

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: Green and sustainable organisation BPW Europe “Together For A Green and Sustainable World”

Proposed by: BPW Europe Green and Sustainable working group**Date:** 30th January 2024**Signature of the European Coordinator :**

This resolution is about how to act green and sustainable in the BPW organisation.
It includes the following issues:

- Green and sustainable mindset of every national BPW Europe Federation and Affiliated Clubs and its members
- How BPW should organise events?
- What the guidelines are for green office?
- Recommendations for travelling.

Text of resolution:

Green and Sustainable BPW EUROPE invites all interested parties to build awareness of this topic and to actively participate in the resolution “Together For A Green and Sustainable World”. In this Europe-wide movement, Green and Sustainable BPW Europe acts as an umbrella organisation for the national BPW Federations and Affiliated Clubs and provides a platform for regional Clubs to raise awareness, share knowledge, and together develop sustainable solutions for political, economic and civil life.

If adopted, this resolution should take effect :

Immediately after the European President’s Meeting in **March 2024**

What is the financial impact of your resolution?

There is no direct financial impact directly.



Green and sustainable mindset of every important to follow by every BPW Europe Federation and Affiliated Club and its members.

The world we live in is in constant change. At an ever increasing pace we need to keep up with technological innovation, replace outdated norms with sustainable ways of thinking while coping with a growing flood of information.

We women can only make a difference and shape a green and sustainable world if we take action. If we want women to lead sustainably tomorrow, we need women that are aware of the problems of Mother Earth today. Knowledge about this decides who will be a future leader and who won't.

Our goal is to shape sustainability from a women's perspective.

Therefore, we need to organise lectures, events, workshops, and company visits in the following sectors:

- Sustainability in Politics
- Sustainable Economy & Industries
- Sustainable Awareness & Lifestyle

In this resolution we **propose** that every region and BPW club will make its own guidelines and procedures on how to be part of saving nature and the world for the next generations and include:

- Responsible person in local board yearly, who is taking part of monthly Green and Sustainable working group meetings and is the Green Ambassador* in your local organisation.
- Organisation is taking part at least in organising 1 bigger sustainability event in a year to raise awareness on the topic. (F.e Earth day)
- Organisation is taking part and communicates the working group actions to the regional members and newcomers.

* *Green ambassador* is the person who is the member of the Green and Sustainable working group and is the bridge between the local organisation and working group to share the information, motivate club members to join in events, organising events and following the fulfilment of guidelines brought out below.

The actions, together with communication are giving to the organisation following benefits:

- Organisational growth - more young members
- Possibilities to write projects for getting foundation to raise awareness for both BPW and sustainability
- An active green entrepreneur women network
- Giving your part for saving the planet for future

Guidelines for Green and sustainable organisation

Sustainability must always consider the consequences for the future. This means bearing ecological, economic and social aspects in mind. Sustainability affects all levels of consideration and must be achieved locally, just as much as at the super-regional even global level. Everyone can contribute to this.



The most repeated definition of sustainability comes from the UN World Commission on Environment and Development:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainable development is more than environmental protection and climate action. It is the result of an approach that sees the environment, economy and social affairs as equal, mutually connected areas of life”.

How to organise sustainable events

A sustainable or ‘green’ event is one designed, organised and implemented in a way that minimises potential negative impacts and leaves a beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved.

Why sustainable events?

- They contribute to the global, national and local efforts for climate smart actions
- They support local economies, social entrepreneurship and social inclusion
- They raise awareness of the various stakeholder groups on sustainability, climate and they tackle environmental challenges
- They trigger innovations and changes
- They improve communication, support exchange and motivate employees
- They decrease costs through conserving energy, reducing waste, purchasing local products and lowering consumption
- They improve the positive reputation and image of the institution
- Each sustainable event is an opportunity to raise awareness about environmental issues and encourage sustainable behaviour and responsible choices

These guidelines aim to assist the organisers and planners of events (such as BPW conferences, meetings, summits etc.) in recognising the necessary demands made by sustainability.

Gearing the organisation and implementing events to sustainability requirements often turns out to be more cost-efficient. In particular, cost saving potential lies in the use and disposal of products.

The main recommendation for planning sustainable events is to be proper, timely and careful. Event planning is crucial for success. For an event to succeed, organisers must

plan it in advance, consider various issues and challenges, and engage in timely and informed communication with all stakeholders.

