

Green Meetings in Croatia

**The adoption of green meetings standards
by meeting industry stakeholders in Opatija
with a special focus on the role of Opatija's
convention bureau**

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AFFIDAVIT

I hereby affirm that this Master's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

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ABSTRACT

Green Meetings have been a hot topic for many years. In 2009 UNEP issued a Green Meeting Guide. However, this topic has not yet emerged in Croatia and buzz about the green meetings and sustainability has not yet been spread. Are the meeting organisers aware of the sustainability issues of their events? Do they know about the standards for the green meetings? Do meeting organisers perceive a need for the green meetings? What are the reasons for not implementing the green meeting standards? Maybe there are green meetings, but no one talks about it? Can the initiative for the implementation of the green meeting standards come from a destination?

The purpose of this research is to examine the situation in Opatija, a well-known Croatian tourist and convention destination. The study aims to identify whether hotels and other meeting industry suppliers in the city already have some green meetings practices. What are their attitudes towards the implementation of the green meeting standards? Would they consider this as a competitive advantage? Furthermore, the role of the Opatija Convention and Incentive Bureau in the process of implementation will be investigated. Can the convention bureau be the implementation leader and initiate the interest of all meeting industry suppliers in Opatija? Would meeting organisers follow this initiative? Finally, the best practice examples would provide recommendations for the meeting industry suppliers from Opatija, predominantly hotels with conference facilities, about implementing the green meeting standards. Could this influence their decision to adopt green meeting standards?

In order to gather relevant data for this research, personal interviews were conducted with meeting industry's stakeholders in Croatia. PCO's were interviewed about the current state of green meetings in Croatia as well as their attitudes toward implementation of green meeting standards. Hotel directors and board members of major Opatija hotel companies were interviewed to analyse and identify green meeting practices and attitudes from the supplier side.

The results of the research have shown that awareness and demand for the green meetings in Croatia are pretty low. Both intermediaries and suppliers are aware of the negative impacts of the meetings. However, nobody makes any considerable steps towards reducing them. This particular situation opens a space for a destination to advance and gain some competitive advantage. Can Opatija enter this space as the only destination in Croatia with sustainability on agenda?

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMC	Association Management Company
APEX	Accepted Practices Exchange
CIC	Convention Industry Council
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CVB	Convention & Visitors Bureau
DMC	Destination Management Company
EFAPCO	European Federation of the Associations of Professional Congress Organisers
GHG	Green House Gas
GMIC	Green Meeting Industry Council
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
ICCA	International Congress and Convention Association
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
MPI	Meeting Professionals International
PCO	Professional Congress Organiser
PR	Public Relations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A need for sustainability

Human development and progress, which particularly increased during and after the industrial revolution in the 19th century, caused climate changes that affect the whole world. Global awareness of using non-renewable energy resources demanded the need for sustainability and action to give efforts to reduce negative impacts on the environment. Today many fields of a human activity implemented serious measures to minimise or neutralise such impacts. The meeting industry is no exception in this.

According to Manchester green guide, “every year over 80 million people around the world attend a meeting or a conference and even more attend trade shows or exhibitions” (2008, cited by UNEP, 2009; Maganlal and Schnoor 2011), not to mention global sports events. Following that fact, an organisation of the meetings and events is one of the important fields where results of sustainability measures can easily be presented to the wide range of participants and public, especially considering global events such as Olympic Games or World Football Cup. However, we should not forget that impact on the environment always exists no matter the size of the event. Taking into consideration that almost 80% of the association meetings according to ICCA are under 500 participants, this impact should not be disregarded. Therefore, even when organising smaller conferences or meetings, efforts should be made to minimise or neutralise impacts on the environment.

There are numerous guidelines for “greening” meetings, some more general like recommendations and best practices and some more structured which lead to a certificate. These certificates are sometimes awarded for a specific kind of event while some certificates are awarded at national (Green Meetings Austria, BS8906) or international level (ISO 20121). Croatia, however, doesn't have any regulations or guidelines for conducting green meetings and awareness of the general need for sustainability is just rising. For example, only since January 2015 cities in Croatia are obliged to organise a separate collection of waste (Law on Sustainable Waste Management, Official Gazette no. 94/13).

1.2 Research aims and objectives

Green meetings are globally recognised as the need to do things better and every year more meeting organisers strive to organise green meetings. In Croatia, it seems that awareness is not yet at the global level, and there are no public instruments to help organisers to green their events. With this in my mind and being a part of the Croatian meeting industry, the idea to improve things was a direct call for an action. In the scope

of my master thesis, I have decided to conduct the study on the role of the convention bureau in the adoption of green meeting practices in a destination.

There could be two ways of conducting this study. One is focusing on the meeting organisers' need for such an offer, and the other focusing on the will and determination of the suppliers to create the offer. In her research, Zitz (2014) focused on meeting organisers, and her findings show that 10 of 12 meeting organisers have already implemented green meeting aspects in their event planning. MPI EventView 2009 report, which interviewed sales and marketing executives from different industries, shows that 68% of marketing executives and 73% of event marketers confirmed that they use or will start using green meeting practices latest within a year (MPI, 2009). Both marketing executives and event marketers are considered to be meeting organisers in the sense of this research. In a conversation with Mr Martin Sirk, C.E.O. of ICCA, about the topic and focus of my research, I suggested the idea of creating guidelines for green meetings in Croatia, and he asked me "What would the guidelines for a non-green meeting be?" Finally, the UNEP Green Meeting Guide (2009) states: "Regardless of size, it should be standard practice for every meeting to be a green meeting."

Taking into consideration the above facts, global trends of green meetings, existing certificates for green meetings and the implemented CSR programs in the corporate policies, an assumption was made that the need for such an offer is evident. Sooner or later it will become the foundation for planning and organising a meeting even in Croatia hence, the option to focus on meeting planners was discarded. With a focus on the meeting industry suppliers in Croatia, the scope of my research is to find out whether they are aware of practices for greening meetings and if they would be interested in implementing such practices and offering these to their clients. The research targeted two groups of stakeholders. Croatian PCOs are group one, and group two are conference hotels from Opatija. From each cluster partially different data is collected concerning the fact that PCOs are intermediaries and conference hotels are providers of the basic offer. Neither of the groups is very big, so data was gathered by conducting personal interviews.

The research will aim to answer some of the research questions:

- Do meeting organisers perceive a need for green meetings?
- Do they know about standards for green meetings?
- Can the initiative for the implementation of green meeting standards come from a destination?
- What are hotels' attitudes towards the implementation of the green meeting offer?
- Would they consider this as a competitive advantage?
- Can the convention bureau be the implementation leader and initiate the interest of all meeting industry suppliers in Opatija?

The idea to offer meeting organisers green practices for organising their event would give Opatija a competitive advantage as the only green meeting destination in Croatia. Furthermore, Opatija Tourism Office, as the initiator of the offer, would be a trendsetter in Croatia.

1.3 Structure of thesis

The Master Thesis is structured into five Chapters. The introductory Chapter illustrates the aims and objectives of the research. In the second Chapter, the concept of Green Meetings is defined, along with the historical development of sustainable events. It provides an overview of some standards and guidelines for green meetings with particular emphasis on the UNEP Green Meeting Guide as a practical tool for implementing green meeting practices in Croatia. It will also give an overview of international certificates for sustainable events.

Chapter 3 will focus on the methodology of the conducted research. Chapter 4 will give interpretations of the results and conclusions drawn from conducted research.

Finally, Chapter 5 will give conclusions about the current situation of green meetings in Croatia and the role of the convention bureau in Opatija in the introduction and implementation of the green meetings practices in Opatija, making first steps towards a green meeting destination Opatija.

2 GREEN MEETINGS

There are numerous meetings every day that take place in different parts of the world. To participate in these meetings people first have to find out about them, they have to arrange travel and housing and a lot of other things. All these activities have impacts on the environment, and efforts should be made to minimise these.

United Nations, as a global organisation, organises numerous meetings throughout the year. They came to the awareness that all these meetings have an enormous impact on the environment, so the decision was taken to do everything possible to make more sustainable at least the events they organise (UNEP, 2009). Same goes with numerous other organisations, including more and more corporations and private entities, which are dedicated to reaching their CSR goals. This awareness developed an action to make meetings sustainable, to make them green.

2.1 Definition of the green meeting (event)

The green meetings developed from the practical need to make gatherings of people more sustainable and reduce adverse effects on the environment, so there are not many theoretical definitions that are given by scholars. Definitions presented here are results of the hands-on work of the different task groups, who joined their heads to come to a solution that would help others to increase the sustainability of their meetings. However, Goldblatt's definition is developed on the more scientific model, still based on the theory of environmental, social and economic aspects, but on a higher level (Goldblatt, 2007).

One of the first definitions of a green meeting came from Convention Industry Council's Green Meetings Task Force, which was created in 2003 with a goal to create the minimum best practices for event organisers and suppliers (CIC, 2004). According to CIC (2004), "a green meeting or event incorporates environmental considerations to minimise its negative impact on the environment." In this definition, only environmental benefits are taken into account, which is only one aspect of sustainability. As sustainability also assumes social and economic aspects, the web page of CIC today states "triple-bottom-line" approach that seeks a balance between social, environmental and economic concerns against business needs."

Amy Spatrisano, who was a member of CIC Green Meetings Task Force and is a co-founder of Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) together with Nancy J. Zavada, in their book "Simple Steps to Green Meetings and Events" (2007) define green meetings from the more economic point. According to them, "greening" a meeting or event encompasses all aspects of the strategic planning process (Spatrisano and Zavada, 2007), which means that green meetings incorporate social and environmental as-

pects, as well. Their idea is that with the right planning and clear strategy green meetings do not bring just environmental benefits, but they bring significant economic advantages. The basic idea is to start with the implementation of sustainable practices already in the planning stage and not to consider sustainability as an add-on in the later stage. As a proof, the book gives numerous examples of economic benefits.

According to UNEP Green Meeting Guide (2009) "A green event is one designed, organised and implemented in a way that minimises negative environmental impacts and leaves a positive legacy for the host community." Since the publication was predominantly prepared for the internal use of different UN agencies, the main focus in this definition is again on environmental impacts. However, it also refers to taking into consideration the social and economic impacts of activity, by leaving a positive legacy. In 2012, UNEP published another guide, Sustainable Events Guide, which focuses more on bigger events and festivals. In this publication definition was somewhat adopted and states "A sustainable event is one designed, organised and implemented in a way that minimises potential negative impacts and leaves a beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved." (UNEP, 2012). This definition more clearly reflects the social aspect and, crucially, includes everyone involved, meaning the whole supply chain and not just the event organiser. Special focus is also on the local community where the event takes place.

As previously mentioned, Goldblatt's definition is somewhat more scientific: "Greener meeting and events are meetings, conferences, exhibitions, incentive travel programs and special events that continually endeavour to provide superior experiences through sustainable strategies." (Goldblatt, 2012). According to Goldblatt (2012), two essential inputs for greener meetings and events are CSR and outgreening. CSR is explained as activities that are already implemented in the company strategy, while outgreening is explained as the most efficient performance of CSR activities that gives competitive advantage towards competition. These two inputs, together with ecotourism, sustainable development, and fair trade are forming greener meetings and events.

Set in this way main outputs of the greener meetings and events are innovation, conservation, and education or ICE. By innovation Goldblatt (2012) refers to the constant improvement of strategies and activities to increase energy efficiency and protection of the environment meaning economic impact. Conservation refers to the responsible use of the earth's natural resources and waste minimization (Goldblatt, 2012) meaning environmental impact. Education refers to the promotion of ethical behaviour toward energy and the environment by creating memorable event experiences (Goldblatt, 2012) meaning social impact. Figure 2-1 shows Goldblatt's Theory of Greener Meetings and Events.

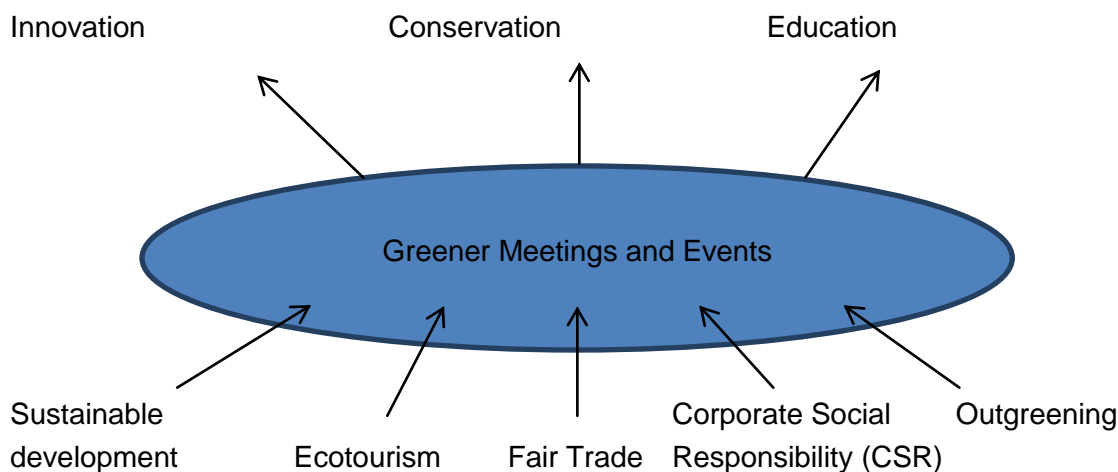


FIGURE 2-1 S. GOLDBLATT: THEORY OF GREENER MEETINGS AND EVENTS

SOURCE: GOLDBLATT, 2012

These three outputs together create two core outcomes of the greener meetings and events: superior experiences and sustainable strategies. By this definition, Goldblatt (2012) defines a greener meetings and events like the ongoing process of constant improvement of strategies by innovation, efficient conservation, and education through memorable experiences.

