

Best Environmental Practices in NGOs

Environmental best practices shared during the "Project Environmental Audit"

BEST PRACTICES FOR THE OFFICE MANAGEMENT

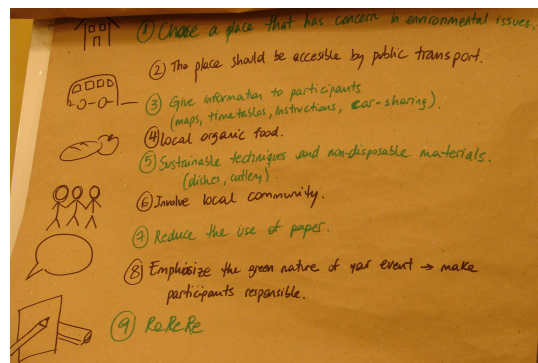
1. Saving energy
 - a. Use energy saving bulbs
 - b. Always turn off the light when leaving
 - c. Use rechargeable batteries
 - d. Unplug all the electronic devices when leaving the office
 - e. Use of the plug which can be switched off
 - f. Use of multifunction machine (copy, printer, fax in one)
 - g. Laptop instead of PC (less energy consumed)
 - h. Big window – use of the day light as much as possible
 - i. If possible use the renewable sources of energy (solar)
 - j. Water – use only the amount of water needed (to make coffee/tea)
2. Efficiency
 - a. Paper – reuse (use double side), print only when needed and both side
 - b. Refill toners
 - c. Responsible person – office policy
3. Ecological products
 - a. Use 100% recycled ink
 - b. Ecological cleaning products – stored in a special place (not mixed with food, etc.)
 - c. Recycled paper and stationary (post-it, glue, pens, pencils, files, envelopes, etc.)
4. Waste separation
 - a. Bins for separation of waste (paper, plastic, aluminum, tetra pack, mix, organic, cans, bulbs and electronic devices)

5. Safety in the office
 - a. Exit' sign
 - b. Fire extinguisher
 - c. Chemicals stored in a special place
 - d. Safe heating system
 - e. Unplugging all the electronic devices when leaving the office
6. Well-being
 - a. Air-cleaning plants – Bamboo Palm, Chinese Evergreen, English Ivy, Gerbera Daisy, Janet Craig, Marginata, Mass cane/Corn Plant, Mother-in-Law's Tongue, Pot Mum, Peace Lily, Warneckii
 - b. Fair trade products (coffee, tea, cookies)
 - c. Organic local food
 - d. Well-designed office – furniture from certified wood
 - e. For party – use only bottles with the natural cork
7. Green office (paper free)
 - a. Use of the internet (mail communication instead of letters)
 - b. Digitalizing the data (scan and store on a server)
8. Links:
<http://www.greenoffice.org.nz/>
www.thegreenoffice.com
<http://www.treehugger.com/files/2006/12/how-to-go-green-at-work.php>
http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/greatermekong/our_solutions/projects/green_office/benefits_and_services/



GOOD PRACTICES FOR ORGANISING LOCAL EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

1. Choose a place that has concern in environmental issues
 - a. Eco-friendly sources of energy
 - b. Automatic lights
 - c. Waste recycling
 - d. Rainwater collecting system
 - e. Well isolated building
2. The place should be accessible by public transport and/or bicycle
 - a. Close to bus or train stop
 - b. If there is no public transport available you should promote car-sharing
3. Give information to participants about public transport
 - a. Provide maps, timetables, clear instructions, prices, etc
4. Local organic food
 - a. Ask the local people on where to buy it
 - b. Check the origin of the products and the quality of the process
5. Sustainable techniques for cooking and non-disposable materials
 - a. Use solar ovens
 - b. Use durable bags
 - c. Avoid the use of wrappings and packages
 - d. Use non-disposable dishes and cutlery and fabric napkins
6. Involve the local community
 - a. Use previous knowledge
 - b. Have consideration for the surrounding inhabitants; inform them about what will happen during your event
 - c. Favor the hiring of locals
7. Reduce the use of paper when promoting your event
 - a. Send information mainly by electronic version
 - b. Use recycled paper and non-chemical ink and minimize the use of it
8. Emphasize the green nature of your event: make participants act responsible
 - a. Spread your ideas
 - b. Set basic rules for the organizing team: act as an example
9. Reduce, reuse and recycle
 - a. Favor natural materials
 - b. Try to find eco-labeled product



WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

1. Layout: Use a different layout for electronic and printed versions
 - a. Favor the black and white for printed version
 - b. Avoid blank pages
 - c. Adapt the format of the layout and the text size
 - d. The binding can be source of environmental impact, use an adapted one
2. Printing company: Make a wise choice
 - a. Does it have an EMS (ISO 14001, EMAS)
 - b. Does it have a waste management,
 - c. What is their policy about publications (ex: www.pointcz.cz)
3. Colors: Think about vegetable oil based colors, soy ink:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Bright colors	More time to dry
More Biodegradable	More expensive (25%)
Easily recyclable	
Less paper waste	

4. Paper: Think about some standards
 - a. Totally chlorine free (TFC)
 - b. Forest Stewardship Council
 - c. Local recycled Paper
5. Distribution: Think about the most efficient and eco friendly ways
 - a. Number of copies
 - b. Carbon neutral distribution
 - c. Online distribution

Other best environmental practices from YEE member organisations

Lilit Simonyan, Stepanavan Youth Centre (SYC), Armenia



1. Reusing the paper (when one side is printed and it is not needed, then we use the other side for taking notes, instead of throwing it away)
2. During the projects we try to avoid using plastic cups. In case it is needed to use, we ask people to write their names on the cups, so they can use it during the whole day.
3. We do sessions on healthy lifestyle and let young people know what food is good for their health, thus promoting organic and healthy way of cooking.
4. We organize garbage collection actions with children and connect it with some information on why it is important to take care of our environment.

Sara Svensson, Fältbiologerna, Sweden

[...] Participants use the most environmentally friendly means of transport to activities. Because of funding from the government to all Swedish not-for-profit youth organizations, we're almost always able to reimburse travel for our members to activities all over the country, and they get it if they go by train or the best available. If someone choose to travel by bicycle to the activity they get reimbursed for food and if necessary camping on the way.

Moreover Sara recommends the [UNEP Green Meeting Guide](#).



Nino Kheladze, Alliance For Society Advancement (ASA), Georgia



My Organisation tries to buy organic and vegetarian food during all events that are organized by us. We are also doing Eco Food related events. We try to promote organic food. Give a chance to participants to find out that organic food is much better.

Background Info: My organisation is very small, about 12 members and approximately 100 volunteers. Unfortunately we don't have enough money to do such Eco events often. Advantages: It's safe for health. Participants can discover that organic food tastes better. They can feel what's the real difference between organic and non-organic food. Disadvantages: It's more expensive to buy organic food. There are only a few certified farmers who sell them. that's why it's hard to find organic food in every mini markets. They are sold only in Big Supermarkets. You can also buy product from farmers but just in case you are sure that product is really organic. We hope very soon, people will start buying more and more organic products, as the more people start buying them, the more price will come down.

Tracy Gemma, Look East Wild Earth (LEWE), UK

- I have attached my organisation's Environmental Policy to this email in case it is useful. I think it is a pretty standard version of an Env Policy.

- As you will see we do not forbid travel by plane or private car, but simply strongly encourage using, and at least investigating, public transport and non-airplane transport.

- When our volunteers (EVS or for training course, e.g. this autumn) travel to Russia they go overland. This is indeed time-consuming, but I guess our attitude is to view this as "part of the experience" of volunteering, and visiting and experiencing other countries. Building links between different countries and cultures is very central to what we do, and especially in Russia, being on a long train ride can be a great way to improve your language and understanding of the country and its people. Indeed one of our volunteers has just left to begin her EVS in Georgia - she travelled by bus some of the distance, and is doing a sponsored cycle the rest of the way (to raise money for our organisation).

- Going to YEE AM at Svycarna was my first experience of doing a long journey for Look East Wild Earth. It is true that travelling by air may well have been cheaper than going by train. However, my organisation supported me in travelling by land by offering to reimburse me the 30% of the travel costs not covered by YEE. When volunteers travel within the UK to give talks etc. then we also offer to reimburse their travel costs.



So, some advantages disadvantages of our travel policy:

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- Travel overland is much more interesting. E.g. going to YEE allowed me to see Koeln and Prague, 2 new cities for me.
- Travel overland helps you practice your foreign languages (especially important for British people ...). I got to use my French, German ... and learn some Czech on the way to YEE AM.
- Travel overland broadens your awareness of other places and cultures

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- Travel overland can be more expensive.
- Not everyone has the time to spare
- I realise that as EU citizens, myself and fellow members of LEWE are lucky to be able to travel relatively easily throughout Europe and hearing other young people talk about the difficulties they face with visas etc., makes me aware that travelling entirely overland is to a certain extent a "privilege" I enjoy.

