

Organising a Greener Event at Palexpo

Ideas to consider

WWW.PALEXPO.CH



Table of contents

- Your Green Strategy
- Transportation in Geneva & Switzerland
- Accommodation
- Food & Beverages
- Energy Conservation & Waste Management
- The Benefits

A Greener Event at Palexpo

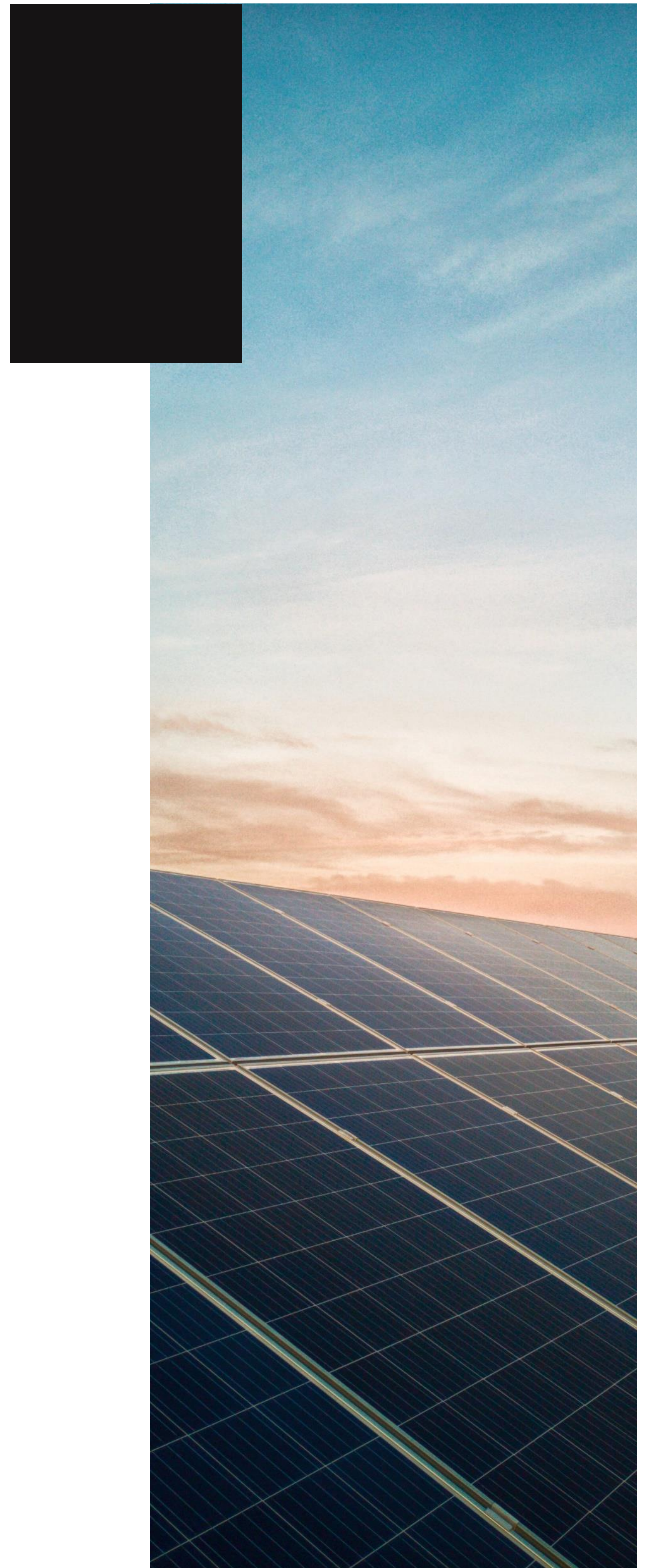
Palexpo is committed to leading the industry towards a more sustainable future for events.

The venue received two ISO certifications in 2018 and 2019 and has committed to respect the “Net Zero Carbon Pledge”, launched at COP 26 in Glasgow for the Events Industry.

Whether you organise a large-scale international conference or exhibition, or a smaller event, this guide demonstrates how organising a more sustainable event does not need to be complex nor expensive!

Adopting environmentally friendly practices to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, minimising waste and effectively communicate to attendees about how they can contribute to decrease their environmental impacts, are all part of hosting a sustainable event.

Below are a few simple steps you could easily incorporate into your next event to make it more eco-friendly! Thank you!





