

# 50 SHADES OF GREEN

A CREATIVE GUIDE FOR  
SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT

AN INITIATIVE OF

TOURISM

NOOSA



**PLASTIC FREE**  
NOOSA

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## WHY 50 SHADES OF GREEN?

Noosa is fortunate to host many wonderful events across the Shire, from Noosa Main Beach to the top of Mount Cooroora in the hinterland town of Pomona, and many places in between. Tourism Noosa's event funding program aims to create iconic tourism events to be enjoyed by visitors and locals by enhancing existing events and help emerging events in Noosa.

Tourism Noosa only sponsors events that demonstrate progress and commitment towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in the areas of community, energy, water, and waste management.

50 Shades of Green, our creative guide to sustainable event management, along with our Sustainable Event Criteria auditing tool and checklist, are designed to help event organisers achieve their sustainability goals and balance the economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits of hosting events in Noosa.

Since 2007, the Noosa Shire has held UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status which recognises the ongoing efforts of the Noosa community to sustainably manage the region's land, water, air and wildlife, in balance with its community and visitors from across the globe. Hosting events in the Noosa Biosphere Reserve is an opportunity to show ongoing commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and demonstrate the Noosa Biosphere Reserve in action.

## HOW TO USE THE GUIDE?

The 50 Shades of Green Guide has been conveniently divided into the corresponding phases of an event planning process including: pre-event actions, during-event actions and post-event actions. The Guide can be read in chronological order from Shade 1 to Shade 50 or simply by the Shade most relevant to understanding and improving your event. Each Shade offers an introduction to the topic, actions to be taken and useful tips and resources.

The links, tools and extra information in the online Guide will be regularly updated to ensure that you have the best, localised resources at your fingertips.

What has been your experience in using the Guide?  
Are you a supplier who should be listed in this Guide?  
Please send any comments or suggestions  
to: [events@tourismnoosa.com.au](mailto:events@tourismnoosa.com.au)



# PRE-EVENT ACTIONS



# 1

## SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER OR GREEN TEAM LEADER

It takes careful planning and coordination across multiple aspects of event management to ensure a successful event for people, planet, and profits. To host a successful event, it is recommended that a dedicated Green Team Leader or Sustainability Officer be appointed to coordinate environmental actions pre-event, during-event and post-event. Events have the potential to negatively impact local communities (noise, pollution, traffic congestion, inequalities), flora and fauna (crowding, erosion, feeding) and economics (over tourism, negative media and loss of market share).

### ACTION

**Appoint a dedicated Sustainability Officer or Green Team Leader to manage the event sustainability goals.**




### Resources

 [Tourism Noosa Sustainable Event Criteria checklist](#)

### NOTE

Download the checklist above and open in [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) to complete and save your audit.

 [Sustainability Officer example Position Description](#)

 [Green Music Australia – Resources and campaigns](#)

 [Clean Vibes – Event waste management company](#)

### TIP

Don't be a lone ranger when it comes to sustainability. Involving your team members in green actions will make your job a lot easier plus raise awareness and behaviour change within your team.



### TIP

Consider using a professional service for assistance e.g. Clean Vibes.



# 2

## SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

A Sustainability Policy is a document which captures the details of the event such as:

<b>Scope of the event</b>	A basic overview of your event.
<b>Location of the event</b>	Address, public/private access, parking and site details.
<b>Sensitivity of the local environment</b>	Outdoor flora and fauna, natural habitats, waterways.
<b>Environmental and social impacts</b>	Research of any harm or complaints about the event and recognition of Kabi Kabi Indigenous heritage.
<b>Compliance</b>	Legal obligations and council permit requirements for the venue site.
<b>Event description</b>	Activities, venues and physical boundaries.
<b>Products and services and facilities</b>	List products that might be sold at your event e.g. Alcohol, fashion etc. Do you have toilets, first aid officers, security etc?
<b>Risks and opportunities</b>	What risks and opportunities do you potentially see with your event?
<b>Measuring resource consumption</b>	Commitment to measure energy, water and waste and annual benchmarking.
<b>Protection</b>	Commitment to protect the natural environment from harm from the event.
<b>Local employment</b>	Commitment to give special consideration to local employment, suppliers, and services.

The Sustainability Policy should be adopted and signed by the highest managerial level and promoted and communicated to all key stakeholders including staff and volunteers. The Sustainability Policy should be reviewed annually and linked to the event risk assessment and long-term sustainability goals. It does not necessarily need to be shared with event patrons but including the Sustainable Event Policy on the event website demonstrates that the event is committed to sustainability and may be looked upon favourably by event patrons.

### ACTION

**Create a Sustainability Policy for the event and share it with the event management team, staff, volunteers and key stakeholders.**

### Resources:

#### Example Sustainability Policies

- [Noosa Festival of Surfing](#)
- [ClimateWave Sample Policy](#)



### TIPS

No need to reinvent the wheel. Research your competitors' or similar event Sustainability Policies to create your own.

Use your Sustainability Policy as a tool to inform sponsors, suppliers, and vendors.

# 3

## CREATING A SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

A Sustainability Action Plan is an important event management tool which should be developed in the early planning stage of an event. The Action Plan details the specific actions that will be taken to achieve the sustainability goals for the event including details on how the actions will be implemented, measured, and who will be responsible for implementing them. An Action Plan can be developed with the support of a sustainability consultant or using existing templates.

### ACTION

**Create an event Sustainability Action Plan with specific and measurable actions.**






### TIP

Be clear and concise in your event Sustainability Action Plan – the more specific the better.

The image shows the cover of a document titled 'Sustainable event guidelines' from the City of Sydney. The cover features a photograph of a city street at night with illuminated buildings and a crowd of people.

### Resources:

#### Example Sustainability Action Plans

-  [Conscious Life – Sustainability Action Plan](#)
-  [City of Sydney – Sustainable Event Guidelines](#)
-  [City of Brisbane – Waste and resource recovery – event sustainability guidelines](#)



# 4

## CREATING A SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Creating a Sustainability Communications Plan will help identify opportunities to promote the event's sustainability goals and actions before, during and after the event. Sustainability messages can be communicated through event communication (pre-event, during, and post-event) to sponsors, vendors, staff and volunteers.

### Event communication

- Create a dedicated Sustainability page on the event website.
- Include sustainability messaging in the event program and competitor packs.
- Include sustainability messaging in the event social media channels.
- Include sustainability goals and actions in the event media releases and radio interviews.

### Communications during the event

- Provide sustainability messaging for MC running sheets.
- Ensure there is sustainability signage at the event.

### Communications post-event

- Update the event website with sustainability highlights.
- Promote sustainability good news stories in print and social media.
- Write a post-event sustainability outcomes media release and/or case-study.



### Communication to sponsors, vendors, staff and volunteers

- Ensure that all sponsors, vendors, staff and volunteers are aware of the sustainability goals and actions either through an in-person briefing or via email.
- Include sustainability goals and actions in the exhibitor information pack.

## ACTION

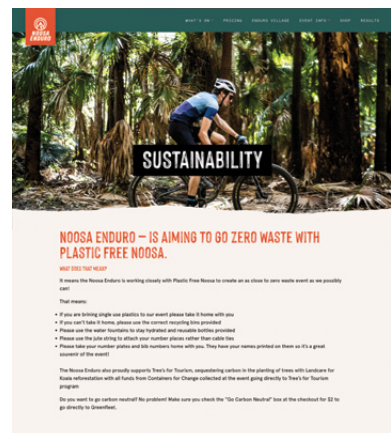
**Create a Sustainability Communications Plan to ensure sustainability messages are promoted before, during and after the event.**

### Resources

-  [City of Sydney – Section 3 – Sustainable Event Guidelines](#)
-  [Noosa Festival of Surfing – Sustainability webpage](#)

**TIP**

You've worked hard to achieve your sustainability goals so don't forget to spread your sustainability messages at every opportunity before, during and after the event!



Dedicated sustainability web page – Noosa Enduro.

# 5





## COUNCIL POLICIES AND PERMITS

Events held on public land may require a council permit to operate. Make sure to contact your local council well in advance of the event start date to understand all permit requirements. Local environmental organisations are a great resource with a wealth of information and knowledge to share.










Event organisers are encouraged to draw on the expertise of local environmental organisations regarding identifying potential risks and mitigations to protect the natural environment at the proposed event site.

### Resources:

#### Noosa Council permits and guidelines

-  [Event Permit Application](#)
-  [Events Policy](#)
-  [Sustainable Events Guidelines](#)
-  [Noosa Main Beach Events Policy](#)

#### Local Environmental Organisations

-  [Local Flora and Fauna – Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service](#)
-  [Local Flora and Fauna – Noosa Parks Association](#)
-  [Local Flora and Fauna – Noosa & District Landcare](#)
-  [Waterways and Coast – Noosa Integrated Catchment Association](#)
-  [Biosphere – Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation](#)
-  [Koalas – Koala Crusaders](#)
-  [Main Beach, First Point, Noosa National Park – Noosa World Surfing Reserve](#)
-  [Eco Legislation – Sunshine Coast Environment Council](#)
-  [Carbon Reductions – Zero Emissions Noosa](#)

### ACTION

**Contact your local council as soon as possible to ensure the event complies with all permit requirements.**

### TIP

Start your event application early so you understand what is required.

Involving local environmental and community groups in identifying ways to green your event is often a great way to get support and garner expertise, as well as grow a potential volunteer pool for your event!



# 6

## ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT

An Environmental Risk Assessment allows you to assess the likelihood of the event causing harm to the environment. It is important to describe the potential hazards and impacts of the event and precautions to reduce any risks. This information may be required as part of the council event permit application.

### 5 key steps of an Environmental Risk Assessment

1. Identify any hazards and possible sources of harm.
2. Describe the harm the activity might cause.
3. Obtain a risk rating using a matrix that evaluates severity and likelihood of occurrence.
4. Identify the precautions and controls to mitigate risks.
5. Identify a person responsible for each risk.

### Common environmental hazards include:

- Event waste storage and disposal (make sure that proper containers are used and located away from drains and watercourses).
- Emissions (dust, fumes, and other substances harmful to the air).
- Hazardous substances (storage, use and disposal).
- Liquid waste (drainage and disposal).
- Environmental impact of packaging or goods distributed at the event.
- Impacts on local flora and fauna (regulated areas, national parks, risks to vulnerable species).

