



Together,  
we can make our  
industry more  
sustainable

Swiss Excellence  
for Your Event • Congress • Exhibition

**palexpo** Genève



# A commitment to sustainability since 1993

Sustainable development has been a central focus at Palexpo since 1993, firmly embedded within our organizational culture.

We believe in the power of change and have continuously implemented tangible measures to reduce our environmental footprint and promote social responsibility. Our commitment to sustainable management is reflected in every facet of our operations, from energy and water use to waste management, resourcing, and procurement.

Our commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship has become a hallmark of our identity, positioning Palexpo as a leader in green practices within the convention and exhibition industry and has earned us numerous accolades.

We are committed to supporting event organisers in their journey toward more sustainable practices, ensuring that every event held at Palexpo contributes positively to our shared environmental objectives.











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# Our commitments and certifications

Palexpo has received many accolades for its sustainability initiatives, solidifying its position as a leader in green practices within the convention and exhibition industry



## ISO 20121:2012 CERTIFICATION

**Since 2018, Palexpo has been proudly certified under ISO 20121, the international standard for sustainable event management**

This certification highlights Palexpo's enduring commitment to integrating best practices that minimize environmental impact throughout the event planning and execution process. In 2019, this certification was renewed by ProCert for an additional five years, recognizing Palexpo's consistent efforts to reduce its ecological footprint while adhering to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



## SWISSTAINABLE LABEL LEVEL III

**On June 29, 2022, Palexpo reached a new milestone by obtaining the Swisstainable Label Level III, the highest certification level awarded by Switzerland Tourism**

The Swisstainable program is part of a broader initiative aimed at promoting sustainable tourism practices across Switzerland. This accolade distinguishes Palexpo as a leading actor in sustainable tourism, reflecting its unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable practices.





# Our commitments and certifications



## NET ZERO CARBON EVENTS COMMITMENT

**In 2021, Palexpo signed the "Net Zero Carbon Events" commitment, developed alongside COP26 in Glasgow, under the initiative of the "Joint Meetings Industry Council" (JMIC), an organisation composed of associations of the event industry representing its stakeholders**

By committing to this initiative, Palexpo aligns its efforts with the Paris Climate Agreement, setting ambitious targets to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.



## SIG-ECO21 CERTIFICATE

**In October 2022, Palexpo officially engaged with the eco21 program, an energy-saving initiative by Services Industriels de Genève (SIG)**

This certification confirms that Palexpo has implemented energy efficiency measures to reduce electricity consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, thereby supporting the local energy transition strategy.



# Our certifications and recognitions

## NÉGAWATT PRICE

**In recognition of its innovative approaches to energy management, Palexpó was awarded the Négawatt Price in 2020**

Established by Services Industriels de Genève (SIG), this price honors Geneva-based companies that demonstrate significant reductions in energy consumption and exceptional contributions to energy efficiency.



## GENÈVE RÉGION TERRE AVENIR (GRTA) LABEL

**Palexpó SA proudly bears the Genève Région Terre Avenir (GRTA) label, a testament to its commitment to sourcing high-quality, traceable agricultural products from the Geneva region**

This label covers all stages of agricultural product processing, ensuring that every item served is locally sourced and sustainably produced.







# Sustainable travel to Switzerland and Geneva

A good way to minimize CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and to travel responsibly is to use public transportation or alternative environmentally friendly means of transportation, wherever we can.

## TO SWITZERLAND BY TRAIN

- Switzerland boasts one of the most efficient public transport systems in the world;
- Geneva is seamlessly connected to Europe through a highly efficient railway network;
- The city has two railway stations: airport and city-centre stations;
- Over 200 trains travel daily through the city and airport stations;
- High-speed trains (TGV/ICE) offer quick access to major cities like Paris, Lyon, and Milan;
- Palexpo is the first international exhibition and congress centre to offer attractive train journeys thanks to its partnership with Railtour Suisse SA, the Swiss market leader for travel train.

## FROM THE AIRPORT TO YOUR HOTEL

- The shortest train ride in Europe from the airport to the city centre;
- City centre located only 4km from the airport;
- 6-minute train ride from downtown to airport;
- Free shuttle-bus transfers to/from the airport offered by many Swiss or French hotels.

