



HEASC

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# Sustainable Meetings and Conferences Report

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## Overview

There are many resources—guides, websites, online tools, consulting services—available for making meetings and conferences more sustainable. A Google search of “green meetings and conferences” returns over 10 pages of results. And while it’s wonderful that there is so much out there on the topic, trying to find the most accurate and useful resources is no easy task.

The purpose of this report is two-fold: 1) to provide you with an up-to-date account of what is occurring in the green meeting industry and; 2) to give you useful resources to guide you in selecting the best resources, services and venues for your meetings and conferences. In conducting this research, I examined websites, reviewed reports and guidelines and spoke with several people who are leaders in the sustainable meetings and conferences field.

While performing the research, a handful of names and organizations came up numerous times. These are the organizations that are included under the “Organizations Involved in Sustainable Meetings” section of this report. Each are a bit different in what they offer—some focus on going for the “low-hanging fruit”—others are more comprehensive in their approach. And others cover only some aspects of conferences (e.g., hotel venues). In Appendix A, the primary resources for each of these organizations are listed along with codes that indicate what aspect of conferences it addresses. I’ve also indicated whether it is at a beginner, intermediate or advanced level, although this designation is only approximate since the resources vary widely in what aspects of meetings they address.

In addition, this report includes a discussion on several green meeting or green hotel certifications. This seems to be the direction in which green meeting planners and consultants are heading. Although attempts have been made over the years to create a standard, no one standard has been universally adopted. But some headway is being made, especially through the efforts of the *Green Meeting Industry Council*.

It’s clear that each of the HEASC association members are different in what they are able to do in regard to making their meetings more sustainable—some of you have made major steps in this direction while others are just starting. Use this report to help select tools and guides that are achievable and appropriate for your association.

And as always, we encourage all of you to apply the lens of sustainability to all aspects of your meetings. As a reminder, here are the four system conditions as defined by The Natural Step:

*In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing:*

1. concentrations of substances extracted from the earth’s crust (e.g., heavy metals)
2. concentrations of substances produced by society (e.g., DDT, PCBs)
3. degradation by physical means (sprawl, destruction of natural space, water pollution)

*and in that society...*

4. people are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacity to meet their needs

In the realm of sustainable meetings, this translates to: lessening the environmental impact of your conference by reducing the use of materials and resources—especially those that can’t be recycled or are produced in an unsustainable manner; minimizing the use of energy; recycling whatever you can; and ensuring that the products and services that you use are from sources where employees are treated fairly and paid a decent wage.

## Organizations Involved in Sustainable Meetings

Below are summaries of what some of the major players are doing in the green meetings field and the resources that they have developed. These organizations were selected because they appeared frequently while doing this research on various websites and in reports. They were also selected for the resources and services that they provide or their involvement in the *Green Meetings Task Force* (see [Convention Industry Council](#) below). To go directly to the section in this report on any particular organization, click on the hyperlink below:

1. [Green Meeting Industry Council \(GMIC\)](#)
2. [Convention Industry Council \(CIC\) – Green Meetings](#)
3. [Meeting Strategies Worldwide](#)
4. [CERES Green Hotel Initiative](#)
5. [National Recycling Coalition](#)
6. [US EPA – Green Meetings](#)
7. [Green Hotels Association](#)

### 1. [Green Meeting Industry Council \(GMIC\)](#)

The *Green Meeting Industry Council* (GMIC) is dedicated to making the meeting industry more sustainable by increasing the “environmental performance, social values and business impact of events and meetings.” It is a membership-based organization although its website contains many resources that are available to anyone. (See <http://www.greenmeetings.info/becoming.htm> for information on becoming a member, which will entitle you to additional resources and recognition.)

GMIC envisions that by 2020, a green meeting will be an activity that:

- Has zero net environmental effect;
- Achieves full integration of environmental responsibility into return on investment analysis for the global meetings industry;
- Is an accepted and standard industry practice, while 'brown' meetings are a thing of the past;
- Achieves economic and strategic business goals and minimizes and eliminates environmental impacts and positively contributes to the environment and host communities;
- Meets minimum green meeting practices as set out by the GMIC.

In addition to resources that can be found on the GMIC website, the council also manages the [BlueGreen Meetings](#) website which has many good resources, including separate sections for Hosts and Planners and for Suppliers. If you are just beginning with sustainable meetings, consider starting with their “[10 Easy Tips](#).”

