

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IN MEETING AND
CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS

Case: Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli dokumentoida ympäristövastuullisten ratkaisujen toteutumista Rovaniemellä järjestetyssä Arktisen neuvoston ulkoministerikokouksessa. Kaikki Suomen puheenjohtajuuden aikana isännöimät kokoukset ovat olleet ympäristövastuullisia ja ohjeistuksia on kehitetty koko puheenjohtajuuden ajan. Ulkoministeriö yhdessä WWF Suomen kanssa toimivat työn toimeksiantajina. Tarkoituksena oli kerätä materiaalia, jota ulkoministeriö voi hyödyntää myös kaksi vuotta kestäneen Arktisen neuvoston puheenjohtajuuden päätyttyä.

Arktisen neuvoston kokouksen käytännönjärjestelyihin kuuluivat olennaisesti catering-palvelut, tilasuunnittelu, kuljetuspalvelut sekä hankinnat, joiden toteutumista arvioitiin ympäristövastuullisuuden näkökulmasta. Työn teoreettinen viitekehys tarkasteli ympäristövastuullisuuden lisäksi myös muita ympäristöllisiä tekijöitä, kuten kasvihuoneilmiötä ja sen vaikutusta ilmastonmuutokseen, kestävästä kehityksestä, ekologiasta ja hiilijalanjälkeä, elinkaariajattelua sekä luonnonsuojelua. Tavoitteena oli tutkimuksen myötä kehittää myös Green Office ja Green Meeting -konsepteja.

Tutkimuksessa käytettiin monimenetelmäisyyttä ja erilaisia kvantitatiivisia ja kvalitatiivisia tutkimusmenetelmiä. Havainnoimalla, haastatteleamalla ja sisältöä analysoimalla saatiin esille uusia näkökulmia, joiden ansiosta konsepteja voidaan edelleen kehittää. Kokouksen havainnointi mahdollisti ympäristövastuullisten kokousjärjestelyiden toteutumisen tarkkailun ja mahdollisten parannusehdotusten laatimisen konseptien kehittämistä varten.

Kun tavoitteena on ympäristövastuullisten kokousten järjestäminen, tutkimus selvitti, että kaikki toimijat, jotka ovat mukana kokouksen järjestämisessä, tulisi huomioida tasavertaisesti, muuten konseptin tarkoitus katoaa. Tilaajan vastuuta pitäisi painottaa myös yhä enemmän ympäristövastuullisia kokouksia järjestettäessä. Lisäksi, työn tuloksena löydettiin parannusehdotuksia ympäristövastuullisten kokousten manuaaliin.

Avainsanat ympäristö, ympäristövastuullisuus, kestävä kehitys, kokousmatkailu, kokousjärjestelyt, ministerikokous, ilmastonmuutos

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The guidelines of environmentally responsible meeting arrangements have been developed during Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council and applied in every meeting organised. Still, there was no evidence of the solutions. The main aim of this thesis was, therefore, to document environmentally responsible solutions and how those had been implemented in The Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi. Moreover, the concept of Green Office and Green Meeting were included as the aim was also to develop the Green Meeting concept. The commissioners of this thesis were Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland together with WWF Finland.

The practical arrangements of The Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting included catering services, venue designing, transportation services, and other acquisitions that were all evaluated from the environmental responsibility perspective. Besides environmental responsibility, the theory of this thesis included environmental aspects such as the greenhouse effect and its impacts on climate change, sustainable development, ecological footprint, carbon footprint and life cycle thinking and environmental protection.

A mixed method approach was utilised in this research and various qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Based on participant observation, structured observation, semi-structured interviews, and qualitative content analysis conducted during the research process of this thesis, the author was also able to identify points that were not considered in the concept.

The thesis acknowledges that if the aim is environmentally responsible meetings, all the actors should be considered equally, regardless of whether those actors had visible parts in the process. Otherwise, the concept loses its purpose. Additionally, as a payer, the contributor's responsibility should be emphasised even more. Further, improvement ideas for the guide on environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements were found as a result of this study.

