



CLIMATE ACTION FOR EVENTS

TSEF ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY | TORONTO CLIMATE WEEK

25 INDUSTRY PROS | 6 WORKING GROUPS

Start With: The Guest Mindset

Design sustainability into the attendee experience. When it's easy, intuitive, and default, adoption soars.

DO THIS NOW → Quick Wins

TRANSPORTATION

- Pick walk-able venues (hotel ↔ venue ↔ transit)
- Share the "why" with attendees (sustainability rationale for location)
- Set up local buddy systems at transit hubs
- Provide detailed local transit information

FOOD SOURCING

- Source within 100km
- Reduce beef, highlight plant-based options
- Show carbon ratings on menus, reward lower-impact choices
- Smaller buffet plates = 20-30% less waste

VENUE & ENERGY

- Require LEED certification or green building credentials in RFPs
- Choose venues with LED lighting and renewable energy systems
- Where possible - report on water, electricity and waste

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Staff collect and sort waste (guests get it wrong 60%+ of the time)
- Food rescue partnerships (Second Harvest model) - donate leftovers to people, then animals, then compost
- Confirm final headcounts to reduce overordering
- Closed-loop water systems (glass bottles, refills)
- Clear waste stations with simple choices

MATERIALS & PACKAGING

- Eliminate/reduce gifting programs - offer choice: none, donation, experience, or physical item
- No dates on signage (enables reuse across events)
- Digital signage, apps, reusable boards instead of printed materials
- Address packaging: use crates instead of shrink-wrap, bulk buying to reduce shipments
- In-house furniture rentals (vs. shipping in decor)
- Standardize reusable lanyards industry-wide
- Explore innovative materials (kelp/mushroom-based signage)



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BUILD OVER TIME → 6-12 Months

Event App Ecosystem: Carbon tracking, digital signage, push notifications, sustainable choice rewards

Local Buddy/Reception Kiosk: High-touch service at transit points—builds community while encouraging public transport

Industry Standards: Reusable lanyard specs, carbon label formats, RFP sustainability requirements

THE ASK

Pick 3 actions to implement at your next event.

Share results with TSEF to build the case for industry-wide adoption.

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