

"Make it Green Seminar"



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Introduction

Why to go “green” or what we can/did to our environment?

Term “**green**”, is becoming more and more used each day, having many different connotations. Instead of “green”, we can also hear the term “**eco**”. It often indicates concern for the well being of the Earth, nature and all the natural resources. So, we are “going green” everywhere, from the technology till politics.

The truth is that every single thing we do, every day has consequences on the planet, good or bad. The fact is that as an individual, every person has the power to control most of its own choices and, therefore, the impact it creates: from place it lives to what is buying, eating, and using to light its home, to where and how is going to vacation, etc.

Beginning from this “smaller” goals we can achieve every day, we are moving to the bigger. And bigger goals are to make a global impact.

Being “glocal”

Ask most people what comes into their minds when they think about “**global warming**”, “**climate change**” or “**greenhouse gases**” and melting glaciers, tsunamis and the dwindling rainforest are likely to feature high on the list of responses. Powerful though these images are, the principal unifying thing about them is not their iconic status, so much as the fact that they are all far away – and essentially remote from our everyday lives. They are unquestionably globally important, but they remain not particularly locally relevant. In many ways this lack of immediacy and direct involvement has always been a problem for the whole environmental movement, right back from its earliest days and long before it became the mainstream issue that it is today. The maxim “**Think Globally, Act Locally**” – stands as reminder of the need for locally relevant action to aid the wider world. However, a slogan is one thing, but how do you go about putting it into practice?

This you can achieve in several ways .One of the things is that YOU need to recognise how you personally impact *global warming*.

Carbon Footprint(the carbon footprint is a measure of the exclusive global amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases emitted by a human activity or accumulated over the full life cycle of a product or service)will show you how to minimise your impact, and show you how to make the right product

choices in the future. So, the first thing is to recognize yourself as an individual, and the other is to recognize your organization as green. It's good that your organization has exact environmental policy, as formal written policy to cover a whole range of important issues, including what steps they take to minimise their own impact, how they approach purchasing, their attitude to waste, how much they recycle and do they assist any conservation projects.

After all, you can **work globally and act locally by:** developing environmental best practices in programs, products and services, setting environmental impact targets and measuring performance, working with our employees, suppliers, owners and local communities to minimize our environmental impact, complying with local, state and federal environmental laws, communicating progress regularly to our stakeholders...

The other way of practicing "green" is by spreading a word through (youth) seminars, trainings and exchanges you organize. If you make our events more "greener", you can reach these bigger goals.

A "green" event refers to a seminar, meeting or training with a focus on sustainability and justifying the negative impacts of holding such events. Meetings and conferences generate a great deal of waste and consume high volumes of energy and other resources. In general, not many people that organize this kind of events are aware of wasting so much materials in a way (as much as money), not saving on energy, food supplies, and not recycling everything. So, if you become more aware of this, and implement more "green" while organizing events, you are on a half way to make our seminars successful. So the first rule of organizing "green" events is to prevent waste!

Why this handbook?

This handbook should help the event planners, and participants as well, to reduce the amount of resources used and waste generated by their seminar or event. It also outlines some steps in planning and conducting an environmentally aware event.

Can you imagine that you are attending a seminar, in which you arrive by public transportation to your hotel, which reminds you to turn off your room lights in order to save the energy?

Workshop materials are printed double sided with vegetable-based inks. And as a nametag, you wear your own business card, inserted in a reusable nametag holder, which is collected as you leave.

Coffee and food are served in real china, not plastic for one use. And after coffee break you are reminded to put leftovers in special bin. Maybe this sounds awkward, but after all, you see that you saved much. The key to planning such an environmentally aware meeting or event is to set environmental priorities early in event planning and incorporate them into as many parts of the event as possible.

Organizing an “green” event

Getting started

Before you start organizing “green” event, you should make a **checklist** of things to do, concerning “green” rules (see for the checklist at the end of the handbook). Maybe, the first thing you can do for your “green” event is to **seek sponsors** (it’s always good to have help with the money issue, but the sponsors will have benefit also) to provide recycling bins, green office equipment and supplies, recycled-content tote bags, coffee mugs (for replacing polystyrene cups), and for volunteers to sort recyclable materials or be on-site green team members, informing delegates how and where to recycle.

