



Sustainable Sport and Events Quick Start Guide



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1. ON YOUR MARKS

It is time to take sustainability out of the green box!

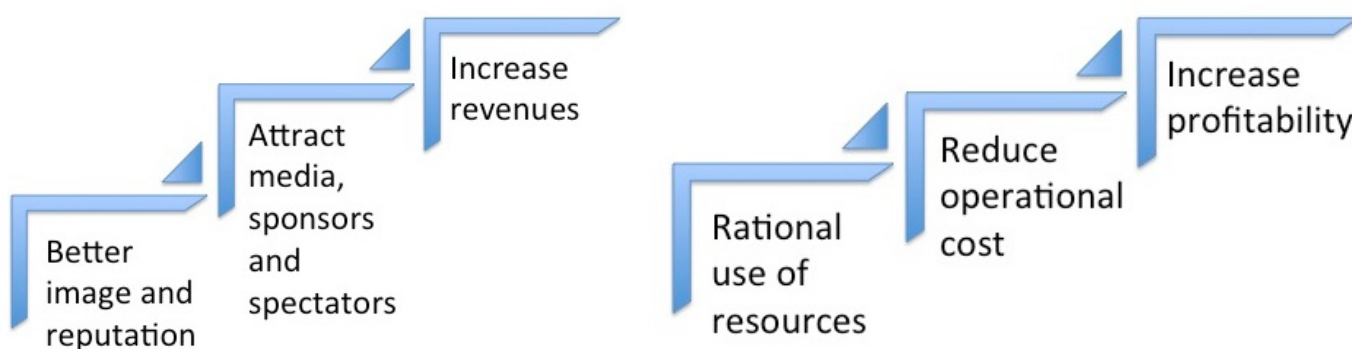
Sustainability is about more than just being “green”. It is about achieving excellence, doing things more efficiently and creating a positive impact. Athletes strive to break records. Organisers strive to promote the best event possible. Why should they together not aim to achieve the next level up of quality by being sustainable?

A sustainable sport event can be described as an inspirational event that requires financial, natural and human resources in a rational and efficient way. It contributes to the development of the economy and tourism, it is an effective branding tool for event owners, organisers and hosts, and brings both environmental and social benefits.

Excellence is not just about **WHAT** you do...

- it is about **HOW** you do it;
- with **WHO** you do it;
- and the **EXAMPLE** set by your actions

Benefits of Sustainability



Sport events should strive to become more sustainable not only because it is “the right thing to do”, but because there are also strong business reasons to do it:

- Using resources in a more rational way is proven to reduce operational costs. Energy savings alone can reduce costs which can be reinvested in other sustainability initiatives.
- It is difficult for specific events to stand out in today’s congested sports calendar. Sustainability has the potential to attract the attention of the media and spectators, and differentiate a sport event from other competitions on the calendar.
- Increasingly, major global companies are working to align their brands with sustainability values, creating sponsorship opportunities for events and sports organisations showing leadership in the field.
- Being economically, socially and environmentally responsible is a powerful way to open dialogue and fulfill stakeholders’ expectations.
- The growing demand for transparency puts additional pressure on sports events to be accountable for their social, economic and environmental impact.

Case Study: **Restarting a race image**

The Foyer Nordstadsemi, a half marathon race in Luxembourg, had lost its stride by 2009. It had gradually gained a poor reputation and was almost cancelled for two consecutive years.

Therefore changing the race’s image was critical to increase popularity amongst runners as well as attractiveness to the public and local media. Anchoring the race’s image to sustainability came as the solution to race organiser, Paul Zens.

The 2010 edition brought innovations such as the reduction of printed materials to save paper, the use of biodegradable cups instead of plastic bottles to serve water, offsetting the carbon impact of the race and redirecting part of the income to the Red Cross.

Luxembourg’s most popular daily newspaper took an interest in the initiative and offered a half-page to advertise the race’s sustainability efforts. Extensive media coverage followed and with it the interest of potential partners and sponsors.

After two editions going down the sustainability route, the race successfully consolidated its new image, acquired new sponsors, received renewed attention from the media, showed a 30% increase in the number of runners and saw a bright financial outlook.