Both Amy Spatrisano (Board President of GMIC) and Shawna McKinley (GMIC’s Executive Director) served on the *Convention Industry Council’s* Green Meetings Task Force that produced the *Green Meetings Report* ([see below](#))—one of the better-known green meetings guides available.

A good resource on the GMIC website is their new online [Green Meetings Forum](#). Use the forum to post questions and share information. HEASC members, especially staff involved in meeting planning, are encouraged to join the forum and participate in discussions. Obviously, the more people who join—the more information and resources will be available on the forum.

Regarding standards and green meeting certification, GMIC will be partnering with others to create standards and certifications for various components of sustainable meetings and conferences. Ms.

McKinley stated that they are just beginning work on this project and that they intend to include measurable actions and third party verification in their scheme. Both the *Green Meetings Report* and the British Standard (see [BS 8901](#) below) will be used as starting points. GMIC will be administering the certification.

## 2. [Convention Industry Council \(CIC\) – Green Meetings](#)

The Convention Industry Council (CIC) is an organization that deals with all aspects of convention/meeting planning. It is included in this report because it originally sponsored the *Green Meetings Task Force*, which was made up of representatives from different sectors, including nonprofits, government (EPA), travel and meeting consultants and visitor bureaus.

Several of the members of organizations that are included in this report participated on this task force and the subsequent creation of the [Green Meetings Report](#). (These were: the EPA, *Green Meeting Industry Council*, *Meeting Strategies Worldwide* and *Eco-Logical Solutions*.)

The *Green Meetings Report* is one of the better known and more widely used guides, outlining best practices as they apply to event suppliers and event organizers. The guide covers a number of different areas including destinations, accommodations, venues, and food & beverages and is organized into two sections by audience—event suppliers and event organizers. Furthermore, the practices are placed in “minimum best practices” and “strongly recommended best practices” groupings.

The guidelines that are included in this report are those that were identified by the task force as being the most effective without being cost-prohibitive. While it is fairly comprehensive, the guidelines are not specific enough to be measurable and sometimes lack the detail that someone who is just starting to make their meetings more sustainable might require. On the other hand, the guide is general enough that practitioners can use or adapt the guidelines to fit their needs.

Download the *Green Meetings Report*:

[http://www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green\\_meetings\\_report.pdf](http://www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green_meetings_report.pdf)

## 3. [Meeting Strategies Worldwide](#)

*Meeting Strategies Worldwide* is a management, consulting and training company specializing in sustainable conferences and meetings and corporate responsibility programs. Amy Spatrisano (also Board President of GMIC) and Nancy Wilson are both principals of *Meeting Strategies Worldwide* and leaders in the green meetings field. Ms. Spatrisano was the chair of the CIC’s Green Meeting Task Force that produced the *Green Meetings Report* (see [Convention Industry Council \(CIC\)](#) above).

I spoke with Ms. Spatrisano about the services offered by her company and the trends in the green meetings sector. She noted that as consultants, they take a five-step approach that is customized for a particular organization. The steps are 1) assessment; 2) establishing a level of commitment; 3) analyzing cost factors; 4) creating specific guidelines for the client and; 5) assistance with negotiations (contract languages, RFPs, etc.). It’s not a one-size-fits-all approach since everyone is different as to where they are in regard to sustainability and green practices and how quickly they can incorporate change.

Ms. Spatrisano noted that the interest in green meetings has increased dramatically in the last few years. In her 12 years in the industry she has seen attendance at green meeting presentations grow from “a few people in a room” to full capacity.

In addition to consulting, *Meeting Strategies Worldwide* offers everything from A-Z for planning and executing meetings and conferences. They will also work with other meeting planners that have been retained by an organization to ensure sustainable practices in any or all aspects of the event.

In regard to green meeting certification, Ms. Spatrisano noted that many organizations are moving towards standards. These include ISO 14000, BSI (British Standards Institute), the province of Quebec and the EPA. Ms. Spatrisano said that the set of standards from BSI appear promising in that they could either be adopted or modified to meet the needs of American standards. (See [BSI—British Standard 8901](#) below.)

