
THE ECO-RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPANT'S HANDBOOK



**5th WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION CONGRESS**

Earth, our common home

ABOUT

Every year, thousands of congresses, conventions and special meetings are held all over the world. Regrettably, these events can generate considerable negative impacts. Holding an eco-responsible event can be an effective and often economical way of mitigating those adverse effects by ensuring social, economic and environmental considerations are taken into account in the organizational process.

The organizing committee of the 5th World Environmental Committee has done just that by establishing a committee, policy and action plan on eco-responsibility. This *Eco-responsible Participant's Handbook* is designed to help Congress attendees play an active part in this process and to encourage their ongoing commitment to eco-responsible practices.

What is an eco-responsible event?

An eco-responsible event adheres to principles of sustainable development at every stage of its organization. Its aims are to:

- Reduce the negative impacts of the event, particularly in relation to the environment (e.g.: reducing the amount of waste generated, the level of greenhouse gases emitted, the natural resources consumed, etc.)
- Increase the positive impacts of the event (e.g.: local and fair trade, local insertion enterprises, education, networking, access to the event for students and NPOs, etc.)

This handbook is divided into four main sections: communication and awareness, ecological footprint, responsible consumption and social responsibility. In each section you will find a statement of principle urging us to reconsider our actions, a list of measures put in place by the organization to mitigate the negative and enhance the positive impacts of the event and some of the actions you can take to help us meet the challenge. For additional information, visit the *Eco-responsibility* section of the Congress website at: <http://www.5weec.uqam.ca/EN/ecoresponsabilite.asp>.

COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

Holding an eco-responsible Congress allows the organizing committee to fulfil a social role by raising participant, supplier and partner awareness and enhancing the event's image among the general public and media. The effectiveness of the measures and overall success of an eco-responsible event depend largely on the efforts of all parties involved, from organizers to participants. It is for this reason that the 5th World Environmental Education Congress wishes to engage as many players as possible in its eco-responsible mission.

Actions of the 5th World Environmental Education Congress

- Distribution of information to Congress delegates and collaborators on the event's guiding principles for eco-responsibility;
- Exhibitors' handbook containing expectations and suggestions on reducing material distribution;
- Contest for the most eco-responsible booth;
- Publication of a report on the Congress' eco-responsibility efforts following the event;
- Information capsules and Web page devoted entirely to eco-responsibility on the Congress website;
- Online survey to gauge participant interest in public transit use;
- Implementation of an eco-responsibility policy for suppliers;
- Establishment of an on-site Green Team to inform participants about eco-responsible measures and to guide them in their individual efforts.

What can I do as a participant?

- Make at least one eco-responsible commitment, follow it throughout the Congress and discuss it with other delegates;
 - Avoid taking paper copies of documents that can be found on the Internet or ask exhibitors to e-mail a copy;
 - Apply the eco-responsible principles of the Congress at home and during future events;
 - Send electronic copies of documents and reports rather than printed versions to the Congress delegates you meet.
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ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Each Congress participant produces an average of 30 kg of waste over three days, five times more than he or she produces on an average day (USEPA, 2000; 2003).

The City of Montréal produces and supplies excellent-quality drinking water that meets Quebec's standards for lead content (Ville de Montréal, 2007). We urge you to use the public water drinking fountains.

ABOUT AIR TRAVEL

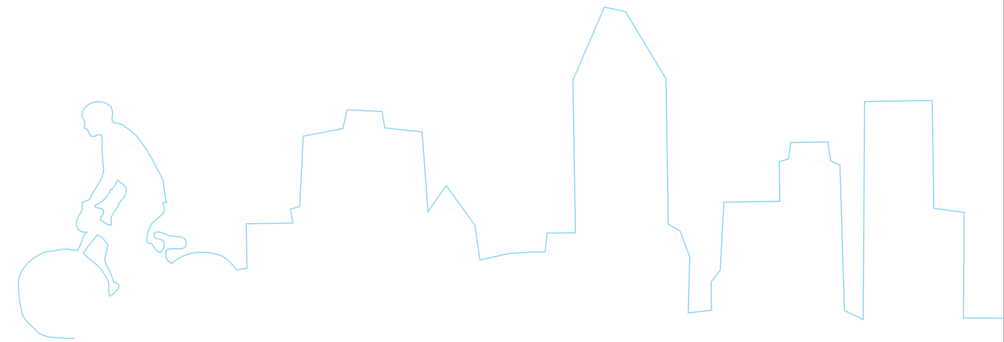
A round-trip flight between Denver and Montréal, a total distance of 5,214 km, produces about 1.55 tonnes of greenhouse gas per participant. The participant travelling the 11,049 km on a Paris to Montréal round-trip flight generates 3.28 tonnes, while 9.51 tonnes of greenhouse gas are produced getting the participant from Sydney to Montréal and back home again (32,019 km). (Calculator of the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi's Chaire de recherche et d'intervention en éco-conseil, 2009)