These guidelines aim to give organisers some ideas and support them in their work. The following fields are regarded as relevant areas of action for the environmentally sound and socially compatible organisation of conferences and events:

1. Mobility
2. Event venue and accommodation for participants
3. Energy and climate – resource efficiency
4. Procurement of products and services
5. Catering – food and beverages
6. Waste management
7. Water management
8. Gifts for guests
9. Communication



“also read https://green-business.ec.europa.eu/eco-management-and-audit-scheme-emas_en

1. Mobility – is a physical meeting/event necessary?

Virtual events are more flexible, environmentally friendly and cost-effective than the traditional ones. They can usually host more participants and engage more people. The risks from external circumstances are lower, and analysis and reporting easier.

When planning an event, organisers should always look for possibilities to reduce the need for physical meetings, thus decreasing the negative environmental impact of travel, accommodation and waste, and lowering the costs. Online presentations, live streaming of guest speakers, webinars, or other online training or workshops are less harmful to the environment. While planning, organisers should consider including some virtual segments.

Also read: <https://info.workcast.com/blog/virtual-events-vs-in-person-events>

Goals

- Reducing transport-induced environmental impacts
- Making event-related journeys climate-neutral

Key measures

- To examine alternatives to face-to-face meetings: Virtual meetings (video conferencing, teleconferencing or relays from individual participants)
- Selection of event venues which can be reached conveniently using public using public transport (rail, local public transport network)
- Information on the use of environmentally sound transport and making explicit reference to this in the invitations (Travel directions and links to railway and local transport network timetables).



- Use of low-energy consumption vehicles
- Organisation of a shuttle service or car-share scheme for travel between the hotel, conference venue and/or point of arrival/departure (railway station, airport)
- Footprint calculation per participant

2. Event venue and accommodation

“Event venue and accommodation” covers requirements for the conference building and hotels, as well as aspects of the planned side events. Questions of waste management, procurement, energy consumption, mobility, catering, water consumption and cost-effectiveness play an important role in the selection of hotels, conference buildings and the staging of events.

- Use hotels that are certified by an eco-labelling programme such as ASTM/APEX, [Green Key](#) or LEED
- Highlight any accommodation providers that subscribe to a specific industry or environment code of practice such as the Guidelines of Sustainable Tourism
- Ensure the hotel has a comprehensive environmental policy and that this policy is in line with your event’s goals
- Require that the hotels food service abide by the same criteria listed in the food and beverage section (see below)
- Ensure all rooms and meeting spaces have appropriate recycling and organic composting units
- The hotel should provide information in guests rooms about the green aspects of the hotel to inform and encourage guests’ participation
- The hotel should offer and coordinate group pick-up services for participants
- Guests should have the option of no second-day sheet and towel change to save laundry energy and water
- Central location and/or easy access by public transport or alternative transportation (bike, walking)
- Waste management in line with the 5Rs (refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle)
- Energy efficiency and energy savings
- IT support enabling virtual and distant participation

3. Energy and climate

The amount of energy and resources used to prepare and conduct an event is an important element in ensuring event sustainability. When selecting the event location, organisers should see if it is possible to use natural, open spaces. If inside areas are used, advantage should be given to the venues with more natural light inside their rooms and lobbies. If a venue with sustainable features is not available, it is recommended that organisers, in cooperation with the venue’s management, propose activities or interventions that may reduce electricity consumption. For example, There are simple and easily applicable energy efficiency measures that can be introduced for this purpose. These measures include moderate usage of air-conditioning, heating or



cooling equipment, use of energy-saving light bulbs, low-energy appliances and equipment, lighting timers, incorporated sleeping modes on equipment etc.

The use of natural climate systems is the most important factor in the use of light, as is organising events in spaces that do not require active cooling and heating.

- Plan for the equipment being used at your event to be energy efficient, including lighting, sound and stage equipment
- Promote the use of low energy booth lighting
- Ensure that equipment not being used is turned off and that all of the lights are not turned on during daylight hours in areas with natural lighting
- Set lighting to lower levels during move-in and move-out
- ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE! Encourage delegates and participants at the event to actively contribute to the resource savings. Make clear notes within the venue on how they can save electricity, water, energy...
- The sound and light pollution associated with the event must be kept to a minimum (e.g. fireworks must be replaced by light installations and the venue must not be left fully lit all night)

4. Policy of products and services

- Suggestion is to create an internal green policy for sourcing event materials
- Service suppliers that demonstrate their environmental commitment should be used wherever feasible
- Supplies that are certified by credible environmental standards should be a preference
- Use local suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of emissions created during transportation and importing
- Request that event related products are purchased in bulk, reducing the amount of packaging
- Give preference to products that are easily recyclable or reusable
- Request verification from suppliers supporting claims of sustainable products/services
- Find out if packaging can be reduced. If not, find out if the supplier can take the excess packaging away with them. Remember, the main aim is to reduce waste
- Avoid hazardous materials. However, if used, ensure hazardous materials are properly handled, stored and disposed of.

