SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The FORTHEM Sustainability Recommendations offer practical guidelines for taking into consideration sustainability when organising activities such as meetings, projects, conferences, and summer schools. As the impact of both onsite and online events can be detrimental, the FORTHEM Alliance is committed to minimising the environmental footprint of its common activities.

In order to fulfil the recommendations, we ask to consider the following areas of impact. Choosing multiple of the recommendations, especially the ones marked with a leaf, would provide the best outcome.

TRAVEL

- Choose to meet online when sufficient.
- Choose lowest impact travel.
- Purchase carbon offsets for travel when possible.

TRANSPORT

- Choose lowest impact local transportation.
- Choose venue that is accessible by public transport/cycling/walking.
- Advise participants about how to use public transport and bicycle/e-scooter/electric vehicle/community car hire schemes.
- Provide public transport/bicycle/e-scooter passes.

ACCOMMODATION

- Choose accommodation close to the premises.
- Choose environmentally responsible accommodation.

MEETINGS & TEACHING

- Choose to meet online; if necessary, hold only first meetings between parties in person.
- Use environmentally responsible search engines.
- Distribute sustainability guidelines online.
- Devote a part of the agenda to discussions about sustainability.
- Enable sharing of good sustainability practices.

ENERGY & RESOURCES

EQUIPMENT

- Use existing/rent tech and equipment.
- Minimize new purchases and purchase new tech and equipment responsibly.
- Use energy saving modes and turn off devices when not in use.

PREMISES

- Choose premises with natural light and energy efficiency measures.

MATERIALS

DIGITISATION
- Disseminate informational materials online.
- Use whiteboards/digital screens for important information.
- Use emails instead of letters.
- Use electronic forms with electronic signatures.
- Provide an online registration process.
- Offer digital poster sessions.

PRINTS
- Use recycled/FSC certified paper.
- Print double-sided and reduce the print size.
- Order prints from environmentally responsible print shops.
- Purchase carbon credits to offset purchase of materials when possible.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
- Contemplate whether promotional materials are necessary.
- Ask participants if they would like promotional materials to not create surplus.
- Provide reusable promotional materials made from sustainable/ethical materials.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Minimize the possibilities of waste occurring.
- Provide instructions about the importance/possibilities of recycling waste.
- Provide labelled bins for different types of waste.

CATERING

FOOD
- Provide food with low environmental impact.
- Offer vegan/vegetarian options by default.
- Choose sustainable and ethical animal products.
- Prefer local, seasonal and certified organic produce.

PACKAGING AND TABLEWARE
- Avoid offering packaged food items.
- Avoid single-use tableware/utensils.
- Serve food on/with reusable/environmentally friendly tableware/utensils.
- Provide water, coffee and tea from pitchers/dispensers with reusable/environmentally friendly glasses/cups.
- Ask participants to bring reusable cups and bottles.

FOOD WASTE
- Avoid over-ordering food.
- Provide food in small and combinable portions.
- Ask participants to bring reusable containers and take home leftovers.
- Provide leftovers to food-rescue services/via food-sharing apps.

OUTREACH

- Promote activities online and on digital screens.
- Disseminate the results of the project online.
- Enable cooperation with environmental organizations (e.g., NGOs and student initiatives).
- Participate in and distribute announcements of environmental campaigns.

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