



One Planet Events

-

Methodology and tools to green your events?

Prepared by Gaël Léopold, WWF International

IMPORTANT: Using these guidelines developed by WWF, does not entitle anyone or any organization to call an event a "One Planet Event". Event organizers using these guidelines could use the following wording "*In order to reduce the ecological footprint of our event/wedding/concert/conference we used the One Planet Event guidelines developed by WWF and based on the One Planet Living principles of sustainability - see <http://www.panda.org/opl/events>". For more information, re brand association, please contact Gaël Léopold, gleopold@wwfint.org.*

Introduction to One Planet Events (OPE)

Events such as conferences, galas, dinners, meetings have an impact on the environment through:

- the resources directly (electricity, water, food, etc) and indirectly consumed (energy and Co2 related to transport to the events, etc)
- the waste created immediately and on the longer term (dishes, equipments, paper, etc)

All these elements compose the ecological footprint of an event.

Environmental considerations have to be taken into account before (a), during (b), and after (c) the events.

a. Before the event

Most of the ecological footprint reduction can be completed through a good planning from the very beginning as that is when you set in stone the overall framework of the event.

b. During the event

During the event, the organizers will make sure that the strategies agreed with venue's managers and other stakeholders are properly implemented. They will also assist attendees and participants in their own individual efforts to contribute to the event's ecological footprint reduction.

c. After the event

Organizers will communicate the results to relevant people (venue's managers, participants, etc). It is important to take advantage of the efforts put into this event to spread the message that organizing greener events is possible.

This document aims at providing tools for events organizers/managers to reduce their events' ecological footprint.

It is divided in 2 sections:

1. Questionnaire for venue's managers
2. Check list for One Planet Events

Key questions

There are two key questions to ask yourself at the very beginning of the event planning.

a. The location

Transport (including air travel) is often going to be the main component of your event's ecological footprint. Therefore the location that you choose will contribute dramatically to minimizing transport and thus the event's ecological footprint. An optimal place has to be chosen based on attendees and participants' place of departure and transportation modes. In order to know better where people are going to be flying from for your event, you can ask them this information in the registration form that they have to fill in.

b. The venue

Only venues having best practices or willing to take into account best practices as defined in this document should be considered. The following "Questionnaire for venue selection" can be emailed to potential venue's managers so you will get a clear sense of how they perform. Make sure to apply the same criteria to the hotels that you will recommend to participants.

To "green" your event is a good opportunity to inform and influence the venue's managers and the attendees about existing strategies to hold events with limited ecological footprint. Make clear to everyone that you want to hold a "green" event.

Interesting links:

<http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org/> - tips on how to green your event

1. Questionnaire to the venue's managers

The following questionnaire can be sent to venue managers, caterer (for the food section at least), to the hotels managers that you plan to recommend to participants.

WWF'S ONE PLANET LIVING BEST PRACTICE SURVEY

WWF is a conservation organization working with individuals, companies and governments to reduce humanity's ecological footprint. As such, WWF wants to make sure that the events it organizes have a limited overall ecological footprint. Accordingly, when making hotel selections for our employees and/or meetings, we apply environmental criteria to our decision making. The following survey is intended to provide a thumbnail sketch of your property's environmental management practices to help us in our procurement process. Please answer the following Best Practice Survey and return it to us by email.

Thanks for your understanding and response,

WWF

General questions about EMS (Environmental management systems) in place:

Y/N

- a. Are there individuals with authority and resources taking responsibility for environmental management (active Green Team; regular eco-meetings with reporting; eco-initiatives budget; employee eco-suggestion opportunities)?
- b. Does the hotel have a management system in place ensuring that employees are properly trained, and processes monitored, and evaluated to improve environmental performance?
- c. Are your property's environmental efforts visibly communicated to guests, shareholders, vendors and the public (lobby signage; in-room material; direct mail; web site; vendor letters; annual report; advertising)?
- d. Is your property an active participant in an environmental partnership or certification program (ENERGY STAR (Green Lights); Green Seal; Green Globe; Buy Recycled Business Alliance; Waste Wise; GreenLeaf)?
- e. Is there an environmental section in your annual report (if so please provide your annual report)?

Zero Carbon – carbon neutrality

Achieve zero net CO₂ emissions.

All energy demand from buildings and infrastructures is met from renewable sources generated on site or from a dedicated off-site source representing new renewable energy capacity.

