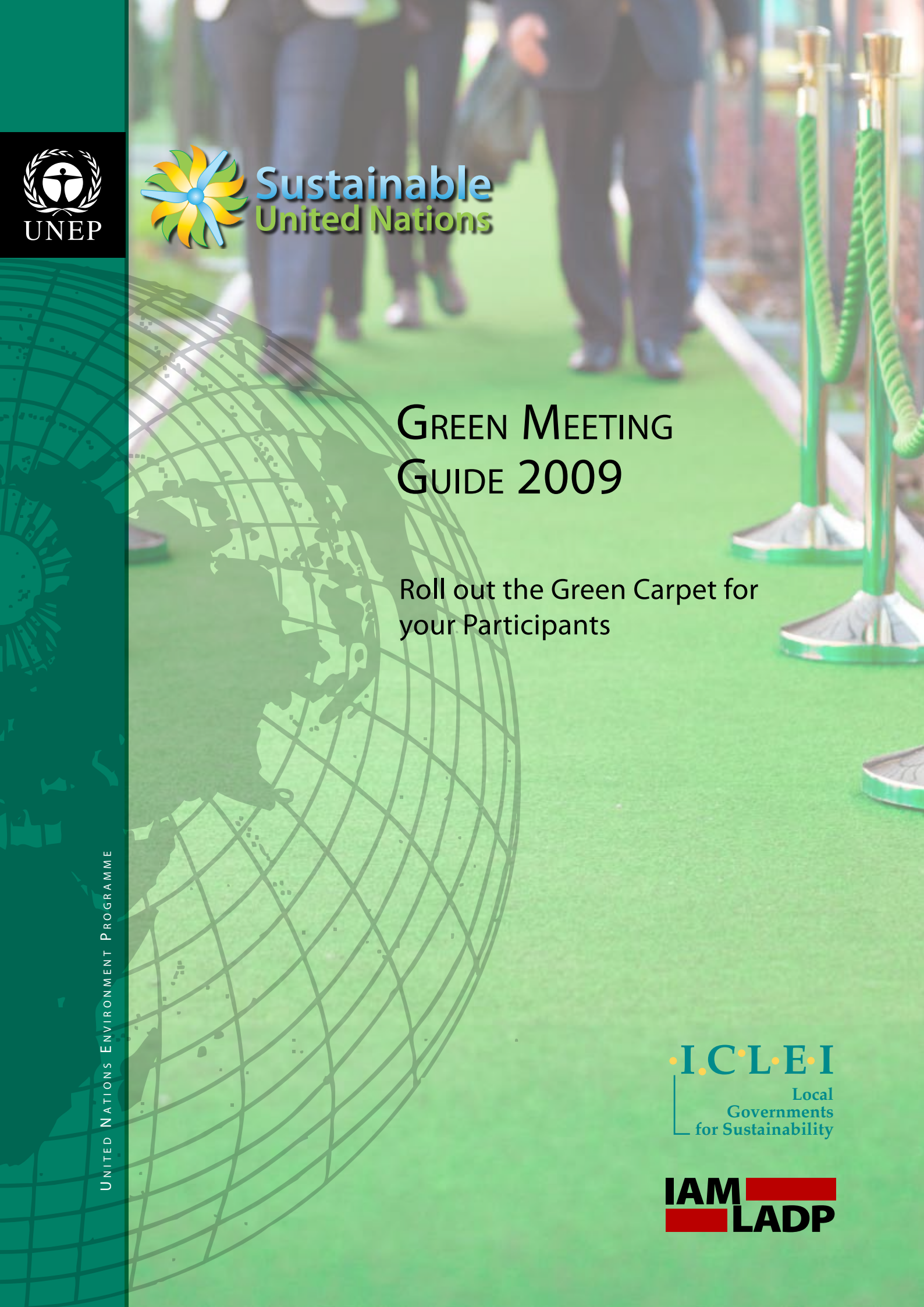


UNEP

Sustainable United Nations

Green Meeting Guide 2009

Roll out the Green Carpet for your Participants

United Nations Environment Programme

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability

IAM LADP

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Green Meeting Guide

Roll out the Green Carpet for your Participants

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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.