### ACTION

**Conduct an Environmental Risk Assessment for the event.**

### Resources



Example Event Risk Assessment template



Noosa Council Community events toolkit

### TIP

What is the number 1 environmental risk of your event? Use the Sustainable Event Criteria categories of community, energy, water, and waste to determine the greatest risk and make sure to invest your time and effort in mitigating the risks.



Koala in the Noosa National Park.



Noosa Enduro, Noosa Biosphere Trails.

# 7

## COMMUNITY IMPACTS AND INDIGENOUS RECOGNITION

The social and cultural impacts of an event need to be carefully considered.

Noosa has long been established as a tourism destination and has developed strong ties with the Indigenous Kabi Kabi people, local Noosa residents and business associations. It is important to recognise that whilst an event may be beneficial to your organisation and patrons, some events may have a negative impact on local businesses and residents. Event organisers can ensure a positive relationship with the community by keeping people informed, seeking feedback, and addressing community concerns.

### Involve and support the local community by:

- Ensuring goods and services are sourced locally.
- Engaging in local community, environmental, cultural, sporting, or recreational activities.
- Providing employment and training opportunities for locals.
- Raising awareness, understanding and respect for local Indigenous cultures and customs at the event.
  - Include a Welcome to Country at the opening of the event.
  - Start performances and talks with an acknowledgement to the local custodians and also use the actual clan name e.g. Kabi Kabi for the Noosa and Sunshine Coast region.

### ACTIONS

- 1. Keep the community informed, seek feedback and address community concerns.**
- 2. Raise awareness, understanding and respect for local Indigenous cultures and customs at the event.**

### TIP

Involve local businesses, charity groups, Indigenous groups, and environmental organisations in your event so that everyone benefits.



To find out more about our regional custodians, visit: [www.visitnoosa.com.au/our-custodians](http://www.visitnoosa.com.au/our-custodians)

To understand the difference between a **Welcome to Country** and an **Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians** [visit here](#).

### Resources:

#### Local business group contacts

[Noosa Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)

[Hastings Street Association](#)

[Noosa Junction Association](#)

[Noosaville Business Association](#)

[Sunshine Beach Association](#)

[The Village Peregian Beach](#)

[Tewantin Traders Association](#)

[Pomona and District Community Association](#)

[Kin Kin Community Group](#)

[Cooroy Chamber of Commerce](#)

#### Noosa charities

[Sunshine Butterflies](#)

[SevGen](#)

[OzHarvest](#)

[Koala Crusaders](#)

#### First Nations contacts

[Kabi Kabi Peoples Aboriginal Corporation](#)

[Gubbi Gubbi Dance Group  
Lyndon Davis – 07 5472 7613](#)

[SevGen/Seven Generations/  
Deadly Espresso Coffee Cart  
Terri Waller – 0431 454 333](#)

# 8

## COMPLAINT AND INCIDENT PROCEDURES

Despite best efforts, complaints and incidents may occur. Be prepared by ensuring there is an event complaint and incident procedure in place.

### Be prepared for complaints

- Appoint an event manager to handle all complaints either verbally or in writing. Ensure that all event staff and volunteers are aware of how to handle complaints. Aim to handle complaints in a timely manner.
- Capture complaints and compliments through a feedback form either online (preferred) or paper copies.
- View complaints as an opportunity to do things better next time.

### Be prepared for incidents

- Develop an incident report form to capture any incidents both to people and the environment.





### Be proactive with the community

- Inform residents and businesses about the event at least 2-3 weeks prior to the event. Outline how the event aims to mitigate any negative impacts and give residents and the community an opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions. Remember residents and businesses know the area well and may have some good advice.

### ACTION

**Be prepared for complaints (and compliments), be prepared for incidents and be proactive in informing residents and businesses about the event.**

### Resources

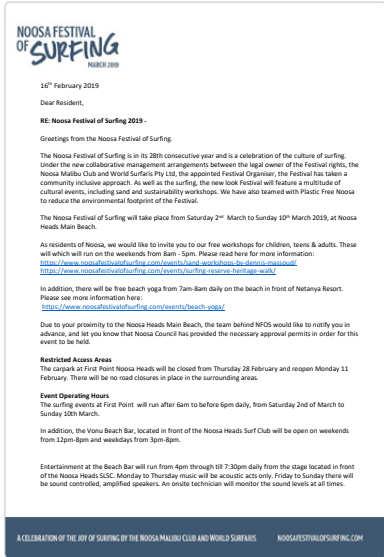
-  [Incident Procedure Form](#)
-  [Letter to residents](#)
-  [Complaints handling](#)
-  [Online Event Feedback Form](#)

### TIPS

Create an online feedback form and be sure to make it highly visible on your website.

Get people inside – invite local residents and businesses to participate in your event or obtain feedback from them on how you can address any concerns.

Can you offer discounted tickets to those residents or businesses who may be most impacted by your event?



Sample letter to residents

# 9

## CARBON EMISSION REDUCTIONS

Firstly, understand the level of emissions the event produces and then take steps to reduce the carbon emissions as much as possible. For those emissions that are unavoidable, carbon offsets may be an option (carbon offsets are a legitimate way to reduce the event impacts but should not be used to rid responsibility for having a high-emission event).

### There are many ways to reduce carbon emissions including:

- Encourage event patrons to use public transport, carpool, walk, take a ferry or ride a bike.
- Provide an event shuttle bus.
- Use solar or LED lighting.
- Replace diesel fuel generators with biofuel or solar generators (Refer Shade 13 Renewable energy).

### TIPS

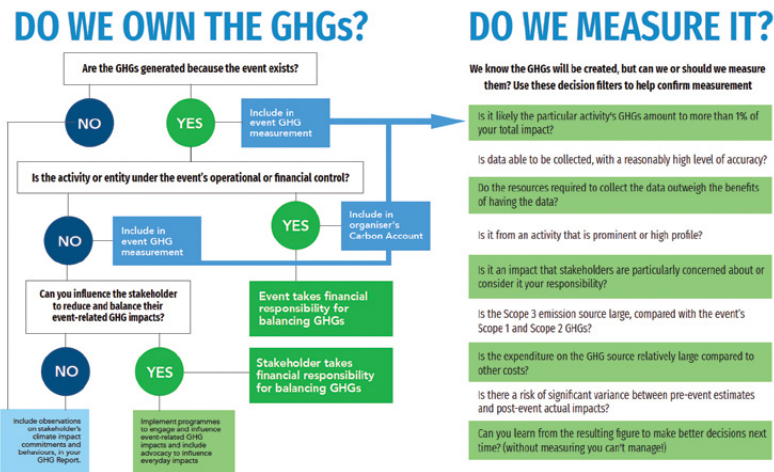
If you are encouraging green transport, make sure to promote it early and often! (Free bus services, bikes, ferry, walking routes etc).

What is your biggest CO<sub>2</sub> emitter? Energy use is usually a biggie.

ACTION

Understand the level of carbon emissions the event produces and take steps to reduce these emissions.

### Event GHG (Green House Gas) Decision tree tool



### Resources:

#### Local green transport options

[VisitNoosa – Getting around](#)

#### Bike hire services

[Eco-Tekk](#)

[Bike On](#)

#### Walking maps

[Noosa Council Walking and Cycling Route Maps](#)

#### Noosa Ferries

[Noosa Ferry Timetable](#)

[Noosa North Shore Ferry Timetable](#)

#### Local shuttle bus services

(preference for non-diesel buses recommended)

[Hinter-Coast Transport](#)

[Boomerang Bus Hire](#)

[Kinetic – electric buses](#)

#### Translink

[Translink Journey Planner](#)

Check Noosa Council and Translink websites as some public transport routes are free over the busy Christmas and Easter holidays as well as weekends. Translink also have an excellent app that shows on-time routes and services.

#### Electric vehicles

[evee – Electrical vehicle network and hire](#)

[Tesla Transfers Noosa](#)

[All charging station options](#)

#### Green equipment

- Solar VMS (Visual Memory System) board hire
- Solar generators
- LED and solar lighting

# 10

## MEASURING THE EVENT CARBON FOOTPRINT

Measuring the carbon footprint of an event is important for benchmarking and obtaining information needed to calculate any carbon offsets. The initial calculations should use previous event data or, if this is not available or it is a first-time event, then calculations can be estimated based on anticipated event numbers.




### Information needed includes:

- Attendance figures and their transport to the event.
- Energy use (Refer Shades 12, 13, 14).
- Water use (Refer Shades 15, 16).
- Waste generated (Refer Shades 17, 18).

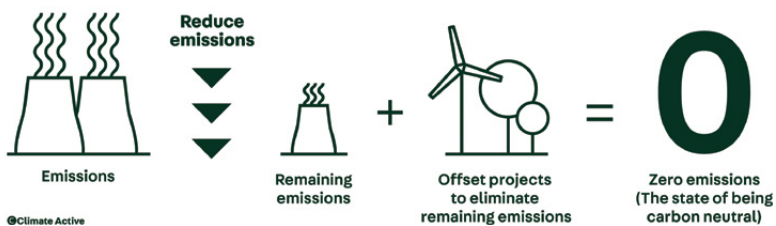
### ACTION

**Calculate the carbon footprint of the event by gathering data and using a carbon footprint calculator.**

### Resources

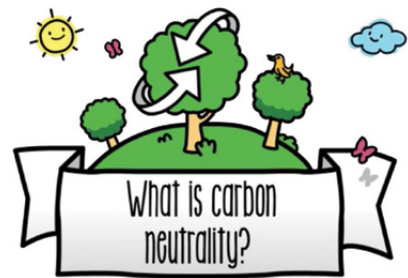

-  [Climate Active – Climate active carbon neutral standard events](#)
-  [Carbon Neutral Charitable Fund – Carbon footprint calculator](#)
-  [Julie's Bicycle Creative Green Carbon Calculator](#)  
Note: calculations are based on UK conversion factors

### What does it mean to be carbon neutral.



### TIP

Don't forget to measure the energy use (electricity plus transport), water use and waste generated at your event as this will be valuable data for calculating your carbon footprint in the future.


 [Climate Change video](#)


Luke Palmer, Race Director – Noosa Triathlon planting trees as part of the Trees for Tourism program.

# 11

## CARBON OFFSETS AND CARBON CREDITS

Some event carbon emissions (e.g. travel of performers, energy and lighting etc.) are unavoidable but could be offset through carbon credits or carbon offsets.

