



Green Events Checklist

MEA supports Reduce Reuse Recycle Offset

1st step: **Reduce**

What you can't Reduce: **Reuse**

What you can't Reduce or Reuse: **Recycle**

What you can't Reduce, Reuse or Recycle: **Offset**

Here's a checklist to assist you to produce and deliver events with a minimal impact on the environment.

Planning and policies

- Prepare a written environmental policy for your event which can be shared with suppliers, delegates and speakers
- Estimate the total carbon footprint and plan to offset the carbon emissions produced at the event. Detail this in your costing so it is clear to the client
- Look at past event energy use and wastage and find ways of reducing this. Track your results after the event
- Plan your event precisely (looking at numbers, duration, size of venue and number of rooms required) then select the right venue to fit, so you use minimum energy and resources
- Ensure your tender clearly states your commitment to the environment and request all respondents to outline their policies
- Establish a policy that encourages all suppliers to submit proposals and quotes electronically
- In all communications with exhibitors and contractors request that waste and packaging be reduced

Travel selection

- Consider using airlines with offset programs
- Travel with companies that are implementing green policies
- Fly visitors by the shortest route possible, not just the most affordable

- Choose a venue that is easily accessible by public transport or by foot
- Accurately monitor the number of delegates needing transport at each stage of the event and match this to the transport vehicle size
- Offer day or weekly traveller tickets to promote public transport use
- Use delegate shuttles and where possible use hybrid vehicles
- Consider bike use by providing bike racks and a bike concierge
- Reduce site inspections and use local scouts to gather information
- Offset carbon emissions for transport
- If you need to travel somewhere try combining it with other meetings to reduce the number of times you travel

Venue selection

- Give preference to venues with a sound environmental policy
- Work with the venue to ensure lights and air conditioning are switched off when not in use
- Consider venues that use as much natural light and natural ventilation as possible
- Consider venues that use 100 percent accredited GreenPower and that can be accessed by public transport
- Choose venues that have environmental accreditation eg. Green Star ratings or Green Globe accreditation
- Find out if the venue is taking steps to improve or establish its accreditation
- Ensure the venue has good waste reduction procedures and uses biodegradable supplies
- Ensure the venue supplies separate bins for delegates to be active recyclers
- Ensure your venue has air-conditioning that can be controlled in each room and activity and reduce the use of this during 'down times'

Accommodation

- Use or recommend hotels within walking distance of the venue and with proactive waste, water and energy management practices

Power and water supply

- Ensure toilet suppliers are using grey water and correctly dispose of black water
- Ensure all equipment, in particular in exhibitions, is turned off at night
- Consider limiting air conditioning at venues during the set-up and pack-down phase
- Investigate alternatives to air conditioning during the event
- Hold the event during the day to utilise natural light and reduce power consumption
- Ensure suppliers use modern, energy efficient technology
- Ensure your event and event business is buying 100% accredited Green Power

Food and beverages

- Ask to see the green policy of the hotel or caterer
- Aim to reduce food miles by using local rather than imported food and beverage supplies
- Plan menus using in-season, fresh, local, organic food
- Request fair trade food suppliers
- Include a larger number of vegetarian options and advise delegates of these options
- Select fish from sustainable fish supplies
- Avoid unnecessary packaging and plastic bags
- Ask caterers to provide reusable table cloths, crockery and cutlery
- Where appropriate limit use of imported and bottled water
- Use water glasses plus jugs with tap water
- Where possible use bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, condiments and sauces. Avoid individually wrapped sweets, salt and sugar sachets
- Ask delegates to sign up for the meals in advance to avoid food wastage
- Allow attendees to pre-select a meal size, offering smaller meals options

Printed material and information

- Use new media and electronic technology to reduce paper use
- Offer electronic registration and market electronically via website and email
- Use recycled paper (post consumer waste) and print on both sides using vegetable inks
- Offer all relevant information, presentations, papers and web links via electronic media, such as on disc
- Consider requesting delegates bring their own pens and note pads
- Consider using SMS to give seating and registration details
- Collect and reuse name badges
- Print signage on biodegradable materials
- Ensure your event communication includes a green message reminding people to think before printing

Waste reduction and recycling

- Reduce waste by keeping track of attendance and tailoring supplies and food according to final numbers
- Make informed purchasing decisions and support use of recycled and biodegradable materials
- Encourage delegates to separate waste
- Reduce use of gift bags or satchels
- Ensure excess food is donated to charity or composted
- Ensure non-toxic cleaning materials are used at the venue
- Create incentives for suppliers to return excess or unused products
- Educate delegates about how they can assist to reduce waste
- Ensure your waste management plan addresses all types of waste
- Reduce the amount of printed promotional material used and supply electronically
- Buy products made from recycled products
- Make arrangements with suppliers for the return of unwanted or unused products and materials – arrange for the return of printing cartridges, containers and packaging

Activities

- Plan to include sessions on relevant environmental issues
- Offer off-site activities that are nature-based with minimal environmental impact
- Suggest a community activity for delegates which helps restore the environment
- Give an eco-friendly award to the greenest exhibitor

Sources

This checklist was collated with assistance from Tourism Australia from the following sources:

BlueGreen Meetings website, which has a wide range of tips on reducing the environmental impact of business events: www.BlueGreenMeetings.org

Green Event Ideas, *Ecowise* November 2007. Ecowise is a publication produced by the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre's environmental program. The Centre is Green Globe benchmarked.

Start a Green Event Policy: The checklist to running an environmentally sustainable event on a sustainable budget from a presentation at RSVP, Sydney, July 2007, by Clare Donovan of the Australian Conservation Foundation; Jeremy Garling of Great Southern E-vents and Larissa Moore of the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change.



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