# PRACTICAL GUIDANCE AND SUGGESTED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

This section provides guidance and recommendations for reducing the environmental footprint of events across various aspects. These can be applied as relevant and include suggested KPIs to track progress over time.

# Type of event
# (in person, hybrid or online)

Procurement

Transportation and travel

Accommodation

Venue

Catering

Promotional and
printed materials

Awareness-raising

**Decide if the event should be in person, hybrid or online by considering the anticipated environmental impacts in relation to the objectives of the event, the time zones of participants and the costs.** If the focus is on information-sharing, showcasing or preparatory activities, an online or hybrid meeting may be possible. In other cases, an in-person meeting may be the better choice, particularly for activities such as brainstorming, strategic planning, decision-making, relationship-building and negotiations. Online formats are more cost- and time-efficient and have a lower environmental impact. They also give those not able to join in person an opportunity to make their voices heard. However, meetings involving sensitive or complex interpersonal dynamics and requiring focus from participants usually work better in person.

> Hosting a hybrid event is like organizing and facilitating two separate events, each requiring different resources, technologies and strategies. Make sure you plan and budget for both!

> If hosting an in-person or hybrid event, reduce and target essential in-person participation and promote a more inclusive online participation.

> Consider the pros and cons of having multiple local/regional events with virtual links between them. While it reduces air travel, it may also lead to less diverse interaction.

> Prior to the event or as part of registration, inform participants of the format (in person/online/hybrid) and let them know if all or parts of the proceedings will be recorded and made available.

## Possible KPIs:

### Quantitative

> Proportion of in-person and online participation over consecutive events/years (%).
> Number/percentage of attendees opting for virtual participation instead of travelling over consecutive events/years.
> Total estimated carbon emissions saved by hosting virtual or hybrid events instead of fully in-person meetings.

### Qualitative

> Measures taken to optimize participation, including limiting the number of in-person participants and strengthening online engagement capacity through better IT systems, training, etc.

# Type of event
## (in person, hybrid or online)

---

## Procurement

Transportation and travel

Accommodation

Venue

Catering

Promotional and
printed materials

Awareness-raising

> **Integrate environmental criteria across all procurement of services and products**, including accommodation, venues, local transport, catering and materials, to evaluate suppliers and/or products and services purchased. Request suppliers to show proof that such criteria are met wherever feasible.[VII]

> Where possible, **prioritize providers who can show how they are managing and improving their environmental performance and the environmental impact of the product/service they provide**.

> **Include environmental considerations in your tender and contractual documents** (e.g. clauses in your contracts, environmental stewardship in your code of conduct).[VIII]

## Possible KPIs:

### Quantitative

> Percentage of suppliers with sustainability criteria integrated into their contracts.

### Qualitative

> Examples of measures proposed by suppliers to reduce environmental impact.
> Willingness of suppliers to engage in discussions about environmental sustainability measures.
> Inclusion of environmental standards in the supplier code of conduct.

[VII] To further assist in greening procurement practices, the IFRC Green Logistics Guide provides useful instructions. As part of the procurement process, suppliers can also be asked to fill out the ICRC sustainability questionnaires to provide a better understanding of their products, services and sustainability practices.
[VIII] The ICRC Supplier Code of Conduct can be used as guidance.

# Type of event
# (in person, hybrid or online)

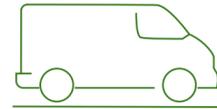# Procurement

---

# Transportation and travel

# Accommodation

# Venue

# Catering

# Promotional and
# printed materials

# Awareness-raising

> **Report on air travel emissions.** Air travel represents between 96% and 98% of the total emissions of international events. While it may be considered that responsibility for these emissions should be shared between the host and the participating organizations, it is nonetheless important to report on them.[IX] Air travel emissions can be estimated using home and destination locations and applying the ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator or the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator.

> **Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport** (e.g. rail), as appropriate, for all or part of travel to and from the event.

> With regard to local travel, **organize shared transport between the airport, hotels and the venue. Promote the use of public transport if appropriate**.