2. GET SET

This Quick Start Guide is not a checklist. What it does is to provide you with a step-by-step approach, accompanied with some practical tips, best practice examples, tools and frameworks. Our aim is to help you make a seemingly overwhelming task much more manageable and attainable.

The best way to make a sport event sustainable is simply to make social, economic and environmental responsibility the normal way of doing things. Sustainability is a way of working, it is not an add-on. Thus, avoid the common trap of running sustainability actions separated from the core business of organising the sport event.

To make sustainability an integral part of the core proposal of your sport event, integrate it early on into your operations planning and make it widespread through all functional areas. In other words, take time to look at how you run your event and try to find innovative ways to do it better with fresh eyes. Being efficient is the first step to becoming sustainable.

For example:

- Events need to deal with waste and hire waste service providers to remove discards. When thinking about waste services, think about avoiding waste in the first instance (saves money!), then how to maximise recycling and composting, and then how to enable efficient waste separation by spectators/vendors/etc. By doing so you are embedding sustainability thinking into your thought process around waste, versus simply hiring a waste service provider under business as usual circumstances.
- Events need to transport their workforce. When planning your transportation logistics ask yourself how you can move people efficiently in the most sustainable manner (minimise emissions, fuel and cost!). Prioritise your mobility solutions and ask your transport provider or vehicle sponsor to provide innovative approaches to meet your objectives.

Do's and Don'ts: **Getting it right from the start.**

- It's about doing better. It is not about doing more.
- Use available tools and frameworks. Don't reinvent the wheel.
- Make sustainability the "normal way of doing things". Don't make it an add-on.

Before you hit the ground running, take some time to develop the outline of a plan to guide your actions. These simple 4 steps will ease your journey:

1. Know the value of sustainability for your event (**Why**)



2. Assemble your champions (**Who**)



3. Define your playing field (**What**)



4. Use the SSE Toolkit management approach to plan for action (**How**)

2.1 Why

The value added by sustainability to your sport event can be understood by looking at the connections between:

- your stakeholders' interests/expectations;
- the major sustainability issues related to your sport and your event;
- the associated risks and opportunities.

Remember this is an ongoing process, so keep monitoring stakeholders, issues and risks/opportunities. They do change with time.



Stakeholders. Your first step is to reach out to your key stakeholders. Engaging with the many individuals or groups that have an interest in any decision or operation related to your event is the most effective way of avoiding future problems and creating solutions. It can lead to collaboration on shared goals and establish a significant share of good will.

Start by listing the stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, sponsors, athletes, media, NGOs, suppliers) that:

- influence the way you manage your event;
- have significant expertise to offer/share;
- are most likely to be affected by your actions.

You can use a variety of communication channels such as your website, newsletters, social media, personal communication. In all cases remember to make it a two-way conversation and to engage in an open dialogue with them, by listening, integrating their feedback and acknowledge their contribution.

Issues. Your second step is to identify issues. Sustainability issues are those related to the potential economic, environmental and social impact (positive and negative) of your event.

Identifying sustainability issues in 3-steps:

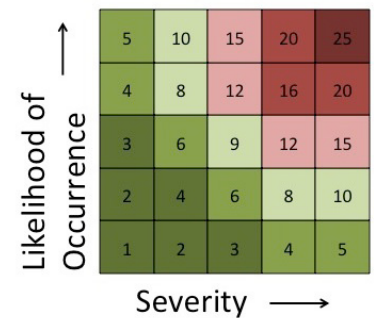
1. Consider the goals of your event and the main activities required to achieve them;
2. Ask some simple questions such as:
 - what resources will be used? will significant waste be produced and disposed of?
 - will the venue be in a better or worse condition after it?
 - what is the economic value created and how will it be distributed?
 - does the event depend on any public infrastructure and services?
 - what changes will it bring to the host city/region?
 - are there any concerns related to security, human rights, accessibility and public health?
 - what modes of transport will be used?
3. Get feedback from your key stakeholders on actual and potential impacts.

Risks and opportunities. Your third step is to assess the sustainability risks and opportunities related to the operation of your event.

Risks and opportunities can be:

- strategic - e.g. damage to reputation; press-relation improvement.
- financial - e.g. attracting sponsoring; ticketing; currency fluctuation.
- natural and “force majeure” - e.g. fire; floods; boycott/strikes.
- operational - e.g. logistics; safety; sites.

