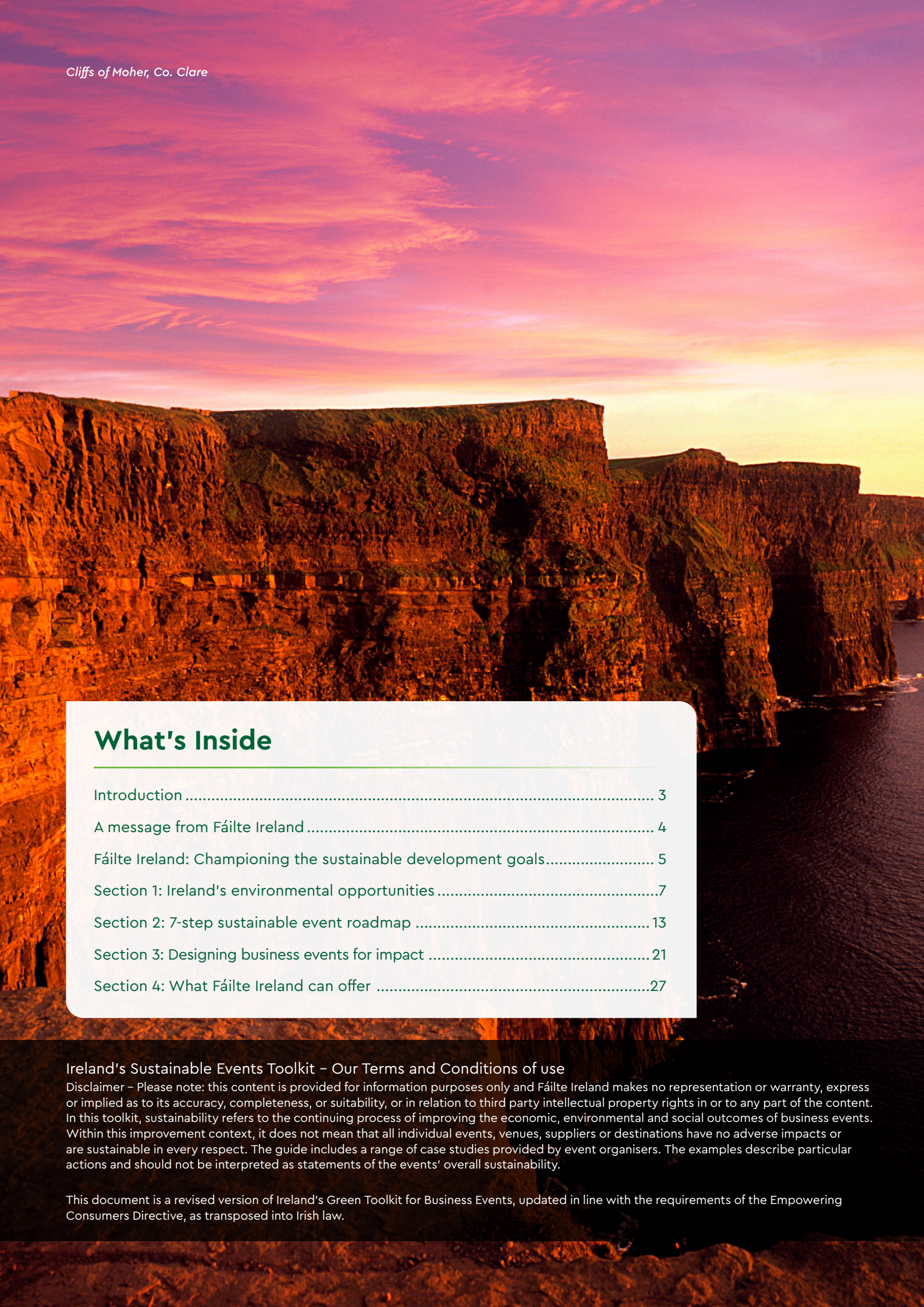
Business Events Industry

Ireland's SUSTAINABLE EVENTS Toolkit

An environmental sustainability guide for event organisers and professionals



Fáilte Ireland



Cliffs of Moher, Co. Clare

What's Inside

Introduction 3

A message from Fáilte Ireland 4

Fáilte Ireland: Championing the sustainable development goals 5

Section 1: Ireland's environmental opportunities 7

Section 2: 7-step sustainable event roadmap 13

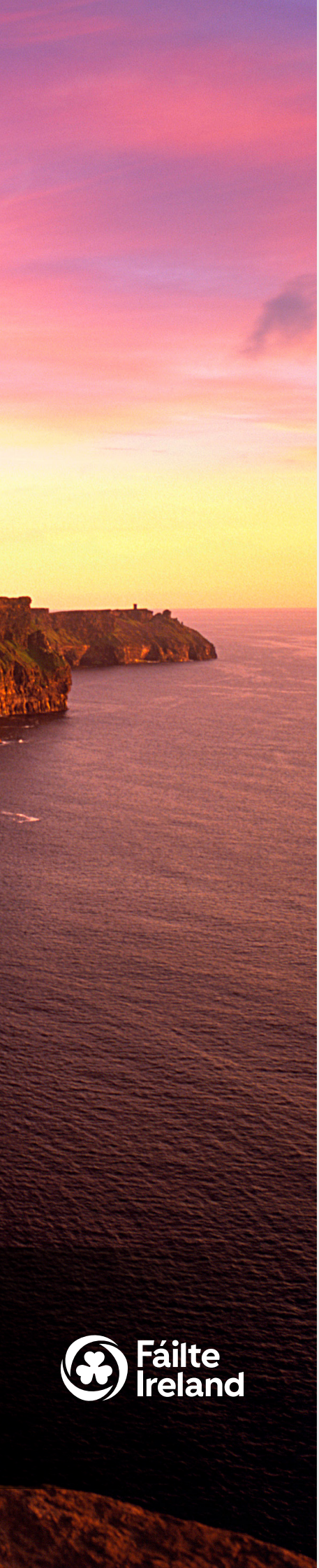
Section 3: Designing business events for impact 21

