

Book review

Raj, R. and Griffin K. (eds), *Sustainable Events Management* (CABI, UK 2024) 208 pp.

Marie Delaplace*

Emeritus Professor, University Gustave Eiffel, France

An abundance of academic literature has been developed over the past 15 years on sustainable event management. This issue is now at the heart of the events industry. It is particularly important for the world's biggest events, such as the Olympic Games. For example, Paris 2024 has committed to reducing its carbon footprint by half compared to London 2012 (Lopes Dos Santos and Delaplace, 2024).

The book *Sustainable Events Management*, edited by Razaq Raj and Kevin A. Griffin, looks at the sustainable management of events (events or festivals) from the planning stage through to the event itself. It is aimed directly at students studying event management and/or event professionals.

The book comprises 15 chapters organised into three parts (sustainable event policies and strategies, sustainable event management and sustainable event operations). The chapters are written or co-authored by around 20 researchers, the vast majority of whom specialise in management and come from universities based in a variety of countries (Argentina, the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia and Portugal). As a result, the book offers a diversity of macro-economic contexts and is also rich in case studies. Each chapter concludes with a summary and a few questions to serve as a basis for discussion, and an index ends the book.

The first introductory chapter, written by the two co-editors, reviews the issue of sustainable development in its three dimensions (economic, environmental and social), the institutions that have promoted it and the standards associated with it in the events industry. It then looks at the main challenges faced by organisers when planning events in terms of waste management, consumption, transport and the impact on local communities. Finally, it discusses the strategies and actions to be implemented according to the 5 pillars and 17 goals of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and proposes an analysis of both the positive and negative impacts based on these pillars and goals. But as several authors in this book have pointed out, sustainable events can be considered an oxymoron.

Chapter 2, written by Ruth Craggs, looks at sustainable event policies and strategies as a tool for regeneration. The biggest events such as the Olympic Games are now linked to such operations (East London for London 2012 or part of Seine-Saint-Denis for 2024). They help to change the image of places (Gignon et al., 2024) and can help to revitalise these places. Using several case studies, the author proposes a conceptualisation of the link between the various events policies and the revitalisation of the destination.

In Chapter 3, Stefania Cerutti and Paola Menzardi present policy perspectives for sustainable events. Their presentation, illustrated by several case studies, aims to show

* Email: Marie.delaplace@univ-eiffel.fr.

how the current move towards greater sustainability requires the joint participation of the various public and private players, including the visitors.

Chapter 4 by Neil A. Richardson provides an overview of sustainable event management. Using the classic strategic management models (Porter's five forces, SWOT model etc.), it presents the tools used at both micro and macro levels to assess the strengths and weaknesses of an event in terms of sustainability. It then facilitates decision-making and the implementation of sustainability in events.

In chapter 5, Maximiliano E. Korstanje raises the issue of stakeholder management. In a post-pandemic context of COVID-19, he underlines the importance of event tourism today and the need to take into account possible conflicts between these different stakeholders, in particular visitors and local residents. It examines the different levels of commitment among stakeholders in the management of events and festivals.

Chapter 6, written by M^a Carmen Pardo, Flora Seixeira and Goretti Silva, concludes the first part by proposing sustainable development objectives for events based on the 17 UN SD objectives. We can only agree with the authors' preliminary remark that the expression 'sustainable events' is an oxymoron, given that the largest events bring together a large number of people. That said, it is possible to define strategies to make events more sustainable, in particular by drawing on existing standards.

The second part begins with chapter 7, which looks into responsible events. Ahmad R. Albattat and Azman Norhidayah present the many terms used to describe sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, eco-responsible tourism and so on and show how vague these terms are. They then develop the factors linked to event tourism that are responsible for climate change (transport, accommodation, food etc.) and the measures that can be taken to reduce its carbon footprint.

In chapter 8, the same two authors discuss the management of sustainable event destinations defined on the basis of the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, environmental and social), emphasising the importance of taking into account the whole stakeholder. As the literature about tourism destination highlights, cooperation between them is essential.

In chapter 9, Maximiliano E. Korstanje defines economically viable events. Taking into account the diversity of events, he proposes a new model for understanding sustainability in their management, based on three factors: supra-structure, micro-relations of power and permeability. The model is then compared with several case studies in Argentina.

In chapter 10, after highlighting the diversity of definitions of the social sustainability of events, Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes analyses the role of the socio-cultural impacts of events in this social sustainability, distinguishing between positive and negative impacts. She stresses that event planning and management strategies should be implemented in line with the UN's SDGs and highlights the importance of community events in social sustainability.

Finally, in chapter 11, Daniel H. Olsen closes the second part by dealing with the sustainable management of the impact of events. After defining the impact of an event as the effects that result from hosting an event, he presents the many positive and negative impacts in the three fields of sustainable development. It then highlights the various models that can be used to estimate these impacts (CBA, Input-Output model, CGE) and presents a number of possible indicators. Finally, it stresses the need to accentuate the positive impacts and mitigate the negative impacts associated with events by incorporating them into their management plans.

The third part consists of four chapters detailing sustainable event operations.

In chapter 12, Jaffer Idris discusses the management of energy, water and waste during events. This is an issue that the events industry has only recently begun to take into account, but it is essential in terms of sustainability. A circular economy for events could no doubt be precisely defined.

Chapter 13, written by Ruth Dowson, proposes tools for assessing sustainable events. She highlights the approaches and methods for measuring the impact of events on sustainable development and details a number of actions that can be taken to increase the sustainability of events.

Chapter 14 by Ziene Mottiar and Theresa Ryan looks at the role of events in developing global citizenship and ultimately in solving global problems. While this chapter does not directly address the question of the sustainability of events, it does suggest that events could contribute to the development of global citizenship. However, the increasing individualisation of our societies calls this possibility into question.

In the final chapter of the book, by way of conclusion, Razaq Raj and Kevin A. Griffin stress the importance of the issue of sustainable development in the events sector. Aimed at managers in the events industry, the book proposes guidelines and actions to help them better integrate this issue into their strategies. This integration is one of the conditions for the survival of this sector.

REFERENCES

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