5. Catering - Food and beverage

“Catering” covers all aspects of the provision of meals and refreshments for participants, procurement (of foods) and the traffic generated by their transportation. In this field, special attention should be given to local, seasonal, organically sourced and fairly traded products. Minimising food waste should be one of event management goals. Also, event





organisers need to consider, plan and implement strategies for bio-waste treatment and food surplus management during the event.

Plan your food at the event carefully and resourcefully. Serve local, fresh and seasonal, avoid surpluses, and enforce composting.

DISPOSABLE VS. REUSABLE

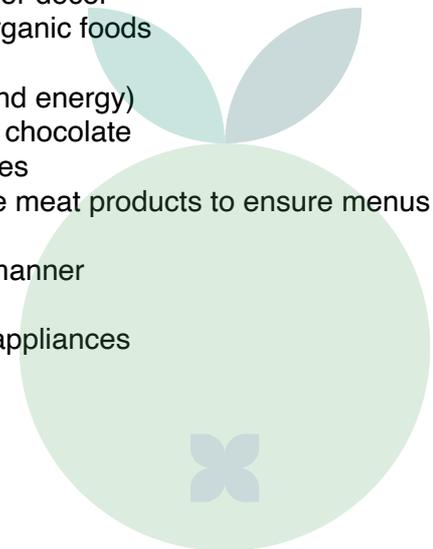
- Request the use of real dishes instead of disposables
- Provide attendees with mugs or reusable water bottles and ask them to use them each event day for coffee and water service
- Use cloth napkins and table cloths rather than disposables. If these are not available, ensure a compostable item is used
- Request that the venue use less, or no linens in your meeting rooms

RECYCLE & REDUCE

- Ensure appropriate recycling receptacles are in place and well identified, especially if using disposable products
- Encourage the elimination of bottles and all food packaging
- Ensure all packaging is recyclable, or encourage suppliers to use reusable containers to help reduce excess waste

MENU

- Meet and discuss your menu options with the Chef – ask about local sustainable options
- Ensure any claims of local or sustainable food options can be tracked back to the source
- As an option, all condiments (butter, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salad dressings, creamers, etc.) can be served in bulk containers rather than individual packages
- Ensure all food garnishes be edible and not simply used for décor
- Request your menus to be made up of local, in season organic foods
- Options to customise meal portions (i.e. smaller plates)
- Select foods that are less resource intensive (i.e. water and energy)
- Use fairly traded products such as coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate
- Use water coolers or jugs instead of individual water bottles
- Consider offering vegetarian and vegan options alongside meat products to ensure menus have alternative choices for guests
- Serve only seafood that was harvested in a responsible manner
- Feature locally made alcoholic beverages
- Encourage the use of water and energy efficient kitchen appliances
- Shift to more health-focused menus





FOOD WASTE

- Confirm the guaranteed number of event participants in order to eliminate excessive food waste Whenever possible, plan for leftover food to be donated to a local shelter or soup kitchen and/or turned into biofuel
- Offer healthy food options to attendees and re-design your food menu to reflect this
- Confirm that kitchen waste is being composted
- Track your food waste and attendees' eating patterns – enlist your venue partner to assist with conducting a food waste audit.

6. Waste management – ZERO waste event

“A zero-waste event is not accomplished by merely adding recycling and composting bins. The key to a zero-waste event is careful planning so that all materials used and discarded are reusable, recyclable or compostable.”

The zero-waste principle implies a society without waste, where all materials are constantly recycled, often changing their purpose as they move through the cycle. What was surplus in one part of a system becomes food or fuel in another part of the system. The zero-waste event approach aims to design waste out of the system, improving the management of material flows, so that all materials used at an event can keep being useful in the future.

Even if the zero-waste principle only became promoted more in recent years, it can still be hard to simply organise a zero-waste event. For example, there's no distribution of printed material or single-use items and therefore trashcans can be completely removed and replaced with recycling and composting containers.

However, organisers shouldn't miss any opportunity to promote and raise awareness at the event, and they should introduce every feasible measure and action that can reduce waste. For example, they can start by incorporating the 5Rs principle, and later, if there's an opportunity and interest for an advanced measure, they can make it so that only recyclable and compostable materials are distributed at the event.