Section 4: What Fáilte Ireland can offer 27

Ireland's Sustainable Events Toolkit – Our Terms and Conditions of use

Disclaimer – Please note: this content is provided for information purposes only and Fáilte Ireland makes no representation or warranty, express or implied as to its accuracy, completeness, or suitability, or in relation to third party intellectual property rights in or to any part of the content. In this toolkit, sustainability refers to the continuing process of improving the economic, environmental and social outcomes of business events. Within this improvement context, it does not mean that all individual events, venues, suppliers or destinations have no adverse impacts or are sustainable in every respect. The guide includes a range of case studies provided by event organisers. The examples describe particular actions and should not be interpreted as statements of the events' overall sustainability.

This document is a revised version of Ireland's Green Toolkit for Business Events, updated in line with the requirements of the Empowering Consumers Directive, as transposed into Irish law.



Fáilte Ireland

An introduction to

Ireland's Sustainable Events Toolkit

Promoting environmental sustainability in the Irish business events sector

Ireland's Sustainable Events Toolkit offers practical guidance to event organisers and professionals involved in the planning and delivery of business events hosted in Ireland – whether preparing a bid, coordinating logistics, or managing onsite execution. The toolkit helps organisers to reduce emissions, limit environmental impact, and ensure business events align with Ireland's national climate objectives.

Ireland's Sustainable Events Toolkit is especially useful for:

- Strengthening proposals with clear environmental commitments
- Aligning with Ireland's national sustainability goals
- Delivering confident, credible, low environmental impact business events

Packed with fresh ideas, top tips, practical checklists, and inspiring case studies, this toolkit helps embed sustainability into any business event – from the very early planning stages to the final event delivery. It also highlights a range of sustainability supports available from Fáilte Ireland, helping organisers create impactful, environmentally responsible business events.

Keep an eye out for Top Tips and Resources!

A message from
Fáilte Ireland

At Fáilte Ireland, we recognise that the future of Ireland's tourism sector depends on our collective commitment to sustainability.

As custodians of the environment and stewards of Ireland's global reputation as a leading destination for business events, we are taking proactive steps to embed sustainable practices into each event that is hosted in Ireland.

In 2025 Ireland unveiled a bold new vision for its business events sector with the launch of Business Events 2030; a national strategy that represents a fundamental shift in how Ireland approaches business events.

Business Events 2030 is a product of collaboration between the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and industry leaders. It is a strategy that is rooted in sustainable development, taking full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities. The strategy aims to make optimal use of environmental resources, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, and ensure viable, long-term economic operations.

The Irish business events sector can become industry leaders by aligning with the government's environmental policy commitments across a variety of platforms including climate action; sustainability; reducing carbon emissions etc. Recognising environmental sustainability as a primary legacy outcome for events underscores its importance as a core value.

Fáilte Ireland is committed to empowering its stakeholders to plan and deliver events that minimise their environmental footprint. Together, we can ensure that Ireland remains not just a destination of choice but a destination of conscience for business events worldwide.

"Business Events 2030 not only enhances Ireland's reputation as a responsible and attractive destination for business events, while generating economic returns and driving employment, but it also aligns with global expectations for sustainable practices, thereby increasing Ireland's competitiveness in the market"



Paul Mockler
Head of Business, Festivals & Major Sports Events

Fáilte Ireland

Fáilte Ireland

Championing the Sustainable Development Goals

Driving sustainable development across Ireland's business events sector

As part of the SDG Ambassadors Programme, led by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, Fáilte Ireland serves as an ambassador, demonstrating its leadership in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across tourism.

This toolkit focuses particularly on:

- emissions reduction and climate action
- protection of nature, water and local environments

Fáilte Ireland's key contributions to the SDG agenda:

- **Advocacy:** Promoting awareness and adoption of the SDGs across the tourism sector.
- **Support:** Assisting tourism businesses in implementing sustainable practices.
- **Integration:** Aligning strategic programmes and initiatives with the SDGs.
- **Vision:** Positioning Ireland as one of Europe's most sustainable tourism destinations.

Aligned with Ireland's business events strategy, mapping has identified the most relevant SDGs.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Foster business events that promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic development, to create opportunities for decent work and sustainable economic growth in Ireland.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Focus on hosting business events that encourage collaboration, knowledge sharing, and technological advancements that will contribute to building resilient infrastructure and promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Promote inclusive participation, knowledge exchange, diversity, economic empowerment, and policy advocacy. Business events provide platforms for individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage, learn, and collaborate, empowering marginalised groups and advocating for policies that promote social equity and justice.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Strive to showcase sustainable practices in urban planning, transport, and resource management, through business events, thereby supporting the development of sustainable cities and communities in Ireland.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Support business events in Ireland through various initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable practices in event planning, execution, and management. These events often emphasise reducing waste, conserving resources, and adopting eco-friendly alternatives.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

Support business events in Ireland through various initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable practices in event planning, execution, and management. These events often emphasise reducing waste, conserving resources, and adopting eco-friendly alternatives.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Collaboration is key to achieving the UN SDGs. By fostering partnerships between businesses, government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders, business events can amplify impact and drive collective action towards sustainable development.

If referring to SDGs, event organisers should identify the relevant target and record the measurable action or outcome.



