

Environment Canada's Green Meeting Guide



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Canada

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Much of the information contained in this publication came from the Green Meeting Guide developed by the Atlantic Region of Environment Canada in 1995. Information from that guide has been updated to incorporate progress in greening techniques and approaches over the past decade.

The Government of Canada is committed to hosting green meetings and ensuring that all environmental aspects are considered in the planning and execution of both small and large events.

HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

This guide is a practical reference tool for anyone faced with the task of organizing a meeting or conference with the aim of making the event environmentally responsible. It provides information on how to incorporate environmental concerns at every stage of an event.

The guide contains three broad categories of information:

1. The up-front part of the guide has concise general information on the major steps for organizing a green event.
2. Checklists in Appendix 1 provide detailed descriptions of specific tasks to ensure that you cover all environmental requirements at each stage of organizing and carrying out an event.
3. Appendices 4, Eco-labelling Programs and 5, Further Information, describe relevant environmental programs and provide links to key Web sites.

Using the Guide for various kinds of Meetings

The guide is a comprehensive document intended to cover all aspects of greening meetings of different types and sizes. You can easily select parts of the document that apply to the particular needs of the meeting at hand. For example, each of the checklists in Appendix 1 applies to a particular aspect of a meeting: logistics, transportation, food and beverage services, accommodations, green office procedures, procurement and communications.

You can choose the checklists that are relevant to your needs:

- Checklist 1, Logistics, is useful for any meeting because it addresses basic organizational tasks such as registration, assembling meeting materials and managing presentations.
- Checklist 5, Green Office Procedures will also apply to most meetings.
- Other checklists, such as #2, Food and Beverage Services, #3, Transportation and #4, Accommodations, may be relevant depending on the scope of your activities.

You can use each checklist as a stand-alone document, and edit it as you wish to customize it to your needs. To download an electronic version of the guide, see <http://www.greeninggovernment.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=256986C5-1#GrnMeet>.

The chart below shows how to use the Green Meeting Guide to meet various objectives.

| Objective | Where to find the information |
|--|---|
| To understand the concept of a green meeting → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction, page 1 |
| To organize a basic meeting without significant travel → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps 1-4, beginning on page 4 • Appendix 1: Checklists #1 Logistics, #5 Green Office Procedures, and #6 Green Procurement |
| To organize a medium-sized workshop with some out-of-town participants → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps 1-4, beginning on page 4 • Appendix 1: Checklists 1-6 |
| To find a green hotel → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 4, Eco-labelling Programs, page 50 |
| To evaluate a potential supplier of goods or services → | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 3, Sample Supplier Verification Form. Page 47 |
| For further greening information sources→ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 5 |

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations of all types are increasingly aware of the need to consider the environmental consequences of their actions. Whether the issue is saving energy and money, reducing waste and pollution produced by an event or protecting human health, we have numerous suggestions on how to act sustainably.

One area where an organization can reduce its environmental footprint is by hosting a green meeting or conference. Most organizations are involved in hosting such events – weekly staff meetings, seminars, annual general meetings, or the occasional conference. Any gathering has environmental implications. It consumes energy, produces wastes and results in air emissions such as the greenhouse gases implicated in climate change.

The green meeting concept

Many of us have had the task of organizing a meeting – setting the agenda, inviting participants, arranging facilities, and ordering food and

What is a Green Meeting? A green meeting ensures that all aspects of an event, including its location, food services, transportation and the provision of materials are approached with pollution prevention in mind in order to reduce its environmental impact.

equipment. However, few meeting organizers are environmental experts. This guide was written with that in mind. It uses plain language and an easy-to-follow format to help make your meeting a green and successful event. It can be utilized for events ranging from small half-day meetings to large international conferences.

Why should you host a green event?

- Conserving energy and reducing waste saves money.
- The meeting presents an opportunity to educate participants, organizers and suppliers about the benefits of green meetings.
- Green organizations have a positive public image.
- Showcasing environmental technologies can result in increased business opportunities for the exhibiting companies.
- Hosting a green meeting can stimulate an organization to institute environmental protection measures more broadly, thereby achieving even greater environmental and economic benefits.
- Green and socially responsible organizations can better attract and retain employees.

Green meetings have tangible benefits

Faced with time and budget constraints, a meeting organizer might feel that greening the session would be a lot of added work for limited benefit. But the fact is, a green meeting does more than simply help the environment. It makes good economic sense; it is good public relations; and it will help others learn by your example.

Many organizations have found that greening their operations actually saved them money:

- At one event, Meeting Strategies Worldwide Inc. replaced bottled water with reusable containers and bulk dispensers. This simple step saved about \$15,000.
- According to the Convention Industry Council, collecting and reusing name card holders for an event of 1300 attendees can save \$975.00 (US).

Time well spent

Initially, it may take a bit more time for you to institute the green measures described in this guide. However, once you are familiar with the guide and its checklists, you will need to refer to them less and less and greening an event will become second-nature.

The checklists are organized according to the typical tasks in organizing any meeting, including logistics, arranging transportation and accommodations, and providing food services. This makes them easy to use. Also, the checklists can serve as reminders of the overall organizational tasks as well as the greening aspects.

STEP 1: GETTING STARTED

This section of the guide addresses pre-planning tasks such as establishing a green policy and an emission reduction strategy for the event.

Planning the Event

The first question to consider is “Do people have to be here in person for this meeting?” Have all other options such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing been addressed? For smaller events this should always be considered first, as well as for those events with just a few delegates required to travel. This can help to not only reduce waste and consumption at the meeting, but it will also reduce greenhouse gas and other air emissions associated with travel.

Your Environmental Policy

Greening begins at the earliest stages of organizing an event. Your organization should start by making a clear statement of its intentions to carry out a green meeting. This policy statement need not be elaborate; it should be a clear and simple statement of your green intentions. (See box.)

A sample environmental policy:

We will address environmental considerations at every stage and include environmental factors in every decision to purchase a product or contract a service. We will minimize the meeting's waste, water, energy consumption, and air emissions.

A Greening Strategy for the Event

To apply your environmental policy, you will need an implementation plan or strategy for greening the event. This will include delegating specific tasks to individuals who are accountable for their completion.

Consider the scale of the proposed event to determine how elaborate your greening preparations must be.

The checklists in Appendix 1 will be a key tool for this exercise. Look over the checklists at this stage to see which ones are relevant for you.

- Your greening strategy should state which of the checklists will apply to the meeting.
- If you are hosting a large event - because each of the seven checklists applies to a particular aspect of meeting organization - it may be reasonable to assign each to a different member of your organizing team.
- For smaller events, some checklist items may not apply. Thus you can edit the lists accordingly.

Some keys to a successful green meeting:

- Establish the green nature of the meeting at the outset. Delegate responsibility for the overall greening effort and each of its components, and establish a system to monitor progress.
- Distribute this guide to all organizers and involved parties at the outset of the meeting planning exercise, ensuring sufficient time to select suppliers and for making any required changes to existing arrangements.
- The environmental program must be a priority at the highest levels of your organization. Senior managers should publicly commit to the greening process and make it clear to employees that the greening effort is an important part of their jobs.
- For large events, the organizing committee should include a representative of the greening initiative from the outset so that environmental factors are considered throughout the project.
- Allocate sufficient time and resources to achieve environmental objectives.
- Some items are highly visible, such as the avoidance of disposable products, use of recycled materials, and presence of recycling programs. Others, such as energy management programs, may be less visible though no less important, especially as many of these can actually reduce costs. Visible elements in particular cannot be overlooked as they serve as an example to all of the participants.
- In the early stages of planning for a large event, consider involving community groups and schools in the environmental effort. For example, poster contests in schools could develop interest and enthusiasm about the environmental aspects of your meeting.

