

Nordic Swan Ecolabelling for Events



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CONSULTATION

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Contact information

In 1989, the Nordic Council of Ministers decided to introduce a voluntary official ecolabel, the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. These organisations/companies operate the Nordic Ecolabelling system on behalf of their own country's government. For more information, see the websites:

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1 Environmental communication guideline for Nordic Swan Ecolabelled Events

An event certified with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel meets ambitious environmental requirements and has taken a holistic approach to its environmental work. The event takes an active and structured approach to reducing its consumption and optimizing operations, as well as engaging their suppliers in environmental work.

A Nordic Swan Ecolabelled event:

- Limits energy use and CO₂ emissions.
- Uses reusable cups and disposable items that meet strict environmental requirements.
- Serves food with reduced environmental footprint, such as organic food and drinks and vegetarian meals.
- Reduce consumption and meet strict environmental requirements for decoration, merchandise and giveaways.
- Limits harmful and unwanted chemicals in general cleaning and dishwashing by using ecolabelled cleaning products.
- Involves staff and suppliers in the environmental work.

2 What can carry the Nordic Swan Ecolabel?

Product group definition

In these criteria the term "event" is used for professionally planned events that last over a given period and are linked to a fixed location, such as an event venue or an official and defined event area. A Nordic Swan Ecolabelled event may typically, but is not required to, be repeated periodically/regularly.

In these criteria the term "event" includes both public and private events like:

- Culture events, like concerts, theatrical productions etc.
- Business events, like company meetings, seminar, and workshops
- Conferences
- Congress meetings
- Festivals (the camping area is not included)
- Fairs/exhibitions
- Sports and hobby events
- Political events, such as political weeks, national meetings, and debates

There must be one main professional event organizer of the event that must take full responsibility for the fulfilment of all requirements, regardless of who performs the work.

It is the event itself, "the happening", that is certified with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. The **owner of the licence** is the one who applies for the licence, in most cases it is the event organizer.

This does not mean that all events of the organizer are ecolabelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. Every event is different, so if one organizer wants to ecolabel several events, all the relevant events need to be applied for.

Geographical restrictions

The levels of the Nordic Swan Ecolabel's requirements are based on Nordic conditions. If events in other countries, or events with several host countries outside the Nordic region wish to apply for the Nordic Swan Ecolabel, Nordic Ecolabelling will consider the possibility of developing requirements for the specific region.

2.1 What cannot carry the Nordic Swan Ecolabel?

The following events cannot be Nordic Swan Ecolabelled as they do not fit into the product group definition above, and the requirements are not adapted to these:

- Events that do not have a start and an end date
- Camping sites in connection to events like festivals
- Amusement parks
- Events planned for less than 100 people on site
- Online events, if they are only digital

Nordic Ecolabelling reserves the right to decline applications for events that pose a risk of damaging the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling brand. See details in chapter 5.2 "Disclaimer".

2.2 Justification of the product group definition

A Nordic Swan Ecolabelled event is a professionally planned event, that last over a given period, and is linked to a fixed location. According to the RPS (study of environmental Relevance, Potential and Steerability), there is a good possibility to gain environmental benefits, especially within these areas: energy and climate, food and beverages, disposables, waste management, accommodation and transportation. The criteria can also contribute to an increased demand for ecolabelled products and services.

In these criteria the term "event" includes both public and private events, such as company meetings. To be ecolabelled, there must be one main organizer of the event, that has full ownership of the event and takes full responsibility for the fulfilment of all requirements. The main organizer may suppliers and sub-suppliers for different tasks during the event. The main organizer must be professional, which means that a private person cannot apply for the ecolabel.

The product group definition "events" is broad, including music events, festivals, other events, meetings, seminars and conferences. To be ecolabelled, the events need to have a start and an end date. Small events, planned for less than 100 people on the site cannot be ecolabelled. Online events, that are only digital, cannot be ecolabelled, because the main environmental impact lies outside the scope of these criteria.

There are some limitations set to the product group, for example amusement parks and camping areas connected to outdoor events, are not part of the scope. The reason is that the nature of these differs too much from normal event activities (note, campsites can be ecolabelled by the EU Ecolabel). Nordic Ecolabelling reserves the right to decline applications for events that pose a risk of damaging the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling brand (see more details in chapter 5.2).

3 How to read this criteria document

In these criteria the term "event" is used for professionally planned events that last over a given period and are linked to a fixed location, such as an event venue or an official and defined event area. A Nordic Swan Ecolabelled event may typically, but is not required to, be repeated periodically/regularly.

To be awarded a Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence:

- All requirements must be fulfilled
- Nordic Ecolabelling must inspect the site

Table 1 Overview of requirements relevant to the event organizer, the venues and the suppliers during an event. If a venue or catering service is ecolabelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel (NSE), some requirements are already fulfilled. These requirements are marked with a NSE in the table.

Supplier of	Event organizer	Venue	Catering/food service	Cleaning service	Hygiene stations, portable toilets	Tech provider	Transport service
O1, O2, O3, and O4 General requirement and marketing and communication	x						
O5 Fossil free el. supply	x	x	x			x	
O6 Energy devices	x	x	x			x	
O7 New purchases	x						
O8 Energy/ CO₂ reducing	x	x ^{NSE}					
O9 Transportation, accessibility	x						
O10 Public transport information	x						
O11 Vehicles	x						x
O12 Accommodation	x						
O13 Measures - CO₂ reduction	x						x
O14 Biodiversity	x	x					
O15 Tap water	x						
O16, O17, O18, and O19 Food and beverage	x		x				

O20, O21, O22, and O23 Food and beverage	X		X ^{NSE}				
O24 Waste sorting for guests	X	X					
O25 Waste sorting for staff and suppliers	X						
O26 Ban on disposables	X	X ^{NSE}	X ^{NSE}				
O27 and O28 Serving of drink and food	X	X	X				
O30 Decorations, give away	X	X	X				
O31 food waste	X		X ^{NSE}				
O32 Tissue paper, printed matters	X	X ^{NSE}			X		
O33 Measures - resource efficiency	X	X	X				
O34 Ecolabelled cleaning products	X	X ^{NSE}	X ^{NSE}	X	X		
O35 Prohibited substances	X	X ^{NSE}	X ^{NSE}	X			
O36 Water, toilets and hygiene stations	X	X ^{NSE}	X ^{NSE}		X		
O37 Legal obligations	X						
O38 Volunteer working conditions	X						

All information submitted to Nordic Ecolabelling is treated confidentially. Suppliers can send documentation directly to Nordic Ecolabelling, and this will also be treated confidentially.

The event organizer often has several suppliers and sub-suppliers, and we set requirements to several of these, see the table. It is the event organizer's responsibility to ensure the chosen sub-suppliers meet these requirements.

Note: The event organizer is responsible for the fulfilment of all requirements. A supplier is responsible for fulfilling the requirements according to the table above. If a supplier is using a sub-supplier, the supplier is responsible for the fulfilment of the relevant requirements.

4 Summary

The document outlines the criteria for certifying Events with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel, emphasizing environmental sustainability.

The document includes requirements for reducing environmental impact through various measures.

- Events must be professionally planned, have a fixed location, and meet specific environmental requirements. Events that can be ecolabelled include e.g. cultural events, business events, conferences, festivals, and political events. Exclusions apply to e. g. online-only events, gambling and small gatherings.

- Environmental communication to staff and suppliers is important, as the event must engage suppliers and staff in environmental efforts to actively reduce consumption and optimize operations.
- Catering suppliers must fulfil strict requirements for sustainable food practices including avoiding endangered species, using local ingredients, and offering vegetarian and organic options. They must include organic and vegetarian options, avoid palm oil, and reduce food waste.
- The event must use fossil-free electricity and energy-efficient equipment and promote public transport and eco-friendly vehicles.
- Multiple waste sorting options for both staff and guest must be provided.
- All use of disposable items must be minimized.
- Strict requirements to protect natural features and mitigate impacts on local wildlife must be met.
- The event must ensure compliance with all legal requirements and fair treatment of volunteers.

This is the first generation of requirements developed by Nordic Swan Ecolabel for Events.

5 Requirements and justification of these

5.1 Definitions

Terms	Definition
Event organizer	The main event organizer of the event who takes full responsibility for fulfilment of all requirements for the Nordic Swan Ecolabel application process.
Ecolabelled products and services	Product and services licensed with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel, EU Ecolabel, and Good Environmental Choice. For textiles GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) is also accepted.
Catering services	A catering service offers comprehensive meal services for various occasions. Catering involves providing a full range of food and beverage services for events. Caterers often prepare and serve meals, including appetizers, main courses, and desserts, and may also provide additional services like table setup, serving staff, and cleanup.
Concessionaire	Focuses on selling small treats and snacks at events. A concessionaire typically sells snacks and refreshments like ice cream, candies, popcorn, and drinks at events such as fairs, festivals, sports games, and concerts. They usually operate from a stand, cart, or kiosk and focus on quick, individual sales to event attendees.
Organic certification	Organic certification is related to food and beverage labelled in accordance with Regulation (EC) 2018/848, i.e. with KRAV, Luomu, Nyckelpigan, Debio's Ø-merke, Statskontrollert økologisk (Ø-merket), Demeter or Tún-lífrænt.
Certified coffee and tea	Approved certification schemes for coffee and tea in these criteria are in accordance with Regulation (EC) 2018/848, i.e. with KRAV, Luomu, Nyckelpigan, Debio's Ø-merke, Statskontrollert økologisk (Ø-merket), Demeter or Tún-lífrænt, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, Smithsonian Bird Friendly. Alternative labelling schemes can be used if Nordic Ecolabelling's "renewable raw material requirement" is met. If relevant, please download Nordic Ecolabelling's appendix: "Requirement concerning standards for renewable raw materials".
Main ingredient	Main Ingredient in a meal means the components, excluding water, that contribute to three of the highest percentage of weight or volume to the meal. I.e. fish or potato in "fish'n chips", meat, potato or bread in a hamburger, rice in a pot-dish etc.

Venue	A venue is a place indoor or outdoor, where events are held. Indoor venues may be equipped with essentials like seating, lighting, sound systems, and in some cases catering services. An outdoor venue is an area without roof, which includes open-air spaces like fields, open arenas, gardens, beaches, parks, and rooftops, allowing attendees to connect with natural or urban environments.
Direct trade:	Direct trade here means raw materials bought directly from the farmer/coffee farm, or from a local co-operative in the producing country, that has a direct connection to the farmer/coffee farm. Nordic Ecolabelling requires full traceability of the coffee supply chain, and the price paid for the coffee must be the minimum Fairtrade price at the current time of purchase. Reports must be made on targets and efforts carried out to take care of environmental and social conditions in direct trade. (Fairtrade prices updated 2023: https://fairtradeanz.org/stories/new-fairtrade-minimum-price-for-coffee-qa)
Cleaning products:	Products used for general cleaning, on all flooring and surfaces, including conference rooms, kitchens, Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, mirrors, toilets, public areas and staff offices. The following do not fall into the general cleaning category: Disinfectants, floor treatments, descalers, dishwasher and coffee machine cleaners, drain cleaner, metal polish, freezer room cleaners, furniture polish, stainless steel polish, oven cleaner, grill cleaner, steel cleaner, chewing gum remover, stain remover for carpets and interiors.
Public transport	Buses, trains, and other forms of transport that are available to the public, charge set fares, and run on fixed routes. Public transport (also known as public transportation, public transit, mass transit, or simply transit) is a system of transport for passengers by group travel systems available for use by the public.
Vegetarian	Vegetarian means plant-based food such as grain products, vegetables, fruit, berries, potatoes, nuts and seeds, but also dairy products, eggs, honey and so on.
Locally produced food	For food and beverage to count as locally produced, all production, rearing, hunting, harvesting, picking, processing and storage must take place within 250 km of the business. For businesses north of 62°N, the limit is 500 km, except for Icelandic companies, which can count all national production as locally produced. For fish, the distance that counts are from the fishing port. There must be full traceability along the supply chain from the food service back to the producer/place of production. If the product is processed/semi-processed, documenting the main ingredient is sufficient.
Food waste	Food waste cover both eatable and non-eatable food. Non-eatable food waste is inedible parts, such as. bone remains, shells, peels, kernels, etc. Eatable food waste covers all elements of food that are produced for human consumption, but that are either discarded or removed from the food chain for purposes other than human food, from that point on when animals and plants are slaughtered or harvested. Eatable food waste may arise in a food service due to factors such as incorrect storage, incorrect preparation, overproduction, or waste at serving or on the plate.
Technology provider	Provider of audio-visual equipment's and live streaming services, on site at the venue during the event.
GMO	Genetically modified food is food that, under national legislation, is labelled as containing genetically modified ingredients or ingredients produced from genetically modified organisms (GMO). Particularly relevant products are those based on soya, maize, rapeseed or sugar beet.
General cleaning	General cleaning, is cleaning on all flooring and surfaces, kitchens, glass, bathrooms, toilets, public areas and staff areas. Ozonated water (ozone water) and electrochemically activated water (ECA water) are not permitted to be used either for general cleaning or disinfection. The following do not fall into the general cleaning category: Floor treatments, descalers, swimming pool chemicals, dishwasher and coffee machine cleaners, drain cleaner, metal polish, freezer room cleaners, furniture polish, stainless steel polish, oven cleaner, grill cleaner, steel cleaner, chewing gum remover, stain remover for carpets and interiors.
Cleaning products for dishwashing	All detergents and drying agents used in dishwashers and for manual dishwashing. Soaking agents and descalers are excluded.

Transport hub	A transport hub is a location where passengers and cargo are transferred between different modes of transportation. Common examples of transport hubs include railway stations, (serving as points for passengers to transfer between trains or to other forms of transport like buses or taxis), bus terminals, seaports and airports.
Supplier	A supplier provides materials, products, or services directly to the organizer. They are responsible for delivering the necessary goods or services that the organizer needs to complete its projects or operations. E.g. may a venue be a supplier for the event organizer.
Sub-supplier	A sub-supplier provides materials, products, or services to another supplier of the event organizer. Essentially, they supply the suppliers, helping them fulfill their obligations to the event organizer. E.g. may a restaurant be a sub-supplier at the venue for the event organizer.

5.2 Disclaimer

Nordic Ecolabelling reserves the right to decline applications for events that pose a risk of damaging the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling brand.

If the event is regulated by site-specific safety regulations set by authorities, these must be followed even if they overrule the requirements in these criteria (for example, the use of packaging for food/drinks).

