

Swiss TPH



Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute
Schweizerisches Tropen- und Public Health-Institut
Institut Tropical et de Santé Publique Suisse

Environment and Health – Bridging South, North, East and West.

Conference of ISEE, ISES and ISIAQ in Basel, Switzerland 19–23 August 2013



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Associated Institute of the University of Basel

www.EHBasel13.org

“Greening” conferences – Experiences from www.EHBasel13.org

The first joint annual conference of International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE), International Society of Exposure Sciences (ISES) and International Society of Indoor Air and Climate (ISIAQ)

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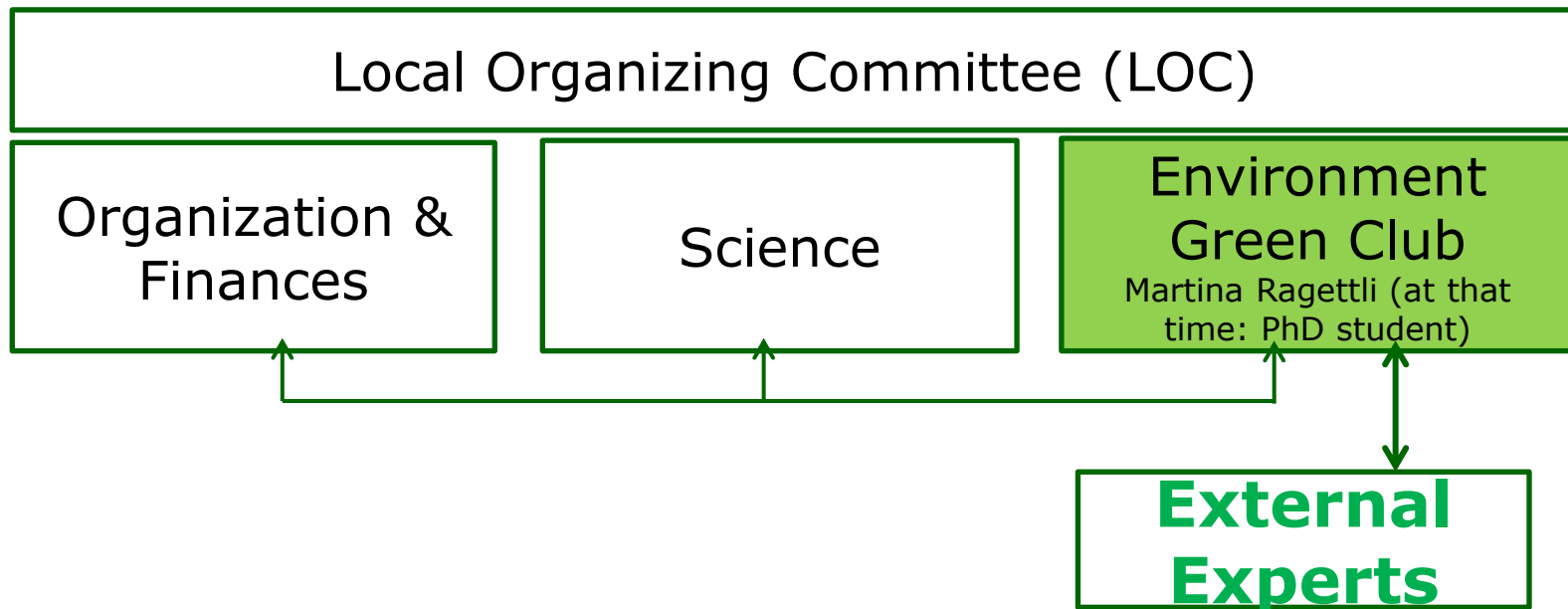
Pre-decisions

Governance Assessment Decisions Communication Outlook Conclusion

- ❖ Do we need a (physical) conference? → **YES**
- ❖ Combine annual conference of 3 societies (with overlapping audiences) → some reduction of travels as compared to 3 single conferences
- ❖ Run an environmentally friendly, CO₂-neutral conference
- ❖ Minimize environmental impact of all conference activities
- ❖ Integrate environmental issues in all conference decisions
- ❖ “Virtual conference” (web-cast): not part of “Green” but of widening access