Your Green Strategy

Think about the green strategy you want to implement and communicate your message effectively

To run a greener event, you need to win the hearts and minds of all participants, whether they are staff members, congress delegates, visitors, or exhibitors.

A FEW IDEAS TO CONSIDER AS AN ORGANISER

- Establish a “green ambassador team” of committed people, prior to the event
- Create a reward/award programme for your visitors or delegates, exhibitors, and staff members
- Think about the project and define your goals well in advance
- Organise a fundraising run in our park in front of the venue and eventually donate to local charity organisations
- Inform your staff, visitors, delegates, and exhibitors about your sustainability guidelines, prior to the event
- Provide feedback after your event about your green achievement
- Include a sustainability message of the event in all communication materials
- Celebrate your successes and thank participants for their support in going green after the event
- Share and promote your eco-friendly initiatives on social medias

Transportation in Geneva & Switzerland

A good way to minimize CO₂ emissions and to travel responsibly is to use public transportation or alternative environmentally friendly means of transportation, wherever we can.

TO SWITZERLAND BY TRAIN

- Switzerland has one of the most efficient public transport networks in the world
- Geneva is connected to a very efficient railway network, providing rapid access to the rest of Switzerland as well as Europe
- The city counts two railway stations: airport and city-centre stations
- Over 200 trains travel daily through the city and the international airport
- High-speed trains (TGV/ICE) provide easy and rapid access to Paris, Lyon, Milan, etc.

MOVING AROUND IN THE CITY

- The size of Geneva and its compact city-centre makes walking between many hotels, sights, and restaurants a matter of minutes
- All guests staying in a hotel in the city are entitled to receive a Geneva Public Transport Card, enabling them to use the entire public transport system, free of charge, for the duration of their stay
- The city encourages the transition to green mobility by switching from diesel to electric buses
- Geneva's public transport network is safe, on-time and highly efficient
- "Taxi Bikes" is the leading environmentally friendly taxi bike service in the city
- Geneva and its surrounding area benefit from a large and practical network of bike lanes
- From May to October, bicycles can be hired free of charge from four stations in the city

FROM THE AIRPORT TO YOUR HOTEL AND THE CITY CENTRE

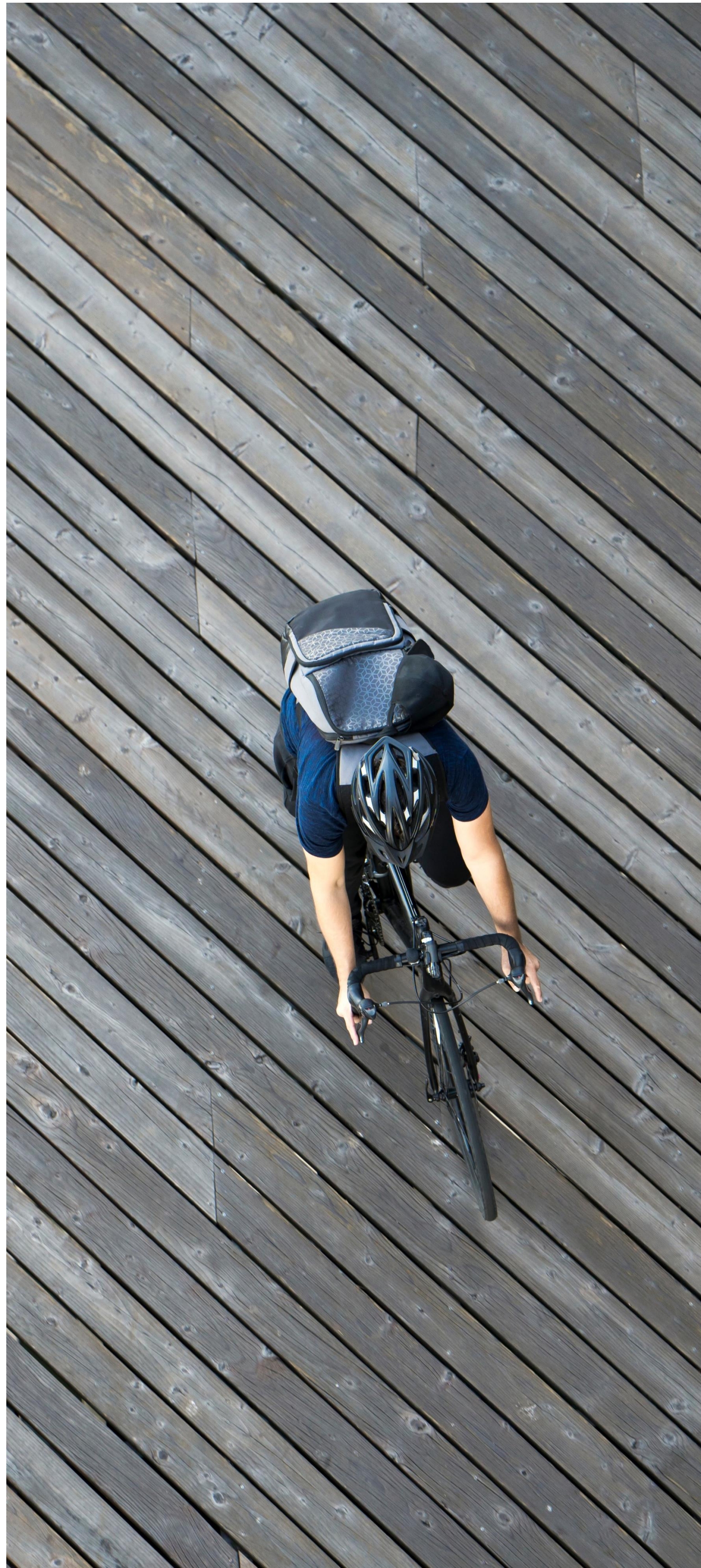
- Geneva offers the shortest train ride in Europe from the airport to the city centre
- Geneva city centre is located only 4km from the airport
- It only takes a 6-minute train ride to reach the city centre from the airport
- Many Swiss or French neighbouring hotels offer free shuttle-bus transfers to and from the airport

