EVENT GREENING

Chapter Four

LEAVING A **POSITIVE LEGACY**

4.1 Introduction

Event greening is the process of incorporating socially and environmentally responsible decision making into the planning, organisation and implementation of, and participation in, an event irrespective of scale.

It requires the inclusion of sustainable development principles and practices into all levels of event organisation, and aims to ensure that an event is hosted in a responsible manner. It represents the total package of interventions at an event, and needs to be done in an integrated manner. Event greening should start at the inception of the project, and should involve all the key role players, such as clients, organisers, venues, subcontractors and suppliers.

Event greening is taking its place in the planning and implementation of major events being co-ordinated and hosted by different spheres of government in South Africa. The uptake of event greening within the events industry internationally and within South Africa is also an emerging trend and is tantamount to the meaningful achievement of enduring event greening.

Event greening is also strongly coupled with the concept of creating a positive legacy, ensuring that the massive investments made for major events have long-term benefits, which are vital for a country that has compelling and competing development needs and priorities.

4.2 Greening Approach

Greening requires the incorporation and application of environmental principles and best practice into the planning and execution of an event.

It requires consideration of the environmental impacts of decisions taken and investments made, and ensuring that the negative environmental impacts of these decisions are minimised. In so doing, natural resources are used more efficiently and conserved, while less pollution is produced. Furthermore, it seeks to ensure that the impacts of greening are beneficial from both a social and economic point of view through community involvement and local economic development.

Event greening aims to achieve these three objectives simultaneously through responsible event management where the overarching principle is sustainability. To complement an green event approach, planning also needs to factor in the following three areas:

- Leaving a positive legacy;
- Education and awareness (which is addressed separately in Chapter 7); and
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

4.2.1 A Greening Framework

A framework for greening is presented in the following table informed by the National Greening 2010 Framework, which guided the development of both a National Greening 2010 programme and individual Host City Greening programmes for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™.

The terms 'event greening' and 'green' refer to responsible, sustainable decision-making and implementation, taking note of environmental, social and economic factors.

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Focus Areas	Application	Objectives
Biodiversity	Maximise protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological systems.	• Maximise protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological systems. • Maximise recreation and tourism experiences associated with biodiversity.
Energy	Minimise the use of coal-derived energy.	• Minimise consumption of energy. • Improve efficiency of use. • Maximise use of renewable energy.
Tourism	Maximise responsible tourism offerings in South Africa.	• Maximise energy and water use efficiency in hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs. • Minimise waste generation and maximise waste sorting, re-use and recycling in hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs.
Transport	Maximise the availability, accessibility and efficiency of public transport systems.	• Minimise use of private vehicles to access venues. • Maximise availability, accessibility and efficiency of public transport systems. • Reduce carbon emissions from public transport systems. • Maximise access for pedestrians and cyclists, and provide appropriate surfacing and lighting.
Waste	Application of the waste management hierarchy to events.	• Minimise waste generation. • Maximise waste sorting, re-use & recycling.
Water	Maximise efficiency in water usage and protection of natural resources.	• Minimise consumption of water. • Improve conservation of water. • Maximise rainwater capture and grey water recycling. • Protect wetlands. • Minimise pollution of water resources.

Cross-cutting Areas	Application	Objectives
Carbon footprint	Minimise the carbon emissions associated with the event.	• Minimise carbon emissions. • Establish carbon offset programmes for carbon emissions that cannot be eliminated.
Communications and Awareness	Maximise the showcasing and awareness raising of greening initiatives to the public.	• Sensitisation of vendors and service providers to greening objectives and expectations. • Outreach to participants and affected residents about the environmental and social impacts and desired behaviour change. • Showcasing environmental best practice including water-wise technologies, energy efficient appliances, and waste recycling initiatives. • Regular communications to all stakeholders.
Job creation & Skills Development	Maximise the number of jobs and skills development opportunities	• Maximise job creation and skills development. • Link to the Expanded Public Works Programme.
Procurement	Protection of natural resources.	• Maximise use of local products and local enterprises.

The application of this framework takes place through the identification of appropriate greening practices. A practice is the actual application or use of an idea such as implementing energy efficiency or waste minimisation. Each of these practices are outlined below in more detail and examples of implementation. They can be implemented at large or small events and although they need to make financial sense, they are generally common sense.

4.2.2 High impact areas

The event greening practices can be applied to almost any business scenario, however, the high impact areas for greening the events industry include the following:

Venues and accommodation

When selecting event venues or accommodation, which usually takes part right at the start of an event, event greening requirements and practices should be taken into consideration. These venues should have an environmental policy and implementation programme in place. Accommodation should be chosen close to conference venues to reduce the need for transport.

Food and beverages

Although not an easy subject, it is important to consider the food being served at events – as an example where fish is served it should comply with the Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) guide. Leftover food is often wasted, so portions should be well planned. The use of disposable cups and plates should be avoided where possible.

Exhibitions

Although exhibitions are important for promoting products and services, they are usually associated with large amounts of waste and are high-energy usage. This is a good opportunity to make a big impact through simple changes.

Marketing, Public Relations and Production

Many events are held annually, yet their marketing materials are re-done every year rather than designed in such a way that they can be re-used. Production of goods specifically for events are also a high impact area because it provides an opportunity for influencing items specifically relating to the event so that they are locally manufactured from natural products and durable.

Transport

The biggest impact relating to events is usually the transport, including flights, buses, cars, etc. If this can be reduced, it will have a positive impact on the event's carbon footprint. Simple ways are to ensure that the venue and accommodation are within walking distance or close to public transport.