Background to disclaimers

Since there is a broad range of events, that might have an interest in ecolabelling their event, some event themes that can be seen as controversial to sustainability and pose a risk of damaging the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling brand. Nordic Swan Ecolabelling has therefore set a disclaimer, according to which the theme of the event can be evaluated, and if a compelling reason is found, the ecolabelling application of the event can be denied.

A disclaimer is also added to ensure that an event can be ecolabelled, even if regulations from authorities are controversial to these criteria. Regulations can naturally always be followed.

5.3 General requirements

O1 Description of the event

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The event organizer must provide a detailed description of the event regarding the following:

- Which type of event is it?
- State the start and end dates for the event.
- Is the event repetitive?
 - If yes, is it repetitive at one location or different locations?
- State the location/address of the venue.
- Is the event indoors (in a building), or outdoors (in a limited area outdoors, like a festival area or an outdoor stadium).
 - If its outdoors, what is the estimated area required for the event?
- How many guests are estimated to visit the event?

- What transportation options are available for guests to reach the event, and how are these arrangements planned?
- Are there any co-organizers for the event?
- Which type of suppliers are used at the event? List all venue, catering service, cleaning service, technology provider, transport provider (rental), hygiene stations and portable toilet suppliers.
 - Is the venue, catering service or cleaning service ecolabelled?

The list shall include the name and a description of the supplier and an ecolabel if relevant. You may use Appendix 1 as a template

See Table 1 for overview over requirement relevant for suppliers.

- Other relevant information.
- † Detailed description in relation to the requirement above. Pictures, a website, etc. can also be used as documentation.

Background to requirement O1 Description of the event

Nordic Ecolabelling requires a detailed description of the event to obtain an accurate picture of the happening and to assess whether the event falls within the product group definition. The information provides the basis for the right advice and guidance in the application process.

An overview of suppliers ensures that we set the right requirement to the right suppliers. If some of the service providers are already Nordic Swan Ecolabelled or offers ecolabelled products, this will make the application process easier, and several requirements may already be met.

5.4 Marketing and communication

O2 Marketing

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The event organizer can market the event as Nordic Swan Ecolabelled, after all mandatory requirements have been met, in consultation with Nordic Ecolabelling.

All guests should be informed that the event has been awarded the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and should be made aware of its significance.

Nordic Ecolabelling provides ideas for marketing and communication

- † Examples or descriptions of the market material.

O3 Communication with staff

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

All event organizers' staff, both paid and volunteers, who are involved in the organizing of the event, must have knowledge regarding the work with the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling.

The event organizer must provide staff with basic information on the environmental work of the company to achieve the Nordic Swan Ecolabel.

The information must be given during the application time, before the event is arranged.

Nordic Ecolabelling provides ideas for marketing and communication

↑ Copy of the of basic information provided to the staff.

↑ Description of how and when the information is given.

O4 Communication with suppliers and exhibitors

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venues, catering services, and hygiene station and portable toilet suppliers.

The event organizer must inform the suppliers about the events work with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and about the requirements relevant for the supplier.

The suppliers must fulfil all relevant requirements and inform their staff. See Table 1.

The event organizer must inform the exhibitors about the events work with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel.

Nordic Ecolabelling provides ideas for marketing and communication.

↑ Copy of the information suppliers receives regarding the Nordic Swan Ecolabelling process and fulfilment of the requirements.

↑ Copy of the information exhibitors receive.

Background to requirement O2 Marketing, O3 Communication with staff, and O4 Communication with suppliers and exhibitors

Information to staff, guests and suppliers regarding the ecolabelling of the events is useful to give a broad insight in the environmental aspects of the event business, and how the event works to limit the environmental impact of the event.

The event organizer must provide staff with basic information on the environmental work of the company to achieve the Nordic Swan Ecolabel.

To ensure staff engagement and compliance with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel's requirements, it is essential that staff is informed about the specific requirements set by Nordic Ecolabelling for the event regarding for the different suppliers.

The event organizer can market the event as Nordic Swan Ecolabelled, and all guests should be informed that the event has been awarded the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. Marketing and information shall be carried out after all mandatory requirements have been met, in consultation with Nordic Ecolabelling.

5.5 Energy requirements

O5 Fossil free energy supply

This requirement applies to the event organizer, catering services and technology provider.

The energy used at the event must be supplied by the electricity grid.

Alternatively, where supply from the public grid is not possible, this must be justified.

In such cases an electric power generator may be used, either

- a) powered by a battery
- or
- b) powered by biofuels (HVO100, RME100, FAME100 or ED95).

It is also permitted to have batteries and/or biofuel as backup power at events, with access to the power grid.

† Documents confirming connection to the power grid, for example an electricity supplier contract.

Alternative

† A justification why electricity supply is not possible and documentation showing the use of batteries or biofuel.

Background to requirement O5 Fossil free energy supply

Significant amount of energy is required to conduct an event, encompassing lighting, sound, heating, and other needs.^{1,2} Consequently, the event has a climate impact that should be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

One approach to mitigating the event's climate impact is to ensure that a minimal proportion of the energy used is derived from fossil fuels. This can be achieved by connecting to the power grid, where efforts are being made across the Nordic countries to reduce the contribution of electricity generated from fossil sources. Alternatively, if connection to the power grid is insufficient or unavailable, and local generators must be utilized, these generators can be powered by biofuel.

The energy used at the event must be fossil free and the event organizer should strive to use as much sustainable energy as possible for the event. If outdoor events require extra energy, it is advantageous to connect to the already established electricity grid. There are no specific requirements regarding the sources of energy used to generate grid electricity. If this is not an alternative, energy generators powered by batteries or biofuel HVO100, RME100, FAME100 or ED95 can be used. However, the biofuels have more disadvantages than electricity, among other things related to the raw materials, and usually have a higher climate impact over the life cycle. With this requirement, Nordic Ecolabelling requires that the event avoids the use of fossil fuels for energy production.

O6 Energy devices and equipment

This requirement is relevant for the event organizer, venue, catering services and technology provider.

Energy devices and equipment must fulfil the following.

- No infrared heaters, or other electricity heaters are used anywhere in outdoor areas. Exemption for staff areas including the backstage, artist area, bench area and VIP area.

¹ [Event Energy Impacts | Event Impacts outdoor events](https://www.eventimpacts.com/impact-types/environmental/content/energy) <https://www.eventimpacts.com/impact-types/environmental/content/energy>

² Baker J. 2022: [Embrace Battery Power for Eco-Friendly Outdoor Events](https://www.joulecase.com/blog/energy-and-carbon-impact-of-various-) <https://www.joulecase.com/blog/energy-and-carbon-impact-of-various->

- No gas heaters, such as umbrella or other, are used in outdoor areas.
- No open-front coolers or refrigerators are used anywhere in the event area.
- No single-use (disposable) batteries are used in microphones, monitors etc. on stage.

† Routines complying with the requirement

Background to requirement O6 Energy devices and equipment

Hosting an event requires a significant amount of energy for lighting, sound, heating, and other needs.³ Consequently, events have a notable climate impact, which should be minimized as much as possible. Various smaller components consume energy at different types of events. This requirement targets some of the most common elements, which can either be eliminated or replaced with more energy-efficient alternatives.

Heating outdoor air is highly resource-intensive⁴, and Nordic Ecolabelling aim to prevent such energy usage at a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled event. Staff areas including backstage areas for artists, bench areas in for example football matches and VIP areas for special guests, are exempt from this requirement.

To avoid unnecessary energy consumption from coolers and refrigerators, these units must be covered. They should have lids, doors, or be kept covered with an alternative solution.

A significant number of disposable batteries are consumed when the batteries in microphones and mice are replaced each time a new person uses them on stage.⁵

Therefore, rechargeable batteries or rechargeable devices must be used at Nordic Swan Ecolabelled events.

O7 New purchases

This requirement is relevant for the event organizer.

The event organizer must have routines that ensures own purchases or rentals of energy-intensive equipment fulfil the requirement.

If the responsibility for purchasing or rental of equipment on another party, the event organizer must actively require the responsible party to purchase or rent energy-efficient equipment.

New purchase of

- Lighting systems must utilize LED technology.
 - Exemption for strong spotlights, if not available as LED.
- Sound and audio equipment must convert a minimum of 90% of the electrical energy into sound (for example class D amplifiers) and must include automatic sleep modes.
- Video and projection systems must be laser projection technology or be LED display technology or be OLED technology.

³ 2022, A Net Zero Roadmap for the Events Industry: [NZCE Roadmap2022 Full-Report-1.pdf](#)

⁴ Propertytalk (2025, 6. January) [Outdoor Heating: What's Best For The Home, Gas or Infrared?](#)

⁵ 2022: Kulturrom: Farvel til engangs batteriene, [Oppladbare batterier - Sluttrapport\(1\)](#)

↑ Copy of routines.

Background to requirement O7 New purchases

Significant energy is required to conduct an event, encompassing lighting, sound, heating, and other needs^{1,2}, and there are several potentials for reducing the consumption.

LED lighting is a leading energy-efficient solution widely adopted across industries, including event management. LEDs consume significantly less energy compared to older technologies like fluorescent or incandescent lighting. LED retrofits in lighting systems contribute to better luminaire efficacy and long-term sustainability. The use of LED technology also enables advanced control systems, reducing overall energy consumption at events.⁶

Laser projectors are recognized for their high energy efficiency and longevity compared to traditional lamp-based projectors. These systems are ideal for large-scale events due to their brighter images, lower maintenance, and significantly lower power consumption, making them a sustainable choice for event venues. Research on sustainable lighting and projection systems highlights their energy efficiency, longer lifespan, and lower environmental impact.⁷

Class D amplifiers are recognized for their energy efficiency, particularly in high-demand audio settings for example events. These amplifiers can convert up to 90% of electrical energy into sound, significantly reducing energy compared to traditional Class A or Class AB amplifiers. In events where audio equipment is used extensively, Class D amplifiers reduce the energy footprint of large-scale sound systems.⁸

O8 Energy and CO₂-reducing measures for venues

This requirement is relevant for indoor venues.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

Events indoors in venues must achieve a minimum of 3 points from the table below.

Table 1 Energy and CO₂-reducing measures

Theme	Measure	Points
Ecolabelled hotel or conference facility	Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, and conference facilities	3
Own electricity production	The venue has its own electricity production, via solar PV within the vicinity of the event and that covers over 10% of the venue's annual electricity demand.	3
Energy metering	The venue measures and collects energy data to optimise the energy demand. The measuring must be divided between energy for heating, cooling, property electricity (lighting, pumps, fans, motors, control and/or regulation equipment, elevators, and similar components) and energy intensive equipment.	2
Energy policy	The venue has an energy policy with a multiannual programme for optimising its energy efficiency which includes target values, measures and a plan for implementation (this includes heating, hot water, cooling, lighting, insulation standards etc.).	3

⁶ Circular Economy Aspects Regarding LED Lighting Retrofit—from Case Studies to Vision (mdpi.com)

⁷ external_content.pdf (oopen.org)

⁸ The Class D Audio Power Amplifier: A Review (mdpi.com)

Lighting	A minimum of 90% of lighting (counted per lightbulb), including outdoor lighting, is equipped with control systems, for example demand- or time controls, so they turn off automatically when the venue area is unoccupied.	1
Demand controlled heat- and ventilation system	The ventilation and heat systems for the venue are demand controlled. Demand controlled ventilation and heat systems are sensor controlled, or CO ₂ controlled and automatically adapt the thermal comfort to the number of people in the premises. This point cannot be scored together with "time-controlled heat and ventilation system".	2
Time controlled heat and ventilation system	The ventilation and heat system for the event facilities are time controlled. This point cannot be scored together with "demand-controlled heat and ventilation system".	1
Energy-efficient light fittings	All light sources in the event area use LED technology or light sources with the best possible energy class.	1

† Description and documentation of the measures implemented.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotel or conference facility.

☞ Checked on site.

Background to requirement O8 Energy and CO₂-reducing measures for venues

Significant amount of energy is required to conduct an event, encompassing lighting, sound, heating, and other needs.^{1,2} Nordic Ecolabelling has listed a number of energy and CO₂ saving measures for indoor venues. Venues where main activities are outdoors, such as open stadiums, do not need to fulfil this requirement. The list also includes some measures (e.g. solar panels) that in the first instance reduce carbon emissions rather than energy consumption. There are different solutions to reduce the climate impact from events. Nordic Ecolabelling rewards several actions, and the most efficient measures give the most points. The applicant must achieve at least 3 points in the list by documenting measures they have already implemented, or plan to carry out, before the event is happening.

Own electricity production: The event organizer can achieve points by producing its own energy for the operation of the venue. For example, by using solar energy via solar panels or solar cells. To achieve points, the energy must go into the operation of the venue. The requirement is relevant for the annual consumption and solar contribution, and not for the specific event. Examples of what do not score points are lamps or other small electronics that are controlled by solar cells.

Energy metering: Monitoring energy-intensive equipment will increase awareness of energy consumption. By understanding the energy usage in different areas, it becomes easier to implement energy-reducing measures. Energy intensive equipment applies to equipment that use more than 10% of the total event electricity, for example heat pumps, large refrigeration units, process electricity for areas like server rooms, etc.

Energy policy: An energy policy is highly rewarded as it requires a multiannual programme for optimising its energy efficiency which includes target values, measures and a plan for implementation (this includes heating, hot water, cooling, lighting, insulation standards etc.) and the potential for reducing energy consumption through such an ongoing focus is high.

Lighting: Automatic demand-control of lighting, as sensor control with motion sensors, is the most efficient way to save energy from lighting. To achieve points, over 90% of the venue must have demand-controlled lighting in public areas.

Ventilation: Ventilation systems in large buildings with many rooms are particularly energy intensive. It is therefore important that the ventilation system is properly controlled according to demand, depending on how many guests are on the premises. Ventilation may, for example, be controlled by CO₂ sensors, or occupancy sensors. Timer controls are not as effective, so if these are used, it is particularly important to have good and detailed timer controls for the best possible effect.

Heat and cooling production: Different venues have different needs when it comes to heat/cooling consumption, depending on the age of the building, windows, location, season and number of visitors. It is desirable for a venue to have clear procedures for heating its facilities in the most efficient way possible, despite the differing circumstances.

Energy-efficient light fittings: Energy efficient light sources have significantly higher light output and longer life than other light sources.