FROM THE AIRPORT TO PALEXPO

- The venue is located just 500 metres away from the airport and its railway station
- Palexpo is easily accessible via public transport from the airport
- The venue is a 5-minutes' bus ride from the airport
- Bus 5 stops directly in front of the Congress Centre
- The venue is a 10-minutes' walk from the international airport

FROM PALEXPO TO THE CITY

- Palexpo is only 4 km from the city centre and lake shore
- The venue's strategic location puts most hotels within 5-30 minutes by public transport
- 20-minutes' bus ride from Palexpo to the city centre
- Four fast charging stations for electrical cars (20kW) are available on site



A FEW IDEAS TO CONSIDER AS AN ORGANISER

- Convince your visitors to use public transport, whenever possible, by communicating about it in advance in all your publications
- Encourage your visitors to travel to and from Geneva by train
www.sbb.ch
- Actively promote the free of charge “Geneva Transport Card” amongst your participants and staff members
www.geneve.com
- Think about original travel alternatives, such as Taxi Bikes, for visitors arriving at the airport and team up with a sponsor willing to offer this service:
www.taxibike.ch
- Promote Geneva’s cycle paths network and the possibility of renting bikes
www.geneveroule.ch
- Try to achieve a CO₂ neutral event by teaming up with companies working on carbon offset projects (Example: myclimate.org lists carbon offset projects in Switzerland and in other countries)
- Promote the projects you have chosen by communicating about them on your website and in your publications
- Allow participants to offset their travel carbon footprint on your website
- Put in place promotional discounts or small prizes to attendees who choose environmentally friendly means of transportation or to those who purchase emission offsets (examples : reduced participant fees, free lunch, green awards, free recycled water bottles, etc.)

Accommodation

Palexpo guarantees minimal commuting by offering a wide selection of accommodation on site.

- A total of 723 rooms are available on-site
- The IBIS Style Hotel offers 115 three-star rooms
- 112 one-star rooms are available at the IBIS Budget Hotel
- 496 four-star rooms are offered at the adjacent Hilton Hotel, connected to Palexpo by a covered walkway

The venue's strategic location puts many hotels within 5-30 minutes reach by public transport.

- Palexpo is only 4 km from the city centre and lake shore
- 20-minutes' bus ride from Palexpo to the city centre and most hotels
- Bus 5 departs directly in front of the venue every 8 minutes

Many hotels in Geneva are dedicated to sustainable tourism

- Many hotels incorporate sustainability in their corporate strategy and governance
- These hotels monitor water and electricity consumption, use renewable energy sources, reduce waste, or use regional products

A FEW IDEAS TO CONSIDER AS AN ORGANISER

- Encourage your participants to choose either a hotel located within walking distance of Palexpo or accessible by public transport
- Recommend hotels committed to sustainability or with sustainability labels
- Select local hotels instead of large chains to support the local economy



Food & Beverages

Palexpo offers sustainable catering.