### Carbon Credits

Certificates or permits issued to companies and organisations participating in a mandatory national or international carbon market (note in Australia there are no mandatory requirements or standards recommended).

### Carbon Offsets

Projects such as solar farms, bush regeneration and tree planting are used to 'offset' 1 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> or equivalent greenhouse gases.

### Trees for Tourism

Trees for Tourism is an environmental sustainability initiative by Tourism Noosa in partnership with Noosa & District Landcare. Noosa's major events play a big role in Trees for Tourism by donating \$1 for every paying event participant to the program and its projects.

One of these projects is the Noosa Biosphere Trails rehabilitation initiative which plants shade trees for walkers on the trail network, assists with erosion mitigation, improves the habitat for local wildlife, including koalas, and sequesters carbon emissions.

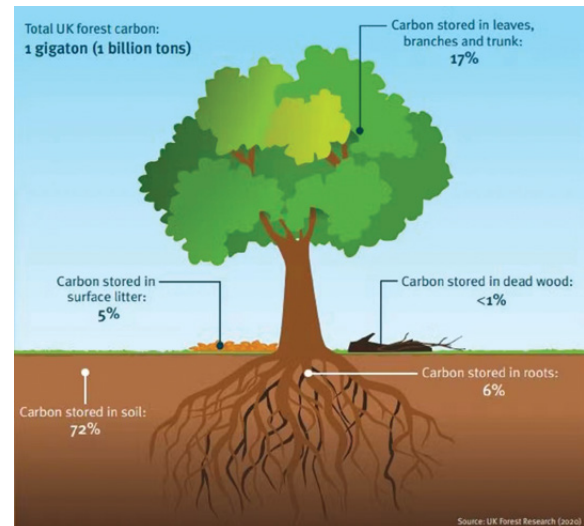
It's estimated that one tree planted from Trees for Tourism on average will sequester 124kg of CO<sub>2</sub> over the tree's lifetime (to give you an idea of what that means, an average car produces approximately 180kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per 100km). We need to be planting a lot of trees!

#### ACTION

**Investigate carbon credits or carbon offsets for unavoidable event emissions.**



Trees for Tourism planting 2023.



Carbon capture.

### Resources:



**Carbon Neutral Adelaide**

Great set of Australian calculators and offset options



**Trees for Tourism**



**Climate Active Guide**

### TIPS

Get involved with Tourism Noosa's Trees for Tourism – Trees remove CO<sub>2</sub>, reduce global warming and provide shade and habitat.

Refer Shade 10 Measuring the event carbon footprint.



# 12

## PLANNING ENERGY USE

Energy use is often the biggest contributor to an event’s carbon emissions. Event organisers should aim to reduce total energy consumed and to maximise the use of renewable energy sources. Planning energy use wisely not only reduces greenhouse gas emissions but saves money too.

### Steps to planning energy use include:

1. Accurately estimate likely total power needs.
2. Use energy-efficient equipment – especially LED or solar lighting.
3. Correctly specify mobile power generators (sizing, siting), and develop a Smart Power Plan.
4. Operate energy efficiently at the event.
5. Source renewable energy (mains supply or use renewable fuels in generators).
6. Use innovative renewable energy and efficient temporary power supplies, including solar, batteries and hybrid systems.
7. Monitor and analyse power consumption for future planning and efficiencies. Ask your electrician about a sub metre to help measure your energy use if using mains (grid) power.

### ACTION

**Reduce the amount of energy used to run an event by planning energy use wisely.**

### Resources



SEA Venue Energy Checklist



Powerful thinking Guide (Smart Power for Festivals and Events)



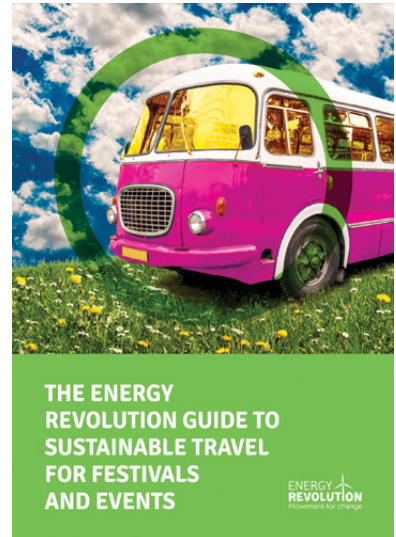
Energy Revolution Guide to Sustainable Travel for Festivals and Events



ENERGEX – Energy meters

### TIP

Using LED lighting will usually halve your energy requirements for lighting at the event.



Sample of a good energy guide

# 13

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

Consider using renewable energy – purchase solar power from the mains (grid) supply or use a portable solar generator. Portable solar generators are great for single-day events or specific feature areas that require small loads such as a speaker tent or stage audio visual equipment.

### Engage a skilled electrician and ask them the following questions:

- Will the power be from mains or from generators or both?
- Will they be able to provide readings of mains and fuel usage for energy benchmarking?
- Are there options for solar or biodiesel generators to offset emissions?

### ACTION

- **Purchase solar power from the mains supply or use a portable solar generator.**
- **Engage a skilled electrician who is knowledgeable about renewable energy at events.**

### Resources:

Electricians (this list is not exhaustive)

[EventElec](#)

[Wolfel Electrical Services – Hermann hwolfel@hotmail.com or 0414 778 038](#)

[Noosa Council Electrician – 07 5329 6500 \(Council venues only\)](#)

### Solar Generators

[Total Generators](#)

[Substation 33 Solar Trailer](#)

### TIP

Reduce emissions by powering down equipment when it's not being used.

Don't forget to record event energy usage so you can benchmark for next time.



Solar generator

# 14

## LEARN TO READ AN ENERGY METER

Measuring energy usage is important for quantifying and benchmarking the energy usage at the event.

### The standard measuring units for reporting energy are:

- Electricity (mains or solar) = kilowatt hours (kWh).
- Gas = kilograms (a general conversion for LPG is 13.6 kWh per kg).
- Fuel (petrol/diesel/biodiesel) = litres. (Ask the generator supplier for kWh consumption data and loading efficiency).

It is recommended to work with a site manager, electrician, or council electrician to locate the correct energy meter and/or check it is possible to obtain a reading. Photograph the meter reading BEFORE and AFTER the event.


**TIP**

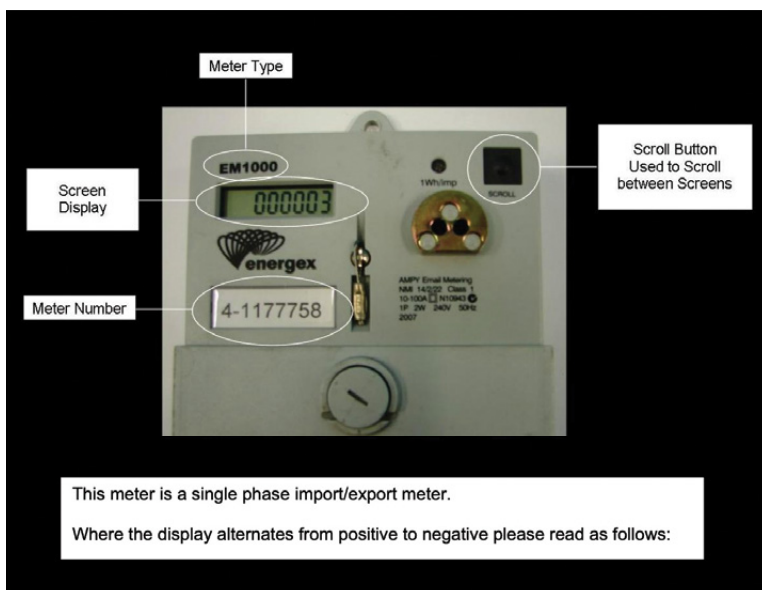
Don't leave finding the energy meters until your event starts, and remember some energy metres require a key to access.

**ACTION**

**Locate the energy meter and learn how to read and understand the meter readings.**

### Resources

 **ENERGEX Inverter Energy Systems**  
Connecting Your Inverter Energy System to the ENERGEX Network



Standard electricity meter.

# 15

## MANAGING WATER USE

Fresh water is a precious resource. Minimise event water use, measure event water use, and understand where used water ends up.

### To reduce the use of water at your event consider utilising:

- Low-flow shower and tap fittings.
- Waterless toilets.
- Control stormwater and run-off and ensure that drains are kept litter-free.

Not all properties within the Noosa Council area are connected to water and sewerage infrastructure. Non-sewered properties store, treat and dispose of wastewater generated via an on-site wastewater facility (contact the local council to ensure you understand any constraints).

Ensure the event has a potable (drinking) water source. If it doesn't, consider arranging a water service for the event. In alignment with Plastic Free Noosa's water strategy, promote BYO water bottles and seek reusable or sustainable water bottle sponsorship from key stakeholders.

### Example local water carriers include:

- ACE Water Delivery
- Sunshine Coast Water Carriers Suppliers
- Sunshine Coast Water Supplies
- Sunshine Coast Water Cartage
- Pomona Water

### ACTION

Use water wisely and monitor water usage.



Unitywater's Water on Tap refill station at a local event.

### TIP

Check you don't have any leaking taps or appliances.

Hiring toilets? Choose a hire toilet provider that is water-efficient, waterless or uses 'grey water' and disposes of waste water correctly.

### Resources

[Unitywater](#) – Unitywater provides a Water on Tap Refill station service (make sure you book it early)

[Water Usage at Events Guide – Julie's Bicycle](#)

[Unitywater Sponsorship Opportunities](#)

[Sunny Coast Water](#) – Local company supplying infinitely recyclable aluminium cans of still and sparkling water

[Bluesky Beverages](#) wholesaler for infinitely recyclable aluminium NOOSA water bottles – note to ask for the special NOOSA design or get your own design made



# 16

## LEARN TO READ A WATER METER

Measuring event water usage is important for quantifying and benchmarking the water usage at the event. The standard measuring unit for reporting water usage is kilo litres (kL). 1kL= 1000 litres.

It is recommended to work with a site manager, plumber or council plumber to locate the correct water meter and/or check if it is possible to obtain a reading (mains, tanks and other provisions). Photograph the meter reading BEFORE and AFTER the event.