Kylemore Abbey, Co. Galway



Section 1

Ireland's environmental opportunities

A natural choice for sustainable events

Ireland offers a compelling blend of natural beauty, progressive sustainability policies, and community-driven tourism initiatives. Known as the 'Emerald Isle', its lush landscapes, rugged coastlines, and rich biodiversity provide an inspiring backdrop for nature-aligned events.

Backed by its business events strategy, Business Events 2030, Ireland's commitment to sustainability is reflected in strong government and industry collaboration, high environmental standards, and practical and financial supports for event organisers.

With access to venues with high sustainability standards, transport options, and eco-conscious suppliers, Ireland makes it easier to plan and deliver impactful business events that align with climate goals.

Leveraging Ireland's sustainability accolades in bids and proposals

Sustainability is now a key factor in how business event proposals are evaluated and how destinations are selected. Clients increasingly expect clear, practical demonstrations of environmental responsibility. For organisers in Ireland, this presents a valuable opportunity to align with both client expectations and national climate goals. By integrating environmental priorities into bids and proposals, highlighting Ireland's unique sustainability strengths, organisers can showcase a competitive edge and contribute meaningfully to climate action.

At a glance

Ireland's climate and environmental context for business events

Ireland's tourism, climate and environmental context

Ireland has a national system of protected areas, including Natura 2000 sites, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Ireland's national parks, UNESCO sites, geoparks, greenways and blueways form part of the country's natural and cultural tourism offering.

8 National Parks
and 600+ Natura 2000 sites protecting land and marine biodiversity [1]

430+ Special Areas of Conservation
and 166+ Special Protection Areas [2]

89 Blue Flag Beaches
and 10 Blue Flag Marinas (2025) – a European leader [3]

500 kilometres of Greenways
and 4 blueways [4]

Tourism-sector programmes

Fáilte Ireland's Climate Action Programme provides participating tourism businesses with expert advice to develop tailored action plans, improve energy and water efficiency, reduce waste and lower environmental impact.

5 Business Events Hubs rank in top 40 GDS-Index [5]

Climate and resource policy

Ireland's Climate Action Plan sets out measures intended to deliver legally binding carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. Event organisers can support this direction by measuring significant sources of emissions and prioritising practical reductions, particularly in travel, energy, food and materials.

Wind and Solar Energy
2nd in Europe for wind and solar energy production per capita [6]

Home to Bord Bia's Origin Green Sustainability Programme
Pioneering sustainable food and drink [7]

Food Waste Charter
A successful government backed initiative [8]

3 UNESCO Global Geoparks [9]
Burren and Cliffs of Moher, Copper Coast, Cuilcagh Lakelands

Need to know

Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index) Rankings

Ireland has established itself as a global leader in sustainable business events, with Dublin, Cork, Kerry, Shannon Region and Galway all ranked among the top 40 destinations in the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index).

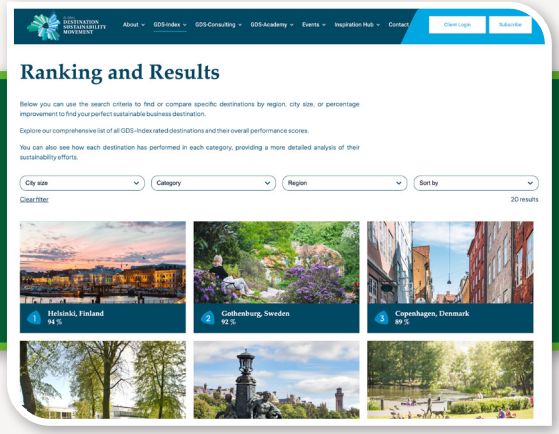
The GDS-Index is a global benchmarking and performance improvement programme that helps destinations measure, manage, and improve their sustainability performance through a structured, data-driven framework. It assesses environmental, social, supplier, and destination management indicators, enabling cities and regions to benchmark progress and strengthen their competitive edge.

The success of Ireland's business events destinations reflects not only strong sustainability credentials, but also a sustained commitment to continuous improvement. Over recent years, Irish destinations have worked collaboratively to strengthen policies, measure progress and share best practice, reinforcing Ireland's position as a leading destination for sustainable business events on the global stage.

Five Business Events Hubs Ranked in Top 40 GDS-Index (2026)

- Dublin Convention Bureau
- Cork Convention Bureau
- Kerry Convention Bureau
- Shannon Region Conference & Sports Bureau
- Galway Convention Bureau

GLOBAL DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX



GDS-Index Leaders on a global stage

Learn more

At a glance

Sustainability in Ireland's Business Events Hubs



Galway

University of Galway is a UN SDG Champion[10]

Atlantic Technological University (ATU) hosts a sustainability observatory[11]

84% hotels/ attractions hold sustainability certifications[12]

Galway is part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network[13]

Clare

Home to UNESCO Global Geopark, one of three in Ireland[14]

Pioneered Ireland's Geopark Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism[15]

Ireland's first certified sustainable tourism destination (EarthCheck)[16]

Home to Ireland's first carbon-neutral and B-Corp Certified hotels[17]

Limerick

Gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way, one of the longest defined coastal routes in the world[18]

Awarded the European Green Leaf (2020) for air quality and noise levels[19]

Smarter Travel Project - encouraging more sustainable, low-carbon transport[20]

University of Limerick holds a Green Flag Award (An Taisce)[21]



Dublin

The Convention Centre Dublin is the world's first carbon-neutral convention centre [22]

Member of the EarthCheck Sustainable Destinations programme [23]

A designated UNESCO biosphere, and only capital city biosphere in Europe [24]

Dublin Airport is carbon-neutral since 2020[25]

Kerry

Home to the longest section of the Wild Atlantic Way[26]

Home to Skellig Micheal – UNESCO World Heritage Site[27]

Ireland's first International Dark Sky Reserve[28]

Killarney National Park - 500 kilometres of woodland, wildlife and ecology[29]

Cork

Awarded Mission Label by European Commission for Climate Action Plan[30]

Sustainability Certification held by over 70% of Cork Hotels[31]

Cork Airport is committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050[32]

Cork was shortlisted in the 2024 European Capital of Smart Tourism Competition[33]



Adare Manor, Co. Limerick



Section 2

7-Step sustainable event roadmap

Sustainability is a thread that runs through every stage of successful event planning

This 7-step roadmap mirrors the natural rhythm of event delivery, offering structure, shared language, and practical focus areas.