After you inform the participants that this seminar is “green”, put a short description of what “green” seminar means, and about specific rules (about eco-friendly transportation, accommodation, food, etc). It’s very important to send this using email, cause in that way you are saving on printing after the same thing you already explained. Since the most of the events are organized for **youngsters**, you should pay special attention on planning some interesting, “green” ways to show those young people why being green is so important. On the start of the event you should make an introduction regarding its eco-character. Further, plan ice-breaking/role play games inspired by ecological principles, encouraging green practices... In many ways you can raise consciousness of your participants, but also is good to make an impact to the society, in general. You can lobby youth agencies to adopt green policies and take into consideration issues of ecological sustainability when funding projects. Establishing green criteria for funding youth seminars would be excellent, as well as encouraging youth agencies to implement environmental management plan (in Greece is a huge challenge). And, finally, you can incorporate environmental-friendly initiatives of the local society (where the project is implemented) in the programme of the event. For instance, in Greece there are community groups advocating the use of bicycles in the city (www.podilatreis.gr). You should consider also advertising green character of the event in media-lobby for the adoption of green practices through press releases.

Location of the event

First thing is to make a **location selection** for your event (depending of what kind of event it is: seminar, (outdoor) training, or meeting). It's good to search the location that has mass transit system, bicycle routes and pedestrian friendly avenues that connect the venue, hotel and any planned activities. It's good to look from local community that this place has environmental certifications and recognitions, for example communities implementing Agenda 21 programmes (Local Agenda 21 is a program that provides a framework for implementing sustainable development at the local level. LA21 aims to build upon existing local government strategies and resources, such as corporate plans, vegetation management plans, and transport strategies, to better integrate environmental, economic and social goals). Also, is good that this venue has visible waste sorting bins.

Accommodation

Next step is to choose a **"green"** hotel. So, what is a green hotel? Hotels that are implementing environmental management plans, engaged in eco-certification such as EMAS, and in EU they use a lot the certification of eco-label. Many of them, around the globe are making a huge effort to lower their energy and water usage, and reduce solid wastes. They are installing energy efficient lighting, low flow showers and toilets, participating in recycling programs, and contributing to the local communities. What's even better is whether you're looking for a luxury suite, or something a little more budget friendly there are green options for you.

Eco friendly hotels exist in Greece, as well as green resorts, with many bicycling, sailing, hiking eco tours, which is very good and inspiring for youngsters (you can check www.ecoclub.com, www.bestgreenhotels.com, www.greenhotels.com).

Before you select a hotel for your event, make sure your hotel and venue are committed to green policies, including recycling and energy saving. It's very important that hotel and meeting venues are connected to the airport by mass transit, and within walking distance of one another. And you should inform hotel about your special needs of "green" seminar, like to ask hotel's housekeeping staff to turn down the heat/air conditioning during the day in rooms while participants are not there, or not to change the sheets and towels daily unless requested by the guest. By choosing meeting rooms, hotels and restaurants that are within walking distance of each other, or provide shuttle services to minimize car trips if walking is great option.

Transportation

Next thing on the list is **transportation** issue. One of the best and most immediate ways to get started is by examining your travelling habits. Most of the changes to consider are very well known and actually pretty obvious. Reducing the number of flights we take, for instance, or **offsetting** the **carbon** they produce, cuts emissions to the atmosphere and while we may never see a melting glacier with our own eyes, we can at least relax in the knowledge that we have done our bit to slow up its thaw.

By cutting out unnecessary journeys and walking, cycling or taking the bus instead of the car – all very local solutions – we can begin our own personal quest for a low impact lifestyle, inspired by the bigger global issues. Car pooling, telecommuting and the recent renaissance of rail for medium to long distance – and even some international – travel all represent the practical end of the public's growing eco-awareness and their attempts to do something at home to counter a threat that is so often seen as being a long way away. So, encourage sustainable travel. Also you can consider purchasing green power for the event. But, the most preferable thing is to stay close. Try to reduce travel emissions by reducing travel needs at your events. If you have people travelling to your events, try to book venues close to the airport. And if you have a large event, book all your sessions close enough that people can walk from venue to venue. If you have events that force your attendees to travel long distances, you may want to consider having more regional events that only require air travel for a few of your staff members. Anyway, sometimes, participants are coming from abroad, and you cannot avoid flying. So, the least you can do is to book flights with airlines that recycle the waste created when serving food and beverages to passengers. For example, **Continental airlines** is one of the first companies implementing green policies and eco-certification schemes e.g. carbon offsetting. Also, think about saving paper by purchasing electronic tickets whenever possible. In your destination place encourage participants to use public transportation when available. Use the bus or local transit system. Share taxi. Less pollution and you can leave the driving to others.

If you're driving, turn your motor off when idling. Encourage tour/bus drivers to turn the motor off when idling. Don't allow anything to be thrown out of your car windows ever.