Communications: Getting the Word Out

Green meetings are a relatively new phenomenon, and not all meeting organizers or participants may be fully aware of the concept. Thus internal and external communications are a key consideration for a successful event.

Your organizing team should meet early and regularly to discuss the meeting's green aspects and report progress. Organize staff briefings as necessary regarding your expectations, specific policies and procedures.

Inform meeting participants of the event's green aspects. For a large-scale meeting, the public and media should be informed of the nature and importance of the environmental program through a formal public relations campaign.

For larger meetings it can also be worthwhile to involve stakeholders such as local environmental, municipal and business communities and various government departments early in the planning of the meeting to ensure they participate most effectively.

Because much of the work of a large conference involves procuring goods and services, your greening strategy should address procurement issues. In particular, you should inform all those involved in procuring goods and services of your greening requirements and convey your needs.

- A clear procurement policy along with Checklist 6, Green Procurement, will ensure that purchases reflect environmental considerations. The policy need not be elaborate, but it should summarize your organization's commitment to green procurement. For an example of a general policy, see the box below.
- Distribute the policy statement to all employees, contractors, and suppliers of goods and services (e.g. hotels and catering services), and require them to adhere to it.

Measuring your Progress

To ensure the greening strategy stays on track, you should take some concrete measures to monitor progress, ensure accountability and report lessons learned.

The intensity of this monitoring effort will depend on the scale of your event. However, the parameters that you could measure include:

- the amount of paper used or conserved through waste reduction measures,
- the amount of waste generated, including relative amounts discarded and recycled,
- travel modes used by meeting organizers and attendees, including percentage usage of public transport versus taxis or private vehicles, and
- greenhouse gas emissions produced.

Sample procurement policy statement:

This organization will give preference to products and services identified as "environmentally superior". "Environmental superiority" will be recognized based on efficient use of energy and natural resources, potential for hazardous and solid waste reduction, and safe means of disposal. Preference will be given to products and services certified by recognized authorities such as (in Canada) the Environmental Choice Program.

The checklists in Appendix 1 should prove useful in monitoring your progress. When you are unable to meet a requirement in a checklist, an explanation should be provided. You can record this information in the Comments section of each checklist.

- For future meetings, you can use the completed checklists to compare performance from one meeting to the next. With experience, you should see steady improvement!

For larger conferences, an external audit may be worth considering. Such an independent assessment process must begin early in the planning phase so that the auditor can fully understand your environmental goals and activities. Keep records of purchases, leases, and contracts for all transactions associated with the event for review by potential auditors.

For a smaller event, you can develop less formal methods of accountability to ensure compliance. In this case, you should consider the particular questions for the organizing team to address (e.g. What do we need to measure, and what are the measuring tools? How should we define success or failure in each aspect of the greening initiative?).

Record the findings from your monitoring effort so that you can do an even better job with the greening of your next meeting. Others will also benefit from the lessons you have learned (see Step 4, Follow-up).

Conferences can release a significant volume of GHGs.

For example, the 45,000 delegates to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa, produced about 300,000 tonnes of GHG emissions.

Many of these emissions arose from air travel, which produces more GHGs than the alternatives—34.1 kg CO₂ on take-off and 0.1046kg CO₂ per passenger km on average, compared to 0.25 CO₂ per passenger-km for travel by car, 0.36 CO₂ per passenger-km by truck or SUV, 0.1033 CO₂ per passenger-km for rail travel, and just 0.0587 CO₂ per passenger-km for bus travel.

Source: Canadian GHG Registries website of Canadian Standards Association
http://www.ghgregistries.ca/assets/pdf/Challenge_Guide_E.pdf

STEP 2: ORGANIZING THE EVENT

This section of the guide includes initial organizational tasks such as preparing invitations, letting contracts, choosing venues, and calculating emissions.

Logistics: Planning and Carrying Out the Main Event

There are a number of green measures that apply to the logistics of planning and carrying out the meeting. These include using electronic means rather than printed materials for pre-meeting communications, reducing paper usage at the check-in stage, and working with presenters and participants to make their own activities more environmentally sound. Follow Checklist 1, Logistics, for the detailed tasks.

- Meet with every involved party, from hotel management to the catering services, to ensure that all are aware of greening requirements. Keep in close contact to address any problems as they arise.

Arranging Facilities

Choose a central meeting location downtown or near the airport that can be easily accessed by public transit or on foot, rather than by private vehicle or taxi.

Arranging Food and Beverage Services

Food and beverage consumption are potential generators of large amounts of paper, plastic and other wastes. Thus this aspect of your meeting is an important area in which to apply conservation measures. It also provides a major opportunity for educating participants about means to reduce food-related wastes in their daily lives. See Checklist 2, Food and Beverage Services.

Reducing waste

The 2002 Forest Leadership Forum in Atlanta, Georgia had over 1,300 participants from 45 countries. Through green measures, organizers avoided the use of more than 80,000 disposable plates, cups, napkins and utensils.

Organizers of the 2004 Democratic National Convention recycled waste paper from the first day of the convention to make posters that were given to convention attendees.

Transportation Planning

Transportation can be a significant environmental factor for many events. For major conferences, international travel can be by far the largest contributor of GHG emissions.

One way to reduce the impact of air travel is to hold the event in a city that is accessible by direct flight, as airline emissions are substantially increased through multiple take-offs and landings. A large meeting provides the opportunity for publicity encouraging car-pooling and public transit, and a chance to demonstrate alternative transportation modes and fuels.

Your public transit organization may be willing to participate in such ways as:

- adapting schedules to the meeting and related activities,
- arranging for a shuttle bus for participants
- producing a flyer on the services offered during the meeting,
- placing newspaper ads that promote the use of public transit;
- Offering a conference transit pass to attendees.

See Checklist 3, Transportation.

Accommodations for Participants

If you have out-of-town participants, the green aspects of their accommodations will be of concern.

- See Checklist 4, Accommodations.
- Appendix 4, Eco-labelling Programs, contains information about two programs, Green LeafTM and TheGreenKey®, that certify hotel and tourist facilities.

Cutting down on travel is environmentally responsible and a great way to save money, for you and your attendees. For example:

- The right location means fewer taxis and lower fares between meeting sites, hotels and airports.
- Webinars and teleconferences eliminate costly air fares (even if only for a fraction of the attendees). Teleconference and video hook-up can allow more people to participate. They will also avoid any travel disruptions such as flight cancellations or delays.
- It may be cheaper for attendees to pay a small shuttle charge than take individual taxis. Shuttles may be less stressful for attendees than finding a taxi. They are also good networking opportunity for groups of participants.
- Encourage attendees to take public transportation by providing bus passes and transit maps.