2.2 History of green meetings

The changing point, when global awareness of sustainable development was raised, was the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UN CED), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The conclusions from Rio de Janeiro led to the first Olympic Games with a set of environmental standards. These were the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer (Norway). The First Summer Olympic Games with environmental agenda were held in Sydney (Australia) in 2000. After that, every next global sporting event that followed had set the environmental program that was improving the previous one, which led to 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London to be awarded ISO20121 standard for event sustainability.

Greening of the events was not limited to the sports events only. Several major international conferences implemented green principles into the strategy and planning process. The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in South Africa in 2002, where the term “greening legacy” was created, is one of the first. (Baillie, 2003). This Summit was assessing the sustainable development and measures taken since 1992 UN CED in Rio de Janeiro. The list continues with Conference of Parties (COP 11) held in Canada in 2005, ICLEI’s World Congress (Local Governments for Sustainability) held in South Africa in 2006, IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Spain in 2008, 10th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10) held in Japan in 2009 and United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (Denmark) COP15 (Conference of the Parties 15) held in 2009. COP15 was among the first con-

ferences to be awarded BS8901 standard for sustainable event management. These are just some of the important conferences which set the ground to change a greening of the events from trend to become a fundamental necessity for today's planning and organisation of events.

Almost every of these events had, as a result of the taken measures, a published guideline or a study with a list of the taken actions and outcomes achieved. While some only report on the achievements, others offer best practice examples and checklists.

2.3 Benefits of the Green Meetings

Apart from environmental aspects of green meetings, several other benefits can be achieved with strategic planning. According to Spatrisano and Zavada (2007), benefits include economic and environmental benefits and competitive advantage. Economic benefits are presented both for meeting organisers and suppliers and mainly represent savings in different services that are substituted or reduced without compromising the quality of experience. These can be the elimination of local transportation due to walking distance to the event venue, reducing printing of speaker handouts or reusing signs. For hotels and venues, major savings are realised with energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste management. For caterers savings can come from serving condiments in bulk containers. Environmental benefits are partly connected to economic savings, like energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste management. However, they also have positive environmental effects such as reduced emissions or diversion of waste from a landfill. By competitive advantage Spatrisano and Zavada (2007) are referring to the higher level of expertise and knowledge, higher attendee satisfaction and good PR. Supplier's advantage comes from reduced operating costs which enable better price strategy.

In addition to these basic benefits, UNEP guides (2009; 2012) cover wider circle of benefits which include:

- A positive reputation and improved image which are gained by promoting a sustainable event, which would raise the profile of the event and attract participants, but also get media attention.
- Environmental innovation. The decision to organise a sustainable event will drive all involved stakeholders to innovative solutions in using resources and protecting the environment.
- Awareness rising. Sustainable event gives opportunity to educate all participants, staff, and other stakeholders but also local community about sustainable behaviour and raise their awareness
- Social benefits primarily focus on the local community through the development of local economy, job creation, usage of local suppliers by promoting better working conditions and social inclusion.

- Influencing decision-making. Successful sustainable events can motivate other meeting organisers and different organisations to implement sustainable practices in their event planning.
- Spreading best practice. Results of the sustainable measures can drive the change in day-to-day operations as many measures do not relate solely to meeting planning, such as reducing paper usage and energy efficiency.

Depending on the size of the event benefits have a different scale of impacts. However, even the smallest actions can bring results and raise awareness which can lead to wider initiatives.

2.4 Guidelines and rules for green meetings

Very often people have a distorted view of the green meetings, taking assumptions about higher costs when organising such meetings, or that they demand too much effort or even giving up on the idea because 100% green is almost impossible. All these assumptions are unjustified and with a few simple steps, a lot can be achieved. Although it might seem that green meetings mainly relate to conferences with environmental topics, they should be considered for the meetings on any other topic and subject.

Several guidelines and checklists were published and released to surpass the above assumptions and facilitate easier implementation of sustainable practices when organising the event. These documents are very often created to assist particular organisations and their members; however most of them are prepared in a way that other organisations interested in implementing green meeting practices can use them in their event planning, hence leaving the legacy.

2.4.1 Convention Industry Council's Green Meetings Report

Convention Industry Council's Green Meetings Report (2004) is among the first documents created to assist in introducing sustainable practices in event planning and organisation. This document, as previously mentioned, is a result of the Green Meetings Task Force of CIC and it gives best practices for event suppliers and event organisers. In both sections, practices are divided into groups related to specific part necessary for event organisation. These are CVBs/DMCs (destinations), accommodations (including cruise lines), event venues, transportation (general and particular practices for ground, air, and ships), food & beverage, exhibition service and general office procedures & communications and for event organisers particularly communication & marketing. Every set of practices has minimum best practices and strongly recommended ones. In every other guideline, sustainable practices are more-less established in the same areas as these are recognised as the most affected areas, where impacts can be easily tracked and measured.

2.4.2 10 Easy Tips for Making your Event More Sustainable

Green Meetings Industry Council on their web page also published “10 Easy Tips for Making your Event More Sustainable” (GMIC, 2007). These are almost identical to “10 Steps to make an Event sustainable” (Kilkenny, 2006, cited by Zitz, 2014). These tips or steps can be considered as an invitation to everyone interested in greening their events in a more simplified and practical way. They are:

1. Put it in writing.
2. Use paperless technology.
3. Meet close.
4. Practice the 3Rs.
5. Bulk up.
6. Lighten your stay.
7. Eat green.
8. Close the recycling loop.
9. Save energy.
10. Spread the word!

Put it in writing considers a formal decision to apply sustainable practices in event planning and organisation. This decision should be formed as a statement or policy, and all stakeholders should be aware of it.

Use paperless technology, in this case, is primarily focused on reducing paper use and using electronic technology to all parts of conference organisation. These include e-mail invitations, conference website to share all news and information, on-line registration and abstracts handling, promotion through the web and social media. However, according to Kilkenny, (2006, cited by Zitz, 2014), another focus of using technology focuses on the modern technologies that enable distance communication. It should be revised if the meeting should be face to face or it can be conducted by using technology, e.g. video conference, conference calls or webinar.

Meet close refers to the selection of the destination and venue of the meeting. Host city should be chosen depending on the target group of potential participants in order to reduce travel distances. When host city is decided, for selection of venue and hotel, the proximity of the two should be considered. Preferably walking distance or usage of public transportation should be the first choice.

Practice the 3Rs refers to the reduction, reuse and recycle. From organisation office to hotel and venue, actions should be taken to enable reduction (e.g. paper use), reuse (e.g. name badge holders) and recycling (e.g. waste separation).

Bulk up focuses on the food and beverage service. Practice should be to avoid separate packaging and use bulk dispensers to reduce waste.

Lighten your stay refers to practices that would reduce usage of resources (energy and water) by choosing hotels with linen and towel reuse program, smart rooms and water-saving faucets.

Eat green refers to providing an offer for special dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, gluten free) but also to use local and seasonal ingredients.

Close the recycling loop refers to the fact that inevitably there will be some printing. In this case recycled paper printed on both sides of the page and ecological printing should be used.

Save energy practices focus on reducing energy consumption in the meeting venue by lights control and efficient use of air conditioning.

Spread the word! All the above practices and deriving outcomes have to be promoted to all stakeholders but also to the public. Promotion of the success of the event greening increases public awareness and invites others to action.

2.4.3 Leaving a Greening Legacy: Guidelines for event greening

This guideline, published by “Greening the WSSD” initiative, is a result of initiatives and actions taken by parties involved in the organisation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) that took place in August and September 2002 in Johannesburg (South Africa). The South African government, the United Nations Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the World Conservation Union joined forces to put ideas and thinking of the Summit in local action, where for the first time the term “greening legacy” was created (Baillie, 2003). As the WSSD was a mega event with 22.000 delegates, the principles and the practices in the guide are covering a very broad scope of areas. Still, the basic greening principles can be easily adjusted to the size and type of any other event.

Guideline gives a step by step procedures and actions that need to be taken to achieve positive results. Before introducing the greening practices, guideline focuses on setting up the base for greening and creating the action plan how greening will be carried out according to the available resources, environment, legislation and target groups.

The basic greening principles are environment best practice (reducing negative environmental impact), social and economic development (promotion through environmental best practice), education and awareness (communication to a relevant audience). Principles furthermore include monitoring, evaluation and reporting (assessing the effectiveness of activities taken and reporting to raise awareness) and finally leaving a positive legacy (ensuring positive short and long-term impacts of decisions and actions). Incorporating these principles has to be in all levels of event organisation (Baillie, 2003).

Based on these principles greening of the event is approached through four key steps – defining the base or context of the event; setting management principles in place; defining greening practices and greening areas of the event; implementing monitoring and evaluation of measures including awareness raising (Baillie, 2003).

Defining the context answers series of questions about the current situation and event location to set up realistic and achievable greening strategy. Management principles give suggestions how to approach greening of the event in a strategic way, which can assure success. Greening practices are divided into waste minimization and management, water efficiency and conservation, energy efficiency and conservation, pollution reduction, biodiversity conservation and sustainable social and economic development. After greening practices are defined, it is also necessary to define areas of the event where these practices will be applied. Areas for event greening include host region, event operations and office practices, green purchasing, registration and accreditation, event venue, exhibition, transportation, accommodation and tourism, and food and beverage services. To maximise the impact of the event, greening monitoring and evaluation of measures taken needs to be set up. Although this does not directly green the event, it is crucial for awareness raising and leaving the legacy (Baillie, 2003).

Finally, this guideline gives a 2-page checklist which outlines basic activities for each area of event planning and staging. (Baillie, 2003) This checklist seems to be a little bit too general. However, it can be used as a great tool for event greening.

2.4.4 UNEP Green Meeting Guide 2009

United Nations, as a global organisation, runs numerous meetings around the world every day. Being aware of the impact of these meetings on the environment, UN organisations started the initiative by introducing policies and plans to reduce the environmental footprint of their meetings, as one of the visible results of efforts to use energy more efficiently and to eliminate wasteful practices (UNEP, 2009). United Nations Environment Programme together with other organisations and experts produced the Green Meeting Guide as a tool to help others within or outside UN to apply these policies and plans for their meetings. Focus of the guide is in small and medium sized meetings with up to 200 participants.

The guide is structured in two core sections – “Green Meetings: what we know” and “Green Meetings: what we do”. While latter one is a checklist with detailed greening recommendations, the former explains the needs for and the elements of the green meetings in 4 parts: Introduction, Management and Communication, Greening your meeting and Climate neutrality.

2.4.4.1 Introduction

The introduction gives definition and benefits of the green meetings which are already explained earlier in this chapter. Also, it gives key instruments for success, as elements of successful green meetings. These instruments are: (UNEP, 2009)

1. Influencing decision-making requires that sustainability becomes essential part of the whole decision-making process from top management to outside service providers;
2. Awareness raising requires that everyone involved in a meeting, being member of staff, service provider or participant, is aware of the greening initiatives, educated on the need for this and is invited to act responsibly;
3. Access to sustainable products, services and techniques to enable greening of the event and in the case these are not available, demand for them can create them;
4. Communication, same as awareness raising, should go towards all involved before, during and after the meeting to share achievements and results enabling success and legacy;
5. Measurement quantifies the achievements to build credibility, provides data for future improvements and PR;
6. Procurement requires the responsible purchase of products and services for the meeting, minimising environmental impacts and maximising social benefits.

2.4.4.2 Management and Communication

Management and Communication part gives guidance on management and communication aspects of greening meetings (UNEP, 2009). Greening of the event cannot be an add-on activity to the meeting organisation activities. It has to be implemented from the very beginning on all levels of meeting organisation since it is a continuous process which does not finish with the event. Meetings are very often organised frequently or at least annually, so greening of the meeting is a learning process where it is necessary to learn from the applied greening measures and strive to improve them for the next meeting. To achieve this, the appropriate greening strategy needs to be developed, including awareness strategy which has to be a part of the overall promotion and communication strategy of the meeting. The success of the greening strategy depends on the awareness and commitment of everyone involved. To follow the greening strategy, for every meeting an action plan with goals, responsibilities and deadlines should be prepared. Finally, monitoring, reporting, benchmarking and evaluation procedures for greening activities are necessary to assess achievements, improve in future and promote the results.

There are five steps that guide to the implementation of greening a meeting. First of all, we have to ask if there is a need for a face to face meeting, or it can be arranged as a virtual meeting. The next step is the selection of the venue/host following the greening principles. Getting started implies that there should be a dedicated person for greening

in the organisation of the meeting. As previously mentioned, greening measures should be applied at all levels of the organisation and implementation of the meeting. Finally, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of greening measures provide us with results upon which we can improve in future, but also communicate the success.

For smaller meetings sometimes it is viable to avoid gathering everyone in one place. The virtual meeting will reduce waste and consumption but also greenhouse gas emissions from travel. If the meeting has to be face to face, measures to minimise impacts need to be taken.

Communication is very important for the success of the meeting. Goals and plans need to be communicated to all actors and public so that they could understand and commit to them. As the success of the greening does not only depend on meeting organisers, communicating with the host, participants and service providers is crucial for achieving greening measures.

