FAQs

What is the Eventia One Future initiative?
The Eventia One Future initiative is designed to position carbon reduction at the heart of event management.

It will enable Eventia members and their clients to establish a carbon responsible programme that recognises the relationship between events, carbon emissions and climate change and that will reduce the emissions impact of the events industry.

In addition Eventia members will be supported with carbon management tools and education for their own businesses to help reduce, and where not possible, mitigate their own carbon footprints.

Why have Eventia selected The Carbon Consultancy?
The Carbon Consultancy has been chosen by the Eventia board as the carbon partner who will provide the best support to its members across all aspects of carbon management support. The company has a number of distinct advantages for Eventia and its members and including its advanced reporting data solutions and its understanding of the events industry. The company will also support the individual activity of Eventia members to deliver a carbon emissions reduction as part of Eventia's wider Corporate Responsibility programme.

What are major companies doing about emissions?
Increasingly client companies are undertaking a range of initiatives and listed below are a number of UK and international companies who have active programmes. This provides a snapshot of how emissions and climate change are at the centre of decision making and purchasing.

HSBC, Barclays, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Dell Computers, DHL, BsyB, Bell Pottinger, Radio Taxis, Bradford & Bingley, Royal & Sun Alliance, Cadbury Schweppes.

Of these companies Barclays are actively looking at their travel spend activity, Dell Computers are planting trees to offset power usage by customers, DHL promise carbon neutral deliveries, Radio Taxis have seen an increase in sales since introducing their carbon offset programme, Tesco will spend £500 million over six years to reduce energy consumption, and Cadbury Schweppes have identified several EU plants that could fall within EU emissions capping programmes.

Is this relevant to UK-based events?
The UK has an annual emissions generation of 556 million tons of carbon dioxide per year, about half the total of India whose population is significantly larger. This figure excludes aviation, except for internal UK flights. The UK creates a disproportionate amount of emissions per capita. Commercial and institutional energy emissions alone, which include the events industry and its suppliers emits 23.4 million tons, whilst passenger vehicles account for 69.9 million tons per year.

Any UK event will involve carbon emissions from planning to execution, through the use of power and materials. This will include hotels, venues, transport and food. Aviation receives a high focus because of its rapidly expanding capacity, but this shifts attention away from ground-based emissions.

Why is this important now?
This has been an important issue for some years, but the recent public awareness and governmental attention, helped by the **Stern Report**, has created a realisation that climate change could be the biggest challenge facing mankind.

Scientists and governments have identified the risks and the need to reduce emissions to prevent severe climate change. We have increased the content of carbon in the atmosphere by over 40% in 150 years with the majority of that increase in the last 30 years only. All our efforts now are designed to stabilise the carbon levels to prevent a 100% increase by 2050. There is a limited amount of time to take action to prevent us reaching this 100% increase level and avoid the population displacement, coastal flooding, reduced agricultural output, disease and death that would be caused by severe climate change.

How is this relevant to the events industry?
This has relevance in several ways.

1. Client CSR requirements
Over 30% of FTSE 100 companies have an active carbon policy, and increasingly emissions reporting and reduction are a corporate requirement. This is increasingly being felt in the corporate supply chain.

The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) received 72% of responses for information from the top 500 publicly traded companies in the world whose GHG emissions are equivalent to 10% of the global total. Some of the key findings reveal how corporations view the issue of emissions and climate change.

- 42% feel that climate change represents commercial risks and opportunities.
- 86% of EU companies responded to the CDP questionnaire.
- 73% of companies reported their emissions data, suggesting existing reporting capability and concern.

2. Regulation
The imperative to reduce emissions is likely to require increased government regulation, especially as the new Climate Change Bill makes emissions targets binding on successive UK governments. UK business currently emits 45% of all UK emissions, making an extension to the 2005 UK emissions legislation a high probability. This will require companies to think about carbon in all areas of their operations, including events.

3. The Environment

The events industry employs large numbers of people all of whom have a stake in the continued stability of our environment. The industry can and must play its part in the overall drive to reduce emissions. Inaction could pose a reputational risk as buyers and end users view activities as polluting, having a knock on effect for the events industry.