After identifying possible risks and opportunities, rank them in order of priority/severity. You can use a framework such as illustrated here.



2.2 Who

Getting buy-in across the event organising team is the key to sustainability becoming the normal way of doing things.

Be sure to get top management commitment from the start.

- Get a cross-functional team on board early and designate a sustainability champion/leader to drive engagement across the organisation.
- Approaching people in the spirit of a team usually works well. For example, your chances of being successful are higher if you ask for ideas, support and expertise, than if you tell others what they have to do. However, other approaches could be considered depending on your organisation and local culture.

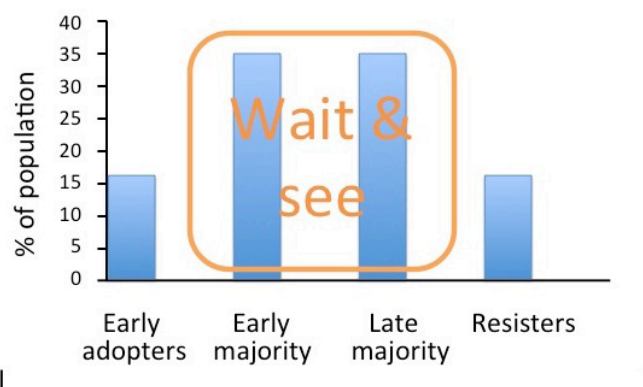
Change isn't easy!

Remember that you will be asking people to change their usual ways of doing things, and that it is just natural that people resist change.

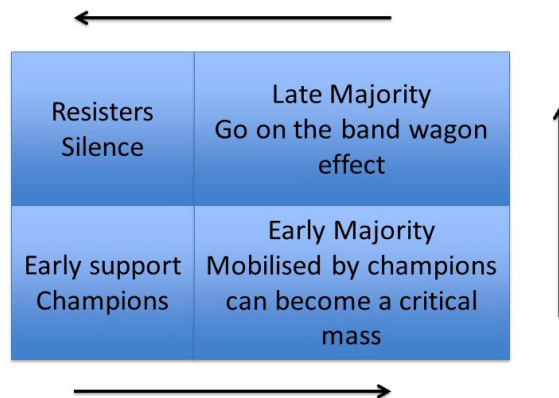
People's attitude toward change varies according to:

- personal disposition;
- professional situation;
- interests;
- incentives structure.

Typical distribution of attitudes towards change



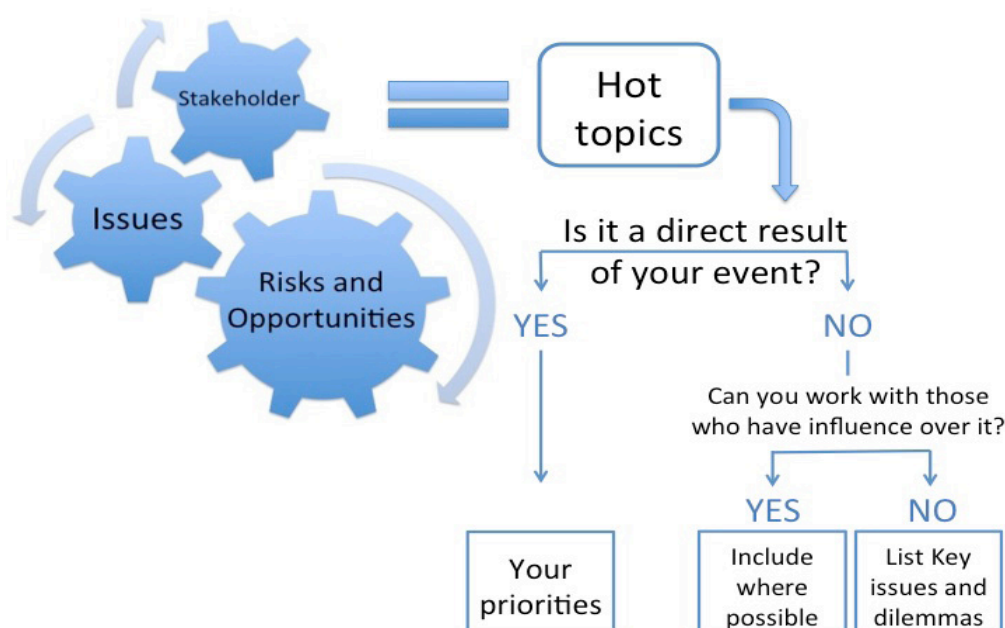
Understand the particular attitudes of key people towards change and use the support you have to move them towards adopting change:



