



FACTSHEET

MFA AND
WWF FINLAND
TOWARDS
ENVIRONMENTALLY
SUSTAINABLE
MEETINGS



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

Ecological footprint and environmental responsibility

Everyone can influence the state of the environment by reducing their ecological footprint and by making responsible decisions. Decisions made at an organisational level have significant impact.



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Climate change threatens people and nature

Global warming is caused by human activities. The past three decades have been warmer than any previous decades from which data is available. The year 2016 was the warmest in the recorded history – once again. Climate change is faster in the Arctic than in any other regions on the globe. Arctic sea ice has declined at a rate of 13.4 per cent in a decade. The sea ice is one of the principal indicators of global warming. Scientists assume that summer sea ice will disappear altogether in the next few decades or even in the next few years.

If nothing is done, the global average temperature may rise as much as five degrees by 2100².

Small acts matter

Ecological footprint refers to the biologically productive area that mankind requires to produce all the resources it consumes and to absorb the waste it generates. Our current global consumption of natural resources means that we would need the natural resources of 1.6 planets to cover our needs. Everyone can influence the size of their ecological footprint. Besides individuals, companies and organisations play a central role in changing production patterns and in setting an example.

The carbon footprint makes up 60 per cent of the world's ecological footprint³. The most important means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are energy saving and energy efficiency, greater use of renewable energy, stopping deforestation, maintaining and creating carbon sinks as well as making sustainable food choices. Using public transport helps to markedly reduce the CO₂ emissions associated with passenger traffic.

Approximately 20% of human-induced global warming⁴ is caused by food, the majority of this arising from primary production phase. From the point of view of global warming, the consumption of foods that are of animal origin is critical. Meat and dairy production have the largest emissions among food production industry. You can respond to climate change by choosing vegetables and sustainable fish more often instead of meat.

1,6

WE CONSUME
NATURAL RESOURCES
ONE AND A HALF
TIMES MORE THAN
EARTH'S BIOCAPACITY
ALLOWS

How does the Foreign Ministry handle its environmental responsibility?

In accordance with its environmental strategy and programme, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs takes environmental perspectives and sustainable development into account in all its activities. One of the matters handled in the strategy is events organised outside the Ministry. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs in cooperation with WWF Finland have developed guidelines on how to arrange environmentally sustainable meetings. These are followed in all Arctic Council meetings organised by the Foreign Ministry in Finland in 2017–2019.



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THE GUIDELINES OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE MEETINGS ARE FOLLOWED IN ALL ARCTIC COUNCIL MEETINGS IN FINLAND IN 2017–2019

The Arctic Council is a high-level forum which promotes cooperation among the Arctic States and Indigenous Peoples, works to protect the Arctic environment and supports sustainable development in the region. In order to meet all aspects of the objectives, it is important that environmental perspectives are taken into account when meetings of the Council are organised. The Ministry negotiates with all service providers about environmentally sustainable solutions in regards to practical arrangements. This way the Ministry emphasises the responsibility of the buyer to request sustainable options and services.

Environmentally friendly choices can be seen especially in catering, purchases and planning of informal events and programmes.

Catering

We are committed to:

- Making purchases observing the principles of local and organic foods
- Using certified products whenever possible
- Avoiding individually wrapped products and catering disposables

Purchases

We are committed to:

- Purchasing products manufactured from environmentally friendly materials
- Limiting the amount of printed materials in our meetings
- Limiting the amount of printed papers and favouring electronic materials

Transport and informal events

We are committed to:

- Planning informal events and programmes with minimum transportation
- Offering nature friendly experiences
- Introducing sustainable development solutions from Finland

Small actions lead to great results!

READ MORE

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