

sustainability INITIATIVES



gold coast | convention and
exhibition centre



SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AT GCCEC

THE CENTRE

The Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC), opened in June 2004, covers an area of 5.4 hectares in the heart of Broadbeach and has been designed to complement the existing urban environment. The building has four floors and a total area of 72,000 m². A 1,400-space car park facility occupies the lowest two levels of the complex.

GCCEC attracts and hosts major conventions, exhibitions, leisure, entertainment and sporting events, catering for up to 6,000 visitors.

Since its inception, GCCEC has been committed to environmentally friendly practices including energy, water, waste management, and in its resourcing and encouraging event planners to hold green events at the Centre.



SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT

Environmental and social sustainable practices are core values at GCCEC and therefore integral to its overarching strategy and operational practices.

A volunteer committee of representatives from different internal departments is responsible for driving the GCCEC's Environmental and Social Sustainability Policy and ensuring performance against the Centre's Environmental Management Plan. All staff are encouraged to attend quarterly Project Green Committee Meetings to ensure a proactive approach company-wide.

The Centre is committed to operating at the world's highest environmental standards and aligns its best practices with EarthCheck, the world's most recognised and largest environmental management program for the travel and tourism sectors. The Centre obtained EarthCheck **Platinum Certification** in 2018 – a first for convention centres worldwide.

Management plans have been developed for energy, water, waste and procurement. Key initiatives and practices from these plans are outlined in this document.



ENERGY CONSERVATION

Air conditioning and lighting are centrally located and controlled systems. Usage is monitored around the clock to ensure each service is shutdown whenever possible. Every event is different and ranges in size, from one meeting room to the whole Centre. Manual monitoring and operation of systems for client-led events therefore achieves optimal energy conservation.

The building has demonstrated that stored latent heat does not rise during long periods of the air conditioning shutdown, therefore ambient temperature can be created with lead times as short as 30 minutes. We believe the open airspace of the car park contributes to this situation.

Lighting: Sensor activated lighting exists in all public amenities.

Energy efficient LED lighting generates a marked saving in running costs and produces less heat which reduces air conditioning costs. LED signage replaces the old exterior road facing signage of the Centre.

Power: Client needs are supplied through a network of supply boards which are shutdown at the end of each day. Power costs are on-charged to clients as the incentive to minimise consumption.

68 retrofitted 'smart sub meters' allow for a more robust charging system.



WATER CONSERVATION

Recycled water: A grey water recycling system operates in accordance with national guidelines. Class A recycled (non-potable) water is supplied by two City of Gold Coast treatment works. Water is treated on site and used for the landscape irrigation system.

Mains water: It is the policy of GCCEC to control all water and energy use and ensure run times of all systems are kept to a minimum. All taps, showers, toilets and urinals are fitted with flow restriction devices. Sensor taps have been retro fitted into all public amenities.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

GCCEC uses many waste management strategies to successfully recycle or reuse 75% of all its waste. These strategies also contribute to reducing hazards and costs, conserving resources and protecting the environment.

Packaging: Carbon neutral, BioPak branded packaging is used in-house (biodegradable or recyclable coffee and drink cups, crockery and cutlery). This enables an offset 16 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually- equivalent to four cars on the road.

Waste storage and recycling: Appropriate waste storage areas are provided in consultation with private waste contractors and EPA, HACCP requirements. Waste segregation containers are colour-coded and clearly labelled.

Recycling bins are located in front of house areas. New recycling opportunities are proactively identified, such as recycling all printer and toner cartridges through Australia Post and Planet Ark.

Two compactors for cardboard and general waste have enabled the City's waste removal services to reduce trips to the Centre from multiple times to only once per week, resulting in a reduction of carbon emissions.

GCCEC participates in the Queensland Government's container deposit scheme for glass, bottles and Tetra Pak® containers through Envirobank, the national supplier and distributor of recycling technology.

GCCEC strives for paperless operations. Where necessary, 100% recycled paper is utilised.