- Clearly assigned responsibility («Green club»)
- Must be part of the central governance structure





«Green Club» Methods

- ❖ Built on strategies & experiences from previous conferences
- ❖ Intregation into general communication concept of conference
- ❖ Close collabo with Uni Basel initiatives for *Guide for Sustainable University Events University of Basel* www.sustainability.unibas.ch/en/event-guidelines
- ❖ Sub-projects and development of new concepts
- ❖ Divided work into main topics:

Transpor-
tation

Catering

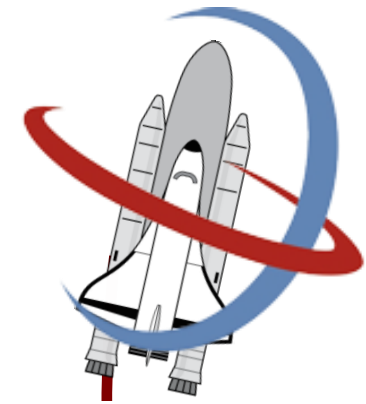
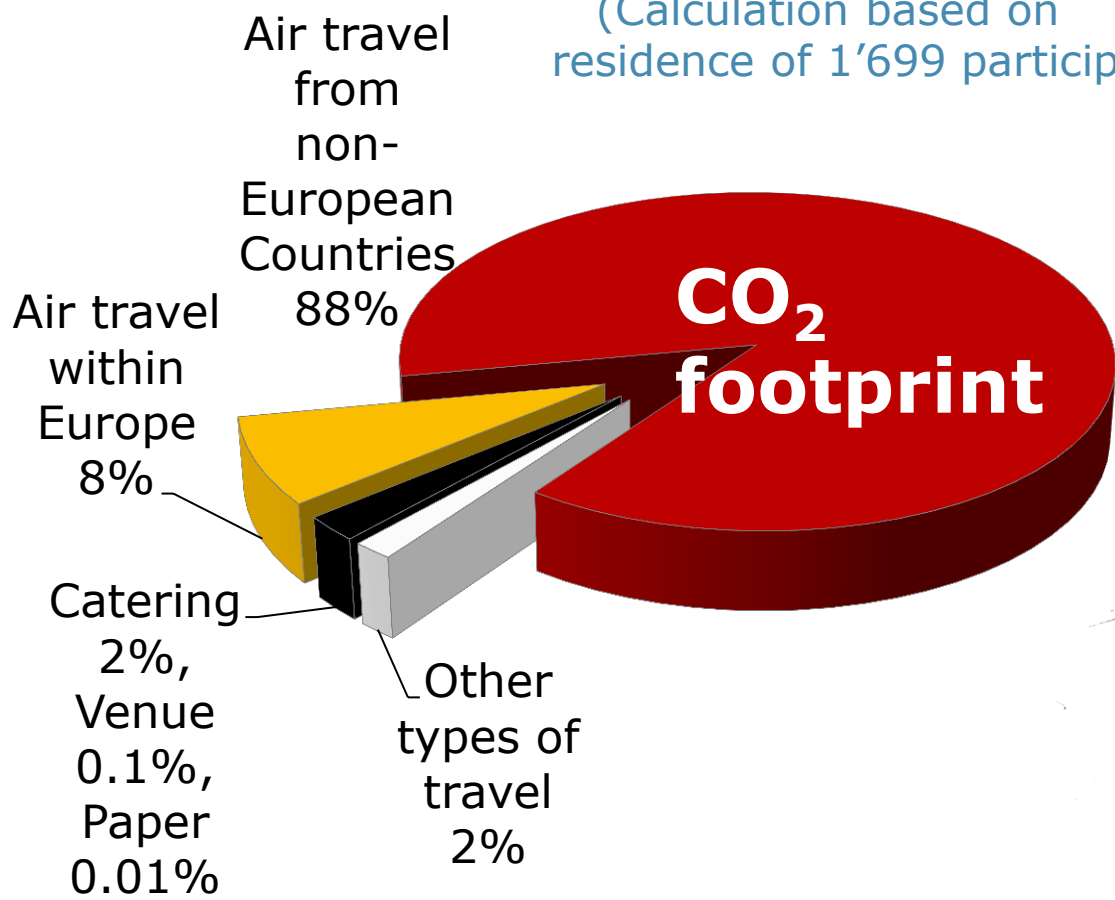
Materials