At each step, sustainability is integrated intentionally, supporting better outcomes for delegates, clients, communities, and the destination.



Bringing the 7-Step Sustainable Event Roadmap to Life



Ireland's Green Toolkit for Business Events
Roadmap Checklist

Fáilte Ireland

Stage 1: Set the Vision
(Purpose & Intention)

- ✓ Define the environmental goals for the event, and intended legacy outcomes from the start
- ✓ Align the event with Ireland's national targets (45% emissions reduction by 2030, net zero by 2050)
- ✓ Appoint a sustainability lead or agree shared responsibility across the team
- ✓ Secure early buy-in from clients, partners, and sponsors
- ✓ Review Fáilte Ireland supports and tools (e.g. Carbon Calculator, Climate Action Programme)

Stage 2: Align and Engage
(Policy, Promotion & Engagement)

- ✓ Develop a Sustainability Policy tailored to the event
- ✓ Share the policy with teams, suppliers, and stakeholders
- ✓ Include sustainability messaging on websites, registration platforms, and programmes
- ✓ Brief speakers, MCs, and staff on commitments and key messages
- ✓ Invite delegates to get involved (e.g. use reusable bottles, choose public transport)
- ✓ Communicate transport options clearly and early
- ✓ Identify one or two sustainability stories to highlight during the event

Stage 3: Source Sustainably
(Procurement & Collaboration)

- ✓ Apply environmental criteria in all procurement decisions
- ✓ Sect local, certified, and low-carbon suppliers committed to sustainable sourcing
- ✓ Request sustainability plans or credentials from key suppliers (e.g. ISO 14001, Green Hospitality)
- ✓ Avoid high-emission materials and activities (e.g. single-use plastics, unnecessary transport)
- ✓ Prioritise reusable, recyclable, or compostable items in catering, signage, merchandise and furnishings
- ✓ Plan for re-use or redistribution of materials post-event

Stage 4: Design for Sustainability
(Venue, Logistics & Delegate Journey)

- ✓ Choose sustainably certified venues (ISO etc.), with established sustainability policies, energy-efficient operations, and measurements in place for energy, water and waste
- ✓ Prioritise in-house waste separation, low-carbon catering systems, efficient water use, and universal accessibility
- ✓ Co-locate venues, accommodation, and activities to reduce the need for transport
- ✓ Promote low-emission travel (trains, coaches, walking tours, design walkable or bikeable delegate routes
- ✓ Offer public transport incentives or tickets in delegate packs
- ✓ Minimise energy and AV needs through smart scheduling and space design

This practical checklist can be used to navigate the 7-Step Sustainable Event Roadmap.

Download the Checklist

1. Set the Vision
2. Align and Engage
3. Source Sustainably
4. Design for Sustainability
5. Activate on Site
6. Measure and Evaluate
7. Storytelling

Establish the event's sustainability vision from the outset. Clarify what success looks like, align with Ireland's climate ambition, and embed environmental and social goals into the event's core purpose.

Purpose and Intention



Create and share an event sustainability policy to set the tone. Clear, consistent messaging builds trust with clients, delegates, suppliers, and internal teams, and lays the groundwork for powerful engagement and storytelling.

Policy, Promotion and Engagement



Choose suppliers and procure with purpose. Sustainable procurement is a strategic tool for reducing event footprint, supporting local enterprise, and delivering meaningful ESG outcomes. Assess suppliers using transparent and proportionate criteria such as price, quality, accessibility, employment practices, local economic value, environmental performance and independently verified credentials.

Procurement and Collaboration



Design the event to avoid unnecessary impacts, enable participation and improve the delegate experience. Consider event location, timing, accessibility, transport, programme format, food, accommodation, energy, materials, waste and local community impacts.

Venue, Logistics and Delegate Journey



Turn plans into action. Empower delivery teams and suppliers to follow through on commitments. Make sustainability efforts visible, inclusive, and tangible throughout the live event experience. Think about collecting evidence during delivery. Record actual quantities and outcomes related to planned actions and policies.

On-Site Delivery and Implementation



Track outcomes and report transparently. Use data, case studies, and delegate feedback to capture learning and legacy, strengthening future planning and positioning the business event as a sustainability leader. Remember its good practice to report both achievements and limitations.

Measurement and Reporting



Clear communication of sustainability efforts and achievements builds trust, inspires engagement, and amplifies impact. Plan how to share the story – through social media, newsletters, video, or other channels - and link it to the relevant SDGs to help promote global progress. Remember – be specific in your communications and avoid using individual initiatives to describe the whole event as green, sustainable, low-impact or carbon neutral.

Telling the Sustainabilty Story



Case Study

Meitheal: Applying a structured sustainability-management approach to event delivery

Meitheal is Fáilte Ireland's flagship tourism trade event, bringing over 250 international buyers from more than 20 countries together with over 380 Irish tourism businesses. In recent years, Meitheal has become a live demonstration of how the 7-Step Sustainable Event Strategy can be applied in practice.