Y/N

1. Energy supply

- a. Is your venue getting all or part of its electricity from a green supplier (certified renewable energy sources)?
- b. Have you put in place some systems that provide part of your energy from renewable sources (solar panels for hot water, geothermal, etc)?
- c. Are you offsetting your CO₂ emissions (precise how much and with which organization)?
- d. Has your building been rated or certified by recognized "energy efficiency" schemes (Minergie, HQE, LEED, etc)?

2. Energy consumption

- a. Are programmable, thermostats with motion detectors used to control HVAC in guestrooms?
- b. Are you using energy efficient lighting?
- c. Is lighting in intermittent-use areas is controlled by energy sensors and timers
- d. Are your meeting rooms naturally ventilated?
- e. Are your meeting rooms naturally lighted?
- f. Are you using energy efficient equipment (TV, fridge, beamers, etc)?

Zero Waste

Eliminate waste flows to landfill and for incineration.

To minimize exploitation of virgin resources and prevent waste to landfill.

Y/N

1. Reduce waste production

- a. Is your local authority (or a private company) collecting sorted waste from your venue?
- b. Do you have a strategy in place to reduce packaging (explain)?
- c. Do you have a paper policy in place?
 - e1. Promoting low use of paper?
 - e2. Using vegetable ink
 - e3. Using only recycled and / or certified paper such as FSC?
 - e4. Printing on both sides of paper sheet
- d. If asked to serve box lunches, will they be in recyclable containers?
- e. Are refillable amenity dispensers used rather than individual bottles for bathroom amenities?

2. Organize waste segregation

- a. Do you have segregated bins in public spaces for plastic, glass, paper, aluminium?
- b. Do you re-use organic waste (compost) in your garden or do you give it to local relevant organizations?

3. Ban plastic from the event

- a. If asked to serve food at our event, will you use plastic cups, forks, plates?

Sustainable Transport

To minimize CO2 emissions from all forms of transport.

Provide transport systems and infrastructure that reduce dependence on fossil fuel use, e.g., by cars and airplanes.

Y/N

1. Minimize CO2 emissions from transport

- a. Is the venue well connected to public transport (bus, train)? If so, please provide details such as schedule, routes, websites.
- b. Is the venue reachable by bike from the city centre or other key locations?
- c. Is the venue equipped with videoconferencing equipment?
- d. Can you provide a shuttle service from the airport or main train station to your place for our participants?

Local and Sustainable Materials

Transform materials supply to the point where it has a net positive impact on the environment and local economy.

To minimise transport emissions, spur investment in local natural resource stocks and boost the local economy.

Y/N

1. Do you give the preference to products that are locally made?
2. Do you have a policy to use as much recycled/reclaimed materials as possible?
3. Are you engaging into discussions with your suppliers about their environmental practices (explain)?

Local and sustainable food

Transform food supply to the point where it has a net positive impact on the environment, local economy and peoples' well-being.

Healthy diets should be promoted and minimum targets achieved for supply of organic or low-environmental impact food and local sourcing.

Y/N

If you are also asked to provide food to our event:

- a. Do you offer well balanced and healthy menus?
- b. Which share of the food you serve is locally produced?
- c. Which share of the food you serve is organic?
- d. Which share of the food you serve is seasonal?
- e. Can you offer menus with low meat and fish?
- f. Can you offer 100% vegetarian menus?
- g. Is all the fish you serve MSC certified?
- h. Is your meat/chicken/eggs free range?
- i. Do you offer local and traditional food meals?
- j. Do you offer serve bite-size or finger foods?
- k. Do you use coffee stirrers, straws, paper doilies, and toothpicks?
- l. Do you use food vendors and caterers to use durable serving ware (disposable products should be biodegradable - paper, corn-based, wheat-based, etc.)?
- m. Are condiments, beverages, and other food items provided in bulk instead of individually packaged?
- n. If serving alcohol, will your bartenders save all glass, plastic, and aluminum containers so they can be recycled?

Sustainable Water

Achieve a positive impact on local water resources and supply.

Minimise water extraction and pollution; foster sustainable water and sewage management in the landscape; restore natural water cycles.

Y/N

- a. What is the quality of your tap water?
- b. Do you offer bottled water or tap water?
- c. For hotels only: do you offer reuse option to multiple night guests and raise awareness about water consumption?
- d. Do you have dual flush toilet and venturi shower heads
- e. How is your water treated (on site, main sewage, etc)?
- f. Does the housekeeping and engineering department have an active system to detect and repair leaking toilets, faucets and showerheads?

