

GOING FOR GREEN

CHECKLIST

FOR ORGANIZING SUSTAINABLE
EVENTS AT WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY
& RESEARCH



TRANSPORTATION



CATERING



ENERGY



WASTE



COMMUNICATION &
EVENT MATERIALS



GREEN OFFICE
WAGENINGEN





GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome! This checklist was developed for everyone that wants to organize an event at Wageningen University & Research (WUR). The purpose of this checklist is to help you organize your event in a more sustainable way. Within this checklist, you will find recommendations that are categorized under different aspects. The recommendations that are included in this checklist are derived from research on how the sustainability of events can be improved at WUR. The research report can be provided upon request. The report can give you more information on the research that was done as well as explain the recommendations that are made in the checklist.

By using this checklist, and implementing its recommendations, your event has the potential to be a prime example of sustainable event organization. It can enhance your reputation while educating your attendees on the importance of sustainability issues. In order to achieve these positive results, general recommendations that are essential for this purpose will be given below.

First of all, it is highly advised to assign someone within your organization to be responsible for the sustainability of your event. This will ensure a continued focus on the sustainability of the choices you make. Secondly, a specific part of your budget should be dedicated to sustainability. Even though many recommendations can be implemented without any additional costs, a budget will make it easier for you to take the additional step. Furthermore, we advise you to share your knowledge, ideas and success stories related to sustainability with other event organizers. Learning from each other can be an effective way to keep developing. Besides sharing your success stories with other event organizers, communicate these stories to your attendees as well. For example, dedicate part of your event to explaining what actions you have taken to become more sustainable and what the impacts of these changes are.

Even though the implementation of these recommendations will help you to improve your event in terms of sustainability, we recognize that it might not always be possible to be carbon neutral. Therefore, we advise you to always offset at least part of the event's carbon pollution that could not be prevented. Doing this includes purchasing carbon offsets or supporting (local) climate neutral initiatives

We hope the checklist helps you during the organization of your sustainable events!

Green regards,
ACT team 2075

December, 2018



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION TO THE EVENT

- ☐ **Encourage attendees to use public transport to the event.** For example, cover the costs of public transport within the ticket price of the event, or welcome your attendees at the bus stop.
- ☐ **Award a special prize to the attendee(s) that used the most sustainable transportation method to travel to the event.**
- ☐ **Provide clear maps and directions for walking and cycling.** For example, highlight where bike racks are located on a digital map.
- ☐ **Provide clear directions from public transportation stops to the event.**
- ☐ **Encourage the use of carpooling.** For example, ask attendees in advance if they are willing to share their contact details for carpooling purposes during pre-event communications and/or direct attendees to free carpooling websites.
- ☐ **Contact the public transport company to arrange more busses between the station Ede-Wageningen and the campus of Wageningen.**
- ☐ **If your location is not close to a bus stop, make use of (electric) shuttle buses to and from your event to station Ede-Wageningen.**
- ☐ **Try to avoid scheduling the start and end of your event at peak travel times.**

TRANSPORTATION AT THE EVENT

- ☐ **Encourage attendees to walk between the different locations at your event.** For example, hire volunteers that guide the attendees.
- ☐ **Encourage attendees to cycle between the different locations at your event.** For example, provide bikes for attendees for free or provide information on where bikes can be rented.
- ☐ **If you want to offer motorized transportation at the event, anticipate on the amount of attendees wanting to make use of this.**
- ☐ **If you want to offer motorized transportation at the event, make sure that transportation means offered are low emission, hybrid or electric vehicles.**
- ☐ **Provide electric golf carts for people that have difficulties with walking.**



TRANSPORTATION

WHEN ATTENDEES TRAVEL BY PLANE

- ☐ Encourage international attendees travelling by plane to book direct flights, fly economy class and book CO2 neutral seats.

REDUCTION OF TRANSPORT

- ☐ Ensure that the transportation of supplies is centralized by using a shared storage space.
- ☐ Aim to hire local workforce, speakers and volunteers as much as possible.
- ☐ Work together with local suppliers.
- ☐ Consider if it is necessary that attendees come to the location or that it is possible to arrange online. For example, offer possibilities for long-distance attendees to attend via virtual conferencing.

OTHER

- ☐ Collaborate with travel companies and logistic providers that have implemented green policies in their day-to-day operations.

HOW TO MAKE IT VISIBLE?

- ☐ In pre-event communications and on your website, promote sustainable means of transportation for attendees, staff, suppliers and speakers.
- ☐ Publish numbers on your website post-event, showing how many people used sustainable transportation methods.