Meitheal 2025, INEC Killarney, Co. Kerry

Meitheal follows 7-Step Sustainable Event Roadmap

Step 1: Set the Vision

- A three-year Sustainability Policy drives Meitheal's ambition, with year-on-year improvement a core principle.
- Vision anchored in Ireland's business events strategy and national climate targets.
- Aligned with 7 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Step 2: Align and Engage

- Meitheal Sustainability Policy communicated to suppliers, venues, and partners.
- Supplier assessment incorporated relevant management-system certifications including ISO 20121, ISO 14001 and Origin Green.
- Sustainability messaging integrated into delegate communications and on-site signage.
- Secondary school students hosted on-site for a sustainability-focused project.

Step 3: Source Sustainably

- Killarney's participation in the GDS-Index and the availability of venues, accommodation, transport and local suppliers formed part of destination selection.
- Key venues hold recognised sustainability certifications (e.g., INEC Arena ISO 20121, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001; The Europe Hotel Green Hospitality Silver Award and strong local sourcing, including produce from an owned local farm; The Brehon Hotel enrolled in Fáilte Ireland's Climate Action Programme).
- 75% of food and beverage served at Meitheal was sourced from local suppliers.
- Partnerships with sustainable transport, AV, signage, and materials suppliers.

Step 4: Design for Sustainability

- Shared coach transfers were offered for specified journeys as an alternative to individual transfers or connecting flights.
- Familiarisation trips were designed to incorporate sustainability criteria, certified attractions, and low-carbon activities.
- Reuse of event assets such as printed backdrops from previous years.
- Venues designed to accommodate accessibility requirements.

Step 5: Activate On Site

- Visible waste separation stations and recycling points.
- Pre-ordering of food to minimise waste.
- Refillable water stations and measures to minimise single-use plastics.
- Venue energy and water conservation policies fully applied during the event.

Step 6: Measure and Evaluate

- Carbon footprint measured using the Fáilte Ireland Business Events Carbon Calculator.
- Benchmarking against Meitheal 2024 to target per-delegate emissions reduction.
- Local sourcing % recorded; KPIs such as euros per kilogram CO_2 considered.
- Waste measured by type and reported via external consultants.
- Post-event sustainability reporting is part of the commitment.

Step 7: Storytelling

- Generated awareness of Meitheal's sustainability story through communication channels.

Need to know

Clarity and Credibility in Sustainability Storytelling

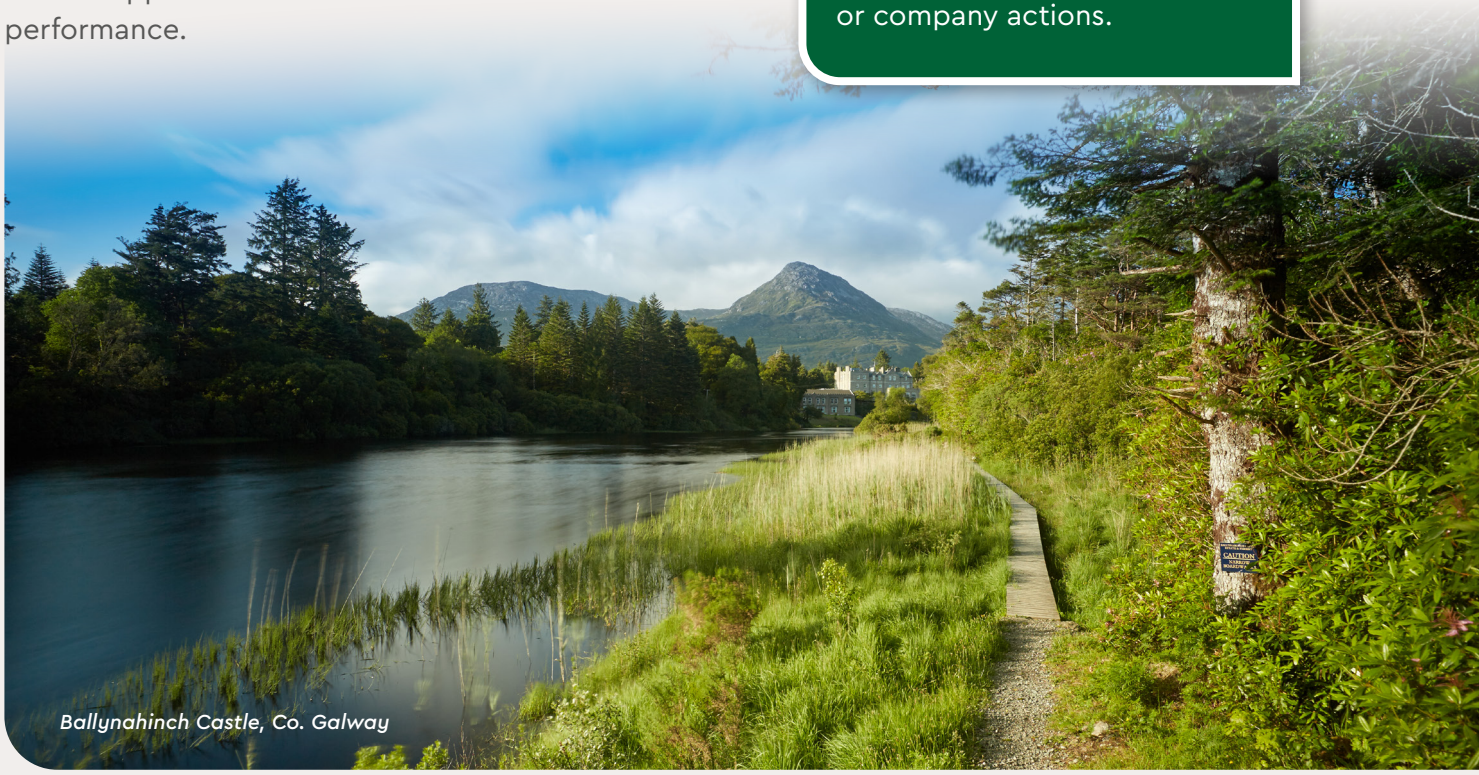
Communicating sustainability claims accurately