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts has found that it pays to be green:

An energy audit and retrofit cost the Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise \$460,000. Projected savings were \$461,000, but after five years, the hotel had saved over \$616,000.

- Typical hotels use 218 gallons of water per day per occupied room. Installation of water efficient guest room fixtures, like Fairmont's fitting of tap aerators and low flow toilets, reduce water use by an average of 31%.
- At the Chateau Laurier, 95% of all exit lighting has been retrofitted to low wattage (15 watt) energy efficient lighting, saving 306.6 KW of electricity per year.
- The Chateau Laurier's new automated shut-off programs for heating/ventilation/air conditioning are reducing energy consumption about 42,000 KW per year.

Operating a Green Office

Organizing a large meeting will require office facilities and services ranging from telephones, fax machines and computers to processing reservations and producing conference materials and reports. Checklist 5, Green Office Procedures, contains environmental protection measures for paper use, waste handling and recycling, lights and equipment and water conservation. In addition, organizers should consider providing video or web conferencing facilities.

Green Procurement

Greening a meeting is in many respects a procurement issue. You should consider environmental factors in every purchasing decision.

Checklist 6, Green Procurement, addresses a full range of environmental considerations in selecting suppliers of goods and services.

Some general considerations regarding green procurement are described below.

Using the Checklists to Evaluate Suppliers

A sample clause that can be included in bid documents for goods and services:

An environmental checklist is attached for your review. Your ability to meet as many of these conditions as possible will be a factor in evaluating bids. Therefore please include information with your bid on the extent that you can meet the conditions.

The appropriate checklist should also be attached.

- Checklist 6, Green Procurement for a single product,
- a subject-area checklist for a service (e.g., Checklist 2: Food and Beverage Services for catering).

Certified Products

There is a growing variety of products on the market which purport to be environmentally superior. When purchasing or renting products, you must evaluate suppliers' environmental claims.

- For some types of products, a national or international body has established environmental standards. Examples of certifying bodies are the Environmental Choice Program (Canada), Green Seal and Scientific Certification Systems (the United States), and the European Union Eco-Labeling Program. (See Appendix 4.)
- Government specifications and guidelines can also provide a basis for green requests of suppliers. For more information on specifications and guidelines, call the environment or purchasing departments of your local, provincial or federal government.
- Unfortunately, many product categories lack standards or specifications. When purchasing these, ask suppliers for information on the environmental characteristics of their product to allow a comparison with competing products. Checklist 6, Green Procurement, will assist you here.
- In evaluating product suppliers' claims, it is important to understand various claims such as "recyclable", "recycled", "biodegradable" etc. The glossary in Appendix 2 can provide guidance. In some cases, determining which alternative is environmentally preferable will be a judgment call.

Ideally, environmental factors should be considered for each stage of a product's life cycle - the creation, use, and disposal of the product. In general, preferred products and suppliers:

- make the most efficient possible use of materials, energy and water,
- produce a minimum of waste, and
- minimize the release of harmful substances into the environment, both within buildings and outside.

Service Suppliers

It is also important to assess the environmental performance of service suppliers. This may require a bit more investigation than for product suppliers, because there are fewer standards available. Checklist 6, Green Procurement, represents minimum requirements.

Local suppliers may not always be available for more specialized products. However, by demanding environmentally responsible products, you may encourage local suppliers to begin carrying such products. This in turn will contribute to the positive environmental legacy of your meeting.

- Ask suppliers to provide supporting evidence for their claims. The sample supplier verification form provided in Appendix 3 may be useful.
- Also ask suppliers to provide information on the environmental appropriateness of their own operations (For example, are they ISO 14001 certified?).
- Use local suppliers when possible, particularly for produce, other food products and beverages. This reduces transportation requirements and the associated environmental impacts.

Communications: Conveying Green Messages

Through advertising your event and contacts with participants, you will have many opportunities to convey your environmental commitment and to encourage others to green their own activities. Your communication approach deserves some careful thought to ensure that your messages, both intended and unintended, support your environmental policy.

See Checklist 7, Communications.

Selecting a Sponsor for your Event

Environmental factors should be among the criteria for selecting sponsors. Although free goods and services may be important financially, basic environmental criteria still apply, (for example, a free supply of virgin paper would be inappropriate).

- You could seek sponsors 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.

Security Requirements

Regular communication between meeting organizers and the security team will help in identifying any security issues having environmental implications and assist in providing timely solutions.

The following measures will reduce the environmental impact of security requirements:

All suppliers of products and services, including donors and sponsors, should meet these criteria:

The organization's practices respect all local and national environmental legislation.

Neither the organization nor any individual has been convicted of an environmental offence or been the subject of adverse environmental publicity.

The products and services sponsors provide comply with the Checklist 7, Green Procurement.

- Encourage security staff to adhere to checklists 3, Transportation, and 5, Green Office Procedures.
- Have reusable luggage tags (for example, as business card holders), and/or have tags that have recycled content or are recyclable.
- Provide reusable and recyclable accreditation passes.
- Coordinate security and motorcade routing with local transportation and mass transit authorities so that mass transit and other local transportation is not unduly disrupted.
- Avoid unnecessary idling of vehicles.

Special Events

If you are planning special events, such as state dinners, local talent showcases, visits to local attractions, or spousal programs, consult the checklists as you would for the main event.

- For large meetings having ancillary tourist events, establish links as early as possible with the responsible organizations. Encourage organizers to use the relevant checklists, and advise them to avoid environmentally harmful activities such as balloon releases.
- Assisting the organizers with the key environmental aspects of their events will ensure that the meeting participants have an overall impression that environmental concerns were addressed.

STEP 3: CARRYING OUT THE EVENT

This section of the guide covers the activities taking place during the event.

Opening the Meeting

Greeting guests and opening the session provides an opportunity to reinforce the meeting's green messages and encourage participants to support your environmental policy.

- Checklist 1, Logistics, contains measures to reduce paper waste at check-in.

- Inform attendees of your environmental policy and the greening strategy for the event (see Step 1, Getting Started).
- Tell the participants what they can do as individuals to help make this a green event. (See the box on the next page for examples.)
- Signs or notices at the site can remind attendees of recycling facilities and other green measures. (Signs should be reusable – see Checklist 5: Green Office procedures.)

Running the Meeting

The meeting session will be a busy time for organizers, but it is important to keep track of environmental issues. The day of the event also provides important opportunities to reinforce green messages.

- Keep the checklists handy to ensure that organizers and contractors adhere to all requirements. (See checklists 1: Logistics, 2: Food and Beverage Services, 5: Green Office Procedures, and 6, Green Procurement.)
- Have contractors' and suppliers' contact information handy in case you need to be in touch.
- During the meeting, remind participants of the greening requirements. This could involve making a brief statement at the opening of each day's session, as well as occasional reminders when necessary.
- As part of your monitoring effort, record information on your selected monitoring parameters such as paper use and waste generated (see "Measuring Your Progress" in Step 1). Take note of any environmental problems or issues arising during the session.
- If you have sufficient staff or volunteers, have a designated green team on site to respond to attendees' inquiries, identify potential problems and assist with environmental monitoring.