PACKAGING

- Encourage exhibitors to reuse boxes for event set up and take down
- Enforce a pack-in/pack-out or zero waste policy to ensure exhibitors leave with everything they brought to the event

RECYCLING DURING THE EVENT

- Allow for exhibitors to have a positive recycling experience by providing a simple but effective process for recycling
- Provide each exhibitor with a desktop recycling bin and have volunteers empty them daily or have exhibitors empty them at a central recycling station
- Work with the venue and hotel to include all recycling stations on floor plans, clearly labelled so they can be easily located by exhibitors and attendees
- During set up and take down, provide exhibitors with a variety of recycling options, central recycling stations and maps of where they are located



EVENT CLOSING

- Develop a check-out procedure that requires exhibitors to interact with event staff to ensure that the exhibitor is leaving with everything they brought in
- Enforce fines for exhibitors that leave excess material, trash, waste or anything not properly discarded. It is easier for exhibitors not to litter
- Work with the on-site cleaning and waste removal service, to provide large recycling stations throughout the event that will not be in the way during move-out management

7. Water management

Organisers need to consider water consumption at the venue, in particular during the event. The participants should be encouraged to refill their water bottles. If there are no water-saving measures at the venue, organisers can, in cooperation with the event management, propose and introduce certain measures. In the Green Key certified buildings, strict criteria on water use are imposed. These include, for example, water consumption of dishwashers and toilets, types of water pipes, taps, and showers. The wastewater treatment should also be considered when possible.

8. Gifts for guests and promotional materials

The gifts presented during events should not end up being thrown away soon afterwards, their manufacture and delivery should cause as little environmental damage as possible and they should be socially sound. As a general rule, organisers should explore the possibility of dispensing altogether with gifts for guests.

GIFTS

- Suggest exhibitors focus on 'experiential' activities as giveaways, rather than waste creating giveaways
- Encourage exhibitors to select giveaways that are made from post-consumer materials and are recyclable or reusable items
- Request that exhibitors minimise giveaway packaging and create accountability guidelines for the recycling or discarding of any excess materials
- Source locally made, unique products made from communities with stories or give-back programs.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

- Provide exhibitors with guidelines for sustainable communications and marketing alternatives, such as digital signage and online communications
- Communicate the expected number of attendees in advance in order to minimize waste
- Suggest exhibitors avoid printing dates on exhibit materials, so they can be reused
- Encourage exhibitors to reduce the quantity of promotional materials they use and instead, direct attendees to their website to access electronic material
- Use technology to gather attendee information and distribute promotional materials



9. Communication and marketing

Before the event, organisers should carefully consider if the promotional materials are absolutely necessary and if they can be distributed online, partially or completely.

It is important that organisers apply the sustainability criteria in planning and designing promotional activities, materials, merchandising and other tools that will be used at the event. All distributed items should be aligned with the concept of sustainability, climate-smart and environment-friendly, generating minimal carbon footprint or positively impacting the socioeconomic aspects without harming the environment.

If it is not possible to have an event without any printed material, organisers should reassess the needs and reduce the number of printouts. For printing, organisers should use either recycled paper or paper produced from sustainably managed forests.

REDUCE

- Always use double sided copying and printing
- Minimise print material by using electronic and on-line advertising and promotion whenever possible
- Utilise social media forums to get your message out i.e. Facebook, X, Instagram
- Format material accordingly to minimize the amount of paper used

SELECTING THE RIGHT MATERIALS

- Use post-consumer recycled content paper whenever possible
- Print all material using Energy Star certified printers and with vegetable based inks
- Use mailing labels with water based adhesives
- Limit the use of paper that is difficult to recycle, such as: glossy paper, goldenrod and fluorescent

EVENT DAY

- Use biodegradable or recyclable badge holders and collect them for reuse at all registration, exhibit and exit areas
- Encourage online registration to reduce paper usage
- Encourage the use of reusable signage. Do not post-date specific information on signs so they can be reused year over year. Non reusable signs should be recyclable and made from recycled or biodegradable material
- Ask sponsors and any others who are providing materials to follow your guidelines
- Encourage speakers to provide electronic copies of handouts and any visual presentations to post on your website
- Use water-based, non-toxic markers on reusable white boards instead of traditional paper flip charts
- Consider organizing a paperless meeting by providing participants with laptop use



