

Responding to the need for change.

FOREWORD

Within the board at European Ecological Federation (EEF), we felt it was important to integrate sustainability into the organisation of the 12th EEF Congress. This year we started with some good practical actions. We have created this report together with MCI Sustainability Services to inform our stakeholders and to share our learnings with the organizers of future conferences.

This is the first sustainability report for an EEF congress. It provides an evaluation of the sustainability of the event management system and the logistical processes followed. It presents a summary of the key material actions implemented and the environmental performance of the event. The document closes with a list of practical recommendations that the next EEF congress, or any other event, could follow to bring improved results and returns.

We hope that our actions inspire others both in Spain and beyond to do more to “walk the talk” and show that events can be aligned with our principles of sustainable development and find a balance between economic, social and environmental considerations

Profesor Dr. Fernando Valladares

*President of the Spanish
Association for Terrestrial Ecology (AEET)*

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Event background

The 12th EEF Congress was held at the Centro de Congresos y Exposiciones Lienzo Norte in Avila from the 25th to 29th September 2011. It was organised on behalf of EEF by the Spanish Association for Terrestrial Ecology (AEET) and the Portuguese Ecological Society (SPECO)

The event united over 1000 leading scientific minds from over 57 countries to discuss and advance the work of the scientific ecological community. The motto of the Congress was "Responding to Rapid Environmental Change", and over 36 sessions were dedicated

to how the ecological community is responding to global change on ecosystems, and how they are enabling solutions that help mitigate these negative impacts.

The event was organised in collaboration with MCI Madrid who served as the Professional Congress Organiser (PCO) to organize registration, logistics, accommodation, venue and financial management for the event





SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

Sustainability Vision

The 12th EEF Congress will demonstrate sustainability in action in Avila. It will be a documented industry reference on how to organise a sustainable Congress in Spain.

Sustainable Event Management Activities

- **Strategic Planning:** The planning team leaders met to identify a strategy for the sustainable performance of the event and created customized targets and Key Performance Indicators to help measure event success. The action plan was presented and approved by the EEF board.

- **Supplier Code of Conduct:** Inspired by the United Nations Global Compact, a Supplier Code of Conduct was prepared for the event.

The EEF Code of Conduct outlined clear expectations for supplier compliance to ethical, responsible and sustainable business practices. Event suppliers were asked to agree to the principles outlined in the EEF Code of Conduct with a signature of a senior manager in the organization...

- **Supplier Engagement:**

Through a series of interviews, key suppliers were evaluated regarding sustainable practices and were offered coaching and recommendations for improved results.

- **Sustainable Procurement:**

The EEF event management team made a series of decisions in the purchasing of material and services to reduce environmental impacts. Actions included procurement of more responsible options for merchandising, printing, catering as well as the selection of locally based suppliers and a logistics team.

- **On Site Audit:**

Independent verification of actions on the part of the hotel, venue, catering, and transportation suppliers followed by a documentation of results.

Sustainability Systems

This was the first EEF Congress to incorporate sustainability into the organisation of the event. To provide a structure (or system) for sustainable event organisation the organizers adopted the MCI Sustainable Event Management (SEM) framework. Continued use of the system will more easily allow EEF to migrate to the ISO20121 sustainable event management standards in the future.

Key Sustainability Issues

- Carbon Emissions resulting from delegate transport and local event operations
- Waste produced by the venue during the EEF 2011 congress
- Sustainability of food and beverage options
- Quality and event experience
- Lack of application of sustainable practices within local meetings industry

Performance to Sustainability Objectives

The following objectives were identified after reviewing event issues, risks and opportunities. In the right hand column of this chart, performance to these objectives is noted.