What meeting attendees can do:

- If possible choose to stay in an eco-rated hotel (for example, see Green Leaf™ <http://www.terrachoice.ca/hotelwebsite/indexcanada.htm>)
- Turn off any lights, TV, air conditioner or heater when you leave your hotel room for the day.
- Recycle your waste: bottles, cans, paper, etc.
- Register on-line if possible rather than printing paper copies.
- Bring your own reusable mug, pen and pencil.
- Do your sightseeing by foot or public transport.
- Collect business cards of presenters and have them e-mail reports and other information rather than collecting printed hand-outs.
- If the hotel offers this service, take the energy-saving option of not having sheets and towels changed every day.
- Next time if possible, participate by teleconference or videoconference rather than travelling to the event.

STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP

This section of the guide includes clean-up, publication of proceedings, post-event auditing, and reporting on lessons learned.

Clean-up

If there are items such as office supplies, goods provided by sponsors, or gifts remaining after the event, ensure that they are used and not disposed of.

- Have an on-site drop off for attendees to return material that can be re-used.
- Community groups and schools can often use supplies.

See Checklist 1, Logistics, for final on-site tasks.

Recognizing efforts

Thank your staff and volunteers. When purchasing gifts, consider environmentally-friendly products with recycled content, for example bags and mugs made from recycled plastic. Other gift ideas include items made by local artisans, and investing in an eco-friendly project (such as having a tree planted in a volunteer's name). This can help to focus continued attention on environmental concerns.

- Your communications strategy for the event should recognize any assistance with the green aspects.

Publication of proceedings

Your conference proceedings are an opportunity to highlight the event's green aspects. To minimize the environmental cost of publishing the proceedings, consider distributing them electronically or posting them on your Web site.

See checklists 5: Green Office Procedures, and 6: Communications, for more information.

Reporting on lessons learned

If you commissioned an external auditor for the event, distribute his or her report (electronically) to interested parties. Otherwise, document the results of your greening effort to provide an example for others to follow.

Leaving an Environmental Legacy

The most important legacy from a large-scale meeting may be the building of partnerships among civic, environment, business and government agencies. Encourage these groups to build on the cooperation developed through the meeting.

Various infrastructure and improvements may also be a legacy of a large-scale meeting, such as energy-efficient structures, environmentally appropriate outdoor lighting and landscaping in key areas of the host city. Local hotels will also be more aware of the environmental concerns that apply to them.

APPENDIX 1: CHECKLISTS

This appendix contains detailed lists of tasks to complete at each stage of planning and carrying out a green meeting. In total, the checklists cover all the steps necessary for a large international conference.

To meet your own needs, select the most appropriate list or lists, and keep in mind that each list can stand alone. Generally you should endeavour to adhere to these practices. However, it may not be possible to do so in all cases. For example, in some regions there may not be sufficient suppliers of environmentally-friendly products for certain product categories.

When a checklist requirement cannot be satisfied, an explanation should be provided, using the "Comments" section of the checklist.

List of checklists:

- 1: Logistics
- 2: Food and Beverage Services
- 3: Transportation
- 4: Accommodations
- 5: Green Office Procedures
- 6: Green Procurement
- 7: Communications

CHECKLIST 1: LOGISTICS

Meeting organizers should use this checklist for planning and carrying out the meeting's organizational tasks.

Planning and Pre-meeting Organization

- () Advise participants in advance that the meeting will be green.
- () For all goods procured for the meeting, give preference to the most environmentally appropriate options (see Checklist 6: Green Procurement).
- () Gifts for participants (if applicable) are durable, minimally packaged, made from recycled materials (e.g. mugs or tote bags made from recycled plastic), and produced locally if available. Consider gifts conveying a green message, such as a tree planted in the recipient's name.
- () Participants can register, and media be accredited, electronically.
- () Confirm registrations by e-mail or phone.
- () Ask participants to bring their own pens and paper. (Provide additional pens and paper on-site for those who forget).
- () Rather than printing conference material, burn it on a CD, post it on the Web or e-mail it to participants.
- () Encourage participation through teleconferencing rather than travelling to the conference.
- () Any printing done for the conference or for conference/registration package, should be printed on an Energy Star certified printer, on high post-consumer content paper (with visible EcoLogo water marks) and be double-sided.

During the Meeting

- () Reduce paper waste at check-in (e.g., short registration forms, computerized systems).

- () Provide the registration package in a reusable holder (e.g., a reusable cotton bag, or a durable binder or folder made from recycled plastic or paper), if necessary.
- () If name cards are required, print them on recycled paper, and use reusable plastic name card-holders, and recycle them after use.
- () Ask participants to return card-holders at the end of the meeting, and provide convenient receptacles.
- () All office and administrative facilities associated with the meeting adhere to Checklist 5: Green Office Procedures.
- () Signage can be rented. If purchased, it should be durable, generic and undated so that it can be reused at other events (e.g., plastic signs with removable letters).
- () Place cards and banners are reusable or made from recycled materials.
- () As part of session introductions each day, remind attendees of the waste reduction and other environmental opportunities.
- () Recycling bins are numerous, conveniently located, well marked, and large enough to accommodate the expected amount of waste (i.e., Cafeteria areas, would need more and possibly composting facilities).
- () Use reusable dry-mark erasable boards or blackboards, overheads and slides instead of paper flip charts. (If you must use paper flip charts, they should be made of recyclable newsprint, with recycled content.)
- () Use “non-toxic” markers for presentations.
- () Ask presenters to turn off overhead and slide projectors when not in use. (Little stickers on overhead projectors can remind presenters of this request)
- () Provide one-side-used paper scratchpads for participants to take notes.
- () Limit distribution of brochures, handouts and session notes to those with a genuine need or interest (e.g., by providing a sign-up sheet or collecting business cards for subsequent mailings; putting copies at the front of the room rather than at the back). If participants need copies of slides or overheads, use the photocopier reduction or PowerPoint handout feature to fit several on a page. Offer IT services, such as a USB port where people can copy information to memory sticks.
- () Exhibit components are reusable and, if practical, made from used or recycled materials.

- () Exhibitors limit handouts and “giveaways”, and instead collect business cards, post a sign-up sheet, or provide a USB port for those seeking more information or product samples.
- () Exhibit packaging is minimal and reusable (e.g., pallets, wrappings), and/or recyclable.

Following the Meeting

- () Follow-up communication should be done electronically via e-mail, intranet or voice mail, instead of sending out mailings.
- () Assess the program and identify potential improvements.
- () Distribute conference proceedings and other reports electronically.

Comments:

CHECKLIST 2: FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICES

This checklist applies to all aspects of food service, including:

- catered functions;
- restaurants, cafeterias and take-out facilities at the meeting venue and in hotels;
- hotel picnic baskets; and any catering provided in airport lounges for delegates, welcoming contingents or members of the public.
- food service operations associated with tours and events organized in conjunction with the meeting.

The most visible evidence of a food service operation's commitment to environmental concerns is avoidance of disposable dishes and single-serve containers (i.e. individual creamers and sugar). However, as the checklist indicates, 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.