TYPES OF FOOD

- ☐ **Ask your caterer for fruit and promote fruit and vegetables as a snack.**
- ☐ **Ask your caterer to serve vegan and vegetarian food options.**
- ☐ **Ask your caterer to serve local and seasonal food options.**
- ☐ **Ask your caterer to serve organic food.**
- ☐ **Ask your caterer to serve food that is made from rest processing.** For example, Kromkommer soup.
- ☐ **Make vegetarian food the default option for all attendees, and inform them about this choice before the event.**
- ☐ **Instruct attendees to contact the event organizers if they have specific dietary requirements, or create a registration system in which attendees can register their dietary requirements.**

FOOD WASTE

- ☐ **Anticipate pre-event what to do with leftovers.** For example, implement a leftover food pick-up system via an online platform or donate food to a food bank or an organization like 'Thuis'.
- ☐ **Offer doggy bags to your attendees.**
- ☐ **Make sure you know in advance how many attendees are attending the event and order food accordingly.** For example, make use of a registration system in order to do this.
- ☐ **If food is served buffet-style, ensure to bring out the food in batches to make sure that unused food can be given away post-event (keep in mind the two-hour rule).**
- ☐ **Arrange a portion size that fits the needs of your attendees.**
- ☐ **Avoid pre-filling glasses as much as possible.**
- ☐ **Inform your staff and attendees about the amount of sandwiches or other food that is available per person.**



CATERING

CATERING MATERIALS

- ☐ In pre-event communications, encourage attendees to bring their own reusable cup and/or bottle.
- ☐ Ensure water stations are in place for attendees to fill up their reusable glass or bottle, rather than offering throw away water bottles.
- ☐ Avoid offering single-use straws, coffee stirrers and napkins.
- ☐ Use dark-colored, reusable tablecloths rather than light-colored tablecloths during your event.
- ☐ Use reusable tableware such as cutlery, glassware, plates.
- ☐ Use hard plastic cups or glass, if there is the possibility to rinse glassware.
- ☐ Use mugs and pitchers instead of paper cups.
- ☐ If disposables are used, ensure that they are made from compostable or biodegradable materials.
- ☐ Ensure not to make use of individually packaged food. For example, avoid individually packaged lunches and snacks.
- ☐ Ensure not to make use of individually packaged food-related items, such as condiments, milk, sugar, salt.

HOW TO MAKE IT VISIBLE?

- ☐ Provide information to attendees about the sustainability of the catering of your event. For example, place signs with fun facts at your event.
- ☐ Ensure that attendees know that they can take leftovers with them.
- ☐ Communicate that attendees can use their own reusable cup or take away container. Consider offering discounts.



VENUE & TIME OF THE EVENT

- ☐ **Ensure that the venue chosen for the event is appropriate for the amount of people attending.**
- ☐ **Aim to hold your event during the day.**
- ☐ **Try to host your event during milder climate months.**

HEATING & COOLING

- ☐ **Make sure to turn off unnecessary heating and cooling during the event.** For example, avoid using the airconditioning when setting up or packing up the event.
- ☐ **Ensure that the venue temperature is between 19 and 22 degrees Celsius.**
- ☐ **Ensure that doors and windows are closed when heating or air conditioning is on.**
- ☐ **Make sure to turn off unnecessary heating and cooling during the event.** For example, avoid using the airconditioning when setting up or packing up the event.
- ☐ **In warmer months, provide cooling solutions that do not use energy.** For example, ventilate the venue by opening all of its windows.

REDUCTION OF ENERGY USE IN GENERAL

- ☐ **Make sure to turn off electrical equipment, lighting and other sources that use energy when not in use.** For example, assign a person to check this.
- ☐ **Encourage the use of more energy efficient electronic devices.** For example, use LED lighting.



USE GREEN ENERGY

- ☐ If you need an emergency generator, use a green battery.

HOW TO MAKE IT VISIBLE?