2.3 What

Start setting priorities following a 4-step approach:

1. Pull together the issues, feedback you received from your stakeholders and your analysis of risks and opportunities. You will notice that some themes/problems/issues appear again and again. These are your hot topics!
2. For each hot topic ask yourself if it is a direct result of the event and therefore can be influenced by the event organisers.
3. Your priorities are those topics that you can directly act upon (or influence).
4. By partnering with suppliers, sponsors, local authorities and other stakeholders, you can broaden the reach of your actions and be able to include in your playing some more topics.



A few golden rules to set priorities:

- Pick the low-hanging fruits. If it is a hot topic and you have a high chance of success, go for it!
- Identify the 'big hitters'. Act first on what will add more value and/or reduce negative impacts most significantly.
- Identify the 'slow issues'. Address early on issues that take a long time to correct.
- Think systems. Fix the problem at the source whenever it is feasible.
- Find the pressure points. Bidding. Contracts. Procurement.

Benchmarking: 10 Things You Can Do

1. Commit to sustainability as a team.
2. Facilitate accessible venues and services.
3. Travel lightly.
4. Buy local, ethical and green products where relevant.
5. Recruit locally.
6. Operate efficiently.
7. Minimise waste to landfill – reduce, reuse, recycle.
8. Facilitate participation of minority groups.
9. Leave a positive legacy.
10. Celebrate and share successes.


2.4 How

Once you and your team know your playing field you can move on and design your action plan using the SSE Toolkit management approach:

- 1. State what you will do.** For each hot topic in your playing field, create a clear objective;
- 2. Explain how to do it.** Break each objective (goal) down into specific action items and choose performance indicators to measure success;
- 3. Delegate it.** List the person or group responsible for each objective;
- 4. Check it.** Monitor the status of your action items;
- 5. Celebrate** your success and learn from your mistakes;
- 6. Review** your action plan and integrate what you have learned.

Remember that at each of the above steps, success is the result of the involvement of and consultation with all stakeholders.

Example:

STATE WHAT YOU WILL DO	HOW TO DO IT	DELEGATE IT	CHECK IT
Goal - Objective	Action Items / Performance Indicators (PI)	Sustainability Champion	Status of Action Item
4.1 Implement responsible energy management practices  GRI EN (4, 5, 6, 16, 17, 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate site and venue lighting, heating and cooling optimally. Use spectator signage and operational staff training and on-going inspections. Purchase low-energy designated office equipment (i.e. EnergyStar), turn off all lights, computers, printers, coffee machines, etc., purchase green electricity. PI: Kilowatts of electricity consumed; tonnes of direct greenhouse gas emission (CO2) offset	Name:	Discussed <input type="checkbox"/> Documented <input type="checkbox"/> Implemented <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>

If sustainability is new to your event, take a gradual approach. Start with 3 to 5 objectives and once you have gained a little experience and some confidence, you can move on to new objectives.

If you already have experience in sustainability, integrate all relevant objectives in a comprehensive sustainability plan.

The full version of the SSE Toolkit serves in both situations as a practical how-to-guide. It is available at www.sustainable-sport.org/ (member access only). This toolkit provides additional resources such as examples, solutions, best practices, useful tools, documents and measurement tools. To find out more about the SSE Toolkit or to sign-up as member, go to www.aists.org/sset

Benchmarking: **Guidelines for Event Owners and Governing Bodies**

Decision: integrate sustainability into bidding process and contracts;

Regulation: integrate sustainability into event, operating rules and supply codes;

Capacity Building: integrate sustainability principles into operational manuals, training programs and knowledge sharing tools;

Recognition: integrate sustainability into existing reward systems.

3.1 Funding and Financing

Because sustainability is rather a way of working than a separate project, sustainability budget should be embedded into the operational budget. However, as some additional money for sustainability will always be required, you can find here a few ideas on how to get initiatives funded.

