

Hosting a Sustainable Event: Lessons from SSEE-07

Alice Turnbull
Coffey Natural Systems

Alice Micenko
Sinclair Knight Merz

Karen Lane
ENV Australia

Emma Samson
RPS Ecos

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ABSTRACT

The Society for Sustainability and Environmental engineering (SSEE) held their International Conference on Engineering Sustainability (SSEE-07) in Perth, Western Australia, between 31st October and 2nd November 2007. The conference organising committee committed to applying the principles of sustainability to the conference, in order to use the conference as a demonstration of a sustainable event, as well as a forum for passing on information and ideas.

The conference organising committee used a subcommittee structure, with five members volunteering to drive sustainability initiatives as part of the sustainability subcommittee. The sustainability subcommittee developed a set of guidelines for the conference as a first step in helping to define their goals and objectives. The sustainability subcommittee were able to achieve a number of initiatives in the areas of carbon emissions reduction, carbon offsetting, waste reduction, sustainable purchasing, community education and social inclusion. The committee were able to achieve a 54% implementation rate on the list of sustainability initiatives proposed in the conference sustainability guideline.

There were a number of initiatives that were not able to be implemented including encouraging sponsors to advertise in more sustainable ways, implementing scholarships for students and young professionals, providing low cost access to the conference via the internet and charity sponsorship from conference profits. Failure to implement these initiatives can be attributed to a number of factors including time constraints on committee members, a strong desire to 'keep the budget in the black' and failure of the organizing committee, on occasion, to follow their own guidelines.

Key lessons from SSEE-07 include the importance of considering sustainability issues from the beginning, ensuring the whole organizing committee lends its support, developing a tailored sustainability plan, budgeting for sustainability initiatives from the outset and the importance of persistence.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Society for Sustainability and Environmental engineering (SSEE) held their International Conference on Engineering Sustainability (SSEE-07) in Perth, Western Australia, between

31st October and 2nd November 2007. The aim of the event, hosted by the WA Chapter of SSEE, was to share knowledge and ideas on sustainability and showcase the role of engineering and science in delivering sustainable outcomes.

SSEE-07 attracted 276 delegates, of which 142 were from Western Australia, 75 were from other states and territories of Australia and 59 were from overseas. Overseas delegates came from a range of countries, including Bangladesh, China, Czech Republic, Gambia, Ghana, Germany, India, Iraq, Kuwait, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Tanzania, Thailand, UK, Ukraine, UAE, USA and Zambia.

Conference papers covered a range of topics and were divided into several streams, namely energy, social sustainability, sustainability theory, transport, clean stream (covering issues such as industry emissions and cleaner production), water, waste, built sustainability, and sustainability tools.

There was also a well attended non-technical program to compliment the themes of the program, including full-day bus tours to WA's new desalination plant, Kwinana industry, the Sustainable Mandurah Home and the Bridgewater Lifestyle Village on 31st October; which attracted 51 delegates. There were various social events – a welcome reception (247 registrants), a gala dinner (157 registrants) and a travelling dinner to conclude (24 delegates).

In the early stages of the project, the conference organising committee made a commitment to running the event in a sustainable manner and considered sustainability in the decision-making process for all aspects of the conference. Economic profit was taken as only one indicator of the event's success, with minimisation of environmental impact and creation of social benefits also seen as important. This paper documents some of the outcomes of the conference planning process, a range of successfully implemented initiatives and presents a list of recommendations for planning future events.

2 STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

The SSEE-07 organising committee (a total of 16 people) consisted of SSEE members and people invited to join the committee. All members of the organising committee had full-time employment as environmental or sustainability professionals, working in a range of sectors, including private enterprise, consulting, government utilities and universities.

The organising committee initially met monthly and then fortnightly, commencing in May 2006, for almost 18 months. While not all members of the organising committee could attend all meetings, there was a consistent quorum of approximately six to eight people at each meeting.

In order to increase the efficiency of the organising process, the committee was divided into several subcommittees, with each member of the organising committee also serving on one or two subcommittees. These subcommittees included:

- *Technical*: Responsible for the technical aspects of the conference, including co-ordination of the abstract and paper review process and development of the conference program.
- *Non-technical*: Responsible for organisation and promotion of the conference social and networking events. These events included the conference Welcome Reception at the Perth Mint, the conference dinner at Government House, and a progressive dinner held in Fremantle. This subcommittee was also responsible for co-ordination of the industry tours.
- *Sustainability*: Responsible for ensuring that the conference was carried out in the most sustainable way possible.