Food waste: An ongoing partnership with national food rescue organisation OzHarvest means quality excess food is collected from the premises and delivered free of charge, to more than 37 charities on the Gold Coast. This has resulted in the redistribution of more than 17,000 meals since June 2014.

Composting bins receive any leftover served food products that do not meet the food and health safety standards for food donations.



RESPONSIBLE PURCHASING

GCCEC 's objective is to encourage the procurement of goods and services that over their life-cycle, offer a reduced environmental impact. For example, all cleaning and pesticide products purchased for on-site use are biodegradable.

The Centre works with local suppliers to change the way goods are being packaged and delivered.



EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

More than 2.5 million people have attended events at GCCEC since its opening in 2004. A team of over 300 full, part-time and casual team members are responsible for delivering a positive guest experience and service excellence, which the property is renowned for.

Adhering to environmentally-friendly policies since inception, GCCEC recognises the many benefits of being innovative and championing change, including a reduction in operational costs, increases in efficiency and recognition throughout the community.

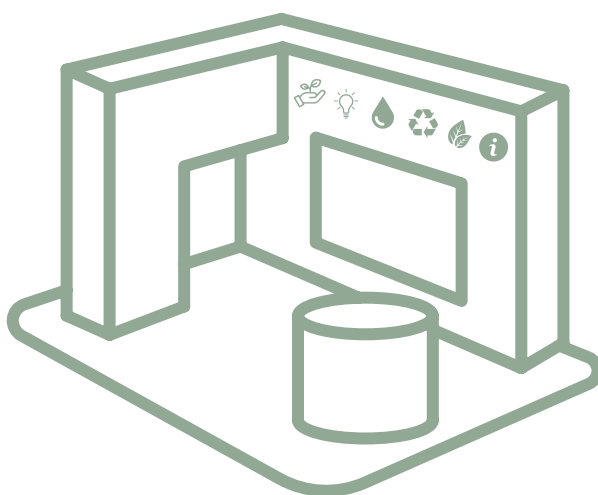
In addition to key messages and signage throughout the property, GCCEC works with team members, clients, suppliers, the industry and the community to help increase environmental awareness. GCCEC place emphasis on educating all stakeholders about our own environmental and social journey through education and communication tools. Below is a snapshot of activities and tools implemented for team members and guests.

Team members receive:

- New staff induction and ongoing training
- Team member handbook
- Sustainability committee meetings and activities
- Emails, newsletter and signage in work areas and amenities

Guests/Suppliers receive:

- Annual emails to key stakeholders on policies
- GCCEC website and social media
- Environmentally preferred partnerships
- Post-event feedback and assessment
- Digital and permanent signage aimed at sustainability practices



ARE YOU PLANNING A GREEN EVENT?

Download our [Green Event Checklist](#) and enhance your next event with sustainable practices.



green

EVENT CHECKLIST



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GREEN EVENT CHECKLIST

The Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) is committed to leading industry towards a more sustainable future for conferencing and events. We work hard to limit our impact on the environment and have created this guide to help event planners walk a little greener and achieve significant carbon savings at your events.



WHAT MAKES A GREEN EVENT?

Adopting eco-friendly practices to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, minimise waste, and effectively communicate to attendees how an event is reducing its environmental impacts, are all part of hosting a sustainable event.

Whether it's a large-scale, international conference or a simpler event, this guide illustrates that planning a sustainable event doesn't need to be complex or expensive – in fact, sometimes the most simple and inexpensive initiatives are the most effective.



WHY HOLD A GREEN EVENT?

Current statistics show that Australia is one of the world's largest polluters on a per capita basis, with electricity and transport two of the biggest contributors.¹ For an event, travel is usually the single biggest contributor at around 90% of the total carbon footprint.²

Creating green events is a way event planners can actively contribute to a reduction in environmental impacts, leaving a positive legacy behind. This is great for both the environment and company reputation.

The advantages of implementing sustainable and responsible event practices include saving on costs and resources, reducing waste, increasing productivity, enhancing company transparency, sharing knowledge and boosting the morale of delegates.