Brand your sustainability program and align it with a sponsor.

- Brand your entire sustainability program under one core concept that is catchy and easily understood by all. For example, a major sport for all event in Switzerland in 2011 branded all sustainability initiatives under the concept of “Respect”.
- Look for a sponsor whose brand is aligned with your own sustainability brand.
- Your sustainability programme could provide a platform for sponsors to position their own initiatives in a way that deepens engagement with fans. Remember to include in your sponsorship/funding application a plan to give sponsors not only exposure, but several opportunities to engage and interact with spectators. For example, a Triathlon event worked with a sponsor, a health insurance company, to convert the competition route into a branded fitness trail. Maintain the exposure given to the sponsor after the event ended.
- Agree early on with your top management that a relevant portion of funds from sustainability sponsors goes directly to sustainability initiatives and report it back to the sponsor. Often, the money brought in via sustainability-related sponsorship is directed to a general fund, and the sustainability team is left without a working budget.

Benchmarking: The carrot and the stick

Funding and Financing is not only about sponsors providing extra money for sustainability initiatives. It is also about:

- Making your event more attractive to secure sponsorship - the carrot.
- Ensuring that sponsors do not turn down offers to support your event because you don't have a good track record on sustainability - the stick.

Value-in-kind (VIK) contribution can take you a long way. It can significantly reduce the costs of staging your event. Your sponsor, the host city/country, local businesses and other organisations can contribute to your event organisation with human resources, venues, sponsor products and equipment. You can also share resources with other events.

Search for grants and other funding opportunities. Many countries offer grants and other funding opportunities for climate protection programmes, energy efficiency and water conservation initiatives. Ask for information at your local/national environmental agency. International organisations also offer grants for a large range of social sustainability actions, sport for all and sport and peace initiatives.

Example: Sustainable Sports Grounds

The State of Victoria in Australia funds local communities' sustainable water management practices at sport and recreation facilities. In 2011, the average grant was up to 100,000 Australian dollars per project.

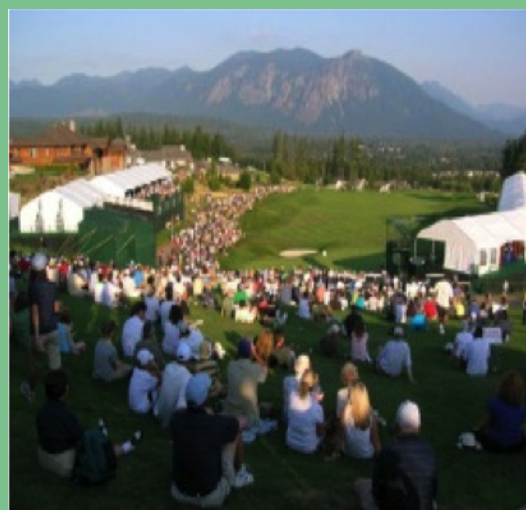
3.2 Site and Venue

Select sites and venues with low negative impacts.

If you have the freedom to choose the site/venue of your event, bear in mind that location, existing infrastructure and operational efficiency of the venue will play a major role in defining how sustainable your sport event will be. Maximise your chances of success by minimising the negative environmental and social impacts of your venue!

Checklist: Selecting Site and Venue

1. Is it centrally located?
2. Is it serviced by accessible public transportation?
3. Is it safe and secure for participants, organisers, employees and community?
4. Is it accessible to all participants (e.g. wheelchair accessible)?
5. Is the necessary venues and equipments already in place?
6. Is there evidence of a sustainability policy in place and in use?



Implement responsible use of energy, water and waste management.

Events usually use a lot of energy and water and produce large quantities of waste. If you plan your event carefully and work in partnership with venue managers you will find many opportunities to reduce operational costs and use resources in a more rational way.

A few golden rules:

- Operate site and venue lighting, cooling and heating optimally.
- Reduce water usage and use water from renewable sources.
- Include storm water capture and re-use; low-flow toilets and no-flow urinals; gray water re-use systems; water-saver taps and other efficient water technologies.
- Find ways to prevent the creation of waste: only buy what you absolutely need, don't hand out give-aways, prizes and marketing materials that creates waste.
- Waste that cannot be avoided should be reused, recycled or sent for composting.