*Meeting Strategies Worldwide* offers several products under the *MeetGreen* brand name. These include:

- *Calculator*: described as the most comprehensive tool for measuring how green a meeting or event is. The calculator is based on the CIC's *Green Meetings Report* best practices. For details on the *MeetGreen* calculator go to: [https://www.meetgreen.com/calculator\\_background.php](https://www.meetgreen.com/calculator_background.php)
- *Certification*: *MeetGreen* offers a certification that is also based on the CIC's Green Meetings Report best practices.
- *Toolbox*: the toolbox is a set of forms with language for specifying green practices. It covers forms and language for destinations, convention centers, caterers, decorators, hotels and exhibitors.

#### 4. [CERES Green Hotel Initiative](#)

CERES isn't actively administering their Green Hotel Initiative program at this time, however they do have several useful resources on their website. Tedd Saunders of [EcoLogical Solutions](#) and the *Saunders Hotel Group* recommended their [Best Practices Survey](#)—a relatively short (4 page) checklist that can be given to hotels to assess their environmental practices.

While the *Best Practices Survey* is not rigorous, its brevity makes it likely that hotels will fill it out and return it. Saunders noted that many planners are using this tool and that all of the practices are those that would save the hotel money in the long run.

There are 19 questions in all—the hotel rates itself (1 to 5) on each question. The resulting score can help determine hotel selection for either the meeting venue or accommodations. If you are just getting started with making your meetings more sustainable, this is a good tool.

Download the Best Practices Survey:

[http://www.ceres.org/pub/docs/Ceres\\_GHI\\_BPS\\_survey.pdf](http://www.ceres.org/pub/docs/Ceres_GHI_BPS_survey.pdf)

#### 5. [National Recycling Coalition](#)

Although the *National Recycling Coalition* isn't directly involved in sustainable meetings, it published their own policy for its annual conference and other NRC events in 2001. The document, entitled [Green Meetings Policy](#) contains a list of waste reduction and recycling policies pertaining to printed materials, food & beverage, on-site facilities, conference facilities and more.

In addition, it includes several good tools in its appendices: a food service RFP, contract addendum on green meeting policies, recycling and waste prevention information for RFPs, an exhibitor's green checklist and CERES Green Hotels Initiative *Best Practices Survey* (see [CERES](#) above). So

while it is mostly focused on recycling and waste, it offers very good resources with clear, user-friendly descriptions.

#### 6. [US EPA – Green Meetings](#)

The EPA hosts a Green Meetings website which is intended to assist visitors in environmentally responsible meeting practices, depending on their respective roles: meeting planner, meeting service supplier, meeting host or meeting attendee. Interestingly enough, a number of the links point to GMIC's [BlueGreen Meetings](#) website.

It is notable that the EPA, as of May 1, 2007, revised its acquisition regulation that sets a policy for purchasing towards “environmentally preferable” meetings. Agency employees are now required to use a “prescription and solicitation provision...when soliciting quotes or offers for meeting and conference space and services.” Although this doesn't rule out using vendors that are not “green”, it does give preference to those vendors who are making an effort to be environmentally responsible.

Another interesting development is a bill that was introduced into the House as H.R. 3037 – the Green Meetings Act of 2007 that would “ensure that all federal agencies consider the environmentally preferable features and practices of a vendor in purchases of meeting and conference services.” The house approved the act as an amendment to the “New Direction for Energy Independence, National Security, and Consumer Protection Act” (H.R. 3221) and will be negotiated as part of this bill.

#### 7. [Green Hotels Association](#)

This association, founded by Patricia Griffin of Houston, includes hotels and hospitality-related product and service vendors as its members. Members pay to join the association (fee based on size) and in return are listed on the *Green Hotels Association* website and receive resources to help make their hotels more eco-friendly. Vendors offering “approved environmental products and services” can also join the association for a fee based on annual sales. Do note that there is no screening of member hotels—rather a tacit agreement that the hotel is committed to environmentally sound practices.

There are several resources on their website available to non-members including the [Meeting Planner's Questionnaire for "Green" Lodging Establishments](#) which can be used to assess a hotel's accommodations, food and beverage services, and meeting facilities.

## Standards and Certifications for Green Meetings

Below are some of the standards and certification programs that apply to some or all aspects of sustainable meetings. As stated earlier, no one certification appears to be dominant. There does, however, appear to be a movement towards creating a more widely adopted standard and certification process in the US.

### Green Seal

*Green Seal* is an independent nonprofit whose mission is to promote environmentally sound products and services. Its standards are created using “internationally accepted methodologies”, including ISO standards (ISO 14020 and 14024). Another component of their standards is that it takes product life cycle into account.