Accommo-
dation

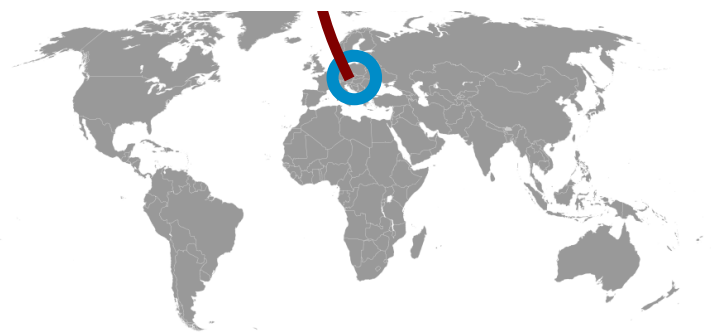
Quantify footprint & CO₂ compensation

Transportation - the largest CO₂ contributor!

(Calculation based on residence of 1'699 participants)



Total 2578 tCO₂e
≈ half a space mission!



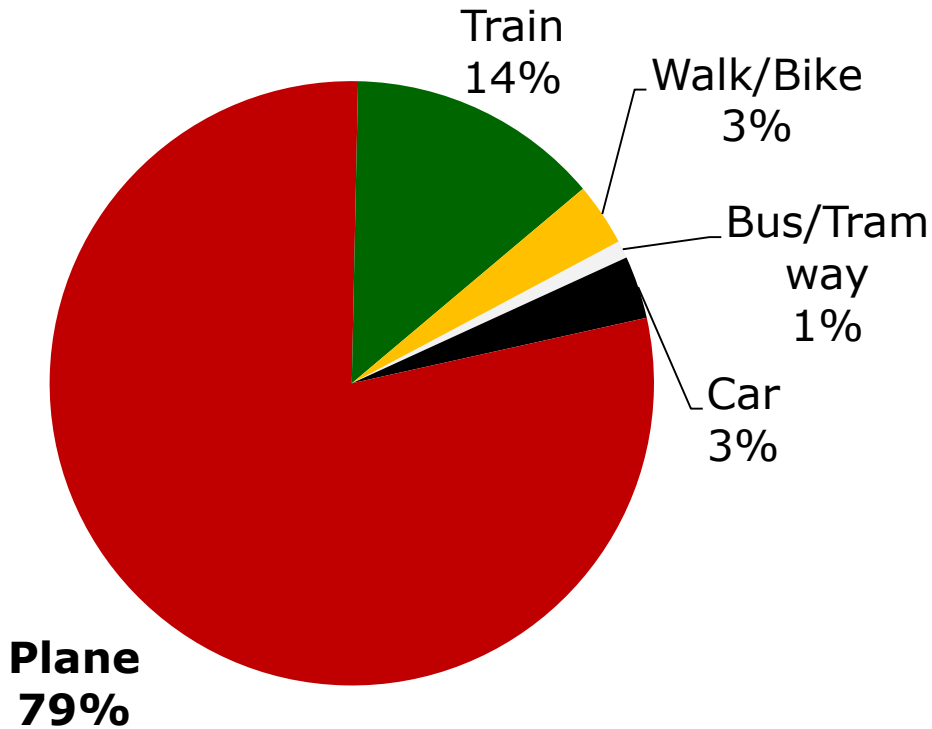
~1.5 tons of CO₂ per «average participants»