5.6 Transportation and climate

O9 Transportation and accessibility

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The following must be secured:

- The event should be accessible within walking distance of a maximum of 2 km, either from the nearest main public transport hub or via transportation (shuttle) arranged by the event.
- Side events, trips etc. are organised in a way that the destinations are within walking distance of a maximum of 2 km, can be reached by bicycle, using public transport or a share-ride shuttle service for all persons involved.

↑ Description of how the requirement is fulfilled.

Background to requirement O9 Transportation and accessibility

When large numbers of people travel to an event, it results in significant environmental and climate impacts due to energy consumption, fossil fuel use, and particulate pollution, particularly when traveling individually by car.^{9,3} These impacts can be greatly reduced if participants have the option to use public or shuttle transportation to and from the event.

Ensuring that the event is accessible from the nearest main transport hub via public transport is a crucial step towards promoting sustainability and convenience.

⁹ International association of event hosts, (6. January 2025) [Environmental Impacts - International Association of Event Hosts](#)

Organizing side events and trips within walking distance of a maximum of 2 km¹⁰ or reachable by bicycle, public transport, or share-ride shuttle services further enhances the event's accessibility and environmental benefits. This approach also makes the event accessible to all participants regardless of their transportation preferences or limitations.

Overall, these measures contribute to a more sustainable, efficient, and enjoyable event experience for everyone involved.

O10 Public transport information

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

All guests, staff, suppliers, artist/speakers must be informed about the following:

- Connection to public long-distance transport services to the destination city/place.
- Connection to public transportation services to the event location.
- Distances between public transport stops and the event.
- Accessible travel options to the event location and accessible entrance for participants with disabilities.

↑ Copy of information/screenshots from web pages etc. showing the fulfilment of the requirement.

Background to requirement O10 Public transport information

When large numbers of people travel to an event, it results in significant environmental and climate impacts due to energy consumption, fossil fuel use, and particulate pollution, particularly when traveling individually by car. See O9. These impacts can be greatly reduced if participants have the option to use public transportation to and from the event.

Informing all guests, staff, suppliers, and artists/speakers about the connections to public long-distance transport services to the destination city or place is essential for ensuring smooth and efficient travel arrangements. This information helps attendees plan their journeys in advance, and providing details about connections to public transportation services to the event location further enhances convenience and accessibility. It encourages the use of more sustainable transport options, thereby reducing the event's carbon footprint and promoting sustainable practices.

Highlighting the distances between public transport stops and the event venue is crucial to nudge the guests to use public transport instead of private cars.

Ensuring accessible travel options and entrances for participants with disabilities is a fundamental aspect of inclusivity. By accommodating the needs of all attendees, the event becomes more welcoming and accessible, fostering a positive and supportive environment for everyone.

¹⁰ Linderova and Shcoulz, 20219; TOURISM FACILITIES ACCESSIBILITY IN CONTEXT OF SOCIAL TOURISM SUPPORT

O11 Leasing, and purchase of vehicles

This requirement applies to the event organizer and transport service.

- **Vehicles:** Vehicles powered by biogas/natural gas (CNG/CBG LNG/LBG), electricity, plug-in hybrid or hydrogen, must be requested when the event organizer purchase transport services or leases vehicles.
- **Heavy industrial vehicles:** Heavy industrial vehicles i.e. vehicles with lift, etc, are exempted from the requirement above, and the latest Euro norm shall be requested.

↑ Copy of leasing/procurement procedures showing that the requirement is met.

Background to requirement O11 Leasing, and purchase of vehicles

Fuel consumption from transports is a significant source of the climate impact of an event. To reduce emissions, it is necessary to shift to more energy-efficient transports and move away from fossil fuels. The steerability of vehicle types is greatest when new leasing contracts are established, or vehicles are purchased. Combined with the possibility of collecting a point for not using fossil fuel both for the event organizer as well as the suppliers in O13, this is a good way to limit the climate impact from the transportation activities from the event.

Biofuels, HVO100, RME100, FAME100, are renewable fuels and it is a good transitional solution for existing vehicles before all vehicles are converted to other engines, but when we set requirements for new purchases, we believe that they must be the most sustainable vehicles. HVO, RME, FAME have more disadvantages than electricity and gas, among other things related to the raw materials, and usually have a higher climate impact over the life cycle.

Electric cars have become increasingly available in recent years, especially among private cars and light goods vehicles. All Nordic countries have a high enough availability of electric cars for Nordic Ecolabelling to set this requirement. Depending on the country, as much as 18–90 percent of newly registered private cars are electric.^{11, 12}

Nordic Ecolabelling considers long-term sustainable vehicles to primarily refer to electrified vehicles. However, natural gas/biogas (CNG/CBG) and hydrogen are also considered good alternatives at this moment. This is in line with the Swedish procurement agency's most advanced sustainability requirements for personal cars and light goods vehicles.^{13, 14}

Some companies have challenges related to electric vehicle infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Nordic Ecolabel therefore allows plug-in hybrid vehicles as a solution for newly purchased and newly leased vehicles.

Both electric and biofuel-powered heavy industrial vehicles are available and offer significant environmental benefits, but each technology faces unique challenges that need to be

¹¹ Carlier m., 2024: [Share of electric cars in the fleet of Nordic countries | Statista](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1538278/fleet-share-plug-in-hybrid-battery-electric-cars-nordics/)
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1538278/fleet-share-plug-in-hybrid-battery-electric-cars-nordics/>

¹² Ritcher F. 2024: [Which countries sell the most electric cars? | World Economic Forum](https://www.weforum.org/stories/2021/02/electric-vehicles-europe-percentage-sales/)
<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2021/02/electric-vehicles-europe-percentage-sales/>

¹³ [Hållbarhetskrav för Energi/koldioxidkrav på lätta lastbilar | Upphandlingsmyndigheten](#)

¹⁴ [Hållbarhetskrav för Energi/koldioxidkrav för fordon med maximalt fyra sittplatser utöver förarplatsen | Upphandlingsmyndigheten](#)

addressed to achieve widespread adoption^{15, 16}, which is why these vehicles are exempt from the requirement.

O12 Accommodation

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

- When the event organizers provide hotel accommodation to own staff, Nordic Swan ecolabelled accommodation must be chosen if its accessible within 10 km by public transportation.
- The event organizer must inform guests regarding Nordic Swan ecolabelled accommodation options that are available nearby the event destination, max 10 km by public transportation.

An exception from the requirement is granted if there are no accessible ecolabelled hotels by public transportation within 10 km.

† Declaration and copy of information regarding relevant accommodation.

Background to requirement O12 Accommodation

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels have met strict requirements, ensuring that their operations minimize negative impacts on the environment.¹⁷ Choosing Nordic Swan ecolabelled accommodation for event staff is a significant step towards promoting environmental sustainability. By opting for such accommodations, event organizers demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and responsible resource use.

Informing guests about available ecolabelled accommodation options near the event destination, a maximum of 10 km¹⁸, further supports this commitment. It encourages attendees to choose more sustainable accommodations, thereby reducing the overall environmental impact of the event.

Overall, these measures contribute to a more sustainable event, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility among all participants.

O13 Measures for reduction of CO₂ emissions

This requirement applies to the event organizer and transport service.

A minimum of 3 points must be achieved from the following table with measures to reduce CO₂ emissions.

¹⁵ Alanazi A., 2023: Electric Vehicles: Benefits, Challenges, and Potential Solutions for Widespread Adaptation

¹⁶ Reddy V. J. et al, 2024: Sustainable Vehicles for Decarbonizing the Transport Sector: A Comparison of Biofuel, Electric, Fuel Cell and Solar-Powered Vehicles

¹⁷ Hotels and other accommodation, version 5. <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/criteria/hotels-and-other-accommodation-055/>

¹⁸ Hooper J. 2014; A destination too far? Modelling destination accessibility and distance decay in tourism <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10708-014-9536-z>

Theme	Measure	Maximum points
Sustainable fuel, event organizer	90% of the event organizer's vehicles used in organizing the event are powered by biogas/natural gas (CNG/CBG LNG/LBG), electricity, hydrogen or Nordic Swan Ecolabelled fuel.	2
	50% of the event organizer's vehicles used in organizing the event are powered by biogas/natural gas (CNG/CBG LNG/LBG), electricity, hydrogen or Nordic Swan Ecolabelled fuel.	1
Sustainable fuel, transport service	90% of all vehicles from one of the company's three largest suppliers are powered by biogas/natural gas (CNG/CBG, LNG/LBG), electricity, hydrogen or Nordic Swan Ecolabelled fuel.	2
	50% of all vehicles from one of the company's three largest suppliers are powered by biogas/natural gas (CNG/CBG, LNG/LBG), electricity, hydrogen or Nordic Swan Ecolabelled fuel.	1
Free tickets - public transport	The event ticket includes free tickets on public and/or regional transport (including a shuttle bus organized by the event).	2
Discount cooperation - accommodation	Event tickets include a minimum of 10% discount on accommodation at a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled or an EU Ecolabelled hotel.	1
Discount cooperation – public transport	Event tickets include a minimum of 20% discount on public and/or regional transport.	1
Bicycle parking	The event organizer provides fixed bicycle parking and communicates this to the guests	1

↑ Documentation related to selected theme, showing the requirements are fulfilled.

Background to requirement O13 Measures for reduction of CO₂ emissions

CO₂ emissions and fuel consumption from transports is a significant source of the climate impact of the event. Nordic Ecolabelling has listed different CO₂ saving measures, and reward several actions, where the most efficient measures give the most points.

The applicant must achieve at least 3 points in the list by documenting measures they have already implemented, or plan to carry out, before the event is happening.

Overall, these measures contribute to a more sustainable, accessible, event, benefiting both the guests and the environment.

Sustainable fuel, event organizer and transport service: See O11.

Discount Cooperation - Accommodation: Offering event tickets that include discounts on accommodation at Nordic Swan Ecolabelled or EU Ecolabelled hotels is a great way to promote sustainable options. By providing discounts, event organizers encourage attendees to choose these sustainable options, reducing the overall environmental impact.

Free tickets and Discount Cooperation – Public Transport: Offering free public transportation tickets can enhance the event experience while promoting sustainability and accessibility. Including discounts or free tickets on public and regional transport with event tickets is a strategy to promote the use of more sustainable transportations. This initiative not only makes it more affordable for attendees to use public transport but also helps reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions.

Bicycle Parking: Providing fixed bicycle parking and communicating this to guests is a practical measure to support sustainable transportation. By ensuring that attendees have a

secure place to park their bicycles, event organizers promote cycling as a viable and sustainable transport option.

5.7 Biodiversity

O14 Biodiversity impact assessment and mitigation plan

This requirement applies to the venues.

Outside urban areas, outdoor venues or venues with garden areas, larger than 10 000 m² must have a plan for biodiversity protection and impact mitigation. The biodiversity assessment must be undertaken for the event on the site prior to the event (this may already have been done by the venue or the landowner). The plan should cover the following:

- a) Description of features of high biodiversity value in the venue area, or close to the area, such as large or old trees and natural watercourses, like natural streams and ponds.
- b) Assessment of potential impact on the biodiversity and measures how to mitigate impacts.
- c) Description of how lighting and sound are set up not to disturb local wildlife. For example, the use of directional lighting and limitation of noise levels near sensitive habitats.

All outdoor venues must have:

- description of measures how to limit littering
- description of measures which are done after an event and to remove littering.

† Biodiversity impact assessment plan with a description according to above.

† Description how to limit and remove littering.

Background to requirement O14

Biodiversity deteriorates rapidly, and changes in land use result in limited habitats, overexploitation of plants and animals, climate change, pollution and foreign, invasive species.^{19,20} The UN's Sustainable Development Goal 15 deals specifically with biological diversity and states that the world must reduce the deterioration of habitats, stop the loss of biodiversity, and prevent the extinction of endangered species.²¹

Venues which take place in outdoor areas have an impact on the local biodiversity. The venue must therefore have a plan for biodiversity protection and impact mitigation for the event which have been conducted prior to the event. Since there is a big difference in types of events and inclusion of outdoor areas, the requirements only comply to events with gardens/outdoor areas larger than 10000 m².

The plan should include a description of biodiversity and habitats present on and surrounding the event site, identify potential impacts on the biodiversity and the habitats,

¹⁹ [Biodiversity — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-communications/infographic/infographic_biodiversity_en.pdf)

²⁰ <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/nordic-ecolabelling/environmental-aspects/sustainable-raw-materials-biodiversity/biodiversity/>

²¹ [Goal 15 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/)

recommendation on how to mitigate these impacts and finally description of measures which are done prior/under/after the event to mitigate damage on local biodiversity. The use of lighting and sound during the event has a negative impact on local wildlife²² and should therefore be assessed in the plan.


Existing biodiversity impact assessment plans done by the venue or the landowner for the specific site may be used as documentation.

5.8 Food and beverage

O15 Tap water

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The event organizer must ensure that free tap water is available for participants throughout the event and clearly inform guests and suppliers about the locations where they can access it.

 Explain where the free tap water is located.

Description of how the information about access is given.

Background to requirement O15 Tap water

Water bottled off-site has a significantly larger climate and environmental footprint compared with the same amount of water from the tap. Tap water ensures savings on materials for packaging and bottles, plus energy and emissions from production and transport. The water supply in the Nordic region is safe, fresh and pleasant, so it is basically unnecessary to buy water, if tap water is available.

O16 Information to guests

This requirement applies to catering services.

Information on menus must clearly indicate which food and beverage are organic certified and describe the main ingredients used in vegetarian meals.

 Copy of the menu showing the requirement is met.

Background to requirement O16 Information to guests

Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals requires a transition to more sustainable food and farming systems that maintain ecosystems, are better adapted to climate change, and improve soil quality²³. Third-party certification of raw materials and organic farming²⁴ is therefore important for documenting more sustainable production.

²² <https://www.horizon-europe.gouv.fr/impact-light-and-noise-pollution-biodiversity-33217>

²³ 8 UN, 'UN Sustainable Development Goals' www.FN.no/Om-FN/FNs-baerekraftsmaal (07.12.2022)

²⁴ 2 Eyhorn F, Muller A, Reganold JP, Frison E, Herren HR, Lutikholt L, Mueller A, Sanders J, Scialabba NEH, Seufert V, Smith P (2019) Sustainability in global agriculture driven by organic farming. *Nature Sustainability* 2:253–255. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-019-0266-6>

To accommodate guests' wishes and needs, it is beneficial to have clear communication about what food and drinks are being served, so that guests can make their choice on an informed basis and appetite.

O17 Organic food

This requirement applies to catering services.

Due to different access to organic goods in the Nordic countries, the limit values are differentiated according to country.

Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden:

All catering services must provide a minimum of one meal with two organic main ingredients, or two meals with one main ingredient.

Denmark:

All catering services must purchase a minimum of 30% organic food.

Catering from Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

† Name and explanation of the two main ingredients in the meal.

Denmark

† Contractual agreement with the catering supplier of food that the requirements are met.

O18 Organic beverage

This requirement applies to catering services.

All catering services must provide a minimum of one non-alcoholic organic beverage and one alcoholic organic beverage, if non-alcoholic/alcoholic beverages are served.

Exemption: If one catering service only serves non-organic beverage, this can be compensated by additionally having one catering service that only serves organic beverages.

† Name and description of the beverage.

† Contractual agreement with the catering supplier of beverage that the requirements are met

Background to requirement O17 Organic food, and O18 Organic beverage

Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals requires a transition to more sustainable food and farming systems that maintain ecosystems, are better adapted to climate change, and improve soil quality²⁵. Organic farming is one way to achieve this²⁶. Therefore, Nordic

²⁵ UN, 'UN Sustainable Development Goals' www.FN.no/Om-FN/FNs-baerekraftsmaal (07.12.2022)

²⁶ Eyhorn F, Muller A, Reganold JP, Frison E, Herren HR, Luttikholt L, Mueller A, Sanders J, Scialabba NEH, Seufert V, Smith P (2019) Sustainability in global agriculture driven by organic farming. *Nature Sustainability* 2:253–255. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-019-0266-6>

Swan Ecolabelling is working to increase the proportion of organic food. See Nordic ecolabelling webpage for more info²⁷.

Organic farming places an emphasis on ecological balance, local eco-cycles and ecological, economic and social sustainability over the long term²⁸. Organic methods increase biodiversity and thus help to maintain the ecosystem services on which agriculture depends²⁹. The UN's nature panel IPBES also advocates organic farming as a system for promoting biodiversity and ecosystem functions³⁰. The UN's climate panel IPCC points out that organic farming can contribute to sustainable land management³¹.

Sales of organic food and beverage have risen steadily in recent years across the Nordic region. However, there are major differences between the countries due to e.g., various political strategic initiatives, trends and demand, plus price versus profitability. Finland and Norway have seen a strong percentage growth in organic food in recent years but are still a long way behind Sweden and Denmark. Denmark has led the way in organic sales per person³², while Sweden has led the way in switching to organic farming and is also the best in the Nordic region at public sector procurement.³³ Catering services with a higher proportion of organic food and drink are rewarded in requirement O23.

O19 Vegetarian dish

This requirement applies to catering services.

All catering services must offer one or more vegetarian dishes on the menu.

Exemption: If one catering service only serves meat or fish, this can be compensated by additionally having one catering service that only serves vegetarian food.

↑ Description of how the requirement is met.

²⁷ <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/nordic-ecolabelling/environmental-aspects/sustainable-raw-materials-biodiversity/organic-farming/>

²⁸ Arbenz M, Gould D, Stopes C (2016) Organic 3.0 – for truly sustainable farming and consumption, IFOAM Organics International, Bonn and SOAAN, Bonn. www.ifoam.bio/sites/default/files/organic3.0_v.2_web_0.pdf

²⁹ Dainese M et al. (2019) A global synthesis reveals biodiversity-mediated benefits for crop production. *Science Advances* 5(10) eaax0121. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aax0121>

³⁰ IPBES (2019) Summary for policy makers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/inline/files/ipbes_global_assessment_report_summary_for_policymakers.pdf

³¹ IPCC (2020) Summary for policy makers. In: *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*. www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/4/2020/02/SPM_Updated-Jan20.pdf

³² Bioforsk Report Vol. 9 Nr.139 2014 Økologisk mat i de nordiske landene - tilgang på råvarer og faktorer som påvirker omsetning av økologisk mat, 2014, HYPERLINK https://orgprints.org/id/eprint/30184/1/BIOFORSK%20RAPPORT_9_139_2014%20%C3%98kologisk%20mat%20i%20de%20nordiske%20landene.pdf

³³ EKOMATCENTRUM MARKNADSRAPPORT Ekologisk i offentlig sektor 2019, <http://ekomatcentrum.se/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Rapport-Marknadsrapport-EMC-2019-2.pdf>

Background to requirement O19 Vegetarian dish

Vegetarian products generally have a lower climate footprint and requires significantly less energy and land to generate the same amount of protein and energy, compared to meat production³⁴.

Agriculture and forestry account for almost a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and cause a great amount of damage to and depletion of the planet's resources. A new report³⁵ from the UN's climate panel states that we need to implement radical changes to make agriculture more sustainable. They recommend, for example, that we change how we produce food, manage land and eat. The recommendation is to switch to a more plant-based diet, which will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Nordic Ecolabelling wishes to see Nordic Swan Ecolabelled events offering guest vegetarian meals, as well as the catering services contributing to the demand for plant-based food.

If one catering service only serves meat or fish, this can be compensated by additionally having one catering service that only serves vegetarian food. A catering provider with multiple outlets can meet the requirement at one outlet, as long as information is available at the location indicating where a vegetarian option can be found.

O20 Prohibited and restricted fish and seafood

This requirement applies to catering services.

Catering from Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

Fish and seafood species listed in the table below may only be served by the catering services if they are MSC certified.

Table 2 Prohibited and restricted fish and seafood

Species	Reason for prohibition
Tropical prawns, i.e. scampi.	Linked to mangrove deforestation
All species of skate	International endangered species ³⁶
Atlantic bluefin tuna	"
Eel	"
Shark An exception is made in Iceland for traditional serving of the shark species <i>Somniosus microcephalus</i> and the skate species <i>Dipturus batis</i> / <i>Raja batis</i> and <i>Raja Amblyraja radiata</i>	"
Weil-cougt sturgeon	"

³⁴ Lagerberg-Fogelberg. 2008. På väg mot miljöanpassade kostråd- vetenskapligt underlag inför miljökonsekvensanalysen av Livsmedelsverkets kostråd. Report, 2008:9. Swedish National Food Agency, and Rööf. 2012. Köttguiden 2012 – kloka val för miljö och djurvålfärd Utkast 2012-10-10. Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU).

³⁵ IPCC Special Report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse gas fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems. 2019. Chapter 5.

³⁶ Species categorised as critically endangered (CR) or endangered (EN) on the red list of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Catfish (caught in Sweden)	National endangered ³⁷ species
Halibut (caught in Sweden)	"
Rabbit fish (caught in Sweden)	"
Roundnose grenadier (caught in Sweden)	"
White ling (caught in Sweden)	"
Pollack (caught in Sweden)	"
Redfish (caught in Norway)	"
Blue ling (caught in Norway)	"
European weather loach / <i>Misgurnus fossilis</i> (caught in Denmark)	"
Lumpfish and lumpfish roe (caught in Denmark)	"
Sea trout (caught in Finland)	"
Brown trout (caught in Finland)	"
European whitefish (caught in Finland)	"
Landlocked salmon (caught in Finland)	"
Arctic char (caught in Finland)	"
Grayling (caught in Finland)	"

Labels for standards other than MSC may be used if Nordic Ecolabelling has approved them. The standards must meet Nordic Ecolabelling's guidelines for assessing sustainability labelling of fish and shellfish, see Appendix 4. ASC is currently not approved.

The list of non-sustainable seafood may be revised if new information is received.

† Copy of procedures that the catering service(s) has in place to ensure fulfilment of the requirement. Serving of endangered fish requires full traceability back to the fishery.

† Contractual agreement with the catering supplier of food that the requirements are met.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

Background to requirement O20 Prohibited and restricted fish and seafood

Marine ecosystems are threatened by overfishing, eutrophication, pollution and climate change. The fact that many fish stocks are overfished affects not only the individual stocks, but whole ecosystems. According to the UN's nature panel IPBES, overfishing is the key cause of diversity loss in the oceans.³⁸ This is followed by changes to land use. In freshwater, the order is reversed. To avoid use of the most endangered species of fish and shellfish and species that are produced in a not particularly eco-friendly way, Nordic Ecolabelling has drawn up a list of species that cannot be served:

Tropical prawns. These are not on the IUCN's list but must not be served because their fishing and farming causes major environmental problems, such as destruction of mangrove

³⁷ Species categorised as critically endangered (CR) or endangered (EN) on the official red list of the country in which they are fished.

³⁸ IPBES (2019) Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services. www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services (15.08.2019)

forests.^{39,40} Mangrove forests are highly productive ecosystems that are home to a huge number of species of fish, shellfish and other animals. They also protect the coasts against flooding and erosion.

Species categorised as critically endangered (CR) or endangered (EN) on the red list of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)⁴¹. Several of the species are also on the OSPAR list of threatened and/or declining species. There is a ban on serving any species of shark or skate, even though not all of them are endangered, since there is a great deal of incorrect labelling.

Species categorised as critically endangered (CR) or endangered (EN) on the official red list of the country in which they are fished. Finland, Norway and Sweden have national red lists for both saltwater and freshwater fish, Denmark has a red list only for freshwater fish, and Iceland has no red list.

Fish and shellfish may in some cases come from sustainable fisheries or farms. For these species to be served, their sustainable production must be documented. They must therefore be certified with standards that meet Nordic Ecolabelling's Guidelines for assessing sustainability labelling of fish and shellfish e Appendix 4. Nordic Ecolabelling currently approves the MSC standard, but not ASC.

An exception is made in Iceland for traditional serving of the shark species *Somniosus microcephalus* and the skate species *Dipturus batis/Raja batis* and *Raja Amblyraja radiata*, because these are traditional dishes served on one day of the year. The shark is served in February and the skate on 23 December. In total, 8 tonnes of the shark species, 145 tonnes of the skate species *Raja batis* and 614 tonnes of the species *Raja Amblyraja radiata* are caught each year.⁴²

O21 Certified coffee, and tea

This requirement applies to catering services.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled coffee services already fulfil the requirement.

All coffee, and tea served must be certified or purchased through direct trade.

† List of all coffee and tea that is served and documentation regarding certification.

† If the business buys raw materials through direct trade, please upload documentation/information showing compliance with the requirement.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled coffee service.

³⁹ Thomas N, Lucas R, Bunting P, Hardy A, Rosenqvist A, Simard M (2017) Distribution and drivers of global mangrove forest change, 1996–2010. PLoS ONE 12(6): e0179302. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0179302>

⁴⁰ Richards DR, Friess DA (2016) Rates and drivers of mangrove deforestation in Southeast Asia, 2000–2012. PNAS 113(2):344–349. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1510272113>

⁴¹ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

⁴² Statistics Iceland: <https://statice.is/statistics/business-sectors/fisheries/catch/>

Background to requirement O21 Certified coffee, and tea

The cultivation and production of coffee and tea has a huge effect the environment and nature. E.g., coffee is ranked as number five on the list of the most climate-impacting raw materials in our food system per kg, after steak, chocolate, and lamb, among other things. Coffee is also number six on the list of raw materials that require the most farmland⁴³. In addition, coffee production is one of the leading (7–8) reasons for deforestation worldwide⁴⁴, and therefore regulated by the EU deforestation regulation⁴⁵.

Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals requires a transition to more sustainable food and farming systems that maintain ecosystems, are better adapted to climate change, and improve soil quality⁴⁶. Third-party certification of raw materials and organic farming⁴⁷ is therefore important for documenting more sustainable production. There are several different certification schemes for coffee and tea, each of which focuses on one or more factors during the cultivation and production of the raw materials. Some impose a ban on synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, and/or have requirements concerning the introduction of sustainable agricultural practices, working conditions, procedures, monitoring, improvements, prices, and so on.

Nordic Ecolabelling promotes organic labelling, as such labelling schemes prohibit synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, and organic farming practices increase biodiversity. Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade standards are not as strict in their environmental requirements as the organic labelling schemes. However, since coffee is a special commodity in terms of production locations and climate and social challenges, we also support the Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade certification schemes, which contribute positively to the improvement of the coffee industry in general via several important social and environmental requirements. Organic labelling refers to the labelling schemes that mainly drive production in the desired direction from an environmental perspective.

Nordic Ecolabelling wishes to set an exemption from the requirement concerning certification if coffee and tea is purchased through direct trade. Direct trade involves purchasing raw materials directly from the farmer/coffee farm. The purchaser must ensure the traceability of the raw materials back to the farmer. By trading directly with the farmers, the purchaser can help to ensure that social and environmental conditions are controlled, managed and taken care of by the farmers.

O22 Palm oil in frying oil

This requirement applies to catering services.

Catering from Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

⁴³ PLATFORM ON SUSTAINABLE FINANCE: TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP PART B – Annex: Technical Screening Criteria, March 2022

⁴⁴ Wedeux B, Schulmeister-Oldenhove A (2021): STEPPING UP? THE CONTINUING IMPACT OF EU CONSUMPTION ON NATURE WORLDWIDE

⁴⁵ https://green-business.ec.europa.eu/deforestation-regulation-implementation_en

⁴⁶ 8 UN, 'UN Sustainable Development Goals' www.FN.no/Om-FN/FNs-baerekraftsmaal (07.12.2022)

⁴⁷ 2 Eyhorn F, Muller A, Reganold JP, Frison E, Herren HR, Luttikholt L, Mueller A, Sanders J, Scialabba NEH, Seufert V, Smith P (2019) Sustainability in global agriculture driven by organic farming. Nature Sustainability 2:253–255. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-019-0266-6>

Palm oil must not make up any part of the frying oil used by the catering.

Contractual agreement with all catering suppliers that palm oil isn't used as frying oil.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled catering service.

Background to requirement O22 Palm oil in frying oil

Different products have different effects, and Nordic Ecolabelling has a particular focus on palm oil. The establishment of palm oil plantations is one of the main causes of rainforest destruction, which threatens the living conditions of indigenous people, plants and animals. The rainforests are particularly important for biodiversity, since they are the most species-rich ecosystems on the planet. Cutting down rainforest is also a serious threat to Earth's climate. Other environmental problems relating to palm oil are the use of toxic substances in production, air pollution when burning native forest, soil erosion and sedimentation in rivers and watercourses, and discharges of wastewater from the palm oil mills. Palm oil production is also associated with social issues, including the risk of workers' rights being violated.

Frying oil is a product that food services often use in large quantities. To reduce the use of palm oil, Nordic Ecolabelling prohibits the content of palm oil in frying oil.