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Measure and reduce carbon emissions through procurement policies and transportation strategies (to include walking & train usage) | ACHIEVED |
| 2. | Offset a minimum of 50% of total CO ² emissions generated by the event | ACHIEVED.
100% of carbon emissions offset. |
| 3. | Reduce waste to landfill or incinerator: Divert through recycling, composting, reusing or donating a minimum of 50% of waste produced by the venue during the congress | ACHIEVED |
| 4. | Generate income for the local economy, by contracting a minimum of 60% of suppliers from the city and surrounding areas | ACHIEVED |
| 5. | Develop a gastronomic offering for the participants that highlights local culture and sustainable growing solutions by using a minimum of 50% from local providers (<160km) and by serving a minimum of 30% organic products | ACHIEVED |
| 6. | Raise awareness and commitment to improving sustainable business practices within the local meetings industry. | AWARENESS INCREASED AND CONTINUING |

HOW SUSTAINABLE WAS THE EVENT?

Environmental Sustainability

The MeetGreen® calculator was selected as the system to influence and evaluate the performance of selected planner and supplier actions. It analyses, measures and benchmarks over 160 facets of event policy, practices and outcomes across ten categories:

Audio Visual

Destination Selection

Accommodations

Meeting Venue

Transportation

Food & Beverage

Exhibition Production

Communications and Marketing

Onsite Office

Offsets

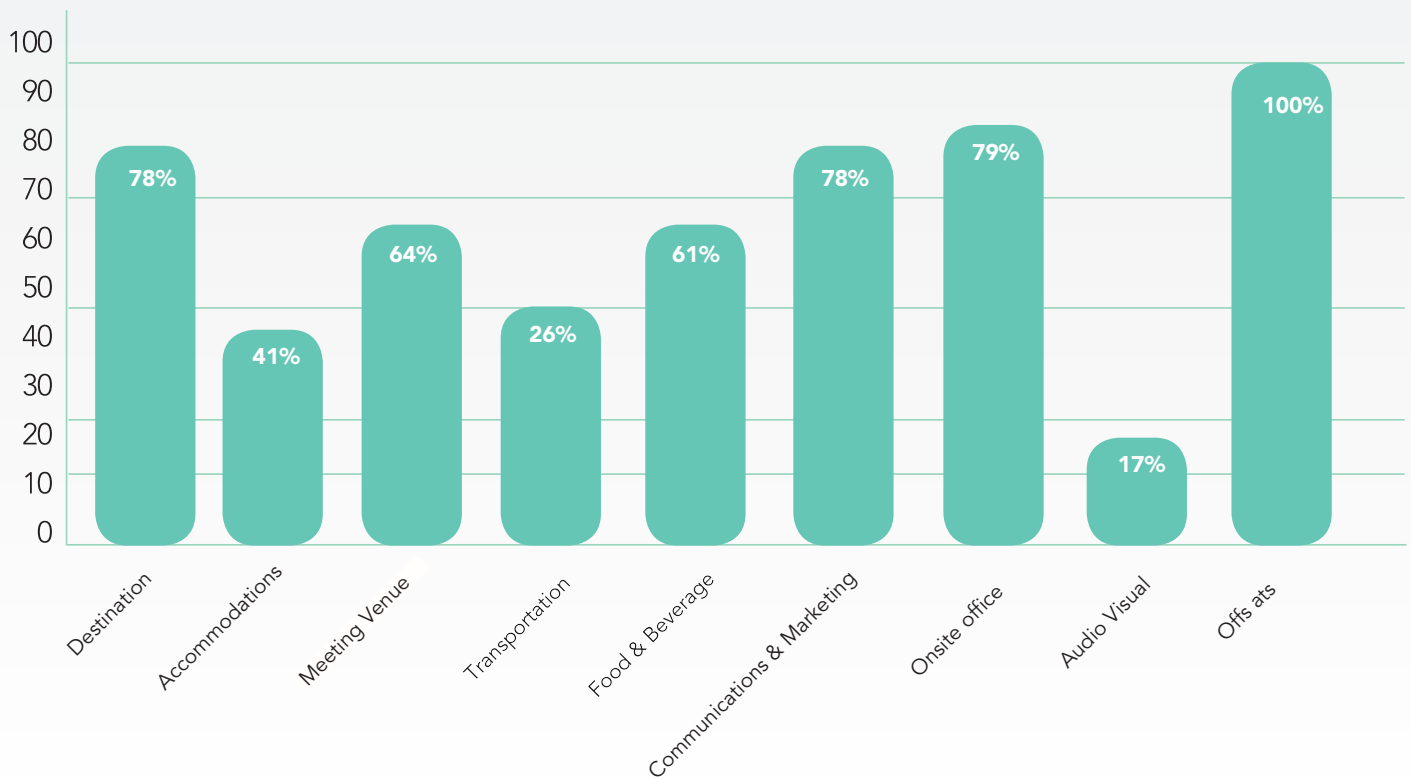
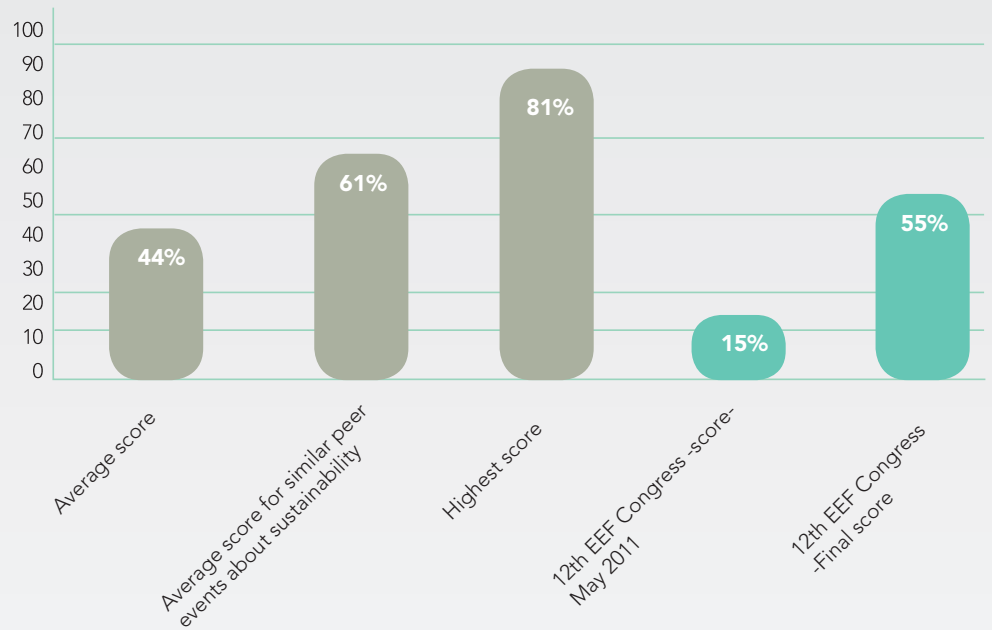
The MeetGreen® Calculator was developed by MeetGreen® and was reviewed by a five member technical advisory committee (with backgrounds in the environmental and sustainability industries. Since its launch in 2004. MeetGreen® has been updated to align with aspects of the British Standard (BS 8901) for Sustainable Events and APEX/ASTM Green Meetings and Events Standards.