Very important tools of the management and communication are measuring, monitoring and reporting. Monitoring and measuring collect quantitative data like consumed resources, generated waste, energy consumption, and travel distances, which need to be referenced with a number of participants, meeting duration and other available information. Benchmarking and evaluation require the collection of data for future comparisons and improvements. Reporting is necessary for raising awareness.

2.4.4.3 Greening your meeting

Greening your meeting part gives an overview of the key environmental impacts of a meeting and how to reduce them through six major areas of the meeting organisation – venue selection, accommodation, catering, setting up the meeting, local transportation, and exhibitions (UNEP, 2009). Reducing environmental impacts is divided into four target groups - reducing energy use and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions, reducing materials consumption and waste generation, reducing water use and reducing indirect environment impacts to air, water and soil.

It is not always possible to apply the same greening strategy for every meeting. This depends on where the meeting takes place and which areas of the meeting organisation can be controlled and influenced. So, the strategy needs to be adapted to the regional realities and focus on areas that are controlled by the organiser.

2.4.4.3.1 Venue

When selecting a venue, the focus should be on the location (accessibility), energy (energy efficient buildings), waste and procurement (waste management and recycling), management (environmental policy) and catering and cleaning (environmental and social impacts).

2.4.4.3.2 Accommodation

As for the venue, selection of the accommodation focuses on same factors – management, location, energy efficiency and water conservation (energy and water efficient devices), waste and procurement and cleaning and catering.

2.4.4.3.3 Catering

Provision of meals focuses on the food and drinks (local and seasonal produce, bulk dispensers), waste and other aspects, such as the environmental policy of caterer, energy and water efficiency of equipment, etc.

2.4.4.3.4 Setting-up the meeting

Planning of the meeting can have a significant effect on the environmental impact of the event, so specific aspects are considered before the meeting, during the meeting and for running the meeting. These are paper use, registration, awareness raising, minimising materials, sustainable materials, re-use of materials and green office practices.

2.4.4.3.5 Local transport

Local transport considers all local travel of participants during a meeting, so the selection of main meeting locations and communication with participants is crucial for minimising transportation impacts.

2.4.4.3.6 Exhibitions

Not every meeting has an exhibition, but when there is one, the focus should be on minimising transportation impacts by reducing exhibitor promotional materials, setting up energy-efficient stands and waste management.

2.4.4.4 Climate neutrality at meetings

In every step of the meeting organisation, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are produced. Climate neutrality refers to the efforts to reduce the GHG emissions arising from the organisation of the meeting and offsetting those emissions that cannot be avoided. To achieve this, sources of emissions first have to be identified. After that strategy to reduce these emissions has to be developed and implemented. Those emissions that cannot be avoided have to be calculated. Final steps towards climate neutrality are collection or allocation of funds for offsetting the remaining GHG emissions and purchasing offsets to compensate them (UNEP, 2009).

2.4.4.5 Greening Meetings Checklist

The section two of the UNEP Green Meetings Guide is the Greening Meetings Checklist, which contains recommendations for the organisers of meetings. The checklist is

divided into six major areas of the meeting organisation, which were discussed in the section one. They are: selecting a venue, accommodation, catering, setting up the meeting, local transport, and exhibitions. In addition to this, there is an additional checklist for assessment and monitoring form. For each of these areas, checklist inquires for sets of information which are divided into three groups: Core Recommendations, Going Further and Regional considerations.

Core Recommendations form the basis for meeting greening in each section, and everyone should strive to apply them. Going Further are recommendations for the organisers that want to make an extra effort and are focusing on smaller or more complicated aspects. Since meetings can take place in different regions of the world, Regional considerations give some guidance on how to adopt recommendations according to the local specific conditions.

Although checklist is aimed at the organisers of the meetings, for areas that are not in their direct responsibility, the checklist can then be passed on to the suppliers and be used as an assessment tool. A complete checklist can be found in Appendix 1.

2.5 International standards for sustainable events

Apart from the guidelines, which can be seen as recommendations and legacies of sustainably organised events, there are also internationally accepted standards. Standards are industry established norms or requirements developed by an independent standards organisation. There are many standards for sustainable events, many of which are developed by countries. However, there are three major standards developed in collaboration with main industry stakeholders, and they are becoming a minimum accepted practice in the event industry. These are ISO 20121:2012 Event Sustainability Management Systems, APEX/ASTM Environmentally Sustainable Meeting Standards and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) G3 Sustainability Reporting Framework - Event Organisers Sector Supplement.

2.5.1 ISO 20121:2012, Event Sustainability Management Systems

International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) developed in 2012 an internationally recognised sustainability standard ISO 20121. Standard defines management system for sustainable organisation of the events of any size, type, duration and shape. The ISO 20121 standard was built on BS 8901 (British Standard for Sustainable Events) and put together with experts from event industry including eight stakeholder organisations such as GMIC, MPI, EFAPCO and others.

To cover all aspects of sustainability, ISO 20121 is based on existing management system standards like ISO 14001 (environmental management) and ISO 9001 (quality management), while key elements of ISO 26000 (Social Responsibility) are integrated, too. ISO 20121 offers solutions for successful event planning at all stages of the supply

chain, while monitoring and measuring assure continual improvement. The standard follows the Plan-Do-Check-Act approach and enables flexibility to respond to the needs of different types of the events and the organisations by providing a methodology that is rooted in international expert consensus. Common international language is given to the event managing so that framework is provided for global tendering and encouraging international trade in the sector.

The ISO 20121 standard requires compliance and implementation of the following processes which are part of the model of the event sustainability management system:

- *Identify and engage interested parties*
- *Determine scope of the management system*
- *Define governing principles of sustainable development*
- *Establish and document policy*
- *Assign and communicate roles and responsibilities*
- *Identify and evaluate issues. Set objectives and plans to achieve them*
- *Provide resources and ensure sufficient competencies and awareness*
- *Maintain internal and external communications*
- *Create and maintain documentation and procedures required for system effectiveness*
- *Establish and implement process for operational control and supply chain management*
- *Monitor and evaluate system performance, including internal audits and management review*
- *Identify nonconformities and take corrective action (ISO, 2012)*

Users can implement ISO 20121 for internal benefits, just as for external benefits of their customers and stakeholders. Conformity with the standard can be first party, second party and third party (GMIC, 2011). The first party is self-declaration by the user, the second party is confirmation of conformity by a party connected to the user while the third party is an assessment by the independent certification body.

2.5.2 APEX/ASTM Environmentally Sustainable Meeting Standards

“The Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) is an initiative of the Convention Industry Council that promotes development and implementation of industry-wide accepted practices to create and enhance efficiency throughout the meetings, conventions and exhibitions industry.” (CIC, 2016a)

Among other areas of the meeting organisation, CIC formed a special APEX working group to deal with the sustainability of the events. APEX working group, in collaboration with ASTM (an accredited Standards Development Organization), created a standard for Environmentally Sustainable Meetings. Standard represents a set of measurable specifications for nine areas of meeting organisation. Areas or sectors covered by the

standard are: Accommodations, AudioVisual, Communication & Marketing Material, Destinations, Exhibits, Food and Beverage, Meeting Venue, OnSite Office and Transportation (CIC, 2016b). For each of these sectors, eight impact areas are identified, and they are Staff Management and Environmental Policy, Communications, Waste, Energy, Air Quality, Water, Procurement and Community Partners (CIC, 2016b). Each of the impact areas has further four levels of the achievement to provide continuous improvement. Requirements for specific sectors are also specified for planners and suppliers, as their role is different in particular stages of meeting organisation.

In difference to the ISO 20121, APEX/ASTM Green Meeting standard is set as a checklist with specific, measurable, performance-based criteria. Since the standard is divided into nine sectors, it is not necessary that all nine sectors are covered, which depends on users area of operation. For example, accommodation providers as suppliers can acquire only Accommodation sector standard while PCO as a planner could cover all nine sectors depending on the size and range of activities of the particular event. However, when the standard is applied, all requirements of impact areas have to be achieved.

2.5.3 Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) G3 Sustainability Reporting Framework - Event Organizers Sector Supplement

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is an independent international organisation that provides public and private entities with sustainability reporting framework. The triple-bottom approach defines reporting on social, economic, and environmental dimensions of their activities, products, and services. The framework consists of four main parts: Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, Indicator Protocols, Sector Supplements and Technical Protocols. (GRI, 2011)

Sustainability Reporting Guidelines consist of Principles for defining report content and Standard Disclosures based upon performance indicators and guidance on technical subjects. Indicator Protocols provide definitions and compilation guidelines for every performance indicator in the Reporting Guidelines. These protocols help report preparers to ensure consistency in reporting. Sector Supplements are used as an addition to the Guidelines for a specific sector and define sector specific performance indicators. Technical protocols provide the user with guidance on reporting issues and are used in conjunction with the Guidelines and the Sector Supplements to cover frequent issues during the reporting process. (GRI, 2011)

Event Organizers Sector Supplement was developed to cover key sector-specific issues. These include Site selection, Transport of attendees, Recruiting and training of the event workforce, participants and volunteers, Sourcing of materials, supplies and services, Managing impacts on communities, natural environments, and local and

global economies, Planning and managing potential legacies and Accessibility of an event. (GRI, 2016a)

Although GRI guidelines look for enhancing comparability among reports by using common indicators, each organisation can adopt reporting to their operating context. Informal approach is also available to use with GRI Guidelines, same as partial use, but then the organisation has to provide information on which core indicators they had used.

In 2013 GRI published a new generation of guidelines G4, which is divided into two parts. The first part is Reporting Principles and Standard Disclosures and the second part is Implementation Manual to enable more user-friendly approach. With this change, Event Organizers Sector Supplement has changed the name to Event Organizers Sector Disclosures and has been re-organized to fit the new structure. However, there were no new contents added. The current activity of GRI is a transition from GRI G4 Guidelines to GRI Sustainability Reporting Standard. It is expected to be launched by the end of 2016. (GRI, 2016b)

2.5.4 Sustainable events framework

Each of these standards focuses on different aspects of the meeting organisation, as they have a different approach to the definition of a sustainable event. While ISO 20121 is a framework for the event sustainability management system, APEX is a set of guidelines and specifications of operations, and GRI is guidelines for sustainable reporting. Each of these standards has a touching point with the other two; however each of them can be used independently or in conjunction with others. In any case, they are complementing each other and together create a framework for the organisation of sustainable events. Overlapping of the international standards can be seen on Figure 2-2.

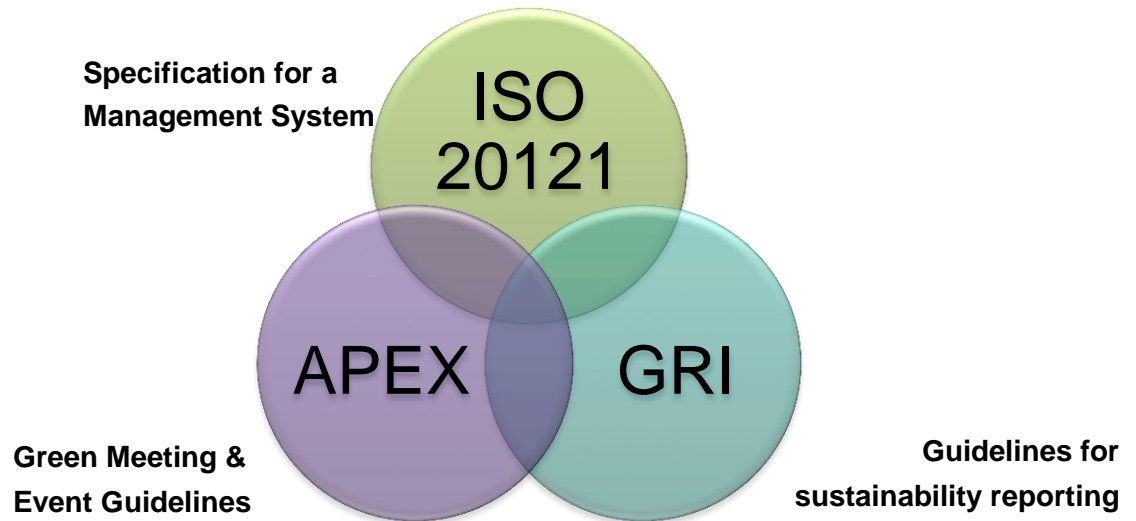


FIGURE 2-2 OVERLAPPING OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

SOURCE: GMIC, INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABLE EVENT STANDARDS

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the research topic of green meetings in Croatia and analysis of the findings of the conducted interviews with stakeholders of the meetings industry.

3.2 Selection of methodology

The research topic of the green meetings in Croatia came as a logical reaction to the current situation on the international meetings industry market, where sustainability practices are becoming fundamental parts of meeting planning and organisation. Croatia is, unfortunately, way behind these trends and green meetings are a topic which is neither researched nor practised. Following the CSR policies of the companies and organisations that operate in Croatia, especially international ones, a logical assumption would be that there are at least some examples of sustainability in meetings and events organisation. However, these were not to be found, and the public information does not exist. This research will try to give a set of actions that could be implemented to improve the situation and raise the awareness about sustainability issues of the planning and organisation of meetings.

Concerning the fact that there are no set standards for organising green meetings in Croatia and there is no previous research on the topic, this research focused on finding out some general facts about green meetings status in Croatia. Predominantly focusing on the supplier side of the green meetings from the aspect of the local convention bureau, it was necessary to find out at least some facts from the organiser's side. Therefore, research was divided into two target groups. One group was the Croatian PCOs, as intermediaries in meetings organisation, and the second group was the hotel companies from Opatija. For each cluster, a set of research questions was developed.