GCCEC already has a range of best practices in place to assist with sustainable event management.

Read more about our [GCCEC Sustainability Initiatives](#).

As an authority on the best practices in sustainable event management, GCCEC is here to help you run a successful event that achieves the following impacts:



Cuts back costs: Something as simple as eliminating paper administration or opting for local produce can cut back on your event costs.



Enhances your brand and reputation: Clients have come to expect a certain level of eco-friendly performance from business. Holding a sustainable event with us will not only enhance your brand and reputation but meet and excel the expectations of today's standard practice.



Encourages market transformation: We work closely with suppliers to change the way goods are packaged and delivered, encouraging the development of broader sustainable closed-loop systems and industries.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/30/australia-carbon-emissions-rise-again-greenhouse-gas-Ing>

² <https://www.triplepundit.com/story/2014/conferences-and-carbon-impact-behind-event/58101>



YOUR CHECKLIST FOR SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Hosting a green event is as easy as following these steps!

The first step is choosing a partner venue that shows a strong commitment to sustainability initiatives and meets your objectives.

Use the checklist below when considering what initiatives can be implemented at your next event.

TRAVEL, TRANSPORT & ACCOMMODATION

Choose a venue that is walkable to accommodation and facilities.

Ask delegates to purchase a voluntary carbon offset with their flights.

If delegates are hiring a car, encourage them to choose a model known for fuel economy or a hybrid.

Promote public transport and car-pooling. GCCEC is conveniently located just metres from the G:Link Broadbeach North Station – a light rail network that offers a safe and affordable transport alternative.

Consider Green Cabs, pedicabs for transport or tours.

Encourage delegates to select accommodation within the Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise precincts. There are thousands of local accommodation options and tram and bus services that run directly to the Centre's front entrance.

Offer video conferencing options for delegates who cannot travel to the event.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Provide final attendance numbers early to help the kitchen reduce food waste. As part of catering requirements, GCCEC requires attendance numbers to be confirmed two weeks prior to the event date.

Consider vegetarian and vegan meal selections as they are more environmentally sustainable options, requiring less energy input in production.

Choose BioPak sustainable packaging where appropriate.

Encourage delegates to use the recycling bins.

SUPPLIERS & EXHIBITORS

Check the environmental credentials of preferred suppliers.

Source printing suppliers who abide by best environmental practice (recycled stationery and paper, vegetable inks and double-sided printing). Avoid metallic ink, varnishes, lamination and glossy paper as these products cannot be recycled, while glossy paper is more difficult to recycle.

Promote the sustainable considerations of the event to exhibitors or provide incentives to encourage exhibitors to get on board.

Ensure exhibits are made from recycled materials or where possible, look to order materials that can be reused at a later date.



CHECKLIST CONT.

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Take registration online. Talk to the GCCEC events team about using an electronic alternative, for examples iPad stands for check-in.

Include a sustainability message in all event communication that reminds people to think before printing.

Ask delegates to access event information online or make the information readily available for tablets and smart phones.

Purposely design promotional banners and posters that can be used year in and out, or reuse material from previous years.

Podcast the event to reduce softcopy notes.

Recycle communication materials such as name badges, place cards and lanyards. GCCEC can provide recycling facilities.

MATERIALS

Offer conference materials as an optional item to reduce individual consumption.

Consider donating leftover or unwanted conference materials such as satchels and notepads to schools or charity groups after the event, or repurpose them for the following year.

Choose locally crafted organic gifts or consider gift certificates.

Avoid using wrapping paper with foil, glitter or cellophane as these materials can't be recycled.

TECHNOLOGY

If purchasing electrical equipment, opt for products displaying a higher star rating and efficiency.

Hire reconditioned laptops to reduce costs and waste.

Ensure any electronic waste (including print cartridges) from the event are recycled. A number of companies will recycle computer waste for free.

