



**Canadian Network for
Environmental Education and Communication
(EECOM)**

Green Conference Guidelines

Updated January 2017

EECOM Green Conference Guidelines

Background and Use

These conference guidelines have been approved by the EECOM Steering Committee and are for use in organizing EECOM events. They are also available for others to use and borrow as they see fit in the interest of encouraging as many people as possible to work towards greener conferences and meetings. The approach for using these guidelines is as follows:

- The guidelines will be forwarded to conference organizers with the request that they do their best to meet them as soon as the organizers are identified. It is not necessarily expected that the organizers will meet all of the guidelines, rather that they will do their best and make decisions based on local circumstances. This is to be an on-going educational process for everyone involved.
- After the conference the organizers are to submit a report that should include the completed checklist and how they did in efforts to meet the guidelines. For guidelines that the conference did not meet, the report should explain why they were not met. The report should make recommendations for revisions in the guidelines such as proposing new additions or suggesting the elimination of some existing criteria for future conference organizers. This report is an environmental statement for the conference much as there is a final financial report. Please submit the report to the EECOM Steering Committee c/o Alan Warner at alan.h.warner@gmail.com. Feedback is encouraged so that this process can be improved over time.
- Conference organizers are encouraged to distribute these guidelines to other key organizations involved in the conference such as those providing meals and accommodations in keeping with the spirit and expectations of the above process.

These guidelines were largely drawn from a meeting on this topic at the 1999 EECOM conference and a broader document entitled the “Green Meeting Guide” which is posted on the Environment Canada web site at www.ec.gc.ca. They were compiled and edited by Alan Warner and most recently revised as of January 2017 by Haley Hidgon and Jenna Khoury-Hanna.

EECOM Green Conference Guidelines

Please use the following guidelines to assist the conference organization process. Please submit this checklist as an environmental report after the conference to Alan Warner at alan.h.warner@gmail.com. Check the guidelines that were met, or explain next to the guideline, or at the end, as to why it could not be met. Fill in N/A where the guideline was not applicable and explain why. Thank you.

A. Conference Organization and Planning

- ___ 1. Participants and presenters are advised in advance that the conference will be green and educated about what this means. The registration materials ask that participants respect and assist this process as appropriate.
- ___ 2. For all goods procured for the conference, preference is given to the most environmentally appropriate alternatives that are available at a reasonable price and are locally produced. There is a willingness to pay more for environmental responsibility.
- ___ 3. To reduce waste at the conference, we have chosen not to include ‘grab bags’. Gifts for presenters and key notes will be chosen carefully and either not wrapped or wrapped in a reusable cloth or handkerchief.
- ___ 4. Participants can register electronically for the conference.
- ___ 5. Steps are taken to minimize environmental impact of transportation to the conference and during it. This could include choosing a locale accessible by public transportation, using a conference site where walking is feasible, providing information on public transit, etc.
- ___ 6. Information systems are in place to facilitate carpooling.
- ___ 7. Sponsors and donors are actively sought who reflect positive environmental values and practices.
- ___ 8. Contributions from corporations that are known for environmentally destructive practices are rejected.
- ___ 9. Organizers are encouraged to walk, bicycle, carpool or use public transit to attend meetings and events whenever possible.

B. Registration

- ___ 10. Measures are taken to reduce paper waste at check-in (e.g., short registration forms, computerized systems like using a laptop or Ipads).
- ___ 11. Paper should be kept to a minimum in the registration package.
- ___ 12. Reusable name tags are used and returned at the end of the conference so that they can be reused, or participants are asked to bring their own.
- ___ 13. Placards and banners are reusable or made from recycled materials. We recommend printing on “GOOS” (Good on One Side) paper.

C. Program

- ___ 14. Educational efforts are undertaken as part of the program to make participants aware of their environmental impacts during the conference and by the conference. This might include ideas such as calculating the ecological footprint of the conference.
- ___ 15. Attendees are reminded of waste reduction and other environmental opportunities during the conference. For example, presenters are asked to turn off overhead and slide projectors when not in use. Attendees and presenters should be reminded to bring a reusable water bottle and a coffee mug. There should be no water bottles for key notes and presenters.
- ___ 16. The program includes education about the local ecology and environmental issues as a part of the program.
- ___ 17. The program includes on-line information opportunities for people who can not come to the conference.
- ___ 18. Field trips are screened to be environmentally friendly.
- ___ 19. The conference evaluation form has a place for participants to comment on the environmentally-friendly practices of the conference and provide suggestions for improvement.

