



# MAKING SCIENTIFIC EVENTS MORE SUSTAINABLE

## SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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Organising a scientific event in an eco-responsible manner requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account all stages of the event, from preparation to closure. This involves collective establishment of clear sustainability objectives that will guide all logistics, while identifying concrete indicators to assess progress. This approach can be reinforced by external support, particularly from local associations specialising in eco-events that can award a badge of recognition.

There are many ways to take action, and some choices have a particularly strong impact. In terms of transport, it is recommended to limit air travel as much as possible, encouraging soft mobility such as shared transport or remote alternatives. When it comes to food, choosing local, organic and mainly plant-based products is an eco-responsible approach that can be adapted to different contexts with a range of options. When it comes to waste management, the priority is generally to reduce waste at source by using reusable or second-hand materials rather than disposable items, even if they are recyclable.

Communication plays a key role in this dynamic. It is essential to involve participants as soon as the event is announced by presenting the eco-responsible approach to them, for example via a dedicated page. Rather than offering responsible practices as options, it is preferable to adopt them by default, leaving the possibility of more impactful choices (i.e. less favourable for the environment) only in exceptional cases. This reversal of norms promotes a lasting change in habits and places the event within a solid ecological transition framework.

## SOME USEFUL RESOURCES

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- GIEC: <https://www.ipcc.ch/languages-2/francais/>
- ADEME: <https://infos.ademe.fr/>
- Eco-manifestation Alsace: <https://ecomanifestations-alsace.fr/>
- Event carbon footprint calculation: <https://www.goodplanet.org/fr/calculateurs-carbone/evenement/>
- INSPÉ Lorraine eco-responsibility charter: <https://inspe.univ-lorraine.fr/eco-gestes>

# BEFORE THE EVENT

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- (a) Create a group dedicated to Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility Goals (SRSD) with a complete overview of logistics and (b) plan its presence at the event (or that of people who are well informed about the measures taken).
- Send out a questionnaire as part of the registration process to measure the attendance rate per half-day in order to anticipate and then to limit waste.

**The primary source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) is transport (over 80%), especially if air travel is involved:**

- Give preference to speakers who are geographically close or can travel by train or shared transport.
- If this is not possible, suggest a webconference or integrate the trip into a larger project (e.g. research trip).



**The second largest source of GHG emissions is catering:**

- Promote vegetarian meals and consider meat, especially red meat, as an option rather than standard.
- Prioritize regional suppliers who use local and seasonal products.
- Implement mandatory registration for each meal break to streamline orders and avoid waste.

- Seek sustainable alternatives to plastic water bottles for breaks and meals.
- Suggest that participants bring water bottles and cups (e.g. during registration).
- Plan for waste sorting and quantification.



- Adopt an eco-responsible communication charter (avoid solid colours, etc.).
- Target and streamline email communications.
- Assess printing needs.

## DURING THE EVENT

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- Ensure that SRSD measures are implemented by a few knowledgeable individuals present onsite (e.g., SRSD group members, trained volunteers).

- Provide participants with relevant information on how to get around on foot, by bicycle, public transport, carpooling, etc.



- Inform participants about waste sorting and specific practices depending on the location.
- Encourage participants to use their own cups and water bottles, possibly offering a small reward (e.g. a local souvenir).
- Provide containers for collecting food waste and inform interested parties (e.g. volunteers on site).

- Offer useful, reusable, locally sourced goodies only upon request.
- Reduce programme printing by promoting the digital version (QR code) and an A3 printout of the programme for each half-day.



## AFTER THE EVENT

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- Conduct a quantitative assessment using the selected indicators, and communicate the results to the organising network and even to the participants.
- Conduct a qualitative assessment (successes vs. failures, possible improvements) and share it with the organising network or the organisers of future similar events.

- At the end of the event, collect reusable materials (e.g. lanyards, badge holders) in a collection box, for example.
- Return any remaining goodies to the relevant institutions (e.g. any sponsor) or distribute them to the organisers of future events.



- Take stock of the volumes/weights of the different types of waste.

# SOME POTENTIAL INDICATORS FOR ENGAGING THE EVENT IN AN ECO-FRIENDLY APPROACH

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- Number/ratio of eco-responsible partners/service providers.
- Amount of electricity/gas/fuel oil consumed for the event.
- Amount of water consumed for the event.

- Proportion of travel to the event venue by mode of transport.
- Proportion of local travel by bicycle/public transport/carpooling/etc.



- Proportion of meat-free/red meat-free meals in the catering.
- Proportion of fresh produce in the catering.
- Proportion of local products in the catering.
- Proportion of organic products in the catering.

- Volumes and/or masses of different types of waste.
- Volumes and/or mass of waste avoided (e.g. disposable cups, plastic bottles).
- Proportion of products redistributed to volunteers, associations, etc.



- Quantity of printed materials (by type, if relevant).
- Quantity of printed materials avoided (by type, if relevant).

# MY EVENT

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Individual(s) in charge of SRSD:

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The organising committee has set three main priorities in terms of social responsibility and sustainable development:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

The four main indicators selected for the event:

Indicator	Target	Target achieved



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