On the UNEP side, the work has been coordinated by Isabella Marras (Programme Officer), Inhee Chung, Lova Andre, Patrick Clairzier and Niclas Sveningsen (the Sustainable United Nations (SUN) Unit). The Climate legacy chapter was drafted in collaboration with Aniket Ghai from the UN Environment Management Group. Special thanks to Bill Mansfield, Senior Adviser in the UNEP Regional Office for North America, Blaine Mohninger of Environment Canada and Harry Lewis of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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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.

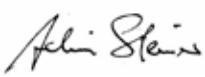
Many UN organisations have now responded to the Secretary-General's request and others are putting in train policies and plans in order to achieve green operational goals including more environmentally-friendly meetings.

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.

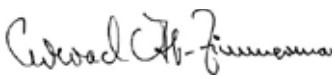
What the guide recommends for UN meetings will certainly also apply to meetings held by any other organisation. Local governments across the world, for example, are also responsible for hosting and arranging a very large number of meetings each year. This guide will provide a valuable tool for helping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



Achim Steiner
Executive Director
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Environment Programme



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Secretary General
ICLEI - Local Governments
for Sustainability



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Under Secretary General - Department for General
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Arrangements, Documentation and Publications

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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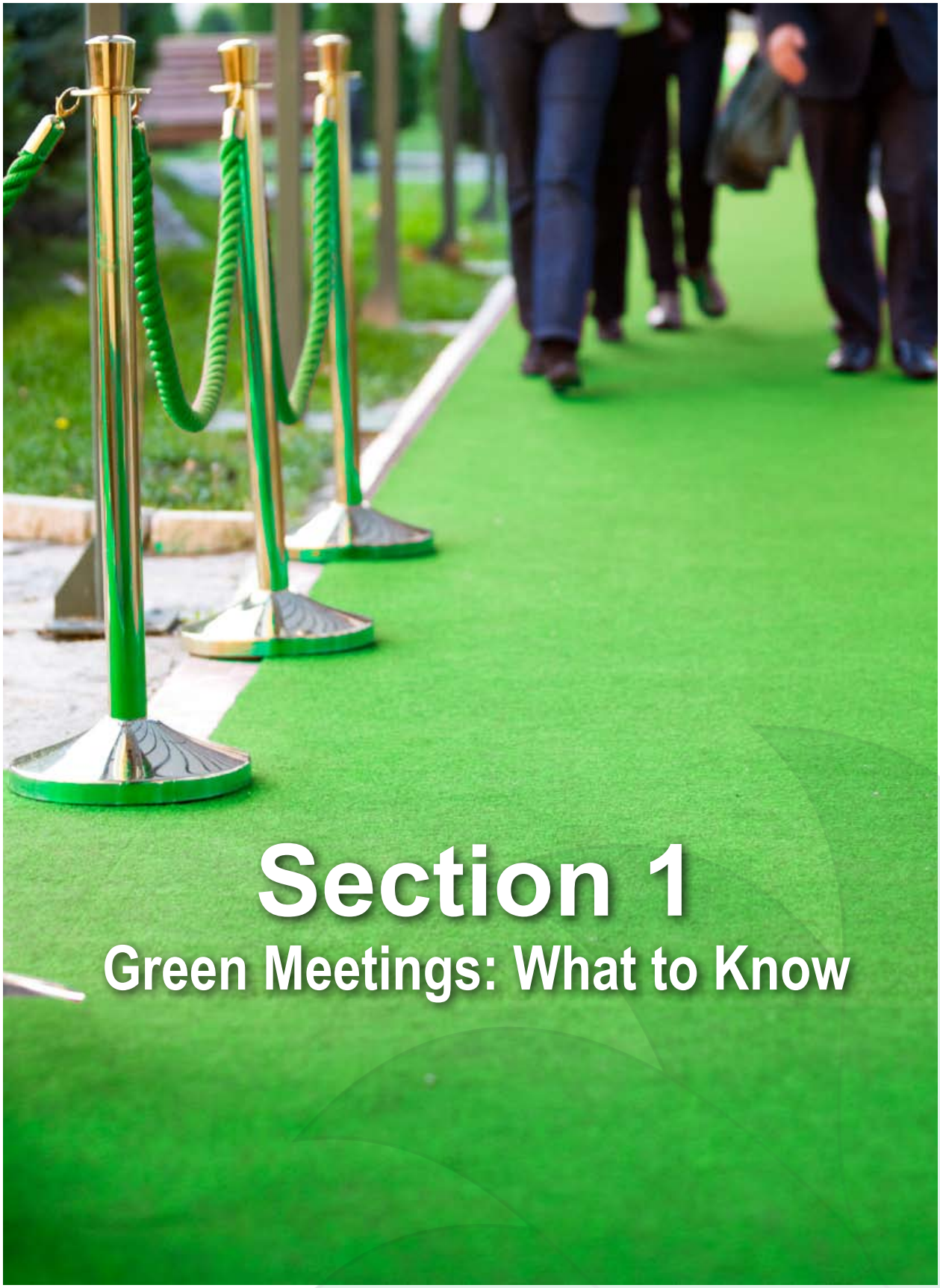
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Section 1
Green Meetings: What to Know