Research questions for PCOs:

- Do meeting organisers perceive a need for green meetings?
- Do they know about standards for green meetings?
- Can the initiative for the implementation of green meeting standards come from a destination?

Research questions for hotel companies:

- What are hotels' attitudes towards the implementation of the green meeting offer?
- Would they consider this as a competitive advantage?
- Can the convention bureau be the implementation leader and initiate the interest of all meeting industry suppliers in Opatija?

To get the answers to research questions, an exploratory research method was chosen. The topic of green meetings in Croatia hasn't been researched yet, so there is no literature or data that could be reviewed as a secondary research. For this reason, research relied on a qualitative approach by collecting primary data. It was decided to collect data by conducting personal interviews with both target groups. This way data could be collected in personal communication with interviewees enabling wider discussions on the topic if necessary. Exploratory research is usually conducted on a small sample, so this fitted well for this research as the target groups are relatively small (total around 20 PCOs in Croatia) and limited (the number of the conference hotels in Opatija).

3.3 Research instrument

By conducting this research, the main focus was to find out whether stakeholders of the meeting industry in Croatia are aware of practices for greening meetings and if they would be interested in implementing such practices and offering these to their clients.

Creating two structured interview guidelines was necessary because one target group is intermediaries and the other is suppliers. Some questions were used in both guidelines. The interview guideline consisted of two parts. The first part had questions directly related to the research questions. The second part of the interview guideline had general questions which referred to background data of the company. Both interview guidelines can be found in Appendix 2.

Interviews with PCOs were structured with more close-ended questions as the focus was on finding some general ideas about green meeting practices on the Croatian meetings industry market. Questions referred to the knowledge and awareness of the interviewees about the green meetings and their attitudes towards sustainability practices in event planning. A group of questions also referred to the status of the demand for green meetings.

Interview with hotel companies had more open-ended questions which enabled more comprehensive explanations. The first section was focusing on CSR policies in their businesses. In the second part of the interview, research focused on knowledge about green meetings and attitudes toward implementation of green meeting practices. The last section referred to interviewee's knowledge about certification of green meetings.

3.4 Data collection

For data collection, interviews were taken in the Croatian language to simplify the communication. Also, both interview guidelines were translated into Croatian for the purpose of conducting interviews. The translation was necessary to explain the topic of the research easier and to get a better understanding of the interviewee's standpoint.

The first target group was PCOs, as intermediaries. There are not many Croatian PCOs, so research tried to include most of them, particularly focusing on the ones who are working throughout Croatia and have the experience of organising meetings for different kinds of clients. The majority of them are based in Zagreb. Dubrovnik is the second city in Croatia by the number of PCOs. In Opatija, there is only one real PCO while other travel agencies focus mainly on the leisure market. Unfortunately, including some PCOs from Dubrovnik in the research was not possible due to geographical reasons. However, all of the interviewed PCOs have experience of organising events in Opatija. The list of PCOs can be found in Appendix 3.

The second target group was hotels from Opatija as suppliers. Here the research focus was on three main conference hotels in Opatija, which belong to the three hotel companies that cover 80% of Opatija hotel capacities. Each of these hotels can host meetings of up to 500 participants, so these hotels form the basic conference offer of Opatija. Also, they are categorised in different categories, covering the range from three stars to five stars category. To widen research, for each hotel company a member of the board or top management and a director of the particular hotel was interviewed. The list of hotels can be found in Appendix 4.

All interviews were conducted face to face following the interview guideline. During the interviews notes were taken as well as entered answers for each question. After the interview, all answers were transcribed. Transcripts of the interviews were used to analyse data. Transcripts translated back to English can be found in Appendix 5.

3.5 Data analysis

According to the conducted research through interviews, content analysis was used. Content analysis enables reviewing the answers and grouping them into different categories. Following the research questions, answers were coded and categorised. Answers to the close-ending questions were coded with simple yes or no, while reviewing answers to the open-ending questions focused on the occurrence of the particular answers by the different interviewees. To review and code them, all the answers were summed up on one paper so that conclusions could be more easily pulled out.

Since the interviews with the PCOs had more structured questions with close-ending, coding of this data was simple as answers were mainly yes or no. Responses to the questions which had open-ending were grouped into different categories to enable interpretation. As mentioned before, questions in the interview referred to different themes, so groups of answers were analysed under specific themes, such as knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and status of demand.

The same principle was used for the analysis of the interviews with hotels; however due to a more open format of the interview, there were more questions which needed a grouping of the answers in different categories. In this interview, answers were grouped

as well and analysed under different themes which covered the CSR status, knowledge, implementation and certification.

Data analysis of the qualitative research is descriptive and requires from a researcher deeper understanding of the answers, reading through the data, coding and making lists and then again going back to the data. This process leads to creating themes and categories which can be further analysed and interpreted. The analysis is completed with the interpretation of findings and recommendations that are found in the next chapter.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

After analysis of the collected data, focus of this chapter is on the interpretation of the results of the research. Since there were two interview guidelines, interpretation will be given for each part of the research followed by conclusions that are drawn from conducted research and international best practice.

4.2 PCO interviews

The PCOs' interviews were conducted to get a general overview of the status of the green meetings in Croatia. Since PCOs are intermediaries and are in contact with both suppliers and clients, this group was targeted to find out about awareness, knowledge and attitude towards green meetings, but also about what the status of the demand for green meetings is. Questions were mainly close-ended with yes or no answer.

4.2.1 Target group information

Target group PCOs included seven travel agencies specialised in professional congress organisation of different sizes and type. Five of them are predominantly operating as PCOs; one is an Incentive agency, and one is a DMC. On average they organise 15 to 20 events annually with 30 to 1000 participants. Approximately 50% of the events they organise are national, and 50% are international ones. Two of the interviewed agencies are bigger companies with 30+ employees. However, these also include the leisure department. Others are mainly smaller companies with 3-12 employees. Four of them have CSR implemented in their company mission. One of the companies is Travelife (www.travelife.org) certified.

4.2.2 Sustainability awareness and knowledge

When asked about general knowledge about sustainability and green meetings, all respondents showed that they are familiar with the green meeting, and all but one think that sustainability is important for organising events.

Every respondent described several factors that differ green meetings from conventional ones. They gave specific examples on how to do meeting greening like using recycled paper, local food and beverage supply, fair trade, reducing usage of resources (energy, water, etc.). They also cited these measures when asked what would be demands for the green meetings. Even more, they are unanimous that they would offer green meetings, and their general attitude towards green meetings is positive.

For the question about the benefits of the green meetings, respondents could give several answers. From their answers, which can be seen in the figure 4-1, their main perception of the green meetings is that it brings environmental benefits, which were further explained as 3R by 2 respondents. Social benefits were pointed out by 3 respondents with only one respondent further explaining them as fair trade and local products and services. It is interesting that in only 2 out of 7 respondents cite economic and financial benefits, which shows that they don't consider significantly green meetings as a driver of the cost savings.

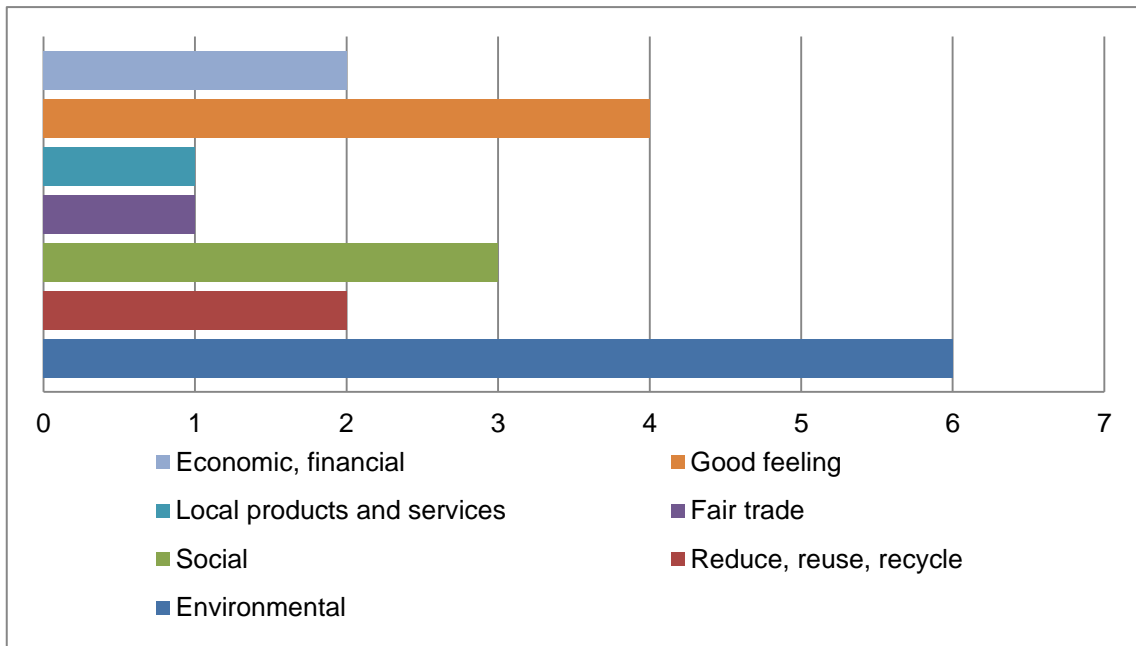


FIGURE 4-1 GREEN MEETING BENEFITS

With these benefits in their mind, all respondents had a very positive attitude towards green meetings. In their opinion green meetings can bring competitive advantage both to them, but also to the hotel, what can be seen in the figure 4-2.

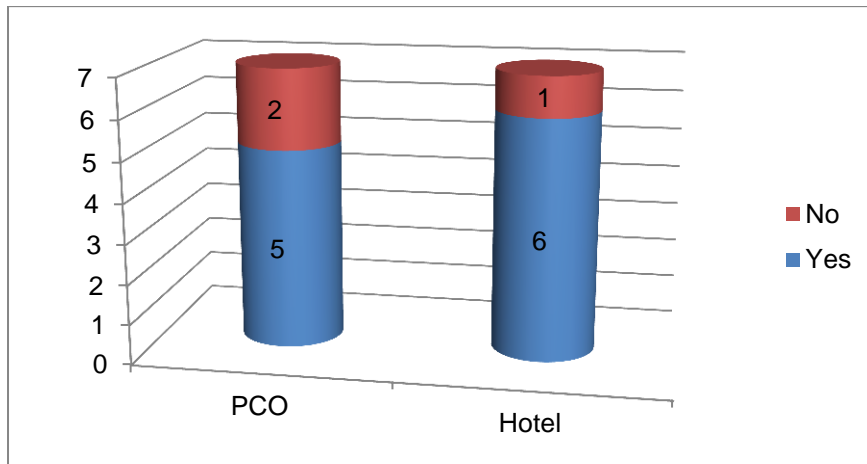


FIGURE 4-2 COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Although only one respondent showed knowledge about standards for sustainable events, from the above findings we can conclude that general knowledge of the PCOs about sustainability and green meetings is adequate.

4.2.3 Demand for green meetings

One of the goals of the interview with the PCOs was to find out if there is a demand for the green meetings in Croatia. None of the respondents organised a green meeting, nor did they have any request from their clients about it. However, three respondents think that demand for green meetings will increase in future.

4.2.4 Initiative towards green meetings

Concerning the fact that the knowledge about the green meetings exists, but there are no demands for them at the moment, all respondents replied that they would gladly promote green meeting as a part of their service. To start with this initiative, they were asked to give their opinion about what they would need to start offering the green meetings and who should bring the initiative. Here again, there was an option to give multiple answers, and Figure 4-3 shows the results.

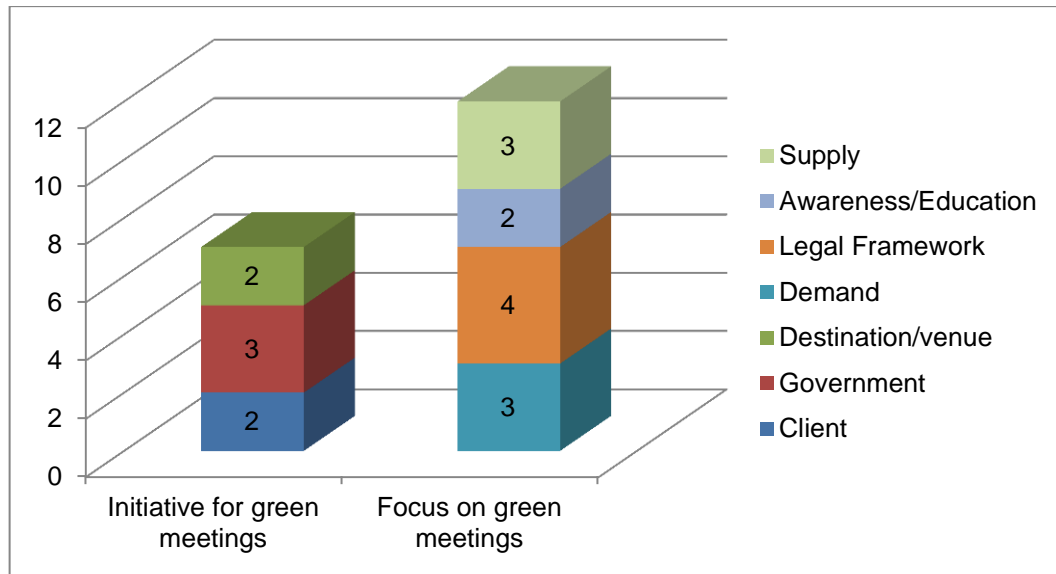


FIGURE 4-3 GREEN MEETINGS INITIATIVE

It is interesting to notice that none of the PCOs think they would start the initiative to offer green meetings. While their main reasons for offering green meetings are to bring business and to get a competitive advantage, they expect that government gives the legal framework for the green meetings in order to focus on them. In their opinion both demand (clients) and supply (destination/venue) are equally strong initiators.