Remind delegates to enable sleep mode on laptops and other technology devices during the event.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

- Learn about [Carbon Neutral Certification](#)
- Get the latest news, information, products and services from [Australia's Green Business Directory](#)
- Find out how to [offset your business emissions](#)
- For ideas on eco-friendly conference products visit [EcoPromotions](#)



SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

The Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) is an industry leader in environmental innovation. GCCEC embraces the governing principles of sustainable development including stewardship, inclusivity, integrity and transparency.

In 2018, GCCEC became '[EarthCheck](#) Platinum' certified in recognition of its commitment to operating at the world's highest environmental standard. EarthCheck is the world's pre-eminent environmental management program for the travel and tourism sectors. GCCEC submits annual data to EarthCheck to benchmark their activities against the certifier's key performance areas.

Since the Centre's opening in 2004, implementation of a Sustainability Policy and Environmental Management Plan has ensured the continuous integration of environmental and social sustainability into strategy, planning and business operations. At every step the Centre encourages partnerships with clients that promote sustainability best practices.



**GCCEC Sustainability in practice*

OUR SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

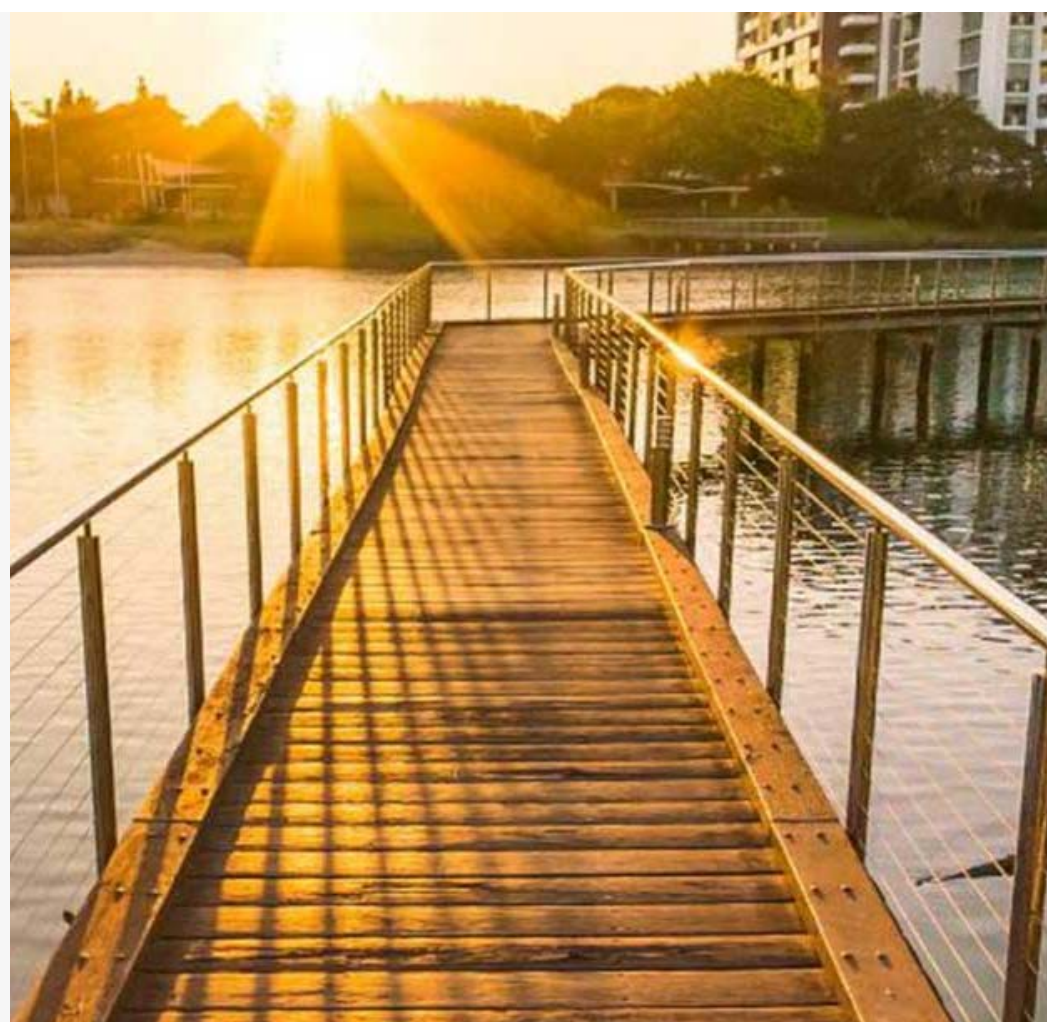
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