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 principles[1]:

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 CO_2, 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 CO_2 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 Management and Communication

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 refurnished 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



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.

- 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.

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.

C Greening your meeting

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?
Reduce energy use, and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions	• 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.
Reduce materials consumption and waste generation	• 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.
Reduce water use	• Select venues and accommodation that implement water conservation practices and use water efficient appliances. • Minimise the distribution of bottled water to participants where possible.
Reduce indirect environmental impacts to air, water and soil	• 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.

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

- **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.



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.

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

- **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.



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 CO_2 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.

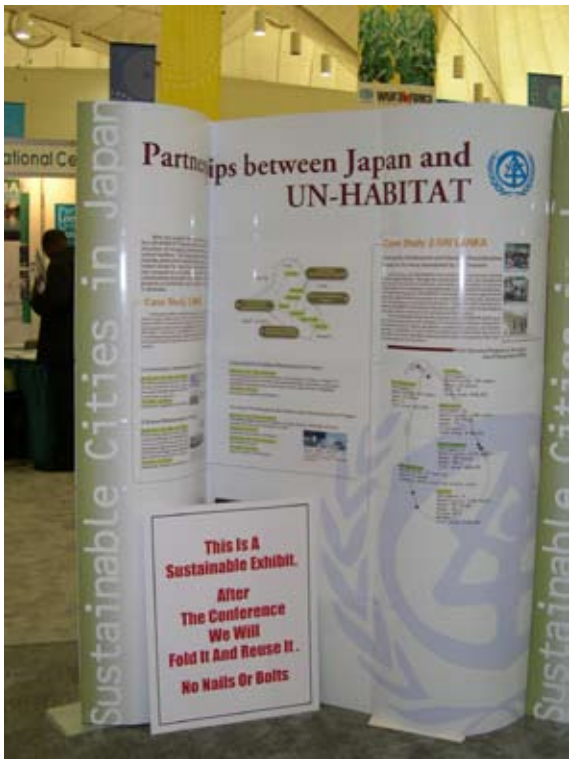
- **Materials:** A great deal of material is often provided by exhibitors (and frequently later discarded by visitors). Exhibitors should be encouraged to minimise the amount of promotional material at the stands. Any material should be as sustainable as possible, i.e. following the guidance in the section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

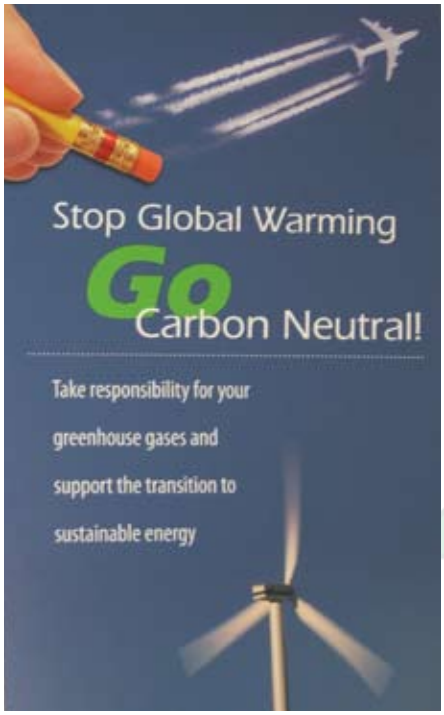


D Climate neutrality at meetings

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 (CO_2 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 CO_2 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 CO_2. 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 CO_2 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/WBCSD[2] (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 cases[3]:

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

> 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

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.