4.2.5 Conclusion of the findings

The interview with PCOs gave answers to the research questions that were developed for this target group.

Do meeting organisers perceive a need for green meetings? The participants of the interviews showed knowledge and awareness of the need for green meetings, and although they never organised a green meeting, there is a very positive attitude towards the introduction of sustainability policies in meeting organisation.

Do they know about standards for green meetings? Elements of the green meetings are very familiar to the Croatian PCOs; however, they are not aware of the standards, which can be partially explained by very low awareness of the sustainability in Croatia in general.

Can the initiative for the implementation of green meeting standards come from a destination? According to Croatian PCOs, it would be very welcome if the destination would initiate with the implementation of the green meeting standards and they would gladly conform the requirements set by destination.

4.3 Hotel Interviews

Interviews with the hotels were conducted within three major hotel companies in Opatija, and particularly focusing on three main conference hotels, which form basic conference offer of Opatija. The interview guide had more open-ending questions than the one for PCOs, and it was structured to find out about views and opinions of leading Opatija hotels about sustainability and green meetings.

4.3.1 Target group information

Hotel interviews were conducted with six hotel executives. From each hotel company a board member and a hotel director were interviewed. The biggest hotel company in Opatija operates 2000 rooms in 16 hotels and employs 326 permanent workers, while in the season there are 1.000 employees. Every year they host about 150 conferences in their five hotels with conference facilities, out of which the interviewed hotel alone hosts 100. The second hotel company operates 530 rooms in 5 hotels and employs 240 permanent workers with additional 140 seasonal employees. In their two hotels with conference facilities, they host about 250 conferences with over 180 in the interviewed hotel. The third hotel company is a standalone hotel with 307 rooms and hosts 75 events annually. The hotel employs 103 permanent workers who grow to 165 in the season.

4.3.2 Company CSR

All three companies have some kind of the CSR policy implemented. Only one of them has it implemented into the vision in writing, while all three employ all measures according to the legal requirements. All respondents consider sustainability as important part of their everyday operation since it brings significant economic benefits with the savings on resources and waste reduction. Each company has already implemented waste separation and water conservation. Some interviewees mentioned that since the largest area of the city of Opatija is in the protected zone, there are limitations and restrictions for improving sustainability i.e. solar panels cannot be mounted on hotel roofs.

4.3.3 Green meetings in the hotels

When asked about the term “green meetings” only one respondent answered positively, with two more being partially familiar with the term. After giving a definition of the green meeting and explaining the elements of green meetings, all respondents agreed that these elements could be implemented in their conference offer. Most acceptable elements that could be implemented or are already implemented in operations are waste separation, energy savings, and water conservation. Furthermore, they all agreed that this should be a basic offer that is complementary for the conference organiser.

The following question asked for a viewpoint of the development of such offer within the company. As seen in Figure 4-4, respondents find that a dedicated person for sustainability and staff education are crucial in the development of the green meetings offer. Two hotel companies stated that they already have a specialist employed in the waste management.

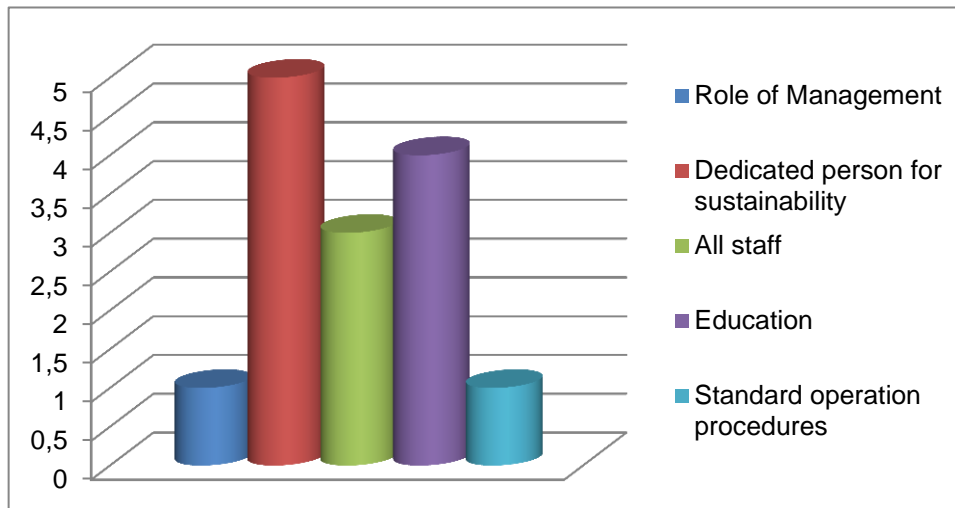


FIGURE 4-4 IMPLEMENTATION DEVELOPMENT

In the opinion of the most respondents, implementation of the green meetings offer would bring competitive advantage to their company; however, two respondents answered that at the moment there is no advantage. One respondent stated that the whole destination should work on this while other think there is no demand for green meetings yet.

The next group of questions focused on the initiative to implement green meetings offer. The great majority of the respondents would consider initiating the development of the green meetings offer in their company, where two of them would do it through investment projects. Others do not think they would secure funds from company's budget. In case that the initiative would come from the convention bureau, all respondents would support it, but mainly without their funds. The support that they expect from the convention bureau is varied and can be seen in Figure 4-5. By opinion of the hotel executives, education and guidelines are the most important support they would expect from the convention bureau, which leads to the conclusion that they see the convention bureau as a partner in the process.

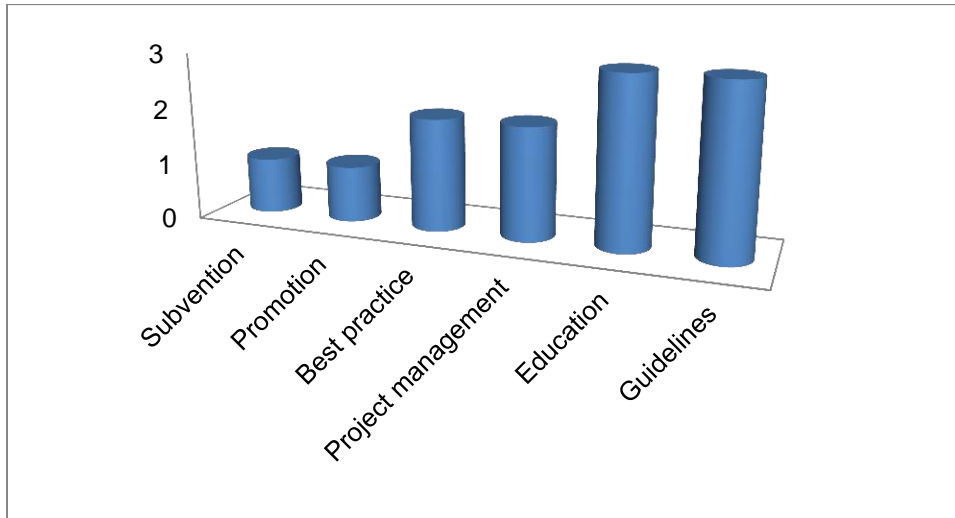


FIGURE 4-5 CONVENTION BUREAU SUPPORT

When talking about benefits they would get from implementing green meetings in their offer, participants of the interviews most often mentioned economic benefits, particularly the ones from cost savings, and environmental benefits. Some also pointed to social benefits. Awareness raising as a benefit of the implementation was also mentioned.

Hotel executives were asked the same question as PCOs about what they would need to start focusing on the green meetings. They could give multiple answers, and among different answers they gave (Figure 4-6), every respondent pointed out that the demand for green meetings would drive them towards implementation of green meetings offer.

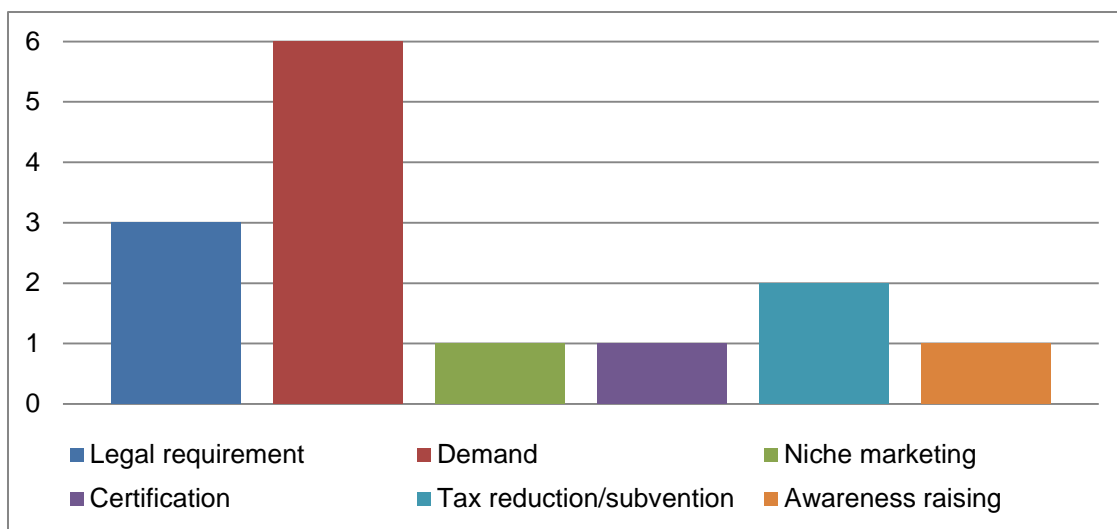


FIGURE 4-6 FOCUS ON GREEN MEETINGS

4.3.4 Standards for sustainable events

In the last part of the interview, the level of knowledge about standards for sustainable events was researched. Not one of the respondents is familiar with any international standards, although some know about ISO standards, but not the ISO 20121 for sustainable events. However, most of them would consider implementing one in their business.

4.3.5 Conclusion of the findings

The interviews with hotel executives gave answers to the research questions that were developed for this target group.

What are hotels' attitudes towards the implementation of the green meeting offer? Hotels in Opatija are very open towards the implementation of the green meetings offer in their hotel. Moreover, some of the elements of green meetings are partially implemented as hotels are focused on reducing costs. The research showed that they would be willing to spend time and even money to develop an offer.

Would they consider this as a competitive advantage? Following the current situation in Croatia, offering green meetings would be a competitive advantage, and most hotels agree with this. In their opinion, the effect would be greater if the whole destination would have a sustainability plan for organising events.

Can the convention bureau be the implementation leader and initiate the interest of all meeting industry suppliers in Opatija? The findings of the research show that convention bureau could have a leading role in the implementation of the green meetings offer in a destination. Through the setting of the basic elements of the green meetings and arranging education on sustainability, awareness and knowledge of the suppliers could be raised.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main aim of this study was to find out whether green meetings standards could be adopted by meeting industry stakeholders in the city of Opatija and what would be the role of Opatija's convention bureau in this process.

The research confirmed the assumption that awareness about green meetings in Croatia is not very high. Such meetings are not organised or promoted although stakeholders, particularly PCOs, have some general knowledge about sustainable measures they could take. According to the interviewed PCOs, the demand for the green meetings doesn't exist, so this could also be the reason why green meetings in Croatia are not as common as on international market. However, all stakeholders are confident that the demand will increase with more international conferences organised in Croatia, but also as the sustainability awareness of the domestic clients will raise, too.

Taking into consideration that the green meetings on the international market are becoming a basic offer and very often are taken for granted, Croatia should work towards the implementation of such an offer to stay competitive. Stakeholders are aware of this; however, they are not very proactive in making the first step, and it seems they are waiting for a legal framework. The first steps need to be taken, and this cannot be created overnight.

The recommendation would be to start with small steps and gradually develop the offer. Since there is no national standard or certificate for sustainable events, some of the existing international guidelines, like the UNEP Green Meeting Guide, can be used as a starting point. This guide offers a simple checklist with core recommendations for each aspect of the meeting organisation. The recommendations from this guide could be easily adapted to Croatian regional conditions. As sustainability is an ongoing process with the aim of the constant improvement, the checklist can be revised from time to time, and additional measures can be introduced. Also, since the UNEP Green Meeting Guide is designed for small- and medium-sized meetings, developments can go in the direction of larger events, too.

Opatija, as a well-known Croatian tourist and convention destination, could take a leading role in this project and become the first destination in Croatia to offer green meeting practices to the meeting organisers. With numerous conferences taking place, the first steps towards green meetings could be made by setting simple and achievable goals. Since hotels already implemented some of the measures, in collaboration with the convention bureau, these measures could be structured and amended with additional ones so that clients could have a clear set of actions that would lead to greener meetings. All results of the greening of the meetings should be measured in order to look for improvements in the future. Reports and case studies from successful green meetings should be used as a tool for awareness-raising of the public.

The critical role of the convention bureau in this process would be to provide knowledge and education to stakeholders, both hotels and PCOs. Promotion of Opatija

as a green meeting destination is important to raise the public awareness, but also as a great PR tool to attract new business. The Convention Bureau should work closely with all stakeholders in the destination, but also with local government, as without the support of the local government some of the measures would be impossible to implement (e.g. waste separation). Local government can work with a convention bureau in the creation of different social programs that would fulfil the social aspect of green meetings.

