

Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017

Responsible Business Forum
Marina Bay Sands
22- 23 November 2017

The annual Responsible Business Forum (RBF) 2017 by Global Initiatives took place at Marina Bay Sands from November 22-23rd. The event jointly organised by Global Initiatives and UNDP saw approximately 900 delegates attend, ranging from NGOs to government organisations, and businesses of all sizes including startups. This year's forum was focused on **Accelerating the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Action**.

Year on year, Global Initiatives works to surpass previous efforts in reducing the environmental impact of the forum, by setting new standards. In 2016, the forum saw the implementation of Zero-Waste, Zero-Emissions initiative. The most recent forum from 2017 saw the implementation of Zero Plastic Waste.

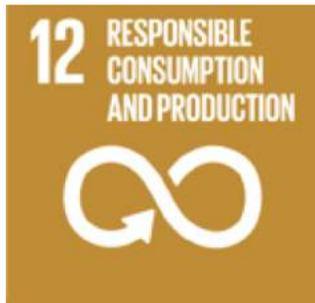
This case study takes a look at how Global Initiatives, along side their sustainable venue partner, Marina Bay Sands, made RBF a Zero Plastic Waste event. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are often talked about in the context of businesses, however, they are rarely mentioned in relation to the events industry. This case study will connect the dots between how sustainable event planning can address global SDG goals.

“A vegan diet is probably the single biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth, not just greenhouse gases, but global acidification, eutrophication, land use and water use,” Joseph Poore, University of Oxford, UK



Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017



Responsible Production and Consumption

“Achieving economic growth and sustainable development requires that we urgently reduce our ecological footprint by changing the way we produce and consume goods and resources. Agriculture is the biggest user of water worldwide, and irrigation now claims close to 70 percent of all freshwater for human use.” UNDP Sustainable Development Goals

In term of events, SDG 12 translates into selecting food that lowers our environmental impact. This includes opting for a vegetarian selection instead of meat as meat production requires a disproportionate amount of water and feed and land use. Reducing food miles by choosing locally or regionally grown food also helps lower environmental impact of an event.



Life Below Water

“Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. However, today we are seeing 30 percent of the world’s fish stocks overexploited, reaching below the level at which they can produce sustainable yields.” UNDP Sustainable Development Goals

In term of events, SDG 14 translates into selecting sustainably produced seafood. Sustainably produced seafood can help reduce over-fishing, stabilise current populations of fish thereby preventing the collapse of fish stocks. In Singapore, Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) & Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certified fish are available through select suppliers. Both certifications support sustainable fishing practices and are strongly encouraged.



Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017



Life On Land

“Plant life provides 80 percent of our human diet, and we rely on agriculture as an important economic resource and means of development. Forests account for 30 percent of the Earth’s surface, providing vital habitats for millions of species and important sources for clean air and water; as well as being crucial for combating climate change.” UNDP Sustainable Development Goals

Events – SDG 15 translates into selecting sustainably produced paper & pulp derived materials that do not destroy our forests. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper is extensively available in Singapore.



Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017

Sustainable Venue

“Over past 3 years,
we’ve had a 300%
increase in our waste
diversion.”
– Ian Wilson, Senior
VP, Hotel Operations,
MBS

RBF 2017 was held at the Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre in Singapore. Marina Bay Sands (MBS) Convention Centre has ISO 20121 Sustainable Events Management System certification and is a BCA Green Mark Platinum certified building. In addition to this, MBS also has GMIC Certification from The Green Meeting Industry & APEX/ASTM Venue Level One certification.

The convention centre focuses on energy and water conservation, waste recycling, and using products and materials containing minimum amounts of indoor polluting contaminants.

The high performance facilities of MBS is coupled with the Sands ECO360 option which allows event organisers to incorporate sustainable options into their meetings and events. Global Initiatives worked closely with the MBS team in ensuring RBF 2017 was planned and executed in a sustainable fashion.



Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017



Name Badges

Over the past several years and this, the RBF name badges have been sourced from a social enterprise, Kumala Foundation, which uses banana fibres to make the name badges. This reduces the need for paper obtained from cutting down trees. By substituting banana fibre waste for plastic badges, RBF was reducing their ecological footprint and saving trees from being cut down. Aside from the banana fibre badge, the names of guests were printed on FSC certified paper.



Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017

No Goodie Bags

No goodie bags or door gifts were given to the delegates, thus saving on a variety of resources (plastic, canvas, cotton, polyester), as well as reducing waste.

Typically event organisers anticipate the number of guests attending ahead of time & end up over-purchasing. The leftover bags and gifts are an unnecessary waste.

Read [xhebit's research study on Goodie Bags](#) to understand changing event-goer perceptions.



Flowers from previous events at MBS were upcycled and placed on dinner tables as a takeaway gift option for guests.

Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017

No Plastic Bottled Water

No bottled water was given out during the entire forum. This was also practiced in RBF 2016 and Global Initiatives estimated that a similar event would have used approximately 1800 500ml bottles. This years event had over 900 delegates, an indication of even greater reduction in the amount of plastic waste.



Doing away with single use plastic by using glasses for water.

Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017

No Paper Collateral or Programme Booklets

RBF 2017 forum was approximately 900 delegates strong. Despite this, no paper brochures, flyers, or programme booklets were given out. This is a substantial area to cut back on resource use via trees (paper) and waste following the forum.

As an alternative to printing programmes, an event app by Double Dutch was used to clearly convey programme details, provide real time updates, and facilitate interaction between delegates.



Responsible Business Forum 2017

FOOD

All food were 100% vegetarian and from MBS Harvest Menu - all fruit and vegetables are grown locally or sourced from neighbouring Southeast Asian regions. MBS makes informed choices on where their supplies originate from, in order to reduce Food Miles. Food Miles refer to the carbon footprint based on the distance from where the food is produced to the customer's plate. The lower the Food Miles, the lower the emissions of greenhouse gases from transportation.

A delectable selection of sustainable seafood was showcased jointly by MBS & WWF. "MBS aims to sustainably source 50% of all its seafood by volume by 2020." – Ian Wilson

In addition to sustainable food, paper napkins were replaced with cloth to minimise waste and resource use.



Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017



Sustainable seafood was part of the menu alongside a vegetarian meal.

Case Study

Responsible Business Forum 2017

PARTNERSHIP with Big Heroes - Impacto!

“The awareness has been very good and the feedback that we received was very good.”

- Christian Rahnsch, Co-Founder of Big Heroes

In order to give delegates the opportunity to create a social impact, RBF partnered with Big Heroes to organise **Impacto!**

Impacto! was a hands-on workshop designed by Big Heroes in collaboration with the Alzheimer’s Disease Association (Singapore), where participants got to produce various activity aids for patients with dementia that helps to slow down their memory deterioration and improve their cognitive skills. During the workshop, delegates got to interact with other Big Heroes’ Partner Beneficiaries such as Jalan Kukoh Resident Committee, Life Point and Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME).

In line with RBF’s sustainable events goals, Big Heroes ensured materials used for the workshops were recycled or upcycled, and that activities were zero waste.

