheme offering an opt-out choice. This means that participants have to explicitly declare that they are not offsetting. Opt out has the advantage that participants would have to take an extra step to avoid offsetting, which could increase participation under this voluntary approach.

Mandatory or voluntary payment by participants could also be introduced even when your organisation is covering the costs of travel for the participants.

Paying directly from the meeting budget (or the general budget of the organiser) is the easiest to administer, and the most reliable approach. However, it does not have the awareness raising benefits of getting the participants to pay, and is of course an added cost for the organiser.

In certain cases participants may already have offset their travel arrangements if their organisation has a systematic travel offset scheme in place. This should be taken into account when organising the collection of offset money.

In addition to charging participants and including the offset in the travel budget of the meeting, innovative approaches to the collection of money have been suggested by

the EMG and implemented in some cases³:

- a) inviting governments to contribute to trust funds for the costs of offsetting;
- b) inter-agency or intra-organisation trading schemes, e.g. in the initial allocation of travel allowances.

In the case of staff travel, money for offsetting travel emissions should have been previously allocated in the travel budget for the meeting.

D.5 Offset procurement

Once the money is collected, there are different ways to purchase carbon offsets. Foremost among these is the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), established under the Kyoto Protocol; the CDM issues offsets based on a series of criteria and undergoes independent third-party validation

of project design, as well as verification and certification of emission reductions. A range of project types have been approved under the CDM including, for example, improved energy efficiency, the promotion of alternative, renewable energy sources, reduced emissions from waste handling and disposal, fugitive emissions from fuels, manufacturing and chemicals industries, the agricultural sector, and afforestation and reforestation.

The German Renewables 2004 Conference successfully became one of the world's first "climate-neutral" conferences by offsetting carbon emissions through the financing of 12 solar powered community kitchens in developing countries to provide meals for 30,000 people, and replacing the typical use of charcoal to cook food in these communities.

<http://www.globalurban.org/GUDMag06Vol2Iss1/Roper.htm>

In parallel to projects under the CDM, a range of offsets have emerged, under what is termed as the voluntary market. Shortcomings of some offset projects, and a lack of verifiability and transparency has led to a growing discussion and concern both at the governmental level and among NGOs and civil society, about the need to ensure that offset programmes are legitimate and deliver what they promise. In response, a number of other independent standards for offsets have also emerged.

Following interagency discussions within the framework of the EMG, the UN has collectively opted to achieve climate neutrality only through the purchase of offsets generated from the CDM. These offsets adhere to intergovernmentally-negotiated norms and guarantee high environmental standards related to additionality, verification and certification, transparency, time frame and permanency, and sustainable development benefits. The EMG has specified a set of further criteria that the UN agencies may wish to ensure are satisfied in their offset choice⁴. CDM-accredited projects be selected directly by the organisers and payment transferred.

³ Note by EMG Secretariat of 17 September 2007 'Strategy for a Climate-neutral UN' http://www.unemg.org/download_pdf/Annual%20EMG%20meeting2007/Working%20docs/EMG_06_Rev1-Strategy%20C-Neutral.pdf

⁴ For more information, see 'Strategy for a Climate-neutral UN' or 'UN climate neutral strategy' at: http://www.unemg.org/download_pdf/Annual%20EMG%20meeting2007/Working%20docs/EMG_06_Rev1-Strategy%20C-Neutral.pdf

Alternatively:

- A fund can be established, or
- Independent brokers may be used

UNEP has established the UNEP Climate Neutral Trust Fund in order to make the purchasing of carbon offsets easier and ensure the above criteria are met. UNEP divisions can thus transfer directly their offset payment to this fund that will then be used to purchase Certified Emissions Reductions (CERs), through the CDM.

Alternatively, independent brokers/organisations, which support CDM projects and use the WRI/WBCSD emission calculation methodology, can be used. Ideally, local brokers or organisations supporting local projects in the region of the meeting could be chosen or recommended to participants, provided that their offset projects are properly certified, reliable and adhere to the CDM.

The website <http://www.cdmbazaar.net> offers a comprehensive list of carbon offset 'brokers', that the host organisation or participant can choose from. These independent "brokers" collect payments and purchase carbon offsets and charge different prices per offset.

There are various reasons for these price differences, e.g.

- different approaches in defining the emission per trip, e.g. differentiated by the type of plane used on a certain route or not,
- different reactions to new scientific findings, e.g. factoring in the flying altitude,
- fluctuating market price for CO₂ equivalents.

UNON DCS, in their report of November 2007 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions by the UNON Division of Conference Services and Opportunities for Carbon Neutral Operations' has developed a comparative table analysing different providers, covering the business orientations (profit vs. non-profit) and approaches used (carbon sequestration, energy efficiency and/or renewable energy projects).

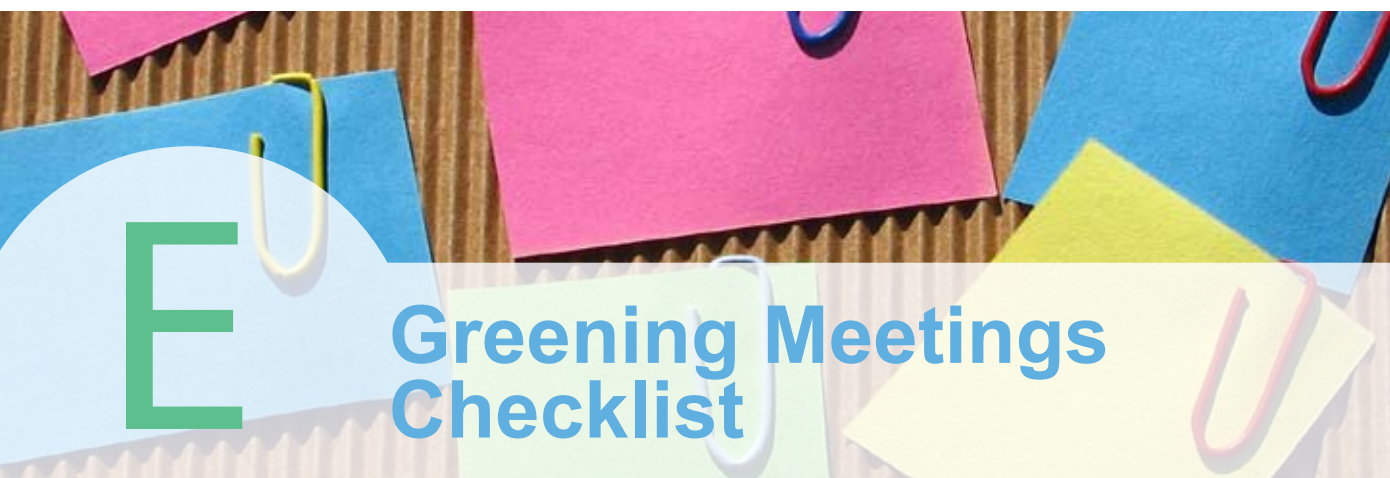
When comparing the brokers, their commitment to poverty alleviation and inclusion of social and further environmental criteria can also be important in the selection.

The 10th session of the GC/GMEF (UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum) held in Monaco in February 2008, was greened by UNEP through the support of the Prince Albert II Foundation in Monaco and the Barclays Bank. The total emissions generated from train/plane and local transport and from the energy consumption of the venue amounted to 1,040,591 tonnes of CO₂, which were offset buying CERs under the CDM and served to finance a gas recovery project in Argentina.



Section 2

Green Meetings: What to Do



This Greening Meetings Checklist provides a detailed set of recommendations for the organisers of small- and medium-sized meetings (up to 200 participants). It covers all relevant aspects of meeting organisation. Where a particular aspect (such as venue or accommodation) is not the responsibility of the organiser, but of the host country/organisation, these recommendations can be passed on. The checklist can be downloaded in word version from the SUN website and the ICLEI website at www.unep.fr/scp/sun and www.iclei.org/itc/greening.

Within each section, three sets of information are provided:

- **Core Recommendations** – these recommendations address the most important environmental impacts relating to that section, and should be applied by all.
- **Going Further** – these recommendations are aimed at organisers who wish to put in further effort to green their meeting, and address smaller or more complicated aspects.
- **Regional considerations** – as the opportunities and barriers for greening meetings will vary considerably from region to region, this section provides some guidance on how the recommendations might need to be adapted to suit the organiser's exact needs.

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E.1 Selecting the venue

The type of venue selected will clearly depend on the size of meeting. A small meeting for up to 30 people will probably not require the use of specialised meeting facilities. On the other hand a meeting for 200 participants will likely require some form of conference centre and this should be chosen with care.

The recommendations below principally focus on specialised meeting facilities, but certain aspects also apply to normal meeting rooms. One way to use these recommendations is to send them to possible venues asking them to tick the criteria they fulfil. This information can then be used to make the selection of venues. Ideally, they should be asked to provide supporting documentation.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Headquarters of IGOs, offices of regional commissions etc. should be chosen for the venue, rather than ad hoc locations or commercial establishments, thus reducing the need of staff to travel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Venues certified with a recognised green building rating system or another recognised environmental management system should be preferred wherever possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should have an environmental policy and action plan, ideally covering: sustainable procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation, and waste.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should have training course for staff on environmental duties in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should have good access (ideally within walking distance) to the main public transport connections and town centre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should be near to hotels where participants and speakers can stay or even provide accommodation facilities in the venue itself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If possible locally, all waste produced at the venue should be separated (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic) at source and sufficient, well-marked bins should be provided in both participant and staff areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If catering is provided by the venue, the facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the “ Catering ” section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Cleaning services for the venue should meet the recommendations provided in the “ Accommodation ” section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
It should be possible to regulate the temperature within the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The venue should have specific, energy management, waste reduction and water conservation programmes in place, either separately or as part of any environmental management programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Preference should be given to venues:		
• With green building standards, e.g. high insulation and efficient heating and cooling systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Designed to maximise the use of daylight (rooms, coffee areas, lunch areas and exhibition areas).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• With energy efficient lighting and other appliances installed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Supplied with green electricity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• With water-saving appliances in kitchens and toilets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should provide information to participants about the green aspects of the venue to inform and encourage guests' participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should reuse materials or donate them to charities (e.g. used linens or usable food).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, organic waste should be separately collected for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Vehicles operated by the venue should be efficient and low emission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

E.2 Accommodation

There can be significant differences in the environmental performance of different accommodation options in a city. The amount of choice in accommodation for participants will clearly depend on the city, but organisers should aim to identify and recommend the most appropriate places to stay.

One way to use the detailed recommendations in the Greening Meetings Checklist is to send them to possible hotels asking them to tick the criteria they fulfil. This information can then be used to make the selection of hotels. Ideally, they should be asked to provide supporting documentation. Then the hotels with the most recommendations ticked (prioritising the core recommendations) should be selected and recommended to participants. Special deals for participants can also be arranged with the selected hotels, which is a good incentive for hotels to comply with environmental requirements.

If resources are available, discuss with hotel operators the possibilities for improving the areas where the criteria cannot be fulfilled at the moment (i.e. not ticked in the checklist) – this would encourage them to improve their operations over time.

E.2.1 Management

The way in which a hotel is managed, and the commitment of the operators to environmental improvement is critical to reducing environmental impacts.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Hotels certified with a recognised Ecolabel or another recognised environmental management system should be preferred wherever possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should have an environmental policy and action plan, ideally covering green procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation waste, and communication to guests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should have training courses for staff on environmental duties in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should provide information in guest rooms about the green aspects of the hotel to inform and encourage guests' participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Catering facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the “Catering” section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The hotel should have specific waste reduction, energy management and water conservation programmes in place, either separately or as part of any environmental management programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

E.2.2 Location**Core recommendations:**

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The hotel should be located near public transportation and near conference facilities (preferably within walking distance).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The hotel should offer and coordinate group pick-up service for participants, when local transport is not an option.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

E.2.3 Energy efficiency & Water conservation

The energy and water that hotels use for their operations can be substantially reduced through the implementation of certain straightforward measures.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Guests should have the option of no second-day sheet and towel change to save laundry energy and water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guests and staff should be encouraged to reduce water use and turn off lights and other energy consuming devices with well-located signs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy efficient light-bulbs and systems should be standard, and lighting levels should be set to provide the minimum necessary for comfort, safety and accessibility. The use of natural light and ventilation when possible should be promoted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Facilities should be equipped with water-saving devices (e.g., tap and shower flow regulators; automatic shut-offs for faucets and showers; low-flush and dual-flush toilets).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Hot waters heaters and pipes should be properly insulated and maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The staircases in the hotel should be visible and have signs inviting guests to walk instead of taking the elevator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guests should be able to open windows and not be forced to use a technical air condition system.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Heating and air conditioning systems should be easy for guests to operate (and thus turn down).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hotel rooms should not be heated to above 20°C, or cooled to more than 6 degrees below the outside temperature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Water-using fixtures should have a regular maintenance programme to repair leaks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Hotels should indicate what further efforts they have taken to conserve water and energy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rain water and grey water use should be maximised in the hotel buildings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Key cards in hotels should be linked to energy appliances; as an example lights should switch off when people leave the room.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Motion-detector-equipped lighting systems should be installed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Water use for grounds maintenance should be reduced through conservation measures such as planting drought-tolerant vegetation and mulching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The building should have a good internal insulation so that less energy is wasted through overheated corridors and unoccupied rooms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Insulating covers should be installed on all indoor and outdoor swimming pools and hot tubs to reduce both energy and water use (i.e. evaporation).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Automatic controls should be in place for heating and cooling with levels set to the minimum necessary for comfort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Vehicles operated by the hotel should be efficient and low emission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
In tropical climates it may not be enough to cool hotel rooms by only 6°C. Local advice should be found on what is achievable.	

E.2.4 Waste & procurement

Large amounts of waste are generated in the operation of hotels from packaging and the use of consumables, to the provision of catering services, and many other areas of hotel operation.

E.2.4.A Procurement and packaging for hotel consumables

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Try to avoid the need for paper, and if used ensure that it is printed double sided. Paper products used by the hotel (including fine paper, computer paper, tissues, toilet paper, paper towels and paper for guests) should have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reusable items should be used to the extent possible. If disposable items are essential, try to ensure they are recyclable and appropriate recycling systems are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Products such as shampoo and soap should be purchased in bulk and provided in refillable dispensers. If not possible, the hotel should instruct housekeeping staff to not replace consumable amenities daily unless they are empty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provided appropriate recycling systems are in place, single-use products for guests (such as those available in mini-bars or complimentary items) should be supplied in recyclable packaging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Newspapers should be delivered to rooms only if requested and should not be wrapped in a plastic bag.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Measures should be taken to reduce paper use (e.g., short forms or computerised systems at check-in).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hotels should indicate what further efforts they have taken to minimise packaging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All products purchased by the hotel should be supplied in packaging containing a high percentage of recycled content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Packaging should not contain PVC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guests laundry containers should be reusable (e.g. baskets).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests.	
Where recycling systems for packaging are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on ensuring packaging is minimised to the extent possible, and, where possible, that biodegradable packaging is used.	

E.2.4.B Waste collection and disposal**Core recommendations:**

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced by the hotel should be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic), and sufficient, well-marked bins should be provided in both guest and staff areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The hotel should reuse materials or donate it to charities (e.g. used linens and usable food).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, hotels should separately collect organic waste for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
Where separated collection and recycling/reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation (see sections above).	
If waste cannot be centrally collected from the hotel, hotel staff should be encouraged to themselves deliver the waste separately to collection depots.	

E.2.5. Cleaning services (also applicable for venue and catering)

The chemicals used in cleaning may have negative effects on both human health and the environment. Significant improvements can be made through selecting appropriate cleaning products and reducing the use of chemicals.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The hotel should practice environmentally cleaning. This should include ensuring that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hotel cleaning staff or private cleaning contractors are trained in environmentally friendly cleaning practices. This training should cover cleaning agents, methods and dosage, equipment and machines used; waste management; and aspects of health, safety and the environment. A record of these training measures should be provided. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of disinfectant should be minimised and automated dosage used. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the extent possible, ecolabelled cleaning products should be used. Where ecolabelled products are unavailable, they should at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not be classified as potentially harmful to human health or the environment according to national/ regional classification systems. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be readily biodegradable. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not contain EDTA, NTA or APEOs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not contain more than 25% by weight of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not contain more than 0.5% by weight of phosphorus. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	

E.3 Catering

Most meetings require some form of catering - from informal snacks to formal dinners. Catering covers all aspects of the provision of meals and refreshments for participants, including procurement of foods, handling of the waste produced by catering services and the traffic generated by their transportation.

The recommendations presented here are intended both for organisers who carry out the catering themselves and for those who are contracting out the catering services to a private company or the venue. If they are contracted out the organiser can request that the company follows these recommendations within the contract.

E.3.1 Waste

The consumption of food and drinks consumption may generate large amounts of paper, plastics, organic and other waste.

E.3.1.A Cutlery, crockery, glasses, paper and linen

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Avoid the use of disposable items by using reusable dishes, cutlery, glassware and linens (i.e., no paper, plastic or polystyrene cups, no paper napkins or table cover, no plastic cutlery, and no disposable doilies); avoid aluminium foil.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If disposable items are essential, try to ensure they contain a high content of recycled or plant-based material, are recyclable, and appropriate recycling systems are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid the use of single use bottles for juice and water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paper products used for catering should have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Avoid unnecessary disposable items (e.g., plastic straws).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For bigger meetings, provide recyclable bottles for participants to refill with drinking water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For boat tours or other functions where breakable dishes are not permitted, reusable acrylic dishware could be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Print menus on recycled, totally chlorine free (TCF – i.e. unbleached) paper, or write them on blackboards using chalk.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests. Also use textile products to the extent possible where recycled paper is not available.	

E.3.1.B Packaging**Core recommendations:**

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Avoid single-serve containers for food and condiments (e.g., milk, cream, artificial sweeteners, butter, ketchup, vinegar, mustard, jams, salt, pepper, and breakfast cereals). Use bulk dispensers or jars also for water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provided appropriate recycling systems are in place, products should be supplied in re-usable or recyclable packaging or alternatively the supplier should take back all packaging and guarantee its recycling or reuse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Ask suppliers to indicate what efforts they have taken to minimise packaging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Request that catering items are supplied in packaging containing a high percentage of recycled content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Packaging should not contain PVC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
Where recycling systems for packaging are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on ensuring packaging is minimised to the extent possible, and, where possible, that biodegradable packaging is used.	
In some areas local health authorities do not accept bulk dispensers and reusable containers for catering consumables. In these cases convey this information to guests. The food service organisation should work with local health authorities to overcome any regulatory hurdles.	

E.3.1.C Waste collection and disposal**Core recommendations:**

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced during catering should be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/instructions – particularly in kitchens and in dining areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Inform caterers of the exact number of participants and re-evaluate quantity needed during the meeting to help avoid waste.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Collect oil and fat and provide it to respective users and/or use for fuelling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where an external catering company is installed, they should be responsible for waste collection and disposal during the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Donate surplus food to non-profit organisations, (e.g. Berliner Tafel: http://www.tafel.de).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, separately collect organic waste for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
Where separated collection and recycling/reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation (see sections above).	
If waste cannot be centrally collected from the venue, the catering company/staff should be encouraged to themselves deliver the waste separately to collection depots.	
In some locations (e.g. for some of the large UN compounds) a compost system on site can be considered.	

E.3.2 Food & Drink

The environmental impacts of the food and drink we consume can vary hugely depending on what it is, where and how it was produced. Special attention should be given to local and seasonal produce. If possible, encourage organic products as well as vegetarian, healthy slow food and fair trade products.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Use locally grown and produced food and drinks. Menus should reflect the seasonal produce of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use organically produced food and drink if possible. Products should be certified as meeting regional or international organic standards to the extent possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide fair trade labelled products (such as coffee, tea, and sugar) as the standard when available, accepting potentially higher prices. Products should be independently certified as fair trade. They should either carry the internationally recognised fair trade product label (http://www.fairtrade.net), or be supplied by a company registered with IFAT (the International Fair Trade Association – http://www.ifat.org).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If working with a private catering contractor, set a specific percentage of products which should be local, organic, and/or fair trade.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimise the quantity of meat products offered, and always offer a vegetarian option (the production of meat produces considerably more CO ₂ than non-meat products).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use drinking water from the tap when possible. It is recommended that drinking water be served in carafes/ jugs instead of bottled water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage caterers to list any local product on the menu.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Inform the caterer in time about the exact number of participants, to avoid waste of food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Where marine and aquaculture products are offered, these should be caught/produced using sustainable methods. If available, use products certified with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or similar label. The WWF has also produced a number of country-specific buying guides:	<input type="checkbox"/>	

http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/marine/our_solutions/sustainable_fishing/sustainable_seafood/seafood_guides/index.cfm . Another useful resource is http://www.seafoodchoices.com .		
Check that menus proposed by caterers do not include threatened or overexploited species appearing in the IUCN Red List (http://www.iucnredlist.org) or listed in qualified international and national bodies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where livestock products are to be used, use those produced according to high welfare standards, and certified as such.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
It is not possible to provide certain guidance on whether to use local non-organic or non-local organic produce, as this depends on local circumstances, distance and method of transport, type of product, and other factors. Ideally, try to use local, organic produce or take local advice on the best option.	
As the availability of local, organic and fair trade products will vary considerably from region to region it is a good idea to check availability and prices with a local catering supplier and set appropriate target percentages (e.g. X% of vegetable/dairy/meat products must be organic).	
In certain regions food produced under “integrated production systems” may be more easily available than organic produce. This can be offered as an alternative.	
For guidelines on animal welfare standards and certification systems, the World Organisation for Animal Health is a good reference (http://www.oie.int)	
It is necessary to consider if there are any cultural or religious considerations to be respected when setting menus.	
Where tap water is not drinkable, ensure that the guidelines for packaging are followed.	

E.3.3 Other

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Catering premises should be cleaned in an environmentally sound manner. For advice on this aspect see the “Accommodation” section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The catering company should have an environmentally policy and action plan in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Encourage the use of water and energy efficient kitchen appliances (e.g. appliances carrying the ENERGY STAR Ecolabel, the EU energy/water label (classification A), or other regional standard).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage catering companies and food & drink suppliers to use efficient and low emission vehicles and to address the efficiency of transportation routes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
It will likely be difficult to influence the types of kitchen appliances used. If catering companies will be using their own equipment, you may try to identify a company which uses energy and water efficient appliances.	
Both the availability of and recognised standards for efficient and low emission vehicles will vary considerably by region. In Europe the EURO 4 (for light-duty vehicles) and EURO IV (for heavy-duty) standards can be used.	

E.4 Setting up the meeting

The way in which the meeting itself is planned and implemented will have a substantial effect on its overall environmental impact - from how registration and communication with participants is handled before the meeting, to the materials participants receive during the meeting, and the way the meeting rooms are set up.

For logistical issues, the organiser will need to check with the venue early on to make sure that the recommendations are achievable. Depending on the venue, the meeting organisers may have limited influence on the equipment used or systems in place. In these cases, the recommendations may be discussed directly with the venue operators if time allows.

E.4.1. Communication with participants and registration

Greening a meeting begins before participants have even left home - both in terms of the procedures used for communication, and in making participants aware of the green nature of the meeting and their own responsibilities.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Use electronic means (e.g. email, website), if they are appropriate and available, rather than printed materials for pre-meeting (and follow up) communications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Set up an electronic registration system that allows participants to submit forms and pictures, if needed, via email or through a web service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Encourage participants to use more sustainable ways to travel to the meeting by providing the following information:</i>		
• For shorter trips, prefer train to car/coach and plane.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• When train is not an option, prefer car/coach to plane.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• When driving by car, use hybrid cars if possible, and share the drive with other participants. In any case, prefer smaller cars.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• If flying is the only option, choose direct flights when possible; prefer economy class to business and business to first class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Offset your costs of travel (See Section D – Climate neutrality at meetings).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide links to public transport websites.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a platform for participants to communicate and organise sharing of cars, buses and/or taxis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Provide advice to participants on “green behaviour” by email about what delegates could do before and during the meeting. This could include (depending on for example accommodation arrangements):		
• Only print what you need before travelling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Bring your own pen and paper to the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Travel by foot, bike or public transport as much as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Stay in one of the recommended hotels, which operate in an environmentally responsible manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Turn off any lights, TV, air conditioner or heater when you leave your hotel room for the day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• If the hotel offers this service, take the energy-saving option of not having sheets and towels changed every day. And make sure it is enforced. If not talk to the hotel managers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Recycle your waste: bottles, cans, paper, etc. where this option exists.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure that the information on your greening efforts is provided electronically prior to and after the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

E.4.2 Materials for the meeting (including conference secretariat)

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Any paper used (promotional material, programme, signs...) should be 100% recycled, with a minimum of 65% of post consumer waste content, and totally or elementary chlorine free.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any necessary material should be printed at the venue/ location of the meeting rather than shipping it from the headquarters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Participant bags/packs, banners, gifts and other relevant items should, as far as possible, be produced locally, using sustainably harvested organic or recycled material, and should be reusable. PVC should be avoided as well as products containing potentially harmful chemicals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any food products provided as gifts should follow the recommendations included in the “ Catering ” section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pens should be provided only upon request. They should be made of a high content of recycled material and be refillable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Only strictly necessary material should be included in participants packs. Send relevant documentation by email beforehand (see above), and have either a restricted number of spare copies of documents available, or printing/copying facilities available on request only at the venue for participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Participants should be encouraged to keep their conference material until the end of the meeting; asking them to sign upon receipt of the material can serve as incentive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All materials produced for the meeting (such as banners, posters, signs, place cards) should be designed and written in a generic way instead of specific way, to allow them to be reused for other meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid glossy publications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Consider organising a paperless meeting. Participants can be issued with laptops and given lessons on how to minimise paper in terms of documents, reports and publications. Special software is available which allows delegates to share and amend papers during meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Provide participants with a CD or USB stick with all the conference material, to avoid printing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For external printing contracts, choose environmentally responsible printing companies which do not use environmentally persistent chemicals and promote responsible practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If possible to influence, the electronic equipment (printers, photocopiers, computers etc.) used by the secretariat should be ENERGY STAR® certified. Recycled printer cartridges should also be used if available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use a computer-based fax programme to send faxes electronically.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use reusable dry-mark erasable boards or blackboards instead of paper flip charts. Ensure “non-toxic” markers are used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Flowers and plants should be purchased locally or regionally and be organically produced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Green ornaments should not be cut flowers, but the whole plant. In meetings that last more than one day, plants should be chosen according to the external conditions where the plant will be placed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reusable and recyclable accreditation badges should be provided. At the end of the conference, a place for participants to recycle the badges should be provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider whether gifts are necessary at all. Often gifts are thrown away or unused and are therefore a waste of resources. If necessary, therefore try to provide something useful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider gifts conveying a green or socially responsible message, such as a tree planted in the recipient's name, or local artisan products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests.	
Where separated collection and recycling/reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation (see sections above).	

E.4.3. Setting up and running the meeting

As long as the venue and meeting has been set up appropriately, good environmental performance should be ensured and participants and staff clear on their responsibilities. These recommendations apply also to the management of the conference secretariat.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Adjust the start and end time of a meeting/meeting to the schedules of environmentally sound transportation means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
At the beginning of the meeting remind both staff and participants that they should follow certain rules to help to green the meeting, and ensure the minimum environmental impacts, including:		
• Print and photocopy on both sides, and keep font size to a minimum (whilst ensuring readability), and minimise the use of colour copies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Collect paper that has been used on one side only in collector trays, and reuse for printing and notepaper.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Turn off lights and equipment when not in use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced by the secretariat should be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic) using the bins provided. This should include the separated collection of used photocopier and printer cartridges and batteries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure that the energy saving features of all electronic equipment are enabled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
There should be numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/instructions – in both participant and staff areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a dedicated area for participants to return material that can be re-used (such as delegate badges).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimise the use of decorative elements such as flowers, banners etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduce paper waste at participant registration - e.g., short registration forms, computerised systems (see ' Communication with participants and registration ').	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Signs should be posted reminding speakers and participants to turn off equipment (such as projectors and laptops), and lighting when not in use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Meeting and conference rooms should be adapted to the local seasonal conditions and not be cooled to more than 6 degrees below the outside temperature or heated to above 20°C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
To minimise paper use offer IT services to participants for the electronic copying of data, and make presentations available for download following the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Set up a stand (e.g., in the exhibition area) to communicate to participants the green aspects of the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If possible and culturally accepted, prefer remote translation options, to avoid the need for translators to travel to the meeting location.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A portable office approach that allows staff to access their files through a secure connection considerably reduces the amount of background material staff needs to carry with them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
If waste cannot be centrally collected from the venue, the secretariat staff should be encouraged to themselves deliver the waste separately to collection depots.	

E.5 Local transport

Over the course of a meeting participants will likely undertake a number of trips within the local region or city - travel between the arrival/departure points (airport, train station), the venue, the hotel and the town centre. Although not as significant as international travel, the length of these local trips and the type of transportation used have an impact on both greenhouse gas emissions and on urban air pollution from vehicle exhausts.

Meeting organisers are able to influence this both through considering transport connections when selecting venue and hotels, and through providing appropriate information for participants.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Consider proximity and public transport connections when selecting the venue and hotels, as this has a major bearing on local transportation impacts (see “ Selecting the venue ” and “ Accommodation ” sections).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide clear instructions to participants on appropriate public transport and/or walking arrangements from point of arrival/departure (railway station, airport) to the venue, accommodation, town centre etc. Also provide public transport maps. These should be provided by email before the meeting and can be included in participants’ packs, and displayed in the venue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a member of staff or local volunteer to accompany participants from hotels/stations to the venue by foot or local transport.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If public transport is not available organise a shuttle service or car-share scheme for travel between the hotel, venue and/or point of arrival/departure (railway station, airport).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If organising shared transport is not feasible ask the hotels to organise joint pick-up of participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Participants could be provided with complimentary public transport tickets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Try to select meeting start/finish times that allow participants to travel easily using public transport.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Organise for bicycles to be available for free/rent to participants and ensure secure parking facilities for bikes are provided at the venue and hotels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Try to organise discounts for participants on public transport (especially for long meetings).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contract a bus shuttle for the participants and speakers with a low emission fleet and employing ecological driving techniques.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
The most appropriate local transportation arrangements will heavily depend on the location. The quality and reach of public transportation systems, as well as the levels of safety for walking or cycling will have a significant influence. The priority should first be on keeping distances between arrival/departure point, venue and accommodation as small as possible.	
Both the availability of and recognised standards for efficient and low emission vehicles will vary considerably by region.	

