



Sustainable Conferences & Events

Toolkit

Best practices and tools for organizing your Conferences and their associated Events in a more sustainable way.

A Sustainable Europe by 2050



INDEX

[WELCOME](#)

[INTRODUCTION](#)

[WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?](#)

[THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS – SDGs](#)

[URGENT SOLUTIONS FOR URGENT TIMES](#)

[WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY?](#)

[WHAT IS CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY?](#)

[CYPRUS: the need to invest in new tourism products/services](#)

[CYPRUS: low competitiveness in the events industry \(MICE\)](#)

[CYPRUS: The challenge of gaining competitiveness](#)

[WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE EVENT?](#)

[PRINCIPLES OF EVENT SUSTAINABILITY](#)

[WHY SHOULD YOU MAKE YOUR CONFERENCES SUSTAINABLE?](#)

[MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE CONFERENCE/EVENT](#)

[GET STARTED!](#)

Sustainable Conferences & Events Toolkit



This toolkit is the product of a joint effort between two leading organizations, Top Kinisis Travel, and AKTI Project and Research Centre, towards the achievement of a Sustainable future in Cyprus according to the EUROPE 2030 Strategy.

We invite you to take full advantage of this toolkit as a resource for your next conference/event.

We've done all the heavy lifting because we understand that achieving a more sustainable conference/event may seem intimidating. The guidelines and practices listed are fully scalable for events of all sizes and varies as are the helpful tools and ideas to make your journey that much easier.



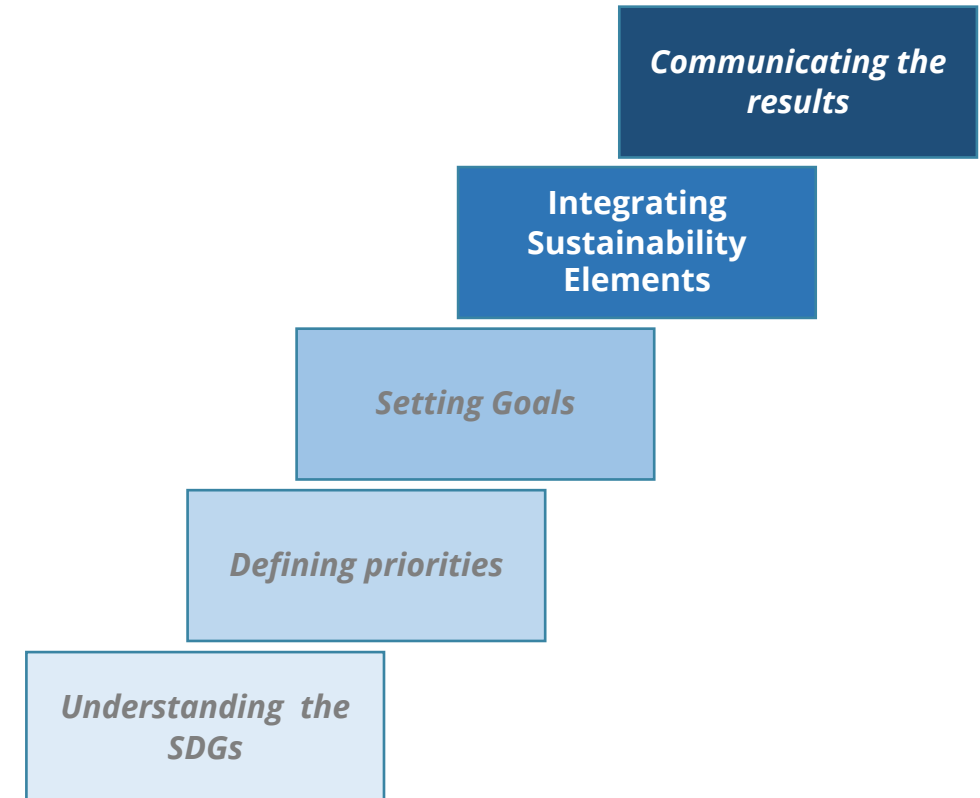
INTRODUCTION

By picking up this Toolkit you have already taken the first step towards organizing your conferences and events in a more sustainable way.

The Toolkit will:

- ✓ Take you through the en8re process;
- ✓ Provide the necessary informa8on, guidance and tools needed for adop8ng and incorpora8ng, where possible, elements of sustainability;
- ✓ Evaluate and measure the sustainability performance of your conference/event.