(Künzli, Ragetti & Rösli, Env H Perspect 2013)

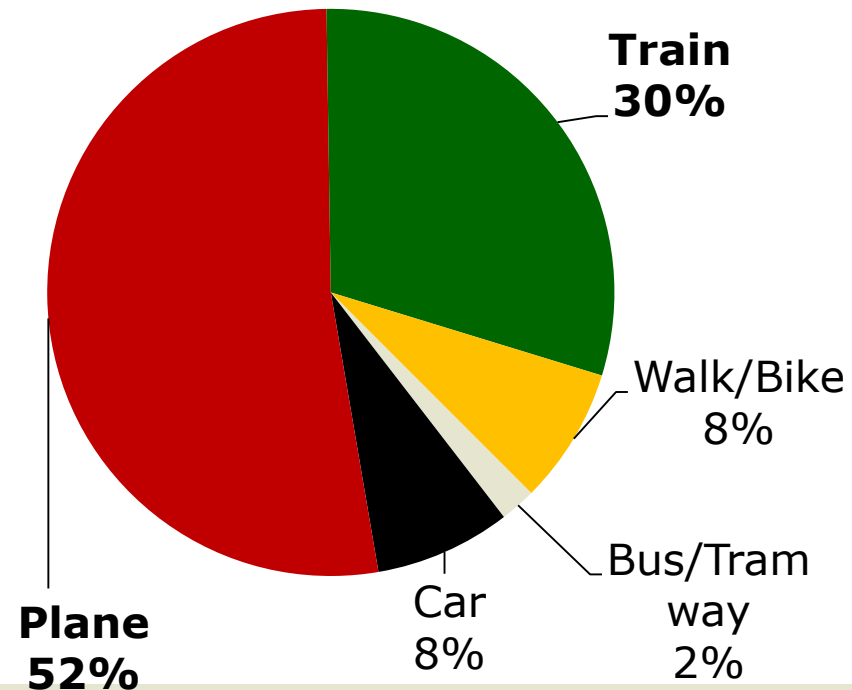
Travel Mode

(participants from 67 countries)

all participants (n=1699)

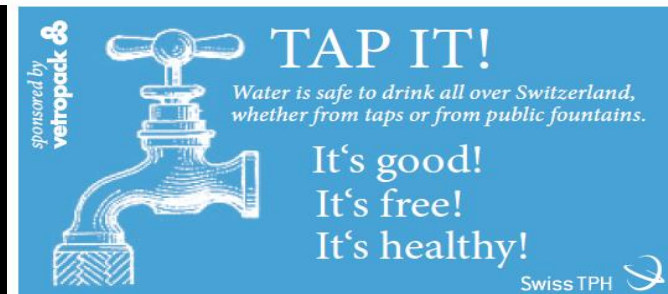


Europe (n=734)





- ✓ Invest in CO₂ compensation
- ✓ No “speaker-only” key-note invitations
- ✓ Seasonal, regional, organic and vegetarian food
- ✓ Tap drinking water
- ✓ Regional apple juice – no orange juice – fair trade organic coffee
- ✓ Fair trade organic cotton T-shirts and conference bags
- ✓ Asked about program book preference upon registration: 64% wanted e-only! → saved 120'000 A4 pages
- ✓ Accomodation: no criteria available. Some Hotels self-declare “greenness”...





CO₂ neutral conference

- ✓ Estimation of total foot print
- ✓ CO₂ compensation as a fixed part of the budget:
final costs: CHF <14 per person
(i.e. NOT an individual choice but the default)
- ✓ We supported two projects with positive impact on the environment and on people's health
 - Efficient cooking stoves in Uganda
 - Energy from waste gas in China, Shanxi province



Needed because «Green Conference» was not (yet) the default !

- Web site: general infos
- Specific «green conference» information
- Registration processes integrated «green conference» issues
- During conference (including opening session)
- In evaluation & reporting
- Editorial in leading journal ...

