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## "Greening" of NSC and CPMR events

Paper to NSC Executive Committee by NSC Sustainable Development Group, September 2006.

Today the arrangers of many major events actively work for the minimisation of local and global environmental impacts produced by the event. They strive to become "climate neutral" or otherwise reduce their environmental impacts. Examples include the recent FIFA World Cup in Germany, the ICLEI EcoProcura 2006 in Barcelona and the Nordic Council's "Fremtid-kom.no", a Nordic Conference on Sustainable Social Development.

An international event leads to appreciable emissions of Greenhouse Gases, primarily through the air travel of the participants. Climate impact through their use of energy whilst attending the event is also considerable, as most countries/regions generate a large proportion of their energy through fossil fuel sources such as coal, oil and gas. Alternative ways are now offered to offset some - or all - of the emissions of Greenhouse Gases, which occur in connection with an international event.

By for instance investing in projects, that lead to positive avoidance of emissions (greater or equal to the amount of emissions generated by the event), organisers can offset the effects of the event on the world's climate – making it "carbon/climate neutral". Carbon offset payment fees to compensate for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from conference-related air travel can be made according to distance travelled by participants. (For further information and a concrete example of a Greenhouse gas offsetting alternative, please visit: [www.myclimate.org/?lang=en](http://www.myclimate.org/?lang=en) )

In addition to measures to become "climate neutral", other "greening" options are available for the arrangers of an event. These include:

- general promotion of public transport,
- general optimised use of the best waste management practice available in the hosting Region,
- all paper products - notepads, leaflets, brochures, etcetera - made out of recycled paper,
- delegate bags and other gifts made from recycled material, through social projects,
- local transports for transfer and study visits with low emission buses or vehicles running on renewable fuels,
- inclusion of fair trade and organic products in the official meals,

Further inspiration and incentives in this field can be obtained by getting actively involved in the ongoing international discussion with cities and event organisers to understand how the environmental and social impacts of large-scale events can be reduced: [www.iclei.org/itc/greening-events](http://www.iclei.org/itc/greening-events) or [www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=766](http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=766) A.o there is an action plan, including a model mission statement for green event planning

Between them, the NSC and the CPMR – and its other Commissions – organise events, which annually attract thousands of participants. Some "greening" measures have certainly already been taken. The NSC Sustainable Development Group considers that the NSC and the CPMR have a great potential for becoming respected fore-runners in the field of "greening events". Therefore the NSC SDG suggests that the NSC Executive Committee decide – as a first step – to:

- a) ensure that all events arranged within a North Sea Commission context provide arrangers and participants with means to reduce or compensate for their emissions of Greenhouse Gases.
- b) Take an immediate initiative to propose that events arranged within a CPMR context provide arrangers and participants with means to reduce or compensate for their emissions of Greenhouse Gases.