We need you to remember that sustainability is a gradual process. Don't expect that you will be able to make your conference/event fully sustainable from one day to the next. Set feasible goals, take steady upwards steps, one at a time, and soon you will be there.



WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

In 1987, the **United Nations Brundtland Commission** defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

The idea of Sustainability is broken down into the following three pillars:

1. **Economic Sustainability:** focuses on long-term economic growth while also protecting the environment, society and cultural values.
2. **Environmental Sustainability:** focuses on the preservation of natural resources in a way that will ensure that future generations will have what they need to maintain a similar or higher standard of living.
3. **Social Sustainability:** focuses on maintaining human welfare by eliminating poverty, hunger and inequality, and promoting education, gender equality, decent work and dignity, peace and justice.

QUESTIONNAIRE I

Dear attendee,

Your input in our effort to develop sustainability awareness is greatly valued.

Please visit the link below and answer the questions provided.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfyfymVJNn3x5o1ypzEfoaKpCzEELaLJQ6ekxLH-raJl94Kiw/viewform?usp=sf_link

WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY?

A sustainable society is one that stands firmly on three equally strong and equally important pillars: Society, Environment, Economy.

When a society can meet its social, environmental and economic needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, then it is sustainable.



WHAT IS CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY?

Corporate Sustainability is an approach whereby a corporation through the implementation of a business strategy delivers its goods and services **in a way that is environmentally and socially sustainable, and supports its economic growth.**

While corporate sustainability recognizes that corporate growth and profitability are important, it also requires the corporation to pursue societal goals, specifically those relating to sustainable development, environmental protection, social justice and equity, and economic development.

Corporations have proven that adopting sustainable practices not only helps the environment but also leads to an **improved brand image**, reduced costs, happier shareholders, increased productivity, and countless more benefits.

THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS – SDGs

In 2015, the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aiming to address all three sustainability pillars.

Through the 17 SDGs, Sustainability became measurable, international goals were set and nations around the globe, are now working towards meeting these goals by 2030.

Click on the images to read more about each of the Sustainable Development Goals.



When done, minimize or close your browser to return to the TOOLKIT



URGENT SOLUTIONS FOR URGENT TIMES

A 30-minute star-studded film on the SDGs.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVWHuJOmaEk>

CYPRUS: the urgent need to invest in new tourism products/services

Cyprus is an island country in the Mediterranean, where tourism accounted for around 20% of GDP (in the pre-COVID-19 era) and is therefore one of the most important sectors of the island's economy.

In 2019, Cyprus hosted 46 international association meetings (ICCA), whereas in 2017 a total of 151 local and international conferences were organised on the island¹.

 There is limited information, not just on the number and type of meetings that take place but also on their environmental performance.

CYPRUS TOURISM DATA:

-  70% of all tourist arrivals to Cyprus come from five countries (United Kingdom, Russia, Israel, Germany and Greece).
-  Nearly 80% of tourists arrive in the period between May and October.

These data highlight two of the main challenges faced by the Cypriot tourism industry: narrow markets and high seasonality. To address these challenges, Cyprus needs to gain competitiveness by investing in new products/services beyond the traditional "Sun & Sea".

¹ Post-Programme Surveillance Report, Cyprus, Spring 2020. Institutional Paper 126. European Commission, May 2020.
Ibid, p. 8. & Ibid, p.10.

CYPRUS: low competitiveness in the events industry (MICE)

Table 15. Tourism product competitiveness as assessed by THR

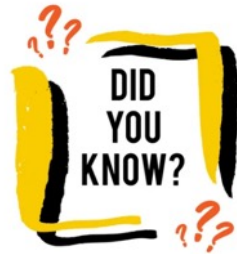
Products	Cyprus	Spain	Italy	Greece	Turkey
Sun & Sea					
City breaks					
Cultural & Itineraries					
Nature & rural					
Sports & adventure					
MICE					
Nautical					
Religious					
Medical & Wellness					
Golf					
Cruise					
Gastronomy & Wine					
Weddings & Honeymoons					
Scuba diving					
Cycling					
Legend:					
Low competitiveness					
					High competitiveness

Mee8ngs,
Incen8ves,
Conferences, and
Exhibi8ons.

² Source: Cyprus brand adop<on survey and secondary research, as reported in Cyprus Tourism Strategy, 2017

CYPRUS: The challenge of gaining competitiveness

The conventional conferences and events currently organised in Cyprus, have significant environmental, social and economic implications, that participants and organisers are often not aware of.



The typical conference attendee produces more than 1.89 kg of waste per day, more than 1.16 kg of which is landfilled!