Overall, this study gives a solid proof that the role of the convention bureau in implementing green meeting offer in the destination can be crucial in a situation where there are no national guidelines. However, there are many different sustainability programs in tourism, such as Travelife, and further research on these could open some touching points that would help in implementation and development of the Croatian green meetings offer.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Greening Meetings Checklist

Source: UNEP Green Meeting Guide 2009 (UNEP, 2009)

1. SELECTING THE VENUE

Core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Headquarters of IGOs, offices of regional commissions etc. should be chosen for the venue, rather than ad hoc locations or commercial establishments, thus reducing the need of staff to travel.		
Venues certified with a recognised green building rating system or another recognised environmental management system should be preferred wherever possible.		
The venue should have an environmental policy and action plan, ideally covering: sustainable procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation, and waste.		
The venue should have training course for staff on environmental duties in place.		
The venue should have good access (ideally within walking distance) to the main public transport connections and town centre.		
The venue should be near to hotels where participants and speakers can stay or even provide accommodation facilities in the venue itself.		
If possible locally, all waste produced at the venue should be separated (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic) at source and sufficient, well-marked bins should be provided in both participant and staff areas.		
If catering is provided by the venue, the facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the "Catering" section.		
Cleaning services for the venue should meet the recommendations provided in the "Accommodation" section.		
It should be possible to regulate the temperature within the building.		
Going further:	Y/N	NOTES
The venue should have specific, energy management, waste reduction and water conservation programmes in place, either separately or as part of any environmental management programme.		
<i>Preference should be given to venues:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With green building standards, e.g. high insulation and efficient heating and cooling systems. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to maximise the use of daylight (rooms, coffee areas, lunch areas and exhibition areas). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With energy efficient lighting and other appliances installed. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplied with green electricity. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With water-saving appliances in kitchens and toilets. 		
The venue should provide information to participants about the green aspects of the venue to inform and encourage guests' participation.		
The venue should reuse materials or donate them to charities (e.g. used linens or usable food).		
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, organic waste should be separately collected for composting and/or supplying to		

farmers for livestock feed.		
Vehicles operated by the venue should be efficient and low emission.		

2. ACCOMMODATION

Management - Core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Hotels certified with a recognised Ecolabel or another recognised environmental management system should be preferred wherever possible.		
The hotel should have an environmental policy and action plan, ideally covering green procurement, energy saving, catering services, transportation waste, and communication to guests.		
The hotel should have training courses for staff on environmental duties in place.		
The hotel should provide information in guest rooms about the green aspects of the hotel to inform and encourage guests' participation.		
Catering facilities should meet the recommendations outlined in the "Catering" section.		

Management - Going further:	Y/N	NOTES
The hotel should have specific waste reduction, energy management and water conservation programmes in place, either separately or as part of any environmental management programme.		

Location – Core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
The hotel should be located near public transportation and near conference facilities (preferably within walking distance).		

Location – Going further:	Y/N	NOTES
The hotel should offer and coordinate group pick-up service for participants, when local transport is not an option.		

Energy efficiency and water conservation – Core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Guests should have the option of no second-day sheet and towel change to save laundry energy and water.		
Guests and staff should be encouraged to reduce water use and turn off lights and other energy consuming devices with well-located signs.		
Energy efficient light-bulbs and systems should be standard, and lighting levels should be set to provide the minimum necessary for comfort, safety and accessibility.		
The use of natural light and ventilation when possible should be promoted.		
Facilities should be equipped with water-saving devices (e.g., tap and shower flow regulators; automatic shut-offs for faucets and showers; low-flush and dual-flush toilets).		
Hot waters heaters and pipes should be properly insulated and maintained.		
The staircases in the hotel should be visible and have signs inviting guests to walk instead of taking the elevator.		
Guests should be able to open windows and not be forced to use a		

technical air condition system.		
Heating and air conditioning systems should be easy for guests to operate (and thus turn down).		
Hotel rooms should not be heated to above 20°C, or cooled to more than 6 degrees below the outside temperature.		
Water-using fixtures should have a regular maintenance programme to repair leaks.		
Energy efficiency and water conservation – Going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Hotels should indicate what further efforts they have taken to conserve water and energy.		
Rain water and grey water use should be maximised in the hotel buildings.		
Key cards in hotels should be linked to energy appliances; as an example lights should switch off when people leave the room.		
Motion-detector-equipped lighting systems should be installed.		
Water use for grounds maintenance should be reduced through conservation measures such as planting drought tolerant vegetation and mulching.		
The building should have a good internal insulation so that less energy is wasted through overheated corridors and unoccupied rooms.		
Insulating covers should be installed on all indoor and outdoor swimming pools and hot tubs to reduce both energy and water use (i.e. evaporation).		
Automatic controls should be in place for heating and cooling with levels set to the minimum necessary for comfort.		
Vehicles operated by the hotel should be efficient and low emission.		
Energy efficiency and water conservation – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
In tropical climates it may not be enough to cool hotel rooms by only 6°C. Local advice should be found on what is achievable.		
Waste and procurement – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Try to avoid the need for paper, and if used ensure that it is printed double sided. Paper products used by the hotel (including fine paper, computer paper, tissues, toilet paper, paper towels and paper for guests) should have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).		
Reusable items should be used to the extent possible. If disposable items are essential, try to ensure they are recyclable and appropriate recycling systems are in place.		
Products such as shampoo and soap should be purchased in bulk and provided in refillable dispensers. If not possible, the hotel should instruct housekeeping staff to not replace consumable amenities daily unless they are empty.		
Provided appropriate recycling systems are in place, single-use products for guests (such as those available in mini-bars or complimentary items) should be supplied in recyclable packaging.		
Newspapers should be delivered to rooms only if requested and should not be wrapped in a plastic bag.		
Waste and procurement – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Measures should be taken to reduce paper use (e.g., short forms or computerised systems at check-in).		
Hotels should indicate what further efforts they have taken to minimise packaging.		

All products purchased by the hotel should be supplied in packaging containing a high percentage of recycled content.		
Packaging should not contain PVC.		
Guests' laundry containers should be reusable (e.g. baskets).		
Waste and procurement – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests.		
Where recycling systems for packaging are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on ensuring packaging is minimised to the extent possible, and, where possible, that biodegradable packaging is used.		
Waste collection and disposal – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced by the hotel should be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic), and sufficient, well-marked bins should be provided in both guest and staff areas.		
Waste collection and disposal – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
The hotel should reuse materials or donate it to charities (e.g. used linens and usable food).		
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, hotels should separately collect organic waste for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.		
Waste collection and disposal – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
Where separated collection and recycling/reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation (see sections above).		
Cleaning services – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
The hotel cleaning staff or private cleaning contractors are trained in environmentally friendly cleaning practices. This training should cover cleaning agents, methods and dosage, equipment and machines used; waste management; and aspects of health, safety and the environment. A record of these training measures should be provided.		
The use of disinfectant should be minimised and automated dosage used.		
<i>To the extent possible, ecolabelled cleaning products should be used. Where ecolabelled products are unavailable, they should at least:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not be classified as potentially harmful to human health or the environment according to national/ regional classification systems. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be readily biodegradable. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not contain EDTA, NTA or APEOs 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not contain more than 25% by weight of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not contain more than 0.5% by weight of phosphorus. 		

3. CATERING

Waste – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Avoid the use of disposable items by using reusable dishes, cutlery, glassware and linens (i.e., no paper, plastic or polystyrene cups, no paper napkins or table cover, no plastic cutlery, and no disposable doilies); avoid aluminium foil.		
If disposable items are essential, try to ensure they contain a high content of recycled or plant-based material, are recyclable, and appropriate recycling systems are in place.		
Avoid the use of single use bottles for juice and water.		
Paper products used for catering should have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF).		
Waste – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Avoid unnecessary disposable items (e.g., plastic straws).		
For bigger meetings, provide recyclable bottles for participants to refill with drinking water.		
For boat tours or other functions where breakable dishes are not permitted, reusable acrylic dishware could be used.		
Print menus on recycled, totally chlorine free (TCF – i.e. unbleached) paper, or write them on blackboards using chalk.		
Waste – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests. Also use textile products to the extent possible where recycled paper is not available. If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests. Also use textile products to the extent possible where recycled paper is not available.		
Packaging – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Avoid single-serve containers for food and condiments (e.g., milk, cream, artificial sweeteners, butter, ketchup, vinegar, mustard, jams, salt, pepper, and breakfast cereals). Use bulk dispensers or jars also for water.		
Provided appropriate recycling systems are in place, products should be supplied in re-usable or recyclable packaging or alternatively the supplier should take back all packaging and guarantee its recycling or reuse.		
Packaging – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Ask suppliers to indicate what efforts they have taken to minimise packaging.		
Request that catering items are supplied in packaging containing a high percentage of recycled content.		
Packaging should not contain PVC.		
Packaging – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
Where recycling systems for packaging are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on ensuring packaging is minimised to the extent possible, and, where possible, that biodegradable packaging is used.		

In some areas local health authorities do not accept bulk dispensers and reusable containers for catering consumables. In these cases convey this information to guests. The food service organisation should work with local health authorities to overcome any regulatory hurdles.		
Waste collection and disposal – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced during catering should be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic).		
Provide numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/instructions – particularly in kitchens and in dining areas.		
Inform caterers of the exact number of participants and re-evaluate quantity needed during the meeting to help avoid waste.		
Collect oil and fat and provide it to respective users and/or use for fuelling.		
Where an external catering company is installed, they should be responsible for waste collection and disposal during the meeting.		
Waste collection – going further:		
Donate surplus food to non-profit organisations, (e.g. Berliner Tafel: http://www.tafel.de).		
Where no organic waste collection system is in place, separately collect organic waste for composting and/or supplying to farmers for livestock feed.		
Waste collection – regional considerations:		
Where separated collection and recycling/reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation (see sections above).		
If waste cannot be centrally collected from the venue, the catering company/staff should be encouraged to themselves deliver the waste separately to collection depots.		
In some locations (e.g. for some of the large UN compounds) a compost system on site can be considered.		
Food and drink – core recommendations	Y/N	NOTES
Use locally grown and produced food and drinks. Menus should reflect the seasonal produce of the region.		
Use organically produced food and drink if possible. Products should be certified as meeting regional or international organic standards to the extent possible.		
Provide fair trade labelled products (such as coffee, tea, and sugar) as the standard when available, accepting potentially higher prices. Products should be independently certified as fair trade. They should either carry the internationally recognised fair trade product label (http://www.fairtrade.net), or be supplied by a company registered with IFAT (the International Fair Trade Association – http://www.ifat.org).		
If working with a private catering contractor, set a specific percentage of products which should be local, organic, and/or fair trade.		
Minimise the quantity of meat products offered, and always offer a vegetarian option (the production of meat produces considerably more CO ₂ than non-meat products).		
Use drinking water from the tap when possible. It is recommended that drinking water be served in carafes/ jugs instead of bottled wa-		

ter.		
Encourage caterers to list any local product on the menu.		
Inform the caterer in time about the exact number of participants, to avoid waste of food.		
Food and drink – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Where marine and aquaculture products are offered, these should be caught/produced using sustainable methods. If available, use products certified with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or similar label. The WWF has also produced a number of country-specific buying guides: http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/marine/our_solutions/sustainable_fishing/sustainable_seafood/seafood_guides/index.cfm . Another useful resource is http://www.seafoodchoices.com .		
Check that menus proposed by caterers do not include threatened or overexploited species appearing in the IUCN Red List (http://www.iucnredlist.org) or listed in qualified international and national bodies.		
Where livestock products are to be used, use those produced according to high welfare standards, and certified as such.		
Food and drink – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
It is not possible to provide certain guidance on whether to use local non-organic or non-local organic produce, as this depends on local circumstances, distance and method of transport, type of product, and other factors. Ideally, try to use local, organic produce or take local advice on the best option.		
As the availability of local, organic and fair trade products will vary considerably from region to region it is a good idea to check availability and prices with a local catering supplier and set appropriate target percentages (e.g. X% of vegetable/dairy/meat products must be organic).		
In certain regions food produced under “integrated production systems” may be more easily available than organic produce. This can be offered as an alternative. In certain regions food produced under “integrated production systems” may be more easily available than organic produce. This can be offered as an alternative.		
For guidelines on animal welfare standards and certification systems, the World Organisation for Animal Health is a good reference (http://www.oie.int)		
It is necessary to consider if there are any cultural or religious considerations to be respected when setting menus.		
Where tap water is not drinkable, ensure that the guidelines for packaging are followed.		
Other – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Catering premises should be cleaned in an environmentally sound manner. For advice on this aspect see the “Accommodation” section.		
The catering company should have an environmentally policy and action plan in place.		
Other – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Encourage the use of water and energy efficient kitchen appliances (e.g. appliances carrying the ENERGY STAR Ecolabel, the EU energy/water label (classification A), or other regional standard).		
Encourage catering companies and food & drink suppliers to use efficient and low emission vehicles and to address the efficiency of		

transportation routes.		
Other – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
It will likely be difficult to influence the types of kitchen appliances used. If catering companies will be using their own equipment, you may try to identify a company which uses energy and water efficient appliances.		
Both the availability of and recognised standards for efficient and low emission vehicles will vary considerably by region. In Europe the EURO 4 (for light-duty vehicles) and EURO IV (for heavy-duty) standards can be used.		

