

Conclusion



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Overall the Host Country Agreement to host a low carbon event was fulfilled. The emissions created as a result of the event were avoided and reduced through the renewable energy donation as well as a comprehensive programme of greening initiatives. Equally, national government's own pledge to raise significant awareness on the subject of climate change and the conference itself as well as demonstrate climate-friendly development solutions was highly successful.

The success of the greening of COP17/CMP7 was largely informed by the contributions of a range of stakeholders and the emergence of a COP17/CMP7 Greening Programme due to this collective effort. This was cemented through suitable institutional arrangements, through the establishment of a Greening Workstream, located within a broader governance arrangement, that allowed for role-players to continue their efforts unhindered yet report to a common structure. This reporting/feedback mechanism thus allowed for the consolidation and crystallisation of the process to organise COP17/CMP7 in accordance with green event principles and practices.

With the experiences and lessons learnt from 2010 FIFA World Cup™'freshin organisers' minds, elements of the Greening Programme were mostly consolidation and refinement of interventions as was the case with transport. This therefore allowed for the wider application of event greening principles and practices to traditionally uncharted areas such as safety and security as well as the identification of linkages between and amongst workstreams to improve sustainability outcomes.

Whilst proposed initiatives may not have always been implemented, due to the nature of the event, a positive space was created to reflect on working in more integrated ways and applying greening principles to as many elements of the event as possible as well as to enhance ways of working after the event. Concern for positive legacy was a shared concern amongst most role-players and several legacy initiatives have been put in place as an outcome of hosting COP17/CMP7.

Unique to the approach of monitoring the sustainability outcomes of COP17/CMP7 was the tracking of 'unofficial' side-events, namely all the side-events not hosted in the UN Precinct. Whilst there is little control over the manner in which these events are organised, the exercise showed that they do have a significant footprint and future COP events should consider ways of supporting the greening of side-events to contribute to an overall greener event.

Whereas visitors and delegates may not always have been conscious or aware of the initiatives which were put in place to achieve a sustainably managed event, the organisation of demonstration projects and site visits, which were another form of awareness, were exceedingly popular. The initiatives formed the crucial link between the focus of the conference and the reality

on the ground where climate change hits hardest, a poignant expression of the *raison-d'être* for the conference. They were also inspirational, affirming the value of the negotiations in promoting a brighter future for all those concerned with reversing and countering the effects of climate change.

In some respects, the awareness-raising component was almost more significant than the actual measures put in place to conserve the use of natural resources in the organisation of the event because of the potential to apply acquired knowledge long after the event's lifespan. With this in mind, the effectiveness of communications, whether they were verbal, written and or visual, assumes a critical role. Key lessons to emerge in the post-event analysis are the importance of timely and sustained communications with emphasis on the effective use of the internet as well as knowledgeable and eloquent communicators with emphasis on the role of Environmental Volunteers, CCR Expo Green Stand Chaperones and people staffing the CCR Expo exhibits.

A major constraint to the organisation of green event in relation to the CCR Expo and the side events is the enduring practice of distributing marketing materials (brochures, pamphlets, giveaways, etc.). Organisers of side-events and CCR Expo exhibitors were encouraged to make information electronically available and to resist the tendency to distribute promotional items, with exhibitors even pledging to minimise the quantity of printed materials through the Responsible Exhibitor Charter. Nonetheless, it was evident that the events and marketing industry are yet to fully appreciate the negative environmental impacts that these handouts have and to embrace alternatives that are more environmentally responsible.

On the whole, the organisation of COP17/CMP7 and the vision for the most sustainable outcomes possible were mostly influenced by the following four factors: degree of planning that took place which was largely dependent on lead-in times; the level of support and cooperation received by stakeholders including political will; the availability of financial resources; and closely related, the ability to influence procurement to support sustainable choices and alternatives. A number of opportunities that would have enhanced the sustainability of the event were not realised due to any one of these factors or a combination thereof. Nonetheless, the initiatives that were put in place were effective, appealing and typically had the desired effect.

In conclusion, the opportunity to host COP17/CMP7 not only reinforced the country's logistical prowess in managing a large international event but also confirmed its ability to organise a sustainably managed event coupled with a lasting positive legacy.