In addition to certifying products, *Green Seal* offers a “Greening the Lodging Industry” certification for hotels and lodging known as GS-33. The certification is fairly rigorous and includes the following components: an assessment of waste minimization and recycling practices; energy efficiency; conservation and management; management of fresh water resources; wastewater management; handling of hazardous substances; and environmentally and socially “sensitive” purchasing. (To view the standards, go to: <http://www.greenseal.org/certification/standards/lodgingproperties.cfm>.)

Unfortunately, there are only 40 or so properties in the United States that have been certified. To access the list, go to:

<http://www.greenseal.org/findaproduct/index.cfm#lodging>

### BSI—British Standard 8901

BSI British Standards is the UK’s National Standards Body, working with government, businesses and consumers to represent UK interests and facilitate the production of British, European and international standards to meet economic and social needs. They are currently in the process of creating a new standard for events and conferences called BS 8901:2007 Sustainable event management system.

A draft version of BS 8901 was available for public review until June of this year and the final version should be available in November. As noted on its website—BS 8901 provides requirements for planning and managing sustainable events of all sizes and types, supplemented by advice on how to meet, and surpass, these requirements. It encompasses the entire range of events ranging from large-scale conferences and unique events such as the 2012 Olympics to music festivals and air shows. The draft standard will be applicable throughout the sector supply chain encompassing venues, organizing companies and industry contracting firms and is aimed at the following groups:

- \* Event organizers
- \* Venues
- \* Organizations and/or individuals in the supply chain

Amy Spatrisano noted that BS 8901 may provide a good starting point for an American standard and will be one of the documents that the Green Meetings Task Force will consider when creating a new certification under GMIC. Ms. Spatrisano, who reviewed and submitted comments on the draft, said that she is looking forward to seeing the final result which could possibly become the standard that they adopt, as is—or modified to fit American requirements. One thing of note is that it will include “social impacts” such as community involvement and fair employment practices.



If you would like to be notified when the final version is available, you can sign up on the BSI website at: [Notification of BS-8901](#).

### [ISO 14001](#)

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) developed a set of environmental management standards under their ISO 14000 guidelines. ISO 14001, first published in 1996 and part of the 14000 series, is the only one for which you can get certification.

ISO 14001 has been applied to making more environmentally sustainable conferences but is really geared towards institutions (municipalities, manufacturing, etc.). It has been used in some guidelines such as the [Delaware North Group's GreenPath](#) program.

### [MeetGreen Certification](#)

MeetGreen (see [Meeting Strategies Worldwide](#) above) offers a certification program that consists of an assessment of a client's current meeting practices by one of their consultants. The client receives detailed reports, recommendations, a MeetGreen ranking (1 to 5) and use of a certification logo for marketing purposes.

The basis of their certification program is the minimum criteria as specified in the CIC *Green Meetings Report* (see Convention Industry Council above). For a detailed description of this program, go to: [https://www.meetgreen.com/certification\\_methodology.php](https://www.meetgreen.com/certification_methodology.php)

## Social Sustainability

There is little mention of social sustainability in the guides and lists included in this report. Those practices that would fall under social sustainability—such as donation of surplus food to local shelters—appear in several of the guides but none include a separate social sustainability category. Granted, meetings and conferences have more of an environmental impact than a social one unless you start looking at purchasing (source and manufacture). Many of these guides, however, do include mention of community benefits—especially in regard to donations and employment of local talent.

Amy Spatrisano of GMIC and Meeting Strategies Worldwide said that they are members of the Natural Step Oregon, which includes social sustainability as part of its system conditions and that they do adhere to the triple bottom line of people, planet, and profit. Ms. Spatrisano said that *Meeting Strategies Worldwide* does include socially sustainable practices but doesn't single them out since, at this point in the green meetings movement, it could be "confusing."

A short compilation of social sustainability measures follow, most of which have been pulled from the sources in this report.

- Use locally grown food as much as possible (support local farms and dairies).
- Donate leftover and surplus food to local shelters or food banks. (Note that you are protected from liability by the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (see <http://www.pcma.org/source/community/network/usa/how/billemerson.asp>).
- Hotels: donate unused portions of room amenities (shampoo, etc.) to shelters.
- Hotels: donate old furniture or other durables.
- Purchase [Fair Trade Certified](#) products (especially coffee).
- Ensure that meeting facilities and accommodations are handicap accessible.
- Use safe cleaning products, paints and other housekeeping and maintenance materials.
- Hotels and Conference Halls: Train housekeeping and maintenance staff in environmentally sound and safe practices – provide multilingual training materials.
- Use facilities that pay fair wages (at least the federal or state minimum wage) and promote worker safety.
- Hire local talent where possible.
- Promote the host community by highlighting local businesses and activities near the conference venue.