Nordic Ecolabelling has assessed the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil's (RSPO) standard for sustainable palm oil production and judges that it does not currently fully satisfy our requirements concerning sustainability standards, since it does not give sufficient protection to biological areas and biodiversity. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore wishes to set as strict a requirement as possible concerning palm oil, where there are alternatives to its use.

O23 Responsible food and drink production

The requirement applies to the event organizers and catering services. Each catering service is responsible for achieving the minimum points, and the event organizer is responsible for ensuring the fulfilment of the contractual agreement in Appendix 3.

Catering from Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

The catering service must fulfil at least 3 points from the following table:

Theme	Requirement	Points
Ecolabelled catering service	The catering service is ecolabelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel.	3
Locally produced	The catering service has locally produced products in 2 of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dairy products (milk, cheese, etc.) • Eggs • Grains and baking ingredients • Fruit and berries • Vegetables, root vegetables and mushrooms • Drinks (juice, beer, etc.) • Poultry (chicken, turkey, etc.) • Fish and seafood • Meat (beef, pork, lamb, goat, wild game, etc.) • Other (honey, oil, herbs, etc.) 	1

Animal welfare	All cattle, goat, poultry or sheep meat from the catering supplier is grass-based and/or from natural pastures. This means that the animals must have had outdoor access and access to pasture throughout the whole day during the grazing season. The meat must be either certified with Dyrevelfærdsmærket (3 hearts only), Swedish Seal Natural Pasture (Svenskt Sigill Naturbeteskött) or Debio grass-based (Debio grasbasert) or be locally produced accompanied by a declaration from the farmer stating that the requirement is fulfilled.	1
Vegetarian	The catering service only serves vegetarian food.	2
Vegetarian to staff and backstage	All catering served to staff and backstage is vegetarian (only relevant in case the catering service oversees the providing food to all staff and backstage)	1
Fish	All served fish and seafood is labelled as either: - Certified organic - MSC certified - Labelled with reduced environmental impact, for example fish marked with government-approved labels such as "Naturskånsom" from the Danish Fisheries Agency.	2
Organic food or drink	The catering service only serves organic food or drink.	3
Organic food and drink	<i>Denmark:</i> - The catering service must purchase a minimum of more than 60% organic food. <i>Sweden:</i> - The restaurant is KRAV-certified to level 1 (in accordance with KRAV's percentage alternative), level 2 or level 3 <i>Norway:</i> - The restaurant has Debio bronze approval (according to Debio's percentage alternative), or Debio silver or gold or <i>Finland</i> - The restaurant has Finish "Step to organic" level 3.	3
GMO	The catering service does not serve genetically modified food. The catering service must have procedures in place to ensure that genetically modified food is not purchased.	2
No bottled water	The catering service only serves tap water, and no sales of bottled water.	2

↑ Contractual agreements.

Alternatively

↑ Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

🔍 Checked on site.

Background to requirement O23 Responsible food and drink production

Production of food and beverage is a significant source of the climate impact of the event. Nordic Ecolabelling has listed different reducing measures, and reward several actions, where the most efficient measures give the most points.

The applicant must achieve at least 3 points in the list by documenting measures they have already implemented, or plan to carry out, before the event is happening.

Overall, these measures contribute to a more sustainable, event, benefiting both the guests and the environment. Every event is different and there are several ways to work with sustainable food and beverage. Points are awarded according to the size/impact of the initiative.

Locally produced food: Several environmental factors support the promotion of locally produced food in the Nordic region, although not all of them apply to all production in every Nordic country. Much of the region's biodiversity can be found on farmland. Local food production helps to maintain the cultural landscape and to increase the diversity of wild species, habitats and cultivated plants⁴⁸, as well as it contributes to shorter transportation distances. Ecosystem services are retained, and the farming becomes more robust. Sales to local markets can encourage farmers to produce a greater variety of crops⁴⁹. With fruit and vegetables, particularly potatoes and other root vegetables, transport accounts for a large proportion of the environmental impact over their life cycle. Use of local, seasonal produce means that less energy is used, and greenhouse gas emissions are lower⁵⁰. When it comes to meat, transport makes up only a small part of the overall environmental impact, but the Nordic region and Europe generally have low carbon emissions per kilo of protein produced, compared with other regions⁵¹.

Vegetarian dish: See O19.

Fish: Marine ecosystems are threatened by overfishing, eutrophication, pollution and climate change. The fact that many fish stocks are overfished affects not only the individual stocks, but whole ecosystems. According to the UN's nature panel IPBES, overfishing is the key cause of biodiversity loss in the oceans.⁵² Organic and MSC certified fish and seafood as well as government approved labels such as "Naturskånsom" are all label schemes that support methods for environmentally sustainable fishing.

MSC-labelled fish: See O20.

Organic Food: See O17 and O18.

GMO: Genetically modified organisms (GMO) are a much-debated topic and many countries have banned the cultivation of GM crops. The themes of the debate include food safety, land use, lack of scientific knowledge about the effects of GM crops under local agricultural/forestry conditions and the risk of negative impacts on health and the environment. Nordic Ecolabelling applies the precautionary principle and bases its decisions on regulations that take a holistic approach to GMO. This means that sustainability, ethics and social benefit are weighed up together with health and the environment. Nordic Ecolabelling is not, in principle, against gene technology and GMO, but is concerned about the consequences of genetically modified plants, animals and microorganisms spreading in nature⁵³.

Tap water: See O16.

⁴⁸ Charlotte Lagerberg Fogelberg, På Väg Mot Miljöanpassade Kostråd. Vetenskapligt Underlag Inför Miljökonsekvensanalysen Av Livsmedelsverkets Kostråd (Swedish National Food Agency) .

⁴⁹ Johanna Björklund and others, 'Local Selling as a Driving Force for Increased On-Farm Biodiversity', *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*, 33.8 (2009), 885–902 .

⁵⁰ Valérie Masson-Delmotte and others, *Climate Change and Land. An IPCC Special Report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems* (IPCC, 2019)

⁵¹ P.J. Gerber and others, *Tackling Climate Change through Livestock. A Global Assessment of Emissions and Mitigation Opportunities* (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2013) .

⁵² IPBES (2019) Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services. www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services (15.08.2019)

⁵³ <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/nordic-ecolabelling/environmental-aspects/sustainable-raw-materials-biodiversity/gmo/>

5.9 Resource efficiency

O24 Waste sorting for guests

This requirement applies to the event organizer and venue.

It must be ensured that a minimum of four waste sorting options are available for guests.

The sorting options must be clearly visible, at several places.

↑ Description or pictures of how the requirement is fulfilled.

Background to requirement O24 Waste sorting for guests

Waste sorting is crucial as it helps reduce resource consumption by enabling the recycling of materials, and the waste sorting system in the Nordic countries is highly efficient and well-established. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore requires a minimum of four waste sorting options in all waste locations that are available to guests. It is up to the event organizer to decide which fractions are relevant for the actual event. The sorting options must be clearly visible in several places. The aim is to encourage guest to sort correctly, to ensure the highest possible degree of recycling.

O25 Waste sorting for staff and suppliers

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

It must be ensured that a minimum of ten waste sorting options are available to staff and suppliers.

Examples of fractions that may be relevant:

- Organic waste for degradation or composting
- Paper
- Cardboard packaging
- Glass, coloured and clear
- Plastics
- PET
- Deposit (deposit system for cans and bottles, where relevant)
- Metal
- Electronic waste such as batteries and lightbulbs
- Unsorted waste
- Other, not mentioned above

↑ Description of the sorting options or pictures of how the requirement is fulfilled.

Background to requirement O25 Waste sorting for staff and suppliers

Waste sorting is crucial as it helps reduce resource consumption by enabling the recycling of materials, and the waste sorting system in the Nordic countries is highly efficient and well-established. Nordic Ecolabelling sets strict requirements for the availability of waste sorting fractions to staff and guest to ensure that the company focuses on recycling. The aim is to

encourage correct sorting of the fractions that are generated, to ensure the highest possible degree of recycling.

There are considerable national, and regional, differences in the fractions that the different waste management contractors accept. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore requires ten fractions available to staff and suppliers.

O26 Ban on disposable items

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue and catering services.

Catering from Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

The use of the following disposable items is not permitted

- Lids, bowls, cups made of plastics (all types of plastics, such as PET, PP, PBAT, bio-based plastic, etc).
 - Exemption for lids used on prepacked food.
- Small single portions of butter, jam, pâté, milk, ketchup coffee capsules, etc.
- Single-use plastic plates, single-use plastic cutlery, plastic straws, plastic stirrers, plastic balloon sticks, cups and containers for food and drinks made of expanded polystyrene (EPS), all products made of oxo-degradable plastic are banned due to EU rules on single-use plastics.⁵⁴

† Confirmation that the not permitted disposable items are not used.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

🔍 Checked on site.

Background to requirement O26 Ban on disposable items

The aim of the requirement concerning disposable items is to reduce the consumption and save resources, as disposable items are often unnecessary, and often only used a few minutes. The EU Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment entered into force on 3 July 2021, and the requirement concerning cutlery, drinking straws, cocktail sticks and toothpicks in plastic is governed by the directive (Article 5, part B of the Annex). Products made of bio-based plastic are not permitted either. The ban on individual portions of butter, ketchup etc. is in line with the objectives of the new Packaging and Packaging Regulation (PPWR) and preparing actors for future legislation. According to the Article 25 in the PPWR, single use plastic packaging for condiments, preserves, sauces, coffee creamer, sugar in HORECA sector shall be restricted from January 2030 (Annex V).

O27 Serving of drinks

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue and catering services.

- Cold drinks: All cold drinks must be served in reusable drinking cups.

⁵⁴ [EU restrictions on certain single-use plastics - European Commission](#)

- Warm drinks, in separate areas, where guests don't take away the drinks: All warm drinks must be served in reusable drinking cups.
- Warm drinks, for take away and staff: All warm drinks must be served in reusable drinking cups or in Nordic Swan Ecolabelled disposables.

The event organizer shall have routines and a collection system, securing collection, reuse of the cups and recycling of disposables.

Drinks served directly from the can/bottle/carton are permitted if collection and recycling of the packaging is secured.

- ↑ Description/documentation of which cups that are used for both cold and hot drinks.
- ↑ Copy of the routines or description of the collection system that secure collection and reuse/recycling.
- 🔍 Checked on site.

Background to requirement O27 Serving of drinks

One of the most used items for food and beverage at an event is drinking glasses and cups. If these items are disposable items at the event, the climate impact from the event is much higher than if disposable products are avoided.

Nordic Ecolabelling is requiring the use of reusable glass and drinking cups because they may have several advantages over disposable cups⁵⁵. They can be reused many times without losing their quality, reducing the need for new virgin materials. Reuse through a safe, efficient system for collection, washing, inspection, and redistribution has potential to yield greater environmental benefits than recycling or discarding single use⁵⁶. In the study of single-use and multiple-use packaging, the environmental performance of glass bottles and the dine-in restaurant scenario consistently showed that multiple use packaging products had lower impacts across most impact categories⁵⁷. Use of reusables is also in line with the objectives of the becoming new Packaging and Packaging Regulation (PPWR). According to the Article 25 in the PPWR, single use plastic packaging for foods and beverages, such as trays, plates and cups in the HORECA sector, including all eating areas inside and outside, shall be restricted from January 2030 (Annex V). The regulation also set targets for reuse e.g. the final distributor in the HORECA sector shall offer consumers the option of packaging within a system for re-use.

Reusable glass significantly reduces waste. Producing glass requires more resources initially, but over its lifespan, it uses fewer resources compared to the continuous production of disposable cups.

⁵⁵ European Commission: Directorate-General for Environment, Gionfra, S., Pollitt, H., Stenning, J., Fazekas, D. et al., *Links between production, the environment and environmental policy*, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/569064> *Links between production, the environment and environmental policy* - Publications Office of the EU

⁵⁶ Eunomia 2023. Assessing Climate Impact: Reusable Systems vs. Single-use Takeaway Packaging [Eunomia Report](#)

⁵⁷ European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Sinkko, T., Amadei, A., Venturelli, S. and Ardente, F., Exploring the environmental performance of alternative food packaging products in the European Union, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/971274>, JRC136771

Many reusable plastics cups can also withstand multiple use, (several over 100), and handle a wider range of temperatures, making them suitable for both hot and cold beverages. High-quality reusable plastics like Tritan are BPA-free⁵⁸ and do not leach harmful chemicals, ensuring safe use.

The climate impact of plastic cups used at an event is influenced by how much new plastic is produced per serving, how much plastic is incinerated and how much plastic is recycled and how much it replaces virgin raw materials.

The return rate (how many cups are returned and sorted correctly instead of going to waste) and loss (how many cups end up as waste, in nature, or taken home) significantly impact the climate footprint of cups used at festivals. This is shown in a study done by NORSUS, Norsk Institutt for Bærekraftsforskning.⁵⁹ The study also suggests how a festival organizes its collection system may have a greater effect on littering risk than the type of cups used.

O28 Serving of food in restaurants

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue and catering services, and applies in restaurants in separate areas, where guests don't take away the food.

All tableware used for food service in a separate restaurant, must be reusable.

↑ Confirmation that reusable tableware is used for food service in a separate restaurant.

🔍 Checked on site.

Background to requirement O28 Serving of food in restaurants

Events with indoor food services and restaurants have good alternatives to the use of disposable items in serving situations⁶⁰, and Nordic Ecolabelling therefore require all tableware to be reusable. The aim of the requirement is to reduce the consumption of disposable items and save resources.

O29 Serving of food - take away and staff

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue and catering services.

All plates and bowls used for food service for staff and take away for guest, must:

- Be reusable tableware

And/or

- Be Nordic Swan Ecolabelled tableware

And/or

- Be made of renewable raw materials such as paper, cardboard, bagasse and palm leaves etc.

Plastics including biobased plastics is prohibited.

⁵⁸ Glausiusz, Josie (2014). "[Toxicology: The plastics puzzle](#)"

⁵⁹ Norsus, 2021, "miljøvurdering av ølservering på festivaler https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B1FkDp_80jkdievoHksA-QHiw_sMyUM7/view

⁶⁰ Sinkko, T., Amadei, A., Venturelli, S., Ardente, F. 2024; Exploring the environmental performance of alternative food packaging products in the European Union, Life cycle impacts of single-use and multiple-use packaging [JRC136771_01.pdf](#)

Exemptions from the requirement:

Laminate and plastic coatings are allowed on paper and cardboard-based products or as “windows”, e.g. in a paper bag, as these can be separated from the paper/cardboard material in the recycling facilities.

↑ Confirmation that the disposable items used fulfil the requirement.