### ACTION

**Locate the water meter and learn how to read and understand the meter readings.**

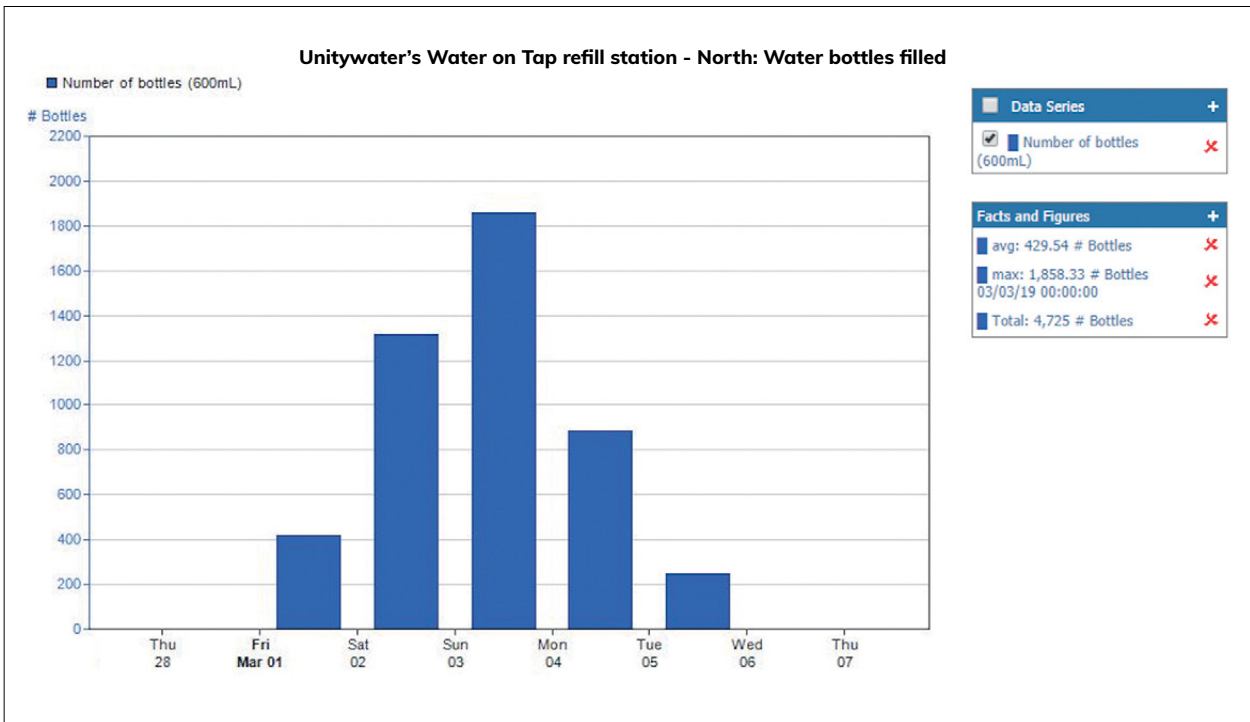
### Resources

- Unitywater Community Relations 07 5475 3735, [community@unitywater.com](mailto:community@unitywater.com)
- Noosa Council (ask for the Council Plumber) 07 5329 6500

### TIP

Don't leave finding the water meter to the last minute.





# 17 MANAGING WASTE

Events are high-waste activities and therefore waste management is a large part of making an event sustainable.

Events put extra demand on Council's public litter and recycling bins. As the event organiser, you need to supply additional bins. Brisbane Council's [Entertainment Venues and Events Subordinate Local Law](#) provides a formula for the calculation of the number of bins and toilets to be provided at an entertainment event.

Access the [Amenities \(bins and toilets\) calculator](#) to use this formula or alternatively, the waste, recycling and litter control fact sheet can guide you on how to manage waste. There are many aspects to managing event waste, e.g.:

- What waste streams will be in place (landfill, recyclables, refundables, compostable)?
- How will waste be separated?
- How much will it cost?
- Who will collect the waste?

## ACTION

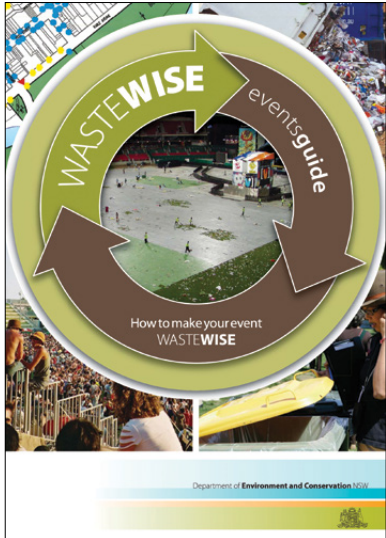
**Manage event waste as it is a significant component to making an event sustainable.**

### Resources

- [Become a Waste Wise Event](#)
- [Plastic Free Council Event Guidelines – Boomerang Alliance](#)
- [Noosa Council Sustainable Events Guidelines](#)
- [Sustainable Events on the Sunshine Coast](#)
- [ASPIRE online circular economy marketplace](#)

**TIP**  
Use the ASPIRE online marketplace sponsored by Noosa Council, empowering businesses to exchange waste as a resource online. This service allows you to source much needed reusable products at no or low cost or offload your excess waste (if reusable) to other businesses.

**TIP**  
Make compost not waste – have you considered turning your food and packaging waste into a resource? (Refer Shade 24 Commercial composting).  
Negotiating a waste contract can be complex so start your negotiations early. (See Shade 19 for details on waste contractors and services).



Waste Wise Event Guide.

# 18

## REDUCING WASTE

Reducing waste should be a key consideration for any event. Decisions made in the early planning stages of an event can be fundamental to the amount of waste generated and diverted from landfill.

### Consider the following easy options to reduce waste:

1. Eliminate single-use water bottles (Refer Shade 26 – Ban the single-use bottle).
2. Provide a reusable cup system (Refer Shade 27 – Offer reusables).
3. Encourage BYO bottles, cups and containers by patrons.
4. Implement a refundable container collection system for your event (Refer Shade 25 – Container refund scheme).
5. Provide E-ticketing and rethink wristband/entry services and options.
6. Find recycling and reusable options for your signs and banners.
7. Reduce promotional and printed materials and move to online.

### ACTION

- **Use the early planning stages of an event to implement decisions that will reduce waste generated at the event – the less waste that comes in, the less waste that needs to go out!**
- **Involve waste contractors in achieving your waste reduction goals.**



Waste stations at events.

### TIPS

Communicating BYO bottles, cups and containers to patrons early and often is essential for the success of these options.

When buying signage for your event, consider end-of-life recycling options such as Bannerloop!

Implementing a refundable container collection system is a great way to make \$\$ (Refer Shade 25 – Container refund scheme).

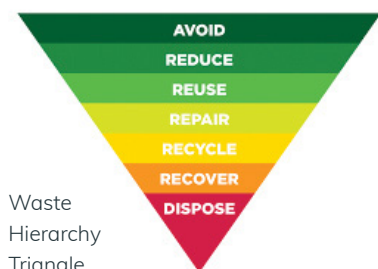
What if you could plant your wristbands? Be creative in your solutions and let patrons know how you are being more sustainable than other standard events.

### Resources:

[Development of a spreadsheet to record waste reductions and quantify \(similar to Plastic Free Noosa worksheets\)](#)

[Focus Banners](#)

[Beyond the Bin](#)



Diversion of waste to landfill is critical. Currently, there are three standard streams of waste collection service available in Noosa Shire: landfill, recycling and garden waste. However, the provision of two additional waste streams – compostables and refundables – is strongly encouraged at events and can be arranged with a private waste contractor.

It is important to use a waste contractor that aligns with the event sustainability goals and can provide accurate waste data, e.g. weighbridge receipts of: waste to landfill, recycling facility, commercial compost facility etc. Data collection should be specified in the waste contract and will be used to determine waste diversion from landfill.

#### Items to consider when negotiating waste services include:

1. Transport costs and the destination of the waste streams (note, waste transport and waste management are not the same).
2. Collection costs of additional streams, e.g. compostables and refundables (transport and delivery).
3. Delivery and collection times of the bins to the event.
4. Number of bins, style of bin, equipment, and site setup of waste stations.
5. Management of waste stations during the event.
6. Bin signage and bin covers (Refer Shade 20 – Planning the waste stations).
7. Cost of waste sorting on-site or off-site including supervision.
8. Does the waste contractor include cleaning services (toilets, cleaning)?
9. Provision of weight/volume figures for waste reporting (critical for benchmarking).

#### ACTION

**Work with the local council and/or private waste contractors to negotiate waste transportation and waste management for the event.**



Local waste contractor Party Bins in action.

#### TIPS

Mapping out where your waste stations will be located early in the planning phase can potentially reduce overall waste costs. More bins don't mean better waste management!

(Refer Shade 20 – Planning the waste stations).

#### Resources:

[Beyond the Bin video resource](#)

#### Private waste contractors:

[Closed Loop](#)

[Party Bins \(Coolum\)](#)

[AA Rubbish \(Logan\)](#)

[T2 Environmental \(Maroochydore\)](#)

[TBM \(Brisbane\)](#)

[CleanVibes \(Brisbane\)](#)

[Climate Wave Enterprises](#)



# 20

## PLANNING THE WASTE STATIONS

Careful consideration needs to be given to the location of waste stations. Waste stations should be highly visible by event patrons as well as easy for waste contractors to empty when they become full.

Place the waste stations on main thoroughfares, near food consumption areas, near bathrooms and at the entrance and exit to the event. Clear signage at bin stations is essential to help patrons to separate waste correctly. Ensure you have a waste hub – an area where bins can be taken when they are full and sorted for any contamination.

It is very important that you never leave a bin standing solo, all bins must be stationed together to encourage recycling and reduce contamination.

### ACTION

**Plan where the waste stations will be set up to optimise use and reduce contamination.**



Examples of waste stations.

### TIP

Try to encourage vendors not to bring waste into the event (e.g. cardboard, plastic wrapping) as this can quickly fill up your event bins.

### Resources:

- [Beyond the Bin](#)
- [Amenities and bin calculator](#)

### Specifically

- [Planning your infrastructure](#)
- [Costs to factor into your waste budget](#)
- [How to map your waste stations and why](#)

- [Bin covers – Contact Noosa Council 07 5329 6500](#)
- [Environmentally friendly signage at events – Focus Banners](#)
- [Sunprint Noosa](#)

# 21

## WASTE WARRIORS

Waste Warrior volunteers are an essential part of your event volunteer team and key to diverting waste from landfill and increasing recycling, refundables and composting at an event.

