

Next Steps in Sustainability

Green initiatives don't have to be intimidating. There are several micro-moments in which you make cleaner design decisions.



Being locked down was a shock to our system, but it benefited the planetary ecosystem. According to IQAir's [2020 World Air Quality Report](#), COVID-19 measures improved air quality in 84 percent of countries worldwide and 65 percent of global cities. Look at these [satellite images](#) of NO2 pollution over major cities. See how much cleaner the air is in April 2020 as compared to April 2019? If you need further proof, [watch this video](#) and see how drastically air quality improved during the lockdown. This is important because air pollution is the estimated cause of more than [6 million premature deaths each year](#) from heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and respiratory diseases, and nine out of every ten people around the world regularly breathe unhealthy air.

In this way, the pandemic did have a silver lining: It gave the Earth some breathing room from the pollution created by air and ground travel as people stayed home and events moved online. Unfortunately, pollution levels quickly rebounded. Images from April 2021, when many of the lockdown measures began to relax, show [pollution approaching pre-pandemic levels](#).

And sustainability is clearly on meeting and event professionals' minds. According to the [Encore Fall 2022 Planner Pulse Report](#), environmental sustainability is one of the top three attributes that 65 percent of planners look for when selecting venues and vendors/suppliers.

With 85 percent of meeting and event professionals planning in-person events of some type in the next year, planners need practical ways to convene people while minimizing the environmental impact of their events.

Here are some potential solutions.

Minimize the impact of in-person events

When you are organizing face-to-face meetings and events, consider the following actions to reduce the environmental impact of your event:

- > Ask venue partners about their sustainability initiatives and what options and reporting is available to you during site visits. There's a possibility that European-style sustainability regulations may go into effect for publicly traded U.S. companies in the next five years. So knowing what's available and starting to track progress will help your company adapt.
- > Ask vendors about sustainable options for food and beverage, technology and more.
- > Serving an exclusively ovo-vegetarian menu, which includes eggs rather than soybean products, has the potential to reduce up to 18 percent of the event's total carbon footprint.



- > Meeting in a destination with train service to major cities can reduce the carbon footprint of accommodations from [13 percent to 2 percent](#) of the event's total carbon footprint.
- > Ask potential venues and vendors about their sustainability initiatives and options. Partnering with sustainability minded venues and vendors can accelerate the greening of your own meetings and events.



At IMEX America 2022 the Encore team made conscious decisions to reduce waste within the Encore 'Break Free' experience space to align with IMEX America's zero-waste event initiative.

They included:

- > Using reusable printed items
- > Replacing traditionally printed items with projected or digital content
- > Using reusable pipe and drape rather than carpet or built walls
- > Using water fountains instead of water bottles
- > Refraining from giving away SWAG items
- > Serving bar drinks from recycled and alternative materials.

Reduce the impact of hybrid events

Hybrid events combine the benefits of meeting virtually with those of in-person events and can also reduce the overall carbon footprint of an event.

Consider the following:

- > If you intend on having more than 50 percent of your participants in-person, carefully selected hubs for hybrid conferences have the potential to reduce the carbon footprint and energy use by [67 percent](#).
- > The number of conference hubs placed in strategic locations can reduce the carbon footprint and cumulative energy demand of an in-person meeting by [50 percent](#). A six-hub in-person scenario has the highest environmental impact, as the number of hubs reduces the overall transportation distance required of participants.

For more tips, review [IMEX Group's CSR and Sustainability page](#) or the [Event Industry Council's Centre for Sustainability and Social Impact page](#).

To learn more about Encore, click [here](#).

Having your virtual viewers

TURN OFF CAMERAS

reduces viewer environmental impact by

96%

Ways to reduce the carbon footprint of virtual events

When you are meeting virtually, the following measures can drastically shrink your online meeting or event's carbon footprint:

- > Set default video quality to standard definition and allow users to upgrade to high definition. That can decrease each viewer's carbon footprint by [95 percent](#).
- > Advise viewers to turn cameras off during a video conference. That can reduce a viewer's environmental impact by [96 percent](#).



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