↑ Overview of all the disposable items purchased, and information about the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and license number, if relevant.

🔍 Checked on site.

Background to requirement O29 Serving of food – take away and staff

Nordic Ecolabelling wants as few disposable items as possible to be used, but we see that there is a need for disposable items when the event does not have the possibility to use reusable tableware. Nordic Ecolabelling wishes to promote products ecolabelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel, and products made from renewable raw materials, because these have a generally lower environmental impact than other disposables.⁶⁰ The reason why we do not accept bioplastics within the renewable raw materials is because bio-plastics like PLA, which are compostable or degradable, cannot be recycled with current systems and can cause issues with existing recycling processes. These plastics do not align with the EU's goal of increasing recycling in the circular economy. Composting and biogas facilities also do not want these plastics because they cause problems. The waste phase is important because disposable items create a lot of waste, and Nordic Ecolabelling want to encourage products that can be recycled.

O30 Decorations, give aways and confetti

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue and catering services.

- No disposable items and single use products in plastics, glass and metal are permitted as give aways and merchandising products, unless the products are designed for recycling.
- Confetti must be made of paper or dried leaves.
- Decoration materials must be reused, capable of being reused after the event or made from renewable resources.
- The use of cut flowers is prohibited.

Exemption if the flowers are locally produced.

↑ Contractual agreements from catering services

↑ Verification from the event organizer and venue.

🔍 Checked on site.

Background to requirement O30 Decorations, give aways and confetti

Nordic Ecolabelling sets strict requirements to decoration, give aways and confetti, because single use products and disposable items are used for a very short period of time, and production of these items consumes valuable resources and energy, exacerbating their environmental footprint.

Plastic confetti used outside is nearly impossible to clean up completely. For outdoor events this problem is increased since it often ends up in waterways, where it can be ingested by marine life.

The cultivation of cut flowers typically involves the use of pesticides and fertilizers, which can contaminate soil and water sources.⁶¹ Additionally, many flowers are grown in regions with scarce water resources.⁶² In addition, the transportation of cut flowers, often over long distances, results in significant carbon emissions.

To reduce the environmental impact, it is important to consider sustainable alternatives. For instance, reusable products can significantly cut down on waste and carbon emission. Biodegradable confetti made from materials like paper or dried leaves offers a festive option without the environmental harm. Instead of cut flowers, reusable artificial flowers, potted plants or locally grown flowers can be a more sustainable choice, as they often require fewer resources and have a longer lifespan.

O31 Food waste

This requirement applies to the catering services.

Catering from Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

All catering services shall have a food waste reduction policy. The policy shall have preventive measures for reduction of food waste.

- Food is planned, calculated and prepared in a way that food waste is prevented.
- If buffet: food is served in a way that food waste is prevented.

E.g. smaller plates, reducing the selection on the buffet, overview of which dishes in the buffet belong together, reducing the size of serving dishes, optimising procedures for refilling, pricing by weight or size, having a good idea of the number of visitors, maintaining food at the correct temperature, etc.

- There are solutions for leftover food. E.g. sale of surplus food and/or donation.

† Description and contractual agreement.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

Background to requirement O31 Food waste

Food waste that is fit for human consumption is a significant problem all over the world, with around a third of all the food produced ending up in the bin.⁶³ Food waste presents a challenge to the climate and the environment, commercial profitability and social ethics. Food waste has moved further into the spotlight in recent years, and relevance and potential are high, with medium steerability, all depending on the type of food being served.

⁶¹ [Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment: Soil Fertility for Field-Grown Cut Flowers; Greenhouse & Floriculture: Soil Fertility for Field-Grown Cut Flowers | Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment at UMass Amherst](#)

⁶² Gelaye Y. 2022; The status and natural impact of floriculture production in Ethiopia: a systematic review: [The status and natural impact of floriculture production in Ethiopia: a systematic review | Environmental Science and Pollution Research](#)

⁶³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FOA: <http://www.fao.org/savefood/resources/keyfindings/en/>

Food waste is ethically indefensible, bad for the environment and makes little financial sense for business. The aim of reducing food waste is incorporated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), with Goal 12.3 expressing a target to halve food waste per person by 2030. All the Nordic countries are committed to this target. Food waste is already a priority theme in the catering service industry. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore requires a food waste reduction policy.

O32 Purchase of printed matter and tissue paper

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue, hygiene stations and portable toilets.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

- 100% of the printed matter the event organizer is responsible of, must be from a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled printing company or be certified with the EU Ecolabel. Printed matter means, for example, posters, brochures, advertising, banners etc.
- 100% of purchased toilet paper, and paper towels (alternatively hand towels rolls in Finland) purchased for the event must be Nordic Swan Ecolabelled or EU ecolabelled. This requirement is relevant to the venues, hygiene stations and portable toilets.

† Declaration on which ecolabelled printing company is being used or documentation of purchased printed matter, showing that the purchases are ecolabelled.

† Declaration on which tissue paper is being used, or documentation of purchased tissue paper, showing that the purchases are ecolabelled.

🔍 Checked on site.

Alternatively

† Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled catering service.

Background to requirement O32 Purchase of printed matter and tissue paper

Nordic Ecolabelling requires that the event organizer is purchasing ecolabelled products for printed matter. This is only relevant for the products the event organizer is responsible of the purchase for. The event organizer has less steerability for posters and handouts, that are delivered by for example artists, exhibitors or sponsors.

All toilet paper, kitchen rolls and paper towels, used at the event shall be ecolabelled, as these have a lower environmental impact compared with non-ecolabelled purchases.⁶⁴

That is why we require that event organizer, venue, supplier for hygiene stations, and portable toilets shall provide the event with ecolabelled tissue paper.

Nordic Ecolabelling's environmental requirements for tissue paper, including napkins and kitchen towels, cover everything from forestry and the choice of raw materials to low energy consumption and low carbon emissions, emissions to air and water and control of the use of

⁶⁴ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/eu-ecolabel/about-eu-ecolabel_en

chemicals and eutrophying and acidifying substances such as sulphur and nitrogen oxides. Labelling only with the PEFC or FSC logo is not sufficient, however, as these labels only cover the forest raw material. Paper labelled with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel, or the EU Ecolabel ensures that, as well as the forest raw material being sustainable, the manufacturing process has low emissions to air and water. It is manufactured with efficient energy use and a limited amount of chemicals. "Tissue paper" in this requirement includes toilet paper, kitchen rolls and paper towels. In Finland ecolabelled towel rolls are commonly used instead of paper towels.

O33 Measures for resource efficiency

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue and catering services. The event organizer is responsible for achieving the minimum points, but suppliers and sub-suppliers might often be responsible for the documentation.

A minimum of 2 points must be achieved from the following table with measures for resource efficiency.

Theme	Measure	Maximum points
Finger food	Meals from 50% of catering service are offered in the form of finger food, wrapping (from renewable raw materials) or similar to avoid the use of tableware.	1
Ecolabelled napkins and kitchen towels	All napkins and kitchen towels used by 50% catering services are ecolabelled.	1
	All napkins and kitchen towels used by all catering services are ecolabelled.	2
Gifts and medals	Gifts and medals for speakers, artists, or participants are made of sustainable materials. I. e. local or organic food and drinks, wood, cardboard, recycled material or upcycling products. <i>Flowers certified with Fair trade fulfil the requirement.</i>	1
No giveaways	No giveaways to guest during the whole event (including venue, event organizer and catering services).	2
Different size of meal portions	Portions of food are available in different sizes, from at least 50% of the catering services.	1
Reuse of rainwater	Using rainwater tanks to reduce the use of water. E.g. water for flushing in toilets.	1

↑ Documentation related to selected theme, showing the requirements are fulfilled

Background to requirement O33 Measures for resource efficiency

The use of resources at an event has a significant climate impact. Nordic Ecolabelling has listed different reducing measures, and reward actions, where the most efficient measures give the most points.

The applicant must achieve at least 2 points in the list by documenting measures they have already implemented, or plan to carry out, before the event is happening.

Overall, these measures contribute to a more sustainable, event, benefiting both the guests and the environment.

Finger food: Finger foods are easy to eat without the need for utensils. However, individually wrapped items can be more hygienic, reducing the risk of contamination, which

is particularly important in large events. Using renewable raw materials for wrappings and minimizing the use of disposable tableware helps reduce waste and the environmental impact of the event.

Ecolabelled napkins and kitchen towels: See background to the Nordic Ecolabelling criteria "Tissue Paper and Tissue Products".

Gifts and medals: Using sustainable materials for gifts and medals, such as wood, cardboard, recycled materials, reflects a growing commitment to environmental responsibility. This approach helps reduce waste, lower carbon footprints, and promote the use of renewable resources. Upcycled products are items created by transforming waste materials, by-products, or unwanted items into new products of higher quality or value. This process aims to give new life to materials that would otherwise be discarded and minimizes the need for new raw materials. Fair Trade certified flowers ensures that the products are ethically sourced, supporting fair wages and safe working conditions for farmers.

No giveaways: Not providing giveaways at events reduces waste and minimizes environmental impact by decreasing the production, transportation, and disposal of materials, thereby lowering the event's overall carbon footprint

Different size of meal portions: Offering food portions in different sizes helps reduce food waste and the environmental impact of catering services. By allowing guests to choose portion sizes that match their appetite, less food is discarded, which saves resources and lowers the carbon footprint associated with food production and disposal.

Reuse of rainwater: Using a rainwater tank helps reduce the consumption of municipal water by utilizing rainwater for various purposes. Additionally, it can lead to lower water bills and support sustainable water management.

5.10 Cleaning products

O34 Ecolabelled cleaning products

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue, catering services, cleaning services, and portable toilet- and hygiene station-suppliers.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled cleaning services, hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

100% of the cleaning products used and expected to be used for general cleaning and dishwashing at the event, must be ecolabelled with Nordic Swan Ecolabel, EU Ecolabel, or Good Environmental Choice.

For each cleaning product, state the name, supplier, manufacturer, function, frequency of use and ecolabel.

Disinfectants may only be used where this is necessary to fulfil legal hygiene regulations.

Safety data sheets and user information must be available wherever the chemicals are used.

† Catering services: Contractual agreements with all the cleaning products with name, supplier/manufacturer, function and ecolabel.

- ↑ Event organizer and venue and cleaning services: Overview of all the cleaning products used at the event. Name, supplier/manufacturer, function and ecolabel.
- ↑ Confirmation that user information and safety data sheets (in line with Annex II to REACH, Regulation (EC) 1907/2006) are available for the relevant users.

Alternatively

- ↑ Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

Background to requirement O34 Ecolabelled cleaning products

Chemical consumption has an influence on the environmental impact of the event. A large amount of chemicals is used when cleaning up after the event, particularly events with large catering services/restaurants and associated with dishwashing. The environmental impact can be reduced by using ecolabelled chemicals that contain minimal amounts of undesirable ingoing substances, and by dosing correctly. The requirements concerning cleaning products therefore focus on general cleaning and dishwashing.

O35 Prohibited products

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venue, catering services and cleaning services. If any of the services are ecolabelled, the requirements are met.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

The following substances is not permitted:

- Ozonated water (ozone water)
- Disinfectants for surfaces must not contain reactive and organic chlorinated substances in such concentrations that it appears on the product's safety data sheet. Electrochemically activated water (ECA water) forms hypochlorite and is not permitted.

Exemptions: Chlorinated compounds whose use is required by the authorities, and disinfectants for food security.

Disinfectants may only be used where this is necessary to fulfil legal hygiene regulations.

- ↑ Confirmation in contractual agreements and/or Appendix X that the company fulfil the requirement.

Alternatively

- ↑ Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

Background to requirement O35 Prohibited products

"Chemical-free cleaning" has become more popular in recent years, and ozone water is one of many competitors. The idea of producing ozone in water become popular in 2010 in the Nordic countries. Ozonized water is produced by infusing water with ozone gas. Ozone itself is a toxic gas and dangerous to humans even at low concentrations. According to the adopted opinion from the European "Committee for Risk Assessment", RAC, the following

harmonized classifications should apply to ozone⁶⁵: Muta. 2 H341 Suspected of causing genetic defects, and Carc. 2 H351 suspected of causing cancer, Acute Tox 2 H330 fatal if inhaled, STOT SE 2 H370 causes damage to organs, STOT RE 1 H372 causes damage to organs through prolonged and repeated exposure, Aquatic Acute 1 H400 very toxic to aquatic life, Aquatic Chronic 1 H410 very toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects, and Ox. Gas 1 H270 may cause or intensify fire, oxidiser.

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) does not recommend the use of ozone water produced at home from household water and have several concerns about the use.⁶⁶

Nordic Swan Ecolabelling has decided to ban the use of ozone water due to the health issues of ozone, which are evident from the classifications. It is a concern that occupational exposure limit values can be exceeded when the product is produced, in addition to the gas's high reactivity and possible harmful reaction products.

Organic and reactive chlorine compounds, such as sodium hypochlorite, are ingredients used in disinfectant and antibacterial products. The ingredients may be toxic or lead to the formation of toxic non-degradable bio accumulative substances. Based on this, Nordic Ecolabelling has decided to ban these ingredients in disinfectants.

Electrochemically activated water (ECA water) is often marketed as harmless and consisting only of water and salt. This does not imply accuracy. The product is produced at the user's site by sending electricity through the salt water, which causes the formation of hypochlorite. ECA water can also increase the use of disinfectants in areas where there is no real need for disinfection, which can contribute to the development of resistance in microorganisms. Nordic Ecolabelling therefore does not allow the use of ECA water at Nordic Swan Ecolabelled companies

O36 Water, toilets, and hygiene stations

This requirement applies to the event organizer, venues, hygiene stations and portable toilet supplier.

Portable toilets are mobility toilets not connected to a sewerage system. Hygiene stations are facilities for cleaning of hands.

Nordic Swan Ecolabelled hotels, food services and conference facilities already fulfil the requirement.

Both toilets and portable toilets and hygiene stations must comply with following:

- Cleaning products used for sanitary cleaning must be ecolabelled (according to requirement O34).
- Hand soap used, shall be ecolabelled.
 - Hand disinfectant is permitted.
- 100% of purchased toilet paper, and paper towels (alternatively hand towels rolls in Finland) must be ecolabelled (according to requirement O32).
- Portable toilets with flushing options must be vacuum toilets or have a maximum consumption rate of 4 litres water per flush.