E.6 Exhibitions

For meetings with associated trade fairs or exhibitions, it is important to have a strategy to address the impacts of these activities, as they are very visible to participants and can create a great deal of waste. Organisers should communicate with exhibitors early to inform them of the meeting's green strategy and ways in which they can reduce their environmental impact.

Core recommendations:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
When the meeting/exhibition is announced, inform potential exhibitors of the conditions of participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Exhibitors should be obliged to (in the conditions of their registration):		
• Use decorations, carpets and display materials which are made of recycled materials and/or can be reused for future meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Minimise the use of lighting and other energy requirements at the stand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced must be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

• Use paper products which have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Limit the amount of publications and handouts. Instead collect business cards, post a sign-up sheet or provide a USB (universal serial bus) port for those seeking more information or product samples.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Provide promotional items which, as far as possible, have been produced using environmentally friendly materials such as organic unbleached cotton or recycled material, and should be reusable. PVC should be avoided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Use packaging which is minimal, and reusable and/or recyclable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Make an effort to collect and reuse publications discarded by participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Avoid sending material by air if possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmentally friendly materials should be used in the construction of the base exhibition stands, including legally and sustainable harvested timber, and recycled materials. All materials used should be recyclable as a minimum.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Consider hosting a competition or providing a discount for the most sustainable exhibition design.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainable) harvested forests.	

E.7 Assessment and monitoring form

A Word version of this form can be downloaded from the SUN website

As part of ongoing efforts to monitor and improve the environmental performance of UN organisations around the world, the SUN team would be grateful for:

- Your feedback on this Guide
- Quantified data collected on the environmental performance of your meeting

Please take some time to complete the questions below. We would also be interested to receive completed checklists – the “notes” column can be used both for your own notes, and for comments on the recommendation itself. This form can also be downloaded from the website.

Completed forms and monitoring data should be sent to sustainable.un@unep.fr

General

1. Name of organisation:
2. Contact Name:
Tel:
Email:
3. Name of meeting:
4. Location of meeting:
5. Number of participants:
6. Geographical origin of participants:
7. Elements of the conference organisation outside the responsibility of the UN organisation:

Assessment of the guide

1. How useful did you find this guide in greening your meeting? Please give a rating between 1 (very useful) and 5 (not useful).
.....
2. Did you find any of the recommendations difficult to understand? If yes, which?
.....
3. Did you find any of the recommendations difficult to implement? If yes, which recommendations and why?
.....
4. Are there any recommendations which you feel are missing from the guide?
.....
5. Are there any improvements you would suggest to the guide (e.g. relating to the structure, language, content)?
.....
6. Please include any other comments.
.....

Monitoring data

Please provide as much quantified information as possible covering the following indicators:

- **Resources consumed (by weight):** paper, water, food etc., together with the percentage by weight which can be considered sustainable (e.g. recycled paper, organic or fair trade food, tap water etc. – according to the recommendations outlined in the Greening Meetings Checklist).
- **Waste generation and disposal:** the total quantity of waste generation, ideally divided by type of waste (plastic, paper etc.) and the percentage represented by the different disposal options – reuse, recycling, compost, landfill/incineration.
- **Energy consumption:** Total energy consumed, by fraction - gas/electricity/oil/coal/biomass, together with the percentage (if any) of electricity generated by renewable sources.
- **Travel:** Overview of the distance travelled and method use (air, rail, road) by participants.

Sustainable UN

Sustainable United Nations (SUN), is a UNEP initiative that provides support to UN and other organisations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and improve their sustainability overall.



SUN was established in response to the call from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon at the World Environment Day 2007 (5 June), to all UN agencies, funds and programmes to reduce their carbon footprints and “go green”. This call was echoed in October 2007 in a decision of the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB/2007/2, annex II) to adopt the UN Climate Neutral Strategy, which commits all UN organisations to move towards climate neutrality. SUN is in this context working with the UN Environment Management Group – the UN body coordinating common environmental work within UN – to provide guidance, and develop tools and models for emission reduction within organisations.

SUN is using a “whole-organisation” approach in identification of sources and causes for emissions and opportunities for reduced emissions and improved sustainability. In this way opportunities for improvements are typically found within one of the three major focus areas for SUN:

- Physical assets: building, equipment, vehicles...
- Management processes: procurement, travel, management systems...
- Organisational Culture: day-to-day office behaviour and “corporate” culture, green meetings...

SUN operates in synergy with existing initiatives and networks such as the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative, the High Level Committee on Management Procurement Network, the UN Global compact, or the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement and many others.

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments as well as national and regional local government organisations that have made a commitment to sustainable development. World-wide over 1,050 metropolises, cities, towns, regions, and their associations comprise ICLEI's growing membership.



ICLEI also provides technical consulting, training, event organisation and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. Our basic premise is that locally designed initiatives can provide an effective and cost-efficient way to achieve local, national, and global sustainability objectives.

ICLEI was one of the first event organisers to work on greening issues, launching its Greening Events Initiative in 2003. This Initiative is mainly aimed at motivating and supporting local governments towards greening events in their role as co-organisers of conferences and (local) events, as the location of huge public events, as providers of licences for private events, as facilitators of co-operation between local actors and – importantly – as role models for many private actors to follow.

Within this Initiative ICLEI's Climate Legacy programme seeks to offset emissions related to events by collecting carbon offsetting payments to compensate travel-related CO₂ emissions; the money generated through the ICLEI Climate Legacy programme serves to finance (municipal) CO₂ reduction projects. For more information visit: www.iclei.org/itc/greening. ICLEI is keen to join forces at the international level with organisations such as UNEP, to help move the greening events agenda forward.

ICLEI has also over a decade of experience working in the field of sustainable procurement aimed at utilising the vast purchasing power of the public sector to help drive the market for more sustainable products and services. Incorporating greening aspects into publicly organised events can make a huge difference to the consumption-related impacts of these events – from the paper used and food provided to the method of travel. For more on the work of ICLEI's Sustainable Procurement team please visit: www.iclei-europe.org/procurement

The International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications



The International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) is a forum and network of managers of international organizations employing conference and language services providers - mainly translators and interpreters. Its membership includes organisations of the UN system and other bodies, such as European Union institutions, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the African Development Bank.

Every year the IAMLADP annual meeting is hosted by a member organisation. The United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) in New York is the permanent Chair of IAMLADP. The IAMLADP Executive Committee, which attends to business through the New York-based Secretariat between annual meetings, includes the chairpersons of three working groups: training; services for conferences, languages and publications; and technology for conferences, languages and publications; as well as the hosts of the previous and the current annual meetings.

Membership in IAMLADP is offered to intergovernmental and supra-national organisations with language and/or conference-servicing components. Universities are invited to participate through its Universities Contact Group or the International Annual Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology JIAMCATT. IAMLADP's goal is to serve its members - and through them the international community - by providing a results-oriented framework for harmonizing approaches and recommending best practices and innovative solutions in the areas falling within its mandate.

The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) helps governments, local authorities and decision-makers in business and industry to develop and implement policies and practices focusing on sustainable development.

The Division works to promote:

- sustainable consumption and production,
- the efficient use of renewable energy,
- adequate management of chemicals,
- the integration of environmental costs in development policies.

The Office of the Director, located in Paris, coordinates activities through:

- **The International Environmental Technology Centre** - IETC (Osaka, Shiga), which implements integrated waste, water and disaster management programmes, focusing in particular on Asia.
- **Sustainable Consumption and Production** (Paris), which promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns as a contribution to human development through global markets.
- **Chemicals** (Geneva), which catalyses global actions to bring about the sound management of chemicals and the improvement of chemical safety worldwide.
- **Energy** (Paris), which fosters energy and transport policies for sustainable development and encourages investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- **OzonAction** (Paris), which supports the phase-out of ozone depleting substances in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to ensure implementation of the Montreal Protocol.
- **Economics and Trade** (Geneva), which helps countries to integrate environmental considerations into economic and trade policies, and works with the finance sector to incorporate sustainable development policies.

UNEP DTIE activities focus on raising awareness, improving the transfer of knowledge and information, fostering technological cooperation and partnerships, and implementing international conventions and agreements.

For more information,
see www.unep.fr

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The United Nations organisations are responsible for an impressive number of meetings each year, ranging from small meetings of 10 people, up to large events with several thousand participants. These meetings take place in all parts of the world and in regions varying greatly in terms of environmental priorities, experience and infrastructure.

While representing an incredible occasion to network, exchange ideas and learn meetings also have negative environmental implications - arising for example from participants travelling; heating and cooling the venue; the materials provided to participants; to the catering for their meals and accommodation. By greening their meetings organisations can achieve substantial cost savings, impress their participants and deliver a very concrete and tangible sustainability message. Greening your meeting will reduce the direct environmental impact of your meeting, but will also leave a positive and lasting legacy to the local community and to the participants.

This guide is designed to assist organisers and hosts of small- to medium-sized meetings in including green considerations as early as possible in the preparation of the event. It describes the issues to consider in the planning phase and provides a very simple and concrete check list to pick and choose concrete actions to carry out.



SUSTAINABLE EVENTS GUIDE

Give your large event
a small footprint



UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE AT NAIROBI
The UN Headquarters in Africa

• I • C • L • E • I
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

IAM
LADP

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and Mr. Raj Liberhan, Director of the India Habitat Centre

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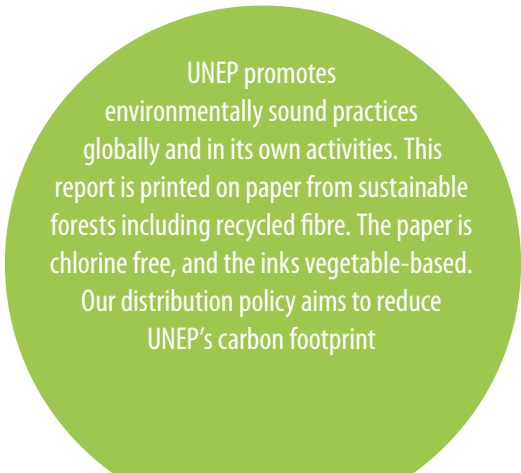
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Sustainable Events Guide

Give your large event a small footprint



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE AT NAIROBI**
The UN Headquarters in Africa

I.C.L.E.I
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

IAM 
 **LADP**

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR-GENERAL, UNON

Since its founding in 1996, the United Nations Office at Nairobi, a major conference facility and venue for numerous meetings every year, has been at the forefront of efforts to make meetings as sustainable as possible. UNON pursues that goal through many means such as providing shuttle buses for meeting participants, requiring caterers to comply with solid waste management standards, recycling unused publications and donating them to Kenyan schools, and recycling all plastic, paper and other solid waste through no-fee contracts with private sector recycling companies.

With the aim of enabling others to adopt its good practices, in 2008 UNON collaborated with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to produce the first ever guide to green meetings published by a United Nations organisation. The guide was launched at the 2008 International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) and made available on the websites of UNEP and other United Nations bodies. In 2008 UNON Conference Services Division was the first to obtain ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management System (EMS) certification for sustainable print and digital publications and services. For many years now, UNON Conference Services Division has been supporting paper-smart meetings, saving many trees and millions of litres of water.

At the 2010 IAMLADP there was talk of expanding the green meetings guide to encompass conferences of over two thousand participants, and at the 2011 IAMLADP it was agreed that a guide for such conferences was needed, both for United Nations bodies and for other major international organisations.

UNON is pleased to announce that it has responded to the call from IAMLADP by producing, along with UNEP and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), the “Sustainable Events Guide”, which provides much valuable information on how to keep large scale meetings as green as they can be. We trust that you and your organization will find the Guide to be innovative and informative, and we believe that it will become a must-have tool for those responsible for the planning and conduct of large-scale conferences and other events.

On behalf of UNON I wish to thank all those who participated in the preparation of the Sustainable Events Guide.

Sincerely,



Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde, Director-General, UNON

FOREWORD

Meetings and other events are standard business practice within the United Nations for the simple reason that they are often the most time-efficient and effective way of sharing thinking, identifying solutions and reaching agreement. At the same time, however, they can leave a significant environmental footprint – through consuming energy and water, generating waste, polluting the air and water, and contributing to climate change by creating greenhouse gas emissions.

Meetings and events will continue due to their many benefits. The purpose of this guide is, therefore, to provide a tool to help event planners maximise the positive impacts and minimise the potential negative ones in the course of planning and delivering meetings. It is a useful tool beyond the UN and can add value to event planning in the government, NGO, public and private sectors as well.

The United Nations hosts large-scale annual events as well as one-time specialty-focused ones. Due to the recurring nature of events as part of the UN business practice, and the number of people attending UN meetings, the Organisation has an opportunity to be an international leader of green meetings by managing them in as sustainable a manner as possible. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his priorities for 2007 and 2012 emphasised that the Organization should take steps to use resources more efficiently, such as by increasing energy efficiency and minimising waste. Managing meetings and events in a sustainable manner is one way to meet this challenge.

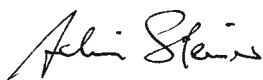
The benefits of incorporating sustainability considerations into event planning can be manifold. Sustainability considerations lead to environmental improvements, financial advantages, creating a positive image for the event planners, and social benefits for the local community. They can also trigger secondary positive effects such as innovation in the marketplace, thereby stimulating new product growth; and by raising awareness and inspiring change they can create long-term benefits for the broader community.

To create valuable guidance on how to achieve these benefits for event planning, UNEP formed a partnership with three other organisations: IAMLADP, ICLEI, and UNON. Each organisation brings their particular contribution to the partnership. IAMLADP brings its experience working with an extensive network of international organisation managers that use conference locations and services worldwide, ICLEI has experience in guiding local governments to green their national and local events and UNON has experience as a hub for conference services. While this guide was originally developed to satisfy the needs of the four partner organisations, it is written in a manner so as to be useful to other organisations as well.

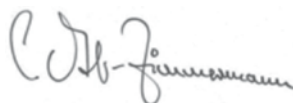
The present guide follows on from the success of its predecessor, The Green Meeting Guide 2009: Roll out the Green Carpet for your Participants. While the 2009 guide focused on small to medium-sized meetings with up to 200

participants, this edition covers larger indoor events but does not go into detail about the additional infrastructure that must be built to accommodate them (e.g., public transport, accommodation, city modifications). This guide also expands on the previous one by defining a “sustainable” event, and including social as well as environmental considerations. A key aspect to recognise is that large events are slightly different to smaller ones in that they offer the opportunity to significantly influence change – in the marketplace, ecology and society – and thus leave a positive legacy.

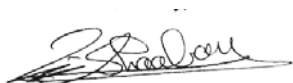
There are many examples of sustainably managed events, both in the UN and externally. This guide builds on these examples by making available relevant criteria and guidance. We hope it will help those interested in moving towards more responsible event management and that sustainability thinking will infiltrate event management worldwide making “sustainable” the “norm” of event planning globally.



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Under-Secretary-General
Executive Director
United Nations
Environment Programme (UNEP)



Mr Konrad Otto-Zimmermann
Secretary-General
ICLEI – Local Governments
for Sustainability



Mr Shaaban M. Shaaban
Under-Secretary-General
Department for General Assembly
and Conference Management
United Nations
Chair – International Annual
Meeting on Language
Arrangements, Documentation and
Publications (IAMLADP)



Ms Sahle Work-Zewde
Under-Secretary-General
Director-General
United Nations Office at Nairobi
(UNON)

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS GUIDE

The Sustainable Events Guide 2012 has been developed as a follow-up to the Green Meeting Guide 2009: Roll out the Green Carpet for your Participants. The decision to do this newer edition was taken to meet the request from organisers of events that were not covered in the 2009 version.

While the 2009 version provides general guidelines and checklists on how to green meetings of up to 200 participants, this 2012 edition builds on that information by broadening its scope to cover larger indoor events, and social and environmental considerations. Some of the information in the 2009 guide is repeated in this guide where relevant to larger gatherings.

While the impetus for creating this guide was to assist IAMLADP members to organise more sustainable events, it has been written in such a manner that it can also be applied to events carried out by other organisations such as governments, member States, the public and private sectors and event planners. These guidelines are particularly useful for those taking their first steps in the field of event sustainability, but also provide inspiration and a new perspective for those with experience and who have more ambitious aspirations.

This guide draws on long-standing practical experience and offers organisers a wealth of concrete, easily understandable and accessible advice including on management issues, sector-specific recommendations, and action-oriented checklists.

This Sustainable Events Guide consists of six sections that can be used separately; we encourage event planners and organisers to familiarise themselves with the entire publication, however, since all sections are inter-linked.

The sections cover the following areas:

Section 1: Sustainable events as opportunity for change – an introduction to the concept of sustainable events and the benefits these can bring to event organisers and other stakeholders involved.

Section 2: Managing and communicating sustainable events – guidance on management and communication aspects of sustainable events, with a special focus on the engagement of relevant stakeholders.

Section 3: Implementing sustainable events – a summary of the main conference areas and the actions that can be taken to reduce potential negative impacts and increase benefits (with a special focus on venue



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selection, marketing and communication, accommodation, transport, exhibiting and catering). This section also covers recommendations on how to embed social criteria throughout event preparation and implementation (small local business support, social integration, food waste, etc.).

Section 4: [Climate neutral and climate friendly events](#) – an overview on the topic of carbon offsets and proposals for calculating and offsetting the remaining greenhouse gas emissions generated by an event.

Section 5: [Reporting on sustainable events](#) – guidelines on how to report on an event's sustainability measures.

Section 6: [Sustainable Events Checklists](#) – detailed sustainable recommendations for the day-to-day organisation of an event.

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1. SUSTAINABLE EVENTS AS OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE

i A sustainable event is one designed, organised and implemented in a way that minimises potential negative impacts and leaves a beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved.¹

Any gathering of a large number of people can have a potential negative impact on the air, soil, water, resources and people. This includes not only the location where the event takes place but also far beyond – participants may consume natural resources such as materials, energy and water, generate waste, create local air and water pollution, and contribute to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions.

By taking sustainability planning into consideration, event organisers have the opportunity to not only to minimise potential negative

¹ Adapted from the Green Meeting Guide 2009 and based on the principles developed at the ICLEI Greening Events Symposium in Barcelona, Spain, September 2004.

impacts but also, given the large number of stakeholders involved, concretely influence change by leaving a positive legacy and hopefully inspiring those involved to live more sustainably.

1.1 What is a sustainable event?

The first question you need to ask yourself is whether the event is necessary. Is it possible to obtain the same results by alternative design? For instance, can you hold smaller meetings in different regions in combination with video conferencing, thus reducing the need for long-distance travel? Or, is it possible to plan the event back-to-back with another larger one so that resources can be shared and the need to travel reduced? After exploring the options and finding that the event does indeed need to take place, then the following qualities should be incorporated in the event design:

- an accessible and inclusive setting for all
- a safe and secure atmosphere
- minimal negative impacts on the environment
- encourages healthy living
- promotes responsible sources
- leaves a positive legacy
- delivers excellent customer experience
- encourages more sustainable behaviour

(adapted from the London 2012: Sustainability guidelines — events)



A Sustainable Event Balances Environmental, Social and Economic Responsibilities

Environmental responsibilities such as low-emission transport and mobility, waste reduction, reuse and recycling, water and energy efficiency, exclusion of dangerous and hazardous substances and material, climate targets, etc.

Economic responsibilities such as savings through increased efficiency, avoidance of corruption, sensible and transparent public procurement, quality of goods, boosting innovation, job creation, profitability, responsible accounting, sustainable growth, etc.

Social responsibilities such as fair use of human resources and a healthy and safe workplace for all involved, respecting human rights, complying with international labour rights standards, inclusion of minorities, respecting diversity, attention to equal opportunities, sensitivity to cultural or religious groups encouraging involvement >>

>>

of the local community, ensuring accessibility to the event, tracking product supply chains to ensure ethical production and fair trade agreements, sourcing goods and services locally and employing local people, etc.

(adapted from the Triple Bottom Line Approach, Green Meeting Industry Council [GMIC] ²)

1.2 Why organise a sustainable event?

Organising sustainable events not only reduces their environmental impact, but can also benefit the main actors involved. Such benefits include:

Financial advantages – Conserving energy, reducing waste, purchasing local products and simply consuming less - all can result in money saved. Despite a sometimes higher investment of resources (financial or human) to research new systems or invest in new tools, applying sustainability principles can bring immediate savings (e.g., by printing less material and having less waste to collect). They can also have long-term financial benefits, due to the more efficient use of resources and easier access to credit lines and sponsors.



GOOD PRACTICE: RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND COST SAVINGS

The 2010 International AIDS Conference held in Vienna, Austria, and organised by the International AIDS Society, attracted more than 19.000 participants but impressively saved:

- US\$ 15,000 by not printing invitation programmes
- US\$ 18,000 by not printing general information booklets
- US\$ 20,000 by printing abstract books only upon order (instead of printing stock)
- US\$ 500,000 by not providing shuttle buses (based on the AIDS 2008 transportation budget) and encouraging the use of public transport, by offering a 30% discount on ticket prices of public transport
- US\$ 50,000 by not having to buy water for delegates (based on the AIDS 2008 water budget) in favour of tap water

Total saved compared to previous conferences: US\$ 603,000

<http://www.aids2010.org/>

Positive reputation and improved image – Promoting the fact that you are organising or hosting a sustainable event will raise the profile of the event, attract participants that are becoming increasingly aware of sustainability issues and potentially engage the media's attention. It may also be appreciated by the general public as well as partners and potential donors.

² The Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) is a global community dedicated to sustainability in the meetings and events industry, through education but also by spearheading research, policy and standards. The GMIC has led the development of numerous sustainability standards and metrics that are endorsed by the industry as a whole. As a global non-profit association, the GMIC has member representation in over 20 countries.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE HOST — COPENHAGEN

As a result of the very successful sustainability programme at the Climate Change Conference COP15/CMP5, held in Copenhagen, Danish tourism authorities refer to Copenhagen as the Capital of Sustainable Meetings. Sustainability is now a clear differentiator for their branding and marketing actions.

<http://www.visitdenmark.com/international/en-gb/menu/mice/news/csm/csm-stakeholder-engagement.htm>

Social benefits – If planned and implemented carefully, the event can provide benefits to the region by creating jobs, encouraging local investment, involving regional Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and can promote better working conditions and social inclusion. It can also act as a catalyst for encouraging environmental and sustainable best practices across the region, as well as improving the relationship between the organiser and the local community.



GOOD PRACTICE: LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT — EDMONTON, CANADA

ICLEI World Congress 2009, “Connecting leaders – Advancing Local Action for Sustainability”, made significant progress towards involving the community at large. The Congress included a full day of Mobile Workshop tours throughout Edmonton and provided volunteer opportunities for Edmontonians: more than 300 citizens signed up to volunteer at the congress! Volunteers were able to gain information about conference environmental initiatives from the Shaw Conference Centre’s Assistant General Manager and Eco-Advisor (on-site), and had the chance to network, mingle and interact with delegates from all over the world.

ICLEI World Congress 2009, ECO Report Card

Trigger innovation – As an organiser of large, sustainable events, you drive the demand: your request for more sustainable products will both trigger as well as promote the development of innovative technologies and techniques, leading to a more efficient use of resources and the improvement of the delegate experience.



GOOD PRACTICE: CO₂ SAVINGS THROUGH ONLINE ATTENDANCE OF EVENTS

Cisco Live is a large technology event where networking professionals come to learn how better to connect their organisations using Cisco technology. The event provides an in-person programme and a virtual option to attend. Since 2010 Cisco has calculated the carbon benefits of expanding attendee reach by taking their event online. They have measured 7550 MT of CO₂ avoided by hosting 3,200 virtual-only attendees at the 2011 event.

Cisco/MeetGreen, 2011

Raising awareness and inspiring change – Your event is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness among your participants, staff and colleagues, service providers, the local community, the wider events community and the general public on the theme of sustainability and sustainable events. Leading by example, you motivate them to take responsible decisions and introduce environmental and social improvements into their own events and organisations.



GOOD PRACTICE: INVOLVING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY— 6TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND TOWNS

The organisers of the 6th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns made special efforts to integrate the event into the Greater Metropolitan Area of Dunkirk and its community, in order to promote collaboration and exchange with citizens and to leave a positive legacy in the community that hosted the event.

Between September 2009 and December 2010, thanks to the Dunkerque 2010 Crossroads of Sustainable Development team, numerous events were offered to the people of Dunkirk to allow them to incorporate sustainable development into their lives. These events included exhibits on climate refugees and on eco-districts, conferences, nature visits, film screenings, debates, and a rally for sustainable development. An added benefit of the debate workshops is that citizens, local actors and institutions have collaborated to produce a local position on each of the conference themes.

The people of the region became active participants in the conference preparations. For example, citizens planted micro-gardens, and decorated the port where the cruise-ship was docked and where some of the participants were hosted. The horticultural school, Leffrinckoucke, beautified the courtyard of the train station, allowing its students to put to use their new skills, and providing a more aesthetic welcome to the participants.

<http://www.dunkerque2010.org/en/greening-of-the-event/index.html>



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1.3 Is your event sustainable? The 8 sustainable events criteria

The following criteria have been developed specifically for IAMLADP members and respond to their needs and experiences. While complying with them will not ensure that the event is completely sustainable, they represent a method of internally benchmarking the sustainability of the event so as to make future events consistently more sustainable.

Based on this premise, an event can be called “sustainable”, among IAMLADP members, only if all the following criteria have been fulfilled³:

1. Efforts are made to reduce conference-related emissions of greenhouse gases and support off-setting of unavoidable emissions;
2. Procedures are implemented to **reduce** the consumption of water, energy, materials and other resources;
3. Measures are in place to reduce the generation of waste and to reuse, recycle and/or repurpose unavoidable waste;
4. When purchasing goods and services for the event, the environmental and social impacts of their lifecycle are included in the purchasing decision;
5. Social and environmental principles are applied throughout the implementation of the event, to reduce damage to the environment and to ensure accessibility, inclusion and well-being of all participants and staff;
6. Measures are taken to foster economic, social and environmental benefits for the local community, and minimise disruption;
7. Efforts are made to increase awareness of, inform and involve relevant stakeholders, including participants, the workforce, local hosts, regional and national authorities, sponsors, civil society groups, NGOs, businesses and technical experts, in order to comply with and support the principles stated above;
8. A reporting system is put in place that allows for the communication, assessment and evaluation of “sustainable event processes, initiatives and results.”

³ Principles adapted from the Green Meeting Guide 2009 and based on the principles developed at the ICLEI Greening Events Symposium in Barcelona, Spain, September 2004.



GOOD PRACTICE: GREENING A CONFERENCE — UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL

In line with the UNEP Climate Neutral Strategy, the 26th session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-26/GMEF), held in February 2011, was conducted as a “green meeting”. Sustainability achievements of this meeting included:

- Paper use was reduced by 85%. This is the equivalent of 15,000 kg GHG less compared to the Governing Council session that took place two years earlier.
- A “zero plastic” waste approach was applied. Safe drinking water was provided to participants in large dispensers, instead of plastic bottles, recyclable paper cups were made available and UN gift cups could be purchased. This avoided 8,000 - 10,000 plastic water bottles being discarded. In addition, the UNON Commercial Operations Unit was able to persuade the caterers to make available an additional 500 glasses for water, fresh juices at the cafeteria, and replace soft drinks in plastic bottles with those in glass bottles.
- UNON provided a green venue at the UN premises where major greening activities have been carried out in recent years, including: improved water management (dual flush toilets and grey water for irrigation); electricity savings through more efficient light bulbs in conference rooms; separation of waste, where glass, plastic and paper are recycled by local recycling firms; and separation of organic waste which is composted on site, thus reducing waste sent to landfills by 80 per cent. To remind people of the value of recycling, waste separation boxes were put in all conference rooms.
- The cafeterias added a variety of green and healthy meals that were favourably received by participants and UN staff.
- Participant travel sponsored by UNEP was offset. Those who covered their own trip were encouraged to do so as communicated in the “Delegates’ guide to a green GC” posted on the website. Since no green accommodation or green transport was available, participants were given a hotel list with the approximate distance to the UNON headquarters.
- To showcase other examples of sustainability work carried out by UNEP, participants were invited to visit the new green offices using a quiz that took participants on an “office trail”, highlighting the main environmental features of the new headquarters office facilities.
- To promote further awareness of the issue, all relevant documents were posted on the website, an information stand was set up in the conference area, and a screen saver featuring green news and updates was installed on all conference computers.
- Prior to the conference, two meetings were held with all those involved in greening the GC and an action plan, drawn from the Green Meeting Guide 2009, was developed and used to share and monitor actions and responsibilities.
- Following the meeting, a sustainability report was drafted that included lessons learned and recommendations for the next meeting. This highlighted, for example, that the quiz was not very successful due to the limited time of participants – organising green initiatives in conjunction with the GC programme was the resulting recommendation. On the other hand, the green stand attracted considerable attention. Some of the measures taken for the event have now become standard procedure for compound activities.

UNEP 26th session of GC/GMEF – Implementation of a Green Meeting - Report



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SECTION

2. MANAGING AND COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

2.1 Management principles

Organising a sustainable event is a process that starts long before the event takes place and continues after its conclusion. If you decide to integrate sustainability into your event, make sure you start early and develop your strategy well in advance – any sustainably ambitious event might fail simply because of late planning.

In particular, do not forget to:

- **Prepare an action plan** with clear measurable objectives (key performance indicators), responsibilities, deadlines and appropriate monitoring actions.
- **Allocate sufficient resources** (time, staff capacity and, to a certain extent, money) – remember, the long-term financial savings and more efficient use of resources will quickly compensate for the initial investment!

- **Build a core “sustainability team”** with internal staff from the main units or departments involved in the organisation of the event and, ideally, representatives from the main stakeholder groups (e.g., host city or country, sponsors, suppliers, venue, hotel, local community, etc.). If you have limited human resources, make one staff member responsible for implementing the action plan.



BEST PRACTICE: ESTABLISH A STAKEHOLDER TASKFORCE — COP 15/CMP5

The Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) decided to create a lasting legacy with the Climate Change COP15 as a sustainable meetings management system and reached out to key stakeholders to form a taskforce. The team consisted of representatives from Horesta (hotel and restaurant association), VisitDenmark, the Wonderful Copenhagen Convention & Visitors Bureau, the City of Copenhagen, the Bella Center (venue), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and MCI (Housing Bureau). Every month, for a year, the taskforce met to discuss challenges and solutions. Working as a team, all members increased their knowledge and became more committed to a common vision of success and legacy impact.