- Provide participants with a USB flash drive or access to Cloud based platforms with all of the conference material, to avoid printing
- As part of session introductions each day, remind participants of waste reduction and other environmental opportunities

REDUCE DIGITAL WASTE

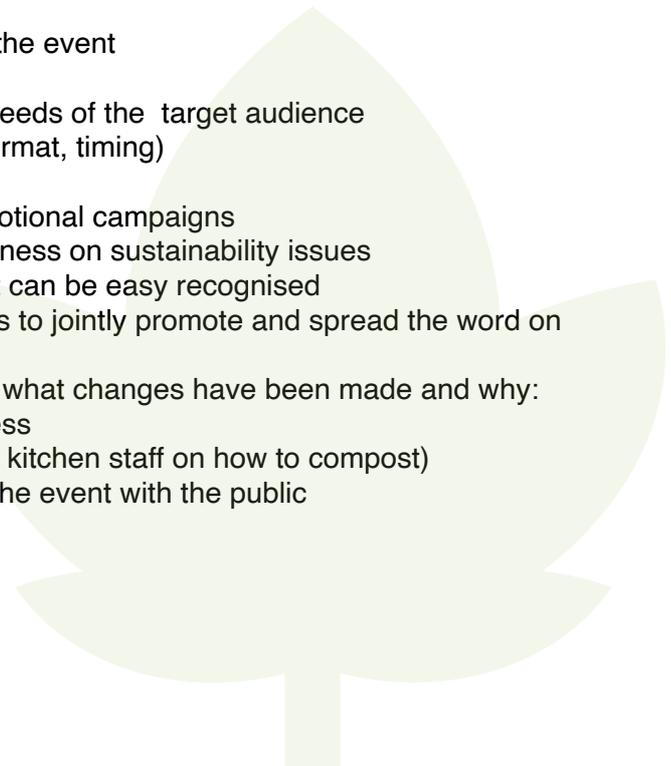
- Agree how long digital materials will be stored on cloud-based platforms
- Reduce the amount of digital waste and regularly delete outdated and unnecessary material

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a crucial part of promoting sustainability. When communicating with their stakeholders, organisers should always present clear arguments, reasons, and sustainability goals. Potential suppliers should be involved at the early stage, as to influence procurement decisions or introduce sustainable and green procurement procedures into the event organisation. This is a crucial element of awareness-raising and knowledge building, which can demonstrate how events can contribute to the sustainability goals.

Communication is crucial for the success of sustainable events, from planning and implementation, to reporting. In each phase of event management, it requires thoughtful messages adjusted to the needs of the audience and the event's purpose. Being the driver of change, the communication strategy for a sustainable event shouldn't aim only to pass the message, but also to contribute to education and persuasion, building awareness and understanding among the actors and partners involved.

- Communicate your sustainability
- Communicate the expected positive impacts of the event
- Develop short, simple and clear messages
- Use communication channels adequate to the needs of the target audience
- Adjust the message to the audience (content, format, timing)
- Be careful of greenwashing
- For the large/scale events use large scale promotional campaigns
- Use social media to additionally raise the awareness on sustainability issues
- Design a logo and introduce green symbols that can be easily recognised
- Cooperate with suppliers, sponsors and partners to jointly promote and spread the word on the event
- Explain to attendees and help them understand what changes have been made and why: include them as much as possible in the process
- Train the staff if necessary (cleaning services or kitchen staff on how to compost)
- Communicate the achievements and effects of the event with the public



Sustainability promotion

It's always recommended, and especially for large-scale events, to develop a communication plan that will lay out all the communication strategy elements, such as: goals, partners, target audience, key messages, means for transferring the message and a precise timeframe.

Organisers should be wary of greenwashing when promoting and communicating the “environmental friendliness” of the event.

Greenwashing describes the practice of using potentially deceptive information to present a product, an event or an event-related product as more environmentally responsible than it really is. This is bad practice and greenwashing can harm the event, hindering trust and negatively impacting the event promotion. The event attendees and the general public should always be properly and accurately informed.



Green office

Read also European green office handbook:

<https://www.sei.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/european-green-office-handbook.pdf>

Sustainable travel guidelines

- Avoid unnecessary travel
- Select the best mode of travel
- Coordinate missions and meetings
- Limit number of participants
- Use local staff
- Train better than road
- Road better than air
- Hybrid/fuel efficient cars better than SUV
- Economy air better than business air
- Business air better than first class air
- Modern aircrafts better than older ones*
- Direct flights better than the ones with stopovers



Read also: https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Sustainable_Travel_final.pdf