- The team uses locally sourced sustainable produce whenever possible, considering seasonal ingredients, to cut down on air imports.
- To cater to different dietary practices, cultural and lifestyle choices, Palexpo Restaurants is accustomed to offering plant-based or vegan menu options
- All our restaurants serve FOS certified sustainable seafood
- Palexpo Restaurants encourages the use of porcelain tableware whenever possible
- All non- biodegradable single-use plastic tableware have been banned from our catering outlets
- Many biodegradable options are proposed to our clients, when using porcelain tableware is not possible
- Clients are given the possibility to select water filling stations in the exhibition halls, thus avoiding the use of plastic bottles: tap water in Switzerland meets very high standards of quality!
- 100% of food waste is recycled and converted into biogas, which is used by the trucks collecting waste on-site
- Due to very high hygiene regulations in Switzerland, donating to a charity is complicated. However, Palexpo has been collecting statistical data for decades allowing to minimize waste
- Our restaurants were awarded the GRTA (Genève Region Terre Avenir) Quality Label

A FEW IDEAS TO CONSIDER AS AN ORGANISER

- Team up with our catering specialists in advance, to define your catering concept
- Use the expertise of our catering specialist to order the appropriate amount of food
- Try to choose fresh, local, and seasonal products as much as possible (for example, you could propose local apple or grape juices instead of imported orange juice)
- Offer plant-based options, as vegetarian food requires less energy in production than meat.
- Favour chicken rather than beef, which has the worst carbon footprint
- Substitute lunch boxes with open roll-in buffets to avoid wasting food
- Avoid disposable glassware or dishware and use porcelain instead
- Use compostable items for take-away options if using reusable cutlery is not manageable
- Ensure your event does not serve individually wrapped items (mints, food goodies, etc.)
- Instead of drinking from single-use cups, choose our “water stations” option in the halls to allow people to fill up their water bottles
- Provide water bottles or team up with a sponsor to distribute them to your delegates or visitors
- Communicate the sustainable outline of your catering concept and menu options prior to your event



Energy Conservation & Waste Management

Palexpo focuses on energy & water preservation

- Palexpo is proud to host the second largest solar power plant in the country: 15,000 solar panels are installed on the roof, which represents to 30'000 sqm of surface
- Palexpo produces the equivalent to the annual consumption of 1,350 Genevan households in electricity
- The electricity used for our daily operations and for our clients originates a 100% from natural sources (hydro-electric or solar sources)
- Two energy audits have helped increase Palexpo's energy efficiency, mainly by reviewing the halls' ventilation and lighting systems
- Motion detectors have been installed in all toilets and conference facilities
- By replacing the lights in exhibition halls 1 and 2 in 2018, Palexpo has saved 375,000 kWh (equals the consumption of 100 Swiss households)
- A lighting-level protocol, set at 50% during build-up, breakdown, and maintenance activities, is in place in all our exhibition halls
- A smart business software ensures that the electricity supplied to our exhibitors is fine-tuned to their exact needs, thanks to remote calibration
- All toilets are fitted with low flow flush and automatic water taps

Palexpo offers many digital signage & advertising options

- Digital LED signage screens have been installed in many areas inside the venue
- Signage screens are available, free of charge, in front of each conference room and at the entrance of the congress centre
- 16 signage screens are offered free of charge on four pillars in the main entrance hall
- Our partner, Neo Advertising, offers many cutting-edge digital advertising solutions on site and at the airport

Palexpo offers eco-friendly signage solutions

- The banners used at Palexpo contain a low level of polyvinyl chloride
- The banners are recycled and reused by gardening companies or to produce electrical cables
- Palexpo uses environmentally friendly water-based latex paint without any solvents

100%

of our electricity originates
from natural sources

95%

of all purchases
are made locally

75%

of the on-site
waste is recycled



Palexpo applies a strict reduce, re-use and recycle policy

- 95% of all purchases are made locally
- 75% of the waste generated on-site is collected, sorted, and recycled by our long-term partner
- The remaining 25% of waste is incinerated to produce electricity or heat: no waste goes to landfill
- Half of the waste is recycled and sorted directly on site
- The remaining waste is treated by our external partner located only 10 km away from the venue
- We ensure that containers are filled, to help our partner reduce the number of trucks collecting waste
- All carpets used at the venue originate from recycled material