- () Inform food preparers of the exact number of participants to avoid waste. Re-evaluate the quantity needed as the event is on-going, this is a good way to minimize waste
- () Encourage attendees to bring their own reusable coffee mugs or supply these.
- () All dishes, cutlery and linens are reusable (i.e., no paper or polystyrene cups, no paper napkins or table covers, no plastic cutlery, no disposable doilies, etc.). For boat tours or other functions where breakable dishes are not permitted, reusable acrylic dishware could be used.
- () Avoid unnecessary disposable items (e.g., plastic straws, plastic coffee stirrers).
- () Provide beverages in bulk whenever feasible, or in containers that are reusable or recyclable in the facility's recycling program (no "sips"/"juice boxes").
- () Avoid single-serve containers for food and condiments (e.g., milk, cream, sugar, artificial sweeteners, butter, ketchup, vinegar, mustard, jams, salt, pepper, and breakfast cereal). Provide these in bulk, unless this is unacceptable to local health authorities. (If health prohibitions apply, convey this information to guests. The food service organization should work with local health authorities to overcome any regulatory hurdles.)

- () Recycle paper (boxboard), glass, metal and plastic containers. Recycling containers are visible in kitchens and in dining areas, and instructions are clear.
- () Print menus on paper with a high post-consumer recycled content, preferably unbleached.
- () Purchase locally-grown produce, local food supplies and locally produced beverages (including mineral waters, wines and beers).
- () Purchase organic foods, wines and beers.
- () Provide vegetarian menus. (Raising food animals requires more energy, water and other inputs than growing grains or vegetables.)
- () If possible, collect food wastes for composting and/or supply to farmers for livestock feed.
- () Donate surplus usable food to charities where possible and permitted by local health regulations.
- () Refuse excess packaging on supplies and produce.
- () Use reusable containers for transport and delivery of food supplies.
- () If using hazardous cleaning products, store, use and dispose of them properly.
- () Identify substitutes for hazardous cleaning chemicals.

Comments:

CHECKLIST 3: TRANSPORTATION

This checklist applies to meeting organizers, attendees, and contracted services (such as airport shuttles, limousines, security, and luggage transportation). The requirements for contracted services would apply to any events or tours associated with the meeting.

- () Include information on public transit in the registration package. (Consider giving participants complementary bus tickets.)
- () For a large conference, establish an airport greeting booth where attendees can obtain information on sustainable transportation from the airport.
- () Offer rental bicycles or provide contact for rental services, and provide facilities for cyclists such as lockers and showers.
- () Provide secure parking facilities for bicycles at the meeting site and hotel.
- () If required, provide vehicles such as shuttle buses for meeting participants and media for all events, in place of individual transportation (e.g. taxis, rented cars).
- () All vehicles for the meeting (including limousines, mini-buses, luggage vans, security, etc.) meet these requirements:
 - () Vehicles are fuel efficient and appropriately sized for the function.
 - () Route planning makes the most efficient use of vehicles.
 - () Use ethanol-gasoline blends for gasoline-fuelled vehicles.
 - () Use low-sulphur fuel for diesel vehicles.
 - () Follow manufacturers' recommendations to maintain vehicles.
 - () Inspect emission control systems annually (older vehicles particularly should have emissions testing or visual inspection to ensure that no emissions are being released through the tailpipe.)
- () Drivers should inspect the vehicles to:
 - () ensure that no fluids are leaking onto the pavement (daily)
 - () check for under-inflated tires (daily)

- () other problems such as a loose muffler (daily).
- () using a tire pressure gauge, ensure maximum recommended tire inflation to reduce fuel consumption (weekly)
- () Teach drivers fuel-saving habits.
- () Establish an idle free-zone around the conference venue.
- () Tell drivers of all vehicles associated with the meeting and related events not to idle their vehicles while waiting for delegates, unless required for security.
- () Use alternative fuelled vehicles (e.g., propane/natural gas, gasoline/ethanol/electric, hybrid, biodiesel) where feasible.
- () In winter, use timers for block heaters.

Comments:

CHECKLIST 4: ACCOMMODATIONS

Use this checklist if meeting attendees require accommodation. If the hotel is providing meals, refer to Checklist 2, Food and Beverage Services.

General

- () The hotel has an environmental policy and an environmental action plan.
- () The hotel is certified by an eco-labelling program such as TheGreenKey® or Green Leaf™.
- () Environmental duties are part of staff job descriptions.
- () The staff receives training and regular updates on their environmental duties.
- () The hotel has a comprehensive environmental procurement policy.
- () The policy includes a commitment to consider environmental factors throughout product life cycles.
- () The facility conveys its environmental policy to guests (e.g., through videos, publications, signage), and encourages guest cooperation.
- () All facilities adhere to green office principles.
- () The hotel subscribes to a recognized industry environmental code of practice (e.g., the Green Globe Program, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism).
- () All food service facilities, restaurants, cafeterias etc. adhere to Checklist 2, Food and Beverage Services.
- () The hotel's vehicles adhere to Checklist 3, Transportation.
- () Encourage participants to billet with local friends or family to reduce reliance on hotel accommodation.

Waste

- () A waste reduction program is in place.
- () All materials (paper, glass, metal, plastic, cardboard, etc.) having local markets are recycled.
- () Recycling bins are numerous, conveniently located, and well-marked.
- () Paper products the facility uses (including fine paper, computer paper, tissues, toilet paper and paper towels) have recycled content and are preferably unbleached with a high proportion of post-consumer recycled fibre.
- () The hotel takes measures to reduce paper waste at check-in (e.g., short forms, computerized systems).
- () The hotel reuses materials (e.g. donating used linens and usable food to charities).
- () Where disposable items have not yet been eliminated, the hotel has a plan and schedule to do so.
- () Hazardous wastes are properly collected, stored, transported and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

Guest Rooms and Amenities

- () Amenities such as shampoo and soap are purchased in bulk and provided in refillable dispensers.
- () Packaging on complementary fruit baskets and other gifts is minimal.
- () Guest stationery is made from certified recycled paper (preferably with a high post-consumer content and preferably not chlorine-bleached).
- () The hotel provides information in guest rooms about the green aspects of their rooms to inform and encourage guests' participation.
- () Information and publicity materials follow principles of green publications (as listed in Checklist 7, Communications).
- () Guest rooms and public areas have containers for recyclable materials such as newspaper, glass containers, etc. The boxes are clearly visible and instructions are provided (via graphics, or in multiple languages).

- () All containers provided in mini-bars are recyclable or reusable through the hotel's recycling program (e.g., no "sips"/"juice boxes").
- () Newspapers are delivered to rooms only if requested and are not wrapped in a plastic bag.
- () Signs encourage guests to turn off lights.
- () Green rooms equipped with air and water filters and low-toxicity finishes and furniture are available.
- () If guest rooms have fax machines, these use recyclable paper.

Laundry

- () The hotel provides reusable containers (e.g., baskets) for laundry.
- () Guests have the option of no second-day sheet and towel change to save laundry energy and water.
- () The hotel endeavours to minimize chemical and energy use (e.g., through reduced use of chemical fabric softeners, bleach, spot cleaners and static removers, use of lower-phosphate detergents, and cold water washing).

Energy

- () The hotel has a comprehensive energy management program.
- () Lighting levels are set to provide the minimum necessary for comfort, safety and accessibility. Lights are turned off when not needed (e.g., in unused meeting rooms). Lighting energy use is reduced through efficient lights, use of task lighting, individual switches, and/or automatic controls (e.g., motion-detector-equipped lighting).
- () Measures are in place to reduce hot water use:
 - () Proper insulation and maintenance of hot water heaters and pipes.
 - () Showers are equipped with low-flow showerheads.
- () Automatic controls (e.g., setbacks) are in place for heating and cooling.