- ☐ **Provide opportunities for attendees to generate their own energy.** For example, let people bike in order to activate a blender (make your own smoothie).
- ☐ **Communicate to your attendees that WUR generates its energy with wind turbines.**



WASTE

WASTE SEPARATION

- ☐ **Guarantee that separate bins are available for paper; plastic, tin cans and drink cartons (PMD); organic; and other waste.**
- ☐ **Contact the firm Renewi eight weeks in advance for events that are organized outside the education buildings, and ask them for separated bins.**
- ☐ **Ensure that bins are placed in visible and high traffic areas.**
- ☐ **Use the separated waste bins from the firm EcoSmart for events inside the education buildings and provide attendees and staff with a digital floor plan showing where the bins are located.**
- ☐ **Ensure that all bins have clear signs with images indicating which waste products go in which bin.** Pay extra attention to event-specific and unusual waste products about which event attendees might have doubts.
- ☐ **Minimize the types of materials used at your event so less waste has to be separated.** For example, people are more likely to separate their waste when there are only two types of waste streams to take into account.
- ☐ **Assign one or more persons to a Green Team to help attendees in separating their waste correctly, while educating them on the importance of waste separation.** For example, ask enthusiastic students or other volunteers to assist you.



WASTE

WASTE REDUCTION

- ☐ **Determine all potential sources of waste and take action to minimize the waste produced by your event.**
- ☐ **Prior to the event, anticipate which products can be sold, reused or donated after the event.** For example, make arrangements with suppliers about the return of unused products.
- ☐ **Collaborate with third parties, such as suppliers and exhibitors, that have implemented waste reduction policies into their day-to-day operations.**
- ☐ **Reuse products as much as possible and otherwise, recycle materials as much as possible.**

HOW TO MAKE IT VISIBLE?

- ☐ **Show the positive environmental impact that results from separating waste by placing informative signs at collection points.**



COMMUNICATION & EVENT MATERIALS

AIM FOR A PAPERLESS EVENT

- ☐ **Communicate via email, a website or an (event) app.**
- ☐ **Use the monitor screens in the university buildings to show the program and other information at the event itself.**
- ☐ **Use electronic advertising and promotions.** For example, promote your event via social media, news websites and mobile applications.
- ☐ **Use a QR code to provide information to attendees.**
- ☐ **Use a QR code as a check-in system for attendees.**
- ☐ **Use an electronic registration system (RSVP).**
- ☐ **Collect post-event feedback through online surveys.**
- ☐ **Distribute materials such as presentations, PowerPoints and brochures, electronically.**
- ☐ **Avoid the use of paper flip charts.** For example, make use of PowerPoints, whiteboards or blackboards when presenting.

IF PRINTING IS NECESSARY

- ☐ **Make sure you use sustainable ink when printing.** For example, use vegetable or soy-based ink instead of traditional ink.
- ☐ **Use a font that requires less ink.** For example, Ecofont saves 50 percent ink.
- ☐ **Use recycled and certified paper that is not glossy or colorful.**
- ☐ **Use reusable print materials.** For example, avoid placing dates or one-time slogans on printed materials.
- ☐ **Reduce the amount of paper needed by printing on both sides of the paper and by using relatively small fonts.**

GOODY BAGS, GIVEAWAYS & EVENT-RELATED MERCHANDISE

- ☐ **Limit the use of goodie bags and giveaways where possible.**
- ☐ **Encourage attendees to bring their own materials, such as pens and notebooks.**
- ☐ **Ensure that the goodie bags are made from reusable material.**
- ☐ **Guarantee that giveaways are reusable and sustainable.** For example, give out a reusable coffee cup or a Doppie.
- ☐ **Ensure that giveaways are experienced-based rather than physical items.** For example, provide a voucher for an activity rather than a physical object.



COMMUNICATION & EVENT MATERIALS

DECORATIONS & FURNITURE

- ☐ **Minimize the use of excessive decorations.**
- ☐ **Ensure decorations are made from sustainable materials.** For example, use soy-based candles instead of wax candles.
- ☐ **Anticipate pre-event what you will do with your decorations post-event: reuse, donate, recycle or compost.**
- ☐ **Borrow or rent decorations and furniture as much as possible.** For example, borrow potted plants for decorations instead of purchasing cut flowers.
- ☐ **Buy second hand decorations and furniture if needed.**
- ☐ **Avoid environmentally harmful activities such as balloon releases, spraying of confetti, or other actions that will waste resources or produce litter.**

OTHER

- ☐ **Ensure that name badges are collected post-event so that they can be reused at future events.**
- ☐ **Collaborate with material suppliers that implement sustainable practices in their day-to-day operations.**
- ☐ **Make sure to use environmentally friendly cleaning products at the event.**
- ☐ **Provide attendees with a checklist of what to bring to the event.**

HOW TO MAKE IT VISIBLE?

- ☐ **Inform attendees about sustainable measures that were taken.** For example, state on your website that you aim for a paperless event or what will happen with the decorations that you used.
- ☐ **Provide information on sustainability at places where attendees are receptive to information, such as the toilet.**



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