



## Tips on minimizing the eco-footprint of our day to day office work

- ✓ **Measure your carbon footprint: there are many suggestions on-line, calculators, tips, etc.**
  - Start simple, with things that are easy to monitor (CO2 emissions from flights: from purchased tickets (they are there!), electricity consumption, natural gas consumption: from bills).
  - Starting year would be used as a baseline. The following year, challenge yourself by setting a specific target (e.g. 15 percent reduction from baseline level).
  
- ✓ **Watch your paper usage: ambitious: paperless office! Or** monitor practice and improve: only double sided printing on recycled paper and only when necessary; go paperless when it comes to meetings; clear/unused sides of printed paper can be used as draft.
  - **Switch to E-bills and avoid paper-mail in general.**
  - **Prefer products with less packaging (and in general do not promote packaging)**
  
- ✓ **Recycle: Reuse and repair as a start! For recycling,** there has to be an infrastructure and market in place, but nevertheless have well placed and visible separation of office waste to raise awareness both for staff and for visitors. Donate your old, yet functional, furniture, electronics, etc. Electronics refurbishing/ recycling must be done responsibly with certified suppliers. Do it quick (don't store!) so that the valuable materials are re-used and there is less pressure for virgin materials. Consider buying refurbished equipment when suitable.
  
- ✓ **Conserve energy**
  - **Low cost options are:** Identify wasteful consumption and stop it (settings on devices (hibernation), **switching off** devices vs hibernation, closing windows or opening windows, Switching to energy-saving light bulbs, don't neglect maintenance;
  - **More expensive moves:** double glazing of windows, insulation, new equipment that is energy efficient; re-design/renovate; become a green building.
  
- ✓ **Manage water:** identify any wasteful use or leakages. Go low-flow. When safe, install water filters so that staff and guests enjoy drinking tap water (less plastic or glass or other water service provision will be required)



- ✓ **Go toxic and chemical-free:** use cleaning products to reduce impacts on water, soil, human health; if you are contracting a cleaning service, ask for their environmental policy. Opt for environment friendly consumables (chlorine free paper, friendly ink, toner, etc.). Deliverables of any kind should have built-in requirements ensuring that they are toxic free.

- ✓ **Assess and monitor travel:**

Video conferencing has advanced. Filming your presentation and connecting on-line for the Q&A session is a good alternative.

But face to face meetings in many cases are necessary. So for travel that cannot be avoided or for other activities involving Green House Gas emissions, **Carbon offsetting** is a way to compensate. **After careful research, participate in schemes designed to make reductions of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.**

Such schemes help to combat global climate change as well as care for local communities.

#### **Keep measuring progress!**

- Review and re-evaluate your eco-footprint. Celebrate your achievement. Mention it in staff and board meetings. Report it in your annual report, etc.

## **Some tips on organising sustainable events**

#### **Venue:**

- Select venues and accommodation that implement energy efficiency measures, comply with green building standards and/or use renewable energy sources. ISO? EMAS? (assess all of the categories you use for your day-to-day eco-footprint). Apply additional energy-saving or other office practices during the organisation and hosting of the event.
- Example: for an x number of reasons, you decide on a hotel that has basic environmental practices: ask them to put marked recycling bins for your meeting; prefer venue with easily regulated cooling and heating!
- Consider proximity and accessibility to public transport or to most of the participants or most of the suppliers. Commitment of the town to sustainable development can be 'rewarded' by your venue selection.
- Rooms, coffee and lunch areas with natural light!
- Visible and well-placed recycling options.
- Where long-distance travel is unavoidable, offset GHG emissions.



- Consider any impacts your venue choice will have on the local community (noise, traffic, etc.)

**Transport:**

**Air:** only when other options are difficult. Opt for direct flights and eco-flight options.

**Locally:** linked to the venue, accommodation and the suppliers. Transport and mobility differ considerably from country to country and city to city. Aside from eco-mobility, where non-motorised mobility (e.g. walking) are options, different socially inclusive means of transport and mobility – related also to delivery and transport of goods – should be considered.

Refer to useful social projects (such as transport options arranged by NGOs that work with disadvantaged or socially excluded people).

**Accommodation:**

- Choose a hotel with an environmental management system (EMAS), good environmental practices (refillable soap dispensers, locally sourced products), rewarded for their innovation
- Proximity to the event site (on foot or with easy access by public transport)

**Catering:** request food that is locally grown, organic, seasonal, preferably vegetarian, fair trade. When locally and culturally suitable, offer vegetarian dishes. With this one action you will achieve multiple sustainability goals: reducing CO2 emissions, improving participants' health, animal welfare and education and awareness-raising. Food must not be from endangered or threatened species (biodiversity targets).

- Know the exact number of participants
- Use reusable crockery and table linen; go plastic free; Serve safe water in jugs or through filters
- Duly recycle any waste generated and arrange to give leftovers away
- Train everyone involved and compound the impact!

**Communication-Materials-Exhibitions**

- Go paper or waste-free: this starts early: online registration; and evaluation; easy access to materials on-line.
- Engage attendees in the event greening effort by properly informing them. Reuse of badges at the end of the Event
- If needed, paper, posters, programme and other communication items printed on both sides and using materials that comply with environmental and social criteria
- Avoid handouts for participants, speakers unless meaningful and impactful.
- If materials are issued to participants, they should comply with environmental and social criteria
- Encourage **exhibitors** to minimize the use of material and collect unused material at the end of the event for reuse; use items manufactured from recycled material; discourage material in plastic and paper format for dissemination (leaflets, etc.)