Water

- () The hotel has a water conservation program. (Evidence of the following measures is a good indication of a water conservation effort.)
- () Staff and others are encouraged, through signage and other measures, to reduce water use.
- () Facilities are equipped with water-saving devices (e.g., faucet and shower flow regulators; automatic shut-offs for faucets and showers; low-flush toilets).
- () Water use for grounds maintenance is reduced through conservation measures such as planting drought-tolerant vegetation and mulching.

Comments:

CHECKLIST 5: GREEN OFFICE PROCEDURES

This checklist is for the organizing team. Some of the suggestions, particularly in the sections on lights and equipment, may not apply to small-scale meetings due to costs of purchasing or renting new equipment. For further information on purchasing, refer to Checklist 6: Green Procurement.

Paper Use

- () 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, and keep them as short as possible. Edit on-screen, rather than printing unnecessary drafts.
- () Make the most efficient use of paper:
 - () Double-sided photocopying is mandatory.
 - () Format documents for efficient paper use (taking into account “readability”): smaller font size, minimum margins, minimum “white space.”
 - () Documents meet green printing standards (see Checklist 7: Communications).
 - () All staff know how to operate the photocopier correctly, and the photocopier is well-maintained to avoid “mistakes” that waste paper.
- () Paper that has been used on one side only is collected and reused for fax cover sheets and notepaper.
- () To encourage re-use, provide collector trays for paper that has been used on one side only.
- () Make draft printouts and photocopies on the back of used paper.
- () Circulate documents and post memos rather than distributing individual copies.
- () Paper products have certified recycled content, with a high proportion of post-consumer content. Chlorine-bleached paper is avoided wherever possible.
- () Minimize fax paper use through brief cover sheets (partial page), no cover sheet, or reusable cover sheets.

- () Re-use file folders and envelopes (e.g., by placing a label—with water-based glue—over the old address).
- () Use a computer-based fax program to send faxes electronically.
- () Keep mailing and circulation lists up-to-date to avoid unnecessary mailings. Use postcards where possible for mail-outs, rather than separate sheets of paper and envelopes.
- () Use electronic mailing lists whenever feasible.
- () Minimize the use of colour copies. Consider using black and white printing for documents.

Waste and recycling

- () Buy reusable products (e.g., rechargeable batteries).
- () Have a central area where co-workers can bring unwanted office supplies, cardboard boxes, etc. for reuse by others.
- () Return plastic cerlox bindings, binders, etc. to the print shop for reuse.
- () Management works with property management to establish recycling programs for waste materials such as paper, glass, metals and plastics. Publicize recycling programs and encourage participation.
- () Recycle photocopier and printer cartridges, and use recycled cartridges (both laser and ink jet cartridges).
- () Where possible, return spent batteries from laptop computers to the supplier for recycling or recycle rechargeable batteries through the RBRC (Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation) program at local retailers (see web-site: <http://www.rbrc.org>).
- () There is a composting program for the office—e.g., using “worm composters” (vermicomposters), or institutional composting—or volunteers take organic materials home for composting.

Lights and equipment

- () Turn off lights and equipment when not in use.
- () Ensure that the energy saving features of all electronic equipment are enabled.
- () In purchasing, give priority to ENERGY STAR[®] rated photocopiers and laser printers with duplex capability, and to plain-paper fax machines. (Thermal fax paper is not recyclable in many office paper recycling programs.)
- () Consider buying multi-use machines (i.e. printer/scanner/fax/copier in one)

Personal items

- () Avoid using disposable dishes, cutlery, straws, stir-sticks, napkins, etc. for coffee breaks or meals.
- () Use durable coffee mugs, and keep extras on hand for visitors.
- () Purchase coffee, cream, sugar etc. in bulk, and avoid single-serve containers.
- () Coffee filters are reusable cloth, steel, or unbleached recycled paper.
- () Encourage employees to turn off taps securely, and promptly report dripping taps or other plumbing leaks to maintenance personnel.

Travel

- () Minimize business travel through the use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing.
- () Encourage organizers to walk, bicycle, carpool, or use public transit to attend meetings and events whenever possible.
- () Schedule meetings to allow people to travel to and from the session using public transit, trains, and inter-city buses.

Comments:

CHECKLIST 6: GREEN PROCUREMENT

This checklist should be used in procuring goods and services for an event. The relative importance of the following questions will vary among product categories, but generally, you should select goods and services that meet a higher number of these criteria.

Products

Planning

- Is the product really necessary? Yes ___ No ___
- Have you checked surplus supplies to ensure that no comparable product is already on hand? Yes ___ No ___
- Have you investigated the feasibility of short-term rental, leasing or borrowing the product as an alternative to purchasing? Yes ___ No ___
- Is the quantity requested appropriate and sure to be used? Yes ___ No ___
- Will the product be used to the end of its useful life? Yes ___ No ___
- If not, can it be easily reused/recycled? Yes ___ No ___

Acquisition

- Is a complete list of the product's ingredients available on request? Yes ___ No ___
- Is the product free of WHMIS-controlled substances that would require special labelling, handling and/or waste disposal practices? Yes ___ No ___
- Will the product maintenance and upkeep be free of WHMIS-controlled products? Yes ___ No ___
- Is the product less polluting during its use than competing products (e.g., non-toxic, biodegradable)? Yes ___ No ___
- Can the manufacturer assure that the health of humans, other animals and plant life is not endangered in any way due to the manufacture, use and disposal of the product? Yes ___ No ___

Is the product more energy-efficient or water-efficient during use and operation than competing products? Yes ___ No ___

Is the product free from banned substances and resources that come from environmentally sensitive regions? Yes ___ No ___

Has the product been certified under a recognized eco-labelling program? Yes ___ No ___

Is the product designed to minimize waste? Yes ___ No ___

Does the product contain post-consumer recycled materials? Yes ___ No ___

Is the product available from a local supplier? Yes ___ No ___

Packaging

Can the product be purchased in bulk? Yes ___ No ___

Has the supplier/manufacturer tried to reduce the amount of packaging for the product? Yes ___ No ___

Does the product arrive from the supplier packaged in material(s) that are reused by either the end user or the supplier? Yes ___ No ___

Does the product arrive from the supplier packaged in material(s) that are non-hazardous and can be recycled within available recycling programs, or does the supplier take back the packaging for recycling? Yes ___ No ___

Does the packaging material(s) have post-consumer recycled content? Yes ___ No ___

Operation, Utilization and Maintenance

Is the product easy to maintain? Yes ___ No ___

Is it economical to repair? Yes ___ No ___

Allowing for possible future needs, can the product be easily upgraded? Yes ___ No ___

Are replacement parts recycled, recyclable or reconditionable? Yes ___ No ___

Have you ensured that components required for maintenance of the product are not environmentally damaging? Yes ___ No ___

Disposal

Is the product recyclable in the locale where it is to be used? Yes ___ No ___

If the product is made of several components, can it be dismantled so as to recycle parts? Yes ___ No ___

Can the product or its parts be reused, reallocated, sold or donated to others? Yes ___ No ___

Can the product or its parts be returned to the supplier for reuse, recycling or recovery? Yes ___ No ___

Can the product or its parts be contributed to a waste exchange program? Yes ___ No ___

Have you ensured that there are no special costs involved in disposing safely of the product or its component parts? Yes ___ No ___

Service Contractors

Service suppliers (e.g., translators, caterers, transport companies, etc.) who demonstrate their environmental commitment should be used wherever feasible and every effort should be made to ensure that these suppliers adhere to their environmental commitments.