The main function of a Waste Warrior is not to handle waste – that is the role of the waste contractor. Waste Warriors are great sustainability communicators and are generally located at the waste stations to assist event patrons to understand which items go in which bin. Waste Warrior volunteers should be provided with adequate shade (if waste stations are exposed to full sun), sunscreen, gloves, rubbish pickers, and hand sanitiser. Waste Warriors generally report that the role is fun and engaging.

**ACTION**

**Recruit Waste Warrior volunteers to be stationed at waste stations and achieve a zero-waste event.**



Are you the type of person who gets frustrated when they see recyclables thrown into the general waste bin? Who brings an apple core home to compost? If you're an avid (or aspiring) recycler or composter, sign up to become a Waste Warrior volunteer for events such as the Noosa Triathlon, Noosa Festival of Surfing, Noosa Alive, Pomona King of the Mountain, Comedy Festivals, Music Festivals and more.

Recycling at events can be confusing, and many event-goers are focused on enjoying the event, not on where their used cup should go. Waste Warriors are stationed at event bins to help inform event-goers to place items in the correct bin (a contractor is responsible for collection of the bins, your role is to assist event goers with what goes in them).

To date Noosa Waste Warrior volunteers have diverted hundreds of kilograms of food waste, 10c refundables and recycling from ending up in landfill.

Volunteers get free admission to event sites, a free t-shirt, plus the satisfaction of knowing that you've made a difference!

### Steps to take action now!

- STEP 1** Apply here for good karma and great hands-on experience in event waste management.
- STEP 2** Prior to the event attend a free training session to learn how to boost recycling and composting efforts at events and meet other recycling rockstars.  
At the training, we'll cover:
  - How to determine which materials belong in recycling, compost, and landfill
  - How to communicate with event goers in a friendly and positive ways that helps them learn what goes in which bin
  - How to improve waste reduction and management at events to send as little waste to landfill as possible
- STEP 3** Bring your smile, enthusiasm, enclosed footwear, hat, and enjoy the event. A Waste Warrior Volunteer Supervisor will coordinate and support you at the event.

For more info Contact Plastic Free Noosa [info@plasticfreenoosa.org](mailto:info@plasticfreenoosa.org) or call 0422 877 162

Waste Warrior call out guide

**TIP**

Be sure to train your Waste Warriors so they can confidently identify if an item can be recycled, composted, or must be sent to landfill.

A goody-bag, a lunch voucher and some shade will go a long way in keeping your Waste Warriors coming back to volunteer time and time again.

Post-event – Don't forget to tell your Waste Warriors how much waste was diverted at the event thanks to their great work.

### Resources

[Plastic Free Noosa Waste Warriors](#)



Waste Warriors in action.

# 22

## PLASTIC-FREE EVENTS

Going plastic-free is a powerful sustainability goal for event organisers. It requires working with event vendors, sponsors, and the management team to get great results. It not only benefits the environment but can attract patrons too. Event patrons are increasingly becoming aware of waste and appreciate supporting and attending plastic-free events.

### The following are key aspects to consider in implementing a plastic-free event:

1. Food service and vendor packaging.
2. Water service and single-use plastic water bottles.
3. Show bags and event “giveaways”.
4. Helium balloons and event decorations.
5. Event infrastructure, e.g. zip-ties, pink bunting tape.

### ACTION

**Work with event vendors, sponsors, and the management team to go plastic-free!**

### Resources

 [Plastic Free Noosa Event and Market Resources \(plasticfreenoosa.org\)](https://plasticfreenoosa.org)



Infinitely recyclable aluminium NOOSA water bottles.

**TIP**

Join Plastic Free Noosa for tailored support in hosting a plastic-free event.

[info@plasticfreenoosa.org](mailto:info@plasticfreenoosa.org)



**PLASTIC FREE**  
NOOSA



Commercially compostable containers.

# 23

## ENGAGING EVENT VENDORS




A critical component of delivering a plastic-free event is ensuring that event vendors are using sustainable packaging and products. To assist in achieving the event sustainability goals it is important to educate and inform event vendors on available sustainable packaging and product options before the event.

Importantly, if the event is implementing a composting waste stream (Refer Shade 24 – Commercial composting) – even one non-compliant vendor can significantly contaminate the compost. An event purchasing policy or a compliance clause may help ensure that vendors are using appropriate sustainable packaging and products.

### ACTION

**Educate event vendors on sustainable packaging and product options before the event.**

### Resources

-  [Plastic Free Noosa – packaging suppliers](#)
-  [Vendor Survey example](#)
-  [Quick Waste Guides \(customisable to events, to inform vendors and staff where specific items go\)](#)



Commercially compostable utensils and tableware.

### TIP

Don't be fooled by greenwash packaging. Look for products that meet the Australian standards for home or commercial composting.

Touching base with all vendors about their packaging and products before the event is a great way to avoid bringing single-use plastics, harmful substances, or large volumes of waste to the event!

Don't forget to have a MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) for any harmful substances that need to be handled or stored at the event.



Home Compostable  
AS 5810  
ABAX 9999



Compostable  
AS 4736  
ABAX 9999

Symbols for home composting or commercial composting.

# 24

## COMMERCIAL COMPOSTING

Commercial composting is a great option for events serving food. Not only can the food waste be composted, but the certified compostable bio-plastic bowls, cups, straws, and cutlery can too!

Home composting cannot process as many types of organic matter as commercial composting. Some materials, such as compostable food service products, will not decompose fully in an at-home compost. Organic material accepted at commercial composting sites tends to require a higher constant composting temperature that cannot be achieved in a home compost. Compost made at a commercial composting site can be resold to the community and used to fertilise soil, creating a true circular economy.

### ACTION

**Use a local Sunshine Coast commercial composting facility such as Earthborn Australia to divert food waste and certified compostable packaging from landfill.**



Earthborn – commercial composting facility.

### TIP

Make sure that the packaging being used at your event can be accepted by your composting service option.

Having plastic-free vendors, Waste Warrior volunteers (Refer Shade 21) and event waste station signage/bin covers is critical to ensure that non-compostable materials, e.g. plastics, soft drink cans etc. don't end up accidentally in the compost bin. Contaminated compost will not be accepted by the commercial composting facility.

### Resources

- [Earthborn Organics](#)
- [Compost Connect](#)
- [Biopak](#)
- [Greenmark](#)
- [Bygreen](#)
- [Plastic Free Noosa – suppliers](#)

## 25

## CONTAINER REFUND SCHEME

Containers for Change is a Queensland Government scheme that places a 10 cent deposit on drink containers. Most aluminium, glass, plastic, steel, and liquid paperboard drink containers between 150ml and 3L are eligible. The scheme is a litter reduction measure to remove drink containers from the litter stream. It is also a potential source of revenue for residents and community groups.

A dedicated bin for eligible 10c refundables at an event is a great way to divert waste from landfill as well as earn additional income! The funds can be used to offset event sustainability costs or donated to a local charity.

## ACTION

1. **Collect eligible 10c refundables.**
2. **Create a Containers for Change Scheme ID.**
3. **Deliver refundables to a container refund point or contact our local provider at Express Recycling to deliver cage bins for your event.**
4. **Earn money for your event or donate it to a charity.**



## Eligible Containers



## TIP

Waste Warrior volunteers, event waste station signage and educational bin covers are a great way to assist patrons to place 10c refundables in the correct bin.

Don't forget to let event patrons know which charity your container refund proceeds will be supporting.

## Resources

[Containers for Change](#)

[Express Recycling Noosa](#)

[Tomra](#)

[Envirobank](#)

[Return-It](#)

# 26

## BAN SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BOTTLES

Banning single-use plastic bottles at an event makes a big impact! Plastic beverage containers continue to be one of the biggest marine plastic pollutants in our environment. Noosa alone sells between 2 – 3 million single-use plastic water bottles to the general public each year.

### However, there are many environmentally friendly alternatives:

- Encourage event patrons to BYO reusable bottle.
- Sell reusable, glass or aluminium bottles at the event (these could even be branded and a great memento from the event).
- Book a Unitywater Water on Tap refill station [here](#).

### ACTION

**Ban the sale of single-use plastic bottles and provide water refill options.**

### Resources

- See if your event qualifies for water bottle sponsorship with Unitywater
- Bluesky Beverages provide Plastic Free Noosa vendors with discounts for infinitely recyclable aluminium water at your event. See their catalogue.
- Sunny Coast Water – Locally produced water in an aluminium can
- Locally produced, non-alcoholic Hop Valley H<sub>2</sub>O Seltzer



NOOSA branded water with Bluesky Beverages.

**TIP**

Get in early when booking a water refill service as they are popular!

If selling water in glass or cans – don't forget these may be eligible for a 10c refund (Refer Shade 25 – Container refund scheme).



Locally produced Hop Valley H<sub>2</sub>O Seltzer.



Local company Sunny Coast still and sparkling water.

# 27 OFFER REUSABLES

Reduce, reuse, recycle! Reducing the amount of waste produced in the first instance is key along with promoting reusable options. There are many existing ways in which to avoid single-use items and promote and implement reusables at an event:

- Provide reusable cups (a deposit on the cup can assist in ensuring they are returned and used multiple times).
- Run a zero-waste bar that utilises cups, kegs and washers.
- Encourage vendors to give a BYO discount.
- Encourage patrons to BYO kits (straws, mugs, cutlery sets, etc.).
- Implement a swap cup system, e.g. Green Caffein.
- Consider hiring or providing a reusables service (collecting, washing, returning on-site), e.g. Green My Plate.

## ACTION

**Achieve a zero-waste event by offering reusables rather than single-use products.**

## Resources

- [Ruzi – reusable cups for events](#)
- [Contact Bettercup to understand their services](#)
- [Contact Green Caffein about what an event service would cost](#)
- [Did you know we have Zero Waste Bar operators in Noosa e.g. Diablo, Eco Brewery and Boiling Pot Brewery – find all your Plastic Free Noosa bar vendors here.](#)
- [Green My Plate](#)
- [Pottery for the Planet – reusable designer travel cups for smaller bespoke corporate events.](#)

**TIP**

Keep using your cups over multiple years of your event and even lend them to others throughout the year!

It's also an excellent way of branding your event, so even if they get taken home by patrons, they will remember your event for next year!



Noosa Festival of Surfing zero waste bar.



Reusable coffee cups for bespoke smaller events and corporate gifts.