<http://www.visitdenmark.com/international/en-gb/menu/mice/news/csmp/csmp-stakeholder-engagement.htm>

- **Take a step-by-step approach:** You can organise events with sustainable attributes despite your limitations (e.g., if you have never done it before, or if you have a small team, or if you have limited financial resources). Start gradually, focusing on one or two aspects and, preferably, beginning where tangible and measurable results are quickly seen (e.g., reducing the use of materials or recycling waste). You can then expand your goals in the next event. This applies especially in regions where environmentally and socially responsible products, experience or infrastructure are lacking or limited. Identify your objectives realistically and work towards them with the resources you have.
- **Focus on the areas where you have influence:** If you are not responsible for the selection of the venue or of the service providers, your sustainability team can still offer recommendations.
- **Develop a communication plan:** if you have introduced sustainability into your event planning, promote it! Make sure your participants and other stakeholders are aware and engaged in your sustainable activities – use your communication channels to promote the sustainability of your event and engage those involved.
- **Monitor and report:** measure the progress of your sustainability activities - to quantify achievements, benchmark weaker areas and set targets and improvements for the future. This can also be used as a marketing and communication tool.



Remember that organising sustainable events is a continuous process: the targets you do not reach now will become the goal for your next event! Therefore make sure to set clear targets, monitor their implementation and evaluate their success.



GOOD PRACTICE: INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT — SUSTAINABLE EVENT IN ASIA 2011

The Shanghai Fashion Week closing event, “Eco, Ethical & Exceptional”, was hosted by the Shanghai Fashion Week Organising Committee with support from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and organised by P1.CN and We Impact and was attended by 1200 participants. By following the Meet Green and GRI reporting frameworks, this event, which took place from 20 to 27 October 2011, became the first sustainable fashion show ever reported on in China.

Because event sustainability is still a new concept in Asia, the organisers faced several systemic and structural challenges. Sustainability was presented as a smart and stylish lifestyle choice in an effort to move away from the old idea that sustainability is incompatible with innovation, design and quality. The campaign encouraged local stakeholders to open up to new ways of doing things. To overcome the lack of understanding on sustainability issues, key suppliers, including the venue managers, production agency, catering company and sponsors, were interviewed about their expectations. Ultimately, they were familiarised with environmental practices and offered training, and recommendations were made to achieve optimal results.

Environmental standards taken into consideration included venue selection, lighting, energy, and travel of delegates to the event. The Shanghai International Fashion Centre was selected as the ideal venue, because of its proximity to public transport, as well as the fact that the building had been retrofitted and equipped with a rainwater collection system for flushing toilets. To overcome the lack of an efficient municipal recycling programme, a recycling system was set up and the venue’s cleaning team trained, with the principle “reduce, reuse, recycle” being applied wherever possible. Moreover, food waste was avoided by using trays of finger food instead of a full buffet service, and disposable plates and glasses were replaced by Chinese crockery.

Despite the recommendations, only 33% of travel was by train and CO₂ emissions from air transport represented 71% of the total. The 56.98 metric tons of CO₂ produced were offset through the purchase of credits from ClimateCare, an environmentally-focused organisation that funds local developing projects like the Mani Hydroelectric Power project in Sichuan Province China.

The major challenges encountered, common in developing countries like China where the concept of sustainability is still unfamiliar, were the selection and training of contractors, clients and providers. These are areas with the most potential for improvement for future events. Using standards helped reduce the amount of time invested to provide guidelines for goal-setting and practical advice for actions. The main lesson learned, however, was the importance of organising the event and selecting partners and suppliers long in advance to ensure that a sustainable supply chain is set up in time.

By Asian standards, the event managed to be fairly sustainable, positioning itself as a global trend-setter in the Chinese fashion market.

2011 Shanghai Fashion week Closing Event Sustainability Report, MCI

<http://www.slideshare.net/gbigwood/shanghai-fashion-showsustainabilityreport>



The Green Meeting Industry Council has collaborated with the Natural Step to provide a guide for leadership to organise more sustainable events. It complements and enhances the UN/ICLEI Sustainable Events Guide by providing four principles for the sustainable development of events with case studies and advice on how to apply them. You can find the “Meeting the Future” guide at <http://www.gmicglobal.org/?page=ResourceLibrary>

2.2 Engaging and communicating with stakeholders

To be successful, event sustainability must be mainstreamed in all the sectors involved in setting up and running the event. By cooperating with the main stakeholders, you make it possible to inspire change and create a legacy that will last long after the event.

Build on the enthusiasm and interest of the private sector and the public, looking out for those stakeholders, such as host cities, venues and hotels, who already have their own sustainability agenda. Partner with them and take advantage of the increased funding, knowledge, skills or capacity. Local actors will provide vital knowledge of, for example, planned activities, understand community sensitivities, etc.

Checklist for stakeholders’ engagement:

- **Map out** all relevant stakeholders and among them include: host, sponsors, partners, venue owners/managers, hotels, suppliers, local residents, workforce, participants, statutory bodies, local authorities, emergency services, relevant NGOs, and local and national media.
- **Categorise them:** differentiate between internal and external stakeholders and define their role (do they have decision-making or purchasing power? Will they interact with your participants?). Assess their area of influence, level of importance, and current involvement or interest in (events) sustainability so as to benefit from their potential fully.
- **Communicate** your sustainability goals early on in a way that is easily understandable by all, and give stakeholders time to adapt and better respond to the sustainability strategy needs. Explain the background of the environmental and social issues so decisions are better understood, thus giving stakeholders a sense of pride in having been part of the process. Meeting participants should be sent a logistics note on sustainability issues related to the city level.
- Establish **formal collaboration**, linking to stakeholders’ current sustainability initiatives or highlighting the benefit of creating new ones, setting common goals and using joint resources.
- Plan **awareness-raising and capacity-building activities**, from simply circulating information, to organising meetings and training for those that will have a role in the event. Take advantage of the fact that

sustainability issues are now receiving more media coverage than ever before and use practical examples and concrete figures to capture the attention of the general public.

2.2.1 Inspire change: host countries and cities

The support and commitment of the host country and/or city is crucial, especially when they are contributing to the event financially or otherwise. Since they are likely to be more familiar with local service providers, involve them in developing your Sustainability Action Plan and ask them to take the lead in the sustainability process if they are willing to do so, or to be members of your sustainability team.

If your host is not easy to convince, you can use these examples to highlight the benefits of hosting and/or funding sustainable events:

- **Financial savings:** At the Climate Change COP15/CMP5, the Danish Government saved more than \$700,000 by not providing gifts or merchandising – the money saved was then used to provide scholarships to students from developing countries. (<http://www.visitdenmark.com/international/en-gb/menu/mice/news/csmp/csmp-sustainable-event-management.htm>)
- **Improved international competitiveness,** through improved image: being a “sustainable host” can bring considerable competitive advantages in host selection procedures - being listed online as a green destination (e.g., for North America, see <http://www.bestplacetomeetgreen.com/destinations>) can undeniably attract companies and organisations looking for a sustainable location.

The 2012 London Olympic Committee (LOCOG) used sustainability as a key part of their bid when competing to win the Olympics. They became the first Summer Host City to embed sustainability into all aspects of the organisation of the Games. The fact that the organisers set the goal of ensuring that all the events and related activities hosted by or associated with London 2012 were organised in a sustainable way is an extremely positive example of sustainability in practice. These actions are part of a powerful legacy that this mega-event will leave since the LOGOC want London 2012 to be the first “sustainable games”, making them a model of sustainable development for all future mega-events worldwide. This has helped improve the reputation of the LOCOG and ease the fears of the local community as to how the new infrastructure and event will affect the area. These actions fit in with the city's long-term goal to brand London as a sustainable destination.



GOOD PRACTICE: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT — ICLEI WORLD CONGRESS 2009

To prepare for the ICLEI World Congress 2009, the City of Edmonton set up a Green Team, worked closely with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and involved representatives of the main stakeholder groups including the venue managers of the Shaw Conference Centre. The team took into account the planning stages of the Congress so that they could incorporate sustainability measures into the planning process and also monitor the environmental impact of the event. A meeting with suppliers also took place in order to increase engagement and promote sustainability throughout the conference.

ICLEI World Congress 2009, ECO Report Card

2.2.2 Inspire change: venue managers

When selecting a venue it is extremely important to assess the **commitment** to sustainability of the venue management beforehand. It is essential to include sustainability criteria and goals, together with corresponding activities, in the agreements you have with them and ask for these principles to be applied in the contracts they have with their own suppliers.

If a “sustainable venue” is not available, **work with the venue managers** to make, if not major infrastructural changes, at least some smaller operational improvements, leaving a lasting sustainability legacy for future users. To get their commitment, highlight the **financial advantages**, the improved image and the **competitive edge** that may attract other conference organisers.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABILITY AS CRITERIA FOR VENUE SELECTION

When selecting the venue for the Leaders Summit 2010, the UN Global Compact and the event management agency, MCI, incorporated sustainability criteria into the RFP (Request For Proposal) process. The venue’s sustainability performance was rated together with cost, availability, suitability, quality and service aspects.

MCI Sustainability Report for the UN Global Compact Leaders Summit 2010.

2.2.3 Inspire change: service providers⁴

Given the scale of goods and services needed for larger events, it is important to make sure to include sustainable procurement considerations in all your purchasing activities. Again, a combination of appropriate management and communication will increase your chances of engaging the interest of the service providers in your sustainability process:

Signal your commitment to sustainability and hence to green purchasing and service practices to the market early on. Set clearly defined objectives and include your sustainability requirements from the **tendering** process onwards and later in all agreements.

⁴ More procurement-specific recommendations, divided into basic and advanced and adapted to regional realities, can be found on www.unep.fr/scp/sun/facility/reduce/procurement/guidelines.htm



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS — EU DANISH PRESIDENCY 2012

The EU Danish Presidency 2012 has announced that all its events of more than 100 people will be as sustainable as possible. Sustainability requirements have been integrated into all contracts with sponsors and suppliers. This has become a competition for companies that want to collaborate with the Presidency and also allows organisers to opt for sustainable products without spending extra money.

<http://www.sustainableeventsdenmark.org/csm/sustainable-eu-presidency>

- If a selection is not possible (e.g., because a venue has a pre-selected caterer), inform those involved in procuring goods and services about the **sustainability requirements** of the event and make sure that they follow the recommendations given in this guide – highlight the market competitiveness of implementing sustainability.
- If someone else is selecting the suppliers, **empower** them with the knowledge needed to make the most sustainable choice. Connect the decision-makers with new sustainable (or willing to become such) contractors and encourage them to discuss issues and find suitable solutions.

(see Annex 1 – Sustainable Procurement, for more information on the benefits of sustainable procurement)



Connecting decision-makers and service providers

Connect the waste manager and recycling industry bodies (e.g., the plastic recycling group) to see how to improve recycling separation and treatment and then use the event to promote the recycling organisation's activities. Introduce a new green printer to the graphic designer, marketing or advertising staff to discuss green printing practices, paper and ink choices. ("Sustainable Event Management" by Meegan Jones)



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GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS - COP 15/CMP 5

For the Climate Change COP15/CMP5, much effort was put into greening the supply chain: all COP15 sponsors and suppliers were asked to contractually commit to upholding the ten United Nations Global Compact principles concerning human rights, labour rights, the environment and anti-corruption measures. With greater engagement and commitment to the principles of sustainable development, the Royal Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs promoted the value of private-public partnerships and fostered a mutually beneficial collaborative approach to organising the event.

A very successful example was the engagement with hotels in the Copenhagen area. The COP15 planners, together with Horesta (a trade organization representing 85% of Copenhagen hotels), carried out a series of stakeholder engagement initiatives, such as training and networking sessions designed to raise awareness about the benefits of certification and provide guidance on how to meet certification requirements. As a result, the majority of hotels succeeded in fulfilling the necessary criteria to be recognised with third party eco-certification. Whereas in December 2008 12% of Copenhagen hotels were third party certified, meeting the criteria necessary to be awarded the eco-labels of The Green Key, Green Globe, EU Flower or Nordic Swan, by December 2009 that figure had grown to 53%.

<http://www.e-pages.dk/visitdenmark/473/>

Work with your suppliers to help them make more sustainable choices

Choosing sustainably or environmentally certified providers can simplify the research and selection process. If there are none in your area, you can still look for those who comply with environmental and social principles. If these are also difficult to find, work with the available ones to create solutions that will reduce their negative environmental and social impacts.⁵

- Request to see their business's **sustainability policy** and a list of their related initiatives, thus motivating them to review their current systems (see checklists 6.1 – Venue, 6.2 – Accommodation and 6.3 – Catering for more detailed information about areas on which to focus). If they do not have a sustainability policy in place, ask them to create one and make it public. For an example of a sustainability policy, see: <http://www.seventeenevents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/08/Seventeen-Events-sustainability-policy.pdf>
- **Offer support** from your sustainability team or person to advise them and monitor the adherence of their services to the given criteria; establish communication and **information channels** during face-to-face meetings and by sending newsletters and personalised emails; provide information packs and summary sheets or offer training to their staff.

⁵ In some regions it is possible to find an inventory of sustainable suppliers, such as the one created by the Regional Activity Centre for Cleaner Production, which developed an online toolkit to help event organizers in the Mediterranean area to organize events that are more sustainable. The toolkit offers a list of sustainable suppliers along the Mediterranean. www.sustainableeventstoolkit.net

- Create awards and other **incentives** to encourage them to develop innovative solutions.
- Brief or, when possible, **train the workforce** (e.g., suppliers' staff, hostesses, etc.) that will be present at your event and will potentially interact with participants so that they know what sustainable behaviour is expected of them and they can pass on this knowledge to the delegates.
- After the event **share the success stories!** Post on the website or include a list in your conference report (by name where appropriate) of the "sustainable" service providers involved and their efforts to comply with the sustainable events strategy. This will give the suppliers visibility and act as an incentive for them to continue to act sustainably, while inspiring others to follow the same example.

(see Annex 1 – Sustainable Procurement, to find a template for a "sustainable event tender")



GOOD PRACTICE: FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE STAKEHOLDERS

When the funding allows, offering financial incentives to local providers is a very effective way to motivate them to comply with sustainability principles: the London Development Agency (LDA) offered subsidised fees for the first 150 businesses that joined the London 2012 sustainability scheme (they provide free advice, benchmarking and back-up). The businesses that joined reported a significant drop in energy consumption and have acknowledged the competitive advantage that joining the scheme has given them, especially hotels. Many of the corporate clients and other guests now ask about green policies and this is starting to become a deciding factor in boosting business.

<http://www.london2012.com/documents/locog-publications/london-2012-sustainability-events-guidelines.pdf>



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE CATERING AND STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT

At the 2011 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, not only did organisers source 65% of menu ingredients from within 100 miles of the host city of Charlotte, North Carolina, they brought the farm to the plate. Farmers Fresh Market is a local cooperative of farmers who provided much of the food served at the event. In fact this was their highest single order ever received. Given that the Assembly attendees have a special interest in sustainable and ethical foods, the farmers were invited to join the event and provide information about their farms, including selling farm produce.

(Source: UUA/MeetGreen, 2011).



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2.2.4 Inspire change: participants and other relevant stakeholders

Involve event participants, as well as other local stakeholders, to increase the chances of success of your sustainability strategy and enhance your image and reputation. Link up with local NGOs and recruit volunteers among your staff and members of the local community – offer them special awareness-raising programmes and use this potential for transferring awareness and knowledge to visitors.

Sustainable participants for a sustainable event

Inform participants that the event will be organised in the most sustainable way both prior to and during it to ensure they are aware of the importance and benefits of sustainability. Make them aware that they too have a role to play so they are conscious of how they are expected to behave.

- Even if you have no resources to develop additional **communication tools**, you can nevertheless take advantage of the existing event-related ones (such as programme, promotional material, signs, on-stage announcements, videos, information stands, etc.) to inform participants and engage them.
- **Be creative!** Find interactive ways to engage participants, such as quizzes and prizes, mini eco-education centres out of the waste stations to explain the why and how of recycling, have “sustainable stewards” mingling with the attendees. Invite local artists to showcase art installations or prepare a sustainability-themed performance.



Competitions as an awareness-raising tool

Many environmental campaigns take the form of a competition among cities, schools or other local groups, with the aim of attracting and engaging as many stakeholders as possible. Initiatives such as the Annual Environmental Competition in Abu Dhabi, or the Cleanest Town Competition in South Africa, have proven successful in involving stakeholders on many levels, as well as in raising awareness among citizens and forging mutually beneficial collaboration between the public and private sectors, overall achieving outstanding results in terms of local sustainability.

<http://www.envirocomp.ae/en/>

<http://www.westerncape.gov.za/eng/directories/projects/482/97029>

- **Incorporate** the concept of sustainability into the topic of your event – ask the Master of Ceremonies or chair of your plenary to briefly outline the main sustainability measures of the event or close your sessions with attention-grabbing slides that give participants tips on how to behave sustainably.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABILITY GUIDE FOR DELEGATES

Create a delegates' sustainability guide for your own event: These are some examples: Delegates' Guide to a "Green" GC-26/GMEF (UNEP 2010) and My Guide to a Sustainable Congress (IUCN 2008).

www.unep.org/gc/gc26/docs/Delegates_Guide_GC26.pdf

cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_guide_final_lowres.pdf

There are various other stakeholders that, depending on the type of event, you may wish to involve:

- **Sponsors:** companies who want to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability could sponsor some "sustainable" area of your event (e.g. providing green IT equipment, subsidising fuel-efficient shuttle buses for participants, funding your waste management, or carbon offsets). Make sure to choose sponsors whose environmental and social policy and ethic is in line with your sustainability strategy to avoid damaging the reputation of your event.
- **Media:** in addition to incorporating your sustainability message in all your communications, create a separate press release or section on the event website which details all your initiatives and is disseminated to media. This should also target the media working on the topic of sustainability or the environment, who you may not normally address.

- **Local community and NGOs:** consulting with local decision-makers and leaders before the event and involving them in your sustainability plan will reduce the potential disruption the event could create. Giving local action groups or NGOs space in the event programme or offering them the option to be present in other event areas (exhibition, social events) will help to raise awareness among participants, get volunteers on board and give these groups the chance to gain visibility at the international level.

(Go to 4.3 for recommendations on how to use carbon offsetting as an awareness-raising tool)



TIP:

In the case of longer events, a great way to engage all these groups is to invite participants to take part in a half-day team-building or volunteering programme with a local NGO (e.g., a soup kitchen). This is an ideal occasion to invite media to cover the event.





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3. IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

3.1 Reducing the negative impacts of your event – Overview

The following table gives an overview of the main environmental and social impacts of an event and gives main recommendations on how to address them. More detailed guidelines can be found in 3.2 and in the corresponding “Sustainable Events Guide checklists”.



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SUSTAINABILITY TARGET	HOW?
Reduce energy use, and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select venues and accommodation that implement energy-efficiency measures, comply with green building standards and/or use renewable energy sources. (See: 3.3.1 Location, 3.3.2 Accommodation; Checklists 6.1 Venue, 6.2 Accommodation) • Choose location and venue minimising local and long-distance transportation needs for participants and products. (See: 3.3.1. Location: destination and venue, 3.3.2. Accommodation; Checklists 6.1 Venue, 6.2 Accommodation) • Where long-distance travel is unavoidable, offset GHG emissions. (See section 4 – Climate neutral and climate friendly events) • Apply energy-saving office practices during the organisation and hosting of the event. (See: 3.3.4. Communication and event material; 6.4 Communication and event material)
Reduce materials consumption and waste generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise materials provided to participants and used by service providers (e.g., caterer, exhibitors), before, during and after the event. (See: 3.3.3 Catering, 3.3.4. Communication and event material; 3.3.6. Exhibitions; Checklists 6.3 Catering, 6.4 Communication and event material, 6.6 Exhibitions) • Avoid the use of disposable items, use pre-used/recycled and reusable/recyclable products and reduce packaging needs to a minimum. (See 3.3.3 Catering; 3.3.4 Communication and event material; Checklists, 6.3 Catering, 6.4 Communication and event material) • Separate and recycle waste where possible. (See: 3.3.1 Location, 3.3.3 Catering, 3.3.4 Communication and event material; Checklists 6.1 Venue, 6.3 Catering, 6.4 Communication and event material)
Reduce water use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select venues and accommodation that implement water conservation practices and use water-efficient appliances. (See: 3.3.1. Location, 3.3.2. Accommodation; Checklists 6.1 Venue, 6.2 Accommodation) • Implement water-conscious measures such as avoid bottled water and re-filling glasses only upon request. (See: 3.3.1 Location, 3.3.2. Accommodation; 3.3.3 Catering; Checklists 6.1 Venue, 6.2 Accommodation, 6.3 Catering)
Reduce indirect environmental impacts on air, water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the need to transport food and other products and favour local organic food. (See 3.3.3 Catering; Checklist 6.3 Catering) • Use products manufactured with or containing fewer harmful substances, such as chlorine-free paper and non-toxic cleaning products. (See: 3.3.3 Catering, 3.3.4. Communication and event material; Checklists 6.3 Catering, 6.4 Communication and event material)

Increase the social benefits for all involved

- Involve local and regional level as much as possible by, for example, e.g. recruiting local people (social integration), supporting SMEs (catering, energy, cleaning, IT supply, family-run accommodation), and showcasing successful local projects. (See 3.2 Social aspects)
- Contribute to the Millennium Development Goals and the core ILO Conventions through compliance with labour standards, and requiring social integration (reducing unemployment), Fair Trade products and social criteria along the supply chain. (See 3.2 Social aspects)
- Assure security and health aspects (e.g., noise level) and avoid illegal labour. (See 3.2 Social aspects)



TIP:

From waste separation to zero waste events

Waste is a problem for every event and a big challenge for large-scale events. Apart from the choice of destination and venue, many factors can reduce waste. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (3 R's) are three key actions in this field. Organisers of large-scale sustainable events may consider whether they want a basic waste management system built on waste separation and the 3 R's early in the planning process or if they feel ambitious enough to take on the Zero Waste challenge.

Zero Waste is a philosophy, a strategy, and a set of practical tools seeking to eliminate waste, not manage it. A Zero Waste event is not accomplished by merely adding recycling and composting bins. The key to a Zero Waste event is careful planning so that all materials used and discarded are reusable, recyclable or compostable. By incorporating Zero Waste into the first stages of an event, it becomes quite easy to achieve this fundamental change in resource consumption. The advance planning ensures that only recyclable and compostable materials will be distributed at your event. Hence, since no printed material is distributed at the event, trash cans can be removed and replaced with Zero Waste stations, which consist of a recycling and a composting container. Zero Waste events are also educational opportunities where attendees can experience a microcosm of a Zero Waste world.

(Source: www.ecocycle.org and www.zerowasteurope.eu)



© Flickr



GOOD PRACTICE: SAVING MATERIALS — OPENWORLD, ORACLE CORP'S ANNUAL SOFTWARE CONFERENCE 2009

Saving Materials: In 2009, the event team re-used 5 percent of signs from the 2008 conference and identified that 37 percent of the signs produced for 2009 could be used for future events. Only 18 percent of the signage, 13,609 square feet, ended up in a landfill, about 20 percent of the signage was recycled, and 25 percent was donated. More than 60 percent was made from recyclable or renewable materials, 39 percent was produced locally and the rest was sourced from Los Angeles to limit transportation distance. By rethinking signage, OpenWorld saved 965 trees.

Oracle Vice President of Marketing, asked his signage team to find materials that could be printed on, completely washed and reused. He said "They didn't find washable but they did find substances that could be reused as roofing material after the conference instead of going into a landfill."

Instead of printing communication materials – nearly a truckload in prior years – Oracle worked with partners to build a virtual collateral rack. According to the company, more than 136,000 downloads were recorded in 2009. Instead of printing maps, Oracle created an online mapping application that allowed delegates to navigate from one point to another.

Saving water: Instead of 500,000 bottles of water, in 2008 Oracle switched to refill stations with five-gallon jugs of water from which attendees refilled the reusable bottle received at registration. The switch saved \$1.5 million dollars, which was reinvested in the event. By 2009, Oracle's event partner, Hartmann Studios, devised a new water delivery system that filtered San Francisco tap water at refill stations for delegates.

Raising awareness and participation in sustainability: To raise awareness, the company created a Green Marketplace where attendees could buy organic foods, clothes and other goods. It also created a Ready, Set, Connect Pedal Charger station at which attendees could pedal a bike to generate battery power to recharge a laptop or mobile device, or earn a cup of coffee.

By MeetGreen, <http://www.businesstravelnews.com/Business-Travel-Agencies/Visions-Of-Green--Oracle-Heralds-Eco-Events;-Advances-Its-Quest-For-Zero-Waste-Conference/?ida=Technology&a=proc> and <http://www.oracle.com/us/products/applications/green/061929.html>

3.2 Including social aspects in your event

Incorporating social considerations in your event gives you the opportunity to ensure benefits for your participants, other stakeholders involved and the local community and to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Below you can find a summary of the main areas where you can make a difference:

Destination: if the main environmental criteria, as well as other requirements such as security and accessibility, can be achieved, consider choosing a "low-income" destination, instead of a conventional one, to boost the local economy and bring some benefits to the area.

Venue: This depends on the type of event, but in most cases it is easier to involve local businesses in a venue that is close to existing social infrastructure (shops, restaurants, pharmacies) than one that is isolated.

**TIP:**

“Design for All”: this concept goes beyond the simple barrier-free accessibility for all and is based on visibly putting into practice respect for human diversity. “Design for All” aims at intervening in environments, products and services so that everyone, regardless of age, gender, capabilities or cultural background can participate on an equal basis. For sustainable events this would mean enabling equal opportunity of access to event information, venue, etc.

(See: www.designforall.org)

Accessibility and inclusivity: find out about the special needs of participants during the registration process and consider them in the organisation of the event (e.g. access to building and conference area, acoustics appropriate for hearing aid users, Braille printing, sign-language interpreters, child-care services, etc.).

Food & beverages: request food that is locally grown, organic, seasonal, preferably vegetarian, and produced by local people. Farming and catering involve many people and can easily address social integration of a marginalised workforce. When locally and culturally suitable, offer one vegetarian dish per day. With this one action you will achieve multiple sustainability goals, from reducing CO₂ emissions to improving participants’ health, animal protection and awareness-raising. Make sure the seafood served is from sustainable sources (e.g., use eco-labels such as the Maritime Stewardship Council (MSC) to help choose products) and the foods are not from endangered or threatened species (biodiversity targets).

**TIP:**

Producing 1 kg of beef leads to the emission of greenhouse gases with a warming potential equivalent to 36.4 kg of CO₂eq⁶ – by lowering the meat consumption of your event you are considerably reducing the carbon footprint! The Bon Appétit Management Company Low Carbon Diet Calculator is designed to allow you to compare the relative carbon impacts of your food choices (www.eatlowcarbon.org). This can also be an interactive way to raise awareness among your participants about the issue of food and related emissions.

Material: Whether it be gadgets, tablecloths or items needed for setting up the venue and exhibition area — all the production of this material can create employment for local people, and in particular for a marginalised workforce.

Service providers: From cleaning, technical support, energy supply, waste collection, delivery and catering to accommodation, all these services involve local businesses and people. When applying sustainability criteria, event organisers and public procurers can require a certain percentage of the workforce to be recruited through local social projects or support small

6 <http://timeforchange.org/are-cows-cause-of-global-warming-meat-methane-CO2>

businesses (e.g., through small lots). For service contracts and supply contracts “along the supply chain”, contract performance conditions should require proven compliance with human rights and core ILO conventions.

Transport & mobility: Transport and mobility differ considerably from country to country and city to city. Aside from eco-mobility, where non-motorised mobility (e.g., walking, cycling) are options, different socially inclusive means of transport and mobility – related also to delivery and transport of goods – should be considered. Shared transport (carpooling, car-sharing, truck-sharing), as well as referring to useful social projects (such as transport options arranged by NGOs that work with disadvantaged or socially excluded people) in this field, can be an option.

Fair Trade: Fair Trade is about empowering small-scale producers with limited market access. Purchasing Fair Trade products can be an important contribution to sustainable development and in particular to the MDGs. Purchasing considerable amounts of Fair Trade coffee, tea, orange juice or bananas can make a real difference to many families and the concrete positive impact can underline the positive outcomes of your sustainable event.



TIP:

Remember that, as an organiser of large events, you drive the demand: the more you require sustainable products, the more beneficial it will be to produce them, ultimately leading to reduced prices!

Field visits: Organise field visits to outstanding local social projects, thus involving the local community and acknowledging the importance of their work in society.

Labour standards and health: While legislation on health, security and social insurance usually exists in all countries, its enforcement varies considerably. It is important to ensure that workers are properly insured and illegal labour is not used (e.g., to lower the cost of employing a workforce). Accidents on construction sites (e.g., set-up of venue and exhibits) can be avoided through diligent compliance with security and safety regulations. Health aspects are equally relevant: the effect of elevated noise exposure is often underestimated but it can range from being a mere annoyance to causing hearing impairment, hypertension or ischemic heart problems.



GOOD PRACTICE: ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS — DIVERSITY WEEK (MARCH 2010)

London 2012 Diversity Week embedded inclusive communication as a core part of its planning process. Each event had an inclusive approach, the added benefits of saving resources, and furthermore enhanced everybody's understanding of what accessible communications embodies.

The week was launched with a major conference in a venue selected with access in mind. The plenary session incorporated British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation and the speech to text translation was projected on large screens. The auditorium was arranged to provide flexible seating giving wheelchair users the choice of location. Videos were subtitled.

At an access summit, information was provided in easy-read format and only accessible formats of printed information were provided. This cut down considerably on the amount of material offered to delegates. Workshops did not use PowerPoint presentations but delegates were offered the option of voice recording suggestions and comments.

The programme of Diversity Week events ensured that speakers and workshop facilitators had a diverse range of backgrounds. The opportunity to promote inclusion was prioritized wherever possible (e.g., a disabled photographer was employed to cover the events).