Palexpo assists you in dealing with waste produced at your exhibition

- A sustainable engineer, familiar with our facilities and local regulations, can be hired to assist you in defining your sustainable management strategy and to edit carbon footprint reports for your event
- Palexpo supplies recycling walls to help visitors and exhibitors sort their waste in the halls
- Waste bags and containers can be ordered by your exhibitors or stand builders, either in advance via the on-line shop or on-site via our Exhibitors Services Centre

A FEW IDEAS TO CONSIDER AS AN ORGANISER

General waste management programme

- Give preference to local suppliers, thus reducing the impact on the environment by avoiding lengthy transportation of goods
- Make arrangements with your suppliers to return unwanted or unused products and materials
- Buy products made from recycled materials (signage, lanyards, paper, etc.) and have them recycled or reused at the end of the event
- Order our recyclable walls and have them installed at the location of your choice in our halls
- Assess where carpet is necessary in the halls
- Choose to lower the temperature in the exhibition halls by a few degrees

Communication and event material

- Reduce printed material each step of your event by using digital technology
- Make content available in digital form (examples uploads available from your website, communication via email and social medias, etc.)
- Avoid printed programmes and offer interactive conference applications for smartphones instead
- When printing is not avoidable, reduce the size of the conference programme to a minimum and use recycled paper
- Paper from a sustainable source carrying the PEFC-certificate should be a minimum standard
- Provide online registration
- Offer conference bags as an option, as there are always participants who only want the programme
- Produce congress items without dates, so they can be re-used
- Use fair-trade organic cotton conference bags
- Recycle promotional materials (name badges, place cards and lanyards) by providing a bin at the exit
- Consider donating leftover or unwanted materials, such as bags and notepads to schools or charities after the event

Signage and advertising on site

- Favour electronic signage and advertising, instead of print
- For all printed banners or flags, focus on branding rather than themed or specific messaging and avoid including anything that could date them so they can be re-used

Exhibitors' regulations

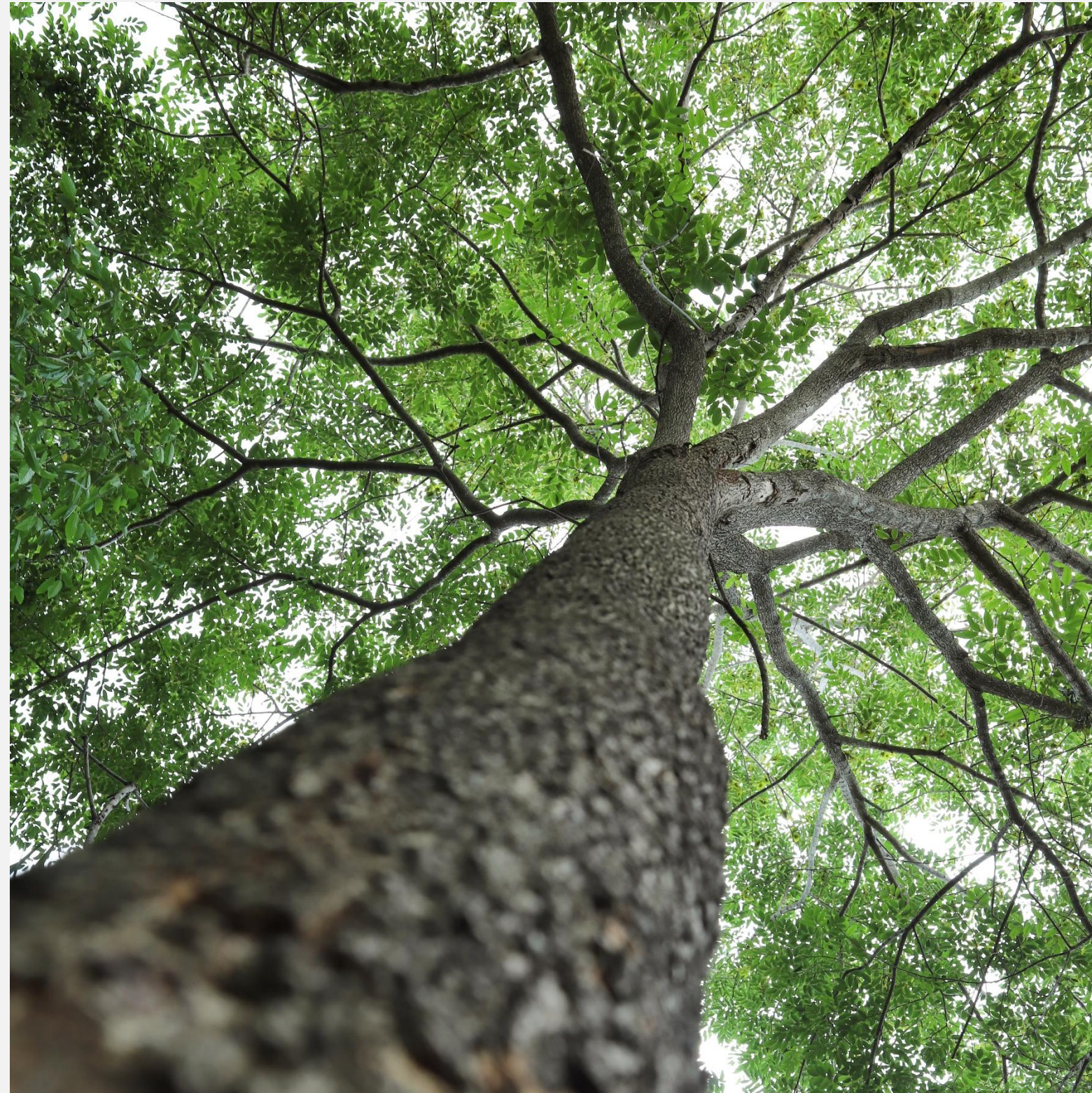
- Establish strict green guidelines for stand construction in all communication materials
- Request your exhibitors to not use disposable exhibition stands anymore but rather to reusable ones
- Persuade exhibitors to use recycled material for the construction of their booths
- Encourage your exhibitors to favour local suppliers when choosing their booth constructors, to avoid lengthy transportation of goods
- Suggest ordering programmed electricity instead of 24 hours electricity
- Encourage, educate, and involve exhibitors in separating waste into containers at the venue
- Encourage your exhibitors to order containers via our Exhibitors Services Centre by communicating about it prior to the event
- Levy an explicitly mentioned 'green charge' or 'waste management charge' in the contract agreement of your exhibitors to cover the recycling costs
- Establish a zero-waste policy for promotional material for your exhibitors
- Encourage exhibitors not to use packaged giveaways
- Reward exhibitors with a "green exhibitor award"