Natural Habitats and Wildlife

Regenerate degraded environments and halt biodiversity loss.

Protect or regenerate existing natural environments and the habitats they provide for fauna and flora; create new habitats.

Y/N

- a. Do you have gardens and other natural spaces in your property?
- b. Do you have specific natural space that could be of interest for our participants (rare local flowers, Japanese gardens, etc)?
- c. Are there any interesting natural sites to visit around your property (please provide details)?

Culture and Heritage

Protect and build on local cultural heritage and diversity.

Celebrate and revive cultural heritage and the sense of local and regional identity; choose structures and systems that build on this heritage; foster a new culture of sustainability.

Y/N

- a. Is your property a particular historical or cultural site?
- b. Are there cultural sites of interest around your property (please detail)?
- c. Can you organize trips to these sites?

Equity and Fair Trade

Ensure that the company has positive economic links with the wider local and global community.

Foster local production and supply of goods. Promote equity and fair trading relationships that will benefit to other communities both locally and globally, notably disadvantaged communities.

Y/N

- a. Do you offer fair trade products (if so, please list the fair trade products)?
- b. Do you donate your excess food to local charities?
- c. Do you have links with some local organizations working with disadvantaged groups?

Health and Happiness

Increase health and well-being of employees and customers.

Promote healthy lifestyles and physical, mental & spiritual well-being through well-designed structures and community engagement measures, as well as by delivering on social and environmental targets.

Y/N

- a. Is your hotel utilizing environmentally responsible cleaners throughout the property?
- b. Is air filtration in place /available for guestrooms?
- c. Have low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) materials been used on property (paints, adhesives, carpeting, etc)?
- d. Are all your rooms properly ventilated (if possible naturally)?
- e. Can you offer relaxation classes (yoga, meditation, stretching, etc) or are there some nearby?

2. Check list for event organizers

The following table is a list of question that organizers should bear in mind when organizing and running their event. It is difficult to answer positively to all these questions but a majority of them can/should be.

Zero Carbon – carbon neutrality	
<i>Achieve zero net CO₂ emissions.</i>	<i>All energy demand from buildings and infrastructures is met from renewable sources generated on site or from a dedicated off-site source representing new renewable energy capacity.</i>
<p>1. Prefer renewable energy If the venue doesn't rely on renewable energy, consider offsetting the overall electricity consumption of your event</p> <p>2. Air conditioning and heating Ensure that AC is not too low or heating too high (19 to 22 degrees is fine for a meeting)</p> <p>Ensure that doors and windows are properly closed if AC or heating is on</p> <p>3. Ensure that electric equipments such as beamers, computers, TV are turned on/off properly Seek out naturally lighted meeting rooms to conserve energy</p>	Y/N

Zero Waste

Eliminate waste flows to landfill and for incineration.

To minimize exploitation of virgin resources and prevent waste to landfill.

Y/N

1. Reduce waste
 - a. use emails and e-documents rather than hard copies (including for registration)
 - b. Offer a print-on-demand service at the venue or ask all participants to bring their documents with them and then bring only a limited number of pre-printed documents
 - c. Make sure that you use vegetable-based inks when you print documents
 - d. Print on both sides
 - e. When using posters/signage do not put date on them so they can be reused later on
 - f. Buy locally recycled or FSC certified paper
 - g. Use reusable plastic namebadge holders. Then collect them at the end of the event for reuse. Adhesive-backed disposable namebadges can not be recycled or reused.
 - h. Do NOT provide pens or other writing utensils, participants can/should bring their own
 - i. Use dry-erase boards or chalkboards instead of flip chart paper
 - j. Encourage speakers/facilitators to prepare PowerPoint presentations instead of using handouts
 - k. Prefer products/materials with low or no packaging
 - l. Ban plastic from the event
2. Organize waste segregation
 - m. Ensure the venue has segregated bins and that signs are clear
 - n. Organic waste should be composted and reused as fertilizer (in venue or elsewhere)

Sustainable Transport

To minimize CO2 emissions from all forms of transport.

Provide transport systems and infrastructure that reduce dependence on fossil fuel use, e.g., by cars and airplanes.

Y/N

Many elements related to transport are covered in the questionnaire to venue managers. Make sure that the venue you pick allows you to optimize transportation.

