



EVENT SUSTAINABILITY

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE



APPENDIX 1:

EVENT SUSTAINABILITY: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This part of the Snowball guide is designed especially for smaller events that are just starting to explore sustainability. It provides clear, actionable steps for event organizers who might be unsure where to begin. The first essential action is to measure and understand the carbon footprint of your event, and the FIS CO₂ Calculator is a crucial resource for this. This tool helps you track and manage the greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂) from your event. By using this tool early in your planning, you will get a clearer picture of where emissions are coming from and identify the areas that need the most attention. This initial step will not only guide your sustainability strategy but also help you make data-driven decisions about how to reduce your event's carbon impact.

Following this step, the guide offers a series of best practices that are easy to implement, even for smaller-scale events. These actions may seem modest at first, but when combined, they can contribute significantly to reducing your environmental footprint and moving your event toward greater sustainability.

EVENT SUSTAINABILITY: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE FIRST STEPS

USE THE FIS CO₂ CALCULATOR – BASIC TEMPLATE

ACTION

Begin by calculating the CO₂ emissions of your event using the FIS CO₂ Calculator. This helps you understand your baseline emissions, identify the most significant sources of CO₂, and develop targeted actions to reduce them.

IMPORTANCE

Understanding your event's carbon footprint is essential for planning effective sustainability measures. By measuring emissions from energy use, transportation, and waste, you can focus on the areas with the greatest potential for reduction.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Lillehammer Nordic Combined World Cup](#), the Local Organizing Committee used the FIS CO₂ Calculator, now provided free of charge by FIS to all World Cup events starting from the 2024/25 season. This calculator measures emissions from areas such as transport, energy use, accommodation, and logistics, allowing organizers to quantify their environmental impact. By using this standardized tool, Lillehammer could make data-driven decisions to reduce emissions and improve sustainability planning.

Now some actionable initiatives grouped in main areas:



ENERGY

→ 100% GREEN ELECTRICITY FROM THE GRID

ACTION

Use electricity from renewable sources to power your event. Contact local suppliers to ensure your electricity comes from certified green sources.

IMPORTANCE

By using green electricity, you reduce the carbon footprint of your event while supporting renewable energy sectors, thus promoting the global transition to cleaner energy solutions.

→ AVOID POWER UNITS, USE HVO WHEN NECESSARY

ACTION

Limit the use of diesel or gas-powered generators unless absolutely necessary. Opt for renewable alternatives like HVO (Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil) if it is possible.

IMPORTANCE

HVO provides a cleaner alternative to conventional diesel, reducing CO₂ emissions by up to 50%. This is a critical step in minimizing the carbon footprint of temporary energy sources used during the event.

→ SUSTAINABLE HEATING FOR TENTS

ACTION

Use energy-efficient or sustainable heating systems in temporary structures (for example heating systems with wooden chips).

IMPORTANCE

Reducing energy consumption in temporary structures like event tents helps cut overall energy use and reduce waste while maintaining the necessary comfort for athletes, staff, and spectators.

BEST PRACTICE

During the [Oslo Holmenkollen Nordic Combined World Cup](#) event in 2025, the Local Organizing Committee committed to powering the entire venue with 100% renewable energy. This initiative was made possible through the use of certified green electricity from hydroelectric sources. Importantly, no diesel generators were used throughout the event, eliminating a significant source of emissions typically associated with temporary power supply. Additionally, the VIP tents were heated using wood pellets, a renewable and low-emission alternative to fossil fuels.

TRANSPORT

→ ENCOURAGE CARPOOLING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES

ACTION

Offer special carpooling apps to meet the needs of travellers or incentives for employees and spectators to carpool or use electric vehicles (EVs). Provide free parking for EVs and shuttle services from nearby areas.

IMPORTANCE

Promoting carpooling and the use of EVs reduces the carbon footprint of transportation, alleviates congestion, and supports sustainable mobility.