Key words environment, environmental responsibility, sustainable development, meeting arrangements, conference arrangements, ministerial meeting, climate change

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SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
WWF	World Wide Fund
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
EF	Ecological Footprint
LCT	Life Cycle Thinking
GPP	Green Public Procurement
MSC	Marine Stewardship Certificate
EMAS	The Eco-Management Audit Scheme
FSC	Forest Stewardship Certificate

1 INTRODUCTION

Any gathering, a meeting or a conference, affects the environment negatively through the materials provided to the participants, catering their meals, heating the venue, accommodating the attendants, and flying them to the conference. Use of these resources contributes to climate change. (Anglada, Clement, Schaffi & Zimmermann 2009, 8.) There is sometimes, though, a need to hold face to face meetings and conferences to discuss about current issues (Kukkonen 2019b). The negative environmental impacts of a meeting or a conference can be minimised, though, when paying attention to the detail. Minimising the environmental impacts also helps to secure the community's legacy. (Anglada, Clement, Schaffi & Zimmermann 2009, 9.) Also, being sustainable as an event means promoting a healthy society and supporting the economy by being environmentally responsible, which both support one another (Events Industry Council 2019).

The background for the topic of the thesis came from the commissioner, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) and raised immediate interest in the author. Later on, also World Wide Fund (WWF) Finland became interested in the topic, as MFA together with WWF Finland had created a guide for environmentally responsible meeting arrangements. These guidelines had been utilised in the previous ministerial meetings. The reason behind this development task was that MFA had environmentalism as a common thread in arranging meetings and there was a need to provide documentation about the environmentally responsible solutions and about the implementation of these environmentally responsible meeting arrangements. Environmentally responsible meetings concept could, therefore, be developed even further.

During the chairmanship of the Arctic Council, Finland focused on the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to it, and on sustainable development (Ulkoministeriö 2017b; Ulkoministeriö 2019b). Finland has organised many conferences and seminars, and the last event ending Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council was held in May 2019, in which the guidelines on environmentally responsible meetings were utilised. There was, though, a need

to document the execution of the meeting arrangements and possibly develop the guidelines even further. (Ulkoministeriö 2017b.) As supporting environmental protection is a key factor in Arctic cooperation, all the meetings were designed by considering the environmental aspects in catering services, acquisitions, and in the transportation services and evening programs (Ulkoministeriö 2019a; WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017).

The objective was to document the environmentally responsible solutions and how those guidelines were implemented in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting. By evaluating, analysing and interviewing, the author managed to document the environmentally responsible solutions and how those were implemented in the ministerial meeting. As a key result, the author gives improvement suggestions that may be utilised as a guideline in the future ministerial meetings and help establishing the concept of Green Meeting. The improvement ideas will hopefully also encourage the other Arctic Council's member countries to develop their meetings' environmentalism and sustainability. The concept of Green Office will also be developed further as a result of this development project, by establishing the concept of Green Meeting which compiles easily utilisable solutions for the offices to work towards greener meetings (Julkunen 2019).

It is important to provide concrete solutions about environmental responsibility to educate the other organisations to know how to act accordingly (Kukkonen 2019b). Also, by being realistic, providing concrete answers will help people to understand the most important matters in environmental protection (Julkunen 2019). There are materials about sustainable and environmental meeting arrangements, but the goal was to provide more concrete solutions that are easy to read and utilise. The contributor as a payer has the responsibility to inquire for a certain type of service that supports environmental thinking (Ulkoministeriö 2017b), this key factor will also be considered closely in this study.

2 ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

2.1 Greenhouse Effect and Impacts of Climate Change

The greenhouse effect works like a conservatory as Figure 1 demonstrates – the temperature is warmer inside of it than outside, and the greenhouse gas emission allow the light to pass and the warm air remain. Even though the greenhouse effect is mandatory for the planet, the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere is growing and it leads to warming climate. (SYKE 2019b; ilmasto.org 2019.) The current global warming is caused by humans, because of over-using the greenhouse effect (NASA 2019). Energy efficiency, transportation methods, and food choices are important factors considering greenhouse gas emissions, therefore, these factors are considered as key elements when it comes to environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements (WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017). The rise in greenhouse gas emissions is noticeable, this strengthens the greenhouse effect and heats up the climate. Climate change can therefore be defined as the cause of natural greenhouse effect expanding, thus, warming the climate. (ilmasto.org 2019.)