MeetGreen® Evaluation

Using the MeetGreen® system the 12th EEF Congress earned a total score of "54%" (of a possible maximum of 100%) which correlates to a rating of "3" stars on the MeetGreen performance index. This score is above the average score of 44 but lower than the score for similar events. However this is a very good and commendable score considering that this was the first EEF Congress to consider sustainability in its organisation, and it was held in a city and venue new to the concept of sustainable events.

When initially measured, six months before the event EEF performance earned a rating of 15. The increase to 54% is recognition of the power of teamwork from MCI, EEF and the Venue. It demonstrates the results of making a common commitment to collaborate in support of sustainability. At the same time it clearly identifies areas for improved performance (see Recommendations for Improved Performance).

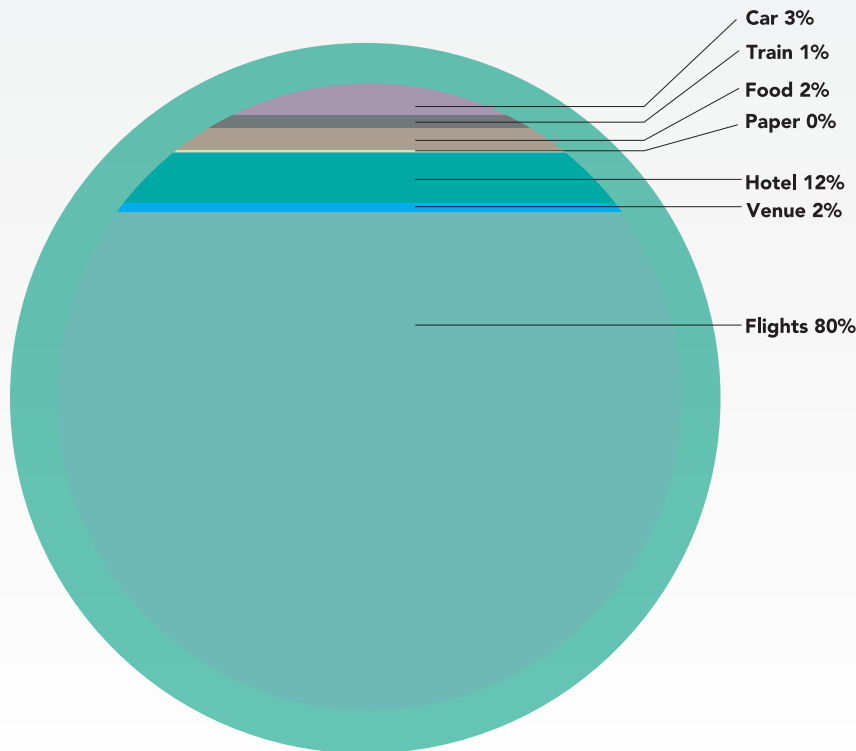
During the onsite audit, MCI Sustainability Services evaluated performance of the the areas in the MeetGreen™ calculator. The relative category scores can be observed in the following graph.



CARBON EMISSIONS FOOTPRINT

The EEF event produced a measurable total of 480 metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO²), or an average of 0.5 tons CO² per participant. In practical terms, this is equal to the total annual emissions of 68 Spanish Inhabitants (Source: UNFCC).

As expected, the biggest CO² emissions impact is from air transport with over 80% of total event-related emissions. This value is lower than average values for similar events. This is due to the selection of Avila as the destination, and the relatively high number of people who arrived by train. It is worth noting that long distance train transport produces just 10% (estimated) of the emissions of flying. For example the average emissions of a flight from Barcelona to Madrid is 140kg CO² while the emissions from the high speed Ave train it is only 14kg CO² (Source. RENFE).



KEY SUCCESSSES

Destination and venue selection

The selection of Avila and the Lienzo Norte Congress Centre increased the overall sustainability of the event. Avila is a small city with excellent bus and train connections to Madrid. All major hotels are within walking distance of the congress center, and so reduced the need for delegates to use taxis or public transport to reach the centre. This efficient infrastructure reduced carbon emissions.

Opened in 2009, the Lienzo Norte Congress Centre has sophisticated energy management, cooling and lighting systems. Combined with an architecture that favour natural lighting and unassisted air flow the building has very low carbon emissions, and ensures a pleasurable work atmosphere.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Prior to the event, the Congress Centre did not have a waste management system designed to divert waste from the landfill. MCI worked with the venue management

to create and introduce a customised waste management plan.

Waste was reduced by using china cups, glasses and water jugs as opposed to disposable products. Where disposable cups were used, a product made from recyclable paper was selected. Recycling bins were purchased and installed at strategic points throughout the centre: Student volunteers were assigned to improve recycling and the venue staff emptied and measured the amount of waste diverted from the landfill.

You can't manage what you don't measure

By the end of the EEF event, the Congress Centre staff were able to provide a full measurement of water, waste and energy consumption per day.

Over 940kg of waste was diverted from the landfill to give a commendable recycling/diversion rate of 83%.

12225 Kilowatt hours (KWh) of

electricity and gas were consumed during the six days of set up, event and break down at the venue. According to the Spanish Association for the Electricity Industry (UNESA), the average Spanish electricity consumption per capita is 5721KWh.