In addition to the above, there is an opportunity to educate your suppliers and vendors when planning your event on issues of social sustainability—or at least ask the questions. What are their policies on international trade and labor practices? Ask your suppliers where the goods you are purchasing are manufactured and if they screen for fair wages, decent working conditions, etc. If they can't answer, ask them to find out.

## Using Offsets

One aspect of conventions and meetings that significantly contributes to greenhouse gases is travel—especially by air. The use of carbon offsets is a way to mitigate the impact by offsetting these emissions through the purchase of renewable energy, energy efficiency projects or carbon sequestration (e.g., through reforestation).

Some conferences have begun to include offsets either by offering a voluntary means of purchase or by including them in the price of conference admission. Voluntary offsets can be offered at the time of registration, during the conference or through online means either before or after the conference.

It has been our experience, however, that a very small percentage of conference attendees will purchase offsets when they are offered on a voluntary basis. The concept of offsets is still fairly new so many attendees don't fully understand what they are. Another barrier is that they may see the purchase of offsets as an extra expenditure for which the university or association may not reimburse.

For this reason, it is highly recommended that offsets be *included* in the price of conference admission. Of course, this should be accompanied by an explanation of the additional cost as a means of educating the attendee as well as the university or association that is footing the bill. Be clear about what you are offsetting. Depending on the way the emissions are calculated, you may decide to offset travel to and from the conference, the energy expended through use of the conference hall, hotel rooms or all of these factors.

The price of offsets is typically very low when compared to the cost of an airline ticket or hotel room. However, the price per ton for greenhouse gases can vary widely among offset providers. Some may only charge for carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions while others add some of the other greenhouse gases into consideration (often referred to as CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents).

Many of these providers offer a variety of calculators on their websites. One of these retailers, [NativeEnergy](http://www.nativeenergy.com), provides a calculator specifically geared towards conference offsets (see <http://www.nativeenergy.com/organizations.html>). Supply the number of attendees, conference hall size, and travel details and it returns the total number of tons of GHG emissions that would result from the event—along with the total charge for offsets.

For example, a 3-day event in Arizona hosting 400 attendees (some driving, but most flying) in a 50,000 square foot conference hall comes to \$5,448 (based on 454 tons). Evenly divided by 400 attendees, it comes to under \$14 per person\* -- a small amount considering the impact.

It's always best to reduce your impact by conserving energy and reducing consumption as much as possible—but in those cases where you can't reduce, purchase offsets.

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\* Based on 400 attendees, occupying 1000 hotel rooms (3 nights); average distance by air based on 3000 miles by 300 people; 100 attendees via car based on 200 miles; 50,000 square foot conference venue.

## Recommendations

There are so many things that you can do to make your conferences more sustainable in all aspects of planning and execution that it may seem overwhelming—especially for those who are just starting out in this direction. There are some steps, however, that you can take that are low-cost or no-cost that will lead you down the path of sustainable meetings. If your association has already adopted sustainable meeting practices, you're well ahead of the game and may be ready to adopt more stringent practices.

