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LIFE LOOP – ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY
Project strategy for carbon footprint reduction

lifeloop
local ownership of power

Intent

This Environmental Sustainability Strategy formalises our commitment to supporting the principles of environmental sustainability. While LIFE LOOP's objectives are inherently environmental it is also important that the way the project is managed and the activities of the consortium partners minimise their impact on the environment. The One Planet Framework has been used as a basis for this. The following table outlines the overall objectives for each area. The environmental impact of the project will be monitored on an ongoing basis and summary provided annually.

😊 Health and happiness	Valuing the health and happiness of the people involved in the programme.
🤝 Equity and local economy	Prioritising local independent suppliers and service providers. Setting up projects that add value to the local community and address fuel poverty.
👥 Culture and community	Encourage diversity and empower women and marginalized groups to participate.
🦋 Land and nature	Ensuring that projects respect land and nature, boosting biodiversity where possible.
🍎 Local and sustainable food	Minimising the impact of food provided as part of the project, for example, through providing local, organic mainly plant-based catering wherever possible
💧 Sustainable water	Minimising use of water
🚲 Travel and transport	Minimising need to travel, while ensuring effective and cohesive working. Travelling sustainably wherever possible.
🌳 Materials and products	Prioritising use of local, sustainable materials
♻️ Zero waste	Minimising waste, encouraging re-use and recycling
🕯 Zero carbon energy	As well as initiating new energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, LIFE LOOP partners will strive to maximise the energy efficiency of their buildings and generate and / or purchase green energy. They will also strive to reduce the digital impact of the project's activities, for example, sharing a link to a document to avoid sending large attachments.

General overview of Life LOOP partners' sustainable performance

ACTIONS	PARTNERS' PERFORMANCES														
PARTNERS	ENC	RESC	ZEZ	ELEC	ZAGREB	MINOAN	CDE	BISTRITA	REGEA	È NOSTRA	VILLA	USSA	CSI	TULCEA	GAB
TRANSPORT – Reducing our travel and CO2 emissions															
Propose for all trips the alternative of train (when plane)	x	x	x	x	x				x	X					
2. CATERING – Less emissions, more ethics and less waste! **– Reducing the ecological footprint of the organisation's meals** **– Support organic, local, waste-free suppliers/restaurants** **– Raise awareness among partners/members/individuals**															
Internal procedure for organising meals (prioritise vegetarian with possible meat option), including organic/local suppliers	x	x	x	x	x					X	x		x		
Sustainable event guidebook, to be made available to partners and members															
Include information on this policy in the annual activity report															
Have a stronger and more structured communication on the subject	x		x	x	x				x	X			x		

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PARTNERS	ENC	RESC	ZEZ	ELEC	ZAGREB	MINOAN	CDE	BISTRITA	REGEA	È NOSTRA	VILLA	USSA	CSI	TULCEA	GAB
3. PUBLICATIONS & OTHER PRODUCTS – Just what is needed, with minimal impact on the environment															
Establish principles for printing – including questions to ask before printing	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	X	x	x	x	x	x
Establish a list of green suppliers for printing and communication materials	x	X	x		x	x			x	X	x				x
4. PURCHASING – Moving towards zero waste, local, organic and ecological sourcing															
Setting up a compost bin	x				x	x			x	X					X
Washable paper towels Table instead of paper	x		x	x		x			x						
List of 100% clean and bulk products for kitchen and bathroom purchases						x				X					
Implementation of a heating schedule	x		x		x	x		x	x	X	x	x	x	x	
Use of thermal comfort windows	x				x	x		x				x		x	

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PARTNERS	ENC	RESC	ZEZ	ELEC	ZAGREB	MINOAN	CDE	BISTRITA	REGEA	È NOSTRA	VILLA	USSA	CSI	TULCEA	GAB
Prioritise purchase of second hand furniture and equipment when possible															
Monitoring of consumption	x		x	x	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	X
IT & DATA															
Checking IT hardware refurbishment policy	x					x		x	x						
Look into more ethical hosting providers						x				X					

Set of Life LOOP recommendations

1. TRANSPORT – Reducing our travel and CO2 emissions

Systematically ask yourself if your presence at the event is really necessary and if the event is important/essential. Can it take place effectively if you're not actually there?