London 2012 - Sustainability guidelines – corporate and public events <http://www.london2012.com/documents/locog-publications/london-2012-sustainability-events-guidelines.pdf>



GOOD PRACTICE: CHARITY AND LOCAL COMMUNITY — EWEA 2011

As part of the event, the European Wind Energy Association donated almost \$12,000 – the equivalent of about \$1.3 per attendee – to its chosen charity, Renewable World. Locally-produced, small-scale wind turbines were installed primarily to pump water and drip-irrigate the crops of the Farmers' Association. This process resulted in higher yield and out-of-season harvests, which in turn led to a better price and higher income for the farmers.

http://www.ewea.org/fileadmin/emag/sustainability/EWEA_Sustainability_Report_EWEA2011/pdf/sustainable%20report%20EWEA2011.pdf, MeetGreen

3.3 Integrating sustainability in your event

This section gives a short introduction to each conference area and how this can include sustainability. The full detailed recommendations, including the more advanced ones, can be found in the relevant Sustainable Events Checklist ([Chapter 6](#)). The focus below is mainly on environmental considerations since social ones were explored in the section above.

The main elements of event organisation are:

- Location: destination and venue
- Accommodation
- Catering

- Communication and event material
- Local transportation and mobility (long distance travel is dealt with in Section 4)
- Exhibition



TIP:

Because of the location of your organisation, or the origin of most participants, you might not have the option of selecting your destination. If you can, choosing to hold the event in a developing region, even with suboptimal transport and access, can bring social and economic benefits by boosting the local economy. In this case, your efforts will be geared towards reducing the overall footprint of the event and increasing its positive legacy.

3.3.1. Location: destination and venue

Choosing the best destination

Given that travel is the main source of emissions generated during an event, the geographical area where an event takes place greatly influences its environmental impact.

If you have the possibility to select your destination, choose one that is central to the majority of participants, easily reachable by train or at least a combination of public transport and direct flights. Connecting flights considerably increase carbon emissions as the main impact is produced during takeoff and landing so maximising the option of direct flights is essential. By doing an inventory of the expected origins and distances of attendees, you can find the best location – some online calculators can help you do this (e.g., www.bestplacetomeetgreen.com/calculator or <http://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/Pages/Tools.aspx>)



79% of event planners would avoid a destination or venue with a poor environmental record. (IMEX, 2008)



© Flickr



TIP:

A careful selection of the destination, can substantially reduce emissions. For example, the standard sustainability measures of an event with 4,000 participants can bring a reduction of 10.5 metric tons of CO₂ (equivalent to taking two cars off the road for a year); adding to that the sustainable choice for the destination, these two factors can result in a final reduction of 669 metric tons CO₂, or 134 cars. (source: UUA/MeetGreen, 2011. <http://greendestinations.blogspot.com/2011/08/not-sexy-but-effective.html>)



GOOD PRACTICE: GREENER DESTINATION — CANADA MARKETPLACE 2010

For the Canada Media Marketplace 2010, the venue was changed from Los Angeles to San Francisco in order to improve event sustainability. With a walkable downtown, integrated transit system and a civic recycling goal of 75% diversion from landfill, the city is one of the world's top destinations for "green" events.

Sustainable Meetings Report, prepared For Canada Media Marketplace 2010



TIP:

ICAO Green Meetings Calculator

The Green Meetings Calculator, developed by the International Civil Aviation Organization, is a software that generates the optimal location for a meeting in terms of CO₂ emissions from air travel, taking into consideration among other parameters the city of origin and the number of participants. This software is built upon the methodology and databases used by ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator (<http://www2.icao.int/en/carbonoffset>). While many factors, such as the availability of green and properly equipped conference facilities or the geographical representation of host countries, affect the ultimate decision of the location, this calculator supports an environmentally-sound planning process. The Green Meetings Calculator is also available for download at the Sustainable UN website www.greeningtheblue.org

The **location** of the venue is equally important. If possible, the venue should be chosen based on its ability to be easily reached by public transport from the airport and the main train station. Ideally, all participants should also be able to stay within walking distance from the venue or reach it using direct public transport. This will minimise local travel involved, save costs by reducing bus transfers, and make the trip more convenient for participants.

Selecting the venue (For more detailed recommendations, see Checklist 6.1 [Venue](#).) Start by assessing the commitment to sustainability of the potential venues. A certified building (see "Tip" box below) will increase the likelihood that sustainability principles are already observed. If a certified venue is not available, give preference to those which comply with the following recommendations:

Management: environmental and social policies, management systems and/or action plans are in place, including appropriate communication with staff and guests to encourage sustainable behaviour.



TIP:

Some examples of international building certifications are BREEAM and LEED. Environmental management commitments are certified also by labels such as ISO 14001, BS8901 or EMAS. Look for these standards or for those specific to the country where the event takes place. If the venue is a member of the United Nations Global Compact, this will ensure that it is in line with the main human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption principles.
<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

Energy: the venue is an energy-efficient building or at least has energy reduction measures in place.



TIP:

Tell your participants why you chose the venue! This will raise awareness on the topic of sustainability in building management and promote the efforts of the venue manager.

Waste and procurement: appropriate and controlled systems for the collection and recycling of waste are in place.

Water: water management measures are in place.

Virtual meetings: Current information and communication technologies (ICT) programmes offer professional video or tele-conferencing at affordable prices. This will require an initial investment but can contribute enormously to running a sustainable event (e.g., greenhouse gas savings) and save time and money. Ascertain if the venue is suitable or open to considering such a solution. If you opt for this decision, make sure to check and enable the energy-saving options since electronic communication also requires a lot of energy.



TIP:

If a venue with sustainable features is not available, you should nevertheless work with the venue's manager to try to reduce its ecological footprint by, for instance reducing the demand of power. There are a number of easily applicable energy efficiency measures that can contribute to reducing energy consumption, such as awareness-raising among conference participants, moderate use of air-conditioning/heating/cooling equipment, energy-saving light bulbs, low-energy appliances and equipment, lighting timers, and sleep mode on equipment to reduce energy consumption, etc.

When **new infrastructure** for larger events is necessary (e.g., renewable energy installations), they should always be built so they can remain useful for future use by the city and built in accordance with sustainable construction standards. This principle should be applied in disadvantaged regions in particular, where a large event could help in the development of a long-term sustainability strategy for the area.



GOOD PRACTICE: VIDEO KEYNOTE AT ICLEI EUROPEAN CONVENTION 2011

At the ICLEI European Convention 2011, which took place in Brussels in September 2011, one of the key speeches at the opening plenary was made via **video link** in order to avoid the emission of 6200 kg of CO₂ resulting from a return San Francisco-Brussels flight.



GOOD PRACTICE: RENEWABLE ENERGY LEGACY

For the Climate Change COP15/CPM5 Conference in Copenhagen, the Danish Government collaborated with two institutions: the event venue, Bella Centre, and the Danish wind energy company, Vestas. With the agreement of the venue owners and managers, the wind energy company installed a wind turbine at the venue. The turbine still remains at the venue today, feeding energy into the main grid and serving as a reminder of the importance of renewable energy to future event participants.

<http://www.e-pages.dk/visitdenmark/473/>

3.3.2. Accommodation

(For more detailed recommendations, see Checklist 6.2 – Accommodation.)

As conference organizers you can influence change by hosting an awareness raising seminar and engaging hotels and tour operators. For participants, you can influence choice by recommending hotels based on their sustainability performance, and in your logistics notes, you can pre-select hotels. In most cases, even if you are not directly responsible for the selection of hotels, you can still influence the participants' choice by recommending some specific

ones. If you work with a travel agent, choose one that implements good social and environmental practices, and ask them to raise awareness of the sustainability aspects of the event in their communication with the clients and to follow the guidelines included for the selection of hotels.

Certified hotels (see box below) are likely to fulfil many sustainability principles. If there are none in your area, talk to the hotel association about the sustainability performance of the hotels at the destination and encourage them to improve in the following areas:



TIP:

You can refer to some international labels to ensure you select the most sustainable hotel in the area (e.g., www.green-key.org or www.TheBestGreenHotels.com). However, eco-labeled hotels are often 4- or 5-star hotels, many of them belonging to a chain. To include smaller local businesses, make certain to add family-run hotels to the recommended list of hotels for participants.

Management: an environmental and/or CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) policy should be in place, including appropriate communication with staff and guests to encourage sustainable behaviour. Special attention must be given to the health, safety and rights of the hotel staff (following UN Global Compact principles).

Energy efficiency and water conservation: energy and water efficiency measures should be implemented to reduce consumption.

Waste and procurement: encourage hotels to reduce waste, have appropriate and controlled systems for waste collection and recycling, and to purchase products that are more sustainable.



GOOD PRACTICE: REDUCE WASTE, REDUCE COSTS — CANADA MARKETPLACE 2010

This event was held at the Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, which provides standard “Eco-Meet” services, including full back-of-house recycling and composting. In 2009, the programme achieved 60% diversion of materials from landfill, helping the Fairmont to reduce costs by an estimated \$10,000 per month in hauling fees. Even kitchen grease was captured for use as bio-diesel.

Sustainable Meetings Report. Prepared For Canada Media Marketplace 2010



GOOD PRACTICE: HOTELS’ GREEN SCORE

The European Wind Energy Association working with MCI, a communications and events management company, integrated sustainability in how they offer hotels to their conference participants. When selecting their hotels, the participants are provided with the price, quality and a “Green Score”. EWEA gives hotels with a higher green score priority on the webpage.

<http://www.ewea.org/index.php?id=2106>

Cleaning: Encourage hotels to select non-toxic and green-labeled cleaning products and to limit the use of toxic chemicals.

Catering: Encourage hotels to serve locally grown food.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Even in regions where certified or green hotels are not easy to find, you can still work towards more sustainable solutions. For the 25th session of the Governing Council in 2009 (GC-25/ GMEF), UNEP sent out a questionnaire to all hotels in Nairobi listed on the UNON webpage and requested information on their greening initiatives and achievements. Hotels providing details of their greening initiatives were acknowledged on the GC25 website.

<http://www.unep.org/sustainability/docs/CN-GC25-02nov2009.pdf>

3.3.3 Catering

(For more detailed recommendations, see Checklist – 6.3 Catering.)

Food served to thousands of participants can have a considerable impact in terms of emissions generated, wastes produced and resources consumed. Considering all the aspects involved, from the procurement of food to the handling of the wastes produced by catering services and the traffic generated by their transportation, the impact can be substantial. At the same time, catering offers many opportunities to minimise the negative impacts and involve the local community.

Management: Give preference to caterers who have an environmental policy/ management system in place; employ people with difficulties in accessing the labour market; and incorporate fair and equitable working conditions.

Procurement: Require seasonal and/or non-frozen foods and/or limited time periods between the production and processing of food and its consumption. This generally leads to short and low emission transport delivery and supports the local and regional economy.



For more detailed guidelines on sustainable catering and procurement, you can consult the UN guidelines available on <http://www.greeningtheblue.org/resources/procurement>



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Food and beverage: The impact of the food and drink we consume can vary hugely depending on what is offered (good choices: seasonal, vegetarian food⁷), where it comes from, and how it is produced (good choices: sustainable agriculture, Fair Trade) (see 3.2 and checklist 6.3 for more information about this). Make sure that the food is clearly labelled and that the sustainable reasoning behind it is made clear to the participants. This way they are more likely to accept variations in the menu. Whenever possible, use tap water for drinking, ban plastic bottles and avoid individual containers in favour of bulk dispensers. Offer culturally-sensitive menus that respect the religious or cultural dietary requirements of your participants.

Set-up and service: Allocate enough time for coffee breaks, lunch and/or dinner, to enable networking and allow participants to “recharge”. Depending on the set-up (buffet, self-service, seated lunch) make sure there is a system in place which reduces the chances of long queues and provides enough chairs for people to sit, especially older participants or those with physical impediments.

Waste: Avoid using disposable items in favour of dishware and linens; cut down on packaging; and ensure appropriate collection and recycling/disposal of waste. Re-confirm the numbers for catering to avoid unnecessary food waste. If the country regulations allow, look for local organisations that specialise in distributing edible leftovers from events.

Other: Other aspects to consider include cleaning techniques use of re-usable and/or sustainable material such as cutlery, crockery and decorations; and water- and energy-efficient catering equipment.



GOOD PRACTICE: WIN-WIN SOLUTION FOR FOOD IN EXCESS AT EVENTS

Many countries and cities run “food banks” – organisations that collect extra, perfectly acceptable fresh food and distribute it to charitable organisations for people in need. An example is the organisation “Wiener Tafel” in Vienna, which is one of the recent IBM Centennial Award winners.

http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/ibm100/us/en/service/grants/wiener_tafel_2011.html

⁷ According to a recent European research project on Sustainable Consumption Patterns meatless food has the highest positive sustainability impact among other options such as organic agriculture.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE CATERING THROUGH FLOSS

The European Ecological Federation (EEF), working with MCI, places the concept of FLOSS (Fresh, Local, Organic, Seasonal, Sustainable) at the heart of menu design. At the federation's annual congress in 2011 in Avila Spain, EEF managed to use 60% local produce and 30% organic produce by introducing local chefs and catering teams to the concept of FLOSS.

<http://www.europeanecology.org/meetings/index.php>



GOOD PRACTICE: LEGAL SUPPORT TO SUSTAINABLE CATERING AND FOOD PROCUREMENT IN ITALY

The minimum environmental criteria for "Catering Service and Food Provision" in Italy's National Action Plan on Green Public Procurement include social aspects for seasonal food, Fair Trade products and the distribution of perfectly edible leftover food to charitable organisations. Additional points are given to bidders that implement collective transport solutions (e.g., shared storage and truck transport and schemes of sustainable mobility for personnel). They also take into account appliances that reduce the noise level in cooking and eating areas.

Example: The City of Argelato, Italy, won the Italian "Green Mensa Award 2009" and the "European Good Egg Award 2008" for their sustainable food supply policy which includes 100% organic food and 90% biodegradable detergents and reusable cutlery. Furthermore all uneaten food is given to social associations or animal groups. To accomplish such good efforts, stakeholders are invited to participate in a canteen committee and annual awareness-raising and capacity building.



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3.3.4. Communication and event material

(For more detailed recommendations, see Checklist – 6.4 Communication and event material.)

All your communications activities (e.g., how registration and communication with participants are handled before the event, the materials participants receive, the way rooms are set up) have the potential to reduce negative impacts and increase awareness-raising.



TIP:

For logistical issues, you need to check with the venue early on to make sure that the recommendations are achievable – in some cases, you may have limited influence on the equipment used or systems in place. In this case, speak with the venue manager and technicians to check what the most sustainable options are and how to improve the current system.

Paper use: Before and after the event, minimise the amount of print material in favour of electronic communication. Develop all documents, especially announcements and invitations, in a way that they can conveniently be sent via email and read on computer screens (short and light documents); make sure that an electronic version of all documents is available on the website. If you need to print some material, do so in a sustainable way (e.g., by reducing the text and the number of pages, choosing fewer colours, using recycled paper and sustainable ink, etc.). Encourage participants not to print the electronic material you send, unless strictly necessary. If they must print, ask them to follow sustainable printing recommendations. (see Checklist 6.4 Communication and event material)

Registration process: The registration process and the related communication should be electronic. Set up online-registration systems that are easy to use, or at least encourage participants to fill out the registration form electronically and send it by email. If you operate in countries where fax or paper registration is still necessary, produce a registration form with the minimum number of pages possible and one that can be conveniently printed in black and white.

Web-marketing and social media: Use social networks, blogs or simply your event website to give visibility to your sustainability measures and to create awareness among participants, encouraging them to introduce sustainability measures in their own offices. Ensure that the event website is user-friendly, updated daily, fast, intuitive and interactive and use web-marketing features such as live updates and videos – users will be attracted to the website and get used to consulting and using digital tools, rather than printed ones. The increased availability of smart-phone applications could be used to your advantage. Applications that provide delegates with customised assistance, and a real-time response to any problem, and result in time-saving and increased productivity, will improve participants' experience.



GOOD PRACTICE: "GREENING THE SPRING MEETINGS" INITIATIVE

The International Monetary Fund Sustainability Team has been working with the event organisers to provide support and give suggestions on how to make the meetings more sustainable.

For the Spring Meeting in 2011, welcoming more than 2,200 participants, electronic networking sites such as "yammer.com" and "IMF connect" were used to engage participants and share knowledge and views on issues such as food, paper versus electronic documentation, and sustainable transportation and accommodation.

The Sustainability Team also developed a list of "Spring Meeting Fast Facts" to be used as a reference guide, listing the areas where the sustainability performance of the meeting was improved. Given that waste and recycling were target areas, volunteers were recruited for the meeting to assist participants with waste/recycling separation and provided information on what items were compostable or recyclable. As assessed after the conference, these communication tools proved to be very successful. An evaluation of the sustainability performance revealed, however, that these efforts need to be combined with the training of janitorial and food service staff, to remind them of what is considered compostable material.

International Monetary Fund, 2011 Spring Meetings



GOOD PRACTICE: SOCIAL MEDIA AND SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Social media plays a big role in current affairs, and sustainable events are no exception. For instance, www.cop15.dk received 4 million visitors, had 42,000 fans on Facebook, a Twitter page with more than 13,000 followers, and on YouTube, more than 5.2 million channel views!

<http://www.e-pages.dk/visitdenmark/473/>



© Sergej Khackimullin Fotolia



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Materials reduction: Remember that participants prefer to travel light. Reduce the materials used for an event to what is strictly necessary. The event should be as “paper light” as possible, and all event documents should be uploaded in advance on the event website, for participants to download. Promotional material, delegate bags, signs (flags, banners, etc.) and gifts should be minimised. The money saved by opting not to use these could be invested in sustainable/green projects or go towards greening other aspects of the event. To reduce costs and emissions from carrying large quantities of print material to the venue, always print locally and work with the local printer to ensure that basic sustainability principles are fulfilled.

Keep in mind that even if you strictly reduce the amount of printed material, participants may still decide to print documents themselves. Encourage your participants to comply with a paper-light approach, but assume that in reality some of them will still print. Therefore develop the material accordingly, and make its decentralised printing easier and with a reduced environmental impact.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS FOR CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

At the ICLEI EcoProcura Conference on Sustainable Procurement in Europe (Barcelona, 2006), attendees were given a conference bag made from recycled advertising banners. The upscale bag was manufactured in collaboration with a prisoners’ social rehabilitation project and the Multiple Sclerosis Federation prepared the materials in the bags. A similar process was used for the IAMLADP 2011 conference, hosted by FAO in Rome, where participants were provided with delegate bags made out of old FAO banners and produced at a local women’s prison.

At the UNEP GC-25/GMEF, in 2009, the delegate bags were made from the inner tubes of truck tyres and produced locally. Furthermore, each delegate was offered a calabash mug, traditionally used in Kenya for serving *uji* (porridge) or milk. The calabash is entirely natural and biodegradable and can be cleaned and reused many times. The distribution of the calabash mugs was done at the Welcome to Green UNEP desk. It was an appreciated gift and provided a good opportunity to interact with the delegates.

Sustainable materials: All materials produced or bought for the event, like gifts, delegate bags, banners, decor, signage and similar, should be produced using sustainable materials, such as organic or recycled long-lasting material, and ideally locally sourced, and with a useful purpose. Products from local social projects should also be explored. Highlight the sustainability of the product by adding a small note explaining the background of its production – participants will recognise the fact that the event is being organised sustainably and become familiar with certain sustainable products and commonly used language.



TIP:

In situations when give-aways or gifts are necessary, because of cultural or political reasons or because they add to the participants' experience, make sure they are useful, re-usable, or are a valued souvenir. Avoid adding the date or specific event title so that they can be used for a long time in the future. Use "placemaking" as an alternative to souvenirs; provide icons/backdrops or background for people to take photographs so that they can create their own memories of the event!



GOOD PRACTICE: TREES INSTEAD OF GIFTS

Since September 2009, the Stockholm Region EU office in Brussels, Belgium, is located in a completely renovated energy-efficient building that meets high environmental standards with bamboo flooring and different types of environmentally friendly materials.

When holding events in their conference room, instead of a conventional present, participants find a note on their chair, stating that "a tree has been planted in your name" by the Stockholm Region EU office.



© Flickr

Reuse: As much material as possible should be reused from other events and given to future ones (e.g., banners, stands, etc.), with the same or a different purpose (e.g., stands that are used year after year; old banners that are turned into delegate bags or name badges).



Paper-less or paper-smart?

Currently, the debate around the environmental advantages of a completely “paperless” conference, in favour of more technological solutions, has still not found a definite answer. A report from Print City, a consortium of print machine and supply manufactures, states that:

It is estimated that internet data centers are responsible for around 1% of all GHG emissions — about a quarter of the ICT (information and communication technology) footprint of 4% (Gartner). These figures may be higher as a German Federal government report estimated that ICT took 10.5% of the country’s electricity consumption in 2007. In a sustainable future, paper and electronic media each have a relevant place. Misplaced perceptions that electronic media are more environmentally friendly than print confuse the issue. The real question is how the two platforms can work together to reduce the overall environmental burden. The internet will also be crucial to a low carbon world by facilitating smart energy grids. Therefore, it is not just technology developments that will affect the growing carbon footprint of the internet, but more importantly how this medium is used.

The pulp and paper industry is one of the world’s largest users of renewable, low-carbon energy. Around 50% of the primary energy used (e.g. purchased fuels) to make paper in Europe and the US comes from carbon neutral renewable resources and is produced on site at mills. In comparison, most IT data systems rely on conventional distributed power generation using fossil fuels.

Recycling can have a significant impact in the reduction of GHGs and energy use. The paper industry is the recycling leader in Europe with over 50% of its raw materials for production coming from recovered products.

For the whole report, go to: https://printcity.dyndns.org/OTHER/shop/products/2011_03_31_PrintCity_Carbon_Footprint_Energy_EN.pdf

*While more studies are undertaken on the issue on which procedure might have the smallest footprint, within the Sustainable Events Guide we recommend a **“paper-smart” approach**, following the recommendations in [Checklist 6.4 – Communication and event material](#).*

3.3.5. Local transport and mobility

Note: Long-distance travel is dealt with separately under Section 4

In the course of an event, participants are likely to undertake a number of trips within the region or the city. Although not as significant as international travel, the length of these local trips and the type of transportation used has an impact on both CO₂ emissions and on urban air pollution from motorised vehicles. Giving attention to the following areas, can minimise the environmental impacts of transport:

Location: The proximity and accessibility of the main event locations (venue, accommodation, town centre and transport nodes) should be a priority in reducing the need for lengthy trips. In those countries where public transport is not available, make sure participants have car-sharing or bus-sharing options available (if possible, use hybrid vehicles).

Communication and information for participants: Participants should ideally travel on foot, by bicycle or public transport (bearing in mind local safety concerns). Encourage participants to do this by providing them, at registration, with maps, timetables and clear instructions, or even with complimentary transport tickets (e.g., at the back of the name badges), to reach the venue and the hotels. Adjusting the event timetable in accordance with the arrival times of the main modes of transport is also an option.



GOOD PRACTICE: FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT AROUND BRUSSELS

At the ICLEI European Convention 2011 “Cities in Europe 2020”, which took place in Brussels, the parallel sessions were held in different ICLEI member offices around the city. This gave participants the opportunity to explore Brussels and observe how city representations work in the so-called European capital. All session hosts were given a “sustainable” checklist to make sure that green office and sustainable catering options were chosen and implemented.

The City of Brussels gave convention participants a free 3-day public transportation pass; the convention team prepared detailed directions including a small map, information about public transport and a picture of the host building, to make it easier for participants to move around by public transport and avoid the use of taxis. From feedback received from participants it was clear that many were in favour of this decentralised approach and had chosen to either walk in groups or take public transport.

<http://convention2011.iclei-europe.org/>



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3.3.6. Exhibitions

Exhibitions associated with events are extremely visible to participants and can create a great deal of waste. To minimise their negative impact, focus on these areas:

Materials: Encourage exhibitors to minimise the amount of promotional material at the stands and to use material that is produced as sustainably as possible (i.e., following the guidance in the section on communication and event material), and give strict guidelines in terms of material allowed (e.g., at UNFCCC COP sessions the consignment is limited to a maximum of one cubic meter/exhibitor). Encourage the use of reusable structures (such as stands and furniture), by asking for modular exhibition stands that are easy to (dis)-assemble and reuse, rather than stands with personalised designs that can be used only on certain occasions. Promote the exchange of information by enabling participants to copy the material directly from the exhibitors onto a USB stick. Look into the possibility of reusing carpets – new systems now make it easy to use carpets made of “squares” or tiles put together, so that when one square is damaged the individual piece can be replaced without having to change the whole carpet.

Energy efficiency: Encourage exhibitors to avoid energy intense stands and unnecessary lighting, applying energy efficiency measures whenever possible.

Waste management: A considerable amount of waste is generated at exhibitions, including through the packaging of display materials and stand construction, as well as discarded display material and disposable carpets. Require exhibitors to follow strict waste collection rules, according to local collection systems, and make it clear that they must remove all discarded publications and materials at their own cost or pay for the ones left at the venue.



GOOD PRACTICE: WASTE REDUCTION AT ICLEI WORLD CONGRESS 2009

- Through the Shaw Conference Centre's on-site composting facility and recycling bins, 68% of the total waste produced by the ICLEI World Congress was diverted from the Edmonton landfill.
- When assessing waste production, exhibitors were found to contribute nearly 10% of the overall waste. The largest exhibitor generated 104.5 kilograms of waste!
- 80% of delegates helped minimise the production of landfill waste by not drinking bottled water during the Congress.
- Delegate name tags were recycled at the end of the congress

ICLEI World Congress 2009, ECO Report Card



TIP:

Inform exhibitors of the event's sustainability strategy well in advance and make them aware of the ways in which they can reduce their impact. Include clauses on appropriate sustainability practices in the conditions of participation or, alternatively offer bonuses or discounts for adhering to them.



GOOD PRACTICE: FROM MILK CRATES TO CLIMATE SMART PAVILION AT COP17

At Climate Change COP17 in Durban, South Africa, the city of Cape Town showed their ongoing commitment to sustainability with its impressive Climate Smart Pavilion, which was awarded the best "green design" and "best overall stand" prizes.

The stand was made of milk-crates, outlining, with the use of light and colours, Cape Town's famous Table Mountain in order to make a visual connection to the city of Cape Town and the projects being undertaken.

A small wind turbine on the roof and a few solar panels produced enough energy to power the structure and be fed back into Durban's grid. The structure was designed to exploit the energy potential of daylight and wind, guaranteeing a cool internal temperature without the use of air conditioning. The interior provided comfortable seating areas and embodied the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle ethos with lampshades from recycled paper, compact fluorescent lamp bulbs and energy-saving lights. Ecologically purified rainwater, produced by a solar-powered purification and heating/cooling system, was offered to visitors in the form of mint tea.

The building was designed by Capetonian Stephen Lamb, (Touching the Earth Lightly <http://touchingtheearthlightly.com/home/default.asp>), who used local labour, giving the construction job to a group of unemployed people.

Sustainable marketing actions and interactive workshops aiming to raise awareness on multiple themes were presented to visitors. These included workshops on making furniture from recycled plastic and alien invasive species, discussions on how to green an everyday routine, how to collect rainwater at home, and calculate a carbon footprint with a view to reducing it.



GOOD PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE EXHIBITION

At the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Conference, co-organised by ICLEI, which took place in Dunkirk, France, in 2010, more than 1,800 participants could visit a sustainable exhibition, where all materials used for decoration and signage were environmentally-friendly: canvasses were made from regionally-produced plant fibers; the furniture was entirely made of cardboard; and, as decoration, local plants were used, which were later replanted by a local firm. All stands had LCD screens to allow exhibitors to make presentations and show videos without using paper.

<http://www.dunkerque2010.org/en/greening-of-the-event/index.html>



© City of Cape Town



© City of Cape Town/ Touching the Earth Lightly

SECTION

4. CLIMATE NEUTRAL AND CLIMATE FRIENDLY EVENTS

The information in this chapter provides a common approach for climate neutral and climate-friendly events. The suggested recommendations have been developed based on existing practices within the UN. These guidelines are not mandatory but have been developed to offer general advice on the topic, for UN agencies in particular. More information can be found in the Green Meeting Guide 2009, pages 31-38, Section D – Climate neutrality at meetings.

4.1 What is Climate Neutrality?

Climate change and its implications have moved many to make voluntary commitments and take action to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and even go beyond and achieve climate neutrality. Climate neutrality, or carbon neutrality, is a voluntary market mechanism that promotes net zero emissions from the activities of an entity for a specified period or for an event. It involves the following three steps, the end result of which would be net zero emissions:

Step 1: GHG accounting

Prepare an emission inventory or an estimate of the amount of GHG emissions from your activity or event.

Step 2: Minimise GHG emissions

Take all measures feasible to reduce GHG emissions.

Step 3: Offset your GHG emissions

Purchase high quality “carbon offsets” to “offset” any emissions that remain. Implementing the sustainability recommendations suggested in the previous chapters will help to reduce the amount of GHG emissions that your event will generate, but will not avoid them completely. For this reason, you need to “offset” the remaining GHG emissions.

Carbon offsetting is based on the fact that the impacts of GHGs are not local, but global. Hence GHG reduction measures taken in different parts of the world will have similar climatic benefits. An entity could financially support GHG emission reduction initiatives elsewhere to “offset” the GHG emissions that it could not avoid. To avoid genuine criticisms of “green washing”, offsetting should be done only after sincere efforts to minimise an entity’s own GHG emissions.

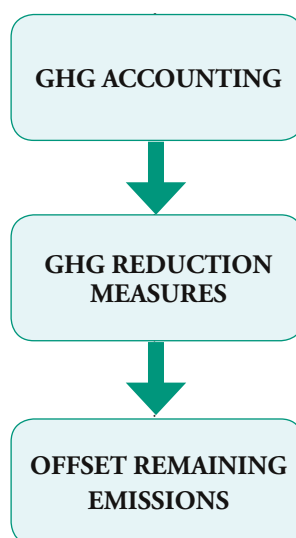
$$\begin{aligned} \text{CLIMATE NEUTRALITY} &= \text{NET ZERO GHG EMISSIONS} \\ &= \text{BASELINE GHG EMISSIONS} - \text{GHG EMISSION REDUCTIONS} \\ &\quad - \text{CARBON OFFSETS} \end{aligned}$$

Applying the above mentioned principles, if you aim at a *climate-neutral event*, the following needs to be done:

- define the GHG emission inventory boundary of your event
- prepare the emission inventory or estimate all emission sources within your event’s emission inventory boundary
- reduce the emissions to the extent possible
- offset the balance of emissions, resulting in net zero emissions

Your event will be viewed as a *climate-friendly* or *low-carbon event*, if:

- all the emission sources listed in the event’s emission inventory boundary are not adequately covered/estimated
- if the estimated emissions are not reduced adequately through emission reduction measures and the balance of emissions fully offset





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4.2 Measuring GHG emissions

The claim that an event is climate-neutral needs to be backed up by a strong methodology to measure emissions, which must follow internationally recognised GHG accounting and reporting standards.