Verifying Suppliers' Claims

In tendering for goods and services for the meeting, suppliers should be encouraged to indicate how many of the appropriate checklist items they can achieve. They should also be asked to document any additional costs associated with the green measures, if applicable.

- () The organization's practices respect all municipal, provincial/territorial and federal environmental legislation.
- () The organization or individual has never been convicted of an environmental offence.
- () The organization or individual makes all reasonable efforts to reduce waste.
- () The organization or individual uses certified recycled-content paper (preferably with a high post-consumer content and preferably not chlorine-bleached) and all printing is double-sided.
- () The organization has ISO 14001 environmental management system certification.
- () The organization or individual adheres to green printing principles/and or EcoLogo certification for printed materials (see Checklist 7: Communications).
- () Food service contractors adhere to requirements listed in Checklist 2, Food and Beverage Services.
- () Transportation contractors adhere to requirements in Checklist 3, Transportation.
- () Any hazardous materials used are properly handled, stored and disposed of.

Comments:

CHECKLIST 7: COMMUNICATIONS

Use this checklist for all communications and media relations for the meeting and related events.

Catering for the media centre should comply with Checklist 2, Food and Beverage Services. It is important that the media be presented with a consistent picture of environmentally appropriate practices, as they will be reporting on all aspects of the meeting and related activities.

Planning

- () Before the meeting, give the media information packages highlighting the meeting's green aspects. (This could include Checklist 5, Green Office Procedures, with some encouragement for the media to follow these procedures themselves.)
- () For large-scale meetings, inform visiting media and delegates of the environmental objectives and encourage their participation.
- () Encourage media representatives to use digital cameras (which avoid the need for photo-processing chemicals) and save or donate used audio tapes for reuse.
- () Limit the size, quantity and frequency of printed media and public relations materials. Use e-mail, CDs and other electronic media whenever possible.
- () Inform print shops for the media centre well in advance of the requirements for paper with recycled content (preferably with a high post-consumer content and preferably not chlorine-bleached) and vegetable-based inks.
- () Inform media relations officers and liaison officers of greening initiatives.
- () If the meeting has a Web site, notify the media and encourage them to use the site.
- () All printed materials for attendees, public relations and media should adhere to green printing principles:
 - () minimal paper use:
 - () brief documents
 - () paper-conserving layout
 - () double-sided printing

- () lightest-possible-weight paper
- () standard paper sizes
- () Accurately estimate quantities or “on-demand” printing
- () Use recyclable paper having high post-consumer recycled content; preferably not chlorine-bleached; not coated, glossy or laminated.
- () Use vegetable-based inks.
- () Limit use of colour (depending on the printing process, increasing the number of colours may increase energy consumption).
- () Avoid excessive ink coverage e.g., solid blocks of ink (which impedes de-inking).
- () Avoid “bleeds” (printing right to the edge of the paper).
- () Ensure that document covers are recyclable.
- () Avoid glued bindings where feasible.
- () Where appropriate, print a smaller number of separate versions for each language, rather than printing a larger number of much longer bilingual or multilingual versions.

At the Meeting

- () Collect used camera batteries for recycling or proper disposal. Store lithium batteries in individual plastic bags for recycling.
- () For equipment such as fax machines and copiers, use paper with a high post-consumer recycled-paper content exclusively.
- () Minimize photocopying.
- () Consider using a local area network (LAN) for inter-office memos. Distribute press releases through a LAN in the media centre rather than on paper.
- () Food services and other amenities for the media follow the appropriate checklists.

After the Meeting

- () Thank your staff and volunteers for their contribution to the greening effort.
- () Recognize greening efforts in post-event communications such as news releases, proceedings and reports.
- () Consider preparing a separate report or brochure about the meeting's green aspects (describing lessons learned and encouraging others) to be placed on the conference website or distributed electronically to participants.

Comments:

APPENDIX 2: GLOSSARY

Biodegradable: Matter capable of being broken down by bacteria into basic elements and compounds such as water and nutrients. Current scientific opinion indicates that biodegradability claims as an environmental benefit for products destined for a landfill site may not be supportable. Therefore, claims of biodegradability may only be appropriate for products normally disposed of through a waste-water system, providing the by-products of degradation and/or the products in question do not create synthetic, hazardous or toxic residues, and will not harm the sewage system or water body.

Double-sided printing: ensuring that both sides of a page are printed on.

Environmental footprint: A measure of the environmental cost of an activity or product. The footprint concept is based in the idea that for every item of material or energy consumption, a certain amount of land is required to provide the natural resource flows and accommodate waste from the activity or product. The larger the footprint of a meeting, the greater its environmental cost.

Green Meeting: A green meeting ensures that all aspect of an event, including its location, food services, transportation and the procurement of goods and services are approached with a pollution prevention perspective in mind in order to reduce its overall environmental impact.

Hazardous materials: Hazardous materials are substances that can cause injury, impairment of health, or death to living organisms, or which can damage the environment, because of characteristics such as toxicity, flammability, explosiveness, corrosiveness or infectiousness. Hazardous materials used in a facility can range from solvents and pesticides to acrylic floor polishes, furniture polish, carpet cleaners, oven cleaners, lubricating and motor oils, batteries, oil-based paints and pool chemicals. In Canada, guidelines on proper procedures for identifying and handling hazardous materials in the workplace are provided through the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). Hazardous wastes are defined under government regulations, which specify the appropriate procedures for handling, storage and disposal.

ISO 14001: a series of environmental management standards developed and published by the International Organization for Standardization http://searchdatacenter.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid80_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. The ISO 14000 standards are not designed to aid the enforcement of environmental laws and do not regulate the environmental activities of organizations. Adherence to these standards is voluntary.

Polystyrene: A type of plastic foam used in disposable food containers such as coffee cups, plates, fast food and egg cartons. Commonly called “Styrofoam” (a registered trade mark of Dow Chemical Canada).

Product life cycle: The cradle-to-grave impact of a product on the environment, including the extraction of resources, energy consumption and emissions into the air and water during processing, manufacturing, transporting, use and disposal. Opportunities for reduction, reuse and recycling are also considered when evaluating the environmental impact of the product.

Recycling: The process of collecting waste materials such as glass, rubber, steel, fine paper, aluminium and newspapers and manufacturing them into new products.

Recyclable: A claim of recyclability is reasonably justified if at least one third (1/3) of the population in the market area for that material has convenient access to appropriate recycling facilities through public recycling programs.

Recycled content: When indicating a level of recycled content in products, any reference to recycled content should exclude “in-house” or recovered materials that are routinely reprocessed on the premises as part of the manufacturing process and would never have been sent for disposal.

