

Practice to be assessed and included in the Guidelines

Number/code: GOV16

Title: SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ACCORDING TO ISO20121

Guidelines section:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance	<input type="checkbox"/> Operational management
<input type="checkbox"/> Context of the event	<input type="checkbox"/> Procurement
<input type="checkbox"/> Event	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobility and logistics
<input type="checkbox"/> Stadium management	<input type="checkbox"/>

Description:

ISO 20121:2012, *Event sustainability management systems – Requirements with guidance for use*, is suitable for ensuring that events, ranging from local celebrations to "mega events" such as the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, leave behind a positive legacy. The standard is relevant to all members of the event industry supply chain including organizers, event managers, stand builders, caterers and logistics suppliers.

Conferences, concerts, sport events, exhibitions and festivals can offer a wide range of public, local community and economic benefits. However staging an event can also generate negative economic, environmental and social impacts, such as material waste, energy consumption and strains on local communities.

ISO 20121 provides the framework for identifying the potentially negative social, economic and environmental impacts of events by removing or reducing them, and capitalizing on more positive impacts through improved planning and processes.

The standard takes the management systems approach familiar to thousands of organizations worldwide through the success of standards such as ISO 9001 (quality management) and ISO 14001 (environmental management).

ISO 20121 has been created by the event industry for the event industry. More than 30 countries and liaison bodies participated in the work.

ISO 20121 has been issued in June 2012 as an evolution of a British standard related to sustainable events management. Several major organisations have successfully followed and been independently certified to the standard over the subsequent years: the Rio 2016 Organising Committee; COP 21, Paris 2015; World Expo Milano 2015; IUCN Congress in Hawaii 2016; World Sailing; Ben Ainslie Racing Americas Cup team; Roland Garros; Paris 2024 Candidature; and many other individual event organisations and venues of varying sizes. The most recent notable certification to the standard was the World Economic Forum in January 2018, for the operation of its Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland. As a management system standard, ISO 20121 is about how an organisation goes about addressing sustainability. It is a tool for helping organisations to embed sustainability principles and actions into their corporate policies and procedures.

Certification to ISO 20121 means that the organising body has an effective sustainability management system in place, which is really a prerequisite for achieving one's sustainability objectives. It is therefore a means to an end, not the end itself.

UEFA EURO 2016 obtained the ISO 20121 certification and exploit the EMS in a strategic way in order to prevent and minimize as much as possible its overall environmental impact. This ensured a wide application of environmental actions with both a top-down and bottom-up approach:

“In line with sustainability standards such as ISO 20121, the organisers of UEFA EURO 2016 implemented both a top-down and a bottom-up approach for sustainability projects:

- Senior management set the tone by endorsing an ambitious policy and the statement of purpose and values (see previous section).
- Project leaders and/or sustainability champions were tasked with designing and implementing specific sustainability activities in cooperation with the sustainability manager.
- Guides and tool-kits were created to facilitate their involvement, and they also underwent training.
- Host cities appointed specific individuals to coordinate actions in stadiums and fan zones.
- Internal and external auditors challenged the robustness of sustainability integration, pointing out areas to develop and gaps to fill.
- On site, volunteers were given training on sustainability priorities (recycling, smoking ban, action to tackle discrimination, etc.) and trained to engage with fans if need be (in the event of non-compliance, for instance).
- The organisers of UEFA EURO 2016 also incorporated sustainability in suppliers' activities, asking them to reduce the environmental and social impact generated by their actions.”

Finally, they engaged France's stadiums' managers in obtaining ISO 20121 for their stadiums' regular operations: 2 stadiums have agreed to start the procedure to obtain this certification after the conclusion of the Championship.

Tokyo 2020 will also adopt management systems in accordance with ISO 20121, the international standard for Event Sustainability Management Systems (ESMS).