- *Advertising, Sponsorship and Media*: Responsible for meeting target numbers for delegates to the conference and securing sufficient sponsorship to ensure the conference succeeded financially. This sub-committee also explored avenues for media advertising that provided both the conference and sponsors with widespread coverage.
- *Finance*: Responsible for the financial accountability of the conference.
- *Keynote Speaker Co-ordination*: Responsible for securing the keynote speakers for the conference and ensuring that their visit to Perth was enjoyable and worthwhile.

Each subcommittee met separately and reported key decisions and findings back to the organising committee, seeking agreement from the main committee for any financial commitments.

In October/November 2006, 12 months before the conference, the sustainability subcommittee developed a set of Sustainability Guidelines that were presented to the organising committee. These guidelines contained recommendations and goals for ensuring that the event was environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. The guidelines were used by the organising committee to assist with conference planning decisions. Implementation of the guidelines was aided by the common desire of all committee members to host a sustainable event. Although not all of the recommendations contained in the guidelines were implemented (reasons for this are discussed in the section entitled "Frustrations" below), the committee believes that the planning process used did increase the sustainability of the event. Some of the key achievements of the conference are highlighted below with a full list of aspirational goals and their outcomes presented in Table 4.

3 INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1 Carbon Emissions Reduction

3.1.1 Main Sources of Carbon Emissions

The committee investigated the carbon emissions associated with the conference in March/April 2007, seven months before the conference. The primary sources of emissions were:

1. Travel during the conference;
2. Travel to and from the conference;
3. Emissions associated with the production and transport of the food consumed during the conference; and
4. Power use at the hotel and other venues.

The strategy from the outset was to avoid and minimise emissions as much as possible in the areas of transport, food and energy use, as discussed below. The latter two were primarily controlled by the venue.

3.1.2 Minimising Transport Emissions

The committee made a deliberate decision at the very beginning of the planning process to select venues within comfortable walking distance of the conference centre to minimise transport during the conference (Emission Source 1). The conference was centred at the Sheraton Hotel, in the eastern end of Perth's CBD. Several other hotels, ranging in price, were located within walking distance or were easily accessible by free public buses. Social events were either held at the Sheraton Hotel (e.g. the Public Debate) or at venues within walking distance. The Perth Mint was selected as a venue for the welcome reception because it is an iconic, historic venue only a few blocks from the Sheraton Hotel. The dinner dance was held at the Government House Ballroom, another historical building a few blocks in the opposite direction. Both these venues provided strong historical and social elements

that added some local context to the conference in Perth, giving it a sense of place. The walkable locations were appreciated by delegates, who did not have to organise transport, and their selection created a convenient and practical outcome to minimise carbon emissions by transport during the conference.

The only events associated with the conference that were outside the walkable area were the industry tours and the final progressive dinner around Fremantle, again intended to provide context and a sense of place, as well as a pleasurable social finale. Bus transport was used exclusively for these events. This not only minimised carbon emissions but also increased social interaction.

Initially, the sustainability sub-committee looked into ferrying delegates between venues using either hydrogen buses, which public transport provider Transperth had recently completed a trial of, or hybrid cars. However, neither of these options was readily available, and they were considered unnecessary given the close proximity of the different conference venues.

The committee had no control over delegates' travel to and from the conference (Emission Source 2). This travel was considered an unavoidable emission and is discussed below.

3.1.3 Minimising Venue Emissions

The majority of the food consumption (Emission Source 3) and power use (Emission Source 4) occurred at the main venue and the focus of effort there was on the Sheraton Hotel's practices. The Sheraton Hotel has a sustainability policy and this was a point of attraction to the Sheraton Hotel as a host venue. The Sheraton's sustainability policy includes commitments to sourcing food locally, where possible, and to minimising waste. The Sheraton Hotel also minimised power consumption through the use of energy saving lightbulbs, and by ensuring that all lights on the conference floor, accommodation rooms and offices were turned off when not in use. This practice was incentivised by significant financial savings for the hotel. The sustainability subcommittee also held a number of discussions with the hotel to determine paths where sustainability could be increased further.