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Perspectives | Editorial

All EHP content is accessible to individuals with disabilities. A full HTML version of this article is available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1289/ehp.1307302>

The Vision of a Green(er) Scientific Conference

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1289/ehp.1307302>

The success of *Environmental Health Perspectives* is connected to the careers of many members of the International Society of Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE), the International Society of Exposure Sciences (ISES), and the International Society of Indoor Air Quality and Climate (ISIAQ)—three societies that will hold, for the first time ever, a joint annual meeting in 2013. The conference, “Environment and Health—Bridging South, North, East and West” (<http://www.isee.org/ehp-conference>)



Nino Künzli



Martina S. Ragetti



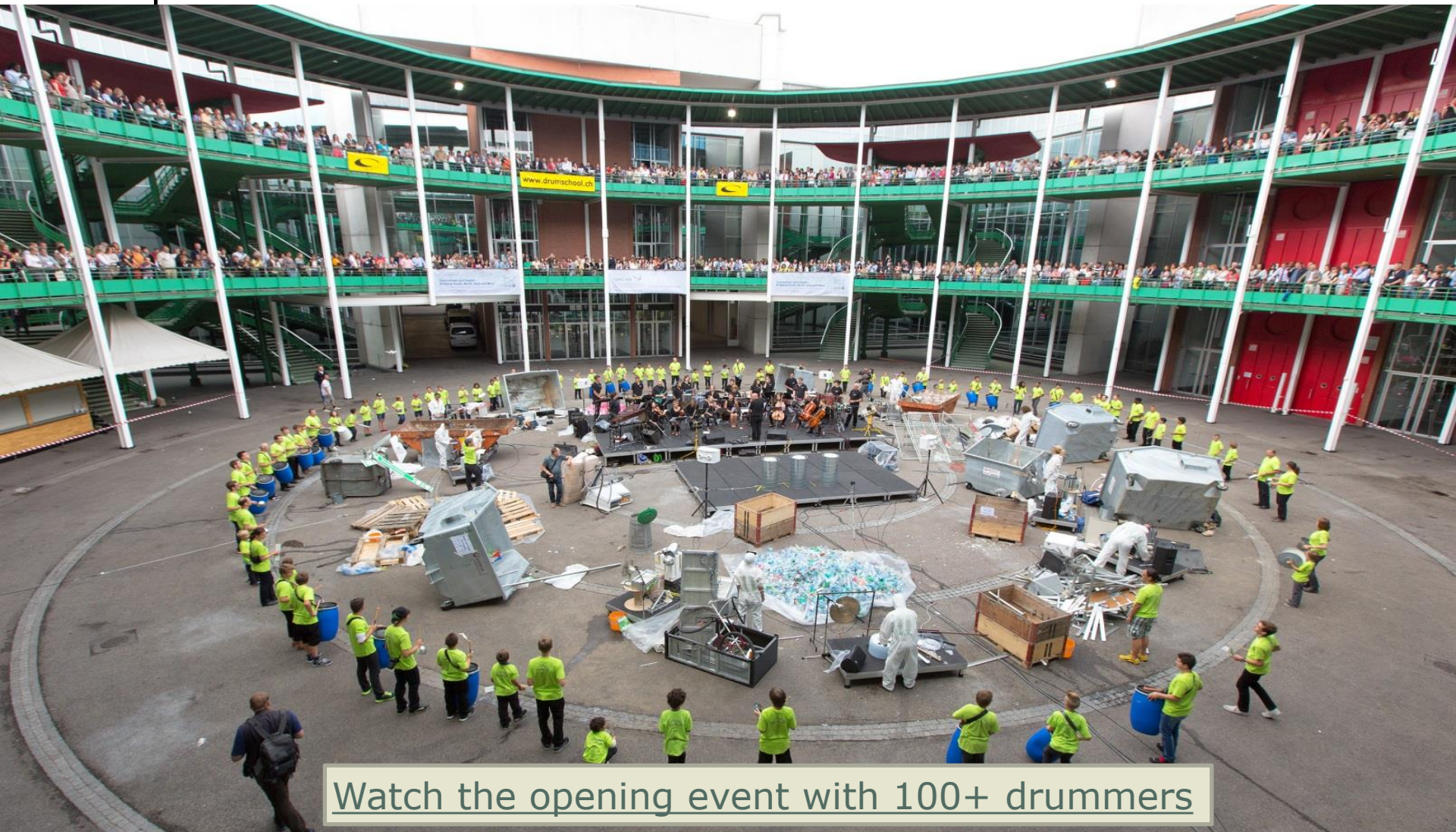
Martin Rössli

... and a major opening event

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... with «Airing Sounds – Wasting Rhythm» - a production of Drumschool Basel – recycling trash of a previous conference - an inspiring performance of >100 children & adolescents with adult musicians



Watch the opening event with 100+ drummers



- ✓ Sustainable solutions are not (yet) the «standard procedures»
- ✓ Extra effort – needs extra resources (e.g. “green club”)
- ✓ Challenge to make best (evidence based) environmentally sound decisions
- ✓ Be flexible to make compromises – don’t be “religious” about it
- ✓ Positive attention from media and the business partners...:
- ✓ Positive feedback from conference evaluation (n=830)

Green conference initiatives	91% good/excellent
CO2 compensation	88% good/excellent
BUT food is a touchy one: «Vegi only» lunches	78% good/excellent, 9% poor



...“I really loved the food.
It was wonderful to have
such well-presented
vegetarian food”

“...vegetarian and organic food
highly appreciated!”

*“...I loved the idea of eating only vegetarian
and organic food!”*



**“...being an eat-meatier myself, I was hungry pretty much
throughout the conference...”**

***“the Lunch...well, only vegetarian...anyway, if it
is the way to cut the CO2, I don't think this