Catering

So, seminar begins, lots of things to do, and, of course you need a break, for **food**, and especially coffee. But, here we come to one big problem. After almost all snack breaks, we find lots of plastic bottles, cups, and plates, and wasted food as well. And, we can prevent this also, by arranging with the hotel-restaurant some useful things. First thing is concerning water. Don't ask for bottled water, and plastic cups. They should serve from glass and refill it. In that way, we are saving water (everyone puts as much as it can drink), and avoiding plastic waste. Good thing is to offer **fair trade**, shade grown, and organic coffee. About the food, well the best thing is to use local, organic and seasonal food. Ask the participants before what they will eat, in order to avoid wasting food. Be concern about vegetarians also. Arrange to have left over food donated to a local food bank or shelter. Ask if unusable left over food portions can be composted, or shipped to a local farm.

Recycling issue

is most common mentioned. Of course, no matter how you are taking care, there will be always some waste after you, and the best thing is to reuse it or recycle. The best way to deal with waste is not to create it in the first place. Determine what materials are needed at your event and consider ways to reduce the amount used. In a first place consider giving **eco bags** to the participants (**avoid plastic and paper folders**), as well as pencils, and other needed materials. Don't print unnecessary instructions; **use CD or USB** stick instead. For example, conference planners may reduce the amount of paper they distribute by purging duplicate addresses from mailing lists and requiring that all printed materials is double-sided. Collect and recycle plastic name badges as people leave the event. It's good to have volunteers empty individual recycling bins each evening, if bins are provided. Of course, hotel has to agree that will put these recycle bins, or mark the places where participants can throw the waste.

It is important to raise awareness with your participants. Share the **3R**: reduce, reuse and recycle. **Reduce** means using fewer resources in the first place. This is the most effective of the three R's and the place to begin. **Reusing** keeps new resources from being used for a while longer, and old resources from entering the waste stream. **Recycling** is the "R" that has caught on the best.

Partly, this is because there are so many curbside recycling programs today, which makes recycling so darned easy.

Then, make sure to provide examples of how you have implemented the **3R** into your meeting.

When you are organizing youth seminars, trainings, exchanges, etc, the good thing is that it's easier to influence these young people. One of the things you need to do is to educate participants in a way to behave "green". You can do this by encouraging them to recycle materials at events. Also:

- Request that unused items be collected for use at another event.
- Request the use of recycled and recyclable handouts or giveaways.
- Reward participation by communicating environmental savings achieved.

Green Office

One of the most important things, not only in seminars, but also in everyday job is how to "**green your office stuff**". Let's start from the, **lightning issue**. You may not be aware of how much **energy** can simple bulb spends. So, in a daytime event held your meeting outdoors, or in a place with plenty of windows, cause this lets you save big on energy costs and global warming pollution from conventional lighting. For additional lighting, use compact fluorescent light bulbs. They use only about one-third of the energy that regular light bulbs do. Look for energy efficient bulbs and fixtures marked with the Energy Star label.

Computers are very important tool in every seminar. But, they are spending lots of energy also. You may not be aware of this often, and that's why is important to put computer screen to sleep if it is not in use for more than ten minutes (not with a screensaver, rather set to "blank" or none). And, if you are absent from the "office" in the meeting room, make sure that you switch other equipment (printers, photocopiers), as well as in the night. There are many ways to save energy and material in your office (everyday or seminar). **Paper** is always the main issue when we are talking about saving or recycling. Here are some useful tips about saving, reusing, and recycling paper:

- Youth agencies, organizations, in a first place should make green procurement (e.g. environmental friendly printers with eco labels)

- When you are buying paper, buy always recycled paper and remember that with every tonne of recycled paper we save 17 trees, 42,000 kWh of electricity, 26,000 L of water and about 27 kg of air pollutants!
- Buy recycled envelopes, and instead of printing address, write it by yourself
- Most of the time, in seminars, trainers are using flipcharts and wasting lots of paper; so maybe it's time to take blackboard, chalk and a organic sponge in your hands
- Make sure that all the paper used in seminar is being collected and recycled
- All the information you can provide electronically, do it, avoid unnecessary printing
- Let the people know that taking care of paper supplies is not only because of saving, its also cause you are saving money
 - For every promotion you can use electronic advertising
- For the printing issue: double-side printing and photocopying print multiple pages per sheet for presentations and the like
- Draft quality printouts use less toner. Select 'Draft' print-outs when using the 'Print' command on your computer – this is usually changed under Printer Options on the Windows Print Dialog box
 - Set your printer to make draft prints by default
- Tailor the size of paper to the length of your message.
 - Use laser printer
 - Use non-toxic, and vegetable ink
 - If you print, set it to light print

Seek feedback from your participants and ask them to help you plan a greener event. Ask what works and what efforts may take time to adopt. The educated consumer is the best consumer. Educate your participants to become green consumers not just on site at meetings, but also in the office and at home with their families. In closing, the resources available to help you begin to plan your first green event are never ending. Also, seek suggestions to improve the environmental quality of your next event, because the best way to guarantee a greener event is to share your knowledge with others. Make sure your participants, exhibitors; presenters and staffs all know what they can do to reduce their environmental impact.