The most important aspect that organisers of events have to remember is that greening has to be implemented from the very initial planning stages and preferably incorporated in the request for tenders.

4.2.3 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

To establish with any veracity whether the environmental performance of an event has been positive and therefore whether greening practices applied have been effective or not, it is necessary to set up a monitoring and evaluation framework with objectives, targets and indicators. The monitoring framework can track every greening practice described above and monitoring should be initiated from the outset. Where a venue is specifically being constructed, then monitoring should begin from the point of construction. Where the venue is already established, monitoring can start from the point of on-site preparations.

Monitoring requires both dedicated human resources as well as the required infrastructure (such as meters and sub-meters to measure different types of water and energy consumption) to track usage. After the event, the quantities need to be tallied and the required calculations performed to establish whether the set targets were achieved or not. An official report needs to be prepared to present the results of the monitoring and evaluation of greening practices and identified areas of improvement for future greener events. If an event spans a longer time-frame, then reporting should happen at agreed intervals. There is also scope to measure ongoing water and energy usage, waste minimisation levels and carbon emissions at venues, not specifically related to any event, to enhancing greening practices at these venues. An example of a monitoring tool can be found in ***Appendix D.***

4.2.4 Outcomes and leaving a Positive Legacy

If an event is hosted in a 'green' or 'sustainable' manner, then some of the anticipated outcomes could be as follows:

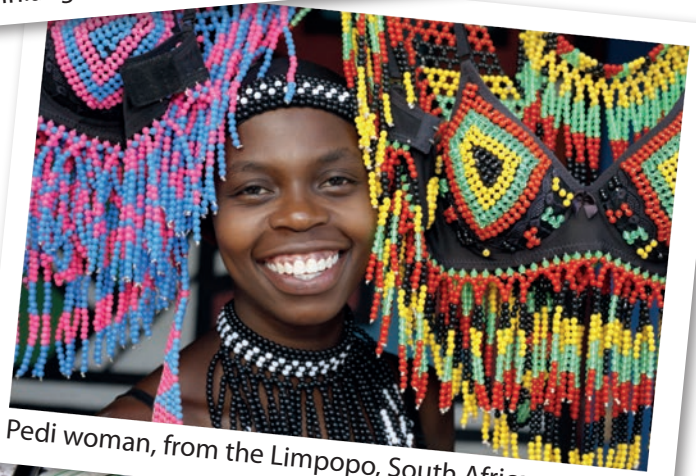
- To ensure that the aims and objectives are clearly defined and measured;
- To present opportunities for more efficient planning and use of equipment and infrastructure;
- To improve the resource efficiency of the entire event and supply chain management;
- To apply the principles of eco-procurement of goods and services;
- To improve sustainable performance within an available budget;
- To increase economic, social and environmental benefits (triple bottom-line);
- To reduce negative environmental impacts, such as carbon emissions, waste to landfill, and the effect on biodiversity;
- To protect the local biodiversity, water and soil resources;
- To enhance the economic impact, such as local investment and long-term viability;
- To reduce the negative impact on local inhabitants;
- To strengthen the social impact, such as community involvement and fair employment; and
- To raise awareness of sustainability issues among all role players.

One of the most powerful motivations for hosting a green event is the longer term positive spin-offs once the event has taken place. Thus an indispensible part of the planning process for an event that is to have significant social, economic and environmental impacts, is its legacy and how to ensure it is a positive one.

A positive legacy arising from green events includes:

- Sustained awareness of the role of the environment and its contribution to our wellbeing and visa versa;
- Sustained employment and community development after the event;
- Trade and direct foreign investment as a result of exposure to the area;
- Return visits to a country or region as a result of exposure from the event; and
- Investment in infrastructure as a result of the event and in particular, in infrastructure that will be of benefit to people in lower income groups and that will assist in reducing the country's carbon footprint.

Pier in Umhlanga Rocks



Pedi woman, from the Limpopo, South Africa

Landscape Architect

4.3 Carbon Emissions and Climate Change

The impact of anthropogenic (human induced) carbon emissions on our natural environment is undeniable and there is sufficient proof to link this to climate change and global warming. The events industry has an important role to play in reducing carbon emissions by establishing the carbon footprint of an event footprint.

Taking responsibility for human induced climate change is an expression of the recognition that human activities are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, which are attributed to climate change and the devastating effects thereof. The management of carbon emissions are a cross-cutting theme with implications for waste management, sustainable energy, transport, tourism, biodiversity and water for both mitigation and adaptation practices. Each of these areas are discussed in separate sections and the underlying objective is to manage carbon emissions and the impacts on climate change.

However, two major contributors to climate change are coal-produced electricity and transportation and events are carbon-intensive because of their dependence on electricity and transportation. Nearly three-quarters of electricity[1] in South Africa is produced from coal and any event that requires electricity generated from coal will have a large carbon footprint. At an international level, 17% of carbon emissions are due to transport[2]. Similarly, when the energy and transport requirements are efficient, a positive impact on emission reductions is experienced.

The goal is to host 'climate neutral' events whereby any carbon emissions created are offset. This goal can be mainly achieved in two ways:

- By reducing carbon emissions at source both at the venue and supporting tourism infrastructure through interventions such as energy efficient installations and use of renewable sources of energy;
- By reducing the amount of travel that is required; and
- Through offsetting the remaining emissions by investing in carbon reduction projects elsewhere.

The three most significant focal areas of energy efficiency and carbon neutrality in the staging of an event are thus:

- The venue and associated infrastructure;
- Tourism and associated infrastructure; and
- Transportation.

Even when excluding the 65% contribution to emissions from international air travel, the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ was predicted to have a footprint over eight times that of its 2006 counterpart.