- If it can, attend using video conference (or don't attend at all!).
- If it can't, for ecological reasons and to protect the climate, Life LOOP strongly recommends you choose an alternative to air travel (such as trains, buses or car sharing) and will cover related expenses within certain limits (see below).

The main selection criteria is the duration of the meeting or event:

- Less than one day of in-person meetings/work: the train or an alternative method of transport is mandatory.
- More than one day of in-person meetings/work: the train or an alternative method of transport is preferable, but air travel remains possible.

Here are some useful tools to calculate C02 emissions

- [Free Carbon Calculator](#)
- [CO2 Emission Calculator 2023](#)
- [CoolClimate Calculator](#)

Here are some ideas to compensate:

- Donate money to renewable production projects
- Supporting green organisations

2. CATERING – Less emissions, more ethics, and less waste!

Objectives:

- Reducing the ecological footprint of the organisation's meals
- Support organic, local, waste-free suppliers/restaurants
- Raise awareness among partners/members/individuals

Proposed actions:

a) Internal procedure for organising meals (prioritise vegetarian and plant based options), including organic/local suppliers

b) Monitoring of number of meals/pers and number of tons of CO_2 saved (simple conversion factor per number of meals, very approximate) – including projects and events; https://myemissions.green/food-carbon-footprint-calculator/

c) Sustainable event guidebook, to be made available to partners, members (include information on this policy in the annual activity report)

d) Have structured communication on this subject

3. PUBLICATIONS & OTHER PRODUCTS – Just what is needed, with minimal impact on the environment

Establish principles for printing – including questions to ask before printing:

Internal documents

- Is this something that can be documented in another way?
- Can this be presented in another way?
- Do I need to print every page of this document?
- Can I print on both sides of the paper?
- Does this document require color to be effective?
- How long will I need this printout?

External publications:

- How many people will actually read this publication?
- Do I have a solid promotion plan?

4. PURCHASING – Moving towards zero waste, local, organic and ecological sourcing

Buy second hand and repair where possible.

The most impactful way you can cut your digital carbon footprint is by buying less and choosing second hand or refurbished equipment. As much as 70%–90% of emissions come from manufacture, so consuming less can make a huge difference.

5. IT & DATA
Reducing digital carbon footprint
Pioritise green hosting, search engines and email providers

Emails: some providers such as Kolab, Posteo, Tutanota or Runbox run on renewable energy and are suitable for individuals and businesses. They are also ad–free and prioritise privacy and security.

Websites: you can check how green your website is, and measure the improvement when you make changes, using Website Carbon Calculator or Ecograder. Likewise you can find a greener home for your website such as Kualo, cohosting, GreenGeeks, Green Hosting and more.

Search engines: set your homepage to Ecosia, which reinvests 80% of its profits to plant trees, or Ekoru which donates 60% of revenue to charitable partners in reforestation, climate action and conservation. Both use renewable energy to power their data centres.

Reduce digital energy use

Reduce energy consumption down by reducing monitor brightness and setting computers to sleep after 5 minutes (a third of a computer's energy is used but the screen!); turn everything off when you're not using it; keep devices running smoothly by deleting unnecessary files and programs, and running disk cleanup); and adjust your energy settings.

Video uses far more energy than audio (7.5x as much!) so turn it off whenever possible. Start group meetings with video introductions then switch to audio only, especially if someone is presenting. If you're having a meeting with one other person, just have a phone call. When you do have video meetings, keep them short and focussed – this is good for everyone involved as well as the environment.

The average carbon footprint of an email is 0.3g CO2e. This increases if it's a long email that takes ten minutes to write and three seconds to read (17g CO2e), or if it's got one image or an attachment (50g CO2e). Avoid sending large attachments, send a link to the document on the drive instead and compress all images in files to reduce storage impacts.