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 choice[4]. 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.

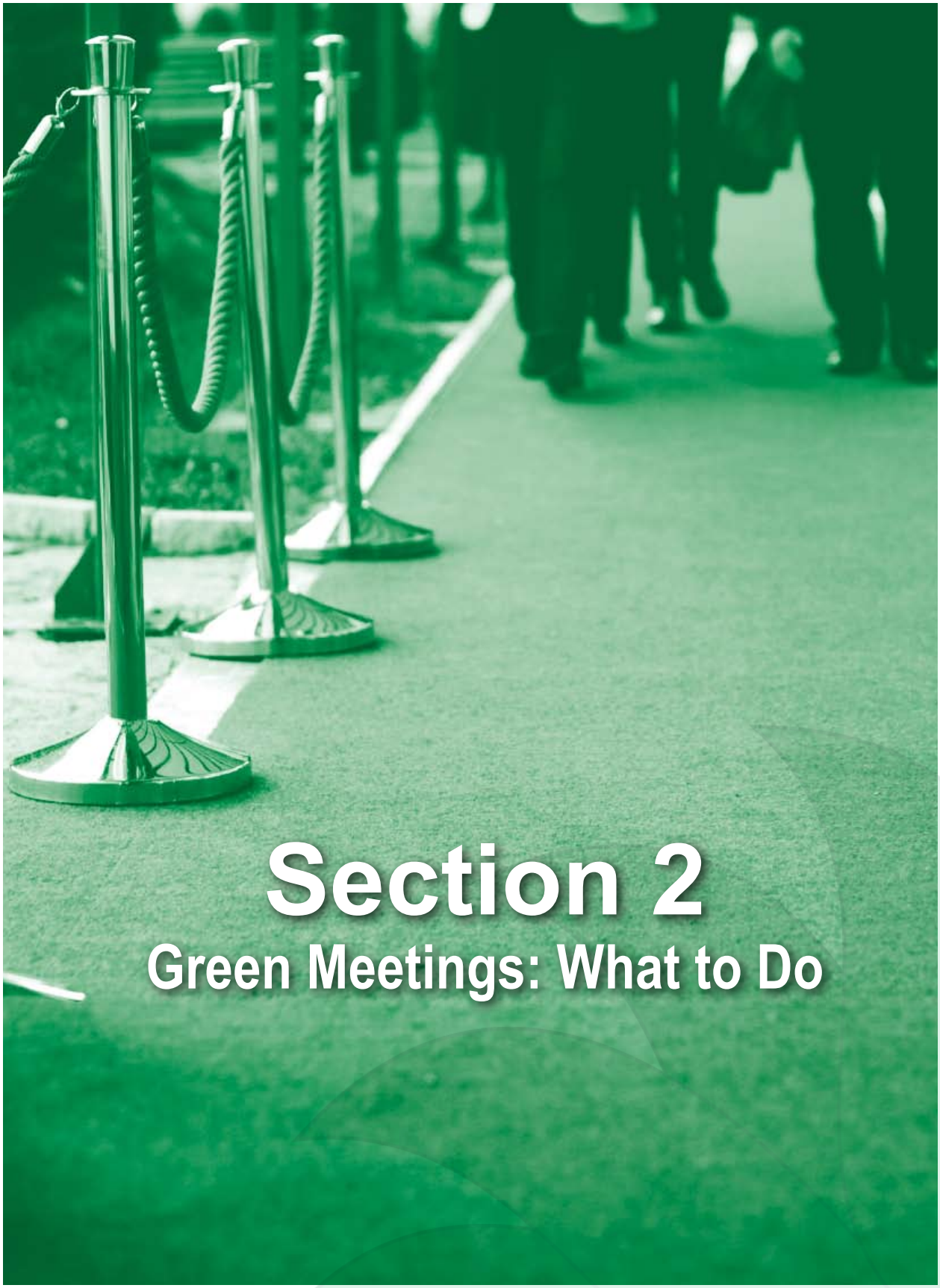
There are various reasons for these price differences, e.g.