GCCEC is proud of its reputation as a world-leader in sustainable meetings and events. The team is firmly committed to the continued cultivation of environmental and social stewardship and strongly supports eco-friendly practices, both operationally and in design.

Best practices at GCCEC include:

- Waste minimisation and reduction of consumables
- Integrated communication systems to control energy consumption and building services
- On-site grey water recycling and management system
- Working with supply chains to develop broader sustainable closed-loop systems
- Procurement of environmentally friendly products and packaging

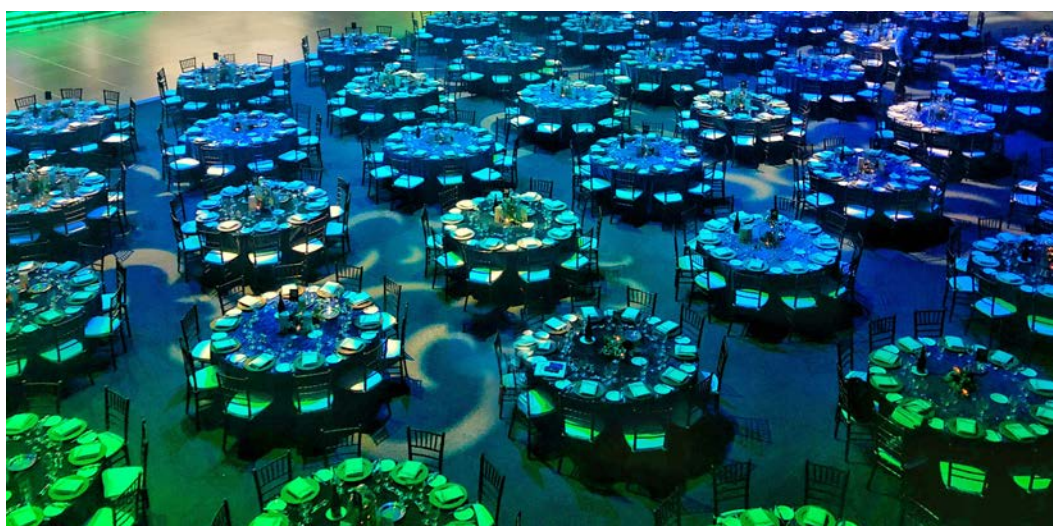
READ MORE ABOUT OUR INITIATIVES



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initiatives.

We provide the resources below so you can learn more about sustainability and assimilate strategies into your standard business practice, including a free Green Event Guide, outlining comprehensive steps to help event planners reduce the carbon footprint of their next event.

[GREEN EVENT CHECKLIST](#)

EARTHCHECK

GCCEC is benchmarked by [EarthCheck](#), the world's largest environmental management program specifically designed for the travel and tourism industry. GCCEC was the first convention centre in the world to attain **EarthCheck Gold** certification in 2015. In 2018 they were again the first venue of their kind to achieve **EarthCheck Platinum** certification.

In 2014 GCCEC became the first EarthCheck certified member to be verified against the 'EarthCheck Responsible Meetings & Events Standard', aligned to the international standard ISO 20121 'Event Sustainability'.

GCCEC is part of an ongoing EarthCheck pilot program (with other convention centres globally) to improve and review the activity measure benchmarking for convention centres. The aim is to provide organisations with a more meaningful assessment to assist with monitoring and managing their environmental performance. GCCEC was a key contributor in leveraging EarthCheck to proceed with the study.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT EARTHCHECK](#)



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