# VALUE AND TRAIN EVENT VOLUNTEERS

Every event organiser knows that volunteers are the lifeblood of an event! Dedicated volunteers in sustainability roles are vital in achieving the event sustainability goals. Event organisers should prioritise recruiting volunteers specifically for the sustainability activities of the event.

### Potential volunteers could be found through contacting the following:

- Local environmental groups.
- Local community groups.
- Local schools.
- Previous year's volunteers.
- A volunteer "call-out" on the event webpage and social media.
- Engage or register with volunteering agencies e.g. Volunteering Sunshine Coast.

### ACTION

**Prioritise recruiting and training volunteers for sustainability roles.**

### Resources

- [Contact Plastic Free Noosa to help advertise your event for Volunteers](#)
- [Watch this great 3-minute video on volunteers by Beyond the Bin](#)

### To assist volunteers

- [Festival Cheat Sheet Guide](#)
- [Recycle Mate](#)
- [Noosa Council Recycle Guide](#)
- [Beyond the Bin Video 10: Event Waste Health and Safety](#)

**TIP**

Getting volunteers to sign a 'commitment' form increases engagement and their likelihood of attendance.

Throw a post-event thank you party/gathering for your volunteers to show you care (Refer Shade 47).

**Sustainable Events Waste Warrior Quick Guide**  
What to look for - Coffee Cups & Lids

**COMPOSTABLE**

Look for the word 'compostable'  
The recycling symbol '7'  
Ingeo is most prevalent brand  
A sugarcane natural lid  
PLA is made from cornstarch

**PLASTIC**

Look for the letters 'PS'  
The recycling symbol '6'  
Recyclable - it's still plastic  
Don't be fooled by 'ecosmart'  
Recyclable - it's still plastic!

**CUPS** *what to look for*

BioCup Brand  
Cup-to-Grow symbol  
Made from PLA  
The word 'Compostable'

**WHEN IN DOUBT - PUT IT IN GENERAL WASTE**

PLASTIC FREE NOOSA

**Sustainable Events Waste Warrior Quick Guide**  
What to look for - Containers

**Eligible Containers**

Beverage containers 150ml - 3 Litre  
Plastic bottles  
Unbroken glass bottles  
Tetra Pak/Paperboard cartons  
Aluminum cans  
Wine bottles  
Spirits bottles

**Non-Eligible Containers**

Cordial and plain milk bottles  
> 1 litre juice bottles

[plasticfreenoosa.org](http://plasticfreenoosa.org)

**WHEN IN DOUBT - PUT IT IN RECYCLING**

PLASTIC FREE NOOSA

29

# PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE – VOLUNTEERS

Many events rely on the support of local volunteers. It is important that event organisers take responsibility for the health and safety of all volunteers. Volunteers may be required to sign a participation waiver form. It is good practice to ask volunteers to sign-in and sign-out so there is accurate information of who was on duty, on what date and what role they were performing. Volunteers may need to be included in the event public liability insurance.

**ACTION**

**Make sure event volunteers are adequately insured.**

**Resources**

 [Volunteering Queensland](#)



Volunteers in action.

**TIP**

Accidental cover is not the same as public liability cover – make sure you know which you need and are covered.



Volunteers.

# 30

## HAVE A BACK-UP PLAN

Be prepared for natural disasters, e.g. flooding or severe storms as well as potential issues specific to the event such as water shortages, power blackouts, or waste overflowing. Being prepared for the worst is the best preparation for an event. Many event council permit applications will require an alternative venue option, especially if the event is to take place in a public space. Try to identify potential risks and mitigation measures before the event rather than during the event.

### ACTION

**Have a back-up plan and be prepared for natural disasters as well as potential issues specific to the event.**

### Resources

[Noosa Council Disaster Management Plan](#)

**TIP**

Many events take place on weekends so be sure to have contractor and vendor after-hours contact details.

Having a comprehensive contacts list can help solve problems efficiently.



Emergency Services open day.

# 31

## RECORDING EVENT SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

After all the effort to make an event more sustainable, don't forget to record and document the outcomes.

### Ways to record sustainability efforts include:

- Benchmarking (Refer Shade 32).
- Taking photos and videos of sustainability in action (Refer Shade 35).
- Conducting waste audits (Refer Shade 37).
- Conducting surveys with vendors and patrons (Refer Shade 43).

It is useful to have a dedicated staff member or volunteer to focus on recording sustainability outcomes. Prioritising sustainability is a great news story and having robust data is useful when engaging with the community, government agencies and sponsors.


**TIP**

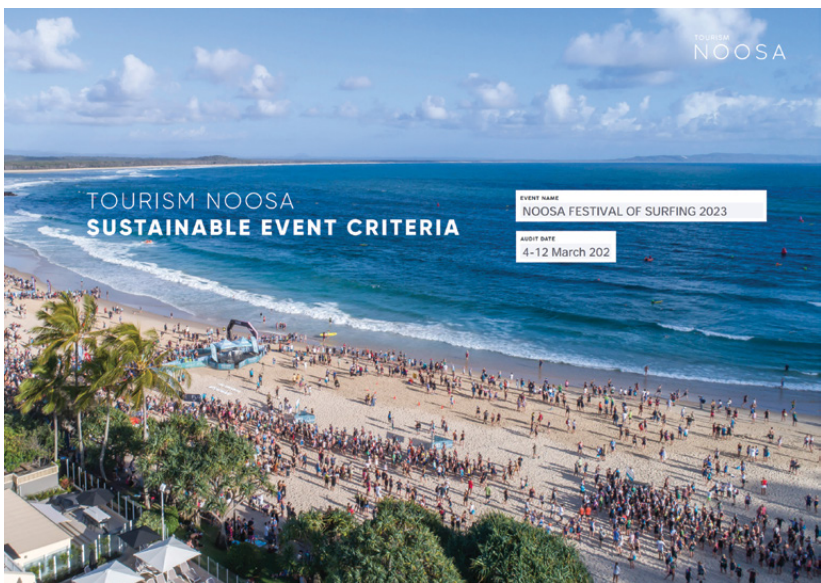
Don't forget to measure energy and water readings before the event starts and when it finishes!

### ACTION

**Ensure there is a dedicated staff member or volunteer assigned to record sustainability efforts at the event.**

### Resources

 See examples of other sustainable event reports in Noosa



# 32

## BENCHMARKING

Measuring energy (Refer Shade 14), water (Refer Shade 16) and waste (Refer Shade 17) at every event is important for setting benchmarks for continuous improvement. Without good records, it is difficult to know what has been achieved and even harder to set future targets for the event. Create easy-to-use and repeatable systems for annual benchmarking and use templates and guides to assist.

Event data is useful across a range of aspects including social media, grant acquittals, funding and sponsorship proposals, and post-event reporting.

**ACTION**

**Create easy-to-use and repeatable systems and templates for annual benchmarking of energy, water and waste.**

### Resources

[Why is benchmarking so important?](#)

**TIP**

“To know where you’re going, you need to know where you’ve been.” Recording your sustainability efforts will help to showcase your achievements and improvements year after year.

Create benchmarking templates that can be replicated at your next event. Don’t forget to record the sources of your data!

## Noosa Festival of Surfing waste-specific key outcomes

- **% Diversion** from landfill has increased from 46% to **85%** in 4 years
- **% of Carbon offsets** has increased from 0% to **100%** in 4 years
- **Total Waste** has reduced from 3.9 tonnes to **0.81 tonnes** in 4 years



### 4-year example records of benchmarking

Year	Date	Criteria	Renewables	Carbon offsets	Water consumed	Water bottles saved	Total waste	Waste diversion	Compost	Recyclables	Refundables	Trees for Tourism
2019	28/2-8/3	46%	0%	1771KG (+2.2t landfill methane)	6.14kL	9475	3.9t	46%	1.125t	0.5t	\$937.00	\$507 = 63 trees
2020	22/2-1/3	71%	0%	0%	2.87kL	4783	0.42t	58%	0.2t	0.04t	\$129.90	\$306 = 38 trees
2021	15/5-25/5	75%	0%	60 tonnes	0.54kL	908	0.28t	71%	0.02t	0.17t	\$71.40	\$404 = 51 trees
2022	5/3-13/3	89%	0%	62 tonnes TBA	0.4 kL (est)	666	TBA	75% TBA	TBA	TBA	\$306.80	\$395 = 28 trees

# DURING-EVENT ACTIONS



It is critical that the management of waste starts BEFORE bump-in, continues throughout the event and AFTER bump-out. The highest waste and contamination periods of an event are often during the event bump-in and bump-out.

#### Avoid generating more waste during these critical times by:

- Engaging with construction or logistics contractors about the event sustainability goals – send them your policy.
- Ensuring that the waste contractor and event sustainability officer are on-site during bump-in and bump-out.
- Budgeting for waste management before and after the event, not just during the event.

#### BUMP-IN

- Ensure that the event waste site plan (Refer Shade 20) makes sense in terms of operations, logistics and patron flow.
- Record electricity and water (Refer Shades 14, 16).

#### BUMP-OUT

- Ensure that any reusables – bin covers, zip-ties, signage, cups, lanyards etc. are cleaned and stored securely, ready to be used again the next year.
- Ensure that vendors and contractors take excess supplies away rather than leaving them at the event waste stations.
- Ensure that waste can be sorted properly. If there are high volumes of waste and/or contamination, allow sorting to continue to occur 2-3 days post-event.



Example of bad waste management practices.

#### TIP

Did you know – most events produce up to 70% of their waste 2-3 days after the event has finished?

Don't run out of steam after the event – keep up sustainability efforts.

Watch for bin proliferation and relocation of bins by event vendors, contractors, and the public. If it is not possible to secure the bins, monitoring is very important.

#### ACTION

**Manage waste at the event bump-in, during the event and after the event bump-out (not just during the event).**

# 34

## SPOT CHECKING

Spot checking is a useful practice to ensure that all the sustainable event processes and procedures are functioning well. Assigning a staff member to do the important task of spot checking, at regular intervals, will help to ensure that small issues do not escalate into big problems.

### Spot check:

- Volume of waste at the waste stations: Are there certain times when more Waste Warriors are needed?
- Identify waste stations that are under or over-utilised.
- Comments or concerns provided by vendors, staff, volunteers, and patrons (don't forget to praise everyone for their sustainability efforts).
- General cleanliness of the venue.

### ACTION

**Conduct spot checks at regular intervals to ensure that small issues do not escalate into big problems.**

### TIPS

Take photos as you spot check as these can be useful for reporting and benchmarking.