- 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 CO_2 equivalents.

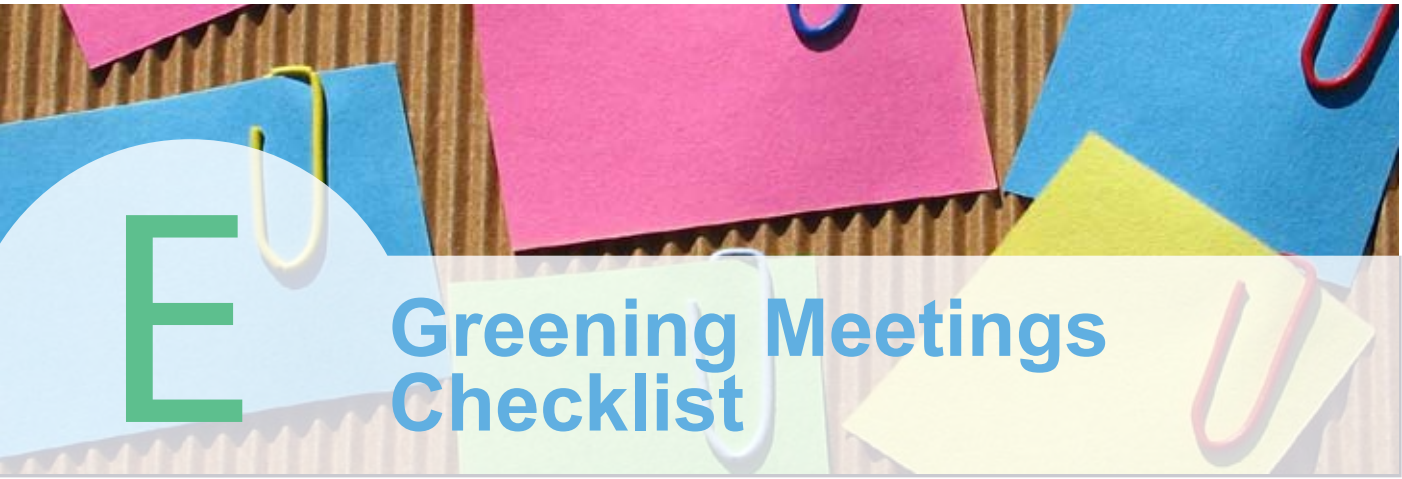
UNON DCS, in their report of November 2007 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions by the UNON Division of Conference Services and Opportunities for Carbon Neutral Operations' has developed a comparative table analysing different providers, covering the business orientations (profit vs. non-profit) and approaches 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 CO_2, 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



E Greening Meetings Checklist

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.	❑	
Venues certified with a recognised green building rating system or another recognised environmental management system should be preferred wherever possible.	❑	
The venue should have an environmental policy and action plan, ideally covering: sustainable procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation, and waste.	❑	
The venue should have training course for staff on environmental duties in place.	❑	
The venue should have good access (ideally within walking distance) to the main public transport connections and town centre.	❑	
The venue should be near to hotels where participants and speakers can stay or even provide accommodation facilities in the venue itself.	❑	
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.	❑	
If catering is provided by the venue, the facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the "Catering" section.	❑	
Cleaning services for the venue should meet the recommendations provided in the "Accommodation" section.	❑	
It should be possible to regulate the temperature within the building.	❑	