Case Study: Triathlon International Vallée de Joux

The Triathlon International Vallée de Joux is held in Switzerland during the summer. The race site was chosen in an effort to minimize landscape changes and to maximise the use of existing infrastructure. The swimming and running races were held without signage. Biodegradable products were used to paint signage at the cycling tour. In order to insure the safety and cleanliness of the venue, race regulation stipulated that athletes who littered would be disqualified. Toilets access to persons with disabilities was available throughout the site.

When building, opt for low impact and high legacy.

As a rule of thumb and where possible utilise existing venues. If existing venues are not available, consider temporary structures, unless there is a very strong legacy case for new buildings.

When building and putting up temporary venues and overlay make sure to:

- consider community needs and respect local culture and heritage;
- use environmentally sustainable design, materials, products, and construction methods;
- employ local workforce;
- fully comply with health and safety worker regulations;
- use efficient water and energy technologies;
- deliver venues that are barrier free and fully accessible to persons with disabilities;
- use toxin-free material;

- use recycled, reclaimed or source certified (e.g. FSC - Forest Stewardship Council) wood;
- consider how construction material will be transported to the building site;
- consider brownfields as preferred locations and avoid environmentally sensitive ecosystems.

3.3 Procurement and Supply Chain

Establish and implement a sustainable purchasing policy.

Write a policy that contains the contracting procedures and a code of conduct to source products and services that are both ethical and sustainable. This should include: respect of local laws; respect of human rights principles; compliance with environmental and labour regulations; creation of social and economic benefits to the local community.

If this seems too complicated to start with, you can simply use the checklist below before making any purchases.



Checklist: Purchasing

1. Do I really need to buy the product or can it be rented (or shared with other events)?
2. Where does it come from?
3. Who made it?
4. What is it made of?
5. What is it wrapped in?
6. What will happen to it after the event?

Engage your sponsors.

Seek sponsors with the commitment and capability to help achieve sustainable sport event goals. Sponsors can collaborate through the planning, management, delivery and dissolution of sponsored products, services and programs. They can also help by implementing their sustainability objectives and targets throughout their own supply chain.

Case Study: Vancouver 2010 Winter Games

Bell is Canada's largest communications company. In the pre-Games period, 2 million US dollars from Bell's Games sponsorship was used to support inclusion of inner-city businesses and residents in increased economic development opportunities.

RONA is Canada's largest distributor and retailer of hardware, home renovation and gardening products. In partnership with VANOC, RONA offered a 30-week carpentry skills and work experience program designed for people who had difficulty entering the workforce. The program included carpentry skills, training, and work experience. Trainees were recruited from Aboriginal peoples, inner-city residents, youth at risk, women at risk and new immigrants.

Recruit and buy from the local community.

Use local organisations for temporary jobs, volunteers and contractors and ensure a fair wage system. (e.g. waste recycling services, clean up crews, entry level job agencies and those that recruit from local enterprises and/or those that support socially-diverse, minorities, people with disabilities).

When possible, buy (or rent) local, environmentally friendly and community-inclusive.

3.4 Transportation and Accommodation

Promote accessible public transportation and encourage clean transportation.

Provide spectators and athletes with information, guidelines, education and incentives to use public transportation services. You can liaise with the local public transportation authorities to ensure sufficient, affordable and effective modes of public transportation.

Provide information and maps of paths and cycle routes, offer supervised bike parking or put in place a bike lending initiative during the event.

Use low emission shuttle vehicles, hybrid and electric cars.