D. Conference Site Systems

- ___ 20. Recycling and composting systems are in place with convenient and well-marked receptacles.
- ___ 21. Reusable dry markers, erasable boards or blackboards, overheads, computer projectors and slides are used instead of paper flip charts. (If paper flip charts must be provided, they should be made of recyclable newsprint, with recycled content.)
- ___ 22. Distribution of brochures, handouts and session notes is limited to those with a genuine need or interest (e.g., by providing a sign-up sheet or collecting business cards for subsequent mailings; putting copies at the front of the room rather than at the back).
- ___ 23. Exhibit components are reusable and, if practical, made from used or recycled materials. Exhibit packaging is reusable (e.g., pallets, wrappings), and/or recyclable.
- ___ 24. Exhibitors limit handouts and giveaways, and instead collect business cards or post a sign-up sheet for those interested in more information or product samples.
- ___ 25. Lights and equipment are turned off when not in use.

E. Office Systems for Conference and EECOM Office

- ___ 26. Paper use is minimized through the use of e-mail and voice mail instead of paper memos.

- ___ 27. Paper documents are produced only when necessary, and are as short as possible. Editing is done on-screen, rather than printing unnecessary drafts.
- ___ 28. All photocopying is double-sided or printed on “GOOS” (Good on One Side) paper.
- ___ 29. Paper that has been used on one side only is collected and reused for fax cover sheets and note paper. Draft print-outs and photocopies for internal use are made on the back of used paper.
- ___ 30. Documents are circulated and memos posted rather than individual copies being distributed.
- ___ 31. Paper products have certified recycled content, with a high proportion of post-consumer content. Chlorine-bleached paper is avoided.
- ___ 32. Paper products used, photocopier and laser printer toner cartridges, and printer ribbons, are recycled.
- ___ 33. File folders and envelopes are reused (e.g., by placing a label over the old address).
- ___ 34. Mailing and circulation lists are regularly checked and updated to avoid unnecessary mailings.
- ___ 35. Environmentally Friendly Capital Purchasing is used: Priority is given to photocopiers and laser printers with double sided copying, and to plain-paper fax machines. Preference is given to equipment capable of using unbleached and recycled paper. Computers with built-in fax-modems are preferred to enable electronic faxing. Preference is given to photocopiers with stand-by or sleep features and computers equipped with energy-saving features.

F. Food Systems

- ___ 36. Explicit effort is made to utilize food that is locally grown, organic, low in processing, and purchased in bulk.
- ___ 37. Food is used as a teaching moment with appropriate labeling
- ___ 38. Food provides meal choices for vegetarian and vegan participants
- ___ 39. Leftovers are used and or given away
- ___ 40. No single portion package items (ketchup, coffee, cream, sugar etc.) and no single-serve containers are used. No Styrofoam or throw away plates, utensils, etc.
- ___ 41. Disposable dishes, cutlery, straws, stir-sticks, napkins, etc. are not used for coffee breaks or meals. Durable coffee mugs are used. Coffee filters are reusable cloth or steel, or unbleached recycled paper
- ___ 42. There is a composting program or volunteers can take organic materials home for composting.

G. Service Contractors

- ___ 43. Preference is given to contractors who adhere to the above criteria as routine practice.
- ___ 44. Contractors are made aware of the green criteria and expected to adhere to them. If they do not utilize some of these criteria as routine practice, they are challenged to make these a practice for this conference. If they refuse in major ways, attempts are made to find alternative contractors.
- ___ 45. The contractor's practices respect all local and national environmental legislation.
- ___ 46. The contractor makes all reasonable efforts to reduce paper use, including obligatory double-sided copying.
- ___ 47. Any hazardous materials used are properly handled, stored and disposed of.

For guidelines which were not met, please briefly explain why and whether you feel this is an appropriate guideline. Use the guideline number to refer to the guideline. Use the back for extra space.

What suggestions do you have for the revision of this form? What suggestions do you have for new guidelines? What existing guidelines do you feel should be revised or eliminated?

(For the conference committee)

(Date)