What is happening in the wider travel sector?

The travel sector is at varying degrees of engagement with carbon. In the corporate travel market, both airline reservations systems, travel logistics companies and industry bodies are providing greater information through carbon calculation of air, road and rail travel and dedicated carbon initiatives. This has been fuelled by a growth in demand from corporate clients and by the realisation that emission's reporting has matured from fad to trend. The activity undertaken ranges from external reporting, to the offset of their own direct carbon footprint.

What are carbon emissions?

Carbon emissions are created primarily by the combustion of any fossil fuel. Fossil fuels are carbon based and when burnt emit carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is also emitted, amongst other methods, by humans, and through the release of carbon into the atmosphere through the decay of wood and wood based products like paper.

Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas (GHG), which helps to warm the planet. These GHGs, are important to keeping the earth warm enough to support life. Without them temperatures would be about 30 degrees Celsius lower and the earth would not support life as we know it. The reason that carbon emissions have become such an issue is that we are increasing their scale and this is helping to warm the planet more and create climate change. Climate change will in time have a significant affect on destinations and regions promoted by Eventia members, even in the UK.

Will technology solve the problem?

Low carbon technology will help to avert the growing problem of climate change but currently there is no sign that mass carbon capture programmes to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere will avert a crisis and nor is there much encouragement that new technology will allow us to remove our reliance on fossil fuel energy sources. Man will need to use his ingenuity not just in technology but more importantly in energy saving through modified consumption.

What can I do to make a difference to climate change?

The average UK citizen emits up to 10 tons per head per year and UK business is responsible for 45% of all emissions. At home energy efficiency reduces emissions as does more efficient use of travel. In the workplace your company can adopt policies to reduce emissions through the working environment and the delivery of its goods and services. The impact of large numbers of people taking climate change and their emissions seriously will help to avoid a serious crisis.

Nobody seems to agree on climate change so why bother?

Most scientists are agreed on the relationship between emissions and climate change. At the very least these two activities have moved in tandem in recent decades. The principal area of disagreement is on the pace that this will accelerate. Some climatologists predict an increase in several degrees of the average global temperature which will have an enormous affect upon fragile ecosystems and potentially on low lying areas such as the Maldives, where any ocean level rise associated with the melting of polar ice caps could be catastrophic. Others suggest

that the process will be more gradual and that our ability to control emissions will head off a catastrophe. All projections are based upon informed opinion, but are not an exact science. Regardless our current situation is not sustainable and therefore action is required.

Does it matter what we do as China and India will outstrip our efforts?
The UK currently emits nearly half of the CO2 emitted by India with only 60 million people versus over 1 billion in India. The scale of UK emissions means we can make a significant impact. India and China are growing fast, with industrial revolutions that promise more carbon efficiency than our own industrialisation. The UK government is providing assistance to China and India to help with low carbon power generation. Citing China's new power stations as a reason to give up on trying to reduce our emissions also ignores the fact that China's economy grows as our own consumption of their goods and services grows.

Many experts suggest a rise of a couple of degrees, so where is the problem?
Two degrees is the UK will produce a more tolerable climate with better summers, but also drier winters. Extreme weather patterns and increased sea level will accompany temperature rises and this will affect UK residents. The global effect of this temperature increase will be more severe with greater disease, starvation, coastal erosion and population displacement in the developing world.

We are told that global warming is increasing but the weather in the UK doesn't seem to have changed too much?
Global warming is as its name suggests a global phenomenon. The effects on climate from UK emissions do not affect just the UK. However, the UK climate has exhibited signs of change in the last two decades, and this does not just mean increased average temperature as suggested by the phrase "global warming" but also extremes of weather patterns. The lack of severity in climate change in the UK is less marked, but is felt with greater effect in countries closer to the equator.

Why don't we just plant trees to solve climate change?
The planting of trees is one important activity for a lower carbon environment, but is not a solution in itself. Carbon sequestration through reforestation needs to exist in tandem with a lower carbon environment that will be achieved through the employment of products and services that emit less carbon, and each of us consuming less and thus emitting less.