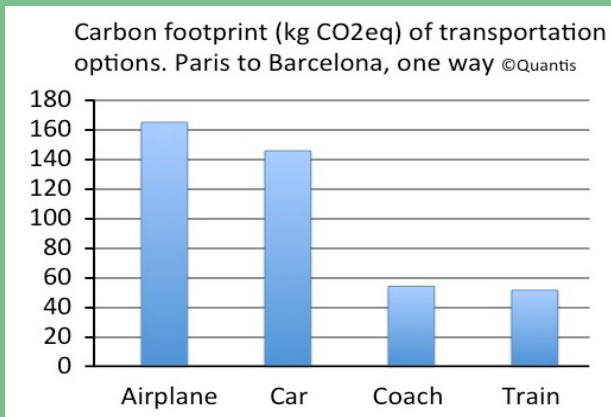
Case Study: UEFA EURO 2008

The UEFA EURO 2008 event in partnership with the Swiss and Austrian governments set a target of 60% fan travel on public transportation for long distance travel and 80% for local travel on match days. The Kombi-Ticket gave fans holding match tickets a general fare subscription ticket valid for a total of 36 hours for the entire public transport network in Switzerland and the Austrian Federal Railways. The program was a success in many cities and the 60% target was exceeded.

Understand the impact of movement of goods, services, and people related to your event.

Potential impacts on the local community include noise, reduced access to local residents, delays, congestion and reduced parking space. Environmental impacts include air quality, water quality, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Communicate the impacts to other stakeholders in advance to help prepare alternatives and mitigating measures.

Benchmarking: Carbon Footprint of transportation



Travelling by train from Paris to Barcelona reduces emissions by 80% compared with travelling by plane.

Support the use of environmentally and socially responsible accommodation close to the event sites and venues.

Provide participants with information on sustainable accommodation. Liaise with local hotels to encourage them to raise the bar with their sustainability initiatives. For example, you can encourage local hotels to apply the SSE Toolkit framework to their own activities.

Ensure that accommodation options meet the needs of people with disabilities, such as adapted signage to low vision (braille), allowing the presence of service animals (guide dogs), clear paths for wheelchair access.

3.5 Catering, Food and Beverage

Promote healthy diets.

A few golden rules:

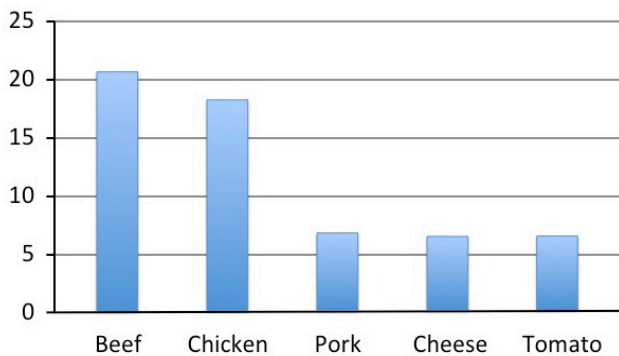
- Healthy and low impact choices can include fruits, vegetables, grains, and other fresh, low-sugar, low sodium, trans-fat-free, and unprocessed food.
- Remember to provide safe drinking water at all event sites and venues.
- Cater for athletes' special dietary requirements.

Source food and water responsibly.

Source from fair-trade, organic, seasonal, local and regional sources where possible and encourage the use of tap water instead of bottled water.

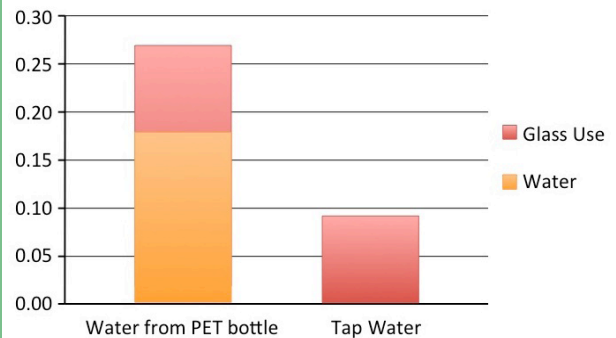
Benchmarking: Carbon Footprint of Food and Water

Carbon footprint (kg CO₂eq) to produce 1 kg of food ©Quantis



Choosing white meat or vegetables over beef reduces carbon emissions by approximately 87%.

Carbon footprint (kg CO₂eq) of consuming 1 liter of bottled water compared to 1 liter of tap water ©Quantis



Drinking tap water instead of bottled reduces CO₂ emissions by 99.8%.

Minimise food and packaging waste and maximise composting, recycling.

The composting and recycling of food waste can be encouraged through the provision of well-marked waste management bins with clear instructions in convenient locations throughout the site and venue. Measures to reduce food and packaging waste can include choosing bulk containers where appropriate (e.g. beverages, condiments). Unused food can be donated to local communities (e.g. community shelters).