## Possible KPIs:

### Quantitative

> Total $CO_2$ emissions from participant air and other travel
> Reduction in travel-related emissions compared to previous years/events
> Distance travelled by participants and method of travel (e.g. air, rail, car).

### Qualitative

> Measures taken to reduce emissions related to transportation and travel, such as shared transport, promotion of sustainable transportation options and venue accessibility from the airport and promoted accommodations.

IX Duane *et al.*, 2021; Leochico *et al.*, 2021; Neugebauer *et al.*, 2020; Stiel & Teuteberg, 2015.

Type of event
(in person, hybrid or online)

Procurement

Transportation and travel

____

# Accommodation

Venue

Catering

Promotional and
printed materials

Awareness-raising

> **Promote accommodations that are close to the venue and that can demonstrate good environmental management and performance.** Service providers can be asked to present records of their environmental management systems and/or sustainability credentials (e.g. Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) or GSTC-Recognized Standards, green building certifications, Green Key, EarthCheck).

> **Privilege longer-term partnerships with accommodations that are currently seeking or willing to improve their environmental performance over time.** This includes their capacity to account for and reduce emissions and waste and to optimize consumption, including energy, electricity and water. See also recommendations for procurement.

> **Ask the promoted accommodations if they collect environmental data and if it can be shared** (could be included as a requirement in tender documents). Such data can include emissions, electricity use and mix, water use per room per night and waste generation and management.

## Possible KPIs:

**Quantitative**

> Percentage of participants in accommodation with sound environmental management systems and/or recognized environmental certification.
> Average $CO_2$ emissions, energy consumption and mix, and water use per room per night.
> Weight of waste generated (ideally disaggregated by type of waste, e.g. plastic, paper) and percentage reused, recycled, composted, landfilled and incinerated.
> Over consecutive events/years, amount/percentage of waste avoided and recovered/recycled/reused.

**Qualitative**

> Measures taken to promote pre-selected accommodations with environmental management systems and/or credentials.
> Updates on partnerships with selected accommodations to enable environmental performance to be improved and data to be collected, shared and reported.

Type of event
(in person, hybrid or online)

Procurement

Transportation and travel

Accommodation

## Venue

Catering

Promotional and
printed materials

Awareness-raising

> **Consider whether the event could be held on your own premises.**

> **Prioritize venues close to or easily accessible from the promoted accommodations, airports, train stations and/or the city centre.**

> **As with accommodation, prioritize venues that demonstrate good environmental management and performance, with preference** given to venues with internationally recognized environmental certification, such as ISO 20121:2024 or ISO 14001:2015.

> **Request waste collection and recycling stations and no single-use items.**

> **Request optimal heating/cooling and lighting options with energy-efficient provisions in place**, privileging the use of renewable energy sources.

> As with accommodation, **privilege longer-term partnerships with venues that are willing to work to improve their environmental performance over time**. This includes their capacity to account for and reduce emissions and waste and to optimize consumption, including electricity and water. See also recommendations for procurement.

> **Ask potential venues if they collect environmental performance data** and if it can be shared for reporting purposes (could be included as a requirement in tender documents).

## Possible KPIs:

### Quantitative

> Percentage of events held at venues with a solid environmental management system and/or recognized environmental accreditation.
> Total $CO_2$ emissions, energy consumption and mix, and water use for the whole event or per day.
> Weight of waste generated (ideally disaggregated by type of waste, e.g. plastic, paper) and percentage reused, recycled, composted, landfilled and incinerated.
> Over consecutive events/years, amount/percentage of waste avoided and recovered/recycled/reused.

### Qualitative

> Updates on partnerships with the selected venue(s) to enable environmental performance to be improved and data to be collected, shared and reported.
> Measures taken to optimize resource use and reduce waste (e.g. lower air-conditioning/heating, recycling stations, digital banners).

**Catering**

**CATERING**

> **Promote plant-based alternatives and minimize waste by carefully planning quantities based on expected demand.**

> **Request caterers to minimize packaging, avoiding single-use items and plastics**, and to implement appropriate waste management practices.

> **Request caterers and/or venues (above) to provide water fountains or jugs with glasses** instead of single-use bottles, plastic cups or plastic-coated paper cups.