⁶⁵ RAC Opinion proposing harmonised classification and labelling at EU level of ozone, March 2023: <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/e0d136d8-50af-00b6-2795-1207b902072f>

⁶⁶ Käykö otsonivesi pintojen tai ihon desinfiointiin? THL, 2023

- After the event, the water pipes connecting portable water stations at the event, must be reused.
- ↑ Contractual agreement with venue, hygiene station and portable toilet supplier showing that the requirement is met.

Alternatively

- ↑ Copy of the agreement with a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service.

Background to requirement O36 Water, toilets, and hygiene stations

Nordic Ecolabelling requires that toilets and hygiene stations comply with specific environmental standards because it is crucial for promoting sustainability and hygiene at events. Using ecolabelled cleaning products for toilets guarantees that the cleaning process minimizes harmful environmental impacts.

Similarly, providing ecolabelled hand soap at hygiene stations ensures that attendees use products that are environmentally friendly and effective. Allowing hand disinfectant is to secure good hygiene, particularly important in maintaining health standards.

Requiring that 100% of purchased toilet paper and paper towels be ecolabelled further supports sustainable practices.

Using portable toilets with vacuum flushing options or those with a maximum consumption rate of 4 litres water per flush is an effective way to conserve water. These toilets are designed to use minimal water while maintaining hygiene standards, contributing to water conservation efforts.

Finally, reusing water pipes connecting all water stations at the event promotes resource efficiency. This applies to e.g. drinking water, catering suppliers, portable toilets and hygiene stations connected to the water network or water tanks after the event. This practice reduces waste and supports a circular economy, where materials are reused and recycled whenever possible.

5.11 Legal obligations and working conditions

O37 Legal obligations

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The event organizer is responsible for ensuring that the event meets all requirements set by the authorities and complies with all applicable laws.

This includes among others:

- Landowner permission, where applicable
- Authority permission, where applicable
- Safety/security
- Sanitary conditions and toilet facilities
- Compliance with government regulations related to serving alcohol
- Risk assessment, where relevant
- Working conditions

- † Declaration that the event meets all requirements set by the authorities and complies with all applicable laws.

Background to requirement O37 Legal obligations

The event producer applying for the Nordic Swan Ecolabel for an event must meet all requirements set by the authority and comply with all laws applicable to the relevant event.

For example, the organizer must comply with all laws and regulations relating to construction, safety, fire protection and hygiene. The event must not endanger human life and health, and safety must be ensured. The event must not lead to a disturbance of public peace, order and security. National requirements for working conditions and working environment must be met. Nordic Ecolabelling requires a declaration from the organizer to ensure that they have assumed this responsibility.

O38 Volunteer working conditions

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The event organizer must commit to fair principles regarding the use of volunteers. The principles must at least cover the following subjects:

- Freedom to volunteer: Volunteers should engage out of their own free will, without coercion
- Safety and security: Ensuring the physical and emotional safety of volunteers is paramount. This includes providing necessary training, protective equipment, and mechanisms to address issues like harassment. The volunteers must be covered by accident insurance.
- Fair engagement: Volunteers roles should be clearly defined. The working hours, including breaks, should be fair and agreed upon before the start of the event.

A copy of the principles regarding use of volunteers and description of how they are fulfilled.

Background to requirement O38 Volunteer working conditions

Using volunteers in events is very common and plays a crucial role in the success of many types of events. By implementing and adhering to fair principles, organizations can create a supportive and rewarding environment for volunteers, ensuring their contributions are meaningful and impactful.

5.12 Licence maintenance

The purpose of the licence maintenance is to ensure that fundamental quality assurance is dealt with appropriately.

O39 Customer complaints

This requirement applies to the event organizer.

The licensee must guarantee that the quality of the Nordic Swan Ecolabelled service does not deteriorate during the validity period of the licence. Therefore, the licensee must keep an archive of customer complaints.

Note that the original routine must be in one Nordic language or in English.

† Upload your company’s routine for handling and archiving customer complaints.

Background to requirement O39 Customer complaints

Nordic Ecolabelling requires that your company has implemented a customer complaint handling system. To document your company’s customer complaint handling, you must upload your company’s routine describing these activities. The routine should be dated and signed and will normally be a part of your company’s quality management system.

If your company does not have a routine for customer complaint handling, it is possible to upload a description of how your company perform these activities. During the on-site visit, Nordic Ecolabelling will check that the customer complaint handling is implemented in your company as described. The customer complaints archive will also be checked during the visit.

6 Environmental impact of Events

The relevant environmental impacts found in the life cycle of Events are set out in a MECO scheme below. A MECO describes the key areas that have impact on the environment and health throughout the life cycle of the product – including consumption of materials/resources (M), energy (E), chemicals (C) and other impact areas (O).

Nordic Ecolabelling sets requirements concerning the topics and processes in the life cycle that have a high environmental impact – also called hotspots. Based on the MECO analysis, an RPS tool is used to identify where ecolabelling can have the greatest effect. R represents the environmental relevance. ; P is the potential to reduce the environmental impact and S is the steerability on how compliance with a requirement can be documented and followed up. The criteria contain requirements in those areas in the life cycle that have been found to have high RPS, since there is potential to achieve positive environmental gains.

Table 3 RPS scheme for events

Overall priority	Area and assessment of R, P, S (high, medium or low)	Comments
HIGH	Energy and CO₂ R: high P: high S: medium	Relevance: Energy use and CO ₂ emissions are high in events. Electricity use was estimated to be 28% of the total CO ₂ emissions in the example from a study ÜBER LEBENSKUNST. The overall energy use and CO ₂ emissions of events consist of multiple smaller parts and compiled together can constitute a large share on the overall environmental impact of the event. Potential to decrease the climate impact is also considered high, as shown in the example from ÜBER LEBENSKUNST ⁶⁷ , where the event could decrease the emissions by 40% by transport related measures. Steerability of energy use and CO ₂ emissions is considered to medium and depends on the type of event and the event producer’s possibility to lower the impact. The event producer can directly influence the energy use of their own equipment for

⁶⁷ Umweltbilanz von ÜBER LEBENSKUNST, Mottschall et al. 2012

		<p>audio playback, lighting, streaming, batteries/generators etc.⁶⁸ It is also possible to indirectly impact the energy use by choice of venue, location of the event, accommodation.</p> <p>Venues – Some venues are very energy efficient, but the possibilities to use only energy efficient venues can be limited because of limited availability. There is for example not so many big venues that are suitable for thousands of visitors. It is however to some degree possible to impact the extra energy need caused by the event and it is also possible to follow up the energy use by specified energy reports from the venues.</p> <p>Location/transport - The choice of a venue for an event has a noticeable impact on the total transport emissions of the event, because of the relation to existing infrastructure. It is important that the venue can be reached by public transport or transportation arranged by the event, and that guests are informed about public transportation possibilities.</p> <p>Accommodation – The event producer has good possibilities to choose energy efficient staff-accommodation, for example by using ecolabelled hotels. Also, the visitors can be nudged to choose more environmentally friendly accommodation alternatives.</p> <p>Food – There is fair possibilities to serve food and drinks with less energy demand and CO₂ emissions, for example avoid bottled water. The steerability is good especially for food served to the staff.</p>
	<p>Disposables R: high P: high S: medium</p>	<p>Relevance of reducing the environmental impact from disposable items in events is high and the use of disposables is not in line with circular economy. To be able to eat and drink in events either in bigger venues or outside in a festival area, disposable items are widely used. Disposable items create a large amount of waste, naturally depending on the amount of people and their need for food during the event, so the relevance highly increases with the size of the event.</p> <p>Potential to decrease the use of disposables is high. Some venues can easily use washable cups and cutlery if the area of eating and drinking is determined, and the items can be collected for washing up. In bigger events and venues where people are walking around with their food and drinks, disposable items are commonly used. Pant cups/mugs is one of several solutions to lower the environmental impact.</p> <p>Steerability to reduce the use of disposables is considered medium. At some venues there is high possibilities to use no disposables, but on other venues there are more challenges. For example, bottled water causes a lot of waste, which in most events in the Nordics could be avoided by providing easy access to tap water and encouraging visitors to bring their own fillable water bottles. There are, however, local/national rules which might restrict possibilities to bring own bottles to the venue. If disposables cannot be avoided, there is still potential for improvement in using ecolabelled disposables. However, the willingness of the venue owner to reduce the impact of disposables is crucial, and the event producer can have reduced possibility to impact.</p>
	<p>Waste R: high P: high S: medium</p>	<p>Effective waste management helps protect the environment by reducing pollution. Relevance of waste management and waste reduction is considered be high. This is especially highlighted in</p>

⁶⁸ Klimabilanzen in Kulturinstitutionen. Dokumentation des Pilotprojekts und Arbeitsmaterialien, Völckers & Haß 2021

		<p>events where the need for disposable items is big. The organizing of events also generates large amounts of waste⁶⁹. Potential of reducing the waste is high in the Nordics, since it is possible to reduce quantities of waste, and by sorting the waste for recycling. For example, introducing pant system for reusable items can replace disposables.</p> <p>Steerability is medium, since the event organizer can have reduced opportunities to impact how the waste sorting is managed in a rented venue. In cases with better control possibility, the steerability can be high.</p>
	<p>Accommodation R: high P: high S: medium</p>	<p>Relevance of the impact from accommodation is high. Events move a large amount of people and many need to stay over in the city of the event for a night or more depending on duration of the event. The accommodation of a large number of people has big environmental impact.</p> <p>Potential for improvements is good.⁷⁰ There is many options on how to make the accommodation more environmentally friendly, as can be studied in the background of NSE's (Nordic Swan Ecolabel) criteria for hotel services. A big tour can have more than 50 000 visitors and it would give a big positive impact if even a part of them could be directed to stay in ecolabelled accommodation.</p> <p>Steerability of the accommodation is medium.</p> <p>Staff accommodation: Since the organizer oversees choosing accommodation for own staff, the steerability is good. In the bigger cities is usually ecolabelled accommodation available. In some cases, the steerability is weaker since the location of the events limits the options for accommodation.</p> <p>Guest accommodation: The steerability of guest accommodation is generally lower but can be nudged by information at the ticket purchase. For example, the event organizer can recommend ecolabelled accommodation around the event, or have discounts for them etc. In events where the organizer also provides some accommodation for the visitors, for example festivals with tent accommodation areas, the possibility to impact the waste sorting, recycling, energy use, water use etc. is bigger and can be well managed with good planning. The Austrian ecolabel has chosen not to include tent areas to events criteria, due to low steerability. This is done in these Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria as well.</p>
	<p>Food (venue restaurants) R: high P: high S: low</p> <p>Food (backstage) R: high P: high S: medium</p> <p>Food (outdoor events) R: high P: high S: medium</p>	<p>The food aspects served at events needs to be divided in the food that is offered by the venue restaurants and the food that is served in the backstage for the staff and the performers. If food is served at outdoor events, where there are no permanent restaurants, this will lower steerability in RPS. In bigger events most of the guests stay in a hotel or other accommodation that also offers some food, that's why it is important to also investigate the accommodation of guests and staff.</p> <p>The RPS of food is documented in Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria for restaurants. Here a short summary of R and P:</p> <p>Relevance: The environmental burden of food is considerable and well documented. For example, the more meat in the diet, the bigger impact. Therefore, it is good for environment to promote vegetarian food.</p> <p>Typically, food serving is not the focus for event producers, but food gets more important if the event that last longer than a few hours, then visitors need something to eat and drink. During longer events like festivals, food becomes even more important</p>

⁶⁹ Klimabilanzen in Kulturinstitutionen. Dokumentation des Pilotprojekts und Arbeitsmaterialien, Völckers & Haß 2021

⁷⁰ How sustainable are sustainability conferences? – Comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment of an international conference series in Europe, Neugebauer et al. 2020

		<p>since people might eat multiple meals a day in the event area. Also, drinks play a significant role in most events.</p> <p>Potential: Ecological food and food based on vegetarian ingredients has a smaller environmental impact than meat and, to a lesser extent, fish⁷¹. ⁷²</p> <p>Also, aspects as avoidance of bottled water and minimizing food waste are significant. Food waste is described in detail below.</p> <p>Steerability for food is highly dependent on the type of the event and what possibilities the event producer has to promote environmentally better food and food services. Possible sponsors might lower the steerability, if they only allow sell certain products/drinks etc. to be sold.</p> <p>Steerability (venue restaurants)</p> <p>In venues that hosts permanent restaurants, the possibility to influence them is quite low. The restaurants usually have contracts with the venue, and this limits the steerability. To get the restaurants to lower their ecological footprint is a long process, but ecolabelling of events might over time influence also the restaurants to improvements. There is a possibility to promote ecolabelled restaurants by giving points, and the event producer can then suggest that the venues get their restaurants ecolabelled.</p> <p>Steerability (backstage)</p> <p>The event producer has usually good possibilities to choose the food offered for the staff and the performers backstage. Some limitations can be set due to demands of artists etc. It is even possible in many cases to offer only vegetarian food in the backstage.</p> <p>Steerability (outdoor event)</p> <p>Some festivals want to profile themselves to be more sustainable, and this can be done for example by offering visitors only vegetarian food.</p>
MEDIUM	<p>Venue R: high P: medium S: medium</p>	<p>Relevance, potential: These aspects are described in the Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria for restaurants, conference centres and hotels. The R and P is high to medium, depending on the type of event. In addition to traditional environmental aspects, also social aspects and working conditions need be considered.</p> <p>Steerability: Some venues can already be ecolabelled by Nordic Swan Ecolabel if they are connected to a hotel, restaurant, or a conference centre. In these cases, they could be nudged towards applying for their own ecolabel. The S might decrease depending on the event: for example, there is overall only a few big enough venues to host a big event, so there is not much to choose from – but also these venues can be nudged to improve some aspects in their environmental performance.</p>
	<p>Transport (goods transport) R: high P: medium S: low</p> <p>Transport (staff) R: high</p>	<p>Relevance for transports related to events can be considered high, the direct emissions from vehicles being the main source of the environmental impact. According to the ÜBER LEBENSKUNST study, more than 50% of the total CO₂emissions were related to transports. The transports can be divided into transport of goods, staff and visitors.</p> <p>Potential for lowering the environmental effects of transports differs according to the type of event but can on average be considered medium high. Environmentally better vehicles can be used for goods and equipment's. Personnel and visitors can be nudged to use public transports and avoid flights, if possible. If</p>

⁷¹ How sustainable are sustainability conferences? – Comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment of an international conference series in Europe, Neugebauer et al. 2020