4. SETTING UP THE MEETING

Communication with participants and registration – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Use electronic means (e.g. email, website), if they are appropriate and available, rather than printed materials for pre-meeting (and follow-up communications).		
Set up an electronic registration system that allows participants to submit forms and pictures, if needed, via email or through a web service.		
<i>Encourage participation to use more sustainable ways to travel to the meeting by providing the following information:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For shorter trips, prefer train to car/coach and plane. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When train is not an option, prefer car/coach to plane. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When driving by car, use hybrid cars if possible and share the drive with other participants. In any case, prefer smaller cars. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If flying is the only option, choose direct flights when possible; prefer economy class to business and business to first class. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offset your costs of travel. 		
Provide links to public transport websites.		
Provide a platform for participants to communicate and organise sharing of cars, buses and /or taxis.		
<i>Provide advice to participants on “green behaviour” by email about what delegates could do before and during the meeting. This could include (depending on for example accommodation arrangements):</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only print what you need before travelling. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring your own pen and paper to the meeting. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel by foot, bike or public transport as much as possible. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in one of the recommended hotels, which operate in an environmentally responsible manner. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn off any lights, TV, air conditioner or heater when you leave your hotel room for the day. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the hotel offers this service, take the energy-saving option of not having sheets and towels changed every day. And make sure it is enforced. If not talk to the hotel managers. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycle your waste: bottles, cans, paper, etc. where this option exists. 		
Ensure that the information on your greening efforts is provided electronically prior to and after the meeting.		

Materials for the meeting (including conference secretariat) – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Any paper used (promotional material, programme, signs...) should be 100% recycled, with a minimum of 65% of post-consumer waste content, and totally or elementary chlorine free.		
Any necessary material should be printed at the venue/location of the meeting rather than shipping it from the headquarters.		
Participant bags/packs, banners, gifts and other relevant items should, as far as possible, be produced locally, using sustainably harvested organic or recycled material, and should be reusable. PVC should be avoided as well as products containing potentially harmful chemicals.		
Any food products provided as gifts should follow the recommendations included in the "Catering" section.		
Pens should be provided only upon request. They should be made of a high content of recycled material and be refillable.		
Only strictly necessary material should be included in participant's packs. Send relevant documentation by email beforehand (see above), and have either a restricted number of spare copies of documents available or printing/copying facilities available on request only at the venue for participants.		
Participants should be encouraged to keep their conference material until the end of the meeting; asking them to sign upon receipt of the material can serve as incentive.		
All materials produced for the meeting (such as banners, posters, signs, place cards) should be designed and written in a generic way instead of specific way, to allow them to be reused for other meetings.		
Avoid glossy publications.		
Materials for the meeting (including conference secretariat) – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Consider organising a paperless meeting. Participants can be issued with laptops and given lessons on how to minimise paper in terms of documents, reports and publications. Special software is available which allows delegates to share and amend papers during meetings.		
Provide participants with a CD or USB stick with all the conference material, to avoid printing.		
For external printing contracts, choose environmentally responsible printing companies which do not use environmentally persistent chemicals and promote responsible practices.		
If possible to influence, the electronic equipment (printers, photocopiers, computers etc.) used by the secretariat should be ENERGY STAR® certified. Recycled printer cartridges should also be used if available.		
Use a computer-based fax programme to send faxes electronically.		
Use reusable dry-mark erasable boards or blackboards instead of paper flip charts. Ensure "non-toxic" markers are used.		
Flowers and plants should be purchased locally or regionally and be organically produced.		
Green ornaments should not be cut flowers, but the whole plant. In meetings that last more than one day, plants should be chosen according to the external conditions where the plant will be placed.		
Reusable and recyclable accreditation badges should be provided. At the end of the conference, a place for participants to recycle the badges should be provided.		

Consider whether gifts are necessary at all. Often gifts are thrown away or unused and are therefore a waste of resources. If necessary, therefore try to provide something useful.		
Consider gifts conveying a green or socially responsible message, such as a tree planted in the recipient's name, or local artisan products.		
Materials for the meeting (including conference secretariat) – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainably) harvested forests.		
Where separated collection and recycling/reuse systems are not in place, efforts should be concentrated on waste minimisation.		
Setting up and running the meeting – core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Adjust the start and end time of a meeting/meeting to the schedules of environmentally sound transportation means.		
<i>At the beginning of the meeting remind both staff and participants that they should follow certain rules to help to green the meeting, and ensure the minimum environmental impacts, including:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and photocopy on both sides, and keep font size to a minimum (whilst ensuring readability), and minimise the use of colour copies. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect paper that has been used on one side only in collector trays, and reuse for printing and notepaper. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn off lights and equipment when not in use. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced by the secretariat should be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic) using the bins provided. This should include the separated collection of used photocopier and printer cartridges and batteries. 		
Ensure that the energy saving features of all electronic equipment are enabled.		
There should be numerous, well-located bins for the separate waste fractions with clear signs/instructions – in both participant and staff areas.		
Provide a dedicated area for participants to return material that can be re-used (such as delegate badges).		
Minimise the use of decorative elements such as flowers, banners etc.		
Reduce paper waste at participant registration - e.g. short registration forms; computerised systems (see „Communication with participants and registration“).		
Signs should be posted reminding speakers and participants to turn off equipment (such as projectors and laptops), and lighting when not in use.		
Setting up and running the meeting – going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Meeting and conference rooms should be adapted to the local seasonal conditions and not be cooled to more than 6 degrees below the outside temperature or heated to above 20°C.		
To minimise paper use offer IT services to participants for the electronic copying of data, and make presentations available for download following the meeting.		

Set up a stand (e.g., in the exhibition area) to communicate to participants the green aspects of the meeting.		
If possible and culturally accepted, prefer remote translation options, to avoid the need for translators to travel to the meeting location.		
A portable office approach that allows staff to access their files through a secure connection considerably reduces the amount of background material staff needs to carry with them.		
Setting up and running the meeting – regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
If waste cannot be centrally collected from the venue, the secretariat staff should be encouraged to themselves deliver the waste separately to collection depots.		

5. LOCAL TRANSPORT

Core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
Consider proximity and public transport connections when selecting the venue and hotels, as this has a major bearing on local transportation impacts (see “Selecting the venue” and “Accommodation” sections).		
Provide clear instructions to participants on appropriate public transport and/or walking arrangements from point of arrival/departure (railway station, airport) to the venue, accommodation, town centre etc. Also provide public transport maps. These should be provided by email before the meeting and can be included in participants’ packs, and displayed in the venue.		
Provide a member of staff or local volunteer to accompany participants from hotels/stations to the venue by foot or local transport.		
If public transport is not available organise a shuttle service or car-share scheme for travel between the hotel, venue and/or point of arrival/departure (railway station, airport).		
If organising shared transport is not feasible ask the hotels to organise joint pick-up of participants.		
Participants could be provided with complimentary public transport tickets.		
Going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Try to select meeting start/finish times that allow participants to travel easily using public transport.		
Organise for bicycles to be available for free/rent to participants and ensure secure parking facilities for bikes are provided at the venue and hotels.		
Try to organise discounts for participants on public transport (especially for long meetings).		
Contract a bus shuttle for the participants and speakers with a low emission fleet and employing ecological driving techniques.		
Regional recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
The most appropriate local transportation arrangements will heavily depend on the location. The quality and reach of public transportation systems, as well as the levels of safety for walking or cycling will have a significant influence. The priority should first be on keeping distances between arrival/departure point, venue and accommodation as small as possible.		
Both the availability of and recognised standards for efficient and low emission vehicles will vary considerably by region.		

6. EXHIBITIONS

Core recommendations:	Y/N	NOTES
When the meeting/exhibition is announced, inform potential exhibitors of the conditions of participation.		
<i>Exhibitors should be obliged to (in the conditions of their registration):</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use decorations, carpets and display materials which are made of recycled materials and/or can be reused for future meetings. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the use of lighting and other energy requirements at the stand. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where separated waste collection/disposal systems are in place locally, all waste produced must be collected separately according to the appropriate fractions (e.g. paper, plastic, metal, organic). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use paper products which have a high recycled content (ideally 100%) and be totally or elementary chlorine free (TCF or ECF). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the amount of publications and handouts. Instead collect business cards, post a sign-up sheet or provide a USB (universal serial bus) port for those seeking more information or product samples. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide promotional items which, as far as possible, have been produced using environmentally friendly materials such as organic unbleached cotton or recycled material, and should be reusable. PVC should be avoided. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use packaging which is minimal, and reusable and/or recyclable. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an effort to collect and reuse publications discarded by participants. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid sending material by air if possible. 		
Environmentally friendly materials should be used in the construction of the base exhibition stands, including legally and sustainable harvested timber, and recycled materials. All materials used should be recyclable as a minimum.		
Going further:	Y/N	NOTES
Consider hosting a competition or providing a discount for the most sustainable exhibition design.		
Regional considerations:	Y/N	NOTES
If 100% recycled products are not available, try to use paper with as high a proportion of recycled content as possible, or paper derived from legally (and ideally sustainable) harvested forests.		

Appendix 2: Interview guidelines

A. INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO

INTERVIEWEE:

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events?
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“?
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are?
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting?
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting?
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase?
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client?
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
 - a) _____; b) _____; c) _____; d) _____
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings?
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
10. What about the hotel?
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it?

Why yes, why not?
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events?

General questions:

14. You are: a) PCO; b) DMC; c) AMC; d) Incentive agency; d) other _____(define)
15. How many conferences you organise per year:
16. Conferences source: national % / international %
17. Size range of conferences:
18. Size of company – number of employees:
19. Is CSR implemented in mission?

B. INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL COMPANY

INTERVIEWEE:

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation?
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation?
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission)
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“?
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings?
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer?
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer?
 - a. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company?
8. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget?
9. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget?
10. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau?
11. What is your attitude towards green meetings?
12. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social)
a) _____; b) _____; c) _____; d) _____
13. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates
14. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI)
15. Would you consider implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)?

General questions:

16. How many hotel rooms you operate:
17. How many meeting rooms you have:

18. How many conferences you host per year:

19. Conferences source: national % / international %

20. Size of company – number of employees: _____

Appendix 3: List of PCOs

No.	Company name	Contact person	Position
1	Ban Tours	Pavle Marković	Product & Business Development Manager
2	Da Riva	Damir Nahmijas	Owner
3	Penta PCO	Stjepan Žunić	Owner/Director
4	PerfectMeetings.hr	Ranko Filipović	Owner/Executive Manager
5	ProConventa	Jasmina Bilać	Owner/Managing Director
6	Rina Team Building	Marin Rinčić	Owner/Director
7	Spektar Holidays	Sanja Vukov Colić	Assistant Director Congress & Incentive Department

Appendix 4: List of Hotels

No.	Company name	Contact person	Position
1	Liburnia Riviera Hoteli d.d.	Dino Hrelja	Board Member
		Jelena Papeša	Hotel Director
2	Milenij hoteli d.o.o.	Vedran Gržetić	Executive Director
		Davor Saršon	Hotel Director
3	Grand Hotel Adriatic d.d.	Milan Mirjanič	President of the Board
		Kristijan Mihajlinović	Hotel Director

Appendix 5: Transcripts

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **Ban Tours**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Pavle Marković, Product & Business Development Manager**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **No**
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“?
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
Yes, reducing negative impact on environment
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are? **No**
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **No.**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase? **Demand will increase**
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client?
Yes, if it brings business
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
a) good feeling; b) less pollution; c) reduced use of scarce resources
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive**
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
Yes
10. What about the hotel? **Yes**
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it?
Why yes, why not? **Yes, to bring business**
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Demand, initiative by client**
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? **No**

General questions:

14. You are: a) PCO; **b) DMC**; c) AMC; d) Incentive agency; d) other _____(define)
15. How many conferences you organise per year: **10-15**
16. Conferences source: **national 50% / international 50%**
17. Size range of conferences: **150 participants**
18. Size of company – number of employees: **35**
19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **Yes**

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **Da Riva**INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Damir Nahmijas, Owner**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **Yes, very much**
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **Yes**
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
Recycled paper, energy saving lights, Food & Beverage supply
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are?
Demand is very low, but increase is expected
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **Not specifically**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase? **Demand will increase**
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client? **Of course**
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
a) environmental – feeling about taking care about the environment
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive**
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
Yes
10. What about the hotel? **Yes**
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it?
Why yes, why not? **Yes, it will be necessity in the future**
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Simplifying regulations, legal framework**
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? **No**

General questions:

14. You are: **a) PCO; b) DMC;** c) AMC; d) Incentive agency; d) other
_____ (define)
15. How many conferences you organise per year: **10**
16. Conferences source: **national 50% / international 50%**
17. Size range of conferences: **80-800 participants**
18. Size of company – number of employees: **12**
19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **No**

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **Penta PCO**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Stjepan Žunić, Owner/Director**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **The awareness is still very low**
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“?
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
Yes, local offer
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are? **energy saving, suppliers norms**
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase?
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client? **Very gladly**
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
a) environmental
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive**
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
Yes
10. What about the hotel? **Of course**
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it?
Why yes, why not? **Yes, because of competitive advantage**
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates
Education, awareness, information - initiative from government
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? **No**

General questions:

14. You are: **a) PCO**; b) DMC; c) AMC; d) Incentive agency; d) other
_____(define)
15. How many conferences you organise per year: **20-30**
16. Conferences source: **national 40% / international 60%**
17. Size range of conferences: **100-600 participants**
18. Size of company – number of employees: **11**
19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **Yes**

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **PerfectMeetings.hr**INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Ranko Filipović, Owner/Executive Manager**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **Yes**
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **Yes**
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting **It includes as many as possible sustainability factors.**
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are? **Generally yes – ecologically friendly environment and venue, human rights and fair trade practices implied – contributed to local economies.**
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase?
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client? **Yes, if/where applicable.**
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
 - a) **Most benefits go to the nature and environment including nature protection and the use of resources (reduce, reuse, recycle)**
 - b) **Benefits for people are in protecting human rights and paying fair wages**
 - c) **Fair-trade practices should be implemented**
 - d) **Using local products and services, local communities and businesses are facilitated**
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Very positive one.**
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you? **Yes – if the suppliers could conform to such requests.**
10. What about the hotel? **Hotels should have much more benefits in cost-savings.**
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it? Why yes, why not? **Yes, of course.**
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates
The combination of everything mentioned above. A destination or a venue should initiate it.
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events?
Yes. PerfectMeetings.hr is a Travelife Engaged company.