Sustainable development is more relevant now than ever following the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting global economic impact. The recovery of the Tourism Industry will be particularly difficult, with countries using all the means at their disposal to salvage this important sector of their economy.

Cyprus needs to find ways of gaining a competitive advantage and be prepared with new tourism services and 'tools' such as the ability to organise and manage Sustainable Conferences and Events.

WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE EVENT?

A **sustainable** conference/event is **NOT** just a green event.

A sustainable event is “designed, organized and implemented in a way that minimizes potential negative impacts and leaves a beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved” (*UN Sustainable Events Guide*).

While ‘green’ events pay particular attention to their environmental impact, sustainable events pay equal emphasis on environmental, social and economic concerns.

AT WHAT COST?

One of the biggest myths about sustainable conferences/events is that they cost more.

While some aspects of sustainable events will increase your budget, overall, you should be able to reduce cost by leveraging the efficiency that is at the heart of sustainable events.

PRINCIPLES OF EVENT SUSTAINABILITY

The successful implementation of sustainable conferences and events contributes to all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sustainability in EVENTS means acting towards:

- ✓ Preserving our natural environment
- ✓ Promoting a healthy, inclusive society
- ✓ Supporting a thriving economy



⁴ Events Industry Council <https://www.eventscouncil.org/Sustainability/Sustainability-Pledge>

WHY SHOULD YOU MAKE YOUR CONFERENCES SUSTAINABLE?

The organization of conferences that disregard sustainability is no longer an option. Both customers and attendees are becoming increasingly more knowledgeable and demanding with regards to the impact of the conferences they attend. Recognizing and embracing the benefits of sustainable conference organization will set you ahead of the competition and allow you to tap into a new customer base.

Economic benefits

- ✓ Sustainable conferences are becoming an increasingly demanded service. You can increase your income by tapping into this niche market.
- ✓ Your lower dependency on natural resources, including energy and water, will bring about cost savings.
- ✓ You will have lower waste management costs.
- ✓ You will build a reputation as a sustainable service provider. This will be extremely important in the post COVID-19 era, when sustainability will be a great commodity in all tourism-related activities.
- ✓ You will create niche capacity for your staff, which can lead to innovation and further cost savings in your business.

... Why should you make your conferences sustainable?

Environmental benefits

- ✓ Reduction in the consumption of resources, including water and energy.
- ✓ Minimization of waste, including food waste.
- ✓ Encouragement of innovative green practices related to packaging, fair-trade products, use of natural resources etc.
- ✓ Creation of demand for more innovative and sustainable products and services.
- ✓ Raising awareness on sustainability in staff, attendees and collaborators.
- ✓ Reduction in your conferences' carbon footprint and overall environmental impact.

Social benefits

- ✓ Improvement of the wellbeing of the host community, through support to local businesses, job creation and business opportunities.
- ✓ Promotion of the local culture and community, by utilizing local food, services and products.
- ✓ Provision of healthier nutrition options for your attendees.
- ✓ Promotion of an inclusive and ethical business model.
- ✓ Triggering the creation of innovative businesses to cover the demand of sustainable conferences.
- ✓ Triggering existing businesses to cover the demand of sustainable conferences.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE CONFERENCE/EVENT

For a conference or event to be called ‘sustainable’ it should meet at least the following eight criteria:

1. GHG Emission ○ Minimize GHG emissions. ○ Offset unavoidable emissions. 	2. Natural Resource ○ Reduce natural resource consumption. 	3. Waste Generation ○ Avoid waste generation where possible. ○ Put measures in place to reuse and/or recycle remaining waste. 	4. Goods & Services Lifecycle ○ Consider environmental and social impacts of the lifecycle of goods and services purchased for the event. 
5. Environment & Accessibility ○ Reduce damage to the environment. ○ Ensure accessibility, inclusion and well-being for all participants and staff. 	6. Local communities ○ Foster economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities, during and after the event. 	7. Awareness ○ Increase the awareness of participants, involve local hosts, regional and national authorities, sponsors, citizens groups, NGOs, business and technical experts where possible in order to comply with and support the above-stated principles. 	8. Reporting system ○ Put in place a reporting system to allow assessment and evaluation of results. 

⁵ UNEP Sustainable United Nations (2012), “Sustainable Events Guide: give your large event a small footprint”, p. 6.

CONTACT

TOP KINISIS EU PROJECT MANAGER
DESPO KAKKOURA
dkakkoura@topkinisis.com



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



Structural Funds
of the European Union in Cyprus



Republic of Cyprus