Kyrylo Ivliev, Youth Environmental League of Prydniprovyia (MELP), Ukraine



I will try to share some examples from my organization:

1) While organizing some training course, seminar, lecture etc. we always try to use papers for flip-chart from both sides or even try not to use usual paper as well substituting it by old wall-papers. Advantages: it helps to shrink consumption of paper and thus mitigates the impact of wood-working industry. It also provides participants with a good example of sustainable consumption.

2) For our office we try to buy only organic food, e.g. honey from local villages, because almost all

the members of our organization believe this kind of food is much more useful for their health. Advantages: it contributes to our members' health, provides the others with a good example, encourage farmers who produce this kind of production to work in this direction.

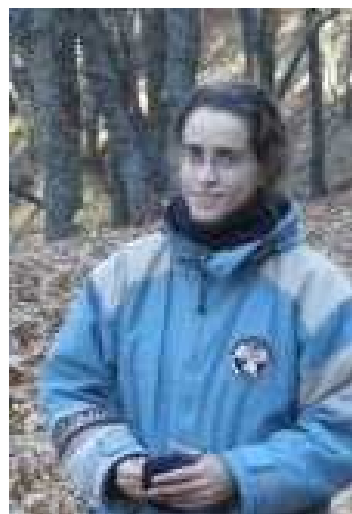
3) During the lunch hour almost all the staff and administration of our organization go to the canteens or cafes where more or less natural food without GMOs is cooked, especially fast food restaurant are forbidden ;) Advantages: it forces people to think over what they eat, what is useful and what is harmful for their health, and maybe as a result force them to change their point of view.

4) ... our organization runs GMO campaign, the aim of which is to determine a range of products sold in our shops and containing dangerous GM elements so that to guard people from buying of these products.

Marta Callejo, Oro Verde, Spain

Regarding the issue you mentioned in your email, in the activities of Oro Verde we:

- Promote the use of public transport, bicycles to attend meetings.
- Another thing is trying to do activities and meetings during day-light, so we switch on lamps as less as possible.
- Use always 100% recycled paper, as well as try to print as less as possible. If we have to print pictures we buy paper free of TCF, there is a certified brand called "Blue Angel" which guarantees that. we also print always both sides of the paper.
- When possible provide people who come to our activities with water from the tap, avoid bottled water, and just if it is not possible buy it from León not coming from far places.
- When we have to buy things for an activity we use durable bags, so we avoid getting plastic ones. Also about buying food we avoid buying things wrapped in plastics



Timur Idrisov, Little Earth, Tajikistan



Here are some things that we try to do within our activities. Little Earth is local small environmental NGO. It is consist of 5 staff person and around 30 members.

1. Energy saving.

- In our small office we use only energy saving bulbs. It help us to save energy and some money from energy bills. Problem - in Tajikistan there is no still system for separate collection and utilization of CFL, which force us to collect broken one by ourselves and keep it in the store.
- usually during winter time we use thermos to keep boiling water hot and to avoid use kettle again and again when someone need coffee or tea.
- we rent a flat, but to keep comfort temperature inside and to save energy, we made some efforts to insulate the office. For example we put double glazed windows on the balcony, and insulate other windows with silicon and so call seal strips.
- we use rechargeable batteries.

2. Use of solar power

- In 2008 we installed 2 solarphotovoltaic panels (with capacity 100 Watt), which we use to provide power for 2 desktops with LSD monitors, fax, modem and some other equipment which are not required a lot of energy. We also use it during winter time when we have some electricity cuts and limits.

3. Organizing workshops and other events

- for our events we never use plastic dishes or glass. we also try to buy environmentally-friendly materials, like folders made from cardboard, only paper notebooks (there are a lot of with the plastic cover), etc. Problem - it is not always possible to find such kind of stuff, especially of you have to organize an event somewhere in the rural area.

4. Waste

- in our country we don't have any waste separation yet. but inside the office we usually collect waste papers separately to use as a draft papers and then we just give it to small recycling company which produced toilet papers. Before we hade an office at house with small yard and we make a compost there for our organic waste. these are just few examples.