Catering at outside (i.e. non-hotel) venues was selected using the Sustainability Guidelines. The catering at the Perth Mint was provided by Comestibles, featuring a menu of fresh local produce, including emu sausage rolls and kangaroo fillets. An Oyster Shucker was also used at The Perth Mint event for the same reason.

Where possible, the sustainability subcommittee chose not to use the venue or caterers' preferred wine suppliers, as none of these suppliers produced organic wine. Instead the sustainability subcommittee negotiated a separate arrangement with Random Valley Wines, a WA winery that produce organic, low preservative wines. This wine was used at the Welcome Reception, the public debate and as the incentive prize for the first 200 registered delegates.

3.2 Carbon Offsetting

For those emissions that could not be avoided, a plan was developed to offset the residual use. Unavoidable emissions and their calculated tonnes of carbon equivalents are summarised in Table 1. Two competing carbon offsetting providers gave very different emission estimates for the venue by a factor of more than three, although the air fare emission estimates were more consistent.

Table 1 Calculations of Estimated Carbon-equivalent Emissions per Person

Element	Estimated carbon equivalent from online calculator and quotation from Carbon Neutral (tonne)	Cost at \$15.50/tonne (Carbon Neutral rate)	Quoted carbon-equivalent emission from Climate Friendly (tonne)	Cost at \$20.00/tonne (Climate Friendly Rate)	Offsetting contribution requested of registrants
Food, Power and paper at venue	0.18	\$2.80	0.05	\$1	\$5
Accommodation for interstate and overseas delegates (47%)	0.60	\$9.30			Combined with item above
Travel					
Perth Metropolitan, based on 50km / day for 3 days in a V6 car	0.05	\$1			\$3 (included some subsistence allowance for 3 days)
Eastern States, based on Sydney, 7,000 km	2.4	\$37	1.9	\$38	\$50
Asia, based on Bombay, 14,500 km	4.9	\$76	4.7	\$94	\$90
"Rest of World": Africa / Europe / US, based on Western Europe, 28,000 km	9.5	\$147	8.6	\$172	\$150

The mitigation measure chosen to address residual carbon emissions was carbon offsetting. The organising committee's approach to carbon offsetting was outlined in a paper prepared by the sustainability subcommittee in March/April 2007 and published on the conference website. This paper had a strong emphasis on avoiding and reducing emissions, wherever possible, and using carbon offsetting only as a last resort. Carbon offsetting was compared to the "Indulgences" of the Middle Ages whereby wealthy people could offset their sins. However, it was also acknowledged that carbon offsetting could significantly shift practices towards more efficient industrial use of energy, carbon sequestration and renewable power generation. It was therefore considered to be a very important economic transition tool and endorsed when used in this manner.

Awareness of the individual decisions that we make is a strong element in moving towards sustainability. For this reason, it was decided not to incorporate each person's carbon offsetting into the registration fee. Rather, a voluntary program was developed where registrants could choose whether to offset their emissions and select an offset appropriate to their travel.

The sustainability subcommittee researched a number of alternative methods for carbon offsetting. An additional awareness / educational element was incorporated into the carbon offsetting of the conference by splitting the contribution collected equally between three distinctly different types of offsetting products, rather than use the least cost option. The three offsetting schemes were:

- **Tree planting** The most common forms of offsetting schemes are focussed around tree planting for carbon sequestration and is the least cost option. This has an additional environmental benefit in reducing salinisation, but it does not have the same transitional benefits associated with the other schemes.
- **Investment in Renewable Energy** An alternative method is to support renewable energy plants that are genuine long-term solutions, investing in 'new' clean energy projects (defined as those built after 1997).
- **Funding Larger Projects** Another alternative is to provide funds for schemes such as the Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme (GGAS), which is a scheme to reduce emissions in NSW, particularly from large power plants, and achieve world class benchmarking for efficiency. The GGAS scheme includes a rigorous audit by a panel.

As travel was by far the biggest factor for interstate and overseas delegates, five options were offered for carbon offsetting, based on an average distance for various modes of travel to and from the conference. Emission estimates were extracted from the online calculators supplied by *Carbon Neutral* (see Table 1), and from direct quotes supplied by *Carbon Neutral* and *Climate Friendly*. All sources gave emission estimates in the same range. Table 2 shows the take-up of the options.