⁷² Umweltbilanz von ÜBER LEBENSKUNST, Mottschall et al. 2012

	<p>P: medium S: medium</p> <p>Transport (visitors)</p> <p>R: high P: medium S: low</p>	<p>the event is organized as a tour in different parts of the country, this will to some extent lower the need of visitor transportations. Steerability for lowering the transportation impact varies from low to medium, depending on the type of transport.</p> <p>Goods transport: The event producer has some steerability to influence the equipment and goods transport by choosing the service provider based on their environmental performance. It however seems, that the options for improvements are limited. Also, sometimes the performers have their own transportation, of which the event producer cannot influence. If the whole tour or series of events is solely organized by one organization, the event producer has more power over all the transport than if the performers come to the event as part of their separately scheduled tours.</p> <p>Staff transport: Staff transport can be more easily influenced by the event organizer for example by providing the staff free public transport to the event site or at least encouraging the use of public transporting case of no existing public transport, busses to the event can be organized for the staff before and after the shifts. Biking could also be encouraged both with the staff coming to work and moving inside the event area, if the area is bigger, by arranging designated bike parks that are free and making car parking in the area cost more.</p> <p>Visitor transport: That can be more easily influenced by the event organizer for example by instructing on the use of public transport or even providing free public transport to the event site with the purchase of the event ticket. In case of no existing public transport, busses to the event can be organized as part of the event and accessible with the ticket. Biking could also be encouraged.^{73, 74}</p>
	<p>Food waste</p> <p>R: high P: medium S: low</p>	<p>Relevance: Food waste presents a challenge to the climate and the environment, commercial profitability, and social ethics. Food waste has moved further into the spotlight in recent years, and relevance is high.</p> <p>Potential: the potential to decrease the impact of food in events is medium</p> <p>Steerability: the steerability to decrease food waste in events is often low. This is however depending on the type of event and type of food provided. The events are often one-time happenings in the one place, where the amount of food needed can be predicted from the amount of sold tickets. Also, the portion sizes can be determined by the type of the event. For example, in shorter events there might be need for smaller snacks, whereas all-day events the need for whole meals increases. On a music festival people might not have the time or want to sit down for a big meal, hence fast food is popular. It is hard to influence people's leftovers in this type of "takeaway" situations. Optimizing the portion sizes and the food options are some means to lower the food waste, as well as selling remaining dishes cheaper after hours.</p>
	<p>Consumables</p> <p>R: medium P: high S: medium</p>	<p>Relevance and Potential: Please check the Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria background⁷⁵ for respective consumable product. The relevance is medium since consumables are not focus on events. Consumption of large quantities of consumables creates high relevance. The potential is high since there are often many ecolabelled products on the market.</p>

⁷³ Umweltbilanz von ÜBER LEBENSKUNST, Mottschall et al. 2012

⁷⁴ Klimabilanzen in Kulturinstitutionen. Dokumentation des Pilotprojekts und Arbeitsmaterialien, Völckers & Haß 2021

⁷⁵ <https://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/criteria/>

		<p>Steerability: It is in many cases easy for the venue to choose for example ecolabelled tissue paper. However, these decisions are often not directly in the hands of the event producer, hence the steerability is medium. The venue can for example have long contracts with the provider of consumables, and it might not be possible to do changes on short notice. There are also big variations across different type of events. Outdoor events might have less consumables than indoor events, but the use of disposables can be higher (see above Disposables).</p>
	<p>Chemicals / cleaning R: medium P: medium S: medium</p>	<p>Relevance and Potential: Please check the Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria for chemicals and cleaning service. The relevance is medium since chemicals and cleaning are not focus on events. The potential is also set medium, but the type of event determines the possibilities to lower the environmental impact. The supply of ecolabelled cleaning products on the market is good.</p> <p>Steerability: On the outdoor events the daily cleaning usually cleaning of portable toilets and possibly serving areas/tables if there is a serving area for eating. In many cases the cleaning happens after the event. The venues usually have their own cleaning, so the steerability is only medium. In best cases, the event producer can impact the venue to get an ecolabelled cleaning service or at least use ecolabelled cleaning chemicals. The event producer can control how the cleaning is done in their own office.</p>
LOW	<p>Ecolabelled products / merchandises, handouts R: medium P: low S: low</p>	<p>Relevance and Potential: The relevance is medium since merchandises and handouts seldom are main focus in events. There are however many products related to the events, that in theory could get an ecolabel, but the actual possibility to access them is not good. The highest potential to lower the environmental impact is often to avoid merchandises and handouts.</p> <p>Steerability: Merchandises as T-shirts, hoodies and tote bags could be ecolabelled but the actual ecolabelled options in the markets are not that many. There could also for example be some ecolabelled furniture used in the venues or even at outdoor events, but it is not custom to make new furniture purchases for an event. Event producers can possibly be encouraged to reuse more materials - like wristbands, nametags etc.</p> <p>Printed paper products that could be easily ecolabelled, even if these are nowadays more seldom used. Some posters or timetables etc are still handed out in festivals. Also, for many conferences at least some number of printed products and notebooks etc are still relevant and used⁷⁶. Possible sponsors can further lower the steerability if they demand merchandises which does not fulfil environmental criteria. The external artists might also bring their own production to the event.</p>
	<p>Water use R: medium P: low S: low</p>	<p>Relevance and Potential: Please check the Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria for restaurants and hotels.</p> <p>There are variations across different venues, but relevance is medium. The potential is low, because there is few means to lower the water consumption.</p> <p>Steerability: The steerability is low since the event producer seldom can influence the existing water fixtures in the venues.</p>
	<p>Chemicals / dishwashing R: Medium P: High</p>	<p>Relevance and Potential: Please check the Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria for dishwashing agents. The relevance and steerability is medium, since dishwashing is usually done only in venues that have permanent restaurants. Potential is high as</p>

⁷⁶ How sustainable are sustainability conferences? – Comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment of an international conference series in Europe, Neugebauer et al. 2020

	S: Medium	<p>ecolabelled products are widely available. In many outdoor events, disposable products are used, and focus should be set on minimizing the disposables.</p> <p>Steerability: If there is dishwashing at the event, it is easy to choose ecolabelled dishwashing chemicals, but as this is often not the case, the steerability is set to low.</p>
	<p>External laundry</p> <p>R: medium P: low S: low</p>	<p>Relevance and Potential: Please check the Nordic Swan Ecolabel criteria for textile service. The relevance is medium since there is staff related to events that might have workwear, use cloths, or have promotional shirts or hats on that need to be washed and there are many ecolabelled laundry available.</p> <p>Steerability: Access to ecolabelled laundry services may be limited in certain areas or to certain firms. Also, the staff is often consisted of many separate operators, each one doing small amounts of laundry. In many cases it is difficult to steer the laundry to be delivered to a laundry with lower environmental impact.</p>

7 How to apply and regulations for the Nordic Ecolabelling

Application and costs

For information about the application process and fees for this product group, please refer to the respective national website. Find contact information in the beginning of this document.

The application consists of an application form/web form and documentation showing that the requirements are fulfilled.

Licence validity

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence is valid providing the criteria are fulfilled and until the criteria expire. The validity period of the criteria may be prolonged or adjusted, in which case the licence is automatically prolonged, and the licensee informed.

Revised criteria shall be published at least one year prior to the expiry of the present criteria. The licensee is then offered the opportunity to renew their licence.

On-site inspection

In connection with handling of the application, Nordic Ecolabelling normally performs on-site inspection visit/-s to ensure adherence to the requirements. For such an inspection, data used for calculations, original copies of submitted certificates, test records, purchase statistics, and similar documents that support the application must be available for examination.

Queries

Please contact Nordic Ecolabelling if you have any queries or require further information. Find contact info in the beginning of this document. Further information and assistance (such as calculation sheets or electronic application help) is available. Visit the relevant national website for further information.

Follow-up inspections

Nordic Ecolabelling may decide to check whether the Event fulfils Nordic Ecolabelling requirements during the licence period. This may involve a site visit, random sampling, or similar test.

The licence may be revoked if it is evident that the Event does not meet the requirements.

Regulations for the Nordic Ecolabelling of services

To easily identify Nordic Swan Ecolabel services, the licence number and a descriptive sub text shall always accompany the Nordic Swan Ecolabel.

The descriptive sub text for 117 Events is:

Events

More information on graphical guidelines, regulations and fees can be found at <http://www.nordic-swan-ecolabel.org/regulations>

Appendix 1 Supplier overview

Overview over suppliers at a Nordic Swan Ecolabelled event

The event organizer shall list all venue, catering service, cleaning service, technology provider, transport provider, hygiene stations and portable toilets suppliers.

The list shall include the name and a description of the supplier and sub-suppliers, and their ecolabel (if relevant).

Event: _____

Venue: _____

Date of event (start-end): _____

The event organizer must have a contractual agreement with the venue and all catering services for the event duration, using the templates in Appendices 2 and 3.

The event organizer must also ensure all supplier and sub-supplier requirements are met, as summarized in Table 1 of the criteria document.

List of suppliers and sub-suppliers at the event, and verification that all the relevant requirements are met.

Supplier/sub-supplier (name)	Contact person (email)	Type of operation/service and ecolabel if relevant	Relevant requirements fulfilled (yes/no)

Event organizer signature:

Appendix 2 Contractual agreement - venue

Template for contractual agreement for the venue

The authority who is responsible for the venue's operations must fill this appendix.

Event: _____

Venue: _____

Date of event (start-end): _____

Venue-related requirements (see criteria document for complete requirements)

Req	Description	Additional documentation	Requirement fulfilled	
			YES	NO
O5	Fossil free energy supply			
O6	Energy devices and equipment			
O8	Energy and CO ₂ -reducing measures for venues			
O1	Protection of biodiversity			
O14	Biodiversity impact assessment and mitigation plan			
O24	Waste sorting for guests			
O26	Ban of disposable items			
O27	Serving of drinks			
O28	Serving of food in restaurants			
O29	Serving of take away food			
O30	Decorations, give aways and confetti			
O32	Printed matter and tissue paper			
O33	Measures for resource efficiency			
O34	Ecolabelled cleaning products			
O35	Prohibited products			
O36	Water, toilets and hygiene stations			

Further information:

I hereby confirm that the requirements listed above are met.

Venue responsible's name and date: _____

Venue responsible's signature: _____

Appendix 3 Contractual agreement - catering services

Template for contractual agreement for catering services

Each catering service at the event must fill this appendix.

Event: _____

Venue: _____

Date of event (start-end): _____

Food-related requirements (see criteria document for complete requirements):

Req	Description	Additional documentation	Requirement fulfilled	
			YES	NO
O5	Fossil free energy supply			
O6	Energy devices and equipment			
O16	Information to guests			
O17	Organic food			
O18	Organic beverage			
O19	Vegetarian dish			
O20	Prohibited and restricted fish and seafood			
O21	Certified coffee, and tea			
O22	Palm oil in frying oil			
O23	Responsible food and drink production			
O26	Ban of disposable items			
O31	Serving of drinks			
O28	Serving of food in restaurants			
O29	Serving of take away food			
O30	Decorations, give aways and confetti			
O31	Food waste			
O33	Measures for resource efficiency			
O34	Ecolabelled cleaning products			
O35	Prohibited substances			

Further information:

I hereby confirm that the requirements listed above are met.

Catering service's name and date: _____

Catering service's signature: _____

Appendix 4 Guidelines for assessing sustainability labelling of fish and shellfish

Nordic Ecolabelling sets requirements regarding standards for certified fish and shellfish. The requirements are summarised in this document, which is updated on an ongoing basis. Each individual standard and certification system is examined by Nordic Ecolabelling to ensure that all the requirements are met.

General requirements regarding standards for sustainability labelling of fish and shellfish.

The following requirements apply for both wild-caught and farmed fish:

- The standard must follow all relevant laws and agreements and comply with the conventions and guidelines of the FAO and the UN:
- 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
- 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement
- FAO Guidelines for the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from marine capture fisheries
- FAO Guidelines for aquaculture certification
- FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
- The standard must balance economic and environmental interests. The standard must be drawn up in an open process in which environmental, economic and social stakeholders have been invited to take part. This means that, as a minimum, there must be a public consultation about the standard.
- The standard and documents related to the standard must be public.
- The standard is evaluated and revised on a regular basis so that the process is developed, and the environmental impact reduced on an ongoing basis.
- Nordic Ecolabelling places particular emphasis on the standard having absolute criteria that protect against illegal fishing and depletion of natural biodiversity.

Requirements regarding standards for wild-caught fish and shellfish

- The standard must have criteria stating that the fished stocks must not be overfished and that they are to be maintained at a level that promotes the objective of optimal utilisation over the long term.
- Assessment of fish stock status and trends and of the impact of the fishing on surrounding ecosystems is to be based on adequate and scientifically relevant data/information.
- The standard must require consideration of ecosystems, i.e. assessment of the negative effects of the fishing.
- The standard must have criteria aimed at minimising bycatch/discards. This can be fulfilled for instance by conducting a risk assessment.

Requirements regarding farmed fish and shellfish

- The standard must contain criteria concerning environmental aspects that ensure sustainable farming, which includes requirements on fishing for feed purposes.
- Animal health and welfare.
- Food safety.
- Requirements on certification systems and certification bodies.

- The certification system must be transparent, have major national or international credibility and be able to verify that the requirements of the standard are met.
- The certification body must be impartial and trustworthy, i.e. certification must be carried out by an accredited, competent third party.
- The certification system must be suitable to verify that the requirements of the standard have been met. The methods used in certification must be replicable and applicable for fishing/farming. Certification must primarily take place in accordance with a specific standard.
- Checks must be carried out of the standard of the fishing/farming before the certificate is issued.
- The certified fishing/farming must be checked/audited on a regular basis.

Requirement regarding CoC (Chain of Custody) certification

A requirement for CoC may be evaluated if the requirements laid down by authorities require supplementing:

- The products must be traceable throughout the production chain with at least the catch zone, trade name (scientific name) and production method (farmed/wild) (ref.: Regulation 104/2000/EC which only applies to non-processed products).
- Chain of Custody certification is to be carried out by an accredited competent third party, as is the requirement for certification of the fishing.
- The system must set requirements for the CoC chain guaranteeing traceability, documentation and checks throughout the production chain.

Documentation

- Copy of standard
- Contact information (name, address and telephone number) for the organisation that developed the standard and audit report.
- Details of stakeholder representatives who have been invited to participate in the standard development.

Please note that Nordic Ecolabelling may request further documentation to examine whether the requirements of the standard and certification system in question can be approved.