*If you are just **starting** to make your meetings sustainable:*

1. Add language to your RFPs that requests vendors to use sustainable products and practices. Use the [Sustainable Meetings and Conferences Questionnaire](#) that was developed for HEASC as a starting point.
2. Educate your staff in sustainable meeting practices. Hold a workshop or pre-conference meeting to brainstorm practices that are realistically achievable by your association and are low-cost. Use GMIC's [10 Easy Tips](#) as a starting point for your discussions.
3. If using a hotel for the meeting venue or recommending one for accommodations, use CERES' [Best Practices Survey](#). Send the survey to prospective hotels to fill in and use the result to make your selections.
4. Include carbon offsets in the price of conference admission. Use [NativeEnergy's conference/event calculator](#) to estimate the number of tons per person and arrive at a cost or one of the many other online offset calculators.
5. Eliminate or minimize conference gifts, unless it's recycled, reusable, biodegradable or edible!
6. Minimize printed hand-outs—supply as much as possible online. Use recycled paper with at least 30% post-consumer content and print double-sided.
7. Minimize the impact of Food and Beverage service by:
  - using refillable containers for condiments, etc.
  - offering vegetarian options (use local, organic food if possible)
  - providing Fair Trade certified coffee
  - providing water in pitchers (as opposed to bottled)
  - using reusable or compostable/biodegradable tableware
  - donating leftover food and beverages to a local shelter or soup kitchen
8. Ensure that recycling occurs at your meeting by providing plenty of well-marked receptacles. Enlist volunteers, if necessary to help sort recyclables.
9. Include a walking map and public transportation information of the meeting location. List amenities that are close to the meeting venue. Encourage attendees to walk or ride-share.
10. Let attendees know what steps you have taken to make the meeting more sustainable—not only throughout the meeting with signage, etc., but during a plenary session at the beginning of the meeting. Point out recycling logistics, local amenities, etc. Ask them to do their part by recycling, walking, conserving water and using public transportation.
11. Hold a post-event assessment meeting with staff. Discuss what worked well, what could be improved and ideas for making your next meeting even more sustainable. Empower your staff to find creative ways to reduce, reuse and recycle.
12. Educate your board and management in sustainable meeting practices. Try to get buy-in for taking the next steps to make your events even more sustainable. Enlist the help of HEASC administrators for presentation assistance and ideas.

*If you have already adopted some sustainable practices for your events, but want to take it even further:*

1. Consider hiring a consultant who specializes in sustainable meeting practices to help plan your next event and to assist you in creating a plan that will enhance your sustainability efforts in the future.
2. Promote/Adopt a Sustainable Meeting policy that commits to a set of criteria (products, services, practices) for all meetings. Consider using the “Minimum Best Practices” as outlined in the [Green Meetings Report](#) or create your own policy. Create a timeline that you can meet or phase in over time.
3. Keep up with what’s going on in the industry. Products and services for sustainable meetings are appearing all the time. Use the resources in this report to continue to improve your practices.
4. Don’t forget social sustainability! See [Social Sustainability](#) above for a list of considerations.
5. Share resources, experiences and ideas with fellow HEASC members. Send ideas or things you have done to [mreilly@secondnature.org](mailto:mreilly@secondnature.org).
6. Consider working with [Meeting Strategies Worldwide](#) to adopt their “MeetGreen” certification.

## APPENDIX A - guides, surveys and checklists

The following table lists the primary guides, surveys and checklists discussed in the first part of this report.

Level indicates:

B – Beginner                      I – Intermediate                      A – Advanced.

Categories (below) indicate the meeting practices covered in each of the guides.

Categories:

AC	Accommodations: covers hotel and room accommodations
ED	Educational & Outreach (Promoting Sustainability): education through marketing messages, education of staff
EE	Energy Efficiency (heat, lighting, air conditioning)
EX	Exhibition Production: reduction of materials and waste in exhibits; use of recycled materials
FB	Food & Beverage: sources/production of food and drink, china and utensils
MV	Meeting Venues: venue characteristics including energy efficiency in HVAC, lighting, etc.
NR	Natural Resources: assessment of water conservation, air quality, grounds maintenance, etc.
OP	Office Products, Printed Materials: green purchasing practices and use of printed materials
SS	Social Sustainability: worker safety, community benefits, fair wages, etc.
TR	Transportation: travel offsets, use of transportation at the meeting
WR	Waste Reduction and Recycling: reduce, reuse and recycle

Level	Title and Link	Description	Categories
B	<p>Blue Green Meetings' Ten Easy Tips  <a href="http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org/HostsAndPlanners/10EasyTips.htm">www.bluegreenmeetings.org/HostsAndPlanners/10EasyTips.htm</a></p> <p>For more information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Destination Selection</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Accommodation Selection</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Meeting / Event Venues</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Transportation</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Food &amp; Beverage</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Exhibition Production</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Communications &amp; Marketing</a></li> </ul>	List of 10 easily achievable practices to make your events green. The tips are somewhat general, so for more information on a particular meeting practice or to go "deeper", visit the webpages listed in the left sidebar of the webpage (or use the links listed in this table, to the left).	AC, ED, EE, EX, FB, MV, OP, TR, WR
B	<p>CERES Green Hotels Initiative  <i>Best Practice Survey</i>  <a href="http://www.ceres.org/pub/docs/Ceres_GHI_BPS_survey.pdf">www.ceres.org/pub/docs/Ceres_GHI_BPS_survey.pdf</a></p>	Short, user-friendly checklist that can be used to assess basic, environmentally sound practices in hotels. It targets those practices that not only help the hotel save money but are reasonable to implement.	AC, ED, EE, NR, OP, WR
I	<p>The Convention Industry Council's  <i>Green Meetings Report</i>  <a href="http://www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green_meetings_report.pdf">www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green_meetings_report.pdf</a></p>	This is a list of best practices for assessing event suppliers and event organizers. This is probably the best-known report as it was a joint effort by several organizations. Note that each set of practices designates "minimum best practices" and "strongly recommended best practices."	AC, ED, EE, EX, FB, MV, OP, SS, TR, WR