## MOVING AROUND IN GENEVA

- Geneva's compact size makes walking between hotels, attractions and restaurants easy and quick;
- Hotel guests receive a complimentary Geneva Transport Card, providing free access to all city's public transport for the duration of their stay;
- Geneva's public transport system is safe, punctual, and highly efficient;
- Welo, the local taxi bike company offers an ecofriendly way for getting around the city;
- Geneva and its surrounding areas benefit from an extensive, well-designed network of bike lanes.



# Accessing Palexpo

Palexpo offers exceptional accessibility, thanks to its prime location near the airport, underground railway station, and close proximity to Geneva's city centre.



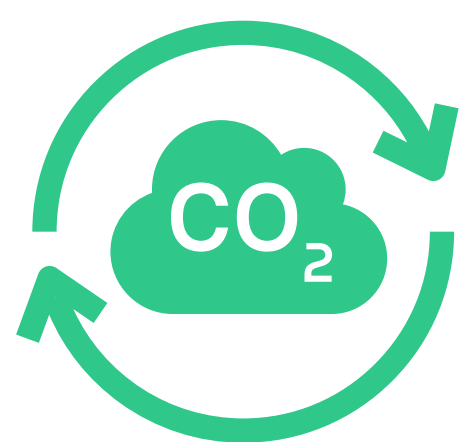
## Public transport is encouraged

- 7 bus lines serve Palexpo



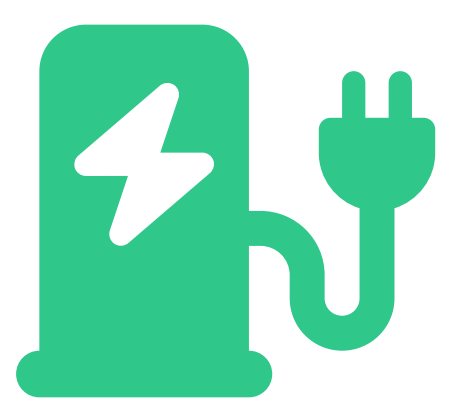
## Palexpo, easy to reach from the airport

- The venue is 500 metres away from the airport and its railway station
- Train station and airport less than 10 minutes away on foot (5-minutes' bus ride)



## Palexpo, easy to reach from the city centre

- Palexpo is only 4 km from the city centre and lake shore (6-minutes by train – departure every 12 minutes)
- Most hotels are reachable within 5-30 minutes by public transport
- 20-minutes' bus ride from Palexpo to the city centre



## Recharge for electric vehicle

- Four fast charging stations for electrical cars (20kW) are available on site







# A few ideas to consider as an organiser

- Convince your visitors to use public transport, whenever possible, by communicating about it in advance in all your publications;
- Encourage your visitors to travel to Geneva by train thanks to our partnership with **Railtour**;
- Actively promote the free of charge “Geneva transport card” amongst your participants [www.geneve.com](http://www.geneve.com);
- Promote **Geneva’s cycle paths network and rental companies**;
- Partner with carbon offset companies to neutralize emissions and promote it on your website and publications;
- Encourage eco-friendly travel with small rewards (ex: free lunch, green awards).



# Energy conservation

We are dedicated to minimising our use of natural resources and actively participate in the Swiss confederation's objectives to reduce the country's energy needs by 25% and to reach 70% renewable energy share by 2030.

At Palexpo:

- 100% of our electricity is sourced from natural energy (hydroelectric or solar);
- 20% of on-site electricity comes from local hydroelectric or solar power plants;
- Nuclear energy and electricity generated from fossil fuels are prohibited in Geneva;
- Systems for remote control of heating and ventilation ensure optimized energy usage;
- Motion detectors are installed in all toilets and conference facilities for energy efficiency;
- 375,000 kWh saved annually (equivalent to 100 Swiss households) by replacing light bulbs in Exhibition Halls 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6;
- A lighting-level protocol, set at 50% during build-up, tear-down and maintenance activities is in place throughout all halls;
- All escalators are regulated by a specially-designed inverter system, which automatically stops or slows down motors when not in use.



**375,000 kWh**  
saved annually





**15,000**  
solar panels

## Green energy produced on our roof

Palexpo houses Switzerland's sixth-largest solar power plant, significantly contributing to its energy needs and reducing its carbon footprint.