Aviva Stadium: the Aviva stadium aims to operate a first-class international stadium, providing an outstanding venue for matches, concerts, conferences and events, offering exceptional customer experience in a sustainable manner. To achieve its mission, the stadium has first implemented the BS 8901 Sustainability Management System for Events and successively the ISO 20121 Event Sustainability Management System. These are part of the Sustainability Policy adopted by the stadium. The scope of the stadiums' Event Sustainability Management System (ESMS) includes all major pitch events and the stadium's tours operation. The ESMS applies to the stadium main structure and its adjacent management building, including a sports shop, the Tours Centre and underground car parking.

AISTS developed the practice called sustainable sport and event toolkit (SSET) together with the Vancouver Organising Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The toolkit is an online “how to guide” for organisers of domestic and international sports events as well as National Federations, International Federations, National Olympic/Paralympic Committees and Cities interested in making their sports and events more sustainable by contributing to a healthy environment, vibrant economy and equitable society).

The toolkit is organised in 9 thematic chapters:

1. Create a sustainable commitment and strategy;
2. Management;
3. Site selection and construction;
4. Site, venue and office management;
5. Community and supply chain;
6. Transformation and accommodation;
7. Catering, food and beverage;
8. Marketing and communication
9. Athlete and public engagement

Each chapter is made of a set of objectives for which action items and performance indicators are listed. For each objective, good practices and reference to international standards (if applicable) are reported. Non-profit sport organisations can request free-of-charge access to the toolkit

7.3 Reduce unused food

← Previous objective
Next objective →

Objective
Minimise amount of unused food and maximise composting and recycling

How to / Target
Minimise unused food by cooking to order as much as possible and link with composting waste management system. Provide recycling and composting bins in convenient locations and donate unused food to food banks or local shelters

Performance Indicator
Kilograms of unused food produced and/or
Kilograms of unused food donated

Sustainable Champion
Designate the responsible individual(s) for this objective

References
GRI EN (22)

Resources

- GRI EN 22
- Mountain Riders Compostage des déchets vert (French)
- Ryder Cup Report.Donate Food - Example
- Ryder Cup Report - Full version

JUMP TO A SECTION
- Choose -

- 7.1 Reduce Ecological Footprint
- 7.2 Healthy choices
- 7.3 Reduce unused food**
- 7.4 Reduce and Recycle Waste
- 7.5 Alcohol consumption
- 7.6 Tobacco smoking

Resources
Filter all available resources by sport, country and topic.

Glossary

Environmental benefits

By following the requirements of ISO 20121, an organisation will be able to identify its material issues, risks and opportunities. This provides the basis to put in place relevant processes for planning what to do; implementing a plan; monitoring and evaluating progress; and then feeding back what has been learnt in order to refine and improve future plans. A key principle of ISO 20121 is continuous commitment. Sustainability is naturally an evolving topic, and a well-managed organisation should always be looking for ways to improve its performance and minimise risk (just like an athlete or sports team should be).

ISO 20121 offers benefit is to all actors involved in the organization of an event, at all stages of the supply chain, including the following:

- Event organizers
- Event owners
- Workforce
- Supply chain (such as caterers, stand constructors, transport companies)
- Participants

- Attendees
- Regulatory bodies
- Communities.

Economic benefits:

Independent certification to recognised standards (not just management systems, but also more technical or results-based schemes and product marks) is important for achieving credibility in this field, and for managing some of the reputational challenges faced by sports bodies.

Applicability and replicability potential

ISO 20121 is suitable to be replicated in major sporting events, included big football event.

Source

[IOC Sustainability Essentials](#) (p. 35-37)

[Vancouver 2010](#)

[ISO - Sustainable Events](#)

[TOKYO 2020](#) (p.20)

[UEFA EURO 2016](#)

[AVIVA Stadium - Sustainability Policy](#)

[AVIVA Stadium - Sustainability](#)

[ISO](#)

[AISTS](#)

[Vancouver 2010](#)