POSITIVE IMPACT

United Nations
Climate Change Secretariat

#BuildBackBetter Roundtable Report

January 2021

#eventscreatechange

www.positiveimpactevents.com

On the 28th of January 2021, UNFCCC and Positive Impact Events invited 39 people to a #BuildBackBetter Roundtable to discuss the event sector identifying a carbon target and reduction strategy to be launched at COP26 in the UK.

What could the compelling future of the events sector be:

- The UK Event Sector could be a leading example at the COP26 conference
- UK could be the place to bring your events as we have the expertise and understanding to deliver them in a sustainable way
- The UK Event Sector could have exportable skills in sustainability
- The UK Event Sector could be a leader with a carbon target and reduction plan, which other countries can join.

Contributions during the Roundtable

Nick Baker, Deputy Director of Business and Engagement, COP26
'we are asking companies to commit to by going net zero by 2050 or earlier and to publish a short to medium term plan on how they are going to achieve that target, as well as, committing to Science Based Targets.'

Miguel Naranjo, Programme Officer, UNFCCC
'A target would be agreed and a reduction framework created taking into account existing initiatives in the sector.'

Theresa Villiers, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Events
'The government has a key role to play, not least in the decarbonisation of travel, because we know international and domestic travel is the lifeblood of successful events and conferences'

Niclas Svenningsen, Manager, Global Climate Action at UNFCCC
'The UNFCCC secretariat helped shape sector initiatives for fashion and sports'

Sarah Fowler, Board Member of Visit England Advisory Board
'I really value the concept of developing a framework aligned to COP26, that advances the Sustainable Development Goals.... I know MeetEngland and VisitBritain welcome this initiative and want to work in collaboration'

Simon Evans, Sustainability Director of Ecobooth
'There is ultimately a competitive advantage for the UK events sector to be getting this right and taking action now.'

Anne Hayes, Director of Sectors, British Standards Institute
'As the event sector starts to move towards a restart, can it restart as it was or could it build on the opportunities provided by COP26 and address the issues of climate change? standards can help address this challenge'

Susan Spibey, Executive Board Chair of Institute of Event Management
'The way forward is to support redevelopment of the professional standards for event management ensuring sustainability is embedded as a common thread through'

Response from our Ambassadors

We asked our 1300 global ambassadors for their opinion:

Over the last 3 years have you been implementing more sustainability initiatives?

Over the last 3 years have you experienced your clients asking for more sustainability initiatives?

Do you have a carbon reduction target?

Do you want to provide sector specific insight in a way that could influence future government regulation and policy?

Do you think the UK government should support the event sector to #buildbackbetter i.e. support the event sector to be an example of a sustainable sector (economic, environmental and social) and promote the sector as having done so?

Would you commit time to building your sustainability skills (E.g. how to implement ISO20121, and other relevant standards) so the UK government could promote the UK event sector as having exportable skills?

What the next steps could be?

There is a funding gap for the compelling future outlined in this report to become reality

Positive Impact has launched a grassroot campaign, educate, to generate £30,000 to fund the UNFCCC framework. The education can be purchased on how you can deliver on event and advance the sustainable development goals, where 100% of the cost will go towards creating this framework.

Find out more

However, this is not enough. COLLABORATION to close the funding gap and ENGAGEMENT to embed the ideas from this roundtable in the wider strategy for the UK event sector is required for the UK Event Sector to have a carbon target target and reduction framework and the following benefits that would come with that:

- The UK Event Sector could be a leading example at the COP26 conference
- UK could be the place to bring your events as we have the expertise and understanding to deliver them in a sustainable way
- The UK Event Sector could have exportable skills in sustainability
- The UK Event Sector could be a leader with a carbon target and reduction plan, which other countries can join.

Thank you to those who attended to contribute:

Fiona Pelham, CEO, Positive Impact
Nick Baker, Deputy Director of Business and Engagement, COP26
Miguel Naranjo, Programme Officer, UNFCCC
Niclas Svenningsen, Manager, Global Climate Action at UNFCCC
Theresa Villiers, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Events
Sarah Fowler, Board Member of Visit England Advisory Board
Simon Evans, Sustainability Director of Ecobooth
Anne Hayes, Director of Sectors, British Standards Institute
Susan Spibey, Executive Board Chair of Institute of Event Management

Thank you to those who attended to listen:

Carina Bauer, CEO, IMEX Group
Richard Shackleton, Deputy Head of Mission, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Budapest
Bénédicte Williams, Climate Policy Officer, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Budapest
Amy Calvert, CEO, Events Industry Council
Mark Cooper, CEO at IACC Meetings, Chair of the Events Industry Council
Michael Hirst, Immediate Past Chair Business & Executive Committee Member, Business Visits and Events Partnership
Mark Chapman, Head of Trade Team, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Denmark
Susannah Fairbairn, Senior Trade Adviser, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Denmark
Søren Riisgaard, Junior Trade Adviser, Foreign and Commonwealth Denmark
Lisa Christensen, Senior International Trade Specialist at Scottish Development International
Kerrin Macphie, Head of Business Events for Visit Britain
Martin Fullard, Editors, Conference News
James Lancaster, Editors, Association Meetings International
Alistair Turner, Managing Director, EIGHT PR & Marketing

We also invited the Joint Meeting Industry Council

Due to limited funding, the stakeholder engagements delivered for the initiative was limited. We hope this will be address when there is funding for this projects.

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