Recycled paper: Paper containing recycled paper fibres. The amount and type of recycled material can vary widely from product to product, supplier to supplier. The Environmental Choice Program has set guidelines for various paper products made from recycled content. The level of post-consumer and post-commercial wastes recycled varies from product to product.

Reduction: Reduction of materials and/or energy consumption, for example, using less paper through double-sided photocopying.

Reuse: The repeated use of products and waste materials in their original form.

Solid waste: Discarded non-hazardous solid materials, including industrial, institutional and residential wastes.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS): WHMIS was established by the cooperative efforts of the federal and provincial governments, industry and labour to provide guidelines for handling hazardous materials in the workplace.
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/occup-travail/whmis-simdut/index_e.html

Approved Definitions of Environmental Claims by Manufacturers and Suppliers¹

- Biodegradable:** Current scientific opinion indicates that degradability claims as an environmental benefit for products destined for a landfill site may not be supportable. Therefore, claims of biodegradability may only be appropriate for products normally disposed of through a waste-water system providing that the by-products of degradation and/or the products in question do not create synthetic, hazardous or toxic residues, and will not harm the sewage collection/treatment system or water body.
- Recyclable:** Claims of recyclability should not be used simply because the product is technically recyclable. Claims of recyclability are inappropriate when used with products or materials for which a recycling infrastructure does not exist. Therefore, a claim of recyclability is reasonably justified if at least one third (1/3) of the population in the market area for that material has convenient access to appropriate recycling facilities through departmental recycling programs.
- Recycled Content:** When indicating a level of recycled content in products, any reference to recycled content should exclude “in-house” or recovered materials that are routinely reprocessed on the premises as part of the manufacturing process and would never have been sent for disposal. *Only post-consumer materials may be claimed.*

¹ These definitions and their rationale can be found in *Guiding Principles for Environmental Labelling and Advertising*, Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada, August, 1992.

APPENDIX 4: ECO-LABELLING PROGRAMS

There are a growing number of eco-labelling programs around the world. The following programs may be particularly relevant for meeting and conference organizers in Canada.

Environmental Choice^M

<http://www.environmentalchoice.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.DspDivision&PageID=28&fkMainPage=0>

The Environmental Choice^M Program (ECP), Environment Canada's eco-labelling program, provides a market incentive to manufacturers and suppliers of environmentally preferable products and services, and thereby helps consumers identify products and services that are less harmful to the environment. The program applies to the following product categories:

- Appliances
- Automotive products and lubricants
- Building, grounds and construction
- Cleaning products
- Consumer products
- Electricity
- Equipment, machinery and automotive products
- Hotel accommodations
- Marine products
- Mutual funds
- Office products
- Paints and surface coatings
- Paper products and printing services
- Plastic products and plastic film
- Systems and technologies

ENERGY STAR[®]

<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/energystar/english/consumers/index.cfm>

ENERGY STAR[®] is an international symbol of energy efficiency. The program identifies products as the top high efficiency performer in their category. ENERGY STAR[®] in Canada is a voluntary arrangement between Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency and organizations that manufacture, sell or promote products that meet the ENERGY STAR levels of energy performance.

Products that are currently being labelled and promoted in Canada are:

- Appliances (refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers and bottled-water coolers);
- Residential heating and cooling equipment (residential boilers, gas furnaces, air-to-air heat pumps, central air-conditioning units, louvered room air conditioners with no reverse cycle, programmable thermostats and dehumidifiers);
- Office equipment (computers, monitors, printers and fax machines, copiers, scanners and multi-function devices, bottled water coolers);
- Consumer electronics (TVs, VCRs, TV-VCR combinations, audio equipment and DVD products);
- Windows and sliding glass doors
- Lighting and Signage
- Commercial and Industrial Products

Audubon Green Leaf™ Hotel Eco-Rating Program

<http://www.terrachoice.ca/hotelwebsite/indexcanada.htm>

This program assists hotels in implementing programs to increase their eco-efficiency and showcase their environmental commitment. It assigns ratings of one to five Green Leaves to an establishment based on a hotel's level of eco-efficiency.

TerraChoice Environmental Marketing and Audubon International have partnered to deliver the program in Canada.

TheGreenKey®

<http://www.green-key.org/>

TheGreenKey® is an international eco-label for the tourism sector. Each business awarded the Green Key fulfils a long list of criteria on technical issues, management, and communication. On-site checks are performed regularly on all Green Key businesses.

APPENDIX 5: FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

This appendix contains suggested readings, key contacts and useful Web links.

Additional information about Organizing Green Meetings

Various organizations have produced guidance material and other information about organizing green events. Here are some useful sources:

- The Convention Industry Council's Green Meetings Report: http://www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green_meetings_report.pdf.
The report contains a series of guidelines for event organizers and event suppliers, covering topics including accommodations, event venues, transportation, food & beverage providers, exhibition service providers, general office procedures & communications, and destination selection. The report was produced by a task force that included representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, professional meeting organizers, and hotel and tourism organizations.
- The on-line Green Meetings Tool of the Oceans Blue Foundation: www.bluegreenmeetings.org/
The Web site includes "10 Easy Tips" for greening a meeting. It applies to hosts, planners and suppliers and provides information on how to incorporate green principles into every aspect of conference and event planning.
- "It's Easy Being Green!" – a guide produced by the U.S. EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response: http://www.greenbiz.com/toolbox/reports_third.cfm?LinkAdvID=2392
The guide, intended for organizers of events, demonstrates the advantages to designing environmentally conscious events and provides an easy-to-follow checklist for integrating waste minimization into event planning. The guide is to encourage event planners to examine the ways in which waste can be eliminated, reduced, or recycled during the course of the meeting.
- The National Recycling Coalition's Green Meetings Policy: <http://www.nrc-recycle.org/resources/library/nrcgreenmtgsguide.pdf>
The document describes procedures developed and adopted by the Coalition in 2001 for its Annual Congress and Exposition and other events. Topics covered include printed materials, food and beverage functions, on-site facilities, hotels, educating attendees, and evaluation of recycling & waste prevention efforts.

- Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Conventions (CERC) Web site: <http://www.cerc04.org/>
CERC is a coalition of environmental, health, and commercial organizations that worked to minimize the local and global environmental footprint of the major 2004 U.S. national political conventions. Its publications, posted on the site, include a brief Green Event Planning Guide and a Guide to Using Local Foods.

Environmental Management Systems and Codes of Practice

Many organizations have an environmental management system (EMS) or code of practice to help them manage health and environment issues.

Perhaps the most comprehensive and best-known environmental codes of practice are the ISO 14000 series. This series, developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), includes detailed environmental policy and environmental management guidelines and standards applicable to organizations of all types and sizes. Member countries within the ISO are required to apply the approved standards consistently. In other words, environmental procedures under the standard should be applied the same way in Brazil for example as they are in Canada. Each country may develop interpretive documents to assist organizations to apply the standards within the country. In Canada, the Canadian Standards Association publishes the ISO 14000 series and has developed and published several interpretive documents (See Appendix 2).

Greening Government Web site

This Web site has information on the Government of Canada's effort to green its own operations and to share knowledge on sustainable development in government operations. The site is especially helpful for Government of Canada employees involved in key operations such as fleet management, real property management and Environmental Management Systems: <http://www.greeninggovernment.gc.ca/>