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.	❑	
Preference should be given to venues:		
• With green building standards, e.g. high insulation and efficient heating and cooling systems.	❑	
• Designed to maximise the use of daylight (rooms, coffee areas, lunch areas and exhibition areas).	❑	
• With energy efficient lighting and other appliances installed.	❑	
• Supplied with green electricity.	❑	
• With water-saving appliances in kitchens and toilets.	❑	
The venue should provide information to participants about the green aspects of the venue to inform and encourage guests' participation.	❑	
The venue should reuse materials or donate them to charities (e.g. used linens or usable food).	❑	
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.	❑	
Vehicles operated by the venue should be efficient and low emission.	❑	

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.	❑	
The hotel should have an environmental policy and action plan, ideally covering green procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation waste, and communication to guests.	❑	
The hotel should have training courses for staff on environmental duties in place.	❑	
The hotel should provide information in guest rooms about the green aspects of the hotel to inform and encourage guests' participation.	❑	
Catering facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the "Catering" section.	❑	

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.	❑	

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).	❑	

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.	❑	

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.	❑	
Guests and staff should be encouraged to reduce water use and turn off lights and other energy consuming devices with well-located signs.	❑	
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.	❑	
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).	❑	

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

Going further:

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

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).	❑	
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.	❑	
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.	❑	
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.	❑	
Newspapers should be delivered to rooms only if requested and should not be wrapped in a plastic bag.	❑	

Going further:

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

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.	❑	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
The hotel should reuse materials or donate it to charities (e.g. used linens and usable food).	❑	
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.	❑	

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 separetely 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:		
• 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.	❑	
• The use of disinfectant should be minimised and automated dosage used.	❑	
• To the extent possible, ecolabelled cleaning products should be used. Where ecolabelled 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.	❑	
• Be readily biodegradable.	❑	
• Not contain EDTA, NTA or APEOs.	❑	
• Not contain more than 25% by weight of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).	❑	
• Not contain more than 0.5% by weight of phosphorus.	❑	

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.	❑	
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.	❑	
Avoid the use of single use bottles for juice and water.	❑	
Paper products used for catering should have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).	❑	

Going further:

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

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.	❑	
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.	❑	

Going further:

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

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).	❑	
Provide numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/instructions – particularly in kitchens and in dining areas.	❑	
Inform caterers of the exact number of participants and re-evaluate quantity needed during the meeting to help avoid waste.	❑	
Collect oil and fat and provide it to respective users and/or use for fuelling.	❑	
Where an external catering company is installed, they should be responsible for waste collection and disposal during the meeting.	❑	

Going further:

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

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 separetely 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.	❑	
Use organically produced food and drink if possible. Products should be certified as meeting regional or international organic standards to the extent possible.	❑	
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).	❑	
If working with a private catering contractor, set a specific percentage of products which should be local, organic, and/or fair trade.	❑	
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).	❑	
Use drinking water from the tap when possible. It is recommended that drinking water be served in carafes/ jugs instead of bottled water.	❑	
Encourage caterers to list any local product on the menu.	❑	
Inform the caterer in time about the exact number of participants, to avoid waste of food.	❑	

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:	❑	

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.	❑	
Where livestock products are to be used, use those produced according to high welfare standards, and certified as such.	❑	

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.	❑	
The catering company should have an environmentally policy and action plan in place.	❑	

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).	❑	
Encourage catering companies and food & drink suppliers to use efficient and low emission vehicles and to address the efficiency of transportation routes.	❑	

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.	❑	
Set up an electronic registration system that allows participants to submit forms and pictures, if needed, via email or through a web service.	❑	
Encourage participants to use more sustainable ways to travel to the meeting by providing the following information:		
• For shorter trips, prefer train to car/coach and plane.	❑	
• When train is not an option, prefer car/coach to plane.	❑	
• When driving by car, use hybrid cars if possible, and share the drive with other participants. In any case, prefer smaller cars.	❑	
• If flying is the only option, choose direct flights when possible; prefer economy class to business and business to first class.	❑	
• Offset your costs of travel (See Section D – Climate neutrality at meetings).	❑	
Provide links to public transport websites.	❑	
Provide a platform for participants to communicate and organise sharing of cars, buses and/or taxis.	❑	