It's also important to:

- delete emails you no longer need

- regularly clear out online drives, boxes and clouds

- delete old assets from your website and e-marketing platforms

- unsubscribe from emails and newsletters that you no longer read

6. EVENTS ORGANISATION

Venue:

Organising a (sustainable) event is a creative and progressive process, which starts with finding an appropriate venue to host it. The best locations are gone quickly! An event for more than 20 people will require more thoughts and criteria regarding logistical and technical arrangements.

Key points to consider:

- **Location and accessibility**: The venue should be easily reachable by walking or public transport. Mention if there is place to store bicycles.

- **Energy**: Energy efficient buildings that maximise the use of daylight and adopt energy saving policies should be preferred.

- **Waste**: Consider venues with advanced systems for waste collection and recycling.

- **Virtual meeting**: Modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) appliances

- allow professional video or tele-conferencing at accessible costs. This will require initial investment but can enormously contribute to a sustainable meeting (e.g. greenhouse gas savings (GHG)) and save time and money.

- **Other**: Further attention could be paid to the procurement and cleaning policies, use of environmental management systems (e.g. EMAS) and overall management of the venue.

Invitation and conference material

In this phase you can save considerable costs in terms of printing, time and resources. Time will be key for a cost-effective and environmentally friendly procedure when developing conference material and sending out the invitations.

- **Paper use** – the amount of printed and sent material should be minimised by using email in pre- and post-meeting communication with participants. If it is necessary to print documents, do it on recycled paper (using ecolabels such as Blue Angel, FSC, EU-Ecolabel, – see e.g. www.label-online.de), print doublesided and try to reduce the text and number of pages as much as possible.

- **Online resources** – participants should be able to register online and download all relevant resources (meeting documents and reports) from the event website.

- **Gadgets** – promotional material, delegate bags and other gifts should be minimised; the money saved by giving them up could also be invested in sustainable/green projects (see good practice example of the "Stockholm Region's Brussels office"). They should be produced with sustainable materials (recycled or organic) and have a useful purpose. Consider products from local social projects.

- **Re-use** – some conference material from previous events can be re-used with the same or a different purpose (e.g. stands that are used year after year; old banners that are turned into delegate bags (see good practice example "Barcelona").

Other green ideas – detail low-emission transport means to and from the venue as well as greener accommodation facilities if available on the website and on the conference material.

Food

Food is culture. Whether a small meeting or a gala dinner, good food contributes to the success of a meeting. Complaining about the usual baguettes might get conversation started but delicious food might inspire far more. Eating is politics when considering local, seasonal, meatless and/or organic food. In that sense less can be more and good food does not have to be more expensive. Good food at meetings is good for business!

Key points to consider:

- **Preference for local, seasonal and/or organic products** – they have a lower impact on environment due to shorter transport routes and lack of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Participants will easily see your commitment.

- **Drinking** – tap water and bulk dispenser should be preferred to individual containers. Avoid or minimise the use of plastic bottles by choosing carafes and glass containers.

- **Vegetarian and plant**-based options – prioritise plant-based and veggie food whenever possible; reducing the quantity of meat and dairy products contributes to reducing the carbon footprint of the event.

- **Drinks** – serve jugs of tap water and refreshing bio and/or Fair Trade juices.

- **Avoid wasting food** – communicating to the caterer the final number of participants few days prior to the event can help to avoid waste. When sending out your "last reminder" add, for instance, "Please let us know if you have registered but are unable to attend, so we can avoid wasting food".

- **Disposable items** – resort to reusable or biodegradable dishes, cutlery, glassware and linens. Alternatively, purchase or require items containing a high percentage of recycled or plant-base material (see also the following section on "waste").

- **Choosing the right caterers** – for larger meetings, where you have to contract private catering companies or rely on the catering service of the venue, take into consideration environmental criteria (in relation to food procurement, energy and water efficiency of the equipment used, cleaning echniques etc.) when selecting a caterer.