Finally, after every event, its good to get some feedback from the participants, and team that organized green event. That's why is very useful to put an evaluation questionnaire, and summarize the impressions, so you can make every next event more "greener". It's good to make a scheme in which you can put results of measuring waste on you event, etc. At the end, you can inform management,

sponsors, contractors, and the public about your success in organizing "green" event, using your internal newsletter, bulletin board system, or annual report.

Prepare **press releases** highlighting the environmental results of your event.

Example of the questionnaire (in a way you can measure carbon footprint)

1. What type of event you organize (meeting, training, festival, etc)?
2. How many participants you have?
3. For how long does your event last?
4. It was outdoor/indoor?
5. What transport you used to the place of event?
6. How much electricity, water and food you used?
7. How much office supplies used (paper, plastic, textile, clothes, other)?
8. What transport on the event you had (bicycle, car, walk, train, bus)?
9. How much waste recycled (paper, glass, plastic, aluminium)?



Example of the checklist for green event planning (short review)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Advise participants in advance that the event will be green.- Pay attention on youth policy, if event is with youngsters- Gifts for participants are durable, minimally packaged, made from recycled materials (e.g. mugs or tote bags made from recycled plastic, or natural materials), and produced locally if available. Consider gifts conveying a green message, such as a tree planted in the recipient's name.- Rather than printing conference material, burn it on a CD, post it on the Web or e-mail it to participants.- Prepare materials you will use during event, according to your green policy.
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Select a technologically advanced eco-conscious venue with an active recycling program to conserve energy, decrease paper waste, and encourage recycling.- Work with a venue that maintains a "green certification", for example communities implementing Agenda 21 programmes.- Choose location near the hotel, which is connected with airport, local traffic, and has bicycle routes and pedestrian.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The "green" hotel has to have an environmental policy and an environmental action plan, and is certified by an eco-labeling program (about energy and water saving, recycling, etc)- It's very important that hotel and meeting venues are connected to the airport by mass transit, and within walking distance of one another.

<p>Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Way of transportation has to be “green”, so try to avoid flying (if can’t thing about “green companies”), and give priority to train (electric, or green powered), green powered car or bus... - In your destination place encourage participants to use public transportation when available. Use the bus or local transit system. Share taxi.
<p>Catering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The most visible evidence of a food service operation’s commitment to environmental concerns is avoidance of disposable dishes and single-serve containers. - Food service has demonstrated commitments to reuse, recycling and composting, and to reduction of the use of energy, water and hazardous products in daily operations, are also hallmarks of an environmentally responsible food service operation. -Purchase organic foods, wines and beers. -Donate surplus usable food to charities where possible and permitted by local health regulations.
<p>Waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The best way to deal with waste is not to create it in the first place. -Use 3R principle: reduce, reuse, and recycle. -After the event collect all the waste and evaluate.
<p>Green office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimize paper use through the use of e-mail, faxing, and voice mail instead of paper memos and other correspondence. -Produce paper documents only when necessary, printed on both sides, with light print and laser printer, and keep them as short as possible. Edit on-screen, rather than printing unnecessary drafts. -Have a central area where co-workers, and participants can bring unwanted office supplies, cardboard boxes, etc. for reuse by others. - Turn off lights and equipment when not in use.

Evaluation

- Seek feedback from your participants, and co-workers as well, in order to improve green events.
- Make your own pattern to evaluate green work.
- Prepare press release, so community can see what you have done.

Note:

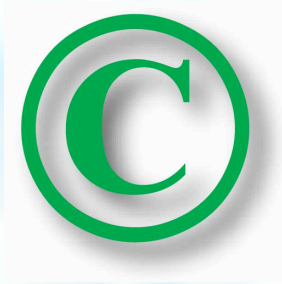
Don't forget!

ISO 14001 standards: a series of environmental management standards developed and published by the International Organization for Standardization

http://searchdatacenter.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0sid80_gci214046,00.htm for organizations. The

ISO 14000 standards provide a guideline or framework for organizations that need to systematize and improve their environmental management efforts. Adherence to these standards is voluntary.





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