

# Inspiration on ecological balance for consultants (consulting firms)



This collection of ideas is intended to give us something to think about when establishing measures within the corporate sustainability dimension *ecological balance*. This list is by no means exhaustive. However, we want to encourage you to reflect on your own ideas and measures and find inspiration and validation with regard to your sustainability in this context.

Using the collection of ideas, you can rate for yourself the extent to which the points mentioned are relevant to your commission and the extent to which you believe they support a **POSITIVE IMAGE**, have a **MAJOR IMPACT** or can be implemented with **LITTLE OUTLAY**. Your assessment is only saved locally, meaning that nobody but you can view it, and you can amend or delete it at any time.

POSITIVE  
IMAGE      MAJOR  
IMPACT      LITTLE  
OUTLAY

## Resource efficiency

- Are your staff aware of how to conserve resources and is the issue discussed regularly in your team?  
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- Do you have a general idea of the main resources used during your work and of areas where you could establish resource-saving measures?  
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- Can water consumption in your offices be reduced (e. g. with dual-flush buttons on toilets or by installing aerators)?  
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- Do you compare your company's carbon footprint with that of others, e. g. using [Compare Your Footprint?](#) Do you set yourself benchmarks and targets for improvement?  
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- Do you know how much paper you use each year and is recycled or eco-paper used?  
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- Is there any way in which you can reduce electricity consumption in your office (e. g. switching to LED lighting, switching off electronic devices instead of using stand-by mode or a 'lights off' policy)?  
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- Do you look out for opportunities to prevent waste and for reusable alternatives? Do you have your remaining waste recycled or disposed of? Do you make sure that waste is separated appropriately?  
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- Do you use energy-saving and more sustainable options for drying your hands (e. g. efficient hand dryers or certified paper towels)?  
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- If you have a canteen, do you check whether unavoidable food waste could be given to a special service provider for environmentally friendly processing and disposal? If not, do you ensure that it is disposed of appropriately (e.g. in an organic waste container)?

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- Can you ask suppliers to take packaging materials away with them?  
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- Can you ensure that your building or offices are well insulated and avoid heat bridges, particularly at the windows, roof and doors?  
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- Have you checked whether you can procure sustainable furniture, e. g. made from sustainable wood or recycled material?  
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- Can measures be implemented to reduce heating and cooling energy (i. e. avoiding heating / cooling offices excessively)?  
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- Does it make sense for you to use IT equipment with sustainability labels for energy efficiency or IT equipment made from more sustainable materials? Is there an option to return equipment for disposal in an environmentally friendly manner that protects data appropriately?  
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- Are you in contact with GIZ in your country to discuss ways of working together to improve resource efficiency (e. g. joint procurement or vehicle pooling)?  
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- If you already have an environmental management system in place, have you considered a certification that makes your environmental activities verifiable (e. g. to EMAS or ISO 14.001)?  
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- Can you use envelopes and packaging made from recyclable materials when sending items by post?  
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- Do you communicate electronically (where possible)?

## CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

- Do you use electricity from renewable resources?  
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- Do you pay attention to / calculate the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions produced by your air travel? Can you identify ways to reduce them?  
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- Can further energy-efficient electronic devices be purchased in your country of assignment (printers, computers, etc.)?

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POSITIVE  
IMAGE

MAJOR  
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LITTLE  
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Do you and your team know about GIZ's measures and targets in your country for preventing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions?

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Do you know your carbon footprint and can you set yourself realistic targets for reducing it? ([Find out more.](#))

## Mobility

Are you familiar with the experiences of your commissioning party (GIZ) with regard to climate-neutral travel?

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In your team, do you discuss whether business trips are necessary and whether they could be replaced with virtual communication methods, if possible? Do you consider more environmentally friendly means of transport for necessary business trips?

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Do you help to make employees' commutes as sustainable as possible?

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Outside Germany: e. g. with an office near the partner?

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Within and outside Germany: with a place of work that can be reached by public transport, car-sharing options, a transport service or, potentially, by offering incentives to use public or environmentally friendly transport?

## Meetings & events

Do you have an overview of hotels that implement standards on social and environmental sustainability on site as far as possible?

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Are you familiar with GIZ's guide to sustainable event management and is it used in your team? ([Find out more.](#))

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Do you offer tap water (if possible) or water from water dispensers instead of water in (plastic) bottles?