The Benefits



What are the benefits of holding a green event for an organiser?

- Reduce the carbon footprint of your event
- Positively increase your social and economic contribution to the environment
- Reduce your event's costs by reducing waste and transport, by optimising resources, and conserving energy
- Educate and raise awareness on sustainability among attendees, employees, suppliers, and the local community
- Meet and exceed today's standard practice expectations in the event industry
- Boast innovation at your event by offering new technological and digital solutions
- Stimulate broader organisational change by achieving greater environmental, social, and economic benefits
- Enhance your image and create a positive brand awareness

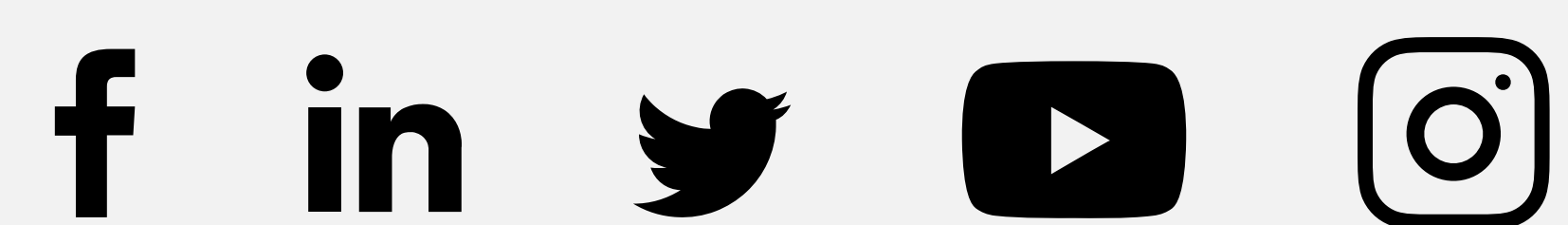


We don't inherit
the earth from
our ancestors,
we borrow it from
our children.

Native American Proverb



Together, we can make the event
industry more sustainable!



Rte François-Peyrot 30
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex
+41 (0) 022 761 11 11

info@palexpo.ch
www.palexpo.ch