> Where possible, **privilege caterers that have environmental management systems/certifications and/or use local, organic and seasonal ingredients and offer plant-based options**.

> **Partner with organizations that redistribute surplus food and/or repurpose food waste** (e.g. composting, energy production).

> **Ask potential caterers if they collect environmental performance data and if it can be shared for reporting purposes** (could be included as a requirement in tender documents).

**Possible KPIs:**

**Quantitative**

> Percentage of suppliers with sound environmental management systems and/or environmental certifications.
> Percentage of locally sourced, organic and seasonal ingredients.
> Percentage of plant-based meals served.
> Total food waste generated (kg or % of total food served).
> Percentage of food waste diverted from landfill (composted or donated).
> Reduction of packaging and single-use plastics over consecutive events (%).

**Qualitative**

> Measures taken that promote more environmentally sustainable catering.

Type of event
(in person, hybrid or online)

Procurement

Transportation and travel

Accommodation

Venue

Catering

___

**Promotional and
printed materials**

Awareness-raising

> **Avoid or reduce printed materials**, including banners. Promote the use of video displays.

> **Where printed or promotional materials are essential, avoid adding the event name and year to encourage reuse.**

> **Avoid or reduce promotional materials and gifts, including carrier bags, notepads and pens.** If such materials are necessary, promote long-term reusable, recycled and/or organic items.

> **Include sustainability criteria in procurement** (see the procurement section) and privilege printing services and products with environmental credentials (e.g. EU Ecolabel, Certified B Corporation, ISO 14001:2015).

**Possible KPIs:**

While reducing printed and promotional materials is essential for promoting pro-environmental behaviour and organizational values, their overall environmental impact is relatively minimal. Consequently, it may not be necessary to gather extensive quantitative data. Focusing on qualitative data is likely more effective.

**Qualitative**

> Ways that the event applied a "digital-first" approach (e.g. using apps, QR codes and digital signage instead of printed materials).
> Measures taken to avoid or reduce printed and promotional materials.

**Quantitative**

> Total weight of printed materials used per attendee (kg/person).
> Reduction in printed materials compared to previous events (%).
> Percentage of promotional items made from recycled, reusable or organic materials.

Type of event
(in person, hybrid or online)

Procurement

Transportation and travel

Accommodation

Venue

Catering

Promotional and
printed materials

**Awareness-raising**

Events are a good opportunity to promote organizational values, including environmental sustainability. Encourage leaders to acknowledge impacts, highlight steps taken to reduce them and promote more sustainable choices among participants.

> **Include communications that promote pro-environmental behaviour among participants, highlighting the personal benefits, ease and values of sustainable travel, accommodation and food options.**

> **Promote the environmental initiatives taken by your organization, including in relation to daily operations** (e.g. renewable energy for offices and warehouses, water fountains, less printing, the use of public transport) and programmes (e.g. climate change adaptation, nature-based solutions, restoration, carbon reduction activities), among others.

> **Include environmental sustainability questions in the post-event survey**, for instance:

- How aware were you of the measures taken to make the [event] more environmentally sustainable? *(Very aware – Not aware)*.

  Can you recall any such measures and explain what they were?

  OR

  How effective do you think the measures taken to reduce the environmental impact of the [event] were? (List your activities, being as specific as you can, e.g. online/hybrid event with reduced in-person participation, reducing or eliminating single-use plastics and event-specific materials, catering, recycling stations) *(Very effective – Not effective – I didn't notice)*.

- Will you change your own behaviour and personal choices based on measures taken for the [event]? *(Yes – No – Unsure)*.

  If yes, what measures will you take?

- Will you change any practices related to your organization's meetings, conferences and events based on measures taken for the [event]? *(Yes – No – Unsure)*.

  If yes, what measures will you take?

- Do you have any suggestions for improving the environmental aspects of future meetings, events and conferences? *(Open-ended response)*.

## Possible KPIs:

**Qualitative**

> Description of awareness-raising and communication activities undertaken (e.g. leadership welcome speech, estimated travel emissions and total emissions for the event displayed or shared with participants).
> Results from post-event survey.

15