4.2.1 Principles for an emission inventory:

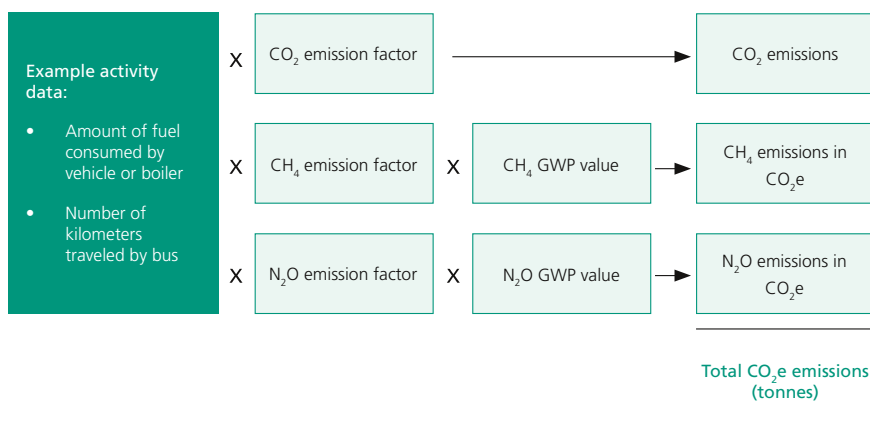
- *Relevance*: ensure the GHG inventory appropriately reflects the GHG emissions from the event and serves the decision-making needs of users.
- *Completeness*: account for and report on all GHG emission sources and activities within the chosen inventory boundary. Disclose and justify any specific exclusion.
- *Consistency*: use consistent methodologies to allow for meaningful comparisons of emissions over time.
- *Transparency*: address all relevant issues in a factual and coherent manner, based on a clear audit trail. Disclose any relevant assumptions and make appropriate references to the accounting and calculation methodologies and data sources used. Document any changes to the inventory boundary, methods, data or any other relevant factor.
- *Accuracy*: ensure that the quantification of GHG emissions is realistic as far as can be judged, neither too much over nor under actual emissions, and uncertainties reduced as far as practicable. Achieve sufficient accuracy to enable users to make decisions with reasonable assurance as to the integrity of the reported information.

4.2.2 Methodology for GHG measurements

The general method used could be:

Mass of GHG emitted (e.g. tonnes of CO₂) = Activity Rate (e.g., amount of electricity consumed in kWh) x Emission Factor (e.g. tonnes of CO₂/ kWh of electricity consumed)

Emission estimates of individual gases are to be multiplied by their Global Warming Potential (GWP) values, to create common comparable units of carbon dioxide – CO₂ equivalent (e.g., Kg or metric tons of the carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂eq) of methane (CH₄)). The total climate impact from an emission category can thus be measured as the CO₂ equivalent. For each emission category, the CO₂eq of all relevant GHGs are to be summed up, to find the total emissions from it. For example, in the case of diesel burned in a diesel generator used to generate electricity for an event venue, the CO₂eq of CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O emissions from diesel can be summed up to find the total emissions from it.



While there are a few internationally recognised guides and tools available to calculate the GHG emissions of an activity, there is no well-known equivalent for measuring event-related emissions. Depending on the components and boundaries of the event's emission inventory, however, the available guidance and tools could be adapted to estimate GHG emissions from an event.

Examples of such guidance are:

Corporate Inventory Reporting

- Greenhouse Gas Protocol standards and tools <http://www.ghgprotocol.org/>
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Corporate Climate Leadership guidance <http://www.epa.gov/climateleaders/guidance/index.html>
- UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) emission calculation methodology <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/economy/business-efficiency/reporting>

Project and product based inventory standards

- Greenhouse Gas Protocol standards and tools <http://www.ghgprotocol.org/>
- BSI Standards – Product Carbon Footprint (PAS 2050:2011): Publicly Available Specification – requirements to be met by anyone wanting to achieve and demonstrate carbon neutrality <http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/How-we-can-help-you/Professional-Standards-Service/PAS-2050/PAS-2050/>

Air Travel Emissions

- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) air travel emissions calculator, which is also further explained in the box below <http://www2.icao.int/en/carbonoffset/Pages/default.aspx>

4.2.3 What should you measure?

Inventory Boundaries

Focus on what you have control over: to define an event's emission inventory boundaries include only the GHG emitting activities on which you have influence (i.e., operational and/or financial control).

Be reasonable and try to get the “big picture” right. Make sure that the main sources of emissions (for example, international transport) are well measured. Approximations and estimates could be accepted for the lesser ones.

Baseline and Actual Emissions

The emission reductions you make can be estimated only when you compare your actual emissions to a baseline. Hence you need to estimate the emissions baseline prior to the event and get it approved by all concerned. The baseline would be an estimate of the emissions from the event, in the absence of any additional emission reduction activity.



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4.2.4 Sources of Emissions

The major sources of emissions from the event could be categorized as follows:

- Long-distance travel
- Local transport (including transport of goods and services)
- Usage of venue
- Accommodation

Long-distance travel

Long-distance travel is by far the greatest source of event-related emissions; therefore make sure to get the related GHG emissions quantity as precise as possible.

- Try to get as many details as possible from the delegates themselves, by making it compulsory in the **registration form**. This should include, for example: itinerary, mode of travel, travel class and type of transport foreseen to be used to get to and from, and during the event, and number of days spent to be spent at the event.
- You can decide to base the calculation on the number of **registered participants** (e.g., corresponding to the number of activated badges) and should include others such as organisers, speakers, interpreters, etc.
- **Avoid offsetting** emissions which have already been offset. For example, the air travel of some participants might be sponsored by their governments, who might also be accounting for those emissions and offsetting them. Hence, we need to check with participants whether their organisations/government/sponsors/airlines have measures in place to offset their travel emissions. Another example where double-accounting might occur is where participants attend another meeting, back-to-back with your event, and the travel emissions are being offset twice.

If you are not able to gather information from participants about their travel, you will need to make assumptions which should be based on a longer term policy and properly documented. Some examples are:

- *Route information*: assume a straightforward route (e.g., in situations where the city from where the participant has travelled is not known, assume departure from the capital city of the country of origin)
- *Travel mode*: in cases where no information is available, you can conservatively assume the travel mode. For example, assume flights for international travel, train for travel within the country, and taxis for local travel.
- *Travel class*: similarly, you can make conservative assumptions for the travel class. For example, you can assume a certain number of hours of travel time, above which a premium class needs to be considered.



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ICAO air travel carbon emissions calculator

The ICAO air travel carbon emissions calculator offers a simple user interface to calculate greenhouse gas emissions from air travel. The only information required is the routing expressed as the three-letter IATA codes for the airports, and the class of travel. The methodology used by the calculator applies the best publicly available industry data to account for various factors which are automatically calculated by the calculator, such as distance, fuel conversion factors, most likely type of aircraft, etc. The ICAO calculator generates the total emissions for all travel, as well as the emission from each trip. A web interface to the calculator is publicly available at www.icao.int, where individual trips can be entered and automatically calculated.

This calculator is the official tool for all UN bodies to quantify their air travel CO₂ footprint in support of the Climate Neutral UN initiative. UN climate neutral focal points can download the full calculator in excel format and thereby process a large number of trips simultaneously. The download is available on the password-protected part of the Sustainable United Nations website www.greeningtheblue.org/, which is accessible to the IMG focal points of UN agencies.

Tailored interfaces to the calculator have also been developed and made available to UN climate neutral focal points: <http://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/CarbonOffset/Pages/default.aspx>. These special interfaces to the ICAO calculator facilitate the aggregation of travel emissions data and also allow the computation of emissions from travels with non-commercial aircrafts (e.g., owned or leased by UN) as long as the fuel consumption is known or, alternatively, the points of departure and arrival.

Local transport

For your calculation, you need to consider transport to and from the airport in the participants' home country and to and from the hotel at the event location. If the information is not available (e.g., from the registration form), a realistic estimation of distances will have to be made (for example, a proxy of 25 km is usually used in both cases for the UN inventories).

Other emissions related to local transport to be considered are caused by: transfers during the event (e.g., to a different location or a study visit); and transport of caterers, exhibitors and any other service and goods providers that deliver to the event. In these cases, assumptions may have to be made in the absence of real data.

Venue

The emission sources related to usage of your venue includes:

- Energy used for heating and cooling systems, lighting, office equipment, catering, water pumping, captive power generation, hot water generation, etc.
- Refrigerants used for cooling
- Waste generated
- Paper consumption, etc.

For further accuracy, the exhibition area should also be taken into account. In cases where a reliable GHG inventory has already been established for the meeting venue, an appropriate share should be taken into account: venue emissions per hour multiplied by the number of event hours.

Accommodation

Event participants generate emissions from staying in the city where the event takes place. The sources of GHG emissions are similar to that of a venue, but on a smaller scale.



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4.3 Offset management

As stated before, emissions should be offset only after all measures to reduce GHG emissions are implemented. To make sure you reduce the event-related GHG emissions, follow the guidelines given in section 3.2 and in the “Sustainable Events Guide checklists”, especially in 6.1 – Venue, 6.2 – Accommodation and 6.5 – Local transport. The remaining GHG emissions must be compensated for by offsetting them through GHG reduction measures elsewhere. This compensation can be done by purchasing “carbon offsets”. When one purchases offsets, one is investing in projects that result in emission reductions elsewhere, that would not have occurred in the absence of the project. In short, you are investing in projects that will contribute to emissions reductions, so as to offset the amount of emissions that your event generated.

$$\text{CARBON OFFSETS (EQUIVALENT TO ACTUAL EMISSIONS)} = \text{BASELINE EMISSIONS} - \text{EMISSION REDUCTIONS}$$

4.3.1 Offset financing

There is no agreed procedure for how a UN organisation may set aside funds to cover the cost of offsetting. Currently, it is up to each organisation to find its own funding solutions. Some approaches are suggested that could be selected according to the needs of the organisation:

- *In-house tax system*: linking the emissions generated by an activity to the cost of carbon offsets that are needed to neutralise the emissions. This can be done, for example, by applying an extra fee to every air ticket in order to cover the purchase of required carbon offsets (e.g., UNEP Climate Neutral Fund). This could be included either in the organisations’ or in the events budget.



GOOD PRACTICE: THE UNEP CLIMATE NEUTRAL FUND

UNEP has developed a model to estimate and manage the budget for its offset payments that other UN organisations could follow. Whenever an air travel ticket request is approved, an estimated offset payment has to be set aside from the same budget line that is paying for the ticket. The carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions caused by the trip in question are worked out automatically, using the UN/ICAO air travel emissions calculator, and taking into account the specific route and the travel class (business or economy). Any travel costs that UNEP meets without knowing the specific route, such as lump sums for home leave, are assumed to create CO₂ emissions at the same average rate as other UNEP air travel. The money is then transferred to the UNEP Climate Neutral Fund on a monthly basis. An estimated price of offset is used, since the actual price can only be known the following year when the annual round of offset procurement takes place. The UNEP plan is to retain any surplus in the Climate Neutral Fund, as a buffer against price fluctuation, and to invest in further sustainability initiatives.

<http://www.greeningtheblue.org/case-study/uneps-climate-neutral-fund>

- *Fund-raising for carbon offset purchases:* Requesting a donor or a sponsor to cover the carbon offset procurement as part of the event budget or separately. Incentives could be provided in terms of greater visibility at the event.
- *Voluntary offsetting:* Encouraging participants to offset their travel emissions and report back to the organisers. Several steps can be taken to make this more credible, including the use of a common offset provider recommended by the event organisers, adding the offset amount to the registration fee with the organisers then purchasing the offsets, providing adequate proof of offsetting, etc. Organisers would still have to take responsibility for any balance of emissions that were not offset by participants.



TIP:

Strategies to increase the likelihood that participants voluntarily offset their travel GHG emissions include integrating offsetting into the registration fee with an “opt out”⁸ option. Experience shows that this process will increase offsetting to above 50%, compared to only 5% with an “opt in” option (GMIC).



GOOD PRACTICE: ENCOURAGE SPONSORSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The UN Global Compact and MCI created a Sponsorship Package for the 2010 Leader Summit. The money raised from the sponsorship funded additional sustainability actions and offsetting. For more information see the [UN Global Compact sustainability report](http://www.mci-group.com/~media/MCI/Files/MCIPublications/csr_related/MCI_Sustainability_2010_Report.ashx) http://www.mci-group.com/~media/MCI/Files/MCIPublications/csr_related/MCI_Sustainability_2010_Report.ashx

4.3.2 Offset procurement

The strategy for a climate-neutral UN states that “...the UN’s choice of offsets [...] should meet the levels defined under the Kyoto mechanisms at the very least.”⁹ The Kyoto mechanisms refer to three market-based mechanisms that together create a “carbon market”: Clean Development Mechanism (CDM); Joint Implementation (JI); and Emissions Trading. (http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/mechanisms/items/1673.php).

⁸ In the “opt out” option, participants have to specify that they do not wish to pay the offset fee, which is otherwise integrated into the overall registration fee. In the “opt in” version, participants have to consciously select the option of paying the offset fee, which will then be added to the conference fee.

⁹ The Strategy for a climate-neutral UN (EMG/AM.07/06/Rev.1), see also www.unemg.org



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Offsetting criteria:

The Strategy also highlights a minimum set of criteria or principles that should guide the UN's choice of offsets:

- *Additionality*: offsets must generate real emissions reductions that would not have otherwise occurred.
- *Verification and certification*: the reductions must be real, demonstrable and measurable.
- *Transparency*: full disclosure of all relevant information in an easily accessible form for potential consumers or purchasers of offsets.
- *Time-frame and permanency*: the time period within which the reductions take place should be clearly indicated and the reductions must be permanent.
- *Sustainable development benefits* must be generated by the offset activities.
- The offsets chosen should be consistent with *inter-governmentally accepted standards*.
- Organisations should voluntarily exclude the purchase of offsets in *self-generated or self-supported activities* to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Organisations may, acting individually or collaboratively, specify additional requirements that reflect their specific mandates, aspirations or objectives. The recommended carbon credits to be purchased are Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) or

Emission Reduction Units (ERUs) through the Joint Implementation, or any offsets that have a higher quality than the CERs or ERUs.

Here you can find some online resources to guide you in the purchase of carbon offsets:

- Purchasing Carbon Offsets: A Guide for Canadian Consumers, Businesses, and Organisations
<http://www.pembina.org/pub/1866>
- Suggested Offset Criteria from the Environment Defense Fund
<http://business.edf.org/energy-emissions/carbon-offsets/suggested-offset-criteria>
- Guidance from the Environment Protection Agency, Victoria, Australia
<http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/climate-change/carbon-offsets/choosing-an-offset.asp>
- Carbon Offset Guide Australia
<http://www.carbonoffsetguide.com.au/>
- A Consumer's Guide to Retail Offset Providers
www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/ConsumersGuidetoCarbonOffsets.pdf
- Carbon Offset Research and Education (CORE) Initiative
www.co2offsetresearch.org

4.4 Climate neutral events as an awareness-raising tool

Involving participants in the measurement, emissions reduction and offsetting process can be a very powerful awareness-raising tool, since they can relate to something very personal, such as the amount of emissions their own trip to the event has generated. This could be done even if the money required to offset is not collected from participants.

As an improvement on this, it would be a good idea to integrate a calculator in the online registration process that, on the basis of the travel-related information entered by the user, generates automatically the estimated amount of emissions related to their travel.

Comparing the emission results to a quantifiable example (e.g., “your first class flight will generate approximately ---- kilograms of CO₂ equivalent; this corresponds to the emissions generated by the electricity use of ---- homes for one year”) would make the number more “real” and easier to understand.

Another way to get participants involved and motivated to make the right choice is by having a “help-desk” or staff at the event location airport and/or main train station. This will not only be appreciated by participants as a welcoming gesture but can also help to encourage them to take more sustainable transport options to the hotels and the venue.



GOOD PRACTICE: OFFSETTING AND PARTICIPANTS ENGAGEMENT

At the 2011 European Ecology Conference participants voted for their choice of offset project from among three options. During the plenary the sustainability initiatives were communicated and participants were invited to go to the sustainability area and place their vote. This type of engagement helps to raise awareness.

MCI, <http://www.europeanecology.org/meetings/>



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5. REPORTING ON SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Sustainable event management is a continuous learning process. Establishing an appropriate and transparent monitoring and reporting procedure will:

- enable you to assess achievements, learn lessons and improve for the future (benchmarking and data comparison)
- help you to communicate and motivate suppliers and staff
- gain the trust of your stakeholders and improve the image of your organization, with potential consequent economic benefits
- save money thanks to the increased monitoring and evaluation of the use of resources.

Make sure to communicate your results! Celebrate your successes but do not hide failures: the goals you have not achieved this time will become new targets for the next event.



Communicating information about a sustainable event

Climate Change COP15 Sustainability Snapshot (Copenhagen)

- 100% of delegates' carbon emissions were offset
- 93% of the participants used public transport to travel to and from the venue
- 75% of the food and beverage was certified organic
- 53% of hotels in the Copenhagen Area and the venue were eco-certified
- more than \$700,000 was saved by not giving gifts
- 40% of food was sourced within a 100mile (160km) radius
- 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions at the Bella Center
- 4% of Venue Energy Consumption generated by an onsite wind turbine
- first UN event to achieve BS8901 certification of its management system

<http://www.sustainableeventsdenmark.org/category/reports>

Snapshot: European Wind Energy Association (EWEA) Annual event (March 2011, Brussels)

Number of participants: 9,000; Leading exhibitors: 445; Presentations: 500

Total score of 62% against industry average of 44%

- 89% of event waste recycled
- 100% of the exhibition hall carpet (31,340 m²) collected and recycled
- 60% of all food served sourced locally
- 3,000 public transport tickets distributed to participants
- Approx. \$12,000 donated to Renewable World for wind-powered water pumps for farmers in Mozambique

http://www.ewea.org/fileadmin/emag/sustainability/EWEA_Sustainability_Report_EWEA2011/pdf/sustainable%20report%20EWEA2011.pdf



5.1 Monitoring

From the start of the organisation of the event, to the end of any follow-up work quantitative data should be collected on:

- Resources consumed
- Waste generation and disposal
- Energy consumption
- Travel
- Water consumption
- Stakeholders' engagement and attitude
- Percentage of local suppliers and SMEs
- Basic information such as the number of participants, duration in days, etc., should always be provided for reference, together with quantitative data on resources.

5.2 Standards

With increasing attention to the “real” sustainability of events and the consequent need to measure and certify it, the market has responded by developing a series of “green/sustainable event” labels and certifications. Currently, many standards are available and more are under development – with different levels of complexity and varying geographical scope.

The image below gives a clear visual representation of major international sustainable event standards that can be used to improve performance.

Event certifications

The events world is waiting for some new tools that are coming out soon to help event organisers better plan, monitor and report on the sustainability of their event.





In addition to the existing British BS 8901, two other standards are currently being developed:

ISO 20121 - Event sustainability management systems: a comprehensive and systematic approach to embedding sustainability into the event planning cycle, developed from the current BS 8901 standard in the UK. www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue/catalogue_tc/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=54552

APEX/ASTM Environmentally Sustainable Meeting Standards: offering a more advanced checklist that includes all stages of the planning process and allows the environmental performance of events to be measured. <http://www.conventionindustry.org/StandardsPractices/APEXASTM.aspx>

To help event organisers report on the sustainability of their event, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)¹⁰ created the Event Organizers Sector Supplement¹¹: a reporting structure to measure economic, environmental, social, and governance dimensions of event activities, products, and services. <https://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/sector-guidance/event-organizers/Pages/default.aspx>

In parallel to the GRI reporting, the GMIC developed a simplified template (called the “Event Sector C Level Template”). It is adapted to the same kind of meetings and events as those to which the Sustainable Events Guide is applicable. The level C template reduces the number of indicators to a few key ones that represent all the main categories analysed by the GRI. The recommendations in this section have been developed in close cooperation with the GMIC, to ensure that they closely correspond to that template. <https://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/sector-guidance/event-organizers/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁰ The GRI is a network-based organization that produces a comprehensive sustainability reporting framework that is widely used around the world. GRI's core goals include the mainstreaming of disclosure on environmental, social and governance performance. GRI's Reporting Framework is developed through a consensus-seeking, multi-stakeholder process.

¹¹ GRI Sector Supplements are tailored versions of the GRI Guidelines. Sector Supplements help to make sustainability reports more relevant, and easier to produce.



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5.3 Sustainable Events Guide reporting options

According to your familiarity with reporting and your current expertise in event sustainability, you can choose between two recommended options to report on how successful your sustainability measures have been:

Basic reporting

If you are still at the early stages of your events sustainability process, you might prefer an easier way to monitor how well you have done. In this case, we recommend you use the checklist at the end of this guide: the number of items you tick off in each checklist will help you benchmark your event; the un-ticked ones will become goals for the next one, in a process of gradual improvement. Using the checklist as a reference, write a short narrative to explain how you worked towards the fulfilment of the 8 criteria given at the beginning of the guide. You can then use this text as your sustainability report.

Advanced reporting

If you already have some experience with sustainable events and reporting, you can use the reporting template that you find in Annex 2 – Reporting template, which combines the 8 criteria of the Sustainable Events Guide with the level C template indicators (taken from the GRI template). This will enable you, at a later stage, easily to fill out the GRI level C template if you wish to do so.

On the other hand, if you have enough capacity and experience, try the GRI reporting, choosing the level (A, B or C) according to how comfortable you feel. For more information on the GRI levels, see <https://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/reporting-framework-overview/application-level-information/Pages/default.aspx>



GOOD PRACTICE: BENCHMARKING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF EVENTS

The European Wind Energy Association working with MCI, have benchmarked the environmental sustainability of their recent Conferences using the MeetGreen_R calculator. This tool allowed them to evaluate performance in the 9 categories of APEX Standards and compare performance from event to event.

Read more: <http://www.ewea.org>



This section could not have been drafted without the support of the Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC), who supported the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) to develop the GRI Event Organizers Sector Supplement and is responsible for developing the simplified “Event Sector C Level Template”.

For more information about GMIC, visit <http://www.gmicglobal.org/>



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6. SUSTAINABLE EVENTS CHECKLISTS

This Sustainable Events Checklist provides a detailed set of recommendations for organisers of larger events. It covers the most important aspects of event organisation. In cases where certain aspects, such as the venue or accommodation, are not the responsibility of the organiser but of the host country/organisation, these recommendations can be passed on to those in charge. They can also be useful when choosing service providers, who can be asked to tick the criteria they fulfil (and provide supporting documentation!).

The checklist can be downloaded in a Word version from the SUN website <http://www.unep.org/SUN> and the ICLEI website <http://www.iclei-europe.org/products-activities/training-events/sustainable-events>.

The recommendations are divided into event organisation areas (mirroring the structure of section 3) and further categorised under headings such as management, efficiency, and service. They are arranged from the most basic recommendation to the most advanced. Depending on your experience and resources, try to fulfil as many recommendations as possible. Use the checklist for internal

benchmarking and aim to increase the number of items you tick for each future event.

Regional considerations have been included for some specific areas. In general, you will need to start by assessing the availability of tools and services in your region. With this in mind, you can implement the basic recommendations and adapt them to your particular situation.

One of the most important guidelines is to prioritise awareness-raising about the sustainable aspects of your event and to ensure that all stakeholders involved are aware of your sustainability goals, action plans and initiatives. When applicable, ask them to inform their staff and their clients; this will enable the users of the checklist (whether your staff, the venue manager or another service provider) to fully understand their role in the sustainability process, increasing the chances of success of implementing the recommendations.

6.1 Venue

Overview:

- 6.1.1 Management
- 6.1.2 Accessibility and social inclusion
- 6.1.3 Service
- 6.1.4 Efficiency
 - 6.1.4.1 *Energy and Water*
 - 6.1.4.2 *Waste*

6.1.1 Management	Y/N?	Notes
The venue should:		
Provide information to staff and participants about the green aspects of the venue to inform and encourage guest participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have an environmental/sustainability policy and action plan in place, ideally covering: sustainable procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation and waste.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Apply environmental and social considerations in purchasing policy, buying locally-produced products and emphasising a life-cycle analysis of all products (waste reduction, energy conservation, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Have an established programme for reporting and addressing health and safety in the workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have training courses for staff focused on environmental responsibilities and opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Be certified with a recognised sustainable building or another recognised sustainability/ environmental management system (e.g. BREEM, LEED, ISO 14001, EMAS, BS8901 or equivalent).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.1.2 Accessibility and social inclusion	Y/N?	Notes
The venue should:		
Have good access (ideally within walking distance) to the main public transport connections and town centre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Be located near hotels where participants and speakers can stay or even provide accommodation facilities at the venue itself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure full accessibility for all ("design for All") http://www.designforall.org/ :		
Ensure full accessibility for all, (e.g., access to buildings and stages with ramps of a gradient no steeper than 1:20, acoustics appropriate for hearing aid users and working loop systems in lecture theatres and reception desks).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure unisex and single-sex accessible toilets on the same level as the main event space.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a variety of seating space allocation (e.g., space for deaf people to sit near the sign language interpreter, and hearing-aid users to benefit from the use of an induction loop).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
When possible, choose a ground floor event space, thus removing the need for lifts altogether.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure that passenger lifts are at least 1.4 m long and 1.1 m wide and that they are in working order.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.1.3 Service	Y/N?	Notes
If catering is provided by the venue, the facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the "Catering" section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should practice environmentally friendly cleaning. This should ensure that:		
The venue cleaning staff or private cleaning contractors are trained in environmentally friendly cleaning practices. This training should cover cleaning agents, methods and dosage, equipment and machines used: waste management; and aspects of health, safety and the environment. A record of these training measures should be maintained on a regular schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The use of disinfectant should be minimised and automated dosage used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eco-labelled cleaning products should be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where eco-labelled products are unavailable, they should at least:		
Not be classified as potentially harmful to human health or the environment according to national/regional classification systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Be readily biodegradable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not contain EDTA (ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid), NTA (nitrilotriacetic acid) or APEOs (alkylphenol ethoxylates).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not contain more than 25% by weight of volatile organic compounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not contain more than 0.5% by weight of phosphorus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.1.4 Efficiency	Y/N?	Notes
6.1.4.1 Energy and Water		
It should be possible to regulate the temperature within the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Preference should be given to “bioclimatic” venues:		
Designed to maximise the use of daylight (rooms, coffee areas, lunch areas and exhibition areas).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
With energy-efficient lighting and other appliances installed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
With water-saving appliances in kitchens and toilets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Supplied with green electricity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
With green building standards, e.g. high insulation and efficient heating and cooling systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should make use of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind or Renewable Energy Credits (RECs).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Promote the use of a “green” taxi operator, for situations when a taxi is needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Operate fuel-efficient vehicles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.1.4.2 Waste	Y/N?	
All waste produced at the venue should be separated (e.g., paper, plastic, metal, organic) at source and sufficient, well-marked bins should be provided in both participant and staff areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, organic waste should be separately collected for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The venue should reuse materials or donate them to charities (e.g., used linens or usable food).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.2 Accommodation

Overview:

- 6.2.1 Management
- 6.2.2 Accessibility
- 6.2.3 Service
- 6.2.4 Efficiency
 - 6.2.4.1 *Energy and Water*
 - 6.2.4.2 *Waste*

6.2.1 Management	Y/N?	Notes
Hotels should:		
Provide to staff and place in guest rooms, information about the green aspects of the hotel to inform and encourage guest participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have an environmental/sustainability policy and action plan in place, ideally covering: sustainable procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation and waste.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Apply environmental and social considerations in its purchasing policy, buying locally-produced products and emphasising a life-cycle analysis of all products (waste reduction, energy conservation, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have an established programme for reporting and addressing health and safety issues in the workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a training course for staff focused on environmental responsibilities and opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Be certified with a recognised Ecolabel or another recognised environmental management system: (e.g., Green Key, ISO 14001, EMAS or equivalent, UNGC).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.2.2 Accessibility	Y/N?	Notes
The hotel should:		
Be located near public transportation and the conference facilities (preferably within walking distance). Close proximity to social infrastructure (pharmacies, shops) might be an asset.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Meet guidelines for accessibility and be adapted for people with reduced mobility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Operate fuel-efficient vehicles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.2.3 Services	Y/N?	Notes
Catering facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the “Catering” section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should provide a Fair Trade coffee option in its coffee service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should use ceramics/glassware for in-room coffee service. If only disposable cups can be provided, they should be locally recyclable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should practice environmentally friendly cleaning. This should ensure that:		
The venue cleaning staff or private cleaning contractors are trained in environmentally friendly cleaning practices. This training should cover cleaning agents, methods and dosage, equipment and machines used; waste management; and aspects of health, safety and the environment. A record of these training measures should be provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The use of disinfectant should be minimised and automated dosage used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eco-labelled cleaning products should be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Where eco-labelled products are unavailable, they should at least:		
Not be classified as potentially harmful to human health or the environment according to national/regional classification systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Be readily biodegradable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not contain EDTA (ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid), NTA (nitrilotriacetic acid) or APEOs (alkylphenol ethoxylates).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not contain more than 25% by weight of volatile organic compounds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not contain more than 0.5% by weight of phosphorus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.2.4 Efficiency	Y/N?	Notes
6.2.4.1. Energy and Water		
Guests should have the option of a re-use sheet and towel programme to save energy and water used by laundry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Guests and staff should be encouraged to reduce water use, turn off lights and other energy-consuming devices and invited to walk instead of taking the elevator – all indicated with clearly visible signs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy-efficient light-bulbs and systems should be standard, and lighting should be set to the minimum level necessary for comfort, safety and accessibility. The use of natural light and ventilation should be promoted where possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
It should be possible to manually open windows to avoid the use of a mechanical air-conditioning system.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Facilities should be equipped with water-saving devices (e.g. tap and shower flow regulators, automatic shut-off of faucets and shower, low-flush and dual-flush toilets).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Hotel rooms should not be heated above 20°C, or cooled 6°C below the outside temperature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Key cards should be linked to energy appliances (e.g. lights and air-conditioning should switch off when people leave the room).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Lighting systems equipped with motion-detectors should be installed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Offer and coordinate group pick-up service for participants (carpooling), or promote the use of a “green” taxi operator, when local transport is not an option.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The building should have an efficient water and electrical system, regularly maintained in order to save energy and reduce long-term costs, which can imply:		
Good internal insulation so that less energy is wasted through overheated corridors and unoccupied rooms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Automatic controls for heating and cooling, with levels set to the minimum necessary for comfort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hot water heaters, pipes and water-using fixtures properly insulated and regularly maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Curtains and blinds should be manually operable, instead of electrically powered. Otherwise, they should be linked to an intelligent system that controls them in order to maintain a suitable temperature indoors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Insulating covers should be installed on all indoor and outdoor swimming pools and hot tubs to reduce both energy and water use (as a result of evaporation).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The hotel should make use of renewable energy sources, such as solar or wind energy, or RECs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rainwater and grey water use should be maximised in the hotel buildings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Water use for grounds maintenance should be reduced through conservation measures such as planting drought-tolerant vegetation and mulching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.2.4.2 Waste	Y/N?	Notes
All waste produced by the hotel should be collected separately (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic), and sufficiently well-marked bins provided in both guest and staff areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Measures should be taken to reduce paper use:		
Short forms or computerised systems at check-in/out and for the billing process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Newspapers delivered to rooms only if requested and not wrapped in a plastic bag.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If used, ensure that paper is printed double-sided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Products such as shampoo and soap should be purchased in bulk and provided in refillable dispensers. If not possible, the hotel should instruct housekeeping staff not to replace consumable amenities unless they are empty, except for when new guests arrive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reusable items should be used as much as possible. If disposable items are essential, they should be recyclable and the appropriate recycling systems should be in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paper products used by the hotel (including fine notepaper, computer paper, tissues, toilet paper, paper towels and paper for guests) should have a high-recycled content (ideally 100%), be totally or elementary chlorine-free (TCF or ECF) and, ideally, carry the approval of a forest-conservation organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Packaging should be avoided or reduced, and when it is needed it should contain a high percentage of recycled content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Packaging should not contain PVC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, hotels should separately collect organic waste for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hotels should reuse or donate materials to charities (e.g. linens and edible food).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.3 Catering

In some areas local health authorities might not accept bulk dispensers and reusable containers for catering consumables. In these cases, convey this information to guests, so they understand why such measures were not possible. Ideally, the food service organisation should work with local health authorities to overcome any regulatory hurdles.