<i>Level</i>	<i>Title and Link</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Categories</i>
I	Green Hotels Association's <i>Meeting Planner's Questionnaire</i> : <a href="http://www.greenhotels.com/question.htm">http://www.greenhotels.com/question.htm</a>	A fairly comprehensive checklist for assessing hotels (both for accommodations and meeting venues)	AC, EE, FB, MV, NR, SS, WR
A	National Recycling Coalition's <i>Green Meetings Policy</i> <a href="http://www.resourcesaver.org/file/toolmanager/CustomO16C45F42045.pdf">www.resourcesaver.org/file/toolmanager/CustomO16C45F42045.pdf</a>	This guide uses the lens of waste and recycling on various meeting components—everything from printed materials, food & beverage to hotel accommodations. Good explanations leave nothing to the imagination. In addition, it includes useful appendices with sample RFP and contract language.	AC, ED, EX, MV, OP, SS, WR
A	Canada's Green Meeting Guide <a href="#">The Green Meeting Guide</a> (pdf) (Version 2.0)	Although the Canadian government was not discussed above, it has recently revised its <i>Green Meeting Guide</i> . Although some of the checklists and resources are more applicable to Canada, most are generic enough to use in the U.S.	AC, ED, EE, EX, FB, MV, NR, OP, TR, WR

## APPENDIX B – additional resources: websites, articles, etc.

### Additional Resources

#### [Green Lodging News](#)

A very good resource aimed at the hotel industry containing some good articles and information pertaining to sustainable conferences and meetings.

#### [Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada - Greening of Conferences, Large Meetings and Events](#)

Canadian government website that contains a “green planner.” The planner consists of a management primer, a checklist of basic green meeting requirements and a large meeting and events planner.

#### [EPA's Energy Star Labeled Buildings](#)

This is a tool that can be used to find different types of *Energy Star* buildings by location and may be useful for selecting meeting venues and accommodations. For example, you can search for all hotels/motels in Massachusetts that have earned the *Energy Star* label. Buildings can earn the *Energy Star* rating if they are in the top 25% of their building type in regard to energy use. To get a list of buildings in the hospitality sector, click the following link: [Energy Star Hospitality Partner List](#).

#### [Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts GreenPath Program](#)

Delaware North Companies (DNC)—a hotel, resort and foodservice management company created the *GreenPath* initiative—a management plan that ensures environmental standards as specified in ISO 14001. A number of their properties have been registered as ISO 14001 compliant and thus receive DNC's *GreenPath* designation. Click the link above to see a list of their *GreenPath* properties. Note that DNC was the recipient of the 2006 IMEX Green Meeting Award (see below).

#### [IMEX Green Meeting Awards](#)

IMEX is an annual, worldwide exhibition for “meetings and incentive travel.” In 2003, IMEX and the *Green Meetings Industry Council* created the “Green Meetings Awards.” Each year, an organization is presented with this award for its environmentally sound practices at a convention or meeting. Past winners have included the US Green Building Council and the Sierra Club.

#### [Green Supplier Directory](#)

This is a new database of green meeting suppliers, developed by IMEX in association with Green Global Village and supported by [GMIC](#) and the MCI Group. This directory is intended to provide planners with information on the “most environmentally friendly suppliers, service providers and products.” To date, the directory has few US resources, but hopefully this will grow over time. (NOTE: as of this writing, this database was not functioning.)

#### [Co-op America's National Green Pages](#)

Excellent resource for purchasing both environmentally and socially responsible products and services. All companies listed in this guide are screened for environmentally and socially responsible practices.