Get to know your overnight security personnel – they can be great eyes and ears for your waste management after hours!



Visual spot checking of bins.



“Pictures are worth a thousand words”. Photos are a quick way to document the impacts, issues and successes of the event sustainability goals. Event photos should capture both the positive and negative outcomes. Good quality photos and videos are extremely useful for event reporting, stories, media releases, marketing and more. Consider hiring a professional photographer or videographer to capture event sustainability. A detailed brief will ensure that photos and videos capture sustainability in action.

#### Suggested photos include:

- Vendors providing food in compostable packaging.
- Patrons using waste stations, water refills, reusables etc.
- Signage explaining the environmental initiatives of the event.
- Happy patrons participating in environmental initiatives.
- Waste separation at the event.
- Clean-up events if specially arranged for your event.
- Waste Warriors assisting patrons.
- Great bar shots with cocktails, beers and wines in reusable cups.
- Guest speakers talking on a sustainability topic.
- Your team helping to plant trees at one of the annual Trees for Tourism tree planting days.

#### ACTION

Take photos and videos of sustainability in action.



#### TIP

Encourage your staff and volunteers to take photos of sustainability in action too.

Don't forget to review and collate your event photos soon after the event.

#### Resources

[Panga Productions](#)  
(Shaun and Carol Cairns)

[Sunny Coast Photos](#)  
(Dave Gleeson)

[Paul Smith Images](#)

[Katja Anton Photography](#)

[Lumea Photography \(Amy Higg\)](#)

[The Four Elements \(Lucia\)](#)

[Aimee Dodge \(Aimee\)](#)

On-site waste separation needs to be incorporated into the event waste management plan. It is important to negotiate who is responsible for sorting waste with the event waste contractor (Waste Warrior volunteers can do limited sorting). On-site waste separation will assist in achieving waste diversion targets as well as reduce overall waste costs.

The goal is to achieve minimal contamination before the waste gets to the waste contractor.

#### Contamination is minimised by:

- Setting up consistent and accessible waste stations at the event.
- Utilising clear and easy-to-understand signage and educational bin covers at the waste stations to help patrons understand which items go in which bin.
- Engaging Waste Warrior volunteers (Refer Shade 21) to help educate event patrons at the waste stations.
- Engaging Waste Warrior volunteers to use pickers to do limited sorting while at the waste stations.

#### ACTION

**Minimise waste contamination before it gets to the waste contractor by improving on-site waste separation – use clear and easy-to-understand waste station signage, educational bin covers and Waste Warrior volunteers.**



Waste Warriors on duty.

#### TIP

Allowing event patrons to witness waste sorting is an opportunity to educate and inform patrons of the event sustainability goals.

#### Resource

- ▶ [Beyond the Bin Video 8: Let's Talk Rubbish: Site Operations](#)



Waste contractor checking for contamination.

# 37

## CONDUCTING A WASTE AUDIT

Conducting a waste audit assists in understanding the effectiveness of the event waste strategy.

### Conducting waste audits periodically throughout the event allows event organisers to:


- Identify which waste streams fill up most quickly and to modify procedures during the event if adjustments need to be made.
- Identify how effective the different waste stations are in preventing contamination, e.g. percentage of contamination in recycling.
- Identify which items are problematic for event patrons in understanding where they go, e.g. are coffee cups going into the recycling station?
- Determine what percentage of waste has been diverted from landfill due to on-site sorting.
- Identify any 'hidden' plastic items popping up at the event, e.g. spot check vendors (Refer Shade 34).
- Plan for future events, e.g. staffing requirements, waste station locations, educational material required.
- Compare improvements in waste separation over time (either at multi-day events or compared between years).
- Record issues and successes for post-event reporting.

Both the volume and the contents of waste streams provide important information, e.g. 5kg of recycling or compost has a significantly different volume to 5kg of general waste. To meet the event targets and benchmarking requirements, event organisers will need to record data on the total waste tonnage (and where it went) for each waste stream. Identifying contamination rates can be determined by separating each bin into the desired waste stream and determining the estimated percentage of contamination.

### ACTION

**Conducting waste audits throughout the event provides important data and allows event organisers to adjust and improve procedures during the event.**

### Resources

 **Beyond the Bin Conducting Waste audits**  
Beyond the Bin Video 9: How to work out your diversion from landfill

**TIP**

Take photos of the contents of the recycle, refundables, compost, and landfill bins to determine common items contaminating the different waste stream. This information is useful for post-event reporting as well as identifying future educational resources required.

### Waste Audit Survey

Date of survey: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time of survey: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Festival Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Landfill	Recycling	Compost
Weight			
<b>BIN VOLUME</b> (see bottom for 240L calc)			
<b>Compostables %</b>			
<b>Recycling %</b>			
<b>Landfill %</b>			
PLA cutlery			
PLA cold cups			
PLA Coffee cups & lids			
Plastic Coffee cups & lids			
Paper straws			
Napkins & tissues			
Magazines, advertising material			
Cardboard boxes			

Overflowing bins are not only unsightly but can also create a lot of work for on-site sorting. In addition, recycling or compost bins with too much contamination can end up all going to landfill.

Waste station contamination can be avoided by staying on top of event waste and keeping one step ahead of potential issues.


#### Take the following actions to stay on top:

- When bins are  $\frac{3}{4}$  full – this is the time to replace them.
- Keep waste stations operational – don't remove a bin for long periods of time, simply swap a  $\frac{3}{4}$  full bin with an empty bin.
- Don't let bins overflow. Provide a central contact point for staff and volunteers to use when they notice a waste station that needs to be serviced.
- Don't ever let bins go solo – a solo bin will always get contaminated with all waste streams – keep your waste station options together.
- Ensure you have good waste station signage and Waste Warrior volunteers (Refer Shade 21) to keep waste stations running smoothly.

#### ACTION

**Avoid waste station contamination by keeping one step ahead of event waste.**

#### Resources

-  [Beyond the Bin Site Operation](#)  
 Beyond the Bin Video 8: Let's Talk Rubbish: Site Operations



#### TIP

Make sure to have the contact phone number (including after-hours number) for event waste managers and contractors to address emergencies quickly.

# 39

## MEASURING EVENT NOISE

Noise pollution is an environmental consideration that is often overlooked. It is important to find an acceptable balance between the need for entertainment and the right to enjoy peace and quiet.








Prepare a noise management plan that includes potential sources of noise and planned minimisation efforts. Document event noise during the event and take readings within 1m, 15m and 50m of the source of noise. There are many free smartphone noise reading apps available.

### ACTION

**Be considerate of people and animals by managing noise levels at the event.**

### Resources

- [For IOS: Decibel X – dB Sound Meter, decibel : dB Sound Level Meter](#)
- [For Android: dB Sound Meter – Decibel meter and noise meter](#)
- [Noise management plan template](#)
- [Events Guideline 27 from WA Dept of Health](#)
- [The Brisbane City Council Guide to decibel levels](#)

Highly injurious	140	Jet engine	
	130	Rivet hammer	
Injurious	120	Chainsaw	
	90	Heavy truck	
Risk	80	Car	
Little risk	70	Conversation	
	30	Whispering	

**TIP**

If the event has loud amplified noise, encourage patrons to use earplugs and earmuffs for children.

Don't forget that animals are also affected by loud noise.



Decibel sound meter.

# 40

## RECORDING COMPLAINTS

Complaints can provide useful feedback on how activities could be improved and where to focus future efforts. Having an Event Complaints Procedure (Shade 8) will provide steps that need to be taken to address any complaints received during the event.


### Complaints should record the following information:


- Date
- Time
- Complainant name and contact details
- Brief description of the complaint
- Name of the staff member who handled the complaint
- Follow-up actions completed or required.

### ACTION

**Complaints (and compliments) should be added to the post-event report.**

### Resources

 **Handling customer complaints**  
Government of Western Australia – Small Business Development Corporation

 **Snap Send Solve** is a convenient and proactive mobile application that allows you to communicate with your local council effortlessly. Whether leading up to your event you come across a situation that requires attention, this app allows you to report issues to your council before, during, or after your event.



**TIP**  
Make sure to keep a record of both complaints and compliments and responses!  
Be proactive in addressing potential concerns and avoid complaints.

**TIP**  
Possible sustainability feedback/complaints could be rubbish overflowing bins, cigarette butts littered and near river or water sources, balloons floating up into the sky, vendors with plastic items, excessive noise for wildlife etc.

Tap into existing event communication channels – celebrity activations, speakers' tents, DJs and MCs, commentators, hosts, digital signs, videos and splash screens on audio visual equipment. These can all act as vehicles to promote the event sustainability goals and actions as well as engage event patrons.

- Use the event MCs and speakers to provide reminders throughout the event on sustainability actions to be encouraged (e.g. where to access free water, what to put in bins, which vendors are plastic-free or using reusables, thank Waste Warrior volunteers, advise how many trees will be planted due to the event etc.).
- Produce event messaging and splash screens about sustainability to be used on event audio-visual equipment.
- Encourage event celebrities to use their social media platforms to highlight the event sustainability in action.
- Create short, engaging videos that tell the event sustainability story and goals.

## ACTION

**Tap into existing event communication channels to inform patrons of the event sustainability goals and actions.**

## TIP

Figures, facts and 'Did you know' messaging attracts interest – so does being witty!

## Resources



What is GREEN marketing?



Noosa Festival of Surfing Sustainability Video



James Tobin, Sunrise TV presenter announcing the Noosa Triathlon's contribution to the Trees for Tourism tree planting program.

Offering education and incentives to participate in the event's sustainability actions is encouraged and should be considered as part of the event marketing plan. Inviting feedback and participation from event patrons is a great way to engage the local community in sustainability efforts.

**Potential actions include:**

- Utilise custom waste signage to add meaningful additions to the event's flair and style.
- Commission or use artworks to tell a sustainability story.
- Display global impact statistics and figures and what the event is doing to address these issues.
- Stationary pedal-powered bicycles can be used to power all manner of items including mobile phone chargers, fans, blenders, and LED lights.

**ACTION**

**Use the event as an opportunity to engage and educate patrons via interactive sustainability displays, artworks, or quirky contraptions, e.g. stationary bicycle pedal-powered mobile phone charger.**

**TIP**

Collaborate with your local primary school to create recycled artwork installations – absolutely everything can be reused with artistic vision.

Do you have something that can be reused and showcased at your next event? e.g. Boomerang Bags made 1000s of reusable bags from Noosa Triathlon banners which were used as the event athlete bag the next year – circular economy in full swing!