Overview:

- 6.3.1 Management and set-up
- 6.3.2 Food and beverage
- 6.3.3 Materials and packaging
- 6.3.4 Waste disposal

6.3.1. Management and set up	Y/N?	Notes
Provide information to staff and participants about the green aspects of the menu to raise awareness of the origin of food and the disposal of leftovers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The catering company should be local, have an environmental policy and action plan in place or be willing to follow the core recommendations in the checklist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage the use of water-and energy-efficient kitchen appliances (e.g. appliances carrying the ENERGY STAR Ecolabel, the EU energy/water label classification A, or other regional standards).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Catering premises should be cleaned in an environmentally friendly manner. For advice on this aspect, see the "Accommodation" section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage catering companies and food and beverage suppliers to use efficient and low-emission vehicles and to address the efficiency of transportation routes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure there is a system in place which allows all guests to easily access the catering service:		
Reduce likelihood of long queues for food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Provide enough chairs for people to sit down.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make sure that people with disabilities or special needs are provided with the necessary facilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.3.2. Food and Beverage	Y/N?	Notes
Consider if there are any cultural or religious considerations to be respected when setting menus. (In case of doubt ensure that a vegetarian and a vegan option are always available.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Opt for tap water. In all situations, avoid bottled water, choosing instead large dispensers and/or carafes. Make it easy for participants by setting up several water points. (Where tap water is not drinkable, ensure that the guidelines for packaging are followed.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimise the quantity of meat and dairy products offered, and always offer at least one vegetarian option.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make sure that the vegetarian and, possibly vegan, options are kept separate from the other options and are well labelled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ask the caterer not to pre-fill water glasses at seated functions but to do so only upon request.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid the use of large quantities of ice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use locally grown and non-frozen food and drinks. Menus should reflect the seasonal produce of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use organically produced food and beverages. Products should be certified as meeting regional or international organic standards, to the greatest possible extent. In certain regions, food produced under “integrated production systems” may be more easily available than organic produce. This can be offered as an alternative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Provide Fair Trade-labelled products (such as coffee, tea, and sugar) as the standard, accepting potentially higher prices. Products should be independently certified as Fair Trade. They should either carry the internationally recognised Fair Trade product label (www.fairtrade.net), or be supplied by a company registered with the WFTO (the World Fair Trade Organization – www.wfto.com).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If working with a private catering contractor, set a specific percentage of products that should be local, organic, and/or fair trade and encourage them to list this information on the menu.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where livestock products are used, purchase only those produced according to high welfare standards and certified as such (e.g., free-range eggs, bio meat).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where marine and aquaculture products are offered, these should be caught/produced using sustainable methods. If available, use products certified with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or a similar label. The WWF has also produced a number of country-specific buying guides: http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/marine/our_solutions/sustainable_fishing/sustainable_seafood/seafood_guides/index.cfm . Another useful resource is www.seafoodchoices.com .	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Donate surplus edible food to non-profit organisations (e.g., Berliner Tafel: www.tafel.de and/or food banks (if allowed by your national regulations).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please note:

It is not possible to provide specific guidance on whether to use local non-organic or non-local organic produce, as this depends on circumstances, distance, method of transport, type of product and other factors. Ideally, try to use local, organic produce or take advice on the best option.

As the availability of local, organic and fair trade products will vary considerably from region to region it is a good idea to check availability and prices with a local catering supplier and set appropriate target percentages (e.g., X% of vegetable/dairy/meat products must be organic).

6.3.3. Materials and Packaging	Y/N?	Notes
Avoid the use of disposable items by using reusable dishes, cutlery, glassware and linens (i.e. no paper, plastic or polystyrene cups, no paper napkins or table cover, no plastic cutlery, and no disposable doilies). Avoid aluminium or plastic wrapping.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid the use of single-use bottles for juice and water. If unavoidable, ensure they are recyclable or reusable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide recyclable bottles for participants to refill with drinking water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid single-serve containers for food and condiments (e.g., milk, cream, artificial sweeteners, butter, ketchup, vinegar, mustard, jams, salt, pepper, breakfast cereals). Use bulk dispensers or jars for water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Packaging should not contain PVC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Products should be supplied in reusable or recyclable packaging or alternatively the supplier should take back all packaging and guarantee its recycling or reuse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If disposable items are essential, try to ensure they contain a high content of recycled or plant-based material.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If a composting service is available, consider using compostable material for disposables.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid the use of paper, substituting it with blackboards/chalk or digital screens. When paper is necessary, try to ensure that vegetable-based inks are used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paper products used for catering should have a high-recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elemental chlorine-free (TCF or ECF) and, ideally, carry the approval of a forest conservation organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For boat tours or other functions where breakable dishes are not permitted, reusable acrylic dishware could be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.3.4. Waste disposal	Y/N?	Notes
Inform caterers of the exact number of participants and re-evaluate quantity needed during the meeting to help avoid waste.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/ instructions – particularly in kitchens and in dining areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All waste produced during catering should be collected separately (e.g., paper, plastic, metal, organic).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make sure that biodegradable and recyclable items are collected separately to optimize the recycling and composting process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where an external catering company is used, they should be responsible for waste collection and disposal during the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where separated collection and recycling/ reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation (see sections above).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make sure to minimise run-off water and to reuse or dispose of it sustainably.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Collect oil and fat and provide it to respective users and/or use for fuelling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
In some locations, (e.g., some of the large UN compounds), a compost system on site can be considered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.4 Communication and event material

Overview

- 6.4.1 Communication with participants and registration
- 6.4.2 Materials for the event (including conference secretariat)
- 6.4.3 Setting up, running and dismantling the event
 - 6.4.3.1 Social considerations

6.4.1. Communication with participants and registration	Y/N?	Notes
Provide advice by email to participants on “sustainable behaviour”, explaining what delegates could do before and during the meeting. This could include, (depending on accommodation arrangements) for example:		
Ask delegates about any specific accessibility requirements in advance of the event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduce, as much as possible, the use of paper in all communications with participants, in favour of electronic means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Set up an electronic registration system that allows participants to register as well as submit forms and pictures via email or through a web service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Encourage participants to offset their carbon emissions created by the trip, unless you plan to do so yourself. (See Section 4 - Offsetting the remaining emissions from a sustainable event)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide links to public transport websites and, if possible, real-time information links.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a platform for participants to communicate and organise sharing of cars, buses and/or taxis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Share with participants the following list of preferable means of transport to get to the meeting, presented in order of increasing environmental impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train, shared hybrid/electric vehicles, bus or car (if not shared a smaller car is recommended), direct flight in economy class when travelling by plane is necessary. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only print what you need before travelling. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring your own pen and paper to the meeting. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel by foot, bicycle or public transport as much as possible. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in one of the recommended hotels, which operate in an environmentally responsible manner. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn off any lights, TV, air conditioner or heater when you leave your hotel room for the day. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the hotel offers this service, take the energy-saving option of not having sheets and towels changed every day (and make sure it is enforced). If not in place, talk to the hotel managers and inform them of your wishes. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycle your waste: bottles, cans, paper, etc. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure that the information on your sustainability efforts is provided electronically prior to and after the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Create an online marketing/promotional campaign on the sustainability practices of the event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.4.2. Materials for the event	Y/N?	Notes
Print only necessary material. Send relevant documentation by email beforehand (see above), and have either a small number of spare printed copies of documents at the registration desk or printing/copying facilities available for participants at the venue on a request-only basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any paper used (promotional material, programme, signs...) should be 100% recycled, with a minimum of 65% of post consumer waste content, and totally or elemental chlorine-free (TCF or EFC). Avoid glossy and colourful publications. (If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a percentage of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Participants should be encouraged to keep their conference material until the end of the meeting. Asking them to sign upon receipt of the material can serve as an incentive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide participants with a CD or USB stick with all the conference material, to avoid printing. As an alternative, provide attendees with a stable internet connection where they can download the conference material from a protected area of the conference website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Print as much as possible locally, rather than shipping material from the headquarters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Participant bags/packs, banners, gifts and other relevant items should, as far as possible, be produced locally, using sustainably harvested organic or recycled material, and should be reusable. PVC should be avoided as well as products containing potentially harmful chemicals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Adopt a generic event brand (e.g., without dates and specific titles) and use it in signage (banners, posters, signs, place cards) so that they can be re-used for the next event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pens should only be provided upon request. They should be made using a high content of recycled material and be refillable. Invite participants to bring their own pens and paper to the meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid PVC and adhesive signage, as well as signage made with polystyrene, in favour of paper or electronic ones.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider whether gifts are necessary at all: you can substitute them with donations for environmental and/or social causes. Make certain to inform the participants about the charity to which they are contributing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you choose to give out gifts at the events, encourage the purchase of useful giveaways such as travel mugs, aluminium water bottles, USB drives, and other such items that participants can reuse. Consider gifts that convey a green or socially responsible message, such as tree planted in the recipient's name or local artisanal products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Any food products provided as gifts should follow the recommendations included in the "Catering" section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use reusable dry-mark erasable boards or blackboards instead of paper flip charts. Ensure "non-toxic" markers are used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Donate material that cannot be reused at future conferences to local businesses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reusable/recyclable accreditation badges should be provided. Set up a dedicated area for participants to return them and other material that can be reused.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For external printing contracts, choose environmentally responsible printing companies which do not use environmentally persistent chemicals and promote responsible practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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6.4.3 Setting up, running the event and dismantling	Y/N?	Notes
At the beginning of the event (e.g. during the opening plenary) remind both staff and participants that they should follow certain rules to help the sustainability of the event and ensure minimum environmental impacts, including the following measures:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favour the use of daylight – plan the setting of the secretariat in a way that maximises the use of natural light: e.g., place working stations close to windows or coffee areas with natural light, etc. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn off lights and equipment and switch off the multi-plug socket when not in use. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favour the use of more energy-efficient electronic devices (e.g. laptops instead of PCs). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print and photocopy on both sides, keeping font size to a minimum whilst ensuring readability, and minimise the use of colour copies. When designing the corporate image of the event, choose colours that are compatible when printing in black and white (it is preferable to use light colours rather than darker colours). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect paper that has been used on one side only in collector trays, and reuse for printing and notepaper. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the energy-saving features of all electronic equipment are enabled. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All waste produced by the secretariat should be collected separately (e.g., paper, plastic, metal, organic). Provide bins for collection. This should include the separated items of used photocopier and printer cartridges and batteries. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make sure that the recommendations to participants about sustainable practices (like recycling signage) are clear, well located and easy to understand for an international audiences (iconography is often well-suited for this purpose).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduce paper waste at participant registration with short registration forms and computerised systems (see "Communication with participants and registration").	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure there are numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste items with clear signs/instructions in both participant and staff areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adjust the start and end time of an event to the schedules of environmentally sound transportation means and avoiding traffic rush hours.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
In the secretariat, use ENERGY STAR® certified electronic equipment (printers, photocopiers, computers, etc.) with energy conserving features as standard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimise the use of decorative elements and always choose sustainable decor (e.g., foliage should not be cut flowers, but rather the whole plant). In events that last more than one day, plants should be chosen according to the external conditions where the plant will be placed after the event. Choose soya candles instead of wax candles. Avoid decorations that might be related to animal cruelty or endangered species (e.g., fur, rare flowers).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Meeting and conference rooms should be adapted to the local seasonal conditions and not be cooled more than 6°C below the outside temperature or heated above 20°C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Set up a stand (e.g., in the exhibition area) to communicate the sustainability aspects of the meeting to participants. Promote it on the website and during the opening session. Make participants feel part of the sustainability process of the event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If possible and culturally accepted, favour remote translation options, to avoid the need for translators to travel to the meeting location.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A portable office approach that allows staff to access their files through a secure connection considerably reduces the amount of background material staff need to carry with them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.4.3.1 Social considerations		
Consider the representation of diversity in event literature and among the hosts/ speakers to reflect that of the target audience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Try to ensure your event runs on time and schedule plenty of breaks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide personal assistants if a large number of disabled people are attending.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make sure to adhere to legal requirements for employment (e.g., equal opportunities and pay) and health and safety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Improve the wellbeing of your delegates by minimising travel, providing plenty of fruit and water, maximising natural daylight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Promote local attractions and amenities to your delegates to benefit the local economy and educate delegates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide an area where participants can relax during the day, especially for those whose hotel is located far from the venue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.5 Local transport

Following the subsequent recommendations, take into consideration that the quality and reach of public transportation systems, the availability and the recognised standards for efficient and low emission vehicles will vary considerably by region, as well as the levels of safety for walking or cycling.

Overview

- 6.5.1. Participant and staff
- 6.5.2. Goods and services

6.5.1. Participant and staff	Y/N?	Notes
Before the event, provide participants with clear instructions and maps, which can be included in the participant packs and displayed in the venue, on appropriate public transport and/or walking arrangements from point of arrival/ departure (railway station, airport) to the venue, accommodation and town centre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider proximity to public transport connections when selecting the venue and hotels, as this has a major bearing on local transportation impacts (see "Selecting the venue" and "Accommodation" sections).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide participants with complimentary public transport tickets. (These could be included on the back of the participant's name badge.) As a minimum try to organise discounts for participants on public transport (especially for long events).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If public transport is not available, organise a shuttle service or car-share scheme for travel between the hotel, venue and/or point of arrival/departure (railway station, airport).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If organising shared transport is not feasible, ask the hotels to organise joint pick-up of participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For cases in which a taxi is needed, promote the use of a “green” taxi operator if available, or encourage the use of cycle cabs in cities where such a service is available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If a bus rental company needs to be hired, select one that operates with hybrid/electric/alternative fuel fleets and that applies ecological driving practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ensure that parking areas for events do not damage the natural environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide walking options by creating safe walking routes with maps between the venue and the hotels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make bicycles available for participants to borrow/rent and ensure that secure parking facilities are provided at the venue and hotels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide a member of staff or local volunteer to accompany participants from hotels/stations to the venue by foot or local transport.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.5.2. Goods and services	Y/N?	Notes
Avoid shipping materials to the venue that can be acquired locally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For materials that must be shipped, select a freight hauler that carries out environmentally responsible practices in their operations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider the use of truck-pooling (instead of using 10 trucks for 10 different items, consider combining loads where possible) or joint storage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.6 Exhibitions

Recommendations	Y/N?	Notes
Choose pre-existing building when available. Avoid erecting marquees or tents, but if essential then check their environmental impact before setting them up (e.g., arrange for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reuse signage and displays – where possible, avoid referring to location and years so you can reuse the signs at future events. For the same reason, favour the use of internationally-recognised symbols instead of words, so that they can be adapted to different languages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid the use of carpet or floorboard to cover the floor. If carpet must be used, substitute a conventional plastic covering with other covering systems such as cellulose or coconut fibre carpet, or reusable floor tiles made from recycled PVC. Use carpet with a high percentage of recycled and recyclable plastic fibres. Do not use irreversible carpet adhesion systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All waste produced must be collected separately (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Limit the amount of material exhibitors can bring in; charge the exhibitors for the amount of waste they produce that cannot be recycled or re-used, or ask them to take it back themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consider hosting a competition or providing a discount for the most sustainable exhibition design.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Include in the exhibitors' conditions for participation the following criteria:		
Minimise the use of decor, carpet, display and giveaway material.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rent furniture instead of purchasing it, whenever possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Be innovative - use fold-up furniture (to make transport easier) and opt for multifunctional, reusable furniture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use separable or reversible joints (clip-type rather than glue) for the exhibition stands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduce decorations, carpets and display materials and when necessary, make sure they are made of recycled materials and/or can be reused for future meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minimise the use of lighting and other energy requirements at the stand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use paper products that have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and which are totally or elemental chlorine-free (TCF or ECF).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Limit the number of publications and handouts. Instead collect business cards, post a sign-up sheet or save the publications, etc., in the participants' USB.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide promotional items which, as far as possible, have been produced using environmentally-friendly materials such as organic unbleached cotton or recycled material, and which should be reusable. PVC should be avoided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use packaging that is minimal, reusable and/or recyclable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Make an effort to collect and reuse publications discarded by participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Avoid using air travel to send materials if possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use environmentally-friendly materials in the construction of the base exhibition stands, including legally and sustainably harvested timber and recycled materials. All materials used should be recyclable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.7 Stakeholder engagement and communication

Recommendations	Y/N?	Notes
Identify key stakeholders and inform them of the event and the sustainability measures undertaken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plan proper communications campaigns to engage all stakeholders in your sustainability communication strategy and action plan and inform them of all stages of event preparation, through the website, regular pre-event emails, tailored info-sheets on how they can contribute.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consult and cooperate with stakeholders (e.g. neighbouring landowners, public authorities and emergency services) in order to reduce environmental impacts such as noise and waste. Use local labour and produce for services such as catering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Use the event to raise awareness among participants, through information documents, opening speeches and announcements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Develop a “sustainable participant” guide/ factsheet and post it on your website and include it in your conference material.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Involve the media before, during and after the event and ensure that they are informed about the sustainability strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose local entertainers and invite local residents to attend the event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Involve stakeholders in competitions that create awareness and require active participation (for example by establishing a special recognition system for partners, sponsors or participants who engage in sustainable practices (e.g., certificates).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide training programmes for staff and service providers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

ANNEX 1

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

1. BENEFITS

Sustainable procurement can:

- **Reduce negative environmental impacts by requiring:**
 - Greater energy efficiency (buildings, meeting rooms, IT appliances)
 - Waste reduction/management (food, packaging, training)
 - CO₂ reduction (low-emission transport, renewable energy)
 - Water-saving devices
- **Encourage social improvement through:**
 - Supporting local and regional business (catering, cleaning, energy supply)
 - Tackling unemployment (social integration, “reserved contracts”)
 - Contributing to Millennium Development Goals (gender equality, Fair Trade)
 - Ensuring human rights and labour standards – also along the supply chain (core ILO Conventions)
- **Achieve financial savings through:**
 - The above-mentioned reductions in water, energy, etc.
 - Having trained staff
 - Other smart solutions (Specific: increase vegetarian food in catering, car/truck-pooling)

2. SUSTAINABLE EVENTS TENDER

- **Recommendations for public procurers**

Sustainable Procurement (SP) is about incorporating environmental, economic and social aspects into procurement procedures. When issuing calls for tender for a large event, it is advisable to clearly state right from the beginning and identify in the subject matter that you want to organise a “sustainable event”. All subsequent tender phases and criteria need to relate to the subject matter. To make the process more manageable, a possibility is to divide one tender into various lots for specific services and products; but the “sustainable event” specification must always be there.

Examples of relevant requirements:

- Specify minimum percentages (e.g., at least 50%) and/or award points for the use of **fruits and vegetables**, sustainably harvested items (e.g., marine products), or resources that must be seasonal and organically produced (technical specification/award criteria)
- Food waste and/or **waste from food packaging** must be minimised (contract performance clauses)
- Caterers must describe their experience applying appropriate environmental management measures, such as **training for staff**, or donation of edible leftover food (selection criteria for suppliers)
- **Paper** is made from 100% recovered paper fibres (recycled) or sourced from sustainably harvested forests
- All or a certain percentage of **IT products** (PCs, notebooks, monitors, multifunctional devices) meet the latest ENERGY STAR standards for energy performance, available at www.energystar.org. (technical specifications)
- All **cleaning products** are accredited, or equivalent, to be environmentally friendly without toxic or hazardous substances (technical specifications)
- **Electricity** (or a proportion of the electricity) must be generated from renewable energy sources. Request Renewable Energy Certificates (technical specifications).
- Additional points are awarded for complementary **energy saving activities** offered by the venue organiser, such as an energy audit of the existing consumption patterns (award criteria)

ANNEX 2

Use the following template to report on the sustainability of your events. The indicators correspond to the GRI Level C template, developed by GMIC and based on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Event Organizers Sector Supplement. Fill out the template with the quantitative and qualitative data required, thus proving how you worked towards the fulfilment of the 8 criteria of the Sustainable Events Guide; complete the template with a short narrative and use that as your event sustainability report.

SUSTAINABLE EVENTS GUIDE REPORTING TEMPLATE

1. Efforts are made to reduce conference related emissions of greenhouse gases and support off-setting of unavoidable emissions:

- Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight (corresponding to EN16)
- Other relevant indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight (corresponding to EN17)
- Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reductions achieved (corresponding to EN18)
- Modes of transport taken by attendees and participants as a percentage of total transportation, and initiatives to encourage the use of sustainable transport options (corresponding to EO2)

2. Procedures are implemented to reduce the consumption of water, energy, materials and other resources:

- Direct energy consumption by primary energy source (corresponding to EN3)
- Indirect energy consumption by primary source (corresponding to EN4)
- Total water withdrawal by source, conservation and improvement initiatives and results (corresponding to EN8)

3. Measures are in place to reduce the generation of waste and to reuse, recycle and/or repurpose unavoidable waste:

- Total weight of wastes by type and disposal method, including initiatives to manage wastes and their results (corresponding to EN22)

4. When purchasing goods and services for the event, the environmental and social impacts of their lifecycle are included in the purchasing decision:

- Type and sustainability performance of sourcing initiatives (corresponding to EO9)
- Average hours of training per year per employee and/or volunteer, by gender, and by employee and volunteer category (corresponding to LA10)

5. Social and environmental principles are applied throughout the implementation of the event, to reduce damage to the environment and to ensure accessibility, inclusion and well-being of all participants and staff:

- Type and impact of initiatives to create a socially inclusive event (corresponding to EO5)
- Significant environmental and socio-economic impacts of transporting attendees and participants to and from the event and initiatives taken to address the impacts (corresponding to EO3)
- Number and type and of injuries, fatalities and notifiable incidents for attendees, participants and other relevant stakeholders (corresponding to EO7)

6. Measures are taken to foster economic, social and environmental benefits for the local community, and to minimise disruption:

- Direct economic value generated and distributed, including revenues, operating costs, employee compensation, donations and other community investments, retained earnings and payments to capital providers and governments (corresponding to EC1)
- Direct economic impacts and value creation as a result of sustainability initiatives (corresponding to EO1)

7. Efforts are made to increase the awareness of, inform and involve relevant stakeholders, including participants, the workforce, local hosts, regional and national authorities, sponsors, civil society groups, NGOs, businesses and technical experts, in order to comply with and support the principles stated above:

- Number, type and impact of sustainability initiatives designed to raise awareness and impact behavior change (corresponding to EO11)
- Average hours of training per year per employee and/or volunteer, by gender, and by employee and volunteer category (corresponding to LA10)

8. A reporting system is put in place that allows for the communication, assessment and evaluation of “sustainable events processes, initiatives and results”:

- Number, type and impact of sustainability initiatives designed to raise awareness and impact behavior change (corresponding to EO11)

For more info about the GRI reporting, see www.globalreporting.org/reporting/reporting-framework-overview/application-level-information/Pages/default.aspx

LIST OF RESOURCES

Sustainable events guidelines

- London 2012 - Sustainability guidelines – corporate and public events, Third edition, May 2010 <http://www.london2012.com/mm/Document/Publications/Sustainability/01/24/08/66/london-2012-sustainability-events-guidelines.pdf>
- Major Event Greening Guide: A practical guide to reducing the environmental impact of a major event: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/sus-dev/major-event-greening-guide/index.html>
- Green Event Guideline: Hosting Green Events in Durban, 2011/2012 <http://www.cop17-cmp7durban.com/downloads/Green-Event-Guideline-Hosting-Green-Events-in-Durban-2011-2012-full.pdf>
- Green Meeting Guide 2009 <http://greeningtheblue.org/sites/default/files/GreenMeetingGuide.pdf>
- How to organise sustainable meetings & events in Brussels: A practical guide <http://www.iclei-europe.org/fileadmin/templates/iclei-europe/files/content/Brussels/bxl-greenmeetings-guide.PDF>
- Sustainable Events Guide, Published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.(DEFRA) © Crown Copyright 2007: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/advice/documents/SustainableEventsGuide.pdf>
- Sustainable Event Management - A practical Guide, by Meegan Jones, UK/USA: Earthscan 2010
- Sustainable Meetings and Events Guide, produced by World Bank group, 2010

Conferences and reports

- ICLEI World Congress 2009, Connecting Leaders – Advancing Local Action for Sustainability, ICLEI ECO Report Card: <http://www.iclei.org/worldcongress2009>
- ICLEI European Convention 2011, Cities in Europe 2020: Enhance Sustainability Now: <http://convention2011.iclei-europe.org/>
- 2011 Shanghai Fashion Week Sustainability Report: <http://www.slideshare.net/gbigwood/shanghai-fashion-showsustainabilityreport>
- COP 15 United Nations Climate Conference, Copenhagen, Event sustainability report: <http://www.e-pages.dk/visitdenmark/473/>

- XVIII International AIDS conference 2010: <http://www.aids2010.org>
- Dunkerque 2010, 6th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns: <http://www.dunkerque2010.org/en/greening-of-the-event/index.html>
- UN Global Compact Leaders Summit 2010, Sustainability Report: <http://lessconversationmoreaction.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/mci-sustainability-report-for-the-ungc-leaders-summit-2010.pdf>
- Canada Media Marketplace 2010: <http://www.meetgreen.com/files/articles/MediaMarketplace2010CaseStudy.pdf>
- UNEP 25th session of GC/GMEF - Report on a Green and Climate Neutral meeting: <http://www.unep.org/sustainability/docs/CN-GC25-02nov2009.pdf>
- UNEP 26th session of GC/GMEF – Report on Implementation of a Green Meeting
- European Wind Energy Association Annual Event (EWEA 2011), Towards more sustainable events: http://www.ewea.org/fileadmin/emag/sustainability/EWEA_Sustainability_Report_EWEA2011/pdf/sustainable%20report%20EWEA2011.pdf
- Green Goal 2010 Legacy Report 2010: <http://www.kas.de/suedafrika/de/publications/23429/>
- European Ecological Federation 2011 Congress: <http://www.europeanecology.org/meetings/>

Catering

- Meat eater's Guide: Report and information: <http://www.ewg.org/meateatersguide/eat-smart/>
- Meat footprint, calculator of your meal: <http://www.eatlowcarbon.org/>
- Livestock's Long Shadow: FAO Report on Livestock impact on environment: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a0701e/a0701e00.htm>

Stakeholders engagement

- Copenhagen sustainable meetings protocol, Stakeholder engagement: <http://www.visitdenmark.com/international/en-gb/menu/mice/news/csmp/csmp-stakeholder-engagement.htm>
- Delegates' Guide to a "Green" GC-26/GMEF (UNEP 2010): http://www.unep.org/gc/gc26/docs/Delegates_Guide_GC26.pdf

- My Guide to a Sustainable Congress (IUCN 2008):
http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_guide_final_lowres.pdf
- EU2012 Business Case for Sustainable Events:
<http://www.sustainableeventsdenmark.org/csmp/sustainable-eu-presidency>
- Western Cape Government, Cleanest Town Competition:
<http://www.westerncape.gov.za/eng/directories/projects/482/97029>
- Environmental Agency, Abu Dhabi: Annual Environment Competition:
<http://www.envirocomp.ae/en/>

Procurement

- Procura+, Sustainable Procurement Campaign: The Power of Procurement: <http://www.procuraplus.org/>
- GPP Training Toolkit (2008):
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/toolkit_en.htm
- Greening the Blue, Sustainable procurement guidelines:
<http://www.greeningtheblue.org/resources/procurement>

Destination and venue

- ICAO Green Meetings Calculator
<http://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/Pages/Tools.aspx>
- Verified Green Destinations (North America):
<http://www.bestplacetomeetgreen.com/destinations>
- BREEAM - Design and assessment method for sustainable buildings:
<http://www.breeam.org/>
- U.S. Green Building Council, LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design: <http://www.usgbc.org/>
- U.S. Green Building Council: Green Venue Selection Guide - Integrating LEED into travel and event management:
<http://www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=6275>
- Design For All Foundation: <http://www.designforall.org>

Accommodation

- Environmentally Friendly Hotels: <http://www.TheBestGreenHotels.com>
- Green Key international eco-label: <http://www.green-key.org>
- Ocean Blue Foundation, BlueGreen Meetings - Hosts, planners, suppliers: <http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org>

Waste

- OpenWorld, Oracle Corp's annual software conference 2009: <http://www.businesstravelnews.com/Business-Travel-Agencies/Visions-Of-Green--Oracle-Heralds-Eco-Events;-Advances-Its-Quest-For-Zero-Waste-Conference/?ida=Technology&a=proc>
- Oracle Herald good practice for Zero-Waste, Eco-events <http://www.procurement.travel/news.php?cid=green-eco-events-zero-waste-conference-Oracle.Mar-10.31>
- Oracle Sustainability Solutions for Enabling the Eco-Enterprise: <http://www.oracle.com/us/products/applications/green/061929.html>
- Eco-cycle – Building Zero Waste Communities: <http://www.ecocycle.org>
- Zero Waste Europe: <http://www.zerowasteeurope.eu>

Greenhouse gases emissions

- ICAO – International Civil Aviation Organization, Carbon Emissions Calculator: <http://www.icao.int/environmental-protection/CarbonOffset/Pages/default.aspx>
- Greenhouse Gas Protocol Initiative: <http://www.ghgprotocol.org/>
- US Environmental Protection Agency: Protocol on Green power and renewable energy certificates: <http://www.epa.gov/climateleaders/guidance/index.html>
- Guidance on measuring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions from freight transport operations: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/economy/business-efficiency/reporting>
- British Standards Institution standards : PAS (publicly available specification) 2050: <http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Standards-and-Publications/How-we-can-help-you/Professional-Standards-Service/PAS-2050/PAS-2050/>
- United Nations, Framework Convention on Climate Change - Mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol: http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/mechanisms/items/1673.php

- The Pembina Institute – Purchasing Carbon Offsets: <http://www.pembina.org/pub/1866>
- Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), Energy and Emissions: <http://business.edf.org/energy-emissions/carbon-offsets/suggested-offset-criteria>
- Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Australia – Ecological Footprint Event calculator: <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/ecologicalfootprint/calculators/event/introduction.asp>
- Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Australia – Carbon Offsets: <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/climate-change/carbon-offsets/choosing-an-offset.asp>
- Carbon Offset Guide Australia: <http://www.carbonoffsetguide.com.au/>
- A Consumer’s Guide to Retail Carbon Offset Providers: <http://www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/ConsumersGuidetoCarbonOffsets.pdf>
- Stockholm Environment Institute and Greenhouse Gas Management Institute – Carbon Offset Research & Education: http://www.co_offsetresearch.org
- UNEP – Kick The Habit: A UN guide to climate neutrality: <http://www.unep.org/publications/ebooks/kick-the-habit/Default.aspx>

Certifications, standards and reporting

- International Organization for Standardization: ISO/FDIS 20121 – Requirements on event sustainability management systems http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue/catalogue_tc/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=54552
- Convention Industry Council – APEX/ASTM Environmentally Sustainable Meeting Standards <http://www.conventionindustry.org/StandardsPractices/APEXASTM.aspx>
- United Nations Global Compact: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org>
- Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Event Organizers Sector Supplement <https://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/sector-guidance/event-organizers/Pages/default.aspx>

Other resources

- Touching the Earth Lightly, people + conservation + design <http://touchingtheearthlightly.com/home/default.asp>
- The conference people, Green events: <http://www.confpeople.co.uk/greeneventsintro.html>

- Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC): <http://www.gmicglobal.org/>
- GMIC – Sustainable Meetings conference: <http://www.sustainablemeetingsconference.com/>
- Less Conversation, More Action - Dispatches from the frontline of sustainability in the meetings industry: <http://lessconversationmoreaction.com/>
- Meetgreen blog: <http://blog.meetgreen.com/>
- Spheres of Influence: the intersection of events, social media, sustainability and engagement: <http://psalinger.wordpress.com/>
- Green Events Austria: <http://www.greeneventsaustria.at/article/archive/26178/>
- London Sustainability Exchange: http://www.lsx.org.uk/whatwedo/running_sustainable_event_page3007.aspx
- Event sustainability: <http://www.eventsustainability.co.uk/pages/index.php>
- United States Environmental Protection Agency, Green Meetings: <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings>
- UNEP Greening the Blue: <http://greeningtheblue.org/case-studies> and <http://greeningtheblue.org/resources>
- Sustainability policy: <http://www.seventeenevents.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/08/Seventeen-Events-sustainability-policy.pdf>
- Cross industry special report - Carbon Footprint and Energy Reduction: https://printcity.dyndns.org/OTHER/shop/products/2011_03_31_PrintCity_Carbon_Footprint_Energy_EN.pdf

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE GUIDE DEVELOPMENT

ICLEI

Local Governments for Sustainability



ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments as well as national and regional local government organisations that have made a commitment to sustainable development. World-wide over 1200 metropolises, cities, towns, regions, and their associations comprise the growing membership of ICLEI.