Case Study: Gymnaestrada 2011

The World Gymnaestrada is one of the most important mass sports events in the world. The 2011 edition gathered over 24,000 participants and volunteers in Lausanne. Water bottles with the World Gymnaestrada brand were offered to all participants together with a map of the city's public fountains. Water taps were added to the demonstration sites to encourage participants to drink tap water.

Fruits, vegetables and wine served during the event came from local/regional producers, lowering the impact of food transportation and maximising economic benefits for the community.

3.6 Engagement and Education

Inspire participants and stakeholders to engage in sustainable behaviour and lifestyle choices.

Encourage participants and stakeholders to submit ideas on how to make the event more sustainable and let them know that sustainability is everyone's responsibility. Dedicate an education and engagement section on your website and/or invite local organisations to set up a kiosk at the event site to promote sustainable products, services and information.

Engage athletes and the sporting community in the implementation of your sustainability actions.

The more people in the sporting community that buy into what you are doing, the more likely they can help get your message out.

Identify primary target audiences - high performance athletes (domestic and international) and the Sporting Community including other athletes, National Sports Organisations, Sport Event Organisers, Federal and Provincial/State government Ministries of Sport/Health/Environment; Corporate Sponsors; Non-government Organisations - and open the dialogue with them. Emphasis can be placed on organisations with resources (financial, technical and human) and similar interests.

Case Study: Clean Air Champions

Clean Air Champions is a network of the Canadian national team, Olympic and Paralympic athletes. They work together to improve air quality and reduce climate change by educating and inspiring Canadians, primarily youngsters, to adopt more sustainable, healthier lifestyles. One of the most innovative actions is the Air Aware program that links air quality, asthma and allergies targeting youths in schools and sport/recreation communities.

Celebrate results.

Identify ways and means to celebrate results through recognition, profiling, awards, certificates, stories and showcasing.

3.7 Communication and Reporting

Make sure your communication is consistent with your actions.

Be careful not to **greenwash** (overuse in marketing of terms and images that are either not accurate or oversell an organisations environmental practices). This can both hurt your credibility and open you up to sanctions by advertising authorities.

Transparency is an important element in communicating about sustainability and it is not just for achievements, but also for failures. There is nothing better for building the credibility of your success than admitting the failures of your event.

Communicate in a more sustainable manner.

Consider the look and feel of your messaging. Choose your media carefully and avoid unnecessary paper (e.g. flyers). Use electronic communication where possible.

Report in a responsible, transparent and accountable manner.

Reporting on your sustainability performance can contribute to enhance the reputation of your event, show transparency and honesty and help to create reliable benchmarks for the event industry.

A few golden rules:

- Measure your performance and add a reporting system, if possible validated by a third party.
- Reporting elements should consider best practices to demonstrate a commitment toward being accountable for environmental, social, and economic performance.
- Reporting information should address issues that relate to the unique dimensions of the event, its commitments, goals, activities, and stakeholders.
- Reporters should strive for accuracy and authenticity of information and apply appropriate assurance methods.

Benchmarking: **Global Reporting Initiative - GRI**

GRI, the most widely-used sustainability reporting framework, has a special supplement for event organisers. Built through a multi-stakeholder consensus approach.

It gives you guidelines on how to credibly report on issues such as:

- sourcing;
- legacy;
- environmental performance;
- direct economic impacts from sustainability initiatives;
- transport and logistics;
- stakeholders' feedback;
- financial responsibility;
- knowledge transfer.

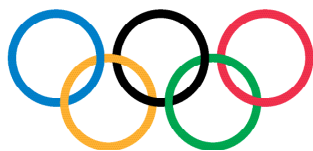
SSE Toolkit - Sustainable Sport & Events Toolkit

Founding Partners:



vancouver 2010^{TM/MC}

Principal Supporting Partner:



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

Development Partners:



Contributors:

Tania Braga, Geert Hendriks, Catia Reliquias, Mandeep Saharan

For More Information:

AISTS - International Academy of Sports Science and Technology
Innovation Park, Building C, EPFL; 1015 Lausanne, Switzerland; +41 21 693 8593
www.aists.org

SSE Toolkit: www.sustainable-sport.org