**Resources**

[5 Upcycling DIY Ideas For Event Decor](#)





Conducting surveys during an event is a positive way to engage and inform patrons and vendors about the event sustainability goals as well as obtain feedback on what worked well and what could be improved.

Patrons are often the focus of event surveys, but a vendor survey can provide valuable insight into the practicalities of implementing the event sustainability goals, e.g. bin locations for vendors, ease of use of compostable packaging and food ware, costs to vendors to be more sustainable, patron feedback given to vendors etc. There is a higher rate of engagement and accuracy when surveys are conducted during the event rather than post-event.

#### Items to consider when conducting surveys:

- Conduct surveys during quiet periods – not while vendors are serving customers or patrons are engaged in activities.
- Don't leave surveys to be filled in – rather, ask the questions and complete the survey for the patron or vendor.
- Keep the survey short – less than 10 questions if possible.
- If someone declines to complete the survey, don't be pushy – thank them and be on your way.

#### ACTION

1. **Conducting patron and vendor surveys during the event is a great way to obtain feedback.**
2. **Be online: More and more events are using online ticketing, social media and Mailchimp-style communications for events, so tag your survey to these to streamline communications before, during and after your event.**

#### Resources

Tourism Noosa has created useful vendor and patron surveys for you to use.



Tourism Noosa's Vendor Survey



Tourism Noosa's Patron Survey

Complete Google Form Surveys for vendors and patrons. This will allow consistency of data being collected by events and can be sent to events as a resource.



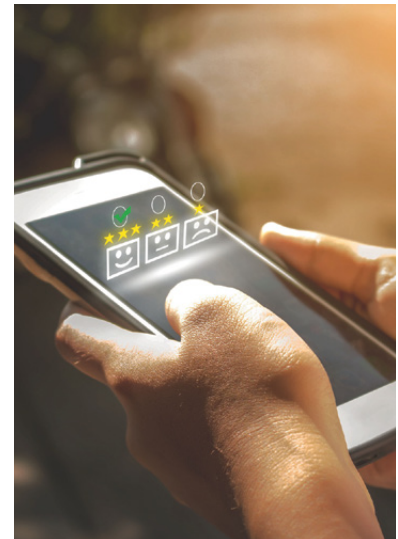
Create surveys with Google Forms

#### TIP

Consider using an online survey to save paper and avoid data entry.

Keep your survey short and sweet.

Roving reporter videos can also be used to get feedback from patrons and can be used in marketing your event – please ensure you seek authorisation to use images of patrons prior.



Mobile device survey form.

# POST-EVENT ACTIONS



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## UNDERSTAND EVENT WASTE DATA

It is important to not only understand how much waste was generated by the event but also what was reduced, reused, and recycled and where did the event waste end up? Managing waste is no longer simply “pay to take away” so make sure to obtain the necessary data from the waste contractor.

Waste is a rapidly changing industry with opportunities to not only divert waste from landfill but potentially create a resource, e.g. compost or earn money through 10c refundables. Quantifying event waste provides transparent benchmarking data and demonstrates commitment to event sustainability goals.



### In addition to data obtained from the waste contractor, plastic-free events should aim to record the following:

- Conduct a water reading to estimate how many single-use water bottles were eliminated.
- Review sales data to determine the number of reusable water bottles sold.
- Review procurement or vendor sales figures to determine the amount of single-use plastic packaging eliminated.
- Quantify emissions reductions by composting at a commercial composting facility. Note 1 x tonne of compost = 1 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.
- Review targets set to divert waste from landfill – were they achieved?

### ACTION

**Review the steps taken to reduce, reuse and recycle event waste and document (and publicise) the results.**

### Resources

-  [Queensland Waste Strategy – Key Performance Indicators](#)
-  [Wild Women Adventure Race Report](#)

**TIP**

Aim to be a zero-waste, plastic-free event – it is possible!

**ZERO**



**WASTE**



Wild Women Adventure Race achieve Zero-Waste event.

# 45

## ASSESS EVENT PERFORMANCE

Use tools such as the Tourism Noosa Sustainable Events Criteria checklist to assess performance and benchmark event sustainability goals.


### A post-event sustainability report should include:

- Benchmarking data – Energy, Water, Waste.
- Survey results.
- Photos.
- Key achievements and challenges.


### ACTION


**Assess the event performance against the event sustainability goals.**

### Resources

 [Tourism Noosa Sustainable Events Criteria audit tool and checklist](#)


Here are good examples of an event sustainability report:

 [Noosa Festival of Surfing 2021 Public Report](#)

 [Orange FOOD Week – Sustainable Event Report](#)

### TIP

Public reports are a great way to highlight successes and help other event organisers (as well as patrons) see what is possible. Publicise your results – you earned them!





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# LEAVE IT BETTER THAN BEFORE

As the saying goes “leave only footprints”. Many events take place in public parks or beach and river settings. Event organisers should aim to leave the event site better than how they found it. Go the extra mile and consider cleaning surrounding areas as well. This will go a long way to ensure goodwill within the community.

### Consider taking the following actions after the event:

- Conduct a thorough site clean-up with the entire events team – many hands make light work.
- Organise a community clean-up event in nearby parklands or beach/river areas.
- Organise a revegetation or tree-planting project with a local bushcare group.

### ACTION

**Leave the event site in better condition than how you found it and go the extra mile to clean-up surrounding areas.**

**TIP**

Ensure you have rostered enough staff for a thorough site clean-up after the event bump-out – you may need more people at the end of the event than at the beginning of the event!

Is there a national clean-up event or environmental day that could coincide with your event, e.g. 6 March Clean-up Australia Day or 5 June World Environment Day, or Plastic Free July etc.?



Noosa Eat & Drink Festival.

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## POST-EVENT PARTY

Hosting a party for event Waste Warrior volunteers and the sustainability green team is not only an opportunity to say thank you but also a great forum to collect additional feedback. They are the eyes and ears at the event and are likely to have a close understanding of what worked well and what could be improved, as well as anecdotes from event patrons.

Don't forget to invite the waste contractor and back-of-house waste staff – these hard-working folk are allies in your event sustainability efforts.

### Keys to a successful post-event party:

- Choose a venue and time that maximises participation.
- Provide food and drinks.
- Host the party as soon as possible after the event so it is still fresh in everyone's memory.
- Prepare a short presentation or speech showcasing event sustainability results.
- Record any additional feedback from event Waste Warriors and the sustainability green team.
- Thank everyone involved.

**TIP**

Showing sincere appreciation for volunteers helps to build an engaged and committed crew of volunteers for future events.

### ACTION

**Host a post-event party soon after the event to thank the team as well as highlight the event sustainability results.**



Thank you hosted by Heads of Noosa Brewing Co.



Zade Currie – Volunteer.

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## CLAIM EVENT SUCCESSES

The world needs more good news stories so be sure to claim the event sustainability successes. Telling the event sustainability journey can help drive participation, enthusiasm, awareness, and make lasting memories. It helps to plan and prepare for the type of story you want to tell prior to the event.


### Tips for working with the media include:

- Show media representatives key aspects of the event sustainability initiatives.
- Arrange short interviews for the media with a diverse range of people (staff, volunteers, stallholders, patrons) at the event.
- Check with media outlets to ascertain if they have an environment reporter on staff. If so, target them for sustainable event stories.
- Encourage the involvement of a well-known local or public figure.
- Be sure to follow-up with media representatives after the event for a story.

### ACTION

**Don't forget to claim (and publicise) the event sustainability successes and the journey it's taken to get there.**

### Resources

 [Noosa Today article on TN's Sustainable Events program](#)

Examples of great sustainability post-event features

- [Wild Women Adventure Race article](#)
- [Noosa Enduro Green Initiatives advertisement](#)
- [Noosa Food & Wine article](#)

**TIP**

Shout it from the rooftops – share your event sustainability targets and achievements.


Avoid greenwashing and always use actual data.



**Spilt Milk Festival Canberra**

78.78%

of waste diverted from landfill (32.38 tonnes of recycling)



**NOOSA EVENTS TAKING THE SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE**

**SNAPSHOT ON THE BENCHMARKS OF SOME OF OUR PAST SPONSORED EVENTS**

Event	Waste	Water	Energy	Carbon	Green
Wild Women Adventure Race	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Enduro Green Initiatives	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Food & Wine	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**THESE FOR TOURISM RESULTS**

- Waste: 100%
- Water: 100%
- Energy: 100%
- Carbon: 100%
- Green: 100%

**GREAT RESULTS FROM SOME OF OUR EVENTS**

- 100% of waste diverted from landfill
- 100% of water recycled
- 100% of energy from renewable sources
- 100% of carbon offset
- 100% of green initiatives implemented

**TOURISM NOOSA SPONSORED EVENTS**

- Wild Women Adventure Race
- Enduro Green Initiatives
- Food & Wine
- Spilt Milk Festival
- ...and many more!

Noosa Today article.

# 49

## TARGETS

Knowing where you have come from helps you know where you are going! Annual events should aim to set sustainability goals each year. Benchmarking allows for comparisons year-on-year as well as recording accomplishments and areas for improvement.

### Set targets that are achievable but also take the event to a new level of sustainability.

Example targets include:

- Reduce total waste generation by an additional 10%.
- Increase waste diversion targets from landfill by 10%.
- Ban single-use plastic water bottles (or other plastic items) from the next event.
- Raise dedicated funds for a local charity through 10c refundables.
- Introduce 50% renewable energy targets for the next event.

### ACTION

**Build on the event sustainability goals and set new targets each year.**

### TIP

Get everyone involved in reaching sustainability goals by ensuring new event managers and team members have a copy of the previous year's sustainability report and new targets.

Set targets based on feedback, passion, available skill sets or motivation. Maybe it's one action, maybe it's many.



Noosa Triathlon – Noosa Main Beach.



# 50

## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations on striving to make a difference. Following the actions in this guide will help show others what is possible. Hosting sustainable events is good for people, the planet and profits. Keep up the good work and maintain the momentum by continuing to achieve event sustainability goals year after year.

### ACTION

**Keep up the good work – build on event sustainability successes and apply for event funding for next year.**

### Resources



Tourism Noosa Events Funding



Noosa Council Grants

### TIP

“The Greatest Threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it” – quote by Robert Swan.

Every little bit counts so give yourself a pat on the back – the planet will thank you!



Noosa Ultra Trail event.

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