ICLEI also provides technical consulting, training, event organisation and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. Our basic premise is that locally designed initiatives can provide an effective and cost-efficient way to achieve local, national, and global sustainability objectives.

In 2003, the members voted to revise the organisation's stated mission, charter and name to better reflect the challenges faced by local governments. The "International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives" became "ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability", with a broader mandate to address sustainability issues. ICLEI was one of the first event organisers to work on greening issues, launching its Greening Events Initiative that same year. This Initiative is mainly aimed at motivating and supporting local governments towards greening events in their role as co-organisers of conferences and (local) events. This includes their role as the location of huge public events, as the provider of permits for private events, as facilitators of cooperation between local actors and – importantly – as a role model for many private actors to follow. The Green Meeting Guide 2009, developed together with UNEP, has become a key document to guide ICLEI members and partners in organising green meetings. For more information about ICLEI green events, visit www.iclei-europe.org/products-activities/training-events/

ICLEI is keen to join forces at the international level with organisations such as the United Nations to help move the greening events agenda forward.

ICLEI has, in addition, over a decade of experience working in the field of sustainable procurement aimed at utilising the vast purchasing power of the public sector to help drive the market for more sustainable products and services. Incorporating environmental and social considerations into publicly organised events can make a huge difference to the consumption-related impacts of these events – from the paper used and food provided to the method of travel. For more on the work of ICLEI's Sustainable

Procurement team please visit: www.iclei-europe.org/procurement

Sustainable United Nations



Sustainable United Nations (SUN) is a UNEP initiative that provides support to the United Nations and other organisations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and improve their sustainability overall.

SUN was established in response to the call from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon at the World Environment Day 2007 (5 June) to all UN agencies, funds and programmes to reduce their carbon footprint and “go green”. This call was echoed in October 2007 in a decision of the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB/2007/2, annex II) to adopt the UN Climate Neutral Strategy, which commits all UN organisations to move towards climate neutrality.

SUN is in this context working with the UN Environment Management Group – the UN body coordinating common environmental work within UN – to provide guidance, and develop tools and models for emissions reduction within organisations. SUN is using a “whole-organisation” approach in identification of sources and causes for emissions and opportunities for reduced emissions and improved sustainability. In this way opportunities for improvements are typically found within one of the three major focus areas for SUN:

- Physical assets: buildings, equipment, vehicles.
- Management processes: procurement, travel, management systems.
- Organisational culture: day-to-day office behaviour and “corporate” culture, green meetings.

SUN operates in synergy with existing initiatives and networks such as the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative, the High Level Committee on Management Procurement Network, the UN Global Compact, the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement and many others.

www.greeningtheblue.org

IAMLADP

The International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications



The International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP) is a forum and network of managers of international organisations employing conference and language services providers – mainly translators and interpreters. Its membership includes organisations of the UN system and other bodies, such as European Union institutions, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the African Development Bank.

Every year the IAMLADP annual meeting is hosted by a member organisation. The United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) in New York is the permanent Chair of IAMLADP. The IAMLADP Executive Committee, which attends to business through the New York-based Secretariat between annual meetings, includes the chairpersons of three working groups — training; services for conferences, languages and publications; and technology for conferences, languages and publications — as well as the hosts of the previous and the current annual meetings.

Membership in IAMLADP is offered to intergovernmental and supra-national organisations with language and/or conference-servicing components. Universities are invited to participate through its Universities Contact Group or the International Annual Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology, JIAMCATT. The goal of IAMLADP is to serve its members – and through them the international community – by providing a results-oriented framework for harmonising approaches and recommending best practices and innovative solutions in the areas falling within its mandate.

UNON



The United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), headed by a Director-General at the Under-Secretary-General level, serves as the representative office of the Secretary-General in Nairobi and performs representation and liaison functions with permanent missions, the host country and other Governments, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations in Nairobi, as well as other organisations of the United Nations system in Kenya; facilitates cooperation between the United Nations and regional organisations; provides administrative and other support services to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); provides joint and common services to other organisations of the United Nations system in Kenya; and manages and implements the programmes of administration, conference services and public information, while also providing security and safety services for United Nations staff members and facilities.

GMIC



The Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) is the premier global community solely dedicated to sustainability in the meetings and events industry.

The GMIC seeks to inspire, educate and support leaders at all levels and of all disciplines who will manifest the transformation of the global meetings industry towards sustainability. The Council champions the implementation of sustainability practices and provides advocacy, education, resources, industry research and recognition of industry leadership. GMIC serves as a lead partner organization in the development of global sustainable event standards.

Founded in 2004, the GMIC is a non profit membership-based professional association with representation in over 20 countries.

The Council believes that collaboration is key for advancing sustainability, and is honoured to have been able to share our members' case studies and experience to support the United Nations with the development of this excellent Sustainable Events Guide.

About the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

Set up in 1975, three years after UNEP was created, the Division of Technology, Economics (DTIE) provides solutions to policy-makers and helps change the business environment by offering platforms for dialogue and co-operation, innovative policy options, pilot projects and creative market mechanisms.

DTIE plays a leading role in three of the six UNEP strategic priorities: climate change, harmful substances and hazardous waste, resource efficiency.

DTIE is also actively contributing to the Green Economy Initiative launched by UNEP in 2008. This aims to shift national and world economies on to a new path, in which jobs and output growth are driven by increased investment in green sectors, and by a switch of consumers' preferences towards environmentally friendly goods and services.

Moreover, DTIE is responsible for fulfilling UNEP's mandate as an implementing agency for the Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund and plays an executing role for a number of UNEP projects financed by the Global Environment Facility.

The Office of the Director, located in Paris, coordinates activities through:

- > **The International Environmental Technology Centre** - IETC (Osaka), which implements integrated waste, water and disaster management programmes, focusing in particular on Asia.
- > **Sustainable Consumption and Production** (Paris), which promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns as a contribution to human development through global markets.
- > **Chemicals** (Geneva), which catalyses global actions to bring about the sound management of chemicals and the improvement of chemical safety worldwide.
- > **Energy** (Paris and Nairobi), which fosters energy and transport policies for sustainable development and encourages investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- > **OzonAction** (Paris), which supports the phase-out of ozone depleting substances in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to ensure implementation of the Montreal Protocol.
- > **Economics and Trade** (Geneva), which helps countries to integrate environmental considerations into economic and trade policies, and works with the finance sector to incorporate sustainable development policies. This branch is also charged with producing green economy reports.

DTIE works with many partners (other UN agencies and programmes, international organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations, business, industry, the media and the public) to raise awareness, improve the transfer of knowledge and information, foster technological cooperation and implement international conventions and agreements.

For more information,
see **www.unep.org/dtie**

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The United Nations famously hosts large-scale events all over the world. There is no doubt that meeting together, face-to-face, provides great opportunities to network, develop understanding and formalize decisions. But it also has the potential to adversely impact the local and global environment by consuming energy, polluting the air and water, and increasing the waste stream.

This guide is intended for all those involved in event planning. It provides information about why and how to create a sustainable event as well as a detailed checklist that helps streamline goals into easy-to-implement steps.

By taking sustainability into consideration, event organizers have the opportunity to maximize the benefits of meetings and minimize potential negative impacts. Incorporating sustainability into event management allows the organizer to influence the future by stimulating market change and inspiring those involved to live more sustainably.

This guide follows on from the success of its predecessor, *The Green Meeting Guide 2009: Roll out the Green Carpet for your Participants* but covers larger indoor events with upto 10,000 participants or more. It provides a framework for defining what is a 'sustainable' event and includes social as well as environmental considerations.

We hope that you will benefit from this tool that will help all of us walk-the-talk of sustainable event planning.

TOOLKIT ON ACCESSIBILITY

Tools to apply universal design across premises
and programmes and promote access for all



SECTION A

SECTION B

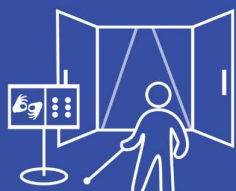
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SECTION F

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ORGANIZATION OF ACCESSIBLE EVENTS



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TOOLKIT ON ACCESSIBILITY

Tools to apply universal design across premises
and programmes and promote access for all

Acknowledgements

This toolkit was developed by the UNICEF Disability Team, based in the Programme Group Leadership Team at New York Headquarters. It was prepared in close consultation with persons with disabilities, and through consultations and collaboration with accessibility specialists, UNICEF staff and other partners around the world.

The core team at UNICEF included Gopal Mitra (currently serving as Senior Officer at the United Nations Disability Strategy Secretariat, Executive Office of the Secretary-General, United Nations), Megan Tucker and Anna Burlyaeva. The toolkit was developed under the supervision of Rosangela Berman Bieler, Senior Adviser and Chief, Disability Section, UNICEF.

Colleagues from UNICEF country and regional offices and various headquarter divisions contributed substantially to the development of this toolkit. Thanks go to Carlos de la Espriella, Katinka Rosenbom, Ignacio Giménez, Kirstin Lange, Ahmed Ghanem, William Abi Abdallah, Heidy Martinez, Shirin Kiani and Besan AbdelQader.

UNICEF consultants with expertise in disability-inclusion, communication, accessibility and urban planning provided key input into the document, including Renata Zanetti, Daisuke Arao, Jens Aerts and Erika Trabucco, on behalf of Humanity and Inclusion.



An original draft that substantially informed this toolkit was created by the Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES), led by past president Betty Dion, with Bob Topping, LoriAnn Girvan and Marnie Peters, and the GAATES project team: Abdul Zazai, Vashkar Bhattacharjee, Chuck Letorneau, Mathew Fleet, Anjee Agarwal, Aqueel Qureshi, Erin O’Herlihy, Aqueel Qureshi, Deepak KC and Janett Jimenez.

Thanks also to conversations and interviews with the Disability-Inclusive and Accessible Urban Development (DIAUD) Group, which included Stig Langvad, Benjamin Dard, Kathy Kline, Lisa Stafford, Mano Karan and Megan Smith during the ninth World Urban Forum in Malaysia, which also informed the toolkit.

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In addition to the PDF version, the toolkit is also available in a range of accessible formats: EPUB, Braille-ready file and accessible HTML.

Cover photo: © UNICEF/UNI163099/Markisz
International Disability Alliance youth Fellow and former Miss Deaf Kenya, Njelekela Ashura Michael, addresses the audience at an Activate Talk at UNICEF Headquarters on 13 June 2014.

Feedback and comments: This toolkit is a living document that will be updated and revised as it is used in the field to support UNICEF’s work on accessibility and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities. UNICEF colleagues and partners are invited to send feedback:

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Illustrator: Foteini Korre
Accessible formats: Prashant Ranjan Verma



Toolkits on accessibility

The toolkit is divided into seven sections and one Toolbox:



SECTION A:

ADVOCACY FOR ACCESSIBILITY:

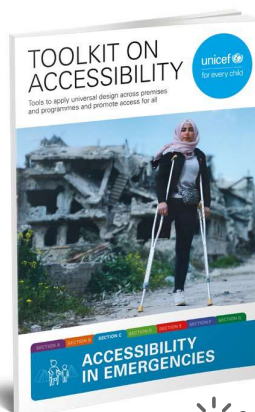
suggestions on how to advocate for accessibility and how to address common objections and preconceived ideas



SECTION B:

PROGRAMME-RELATED BUILDINGS:

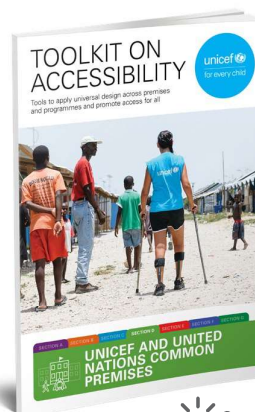
an overview of accessibility issues in programme-related activities and in managing accessibility activities at the programme level



SECTION C:

ACCESSIBILITY IN EMERGENCIES:

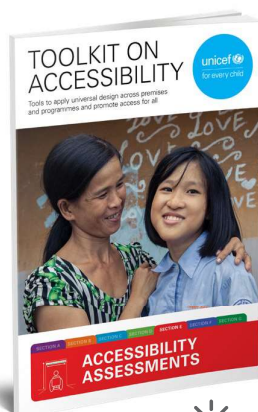
an overview of how accessibility should be taken into account in emergencies and disaster preparedness



SECTION D:

UNICEF AND UNITED NATIONS COMMON PREMISES:

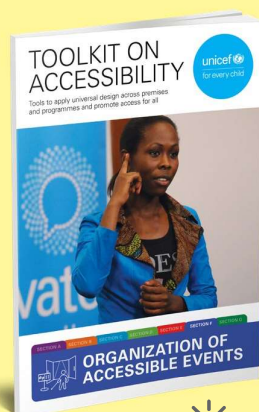
support for managing accessibility improvements in UNICEF offices around the world



SECTION E:

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENTS:

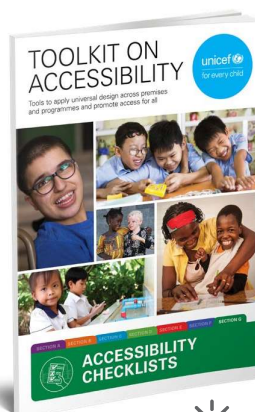
insight on how to conduct accessibility assessments regardless of the specific circumstances



SECTION F:

ORGANIZATION OF ACCESSIBLE EVENTS:

suggestions on how to organize accessible events



SECTION G:

ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLISTS:

17 checklists to use during accessibility assessments



TOOLBOX:

a repository of useful tools, documents and examples for accessibility activities, such as terms of reference or samples of assessment reports





Foreword

Dr Omar Abdi, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Programmes:

UNICEF works across more than 190 countries and territories, promoting the rights and wellbeing of every child in everything we do. UNICEF advocates for and supports governments to create enabling environments and equal opportunities for all children to survive and thrive, including the over 240 million boys and girls with disabilities living in the world today.

Our work on disability inclusion is mandated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and aligned with the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) and the UNICEF Strategic Plan. With the 2017 Executive Directive on Accessibility in Programme-Related Construction Activities (CF/EXD/2017-004), UNICEF reaffirms its commitment to ensure physical accessibility is a principle for all the infrastructure that is built through our programmes, including in humanitarian action.

This toolkit is a result of extensive consultations with UNICEF employees, partners and persons with disabilities. It's a set of technical resources that will help our staff to promote and support accessibility and inclusion across our programmes and operations. We invite UNICEF colleagues and partners to apply this guidance in their work, to ensure that construction related to our programmes, such as school buildings, health clinics, water and sanitation facilities, are free of environmental barriers.

Hannan Sulieman, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Management:

UNICEF is committed to promote an accessible and inclusive work environment for every employee and is investing to increase opportunities for persons with disabilities to join our workforce. This Accessibility Toolkit is an important resource to help us deliver on this commitment, respecting and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in programmes and operations across the organization.

In 2014, a staff survey on accessibility of UNICEF programmes and premises revealed that 84 per cent of offices required awareness-raising materials and technical capacity on accessibility. In a follow-up All-Staff Survey in 2019, only 39 per cent of respondents deemed their office space was physically accessible for persons with disabilities.

To address the growing internal demand for resources to improve our office buildings, we established a Greening and Accessibility Fund, developed guidance to support renovations for environmentally friendly and accessible premises and set up the Environmental Footprint and Accessibility Assessment Tool (EFAAT).

Data as of 2021 shows us that 52 per cent of UNICEF premises meet "level 1", the minimum organisational requirements for accessibility. But we can do better, and we must do better. UNICEF's Strategic Plan Indicator E2.5 on Percentage of UNICEF offices that are disability inclusive and accessible, sets a target of 100% by 2025. This is an ambitious target, but for UNICEF's 100% organizational commitment on disability inclusion, only a target of 100% of accessibility in our premises and operations can be acceptable.



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“ The path to inclusion
starts with accessibility. ”

Introduction to the toolkit

This toolkit was developed so the work of UNICEF programmes can support children like nine-year-old Amal, a girl with a physical disability who lives in Zaatari camp and who can now play with other children because the local playground has been made accessible to all. It can support children like Frinpali, a seven-year-old boy who uses a wheelchair and now receives appropriate education in Burkina Faso because his school has been made accessible. This toolkit has been conceived as an instrument to facilitate the dialogue with partners and the involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) on accessibility-related issues. And it has been developed with UNICEF's current and future employees with disabilities and other organizations in mind, so that the facilities they work in are made more accessible and inclusive for all.

This *Toolkit on Accessibility: Tools to apply universal design across premises and programmes and promote access for all* was developed to help UNICEF programmes and operations to become more accessible. It facilitates dialogue with partners, including OPDs on accessible construction.



Nine-year-old Amal plays on the seesaw in the new inclusive playground in her school in Zaatari refugee camp, Jordan where she is in third grade.

© UNICEF/UN0251366/HERWIG



Frinpali, a 7 year old boy who is using a wheelchair, and his friend Hassan at the playground of their school in Fada, in eastern Burkina Faso.

© UNICEF/UNI388930/DEJONGH

Structure of the toolkit

The toolkit is divided into seven sections and one Toolbox:

- ✓ **Section A. Advocacy for accessibility:** suggestions on how to advocate for accessibility and how to address common objections and preconceived ideas
- ✓ **Section B. Programme-related buildings:** an overview of accessibility issues in programme-related activities and in managing accessibility activities at the programme level
- ✓ **Section C. Accessibility in emergencies:** an overview of how accessibility should be taken into account in emergencies and disaster preparedness
- ✓ **Section D. UNICEF and United Nations common premises:** support for managing accessibility improvements in UNICEF offices around the world
- ✓ **Section E. Accessibility assessments:** insight on how to conduct accessibility assessments regardless of the specific circumstances
- ✓ **Section F. Organization of accessible events:** suggestions on how to organize accessible events
- ✓ **Section G. Accessibility checklists:** 17 checklists to use during accessibility assessments
- ✓ **Toolbox:** a repository of useful tools, documents and examples for accessibility activities, such as terms of reference or samples of assessment reports

This Accessibility Toolkit offers information on how to build or adapt infrastructure both in **UNICEF-supported programmes** and in **UNICEF premises**, for use by all, including persons with disabilities. Its contents can also be applied to non-UNICEF construction processes and facilities as it takes into consideration international standards.

The guidance provided can be used to enhance and promote accessibility when **planning and designing the new construction** of programme facilities and infrastructure both in development and humanitarian contexts, and when **upgrading or adapting existing infrastructure**.

To summarize, information can be used at different points in the accessibility journey, such as:

1. Planning and designing UNICEF's offices, guest houses and other buildings



2. Planning and designing programme-related facilities
3. Remodelling, renovating, extending or repairing UNICEF's offices, guest houses and other buildings
4. Remodelling, renovating, extending or repairing programme-related facilities and premises
5. Selecting facilities for leasing, renting or hosting conferences and events
6. Managing and setting up humanitarian and emergency programmes
7. Preparing construction contracts and agreements
8. Monitoring and evaluating projects involving construction, renovation or repairs
9. Conducting accessibility assessments of existing facilities or premises
10. Advocating for accessibility with donors and partners
11. Developing a curriculum for trainings on accessibility or accessible construction processes

ACCESSIBILITY IS EVERYONE'S TASK

To enable persons with disabilities to access and use a facility with safety, comfort and dignity, the built environment not only must be physically accessible but the relevant personnel must be aware of accessibility-related issues and how to communicate and assist persons with disabilities. The personnel may include people who are in charge of security at entrances and at the reception and of facilities management, as well as those involved in emergency evacuation, etc. While this toolkit addresses issues related to physical accessibility, simultaneous actions are also required to sensitize and train key personnel on the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The following videos developed by the Disability Section could be useful in this regard:

- ✓ Disability Orientation, <https://sites.unicef.org/disabilities/index_66434.html>, accessed 4 November 2021
- ✓ Inclusive Communication Module, <https://sites.unicef.org/disabilities/index_90418.html>, accessed 4 November 2021



Target audience

While this toolkit is primarily for UNICEF employees involved in construction activities, operations focal points or programme colleagues in charge of construction, it can also be useful for UNICEF partners, other United Nations agencies, OPDs, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and other stakeholders.

This toolkit contributes to the implementation of the [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#) and helps to achieve and exceed most of the strategy's indicators: lack of physical accessibility, specifically recognized as one of the barriers to inclusion in Indicator 6 on Accessibility, 6.1 on Accessibility of conferences and events, Indicator 7 on Reasonable accommodation and Indicator 5 on Consultation with persons with disabilities. The toolkit helps to report on United Nations Country Team scorecards and to build the capacity of implementing partners on accessibility.



Bilal Mohammed, 12, signs during his class in the Inclusive Education Program in Mora, in the Far North of Cameroon. He is in class 5 and his dream is to become a photographer.

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Frameworks and approaches

■ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)¹ is an international human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. It was adopted on 13 December 2006 and describes human rights frameworks linked to accessibility, aspects of universal design, reasonable accommodation and international standards for accessibility. UNICEF's existing commitments and policies to promote accessibility are aligned with the CRPD.

The accessibility of spaces and places determines the extent to which everyone – including persons with disabilities, older persons and children – can live, work and learn independently and participate fully and equally in society. Equal access to transportation, media, information and communication technologies, and public services and facilities, such as schools, libraries and town halls, facilitates the participation of persons with disabilities, in both urban and rural communities. Accessibility is also critical in emergency contexts, such as refugee camps, to ensure access to humanitarian services and facilities.

As of October 2021, 184 countries have ratified the CRPD and, increasingly, countries around the world have adopted standards, codes and laws to mandate accessibility, in line with CRPD requirements.

Accessibility is one of the primary principles of the CRPD, set out in article 3 as a vital precondition for the effective and equal enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for persons with disabilities, for example to health, education, information and communication. Other CRPD articles related to accessibility are article 9: Accessibility; article 19: Living independently and being included in the community; article 24: Education; and article 30: Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport.

Universal design

In the 1980s, the American architect Ron Mace coined the term 'universal design', which means good design that benefits everyone.² Universal design is defined in the CRPD as "the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest possible extent, without needing adaptation or specialized design" (article 2).³



Seven principles underpin the concept of universal design, summarized as follows:

- 1 Equitable use:**
Providing the same means of use for all users, with and without disabilities
- 2 Flexibility in use:**
Accommodating individual preferences and abilities, such as left- or right-handedness
- 3 Simple and intuitive use:**
Ensuring easy to understand utilization, including for people with low literacy
- 4 Perceivable information:**
Communicating key information clearly and in multiple ways
- 5 Error tolerance:**
Minimizing hazards and adverse consequences of accidental actions
- 6 Low physical effort:**
Requiring little operating force to use
- 7 Size and space:**
Providing appropriate space for reach and use, if seated or standing

The outcome of using universal design is that environments, buildings and products are inclusive of, usable by and accessible to everyone, to the greatest possible extent, including children, adults and older persons with and without disabilities, pregnant women, parents with children or using baby strollers, and people carrying heavy equipment, suitcases, groceries, etc.

The concept of universal design applies to almost every area of life. While this toolkit focuses on the accessibility of infrastructure and spaces, the concept also applies to many other areas, programmes and services, such as mobility (e.g., accessible cars, buses or trains; inclusive bus stations; accessible communication on mobility-related web platforms), communication (e.g., inclusive events, sign language interpretation; meetings or lessons; easy-to-read publications; accessible posters) and information and communication technology (e.g., accessible web services and mobile apps; audiovisual content with captions and transcriptions; accessible files and software).



Accessibility is one of the core elements of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy. While it is emphasized in all four pillars, accessibility is included also in specific dedicated Indicator 6.



The accessibility continuum

The accessibility continuum is a concept that describes the experience of children, adults with disabilities and older persons departing from their homes, using pathways, crossing roads and taking transportation to reach, enter and use services and facilities. These facilities can be libraries, public meeting halls, sports fields, health care facilities, courthouses, marketplaces, conference rooms, office buildings, etc. A continuous route means that circulating through it is safe, unrestricted and possible using a wheelchair, a walking frame or a service dog, with no obstacles or barriers blocking the way. Such a route must be continuous because, like in a chain, if one link is broken, the chain is compromised.

Four steps ensure the accessibility continuum: reaching a facility; entering a facility; moving around a facility; and using specific features of a facility.⁴ These align with the RECU methodology that stipulates that accessible facilities should be **easy to reach, enter, circulate and use**.⁵

Planning for an accessible environment requires a broad vision of the accessibility continuum perspective. For example, if the route from home to school is accessible for a child who uses crutches but there are stairs at the school entrance and classroom doors are hard to push and pull, the child will have difficulty entering the school or learning and participating in activities with his/her peers.

Similarly, if a UNICEF staff member using a wheelchair has an adjustable desk, an accessible work space with appropriate doorway sizes and accessible toilets, he/she will be able to work on an equal basis with others. However, if he/she is unable to independently access the building because there is no accessible parking space, drop-off zone or kerb (ramp) to get on the sidewalk, the overall accessibility of the workplace is compromised.

At least 10 common pitfalls can be avoided or remedied, often at low or no cost, to achieve an accessibility continuum.