strategy is well acceptable.”***

Communication matters...



- Omit «advocacy style»
- E.g.: EPH asked «are you a vegetarian?»
 - .. but this is not a relevant question !
 - A «less-invasive» question is: «do you choose the vegi menu?»
... one does not need to be a vegetarian to choose vegi...!



EPH Conference registration



Social programme

Please indicate your participation in the social events.

Day	Event	Location	Price	
			Yourself	Partner
Thursday	Welcome Reception <i>(Spaces available 372)</i>	Wiener Rathaus, Festsaal	<input type="checkbox"/> 0.00 Euros	<input type="checkbox"/> 15.00 Euros
Friday	Conference Dinner <i>(Spaces available 291)</i>	Wiener Rathauskeller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 65.00 Euros	<input type="checkbox"/> 65.00 Euros

Please indicate if you or your partner are vegetarian.
If you have other dietary requirements, please send them to registration@ephconference.eu

CONTINUE ->



...AND 😊...

- ✓ as of 2016 the Basel Conference Centre moves indeed toward promoting “green conference” more actively, including the offer for CO₂ compensation!





1. Research community can and wanted to contribute to «greener conferencing»
2. «Green» needs to be part of all planning steps
3. If «Green» is not integral part of strategies of ALL conference business partners (incl. venue, caterer etc.), it is an up-hill battle
4. Given the dominant role of travels, make CO₂ compensation a default (like coffee...) of the budget & fees – not a «choice»
5. Although seemingly «irrelevant», keep negotiating for «green» with local business partners ! – it may influence their future business model not only with you!

Thank you for your attention

Swiss TPH



Nino.Kuenzli@unibas.ch on behalf of
Martina Ragetti, Martin Rösli
and the **"Green Club" of EHBasel13**

Ref:

- Env Health Persp 2013: The Vision of a Green(er) Scientific Conference, Künzli N, Ragetti MS, Rösli M
- Guide for Sustainable University Events University of Basel

www.sustainability.unibas.ch/en/event-guidelines



Martina Ragetti

Environment and Health –
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Basel, Switzerland 10–22 August, 2013



[Watch the opening event with 100+ drummers](#)