- 15,000 solar panels are installed on the roof, which represents to 30,000 sqm of surface;
- Production equivalent to the annual consumption of 1,350 Genevan households in electricity;
- By 2030, the capacity of this plant will be doubled: Palexpo will produce more energy than it consumes by installing a solar power plant on the entire roof surface available.



# Water Conservation

Effective water conservation is crucial for minimizing the environmental impact of any event and is therefore integral to our daily operations.

- In compliance with Swiss regulations, we does not use conventional AC systems for humidity control, prohibited in buildings of this size
- Instead, we focus on natural ventilation to ensure guests' comfort
- Hall 6 features an advanced chilled water loop system, ensuring air-cooling solutions for exhibitors
- Systems for remote control of heating and ventilation ensure optimized energy usage in all facilities
- All toilets are equipped with low flow flush and automatically-activated water taps





# Waste reduction and management

Our strategy is based on the principles of refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover, which guide our efforts to decrease waste generation and increase recycling rates.

78% of the waste produced on-site at Palexpo is recycled annually.

48% of the waste generated is collected and sorted on-site into various streams, including incinerable waste, paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, food waste, cooking oil, wood, electronic waste, and more.

52% of the remaining waste is processed by our waste management partner, Serbeco, located 9 km from our site.

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduced Containers are filled efficiently to reduce the number of trucks collecting waste by an external partner.





# A few ideas to consider as an organiser

## GENERAL WASTE REDUCTION INITIATIVES

- Give preference to local suppliers, to avoid lengthy transportation of goods;
- Make arrangements with your suppliers to return unwanted or unused products and materials;
- Buy products made from recycled materials (signage, lanyards, paper, etc.) and have them recycled or reused at the end of the event;
- Assess where carpet is necessary in the halls.

## COMMUNICATION AND EVENT MATERIAL

- Reduce printed material each step of your event by using digital technology;
- When printing is not avoidable, favour paper from a sustainable source carrying the PEFC-certificate;
- Offer conference bags as an option;
- Produce congress items without dates, for re-use;
- Consider donating unwanted materials, such as bags and notepads to charities after the event.

## EXHIBITORS' REGULATIONS

- Establish strict green guidelines for stand construction;
- Request your exhibitors to not use disposable exhibition stands but rather to reusable ones;
- Persuade exhibitors to use recycled material for the construction of their booths;
- Encourage your exhibitors to favour local suppliers to avoid lengthy transportation of goods;
- Encourage your exhibitors to order containers via our Exhibitors Services Centre by communicating about it prior to the event;
- Levy an explicitly mentioned 'green charge' in the exhibitors' contract agreement, covering the recycling costs;
- Encourage exhibitors not to use packaged giveaways;
- Reward exhibitors with a "green exhibitor award".





# Sustainable catering

**Our dedicated team of professionals is committed to offering sustainable catering solutions that reflect our dedication to environmental responsibility, the diversity of dietary needs and that promotes healthy, sustainable, and responsible cuisine to our guests and employees.**



The GRTA (Genève Région Terre Avenir) Quality Label has been awarded to our restaurants

- Palexpo sources 95% of the products locally, favoring short supply chains and supporting the local economy;
- Most ingredients come from within a 60 km radius;
- 80% of the meat products served in our restaurants come from Swiss farms;
- All the fish proposed comes from responsible fishing, certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC);
- We cater to various dietary, cultural, and lifestyle preferences by offering a range of plant-based and vegan menu options;
- 100% of food waste from our kitchen is converted into biogas, used by the trucks collecting our waste;
- We encourage the use of porcelain tableware whenever possible;
- In 2022, Palexpo ban all single-use plastic tableware in all catering outlets;
- Many biodegradable options are proposed;
- Mobile water refill stations are available to avoid the purchase of bottled water.

# 100%

of food waste from our kitchens  
is converted into biogas



# A few ideas to consider as an organiser

- Use the expertise of our catering specialist to order the right amount of food;
- Prioritise local, seasonal products (ex: Geneva apple, grape, and pear juices over imported juice);
- Include plant-based options, as they have a lower environmental impact than meat;
- Opt for chicken instead of beef to reduce carbon footprint;
- Replace lunch boxes with open buffets to minimize waste;
- Support our efforts by choosing reusable porcelain and glass tableware over disposable options;
- Opt for water refill stations to let attendees refill their bottles;
- Communicate the sustainability-focused aspects of your concept and menu options to your participants.