Printing

All EEF and MCI documents were printed on recycled paper. Through the increased use of the website and giving all participants a USB flash card, paper usage for delegate programs and handouts was reduced to only 350kg of paper.

Waste Diversion

Metal and Plastic Recycled
570 Kg, 50%

Glass Recycled 35 Kg, 3%

Organic/Landfill 190 Kg, 17%

Paper Recycled 338 Kg, 30%



REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE REPORT

BY MANAGING THE RECYCLING PROCESSES
OVER **83%** OF THE WASTE WAS DIVERTED
FROM THE LANDFILL

F.L.O.S.S.: Strategy for catering

The event organisers worked with the chefs and catering management to create menus aligned with the concept of "F.L.O.S.S.": Fresh, local, organic, seasonal and sustainable. Over 60% of all products were sourced locally (from a region no farther than 250 km from the venue), 30% of which was organic. To raise delegate awareness of locally grown products, dishes on the buffet were labelled with information indicating their origins. These sustainable initiatives represented no additional cost to the organizer.

FOCUS ON FLOSS

**Fresh,
local,
organic,
seasonal,
sustainable.**

Over 60% of all products sourced locally

30% was organic

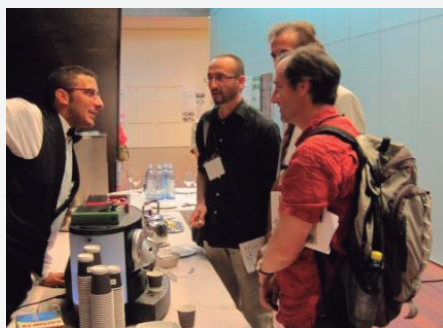
Food had an origin and personally

No additional cost

KEY LEARNINGS

Attention to detail

During the introductory plenary speech, organisers explained their commitment to creating a sustainable event. Following this, delegates were presented with the first coffee break. Catering staff had not been informed that plastic water bottles should be eliminated. The situation was immediately rectified by their replacement with water jugs and glass water bottles



Proactive Sourcing

The congress bags selected were not made from sustainable materials. Earlier focus on sourcing could have enabled a better choice of bags at a parity price point. Alternatively, the provision of congress bags could have been eliminated.

Engaging Sponsors

Care should be taken to discourage sponsors who seek to include their material in the congress bags or display their marketing collateral. Often this material is of little use to delegate, is not printed on recycled paper and is simply thrown away by participants. This system offers little value to delegates or sponsors. New technological innovations, such as smartphone apps, often improve the delegate experience, reduce environmental impacts and deliver better sponsorship ROI.



Engage Delegates

Over 466 posters were printed by delegates and were positioned throughout the congress centre. The majority of these posters were printed on normal paper using chemical inks. In the future, EEF could provide sustainable printing recommendations to poster contributors, to guide them to print responsibly.

Train and Communicate

With a waste diversion rate of 83% the EEF congress was a good example of the results possible from a well organised waste management plan.

However, in the pre-event phase of the EEF event, the catering teams had not been sufficiently trained and waste separation was imperfect. Care should be taken to properly train teams in the weeks before an event. Training increases performance in the busy hours of the event. In aBy

Additionally, the venue could increase performance by working with the city authorities to implement recycling of organic material.

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

COMPENSATING EMISSIONS

To raise awareness and encourage greater engagement in sustainable practices, the organisers communicated the sustainability initiatives via web, newsletter, onsite posters and the program. Additionally Guy Bigwood, Past-President of the Green Meeting Industry Council, was invited by EEF to present the sustainability initiatives and the community project during the opening plenary presentation. Guy encouraged delegates to support the event greening, offset their emissions and to help EEF to choose an event community project. Delegates were asked to deposit a red card from their congress pack into a voting box and thus express their preference for one of four community initiatives. The project with the most votes was the Madre de Dios initiative, which serves to protect vast areas of the Peruvian Amazon from illegal logging. The project has been validated according to the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance, which guaranteed that the project delivered measurable carbon sequestration together with social and environmental value to the local community. The project was awarded the maximum status of "gold" within the CCB Standard and is managed to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards.