General questions:

14. You are: a) **PCO**; b) **DMC**; c) **AMC**; d) **Incentive agency**; d) other _____(define)

15. How many conferences you organise per year: **20-30 per year**

16. Conferences source: **national 30% / international 70%**

17. Size range of conferences: **30-500 participants**

18. Size of company – number of employees: **3 constantly employed, plus temporary help.**

19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **Yes (check our mission at <http://www.perfectmeetings.hr/>)**

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **ProConventa**INTERVIEWEE: **Mrs Jasmina Bilać, Owner/Managing Director**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **Absolutely**
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **Yes**
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
They differ in amount of resources used and energy consumption, usage of recyclable materials
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are? **Recyclable materials, less printing material, usage of applications and online forms, energy saving light, reducing water consumption**
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase?
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client? **Yes**
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
a) environmental; b) social responsibility; c) financial benefits; d) public image of event/organisation
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Definite yes**
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
At the moment no, but should be
10. What about the hotel? **Of course**
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it? Why yes, why not? **Yes, because it is good for society, gives also good branding to the company**
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Legal framework, supply, initiative from client**
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? **No**

General questions:

14. You are: **a) PCO; b) DMC; c) AMC; d) Incentive agency; d) other**
_____ (define)
15. How many conferences you organise per year: **5**
16. Conferences source: **national 40% / international 60%**
17. Size range of conferences: **100-200 participants**

18. Size of company – number of employees: **3**

19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **Yes**

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **Rina Team Building**INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Marin Rinčić, Owner/Director**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **Yes**
 2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **Yes**
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
Choice of recycled materials (reused), consumption of local foods and drinks, tapped water
 3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are?
Yes, water conservation, waste management, reduced menus (according to the needs-no food wasted)
 4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
 5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase?
 6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client? **Yes**
 7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
a) saving money; b) environment; c) good feeling
 8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive**
 9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
Maybe
 10. What about the hotel? **No, for now**
 11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it?
Why yes, why not? **Yes, I believe in it**
 12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Demand, legal framework**
 13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? **No**
- General questions:
14. You are: a) PCO; **b) DMC**; c) AMC; **d) Incentive agency**; d) other _____(define)
 15. How many conferences you organise per year: **30**
 16. Conferences source: **national 60% / international 40%**
 17. Size range of conferences: **10-600 participants**
 18. Size of company – number of employees: **7**
 19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **No**

INTERVIEW WITH CROATIAN PCO: **Spektar Holidays**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mrs Sanja Vukov Colić, Assistant Director, Congress & Incentive Dep.**

1. Do you think sustainability is important for organising events? **Absolutely**
2. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **Yes**
 - a. If yes, how green meeting differ from conventional meeting
Different approach to organisation, process which is already established in the world and should not be disregarded
3. Do you know what demands for organising a green meeting are? **No**
4. Have you ever organised a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, which one, where, client
5. Did you have a demand from client to organise a green meeting? **No**
 - a. If yes, more about it: _____
 - b. If demand exists, will it increase? **Demand will increase**
6. Would you consider offering a green meeting to a client? **Very gladly**
7. In your opinion, what benefits green meeting can bring?
a) globally yes, in Croatia not yet; b) good feeling; c) social benefits
8. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive, I'd love to organise one**
9. Do you think offering a green meeting would be a competitive advantage for you?
Yes
10. What about the hotel? **Yes**
11. If you would have the opportunity to offer a green meeting, would you promote it?
Why yes, why not? **Yes, it would be promoted on the company website. Wants to be a part of global action plan to make the world better for next generations**
12. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Initiative from national tourist board**
13. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? **No**

General questions:

14. You are: **a) PCO**; b) DMC; c) AMC; d) Incentive agency; d) other _____(define)
15. How many conferences you organise per year: **15**
16. Conferences source: **national 60% / international 40%**
17. Size range of conferences: **100-1000 participants**
18. Size of company – number of employees: **30**

19. Is CSR implemented in mission? **No**

INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL: **Liburnia Riviera Hoteli d.d.**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Dino Hrelja, Board Member – Hotel Operations**

Before the interview started a remark was given that company is primarily profit driven hence, very strict cost control and all activities taken are oriented towards maximising profit.

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation? **Yes, it is implemented in vision, based on legal requirement and positive legal regulations**
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation? **Yes, of course**
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission)
Yes, waste separation and management (organic waste), projects on energy efficiency (led lighting)
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **Yes**
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings? **Yes, company is in the process of certification for ISO 50001 certificate (energy management)**
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer? **Basic offer, as market demands for it**
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer? **All employees, training should be organised, internal standard operational procedures, Technical department already has specialist for chemicals**
8. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company?
At the moment no, the whole destination should work on this to get competitive advantage
9. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget? **Yes, without funds. Funds would be available only if there is an economic benefit in this.**
10. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget? **Yes**
11. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau? **Legal framework, but there should also be strong initiative from tourist council as a governing body of tourist board, as it showed that without consensus of all parties involved everything stops**

12. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Very positive**
13. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social)
a) knowledge; b) social benefits; c) participant's awareness;
14. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Legal requirement, demand from clients**
15. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI) **No**
16. Would you consider the implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)? **Yes**

General questions:

17. How many hotel rooms you operate: **2000**
18. How many meeting rooms you have: **20**
19. How many conferences you host per year: **150**
20. Conferences source: **national 90% / international 10%**
21. Size of company – number of employees: **326 permanent (1000 in season)**

INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL: Liburnia Riviera Hoteli d.d. – Remisens Premium Hotel Ambassador

INTERVIEWEE: Mrs Jelena Papeša, Hotel Director

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation? **Yes, as environmental protection**
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation? **Yes**
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission) **Yes, waste management, water conservation**
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **No**
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings? **Yes**
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer? **Basic offer complimentary**
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer? **Staff training could be organised**
8. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company? **Yes**
9. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget? **Hardly**
10. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget? **Yes**
11. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau? **Guidelines, subvention**
12. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive and supportive**
13. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social)
a) environmental; b) social benefits; c) economic
14. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Legal requirement, demand from clients**
15. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI) **No, but I'm familiar with ISO standards**
16. Would you consider the implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)? **Yes**

General questions:

17. How many hotel rooms you operate: **249**

18. How many meeting rooms you have: **7**

19. How many conferences you host per year: **100**

20. Conferences source: **national 90% / international 10%**

21. Size of company – number of employees: **100**

INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL: **Milenij hoteli d.o.o.**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Vedran Gržetić, Executive director**

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation? **Yes, partially (waste separation)**
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation? **Yes, it is future of the company and destination, too.**
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission)
Yes, waste management, water conservation (water saving faucets, rain collection), only ecologic fertilisers are used in horticulture
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **No**
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings? **Yes, waste separation, not using paper flipcharts, tapped water, motion sensors for lights in personnel corridors.**
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer? **Basic offer – everyday offer should be based on these practices**
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer? **Initiative by management, dedicated person as project manager, establish deadlines, organise education**
8. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company?
At the moment no, as there is no demand for such offer
9. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget? **Yes, if funds would be provided for EU funds**
10. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget? **Yes**
11. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau? **Best practice examples, education**
12. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Everyday necessity, positive**
13. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social)
a) economic (savings)
14. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Economic reasons (cost savings), awareness, demand**

15. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI) **No**

16. Would you consider the implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)? **Yes**

General questions:

17. How many hotel rooms you operate: **530**

18. How many meeting rooms you have: **12**

19. How many conferences you host per year: **250**

20. Conferences source: **national 80% / international 20%**

21. Size of company – number of employees: **240 (380 in season)**

INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL: **Milenij hoteli d.o.o. – Grand hotel 4 opatijska cvijeta**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Davor Saršon, Hotel Director**

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation? **Not in written, practices of linen reuse, energy efficiency (led lighting), waste separation**
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation? **Yes, education of staff, lighting control**
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission) **In the process and as stated above. Since hotel is in protected zone solar panels cannot be used, which is big restriction**
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **I've heard about it, it is partially familiar**
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings? **Yes, but tapped water in against company policy**
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer? **It should be basic offer**
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer? **There should be dedicated person, staff training**
8. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company? **Yes**
9. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget? **Yes, within the investment projects**
10. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget? **Yes, but not with funds**
11. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau? **Promotion of sustainability**
12. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive**
13. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social)
a) awareness raising; b) energy savings; c) environment and resources protection
14. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Incentives in tax reductions, demand**

15. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI) **Partially, I know about ISO but not for sustainable events**
16. Would you consider the implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)? **Yes, but only after implementing procedures**

General questions:

17. How many hotel rooms you operate: **223**
18. How many meeting rooms you have: **8**
19. How many conferences you host per year: **200**
20. Conferences source: **national 80% / international 20%**
21. Size of company – number of employees: **98**

INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL: **Grand Hotel Adriatic d.d.**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Milan Mirjanič, President of the Board**

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation? **Yes, partially (it is not implemented in writing, it is more good practice), following legal requirements, a 5-year investment plan towards energy efficiency according to energy certificate**
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation? **Absolutely, expenses (economic benefits) – biggest savings on energy efficiency, targeting guests**
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission) **Yes, energy efficiency (power consumption, AC control), waste management (waste separation), towel reuse, led lights in congress hall**
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **I'm familiar with the term**
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings? **Yes, some are already implemented (energy efficiency-led lights), office procedures (reducing printing), tapped water can be considered**
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer? **Choice of the client, additional offer but complimentary**
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer? **Employee awareness, dedicated person but not separate working position (additional responsibility within existing job)**
8. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company? **Yes, it would bring lower expenses, hence more competitive rates**
9. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget? **Yes, already have investment project for energy efficiency**
10. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget? **Yes**
11. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau? **To provide best practice examples, guidelines and knowledge, to organise a workshop with experienced green meeting organiser to show know how.**
12. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **It is a long-term positive trend, there are no negative connotations**

13. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social)
a) economic savings; b) diversification; c) environmental (less tangible); d) demanding standard with long term effect; e) waste food of composting or livestock feed
14. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Demand, branding niche, action plan to promote destination, commitment to reaching certificates**
15. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI) **No**
16. Would you consider the implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)? **Yes**

General questions:

17. How many hotel rooms you operate: **307**
18. How many meeting rooms you have: **7**
19. How many conferences you host per year: **75**
20. Conferences source: **national 85% / international 15%**
21. Size of company – number of employees: **103 (165 in season)**

INTERVIEW WITH HOTEL: **Grand Hotel Adriatic d.d.**

INTERVIEWEE: **Mr Kristijan Mihajlinović, Hotel Director**

1. Is CSR implemented in your company mission or do you follow any sustainability policies in your daily operation? **Yes, energy efficiency**
2. Do you think sustainability is important for your business and operation? **Yes**
3. Did your hotel company already implement any environment protection programs in its operations? (waste management, water consumption, CO2 emission) **Waste management and separation, cleaning of waste waters, collecting rain (following positive legal regulations)**
4. Are you familiar with term „green meetings“? **No**
Elements of green meetings: waste separation, tapped water, no disposable cutlery, paper reduction, energy saving systems
5. Do you think that you could implement in you congress offer elements of green meetings? **Yes, working on these elements**
6. Would you consider the implementation of these practices should be grounded as a basic offer or additional offer? **Basic offer**
7. Who should be involved in the development of this offer? **Responsible member of staff, all employees included (already have waste management commissioner)**
8. From the point of view of top management, who you represent, do you think that introduction of such offer would bring competitive advantage for your company? **Yes**
9. Would you initiate introduction of such offer and secure funds from company budget? **Yes, but no funds could be secured**
10. If the initiative would come from convention bureau, would you support it and follow it with your own budget? **Yes, including some funds**
11. What kind of support would you expect from convention bureau? **Project presentation, budget requirements and objectives to reach**
12. What is your attitude towards green meetings? **Positive**
13. What benefits can green meeting bring? (economic, environmental, social) **a) social benefits**
14. What would you need for focus on green meetings >political, legal framework, demand, supply, who initiates **Legal framework, demand**
15. Do you know about standards for sustainable events? (ISO, APEX, GRI) **No**
16. Would you consider the implementation of event sustainability standard in your company (hotel, venue)? **No, I personally find certificates irrelevant**

General questions:

17. How many hotel rooms you operate: **307**

18. How many meeting rooms you have: **7**

19. How many conferences you host per year: **75**

20. Conferences source: **national 85% / international 15%**

21. Size of company – number of employees: **103 (165 in season)**