Sustainability is now a central pillar of event design and delivery. Alongside this shift comes a growing responsibility to communicate environmental actions clearly, credibly, and accurately. Evolving national and European legislation is designed to tackle greenwashing and ensure that any environmental claims made in the marketplace are clear, verifiable and evidence-based. From 27 September 2026, Irish consumer law will expressly prohibit or restrict several forms of environmental claim, including unsupported generic claims, certain offset-based climate claims, misleading whole-product or whole-business claims, unauthorised sustainability labels and unsupported claims about future environmental performance.

Jargon Buster

What is Greenwashing?

Greenwashing is when a company claims, through its marketing communications, to be more environmentally conscious and responsible than it actually is in practice. Greenwashing misleads customers through exaggerated claims of the environmental benefits that derive from products, services or company actions.



Ballynahinch Castle, Co. Galway

Guidelines for clear and credible reporting of business events

Focus on measurable, specific claims

Avoid vague or unqualified statements such as "eco-friendly" or "green event." Instead, reference specific standards or verified outcomes. For example: "This event is hosted in a venue certified to ISO 20121, 80% of event waste was diverted from landfill through composting and recycling." State exactly what was done, the outcome measured, and the period and part of the event concerned.

Do not turn one action into a whole-event claim

A certified venue, vegetarian menu, recycling station or local supplier do not by themselves establish that the whole event is sustainable. If the evidence supports only part of the claim, narrow the claim to that part.

Treat carbon claims with particular care

Report the overall carbon footprint before any carbon-credit or offsetting is factored in. Do not claim that an event or service is carbon neutral, climate neutral, carbon positive or has a reduced climate impact where that claim is based on offsetting emissions.

Explain labels, certifications and ratings

Environmental claims need to be backed up with appropriate evidence. These can include:

- Independent certifications or standards (e.g. ISO 14001)
- Supplier-provided data (e.g. venue energy usage, waste diversion rates)
- Use of recognised measurement tools, such as the Fáilte Ireland Business Events Carbon Calculator

Remember to name the certifying or rating body, the applicable standard or methodology, its scope and the validity period. Do not present membership, participation, benchmarking or self-assessment as certification.

Be transparent and accessible

Any sustainability claims made in bids, proposals, websites, or promotional materials should be backed by documentation or reports that can be reviewed by clients, delegates or stakeholders.

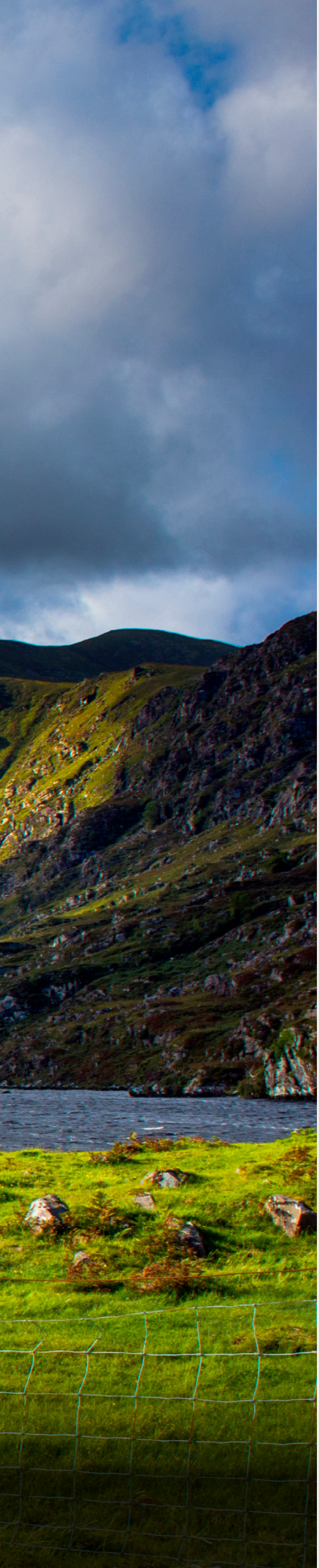


How Fáilte Ireland communicated the Meitheal Sustainability Story

Watch the video



Gap of Dunloe, Killarney National Park, Co. Kerry



Section 3

Designing business events for impact

From footprint to handprint – rethinking event impact

Sustainable event planning has traditionally focused on minimising harm – reducing emissions, cutting waste, and conserving resources. While these efforts remain essential, today's leading events also consider their handprint: the positive impact they leave behind. An event's footprint reflects what it consumes; its handprint reflects what it contributes – to communities, the environment, and long-term sustainability.

The chart on the following page outlines examples of activities that support sustainable event design while also creating a positive, lasting legacy. These dual goals – reducing environmental footprint and increasing positive handprint – can be achieved simultaneously. The decisions made across key areas will shape how visible, tangible, and measurable the event's sustainability impact becomes.

Examples of activities that support sustainable event design – minimising impacts and leaving a lasting legacy.