Regarding the finance - we run for few years an educational project on energy saving called SPARE (School project on application of recources and energy). So we took some funds from this project to organize a demonstrational workshop on insulation in our office.

Yana Muradova, Georgia Youth EcoMovement (GYEM/SAEM), Georgia



Unfortunately, in Georgia we don't have many opportunities to use ecologically - friendly means. But still we try to do as much as possible - for example we don't use plastic bags (Instead of it, we use bags made of fabric), try to use cars as less as possible – we walk or go by bicycle when we are able to. We help schoolchildren to gather paper for recycling, though the only factory which deals with it (left from the Soviet Union times :D), produces toilet paper, so we can't even use recycled paper in the office. However, we use healthy naturally-grown fruits and vegetables, in Georgia it's cheap and accessible.

Paulo de Moraes, Organization for the Promotion of Ecolclubs (OPE), Portugal

I can give you some examples of our organisation.

Recycling is always a major concern, even if it's already something widespread in among



young people (the advantages of recycling), I guess.

The solar food is also good. We can save a lot of energy using the solar ovens to cook. Most people don't really believe that we can cook with it but then they taste the food and they like. Anyway I can't see a general interest in getting solar ovens...

Buying organic food is something that we never cared about. Instead we grow some of our food. We plant aromatic plants and some native species. Some can be used for cooking or directly for

eating. Cheaper than buying it directly to the producers is producing it yourself! If you can have some land try to do it.

Elena Raspertova, Environmental Youth Club (EYC), Russia



here is the example of our best practice:

My organization always asks the members to bring once used sheets of paper to our office so that we can all use those papers second time for different purposes like writing on the back clean side in order to reduce the usage of paper and money on buying new papers for the office. That is just one example of how once used paper can be used second time. If we have too many paper in the office, we collect it and forward to the recycle. Background info: My organization is mainly student oriented and we are based in Moscow University of Humanities. We always welcome new members when they come to study in the university. Our direction of

work is environmental education and we provide seminars and lectures for students and schoolchildren. Advantages: As recycling and garbage selection is not common in Russia, we are proud of what we do and think that we show good example. Disadvantages: The paper is heavy and attracts dust...:)

Nazineh Khalafyan, Federation of Youth Clubs Armenia (FYCA), Armenia



Coming back to your letter concerning the TC over Environmental Audit, here is the response to your request regarding best practices over environmental management:

It could be:

- a. preparation of handmade small garbage bags to carry with everywhere (was prepared while cleaning some areas) this way trying to ensure that next time people will remember about this action and won't throw trash on to the street
- b. using cotton bags/eco bags instead of plastic bags
- c. waste management, specifically turning some trash into quite useful stuff
- d. usage of solar energy instead of irreplaceable natural resources

Irena Oupicova, Hnuti Brontosaurus, Czech Republic

I have two ideas in this moment. About accomodation: in our organisation is not usual to



pay for accomodation, because usually our activities are connected with work. On weekends we work one morning (5 hours) to help some monuments or nature reserves and than sleep in this locality for free - castle, challet or even under sky. It has a wonderful atmosphere and you have a relation to that place then. It is not difficult to arrange it. Food - it is usual, that participants bring food themselves (they recieve list - e.g. 2 cucumbers, 1 yoghurt and bread) and coocing is communal. Fee for weekend activity is usually less than 2 euro - for buying collective flour etc. Once I tried to buy everything myself - we were close to hypermarket. And it was so heavy, that I couldn't bring it alone - so that is problem, when you are in some small village and you don't have a car. Many people bring vegetable or even milk from their gardens, but I cannot imagine to tell students to buy more expensive food - they usually do not have money, somebody do not bring anything. It is a solidarity.

One part of our organization has worked a few years in village near borders with Poland. They have good relationships with local people - mainly seniors - and they collaborate with them, help them e.g. with cutting wood.(It is not a main work - that is cutting meadows). And old people give them some food, when they want – and it is really organic :-)) and again - free.

I think, that this is the best way, how to do that - voluntarily help people, collaborate with them - they will do the same for you. no markets, no wrappings - it is simple.

Kristýna Ondřejová, Hnuti Brontosaurus, Czech Republic

I don't have anything to add ;)

Only the fact that Brontosaurus publisher last brochure called "Ecologically in the club" Unfortunately it is only in Czech, but maybe some Czech speaking colleagues of yours could help you to understand the content and use it. Success!