BEST PRACTICE

[FIS Ruka Nordic](#) has been awarded the EcoCompass environmental certificate in December 2023 by reducing the number of driving kilometres through coordinated carpooling for athletes and volunteers.

→ PUBLIC TRANSPORT INCENTIVES

ACTION

Provide free or discounted public transportation options for staff and spectators attending the event.

IMPORTANCE

By promoting public transportation, you help reduce the number of private vehicles traveling to the event, which lowers emissions and reduces congestion around the venue.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Nordic Combined World Cup event in Schonach](#), Germany, every spectator who purchased an event ticket also received a free public transportation pass valid throughout the regional transit network. This initiative encouraged visitors to leave their cars at home, significantly reducing traffic congestion and CO₂ emissions.

PROCUREMENT

→ REUSE BANNERS AND BIBS

ACTION

Reuse materials, such as event banners and athlete bibs. Instead of printing new ones for each event, update them with Velcro or patches that can be changed as needed.

IMPORTANCE

This reduces waste, minimizes production costs, and promotes a more resource-efficient approach to event materials.

→ OPT FOR UNBRANDED MATERIALS

ACTION

Use generic, unbranded materials that do not require date-specific branding, reducing the need for future disposal.

IMPORTANCE

Unbranded materials can be reused in future events, increasing their lifespan and reducing waste.



FOOD & CATERING

→ PLANT-BASED OPTIONS

ACTION

Offer plant-based and flexitarian meal options, prioritizing local and sustainable food sources.

IMPORTANCE

Plant-based meals have a lower carbon footprint than meat-heavy diets, and sourcing food locally further reduces emissions related to food transportation. A flexitarian diet emphasizes plant-based foods while allowing for occasional local meat and animal products. It encourages reducing meat consumption for health and environmental benefits, but doesn't require complete elimination.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [2024 Paris Olympic Games](#), a 100% vegetarian offer was available to the public at La Concorde to promote the benefits of a meatless way of life. At the venue, where the 3x3 basketball, breaking, BMX Freestyle and skateboarding events took place, they offered 100% vegetarian food.

→ DONATE LEFTOVERS

ACTION

Coordinate with local charities to donate leftover food after the event or/and it is advisable to provide takeaway boxes near the buffet, so that, should a guest purchase an excessive amount of food or receive a portion too large to finish, they may pack the remainder to take home rather than discarding it.

IMPORTANCE

Donating unused food helps reduce food waste and supports local communities, providing meals to those in need while ensuring that excess food does not go to landfills.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Nordic Combined World Cup in Seefeld, Austria](#), the organizers took proactive steps to minimize food waste. Key measures included careful meal planning based on accurate guest numbers, using local suppliers to reduce over-ordering, and ensuring leftover food was donated instead of discarded.

→ REUSABLE CUPS

ACTION

Provide reusable cups for drinks, eliminating single-use plastics.

IMPORTANCE

Using reusable cups eliminates plastic waste, one of the most common environmental issues at large events, and encourages sustainable practices among attendees.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Ski Jumping World Cup in Ljubno](#), Slovenia, the organizers took proactive steps to minimize waste. Key measures included also to use reusable cups with a deposit instead of PET cups.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

→ WASTE DIFFERENTIATION WITH A SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

ACTION

Ensure that waste is categorized (recyclables, compostables, general waste) and well recognize. It is important to ensure that bins are not alone, but rather that ecological corners are established, which should include bins for the collection of all fractions.

IMPORTANCE

Sorting waste properly ensures that recyclables and compostables are processed appropriately, reducing landfill waste and promoting a circular economy.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Nordic Combined World Cup in Ramsau](#), Austria, the organizing team implemented a series of waste reduction strategies to minimize environmental impact. Key actions included eliminating single-use plastics, providing clearly marked recycling stations, and encouraging vendors and participants to use reusable containers and materials. Additionally, strong collaboration with local waste management services ensured that recyclable and compostable materials were properly handled.