# Responsible Purchasing

Our commitment to responsible purchasing is evident in our dedication to using sustainable materials and fostering ethical procurement practices. Palexpo is guided by two core principles in its procurement strategy: sourcing sustainably and prioritizing local suppliers.

- Palexpo gives preference to local suppliers, thus reducing the impact on the environment by avoiding lengthy transportation of goods;
- All our suppliers' tenders systematically include sustainability criteria;
- 95% of all purchases are made locally to reduce carbon emissions;
- Our clients are offered the possibility to opt for carpet made from 100% recycled resources and 99% recyclable;
- 80% of the meat products served in our restaurants come from Swiss farms;
- All the fish proposed in our restaurants comes from responsible fishing (MSC Label).







## A few ideas to consider as an organiser

- Incorporate sustainability into your procurement process, ensuring vendors align with your environmental objectives;
- Prioritize local suppliers in Geneva to minimize transportation emissions and support the local economy;
- Choose seasonal and regional products, which have a lower environmental impact;
- Partner with suppliers that use minimal, recyclable, or reusable packaging;
- Favor reusable items over single-use products wherever possible;
- Engage stakeholders in sustainability efforts, encouraging them to adopt eco-friendly practices.



# Sustainable accommodation

Palexpo offers a variety of on-site and nearby accommodation options that minimise commuting and environmental impact. The venue has 723 rooms directly on-site or in the immediate vicinity, providing a range of options to suit various preferences and budgets

496  
★★★★

four-star rooms at the Hilton Hotel, connected to Palexpo by a covered walkway

115  
★★★

three-star rooms under the IBIS Style brand

112  
★

one-star rooms under the IBIS Budget brand

The above mentioned hotels are committed to sustainable practices, including energy-efficient operations, waste reduction initiatives, and the use of eco-friendly materials



## Minimal commuting

thanks to a wide selection of accommodation options on site



# Geneva, committed to sustainability

- Thanks to Palexpo's strategic location, numerous additional hotels are accessible within 5 to 30 minutes by public transport, making it easy to commute sustainably;
- Many hotels incorporate sustainability in their corporate strategy and governance  
[www.geneve.com](http://www.geneve.com)

## A few ideas to consider as an organiser

- Encourage your participants to choose either a hotel located within walking distance of Palexpo or accessible by public transport
- Recommend hotels committed to sustainability or with sustainability labels
- Select local hotels instead of large chains to support the local economy



**Many more hotels  
within 5-30 minutes reach  
by public transport**

thanks to the venue's  
strategic location



# Geneva, committed to sustainability

- Geneva was the first canton in Switzerland to locally implement Agenda 21
- Geneva Tourism has been a member of the Global Destination Sustainability Movement (GDS-M) since 2016
- In 2023, Geneva, is the second Swiss city in the GDS-Index ranking, after Zurich, with a score of 73.3% , up 5.1% on 2022.
- The city hosts numerous international organizations dedicated to environmental & sustainable development
- Geneva is a leading hub for research, development, and strategic planning in ecology and environmental protection
- Known as the City of Parks, Geneva is among the greenest cities in Europe, with over 20% of its territory dedicated to green spaces
- 80% of Geneva's drinking water is sourced from Lake Geneva, with the remaining 20% coming from groundwater reserves
- Switzerland has the highest density of dams globally, with 220 in total
- The 285-meter-high Grande Dixence Dam in Valais, the world's tallest gravity dam, powers 500,000 households annually
- The GeniLac project is a 100% renewable solution that uses lake water to heat and cool buildings across Geneva
- By 2030, TPG (Transports Publics Genevois) aims to operate a fully carbon-neutral fleet, with a significant portion of vehicles running on renewable energy sources