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.	❑	
• Bring your own pen and paper to the meeting.	❑	
• Travel by foot, bike or public transport as much as possible.	❑	
• Stay in one of the recommended hotels, which operate in an environmentally responsible manner.	❑	
• Turn off any lights, TV, air conditioner or heater when you leave your hotel room for the day.	❑	
• 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.	❑	
• Recycle your waste: bottles, cans, paper, etc. where this option exists.	❑	
Ensure that the information on your greening efforts is provided electronically prior to and after the meeting.	❑	

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.	❑	
Any necessary material should be printed at the venue/ location of the meeting rather than shipping it from the headquarters.	❑	
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.	❑	
Any food products provided as gifts should follow the recommendations included in the "Catering" section.	❑	
Pens should be provided only upon request. They should be made of a high content of recycled material and be refillable.	❑	
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.	❑	
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.	❑	
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.	❑	
Avoid glossy publications.	❑	

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.	❑	

Provide participants with a CD or USB stick with all the conference material, to avoid printing.	❑	
For external printing contracts, choose environmentally responsible printing companies which do not use environmentally persistent chemicals and promote responsible practices.	❑	
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.	❑	
Use a computer-based fax programme to send faxes electronically.	❑	
Use reusable dry-mark erasable boards or blackboards instead of paper flip charts. Ensure “non-toxic” markers are used.	❑	
Flowers and plants should be purchased locally or regionally and be organically produced.	❑	
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.	❑	
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.	❑	
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.	❑	
Consider gifts conveying a green or socially responsible message, such as a tree planted in the recipient’s name, or local artisan products.	❑	

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.	❑	
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.	❑	
• Collect paper that has been used on one side only in collector trays, and reuse for printing and notepaper.	❑	
• Turn off lights and equipment when not in use.	❑	
• 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.	❑	
Ensure that the energy saving features of all electronic equipment are enabled.	❑	
There should be numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/instructions – in both participant and staff areas.	❑	
Provide a dedicated area for participants to return material that can be re-used (such as delegate badges).	❑	
Minimise the use of decorative elements such as flowers, banners etc.	❑	
Reduce paper waste at participant registration - e.g., short registration forms, computerised systems (see 'Communication with participants and registration').	❑	
Signs should be posted reminding speakers and participants to turn off equipment (such as projectors and laptops), and lighting when not in use.	❑	

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.	❑	
To minimise paper use offer IT services to participants for the electronic copying of data, and make presentations available for download following the meeting.	❑	
Set up a stand (e.g., in the exhibition area) to communicate to participants the green aspects of the meeting.	❑	
If possible and culturally accepted, prefer remote translation options, to avoid the need for translators to travel to the meeting location.	❑	
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.	❑	

Regional considerations:

Recommendations	Notes
If waste cannot be centrally collected from the venue, the secretariat staff should be encouraged to themselves deliver the waste separetely 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).	❑	
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.	❑	
Provide a member of staff or local volunteer to accompany participants from hotels/stations to the venue by foot or local transport.	❑	
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).	❑	
If organising shared transport is not feasible ask the hotels to organise joint pick-up of participants.	❑	
Participants could be provided with complimentary public transport tickets.	❑	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Try to select meeting start/finish times that allow participants to travel easily using public transport.	❑	
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.	❑	

Try to organise discounts for participants on public transport (especially for long meetings).	❑	
Contract a bus shuttle for the participants and speakers with a low emission fleet and employing ecological driving techniques.	❑	

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.	❑	
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.	❑	
• Minimise the use of lighting and other energy requirements at the stand.	❑	
• 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).	❑	

• Use paper products which have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).	❑	
• 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.	❑	
• 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.	❑	
• Use packaging which is minimal, and reusable and/or recyclable.	❑	
• Make an effort to collect and reuse publications discarded by participants.	❑	
• Avoid sending material by air if possible.	❑	
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.	❑	

Going further:

Recommendations	Y/N	Notes
Consider hosting a competition or providing a discount for the most sustainable exhibition design.	❑	

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 CO_2 emissions; the money generated through the ICLEI Climate Legacy programme serves to finance (municipal) CO_2 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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UNEP



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.

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