Ha'Penny Bridge, River Liffey, Dublin City

Minimise footprint



- Reducing travel emissions
- Eliminating single-use plastics
- Lowering venue energy use
- Printing less
- Consolidating logistics
- Choosing certified venues
- Tracking carbon
- Minimising/diverting food waste
- Using fewer materials
- Limiting water use
- Avoiding delegate gifts

Maximise footprint



- Funding biodiversity projects
- Partnering with social enterprises
- Co-investing in energy upgrades
- Enabling digital engagement
- Using hyper-local suppliers
- Hosting sustainability training
- Sharing carbon reports
- Piloting circular models
- Creating re-usable signage
- Supporting water conservation
- Donating to local causes

Inspiring Environmental Impact Stories

35th International Geographical Congress



- **When:** August 2024
- **Where:** Dublin City University
- **Theme:** 'Celebrating a World of Difference'
- **Objective:** Promote interdisciplinary research and encourage collaboration across different geographic disciplines and related fields

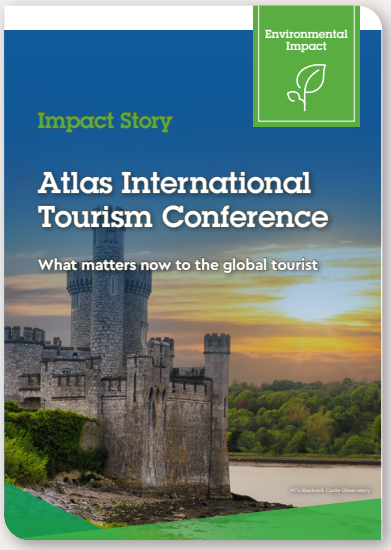
This conference was aligned with the following UN SDGs:



Sustainability was core to the event planning and here are some of the environmental highlights:

- **Public engagement:** The congress included a public engagement programme with events, interactive workshops, and outreach initiatives. Events like the "City Climate Walk" and "Mapping Ireland" through Time engaged almost 300 members of the public, adding societal impact to the congress. A core goal was to bring the congress beyond the university campus to generate wider educational benefits.
- **Carbon mitigation:** The Congress was hosted in DCU which is part of the Dublin City Council de-carbonising zone. The event raised funds through an optional environmental levy for delegates, which will support carbon insetting initiatives on university campuses in Ireland as a legacy project.
- **Hybrid event:** An innovative hybrid event was co-hosted with the Royal Geographical Society in London.
- **Water and Waste Management:** Delegates were encouraged to bring their own water bottles, and water refill stations were provided, eliminating the use of single-use plastics. Managing food waste by requiring pre-notification if delegates did not require lunch resulted in minimal food waste.

Atlas International Tourism Conference



- **When:** September 2022
- **Where:** Munster Technological University, Cork
- **Theme:** 'What matters now to the global tourist?'
- **Objective:** Address challenges facing the tourism and leisure industries

This conference was aligned with the following UN SDGs:



The Atlas International Tourism Conference implemented the following environmental and social measures as part of event planning and delivery:

- The newly extended reach of ATLAS as an advocate worldwide for sustainability was a major step forward, particularly driven by the presence of so many new members coming together in Cork.
- Responsible consumption was practiced, including the eradication of single use plastics, with food waste measures put in place such as preordered food and the sourcing of locally produced and sustainably accredited food where possible.
- A 'Leave No Waste' slogan was communicated with delegates and other stakeholders.
- A conference partnership with Cork city bikes was forged, with bicycles provided at The Kingsley Hotel.
- Diversity, inclusion and equity was a focus area and as a direct output of the conference, a new 'Inclusive Access to Education' programme was developed.
- The conference organisers kept the local community at the core of the conference and aligned their programme to Cork City's SDGs, exemplifying how SDGs set at a regional level can filter to create sustainable business events.

Event organisers have provided the information for case studies included in this section of the guide. The examples describe particular actions and should not be interpreted as certification of the event's overall sustainability.



Cobh, Co. Cork



Section 4

What Fáilte Ireland can offer

Fáilte Ireland offers a comprehensive suite of supports to help event organisers deliver impactful, environmentally responsible events that align with global sustainability standards

Whether bidding for an international conference, designing low carbon delegate experiences, or measuring and communicating environmental impact, event organisers can access a range of tools and programmes for guidance.

From destination subvention to carbon footprint tracking and tailored climate action planning, these supports empower organisers to create events that leave a meaningful legacy – for attendees, communities, and the environment.



Destination Subvention Framework

Fáilte Ireland offers a range of subvention supports for international business events to help organisers deliver exceptional events. Financial assistance during the bidding process enables event organisers to create and present winning bid documents and presentations. Site inspection funding is also available to support costs associated with travel and accommodation for key decision makers to attend site inspections.

In addition, Fáilte Ireland has introduced a new Destination Subvention Framework, designed to incentivise conferences that generate positive economic, social, and environmental impacts. Aligned with Ireland business events strategy, Business Events 2030, this funding model encourages event organisers to go beyond traditional metrics and deliver conferences that create a positive impact on communities and support sustainability.

Conference organisers have the potential to unlock up to €30 per international delegate for conferences that;

- Align with key priority sectors and themes
- Promote regionality, seasonality and extended duration
- Demonstrate clear potential for leaving a lasting legacy
- Show strong commitment to sustainability
- Engage and support local suppliers



Destination subvention and eligibility criteria for international business events

Read more

Business Events Carbon Calculator

In a world of rising expectations, measuring an event's environmental impact is a strategic and reputational essential. That is why Fáilte Ireland has created the **Business Events Carbon Calculator** – a practical event-specific tool that helps event organisers understand, reduce, and report on their carbon footprint.