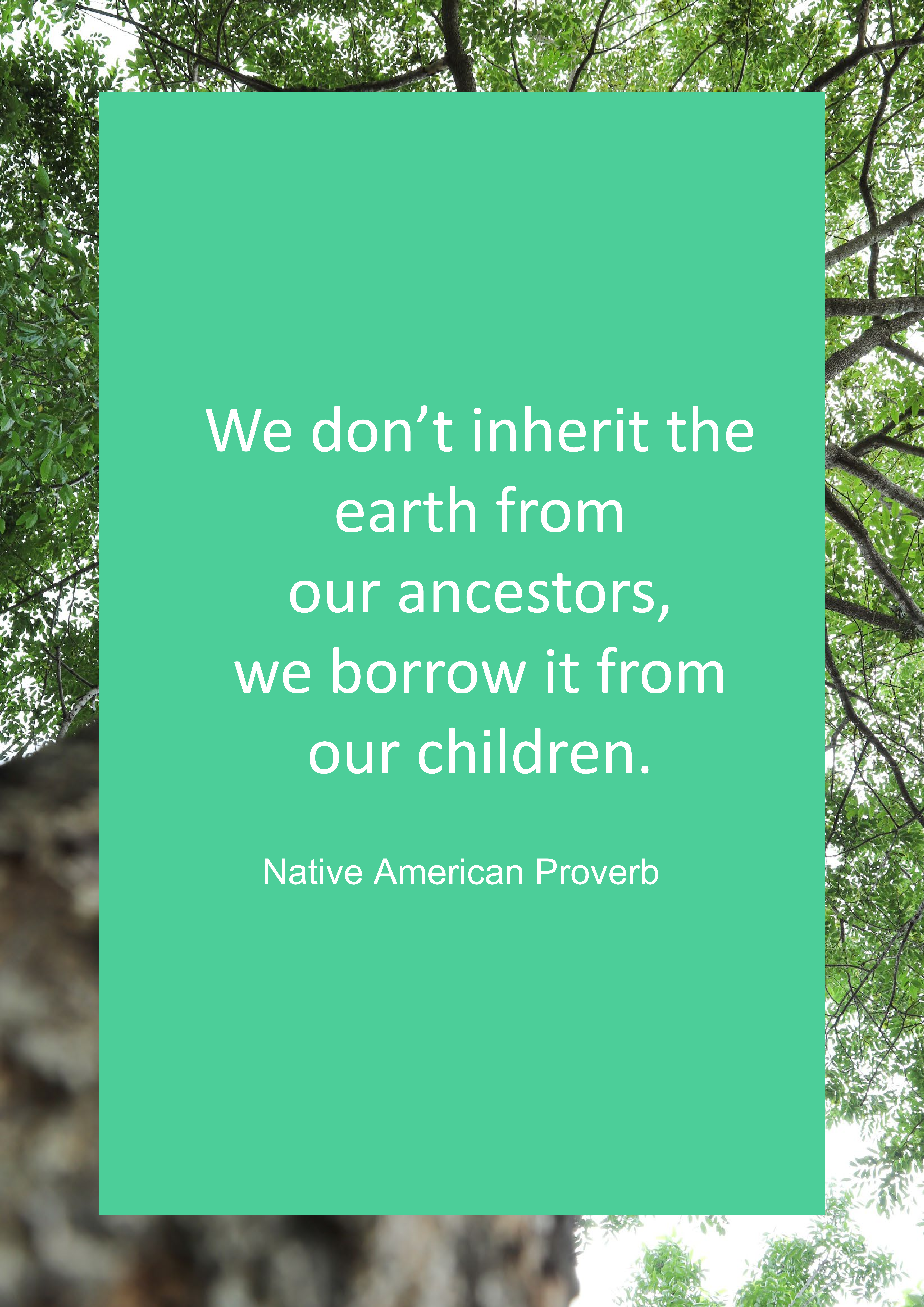




# The benefits of holding a green event

- Reduce the carbon footprint of your event;
- Reduce your event's costs by reducing waste and transport, by optimising resources, and conserving energy;
- Educate and raise awareness on sustainability among your shareholders;
- Meet and exceed today's standard practice expectations in the event industry;
- Boast innovation at your event by offering new technological and digital solutions;
- Stimulate broader organisational change by achieving greater environmental, social, and economic benefits;
- Enhance your image and create a positive brand awareness.





We don't inherit the  
earth from  
our ancestors,  
we borrow it from  
our children.

Native American Proverb



Together, we can work  
towards creating events, that  
not only meet, but exceed  
sustainability standards,  
leaving a positive legacy for  
future generations.

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