Post event 100% of the event carbon emissions or 480 metric tonnes of carbon credits were invested into the project via the ECODES Non-governmental organisation. Delegate donations accounted for 55% of the offsetting investment with EEF covering the remaining 45%.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

The following recommendations are provided to help the next EEF congress, currently scheduled to be held at the Excel - exhibition and conference centre in London.

1. Consider using the ISO20121 Sustainable Event Management System in the planning of the congress. External certification will increase performance.

2. Start early: Discussing sustainability from the first conversations with suppliers and partners will increase results.

3. Include sustainability expectations when sourcing and contracting with suppliers such as the PCO, Venue, Exhibition and Catering companies

4. Create a virtual sustainability team consisting of key suppliers to the organisation of future events

5. Include a requirement for measurement in supplier contracts. It is difficult to get environmental data from suppliers after an event. Make this a condition of the contract.

6. Include a community service event

7. Include a "sustainability donation" in the registration fee. An 'opt in' donation is less effective than an 'opt out' option when offering delegates a chance to donate.

8. Educate exhibitors about sustainable practices and recognise good performance with the introduction of a 'Sustainable Stand' award. Pay particular attention to the number of posters.



PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

This report was developed using the Global Reporting Initiatives G3.1 Framework. As a summary report it does not fully comply with the pre-determined GRI reporting levels, however the Guidelines improve the reporting processes, increase data integrity and enhance transparency. For more information on the GRI Event Organisers Sector Supplement visit: <http://www.globalreporting.org/ReportingFramework/SectorSupplements/Events/>

EC6

Policy, practices, and proportion of spending on locally-based suppliers at significant locations of operation. **Page 6.**

EN7

Initiatives to reduce indirect energy consumption and reductions achieved. **Page 11.**

EN8

Total water withdrawal by source, conservation and improvement initiatives and results. **90,8 m3.**

EN18

Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reductions achieved. **Page 10.**

EN16

Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight in tons of CO₂

- Train: 2,71
- Car: 16,50
- Flights: 382,36
- Venue: 7,50
- Hotel: 60
- Paper: 0,63
- Food: 10,61
- TOTAL: 480,41

Carbon Emissions per Participant-tons CO₂ : 0,49 **Page 10.**

EN22

Total weight of waste by type and disposal method, and including initiatives to manage waste and their results in kg.

- Paper Recycled: 338
 - Glass Recycled: 35
 - Metal and Plastic Recycled: 570
 - Organic-Landfill: 190
 - TOTAL: 1133
- Page 11.**

EN28

Monetary value of significant fines and total number of non-monetary sanctions for non-compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

No fines incurred

EO9

Type and sustainability performance of sourcing initiatives.

Page 6.

EO11

Number, type and impact of sustainability initiatives designed to raise awareness and impact behavior change.

Page 15.

EO12

Nature and extent of knowledge transfer of best practice and lessons learned.

Page 14 and 16 .

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Authors

This report was prepared by Guy Bigwood and Michael Luehrs of MCI Sustainability Services. MCI is proud to be seen as industry thought leaders in sustainable event management and consulting. MCI is actively engaged in efforts to change the way the world meets through the promotion of smart, sustainable business solutions.

MCI is the selected Professional Congress Organizer and Sustainability Guide for some of the world's leading events on sustainable development and the renewable energy sectors, including: The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15), The World Business Summit on Climate Change, the International Climate Change Conference, the GRI Global Conference on Sustainability and Transparency, and the United Nations Global Compact Leaders Summit.

Contributors

These sustainability efforts presented in this report would not have been possible without the valuable input, contribution and support of Pilar Ramos and Andrea Gonzalez from MCI, Fernando Valladares and Leyre Jiménez-Eguizábal from the organising committee at EEF and the committed team at the Lienzo Norte Congress Centre including Felipe Garcia, Gonzalo Súnico and the amazing head of catering – Benjamin.

Contact

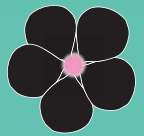
In the interest of constant improvement, all ideas and comments about this report are welcome. Please address comments to Guy Bigwood, MCI Group Sustainability Director - Guy.bigwood@mci-group.com

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