→ GREEN AMBASSADORS

ACTION

Ensure that well-trained sustainability volunteers guide the public to better separate waste. Ask them to oversee the most frequently used ecological corners, with bins for the collection of all fractions.

IMPORTANCE

Sorting waste properly ensures that recyclables and compostables are processed appropriately, reducing landfill waste and promoting a circular economy.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Nordic Combined World Cup in Otepää](#), Estonia, a team of Green Ambassadors was introduced to actively promote and support sustainability during the event. These volunteers were present throughout the venue, informing spectators about recycling, guiding proper waste separation, and encouraging environmentally responsible behavior. Their visible presence and direct engagement helped raise awareness and foster a culture of sustainability among participants and the public.

→ DIGITAL ACCESS WITH QR CODES

ACTION

Provide a QR code which participants can scan to access digital brochure and program details, reducing the need for printed materials.

IMPORTANCE

This approach minimizes paper waste, improves accessibility, and ensures up-to-date information without reprinting costs.

BEST PRACTICE

At the FIS Free Cross Junior World Championships 2025 in Isola 2000, organizers introduced a QR code system to replace printed flyers, programs, and brochures. This digital approach significantly reduced paper waste and prevented littering in natural areas, showing how event communication can be both modern and eco-friendly.



BIODIVERSITY & NATURE CONSERVATION

→ NO FIREWORKS

ACTION

Avoid using fireworks during the event.

IMPORTANCE

Fireworks contribute to noise and light pollution, which can disturb local wildlife and ecosystems. Reducing fireworks helps protect the natural environment during events.

→ NO SPILL CARPET INSTALLATION

ACTION

Place carpets in the starting area and ski/snowboard prep rooms to prevent wax residues from contaminating the environment.

IMPORTANCE

This measure reduces pollution, protects natural ecosystems, and promotes sustainable winter sports practices.

BEST PRACTICE

Also at Isola 2000 at the Free Cross Junior World Championships 2025, the Local Organizing Committee installed protective carpets in the starting area and ski/snowboard preparation zones. These carpets served to contain wax particles, preventing them from dispersing into the surrounding environment.

COMMUNICATION

→ AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

ACTION

Integrate sustainability messages into the event through posters, talks, or workshops to raise awareness also taking into consideration the [FIS SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATION GUIDE](#).

IMPORTANCE

Raising awareness about sustainability encourages attendees to adopt more environmentally conscious behaviours in their own lives, helping to create a culture of sustainability.

BEST PRACTICE

The [FIS Nordic Combined World Cup in Otepää](#) has a very well-structured website where all the sustainable initiatives taken are displayed. The website is divided into working areas and each working area contains the actions taken and the reason behind it.

Another best practice to consider is the [Nordic Sustainability Arena](#) linked to [Åre FIS Alpine Ski World Cup](#). An annual, international meeting place where sports, research, business, and societal actors come together to contribute to the global climate transition. Through collective efforts, they can strengthen the future of winter sports and demonstrate how the power of events can help preserve snow and winters for future generations. The Nordic Sustainability Arena is grounded in research and acts in alignment with the Global Goals within Planetary Boundaries.



LEGACY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

→ EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

ACTION


Create interactive initiatives that engage local communities, such as educational activities or environmental competitions.

IMPORTANCE

Community engagement ensures that the event's sustainability efforts have a lasting impact and strengthens the relationship between the event and the local community.

BEST PRACTICE

At the [Nordic Combined World Cup in Lahti](#), Finland, the organizers offered free entry to school students, encouraging youth participation and community engagement. This initiative allowed hundreds of children to attend the event, many experiencing a top-level winter sports competition for the first time.

The background of the page is composed of several large, overlapping, semi-transparent curved shapes in various colors: purple, pink, light green, orange, yellow, and dark grey. These shapes create a layered, organic effect.

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