Actions of the 5th World Environmental Education Congress

- Promotion of public transit and car pooling;
- Use of reusable dishes and cutlery;
- Sorting, weighing and categorization of waste during the event;
- Calculation of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Offsetting of participants' greenhouse gas emissions.

What can I do as a participant?

- Walk or use public transit to get around;
 - Avoid printing e-mails;
 - Sort and dispose of waste in the appropriate sorting bins;
 - Use the washable cups provided at the event;
 - Bring along a reusable coffee cup and water bottle from home;
 - Use water from the on-site drinking fountains to refill water bottles;
 - At the hotel, request that sheets and towels not be replaced daily;
 - Turn off lights, television, air conditioning and heating units before leaving the hotel room;
 - Return identification badges to the indicated area once the Congress is over.
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RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

Buying a cup of fair-trade coffee allows a producer to earn up to three times more money (Équiterre).

It can take as much as 100,000 litres of water to produce a single kilo of beef (One Drop Foundation).

Actions of the 5th World Environmental Education Congress

- Inclusion of eco-responsibility clauses in all calls for tender;
- Rationalization of material needs and reduced purchasing;
- Promotion of healthy and vegetarian eating;
- Distribution of fair-trade coffee only.

What can I do as a participant?

- Buy only locally-made souvenirs and gifts;
 - Avoid overloading my plate to limit waste;
 - Choose organic foods;
 - Eat a healthy vegetarian diet;
 - Reduce consumption.
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SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

While 770,000 Canadians rely on food banks each and every month—40% of them children (*Abolissons la pauvreté*) — massive quantities of surplus food are being thrown out in homes, grocery stores, hotels... and at venues where small and large-scale events are being held!

Actions of the 5th World Environmental Education Congress

- Distribution of food surpluses to a local community organization;
- Integration of city tour activities in the Congress program;
- Furthering the acknowledgement of all persons and the role they play in public life.

What can I do as a participant?

- Take part in the cultural, political and scientific events organized by the Congress;
 - Thank volunteers for their dedication.
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SUMMARY

Eco-responsible events are all centred on one common principle: at-source reduction must be at the basis of all planning and action. Simple, concrete behaviours can and do help create and maintain a healthy environment. Use your imagination and surprise others with your innovative ideas!

The success of these eco-responsible efforts demands the active implication of all players. Will you join us in making this eco-responsible event a resounding success?

To learn more, visit the 5th World Environmental Education Congress website at:

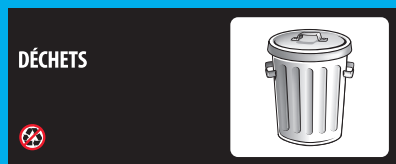
<http://www.5weec.uqam.ca/EN/ecoresponsabilite.asp>

or the Conseil québécois des événements écoresponsables portal at:

<http://www.evenementecoresponsable.com>

Waste sorting stations will be set up around the *Palais des congrès de Montréal* throughout the Congress. Be sure to properly sort and dispose of waste materials in the appropriate receptacles:

- 1 **Plastic, glass and aluminum containers**
- 2 **Paper and cardboard**
- 3 **Final waste**
- 4 **Compostable materials | compostable dishes**
(receptacles for these types of waste will be located near food stands)



THIS ECO-RESPONSIBLE EVENT
IS PRESENTED BY



www.5weec.uqam.ca/en/ecoresponsabilite.asp
www.evenementecoresponsable.com



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