### Clean Air–Cool Planet’s [Consumers’ Guide to Retail Carbon Offset Providers](#)

This is a comprehensive report on the carbon-offset market based on an independent study of top offset providers. It outlines the criteria they used to evaluate the 30 or so companies and nonprofits that were reviewed and also provides a good introduction to the world of offsets. The top providers, as ranked by this report are:

AgCert/Driving Green (Ireland)	Climate Trust (US)
atmosfair (Germany)	co2balance (UK)
Carbon Neutral Co. (UK)	<i>NativeEnergy</i> (US)
Climate Care (UK)	Sustainable Travel/MyClimate (US)

### [SpaceShare](#)

*SpaceShare*, located in Oakland, CA, develops environmental logistics and networking tools for car-pooling, room sharing and social networking at large gatherings. The event planner works with *SpaceShare* to build a database system specifically for the event. Attendees sign in and describe their needs, and are instantly shown the best match. With privacy protected, they can email the best match, or wait for someone to email them.

### [EcoLogical Solutions](#) and the [Saunders Hotel Group](#)

Tedd Saunders formed *EcoLogical Solutions* in 1989 to provide consultation to the *Saunders Hotel Group*, in order to find the most “cost-effective and innovative environmental solutions for its properties.” *EcoLogical Solutions* was the first hotel company to embrace the [CERES](#)’ principles and is now offering Climate Neutral accommodations at its Lenox Hotel in Boston. Mr. Saunders has also consulted to other properties and has been an active participant in the green meetings field and other sustainability initiatives. Read the long list of SHG’s environmental and socially responsible initiatives at: [http://www.ecological-solutions.net/more\\_practices.htm](http://www.ecological-solutions.net/more_practices.htm).

### [Environmentally Friendly Hotels](#)

With over 2,000 hotels in its database, this website is one of the more robust in regard to the number of listings. Hotels submit a form for inclusion on the website which states whether they provide certain green options or follow sustainable practices. Once submitted, the hotel is given a rating of 1 to 6 “trees” and are then listed on the website. The rating is not terribly accurate in that each criterion is given equal weighting (e.g., Fitness Center and eco-friendly food served) and the criteria are not well defined. Anyone can submit a review of a hotel, however, which may help to keep the listings honest.

### [Stetson Convention Services](#)

Stetson is an environmentally responsible decorator for trade shows and events. Among the products that they employ at conferences are LEED certified booths and aisle carpets, 100% biodegradable table coverings, signs printed with water-based ink on recycled paper and natural gas forklifts.

### [Seven-Star Event Management](#)

Seven-Star is a full-service consultant specializing in green events. Two of their events include “Green Festivals Chicago 2007” and “Greening the Green Festival” in San Francisco (see short film under [Videos](#) below).

### [America’s Second Harvest](#)

This organization is a national network of food banks for feeding the hungry. Use its online [Food Bank Locator](#) to find organizations located near your meeting or conference that take surplus food and beverages.

### [Fair Trade Certified on Campus](#)

This is *TransFair USA*'s "Fair Trade on Campus" webpage. (Note that *TransFair USA* is the only US third-party certifier of Fair Trade products in the United States.) The webpage contains a listing of colleges and universities that are committed to purchasing Fair Trade products. Also download the list of food services offering Fair Trade certified products at:

<http://www.transfairusa.org/content/Downloads/FTServiceOfferings.pdf>



## Articles

### [The Future is Green: Charting a Sustainable Future for Meetings](#)

Published by GMIC

### [Meetings That Don't Make an Impact \(On the Environment, That Is\)](#)

By Andrea Doyle in PCMA's "Convene" magazine

### [That's the Plan: Strategies for Green Meetings: Innovative Ideas for Successful Planners](#)

By Amy Spatrisano, CMP

### [Boston Green Tourism Positions City as Eco-Friendly Meetings Destination](#)

By Glenn Hasek (Green Lodging News)

### [An Analysis of the Green Hotel/Meeting Decision Connection](#)

By Shawna McKinley (Green Meetings Industry Council)

### [Going Green](#)

By Seth Gardner (for *Meeting Professionals International*)

### [Meeting Expectations](#)

By Joel Makower (*Grist*, Nov 2006)

## Videos

Short video of an interview with Shawna McKinley and Amy Spatrisano of the *Green Meetings Industry Council* on trends and developments:

<http://eventsreview.com/news/events/604/>

Short video on "Greening the Green Festival" in San Francisco and how 10 tons of waste from 36,000 visitors was diverted from landfills through composting and recycling.

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/link/bcpid716696042/bctid443670898>

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