The calculator estimates greenhouse-gas emissions for specified event activities using a documented methodology and emission factors. Whether bidding, planning, or reporting on a business event in Ireland, this tool provides a credible, means of measuring emissions impact.

Created in partnership with EarthCheck, the calculator was developed with reference to relevant Greenhouse Gas Protocol accounting principles.

What does the Business Events Carbon Calculator track?

- **Delegate Travel:** Distance travelled, and type of transport used
- **Meals and Catering:** Menu design and number of meals served
- **Venue Energy Use:** Energy performance of the main event venue
- **Accommodation:** Emissions associated with overnight stays for delegates

By analysing these areas, organisers can identify opportunities to reduce emissions, operational costs and enhance the sustainability of their events.



If you have any queries on any of our supports, please contact us at **customersupport@failteireland.ie**

Climate Action Programme

Fáilte Ireland's Climate Action Programme provides hands-on support and investment advice for tourism businesses aiming to become more sustainable.

As part of the Climate Action Programme, businesses receive an expert advisor, who is fully subsidised by Fáilte Ireland for three years. This dedicated advisor will mentor businesses on a one-to-one basis and help to develop a sustainability action plan that is tailored to each unique need and goal.

Benefits of joining the programme:

- Cut costs through reduced consumption and improved efficiency
- Get ongoing expert advisor support and resources
- Boost brand's image and reputation
- Lower emissions to meet national targets
- Upskill teams with bespoke training



Discover how the Climate Action Programme works and how to get involved

Learn more

If you have any queries on any of our supports, please contact us at **customersupport@failteireland.ie**

References

[1] Enable Research https://enable-research.ie/national-parks-ireland/; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/press-releases/minister-osullivan-encourages-everyone-to-discover-their-local-natura-2000-site/

[2] European Environment Agency https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/europe-environment-2025/countries/ireland/terrestrial-protected-areas

[3] An Taisce https://www.antaisce.org/news/blue-flag-and-green-coast-awards-2025-irelands-best-beaches-and-marinas; RTE https://www.rte.ie/lifestyle/travel/2025/0516/1513217-irelands-blue-flag-beaches-for-2025-revealed/

[4] Department of Transport https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-transport/policy-information/greenways/; Waterways Ireland https://www.waterwaysireland.org/news/ambitious-plans-for-blueways

[5] Global Destination Sustainability Index https://www.gds.earth/index/ranking-and-results/

[6] IDA Ireland https://www.idaireland.com/latest-news/insights/how-ireland-is-becoming-a-leader-in-renewable-energy-technology

[7] Bord Bia https://www.bordbia.ie/industry/origin-green/

[8] Food Waste Charter https://foodwastecharter.ie/

[9] UNESCO https://www.unesco.org/en/countries/ie

[10] University of Galway; Government of Ireland SDG Champions Programme https://www.universityofgalway.ie/sustainability/

[11] Atlantic Technological University https://www.atu.ie/; UN Tourism INSTO https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/unwto-international-network-of-sustainable-tourism-observatories

[12] GDS-Index ranking/results for context https://www.gds.earth/index/ranking-and-results/

[13] UNESCO Creative Cities Network https://www.unesco.org/en/creative-cities/galway

[14] UNESCO https://www.unesco.org/en/countries/ie; Ireland.ie ireland.ie/en/oecd-unesco/paris/ireland-and-unesco/geoparks/

[15] Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark https://www.burrengeopark.ie/; Burren Ecotourism Network https://burren.ie/our-network/code-of-practice/

[16] GSTC https://www.gstcouncil.org/; Burren Ecotourism Network https://burren.ie/; Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark https://www.burrengeopark.ie/

[17] Hotel Doolin https://www.hoteldoolin.ie/sustainability.html; B Lab directory https://www.bcorporation.net/en-us/find-a-b-corp/

[18] Discover Ireland https://www.discoverireland.ie/wild-atlantic-way; Fáilte Ireland https://www.failteireland.ie/Wild-Atlantic-Way.aspx

[19] European Commission https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/urban-environment/european-green-leaf-award_en; Limerick City and County Council https://www.limerick.ie/

[20] Limerick Smarter Travel https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/community-and-leisure/sports-and-fitness/limerick-smarter-travel; National Transport Authority https://www.nationaltransport.ie/

References

[21] University of Limerick https://www.ul.ie/sustainability; An Taisce Green Campus https://greencampusireland.org/

[22] Convention Centre Dublin https://www.theccd.ie/event-venue/sustainability/

[23] EarthCheck https://earthcheck.org/news/dublin-joins-earthcheck-sustainable-destinations-program/

[24] Dublin Bay Biosphere https://www.dublinbaybiosphere.ie/

[25] Dublin Airport https://www.daa.ie/our-company/sustainability/airport-carbon-accreditation/

[26] Fáilte Ireland https://www.failteireland.ie/en/wild-atlantic-way

[27] UNESCO https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/757/

[28] International Dark Sky Places https://darksky.org/what-we-do/international-dark-sky-places/all-places/?_search_field=ireland

[29] National Parks Ireland https://www.nationalparks.ie/killarney/

[30] Government of Ireland https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-climate-energy-and-the-environment/campaigns/eu-climate-neutral-and-smart-cities-mission/

[31] Cork Convention Bureau https://www.corkconventionbureau.com/cork-ranked-amongst-the-worlds-most-sustainable-destinations/

[32] Cork Airport https://www.corkairport.com/corporate/community-sustainability/sustainability

[33] European Commission https://smart-tourism-capital.ec.europa.eu/winners-and-finalists/cities-and-destinations-shortlisted-2024-competition_en

Fáilte Ireland



supports.failteireland.ie

© Fáilte Ireland 2026

Bantry House and Gardens, Co. Cork