Table 2 Delegates' Take-up of the Carbon Offsetting Program

Option	WA delegates	Australian delegates	International delegates	Total delegates
No carbon offsetting	52	34	42	128 (46%)
Event only	63	13	11	87 (32%)
WA travel + event	27			27 (10%)
Eastern states travel + event		28		28 (10%)
Asia travel + event			2	2 (1%)
Africa / Europe / US travel + event			4	4 (1%)
Total	142	75	59	276

The committee considered that a 54% take-up by the registrants was an endorsement of the scheme.

3.3 Waste Reduction

3.3.1 Printing

One major sources of waste produced by a conference is through paper and printing. SSEE-07 minimised printing through a number of initiatives including:

- Implementing paperless registration;
- Limiting print runs of advertising material;
- Using a paperless reviewing process for conference abstracts and papers; and
- Providing conference proceedings electronically.

3.3.2 Venue Waste

The Sheraton hotel has a range of practices in place to minimize waste. All cardboard boxes are recycled, items such as pallets and printer toners are reused, and glassware and crockery are used rather than disposable items wherever possible. The hotel's purchasing

officer ensures that all items are ordered in only the required quantity, and for the duration of the conference food was supplied in accordance with the final advised delegate numbers. Leftover reusable food was supplied to the staff canteen.

The conference organizing committee also requested that the hotel provide water in glass jugs with reusable glasses for the conference, rather than in individual bottles or plastic cups, and the hotel was happy to agree to this request. The willingness and enthusiasm of the venue's staff to assist in creating a sustainable event was a key factor in both the selection of the venue and the success of the conference.

3.4 Conference Satchels

A conference bag was provided to each delegate to hold the conference program and proceedings, sponsor information and other sundry items. A number of options were compared by using a number of criteria used to choose between options. Three short-listed options are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3 Comparison of Short-listed Conference Bag Options

Bag Type	Reusable	Australian Made	Natural Fibre	Social Benefits	Cost
Freeset Satchel	Yes	No (India)	Yes	Yes (made by ex- street workers)	High
Envirosax fold-up bag	Yes	No (China)	No	No	Medium
Calico Bag	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (provides employment to disabled people)	Low

The only bag that met all criteria was the calico bag produced by a local Western Australian disability services group. This supplier was not easy to find and the contact was provided by the conference secretariat, Keynote Conferences. Finding a bag that met all criteria took significant effort and searching by the sustainability subcommittee and is certainly an example where persistence paid off.

3.5 Public Debate

It was recognised during early planning that a conference, such as this one, predominantly attracts people who are already very conversant with sustainability issues. One of the biggest barriers to implementation of initiatives raised at the conference is the broad understanding within the community. It was therefore felt that a public debate would take the issues raised to a broader audience and go some way towards generating greater practical outcomes from the conference.

The debate was held immediately following the formal close of the conference and attended by about 100 members of the public and also about 100 registered delegates. Formal RSVPs to advertising through the Engineers Australia and conference websites were 185. SSEE provided drinks and finger food to all attendees to welcome the public and facilitate some informal interaction between the public and conference delegates. This enabled the debate to be offered at no cost to the public, thereby making it very accessible. A gold coin donation was requested for the charity '*Engineers Without Borders*' and attendees donated generously.

3.6 AusAid

The main organising committee recognised that accessibility of experts and leaders in developing countries to international conferences on sustainability was a very important

ingredient to achieving global sustainability. The main committee, principally via the conference chair, was able to arrange AusAid funding after a couple of months of intensive negotiation and formal written submission to AusAid.

The funding was not financially capped; instead it was a per-capita funding and available to any registrants who qualified with the AusAid criteria. Delegates were selected by the organizing committee prior to registration. Only those who submitted papers, but mentioned that they would need assistance to attend the conference were selected.

The AusAid funding was available only to particular countries specified by AusAid. A total of eight delegates accepted the AusAid funding and attended the conference. They represented academic institutions, government departments, private enterprise and non-governmental organisations. The delegates came from countries including Bangladesh, India, Iraq, Pakistan, Thailand and Zambia. Only one country, India, had multiple AusAid delegates (funding was supplied for three delegates).

The funding covered the accommodation, air fares and a daily living allowance. Apart from the funding, the AusAid delegates were treated as ordinary delegates and their status was not openly identified to other delegates.

3.7 Implementation Success Rate

The sustainability guidelines set a number of aspirational goals and initiatives to address each of the areas discussed above. These are summarised in Table 4 below, with some important initiatives that were not achieved labelled “A” to “D” and discussed further below.