1. Minimize air travel
 - a. Ask attendees where they will come from in order to determine the optimal location
 - b. Provide information on alternatives to air travel (train companies websites, train and public transport schedules, car pooling websites, connect people coming from the same place)
 - c. Offer the possibility to follow the discussions via videoconferencing for those unable/unwilling to travel
 - d. Ultimately, suggest website where attendees can offset their flights (www.climatefriendly.org) but make clear that offset has to be the last option
2. Pick a venue that is well connected to the public transport network or reachable on foot/by bike?
 - e. Provide all required information to make it easy to pick public transport or soft transportation modes (include it in the delegates' package)
 - f. If the venue is poorly connected, organize (with the venue) a shuttle from the train or bus station/airport to the venue
 - g. Ensure the venue is also well connected to hotels where attendees will stay
3. Ensure that all social events will be green?
 - h. Pick social events that don't require too much transport
 - i. Prefer soft or low CO2 emitters transportation modes (boat, walking, cycling)
 - j. Try to apply to these social events the same rule as for your events
 - k. for transport from/to and during the event, prefer cars and buses that produce less CO2 emissions (electric, hybrid, hydrogen, biogas, biofuel)

Local and Sustainable Materials

Transform materials supply to the point where it has a net positive impact on the environment and local economy.

To minimise transport emissions, spur investment in local natural resource stocks and boost the local economy.

Y/N

1. Make sure that all materials used are locally sourced (paper, food, others)
2. Purchase promotional products made from recycled content
3. If you happen to have utensils, make sure they are made from recycled or biodegradable materials
4. Use office products (sticky-notes, lined pads, paper clips, etc.) made from recycled content

Local and sustainable food

Transform food supply to the point where it has a net positive impact on the environment, local economy and peoples' well-being.

Healthy diets should be promoted and minimum targets achieved for supply of organic or low-environmental impact food and local sourcing.

See questionnaire to venue managers!

Sustainable Water

Achieve a positive impact on local water resources and supply.

Minimise water extraction and pollution; foster sustainable water and sewage management in the landscape; restore natural water cycles.

- a. Do NOT offer bottled water, prefer tap water (check water quality with venue)
- b. Apply all recommendations in questionnaire to venue managers.

Y/N

Natural Habitats and Wildlife

Regenerate degraded environments and halt biodiversity loss.

Protect or regenerate existing natural environments and the habitats they provide for fauna and flora; create new habitats.

Promote the local environment (to ask venue and local NGO)

- a. Provide information on natural sites to be visited in the surrounding area
- b. Organize trips to these natural areas

Y/N

Culture and Heritage

Protect and build on local cultural heritage and diversity.

Celebrate and revive cultural heritage and the sense of local and regional identity; choose structures and systems that build on this heritage; foster a new culture of sustainability.

1. Promote the local culture and heritage (to ask venue and local NGO)
 - a. Provide information on cultural sites to be visited in the surrounding area
 - b. Organize trips to these cultural sites

Y/N

Equity and Fair Trade

Ensure that the company has positive economic links with the wider local and global community.

Foster local production and supply of goods. Promote equity and fair trading relationships that will benefit to other communities both locally and globally, notably disadvantaged communities.

Y/N

1. Promote fair trade products
 - a. Ask venue to offer fair trade products (sugar, tea, coffee, rice, etc)
2. Promote local production
 - a. Promote local food, materials, goods when possible
3. If you use centerpieces or decoration items that are not reusable, consider donating them to a local charity
4. Ask venue to ensure that excess food will be donated to relevant local charities
5. Consider leaving a positive environmental legacy (see http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org/HostsAndPlanners/Documents/Legacy_Examples.doc)

Health and Happiness

Increase health and well-being of employees and customers.

Promote healthy lifestyles and physical, mental & spiritual well-being through well-designed structures and community engagement measures, as well as by delivering on social and environmental targets.

Y/N

1. Promote healthy activities such as cycling, walking, and other physical activities to attendees
2. Ensure that you follow recommendations as specified in the "Health and safety regulations" guidelines provided by the human resources department
3. Offer some relaxation classes (yoga, meditation, stretching, etc)
4. Create opportunities for attendees to socialize during the day and in the evening
5. Explain to attendees the One Planet Events objective (see below) to get them "to play the game"

Interesting links:

<http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org/> - tips on how to green your event