They include the following:

Common pitfall	Plan or remedy
1. Doors are too narrow and the doorway cannot be entered by a standard or larger wheelchair	✓ Design wide doors and/or change the latches on the doors to allow larger openings
2. Entrances have steps only	✓ Install a ramp or consider a lifting platform
3. Ramps are installed but they are steep and unsafe	✓ Consider going beyond the standards and applying recommended values for a gentle ramp slope (the less steep the better, even if local regulations allow steeper slopes)
4. Ramps are installed but key safety features are missing , with no landing space at the top or bottom to move/turn in a wheelchair, or without handrails or kerbs	✓ Add appropriate handrails; make sure a flat, wide and sufficiently long square circulation or landing space allows room to safely open a door or create momentum to move up the ramp
5. An accessible typical building plan is used but the specifications have not been tailored to the actual context , so the slope is steeper or the entrance path is dangerously slanted such that a wheelchair could fall sideways or backwards	✓ Always take the actual environment into consideration, even when using a 'standard' building plan; the nature and topography of the area might affect the accessibility of the overall design
6. Accessible toilets exist but the door opens inwards instead of outwards , which takes up needed moving space	✓ Make sure the toilet door opens outwards and that there is enough moving space in and around the bathroom



Common pitfall	Plan or remedy
7. Accessible toilets exist but they are used as storage space or kept locked, so they are unusable	✓ Raise awareness of the need for accessible toilets to always be available, without needing to request access or having to move things out of toilets
8. The main building is accessible but the pathways leading to it are inaccessible/unreachable or unsafe, for example, unmaintained or steep, or with stepped paths, slippery tiles or construction in or across the pathway	✓ Remember that persons with disabilities must also be able to reach a building; create safe, continuous step-free paths and engage with urban planning officials and people who are blind to review the implemented designs and solutions
9. The pathway leading to the playground or office is accessible and safe but there is fixed furniture at arrival, so persons using a wheelchair do not have room to use the table or area	✓ Use light furniture that can be moved easily or, where furniture is fixed, make sure that it meets measurements that allow comfortable access and usability, including for persons using a wheelchair or who are blind
10. The building, pathways and toilets are physically accessible for persons using a wheelchair but no clear, large signs indicate orientation, so the main buildings and features are difficult to identify and reach	✓ Use clear, large-font, easy-to-read wayfinding signs with high visual contrast and pictograms to make it easy for people to navigate through venues and spaces without having to ask for assistance

Other considerations to promote inclusion include:

Welcoming, respectful attitudes – If a school is physically accessible but the teacher has a negative, discriminatory attitude and does not want to teach a child with a disability, unless the teacher's attitude is changed, the child's access to education will be limited. Attitudes can be improved through role models, interaction with other teachers and students with disabilities, experiential training or campaigns, and programmes to transform harmful social norms.

Culturally appropriate technical resources or assistive devices – If a school is physically accessible but a child with mobility impairments does not have a wheelchair to reach it, or if no pedagogical tools and assistive devices have been adapted to support children who are blind (such as Braille devices or screen-reading software), some children may not attend school at all. Some of these gaps can be filled through access to reasonable accommodation.

Technical accessibility standards

Many of the technical specifications in this toolkit are based on International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards, developed by a committee of experts. In particular, ISO 21542:2011 ‘Building construction – Accessibility and usability of the built environment’ applies to construction and the modification of new and existing buildings and is available to UNICEF staff via the Supply Division.

Related ISO standards cover accessible lifts (4190-1), emergencies (22320), assistive devices such as tactile walking surface indicators (23599) and graphical symbols for public information and accessibility (7001). Some of the common global symbols used for accessibility are available in the Toolbox.

For UNICEF programmes, ISO 21542 can be applied to all construction-related activities. While dimensions in the standard are geared primarily towards adults, it also recognizes that people across age levels have different needs, so it incorporates, for example, accessibility in toilets designed for children. In addition, accessibility for children is considered in this toolkit based on other existing guidelines and principles.⁶

Sustainable Development Goals

As part of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) framework,⁷ accessibility of the built environment is referred to explicitly in the targets and indicators for:



Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Target 4.A – Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all



Indicator 4.A.1 – Proportion of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) the internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities



Goal 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Target 11.2 – By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons

Target 11.7 – By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities



In addition, **Goal 6** (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all) supports the principle of inclusion in the following targets:

Target 6.1 – By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

Target 6.2 – By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations



Nupur takes a computer course and regularly attends counselling services. She receives UNICEF funded Conditional Cash Transfers under the supervision of the Department of Social Services, Nilkamal Union, Char Fasson, Bhola, Bangladesh.

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New Urban Agenda

In 2016 during Habitat III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, global leaders came together in Ecuador with local governments, mayors and constituency groups to establish the New Urban Agenda. The New Urban Agenda commits governments to promoting:

- ✓ quality public spaces that are safe, inclusive, accessible and green
- ✓ accessible and well-connected infrastructure
- ✓ adequate investments in protective, accessible and sustainable infrastructure and service provision systems

The New Urban Agenda emphasizes the importance of process and implementation in a “participatory manner”, which considers “innovative, resource-efficient, accessible, context-specific and culturally sensitive sustainable solutions”.⁸

In 2018, as a follow-on to the Habitat III conference, the World Urban Forum in Malaysia issued the Kuala Lumpur Declaration, with an explicit paragraph on universal design, committing governments to “adopt accessibility and universal design as core principles into national, subnational and local action plans for implementing the New Urban Agenda through inclusive, accessible and participatory processes and consultations”.⁹

United Nations commitment to accessibility – UNDIS

During the twelfth Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres launched the [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy \(UNDIS\)](#).

The policy establishes the highest levels of commitment and a vision for the United Nations system on disability inclusion for the next decade, and aims to create an institutional framework for the implementation of the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among other international human rights instruments and development and humanitarian commitments.

The accountability framework tracks the implementation of the policy for the entire system. It facilitates the assessment of progress and gaps in the work of the United Nations on mainstreaming disability inclusion with a view to advancing system-wide planning and action, promoting synergies and reducing duplication. The accountability framework comprises two related components: an entity accountability framework and



a United Nations country team accountability scorecard on disability inclusion. Each component includes a set of common system indicators focused on four core areas: leadership, strategic planning and management; inclusiveness; programming; and organizational culture.

Accessibility is one of the core elements of the UNDIS. While it is emphasized in all four pillars, accessibility is included also in a specific dedicated indicator.

UNICEF commitments to accessible programmes and premises

■ UNICEF executive directives

Two executive directives issued by UNICEF relate to disability and inclusion. The first, CF/EXD/2011-005 on disability, sets out the minimum requirements for the accessibility of UNICEF premises and procedures for employing staff with disabilities. A disability accommodation fund was also established by UNICEF to support staff with disabilities.

The second directive, the Executive Directive on Accessibility in UNICEF's Programme-Related Construction Activities, was issued in December 2017 (CF/EXD/2017-004) to systematically address issues related to the accessibility of the physical environment in programmes. This directive requires UNICEF to adopt accessibility and universal design in all projects with governments and partners across all programme areas, and applies to all new construction, remodelling, extensions or repairs both in development and humanitarian contexts. As stated in the directive, "Accessibility is an enabler that allows children and adults with disabilities to enjoy their rights and entitlements. It is also a precondition for children and adults with disabilities to live independently and participate fully and equally in society".

This executive directive supplements the existing requirements for the accessibility of premises in *Property and Equipment Policy, Supplement 6 – Guidelines for Premises Management* and the UNICEF Greening and Accessibility Fund (GrAF) procedures. The GrAF was established in 2015, generated by a 3 per cent air travel surcharge, with 2 per cent of the fund to be used to finance eco-efficiency projects and 1 per cent to be used for accessibility projects (*see also [Section D](#) of the toolkit*).



Accessibility is an enabler that allows children and adults with disabilities to enjoy their rights and entitlements. It is also a precondition for children and adults with disabilities to live independently and participate fully and equally in society.





International Disability Alliance youth Fellow and former Miss Deaf Kenya, Njelekela Ashura Michael, addresses the audience at an Activate Talk at UNICEF Headquarters on 13 June 2014.

SECTION F

ORGANIZATION OF ACCESSIBLE EVENTS



Organization of accessible events

UNICEF, together with its partner organizations, is often involved in organizing conferences, seminars, meetings or workshops and is therefore committed to ensuring that all participants and stakeholders, with and without disabilities, can actively participate in the event.

Several basic principles can be followed to select venues with the appropriate accessibility features. Requirements include, at a minimum, an accessible entrance and reception area, corridors, a main meeting room and bathrooms.

SECTION F of this toolkit describes key considerations for creating accessible and inclusive events.

Part 1 provides overall accessibility guidance according to the type and scale of the event, by phase (before, during and after the event).

Part 2 details specific actions that must be performed to ensure the accessibility of an event.



Kosovo. 14 years old Riad Mehmeti, who is a wheelchair user, having lunch with friends at the school cantina.

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Part 1: Overall principles

Three steps of accessible organization

An event is composed of three phases that have different needs in terms of accessibility:

- Event preparation
 - Accessible visibility and advertisement
 - Assessment of the accessibility needs of all participants
 - Accessible website of the event
 - Accessible invitations to the event (if any)
 - Selection of an accessible location (neighbourhood and building)
 - Accessible transportation to and from the venue
 - Programme and content preparation and preview
 - Technology and personalized assistive devices
 - Accessibility instructions for group facilitators
- Event proper
 - Accessibility of reception areas
 - Availability of accessibility-related technologies (live filming, live translations, live transcriptions (Communication Access Realtime Translation - CART), sign language interpretation, magnetic hearing loops, etc.)
- Event follow-up
 - Provision of accessible event results
 - Availability of a feedback collection system

NOTE: Partnering with the local organization of persons with disabilities (OPD) is recommended to support the dissemination of information and provide advice on the accessibility of the event.



Definition of the type of event

Even though some accessibility measures are common, certain needs and considerations change according to the type of event that has to be organized. For example:

Large public conference

- Only one speaker at a time
- Unknown and diverse audience
- Long duration (all day or several days), with the need to organize breaks
- Public who may come from elsewhere and may not be familiar with the location



On 13 June 2014, Science All India Topper winner Kartik Sawhney addresses the audience at the Activate Talk at UNICEF Headquarters.

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Examples of accessibility considerations for a **conference** throughout the three phases include:

PREPARATION	EVENT	FOLLOW-UP
Ensure that the outreach is disability inclusive and information reaches persons with disabilities (partner with OPDs, consider engaging inclusive or specialized schools)	n/a	n/a
Ensure visibility in different formats (accessible website, posters, radio and TV programmes with subtitles, sign language window, etc.; <i>see the Note below</i>)	Ensure facilitated reception and registration procedures	Ensure an accessible feedback collection system
Make sure the registration system is simple; invite volunteers to help participants navigate the building	Provide screens in the room showing the podium and the sign language interpreters	Share materials in accessible formats
Ensure information on how to reach the venue	Provide live captioning for sessions (CART)	n/a
Choose an accessible and easily reachable venue	Provide sign language interpretation	n/a
Provide instructions to speakers as well as accessible materials (and videos)	Provide simultaneous translation	n/a
Make available additional services if needed	Ensure the accessibility of side events and ancillary services; provide disability focal points	n/a

NOTE:

- People with visual disabilities who have screen-reading software on their computers can also access electronic information (e.g., emails, Word formats).



- Formats that are accessible for people with intellectual disabilities include simple language and visual signs, such as pictograms, drawings, pictures and photos on printed materials.
- Formats that are accessible for people with hearing impairments (who are deaf or have hearing loss) include information in print, text messages, captions and sign language interpretation for meetings, consultations, interviews or focus group discussions, etc.

Training session for partners

- Participation by invitation, with possibility to know the needs of each person in advance
- Group activities, discussions, exercises
- Various materials (presentations, videos, etc.)
- Possible long duration



Farma Hasan and her family visit Al Farah Child and Family Support Centre (CFSC) in Gaziantep, Turkey.

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Examples of accessibility considerations for a **training session** throughout the three phases include:

PREPARATION	EVENT	FOLLOW-UP
Ask if participants need reasonable accommodation/support	Describe any visual materials used	Ensure an adapted feedback mechanisms
Ensure that all services are accessible (toilets, restaurant, relaxation area, etc.)	Plan sufficiently long sessions with breaks to allow everyone adequate time to speak	Facilitate the sharing of accessible training materials
Provide definitions, acronyms and a glossary of terms, if necessary	Explain to other participants how to address people with different impairments	n/a
Create accessible materials with pictures and diagrams, without too much text	Ensure that circulation in the room is possible	n/a
Ensure additional opportunities if needed	Provide mixed working groups; a chance for everyone to speak	n/a

NOTE: It is important to brief facilitators and make sure they know the basic skills for communicating with children and adults with disabilities.¹⁰

Awareness-raising session with communities

- Unknown and varied public, but possibility to find out their needs in advance
- Small budget, possibility of an outdoor location
- Simple material formats for participants with a low literacy level
- Noise, people talking at the same time

Examples of accessibility considerations for an **awareness-raising session** throughout the three phases include:

PREPARATION	EVENT	FOLLOW-UP
Ask the village leaders for information on the possible attendance	Use accessible practical activities (theatre/creative set-up with sign language, role play, practical demonstrations, interactive games, etc.)	Provide simple and accessible information materials that summarize the key messages
Ensure that accompanying persons are present for people with disabilities who need them	Provide sign language interpretation, if necessary	n/a
Ensure that people with disabilities are informed about the session and engaged	Use drawings or pictograms; use narration	Ensure adapted feedback mechanisms
Choose an accessible and easily reachable location	Use simple language	n/a



Partnering with the local organization of persons with disabilities is recommended to support the dissemination of information and provide advice on the accessibility of the event.





Part 2: Detailed considerations

Accessibility applies to both thematic events and social events, e.g., a post-workshop dinner. Regardless of the specific type of event, this section presents nine areas to check to inform the selection of the most appropriate venues when running events.



CHECK 1:

In event invitations and visibility materials, highlight the accessibility features of the event and ask about access needs

- In event information and materials, list accessibility information for the venue and the services provided, for instance as follows:
 - Please note that real-time transcription (CART) services will be provided.
 - Please note that the building/office/school has accessible entrances, toilets and rooms.
 - Please note that the nearest train station or bus stop (*name the station and/or pinpoint it on a map*) has accessible facilities and accessible parking is available at the venue.



The 4th cohort of UPSHIFT: Social Impact Workshop presents the 10 final projects in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam in 2018.

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- When requesting RSVPs or registration, ask individuals, staff, visitors and guests to indicate access needs, for instance as follows:
 - During this event, real-time transcription (CART) services will be provided. In addition, please indicate if sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodation¹¹ is needed.
 - Will you bring an assistant or service animal with you? Do you or your assistant have any dietary or access requirements?
 - Do you require reasonable accommodation? If yes, please indicate the type needed:
 - Sign language interpretation (specify which type of sign language)
 - Temporary wheelchair
 - Documents in electronic or easy-read format
 - Other (please specify)



TIP: Sign languages differ, so it is important to check which languages are required before sourcing an interpreter, or to determine if the person has an assistant who is an interpreter. Another option is to ask for a recommendation of an interpreter who could be hired for this work. Sign language interpreters can be in high demand. During large international events, more than one sign language interpreter could be needed in each session.



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CHECK 2:

Book accessible services and venues

Accessibility must be considered when selecting venues for hosting training workshops, meetings, consultations or events, including for programme implementation. Venues that meet the recommended levels of accessibility and standards of universal design will provide access for adults, adolescents and children with and without disabilities.

If case of doubt concerning the most effective arrangements, devices or assistive technology or services, ask for advice from OPDs¹² or staff working on disability and inclusion.

- Book assistive services in advance, such as real-time transcription (CART) services, at the same time as booking translators and sign language interpreters, if required.
- Ask OPDs to suggest accessible venues in their town or city.
- Before booking a conference or meeting venue, check that the venue has accessibility features. Consider checking the accessibility elements typical of every building, and in particular:
 - Is there accessible public transport nearby?
 - Is there accessible parking or a drop-off area near or at the venue?
 - Is there an accessible tactile plan of the venue at the entrance?
 - Is there an accessible reception desk? Do entrance and reception areas have enough space to move around in a wheelchair?
 - Is the circulation space in meeting rooms sufficient for persons using a wheelchair?
 - Is there at least one accessible toilet on each floor?
 - Are all public spaces in the venue accessible (restaurants, buffets, information points, registration booths, etc.)?

For further details on what to check, please refer to the dedicated checklists in [Section G](#) of this toolkit.



TIP: In some contexts, at least one unisex toilet is recommended for accessibility as it allows support workers of both sexes to accompany those needing assistance. In other cultures, one unisex toilet may not be sufficient, and an accessible male and female toilet could be required at a minimum.



CHECK 3:

Inform presenters in advance about accessibility and provide materials in accessible formats

- Ask the presenters and facilitators to provide materials in advance. These materials should also be provided to sign language interpreters or other language interpreters, so they can become familiar with the event's topic.
- Make sure the provided materials, including agendas, are available in electronic accessible format (on USBs or sent in advance via email) or in Braille, so persons who are blind or have vision impairment can access the materials.
- Create a list of acronyms or list of jargon and technical language that might be used for the sign language interpreters and CART transcribers and provide it to them in advance. Ask presenters to limit the use of acronyms or to explain them when used.
- If provided, ensure videos have closed captions and, ideally, sign language and audio (descriptive) narration.
- Ask presenters and facilitators to think in advance about inclusion and the participation of people with disabilities. Send them a set of inclusion recommendations beforehand or remind presenters and speakers to:
 - Describe charts and other important visual components, rather than saying *"You can see all the information provided on my slides"* or *"I will let you read this slide yourself"*
 - Use large font sizes
 - Use heading levels and contrasting colours
 - Add alternative text (alt text) to images when sharing a presentation
 - Describe the visual elements as they are presented



TIP: UNICEF's 'Inclusive Communication Module' video format¹³ incorporates accessibility features such as sign language interpretation, audio description and closed captioning, as well as training on how to develop materials and organize meetings that are inclusive of and accessible to people with disabilities.



CHECK 4:

Identify staff or volunteers to support people during events

Security personnel, receptionists or volunteers should be briefed to respectfully offer or provide assistance to participants upon request. Volunteers may offer a person who is blind their elbow to guide them towards a venue, or may offer to take a service dog for respite during the event.

To support participation on an equal basis, it is important to provide information in accessible formats, such as DAISY, EPUB, HTML or easy-to-read formats. It is also important to make sure that all videos that are screened include captions. More information is available in UNICEF's short guide on making events accessible.¹⁴



TIP: Additional information is provided in UNICEF Disability Orientation¹⁵ as well as in checklist 6 (*reception areas*) in this toolkit.



CHECK 5:

Set up the meeting rooms and cafes with flexible tables and chairs

- Provide space around tables, chairs and equipment to allow for easy movement by a person using a wheelchair independently or with an assistant. This requires spacing tables apart or creating corridors between desks and chairs to easily approach the tables.
- Make sure table dimensions have wheelchair-friendly or child-friendly heights.
- Leave space at the end of seat rows or along tables, and provide flexible chairs that can be repositioned to allow access for wheelchair users or space for a service dog or assistant to sit alongside participants or presenters with disabilities.
- Ensure some chairs have armrests to support older persons, persons with limited dexterity or persons who want to transfer from a wheelchair to a chair for meetings and at conference events.

For further specifications, please refer to checklist 13 (meeting rooms/offices/classrooms) in this toolkit.



CHECK 6:

Ensure an appropriate stage set-up

- Ensure microphones have a height adjustable stand, so staff or visitors using a wheelchair or a child giving a guest speech can speak independently on stage.
- Where a stage is elevated, make sure an elevator, lift-cart or accessible ramp is available. The ramp should have a gentle slope of between 1:15 and 1:20 or have a handrail if the gradient is any steeper than 1:20 (5 per cent).
- Check that any podium or desk on the stage is set at an accessible height or can be adjusted. Space on the podium should be sufficient to allow a person using a wheelchair to manoeuvre without difficulty.
- If case they are at fixed heights, check that the table or podium for an adolescent/ adult using a wheelchair or sitting is at the recommended height of 740–800 mm from the floor, with leg clearance under the table that is 700 mm high and 700 mm deep.



Mini-summit organized by UNICEF for children in Lebanon's eight Governorates on the occasion of the 30 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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CHECK 7:

Ensure appropriate lighting and sound

- Make sure that the lighting and seating arrangements make it easy for people who lip-read or view sign language to see speakers.
- If the event room is large with many rows of chairs, ensure large screens show the stage and sign language interpreters. These screens should also include the live captioning (CART) of the session.
- In addition to natural light, ensure there is clear lighting in hazard areas, such as at the top or bottom of stairways and ramps.
- Ensure that all speakers, including presenters and people asking questions, use microphones to promote the inclusion of people who are hard of hearing.
- Ideally, make sure built-in or portable hearing loop systems are available at the event venue. Background noise volumes should also be monitored and reduced if required.



CHECK 8:

Address security in case of emergencies

Make sure that the security of participants, speakers and staff is properly addressed in the event of an emergency:

- Make sure that the selected venue complies with inclusive security measures in case of a fire or other emergency (the emergency exits are well signposted and maintained, accessible for persons with disabilities, not at the bottom of staircases, etc.).
- Ensure that the building's evacuation procedures accommodate persons with disabilities (including visual and audio alert systems, evacuation chairs available on each floor, trained security agents present during the event, etc.).



Make sure that the security of participants, speakers and staff is properly addressed in the event of an emergency.





CHECK 9:

Ask for feedback/evaluation after the event

Ask for feedback on the accessibility of the event and on its success, and provide at least two methods for offering feedback, such as in written, electronic or audio formats. If event resources are shared, make sure that they are produced in accessible formats (for example, that they include captions on videos and alternative text on photos, images or infographics).

Receiving feedback: It is important to create a method to receive feedback on the accessibility of existing premises and events, through surveys of staff, visitors and building users and through event evaluations or as part of consultations and focus group discussions.

When requesting feedback, accessibility and multiple modes of communication should be considered, such as options to provide both verbal and written feedback, with forms that are accessible to screen-reading software and confidential. Multiple means of providing responses should be offered. If required, an evaluation form should be developed in an easy-to-read format.

Questions in follow-up evaluations or as part of standard feedback should include:

- Did you find the location of the event easily accessible from your accommodation or residency?
- What areas of the building/premises were not easily accessible and why?
- What services provided during the event were not accessible for you and why?
- Were you able to follow the sessions and actively interact with the speakers and audience?
- How likely would you be to recommend that a friend, relative or official who uses a wheelchair, is blind or deaf or has a hearing impairment visit or meet with you at the building?
- In which areas can accessibility be improved?

For tips on conducting accessible virtual meetings, see the [Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development](#) checklist.

Glossary and abbreviations

accessibility	<p>“Accessibility is a precondition for persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully and equally in society. Without access to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communication, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, persons with disabilities would not have equal opportunities for participation in their respective societies.”</p> <p>(Source: General Comment N°2 of the CRPD)</p>
accessibility of buildings	<p>The provision of buildings or parts of buildings for people, regardless of disability, age or gender, to be able to approach, enter, use and exit from and evacuate a building independently, in an equitable and dignified manner and to the greatest extent possible¹⁶</p>
alternative formats	<p>Formats of documents and other information that include options that can be read via touch, sound or sight, e.g., the format can be read easily by screen-reading software, such as EPUB, DAISY, HTML or Braille readable format, or has been designed with pictures or icons and simple, large letters/type or font</p>
Braille	<p>A system of raised dots which people who are blind can use to read with their fingers</p>
built environment	<p>Defined by the ISO as “external and internal environments and any element, component or fitting that is commissioned, designed, constructed and managed for use by people”;¹⁷ examples include schools, playgrounds, toilets, health centres and UNICEF premises</p>
CART	<p>Communication Access Realtime Translation; the instantaneous translation of spoken language into text that can be displayed in various forms and on a screen or monitor</p>



clear headroom	Space above walkways to prevent hazards, particularly for tall people, persons with low vision or who are blind (from, e.g., cupboards, signposts, the bottom of stairways or tree branches)
cm	Centimetre (1 cm = 0.393 inches)
colour blindness	The inability to determine some colours; for example, green or red colours may appear to be grey
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DAISY	Digital Accessible Information System; a global standard for digital books with audio supporting people who are blind or have other disabilities, such as dyslexia
EPUB	Electronic Publishing; the current standard is 3.2 ¹⁸
flush	Completely level or even with another surface (not raised)
going	The horizontal part of a stair or step; also the horizontal distance between the start and end of a ramp
grab-bars/ railings	Bars/railings that are placed beside bus seats, toilet seats, showers or bedsides to provide support, e.g., for transfer from a wheelchair to a toilet or for passengers to safely stand on a bus
GrAF	UNICEF's internal Greening and Accessibility Fund
hearing loop (audio induction loop)	A sound system (built-in or portable) that produces an electromagnetic signal in an area of a building that can be received directly by hearing aids
HTML	HyperText Markup Language
ISO	International Organization for Standardization; a worldwide federation of national standards bodies that prepares widely used standards through its technical committees



JAWS	Job Access With Speech; a computer screen-reader program for Microsoft Windows that allows blind and visually impaired users to read the screen either with a text-to-speech output or by a refreshable Braille display
kerb ramp	A lowered kerb that provides a ramp for easier access to roads at sidewalk crossings; also called a 'dropped kerb' or 'sidewalk cut-out' or 'curb ramp'
km	Kilometre (1 km = 0.62 miles)
landing space	Space at the top and bottom of stairs, ramps, or in between and in front of lifts that helps persons to safely rest or manoeuvre; there can be intermediate landings if a ramp or a flight of stairs is very long
leaf	The main part of a door or a window, which may swing outwards or inwards, or slide sideways
LRV	Light Reflectance Value; a measure of colour contrast, which makes it easier for people with vision impairment to differentiate hazards and objects (on a scale of 0–100: 0 = black, 100 = white)
lux	The unit of measuring light (= to 1 lumen per square metre)
m	Metre (1 m = 1.09 yards = 3.28 feet)
manoeuvring space	Space needed to make a U-turn or to change position or direction of movement, especially for persons using wheelchairs or walking frames, or when a person is being carried on a stretcher during an emergency
mm, mm2	Millimetre, square millimetre
OPD	Organization of Persons with Disabilities, sometimes referred to as Disabled People's Organization (DPO)
persons with disabilities	Includes those persons with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that in interaction with attitudinal and environmental barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others



PIDB	Programme Information Database; a UNICEF database with codes to report financial expenditure on activities
ramp	Sloped pathway/surface that allows easy level change for people using bikes, strollers, wheelchairs and other objects with wheels
RECU	The reach, enter, circulate, use concept
rise/riser	The vertical part between each stair/step
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRV	Slip Resistance Value; a form of measuring slip resistance
tactile	A raised or bumpy surface that can be felt through touch
threshold	A low step (less than 2.5 cm) that can be found at the bottom of a doorway
ToR	Terms of reference
tread	The horizontal part of a step, excluding the step nose
TWSI	Tactile Walking Surface Indicators; tactile guiding pavements (tiles, strips) often required before hazards like roads or stairs that provide bumpy patterns on the ground or surface, which assist people who are blind or have vision impairment to feel (using a cane or feet) a clear pathway to walk or to alert them to hazards
universal design	The designing of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design
upstand	A vertical support piece alongside a path/ramp for safety and guidance
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

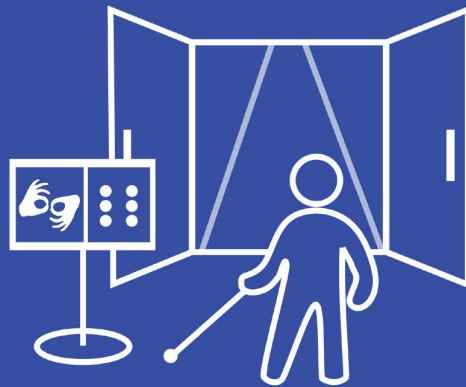


Endnotes

- 1 For more information, including the full text of the CRPD in multiple languages and the list of countries that have ratified it, see United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Disability, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), United Nations, New York, 2006, <www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>, accessed 7 September 2021.
- 2 Ronald L. Mace Universal Design Institute (UDI), 'A Brief History of Universal Design', UDI, 2018, <www.udinstitute.org/ud-history>, accessed 7 September 2021.
- 3 United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations, New York, 2006, article 2, <www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-2-definitions.html>, accessed 7 September 2021.
- 4 These considerations are covered for each type of facility in the accessibility checklists ([Section G](#)).
- 5 For more information on RECU, see Plantier-Royon, Eric, Priscille Geiser and Hugues Nouvellet, 'Accessibility: How to design and promote an environment accessible to all', Policy Brief 2, Handicap International (now Humanity for Inclusion), Lyon, 2009, <https://handicap-international.ch/sites/ch/files/documents/files/accessibilite_anglais.pdf>, accessed 17 February 2022.
- 6 See, for example, United Nations Children's Fund, *Accessible Components for the Built Environment: Technical Guidelines embracing Universal Design*, UNICEF, New York, <<https://docplayer.net/73698977-Accessible-components-for-the-built-environment-technical-guidelines-embracing-universal-design.html>>, accessed 29 October 2021.
- 7 For the complete set of SDGs, targets and indicators, see United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable Development, 'Make the SDGs a Reality', United Nations, New York, <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>>, accessed 29 October 2021.
- 8 United Nations, United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, 'New Urban Agenda', United Nations, Ecuador, 2017, open PDF, paras. 37, 52, 53, 119, <<http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>>, accessed 29 October 2021.
- 9 United Nations, World Urban Forum, 'Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030', United Nations, Kuala Lumpur, 13 February 2018, <<https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2018/04/Agenda-10-WUF9-KL-Declaration-English-1.pdf>>, accessed 29 October 2021.
- 10 For more information, see United Nations Children's Fund, 'Take Us Seriously! Engaging Children with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting their Lives', UNICEF, New York, June 2013, <https://sites.unicef.org/disabilities/files/Take_Us_Seriously.pdf>, accessed 17 September 2021.
- 11 Reasonable accommodation: necessary and appropriate adjustments (e.g., screen-reader, personal support worker, sign language interpreter) that do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden on the event organizer and ensure persons with disabilities can exercise all of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and on an equal basis with others.
- 12 See, for example, International Disability Alliance, 'IDA Members', <www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/ida-members>, accessed 17 September 2021.



- 13 For more information, see UNICEF, 'Disabilities – Inclusive Communication Module', <www.unicef.org/disabilities/index_90418.html>, accessed 17 September 2021.
- 14 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Making your events accessible: Draft quick guide (#3) for UNICEF staff and partners', UNICEF, New York, 2018, <https://sites.unicef.org/disabilities/files/Making_events_accessible_short_guide.docx>, accessed 17 September 2021.
- 15 For more information, see UNICEF, 'Disability Orientation', <https://sites.unicef.org/disabilities/index_66434.html>, accessed 29 September 2021.
- 16 Adapted from International Organization for Standardization, 'ISO 21542:2011 Building construction – Accessibility and usability of the built environment', Introduction and para. 3.2, <www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:21542:ed-1:v1:en:sec:11>, accessed 17 September 2021.
- 17 International Organization for Standardization, 'ISO 21542:2011 Building construction – Accessibility and usability of the built environment', para. 3.4, <www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:21542:en>, accessed 17 September 2021.
- 18 W3C, 'EPUB 3.2', <www.w3.org/publishing/epub3/epub-spec.html>, accessed 17 September 2021.



SECTION F

ORGANIZATION OF ACCESSIBLE EVENTS

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