Table 4 Aspirational Sustainability Initiatives

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES	SUCCESS?
Environment – Carbon Emissions	
Minimise by selecting venues within 15-20 minute walk	Yes
Offer a shuttle bus service	Not required
Supply delegates with information on Perth public transport	No
Establish a voluntary carbon offsetting program	Yes
Tailor the carbon offsetting for different travel distances	Yes
Provide education information about different carbon offsetting products	Yes
Environment – Waste Minimisation	
Promote innovative sponsor promotion, without paper.	No (A)
Use water jugs and glasses rather than disposable plastic bottles.	Yes
Allow conference programs and proceedings to be ‘custom built’ by providing delegates with a folder and ask them to take the program and extracts of the sessions they attend.	No
Or , provide program, extracts and papers on CD only	No
Or , compromise and provide hard copy, double-sided program and extracts only on paper and full presentations on CD.	Yes
Allow delegates to download handouts rather than taking hard copies	No
Provide a USB flash drive (or encourage a sponsor to provide one) to each delegate and provide all handouts in electronic format.	No
Ensure all handouts are printed double-sided on recycled paper.	Yes
Provide clearly labelled recycling bins.	No
Arrange with the conference venue for the proper disposal of this waste to an appropriate recycling facility.	Yes
Environment – Water	
Have water efficient fittings in bathrooms at the main venue.	Yes
Providing water saving tips in a conference sustainability handout.	No
Environment – Energy	
Turn computers off when not in use.	Yes
Use fluorescent lights.	No

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES	SUCCESS?
Install timer switches on lights.	No

Table 4 Aspirational Sustainability Initiatives (cont'd)

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES	SUCCESS?
Social Opportunities – Accessibility	
Host an open lecture or debate for the general public on a topic relating to the conference.	Yes
Offer discounted registration for students	Yes
Offer a full student scholarship to allow the nation's (or the state's) brightest minds to learn about sustainable engineering and take this into their careers.	No (B)
Offer a half scholarship for a young professional with less than five years experience.	No (B)
Offer a cheap, internet access registration, for people who genuinely can't make it to the conference, to enable them to receive conference papers and proceedings.	No (C)
Provide the opportunity to pay for the conference registration in instalments.	Not required
Offer sponsorship for overseas delegates who cannot afford to come.	Yes
Social Opportunities – Social Justice	
Require a commitment from all sponsors to ensure that handouts and gifts are not manufactured using sweatshop labour or manufactured in a way which pollutes the environment.	Yes
Make an active contribution to social justice by donating a portion of any profits to charity.	No (D)
Raise money for a suitable charity at the conference.	Yes
Economic Opportunities	
The organising committee should define the acceptable (e.g. break-even with a pre-set subsidy) and desirable (e.g., make a 10% profit on the conference) economic outcomes of the conference up front.	Yes
Economic sustainability for delegates can be assured by providing an exciting, informative and innovative conference that offers excellent value for money.	Yes
Have the conference bags made locally.	Yes
Decision Making	
Actively consider the triple bottom line outcomes of any decisions made by the organising committee and seek to find solutions that are socially, environmentally and economically acceptable.	Yes

The SSEE-07 organising committee was able to implement about half of these initiatives. They worked on the full list for the whole period and only achieved many of them in the last eight weeks. While this list could be used as a template or starting point for other sustainable event, each event encompasses a unique set of circumstances and sustainability initiatives and goals should be developed to suit.

4 FRUSTRATIONS

Ensuring the sustainability of the 2007 SSEE International Conference was not without its challenges and frustrations. Principally these frustrations stemmed from a lack of time, both on the part of the organising committee as a whole and from time pressures on individuals. Difficulties and frustrations also arose from trying to take action after the conference budget had been set, adding an increased element of financial risk to decisions. These time and financial pressures meant that some environmental or social initiatives were scaled back or were not implemented.

Key areas that were not implemented were:

- A. Encouraging sponsors to advertise in more sustainable ways;
- B. Implementing scholarships for students and young professionals;
- C. Providing low cost access to the conference via the internet; and
- D. Charity sponsorship from conference profits.

Each of these is discussed further below.

Frustration A

One of the aspirational initiatives was to encourage sponsors to ensure that their advertising material and handouts were as sustainable as the message they were seeking to get across. The sustainability subcommittee wanted to avoid the single-sided, high gloss brochure and

the gimmicky, throw-away gifts. The subcommittee developed an information sheet for sponsors and trade exhibitors introducing this initiative and had planned to acknowledge the company with the most innovative and sustainable advertising at the conference dinner as an incentive. However this initiative was not fully implemented for a number of reasons:

- The main organising committee was not fully conversant with the initiative and thus were unable to lend it their support (particularly the sponsorship subcommittee);
- This initiative was developed after the first sponsors were on board and after the sponsorship sub-committee started talking to potential sponsors and trade exhibitors; and
- Many companies advertising at the conference had standard advertising material and give-aways that were produced in bulk and not specifically for the conference, reducing the opportunity for change within the company.

Frustration B

The second aspirational initiative was providing full or half scholarships to students and young professionals who would otherwise have been unable to attend the conference. There are a number of reasons why this initiative was unable to be implemented:

- The sustainability subcommittee were unable to engage the organising committee, particularly the university representatives, in this initiative and were thus unable to gain the support and contacts required to implement the scholarships;
- There would be a significant additional time commitment required from the organising committee to develop, advertise and award the scholarships; and
- The funding for scholarships was not included in the original budget and the financial risk to the conference was considered to be too great.

Frustration C

The initiative to offer the papers on the website to those who did not attend, thereby disseminating information much more widely, was deliberately not implemented. The primary reason was concern that it could reduce patronage of the conference with the risk of an unprofitable conference. There was not sufficient time to determine how to increase access without any negative financial impact.

Frustration D

Charity Sponsorship was not formally endorsed by the main committee because of their concern and focus on the financial viability for the conference. At the time of writing the financial outcomes of the conference were being finalised and it is hoped that the 2008 SSEE committee will commit to donating a portion of the profits from the conference to a relevant charity.

Attitudinal Challenges and Frustrations

There were a number of attitudinal barriers that resulted in the committee being unable to achieve all of the (admittedly high) goals that had been set, including:

- The strong desire to 'keep the budget in the black' and keep discretionary financial commitments outside the budget; and
- The organising committee did not always follow its own guidelines prior to the conference. This can be attributed to an unwillingness to ask others to change their habits and practices and thereby 'rock the boat', with the possible consequence that voluntary members may reduce or withdraw their efforts.

However, sometimes the strong financially-focused attitudes facilitated initiatives, such as:

- There were financial savings associated with reducing printing; and
- There was a cost benefit associated with adopting a simple, locally made conference bag.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The key conclusion was that for a more sustainable conference, the organising committee needs a strong commitment to sustainability, a plan, a good committee structure for implementing the plan and lots and lots of persistence. The achievements for the SSEE 07 conference were significant, but more could have been done, possibly improving practical outcomes compared with the status quo by as much again.

Some key recommendations for achieving the most sustainable conference possible are:

- Start early, at least a year in advance and preferably 18 months in advance;
- Get the whole organising committee on board;
- Develop a very specific and tailored sustainability plan first, drawing on ideas from other conferences as much as possible;
- Plan for sustainability initiatives in the budget from the outset; and
- Persistence, persistence, persistence.

It should be possible to quantify the improvements in the environmental imprint of the conference, such as water use, paper use, power consumption and carbon emissions. This quantification could be used to target efforts to those initiatives that are most effective. Similarly, social benefits could be quantified in terms of numbers of people who benefit and level of impact. This was not done for this conference, instead qualitative judgements were made.

Time is always very limited with a committee of professionals acting in a voluntary role, particularly with the frantic, resource-strapped business environment that currently exists in Western Australia. The efforts that would have been expended in the quantification process were considered to be more effectively expended on implementing initiatives in this case. However, the sustainability committee for SSEE 07 recommends a quantitative assessment as an honours research project for a sustainability student, possibly evolving into an online calculator for a sustainable conference with some best practice target benchmarks.

6 REFERENCES

The committee conducted a literature review, particularly concerning carbon offsetting products and the practices behind them. The websites that presented the most reliable and informative material are listed below.

- www.ecobusinesslinks.com/carbon_offset_wind_credits_carbon_reduction.htm
- www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_offset
- www.carbonneutral.com.au

The sustainability approach was developed by the committee independently of the source materials and is therefore not referenced.