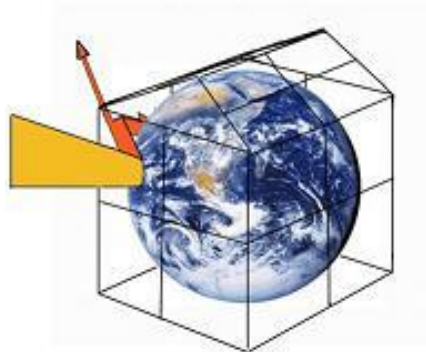


Figure 1. Illustration of a conservatory (ilmasto.org 2019)

Climate change is one of the biggest threats globally, caused by greenhouse gas emissions, especially the rising levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere (WWF Suomi 2018a; SYKE 2019a). The changes in our climate are already affecting humans, species and nature all around the world (WWF Suomi 2018a). Some changes are so extensive that such changes have not been experienced before. The temperature of the atmosphere and oceans have risen, there is less snow and ice coverage than before, which leads to the rising of the sea levels,

and also the amount of greenhouse gas emissions have climbed. (IPCC 2013, 5–8.) Due to the fact that the temperature is rising, the changes in the climate are obvious in the Arctic region, therefore in Finland also. The snow season is getting shorter, meaning there is less snow, also, the Arctic ocean's ice coverage has decreased by 13,4 percent in a decade. (Uusikivi 2019; WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017.) By observing the climate in the Arctic has proved the perception of negative changes in the communities and ecosystems correct (Ulkoministeriö 2017a).

Climate change causes extreme weather conditions such as drought, storms, heatwaves, and floods, therefore, it has a negative impact on people, flora and fauna, and infrastructure. Global greenhouse gas emissions need to be controlled in order to control the temperature from rising any higher. If the amount of emissions remains the same, the greenhouse effect will raise the temperature drastically. (Pommerening 2015, 4; SYKE 2019a.) Companies have even bigger responsibility when it comes to sourcing their materials, as there are more climate-friendly and sustainable solutions available (Pommerening 2015, 5). Controlling climate change requires radical limitation of emissions (IPCC 2013, 19).

Climate change can be controlled, when considering the reasons causing it. Transportation and food services have a great impact in forwarding greenhouse effect yet changing these behaviour styles towards more environmental ways are easy to implement. Plant based diet and minimal food waste decrease the environmental impacts of food, whereas lowering the inside temperature and favouring public transportation services help in saving energy and reducing emissions caused by single car usage. (WWF Suomi 2018a.)

2.2 Sustainable Development and Environmental Responsibility

Sustainable development recognises the importance and value of the environment's wellbeing, sustainable development happens globally, regionally, and locally and its goal is to secure good conditions for living for the present and future generations (Travelcon 2009, 8; Ympäristöministeriö 2013). In decision

making, the environment, people, and economy are all taken into consideration equally. The basic principle for sustainable development is to maintain the biological diversity and the functionality of the ecosystems, as well as to adapt humans' economical and material activity in a long term to nature's resistance. (Ympäristöministeriö 2013.)

There are three aspects in sustainable development: ecological development, economical development, and socio-cultural development. In addition to the national actions, global cooperation plays a key role when aiming in ecological sustainability. Considering cautious actions and evaluating the risks, harms, and costs prior to taking actions has an important role in sustainable development. Also, avoiding damage but also preventing it from happening are both important factors of ecological development. (Ympäristöministeriö 2013.) Therefore, it is essential to consider the ecological development as a key factor when organising meetings, since it includes preventing climate change and maintaining biodiversity (Travelcon 2009, 7).

Being environmentally responsible implicates carrying responsibility of ecological environment, which means using nature's resources efficiently and frugally, protecting the water, air, and soil, securing biodiversity, preventing climate change, and responsibility of the products' life cycle. Environmental responsibility for corporations means taking care of the ecological environment, using natural resources as efficiently as possible, and taking responsibility of the products. The corporations are responsible for knowing about their own actions and their consequences and being aware of the possible legislation. (Travelcon 2009, 6–8.) Environmental issues and sustainable development are acknowledged by MFA in the Arctic Council's meetings and the options are negotiated with the service producers, as the contributor has the responsibility in choice-making (WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017).

2.3 Ecological Footprint, Carbon Footprint, and Life Cycle Thinking

According to Global Footprint Network (2019), ecological footprint measures “[t]he demand on and supply of nature”. Ecological Footprint (EF) implicates the

amount of land and ocean needed for material consumption and service consumption but also the amount needed for waste, energy and emissions. Ecological footprint can also measure the impacts of human lifestyles impact on the globe's sustainability and the capacity of nature demanded by humans. (Metsähallitus 2019; Sjöstedt 2018; Hunter & Shaw 2005, 47.) EF analysis provides a valuable perspective on sustainability, it expresses the environmental impacts as the globe's biosphere pressure. EF outweighs the globe's capacity by 25 percent already. Travelling as an important part of the meeting industry, has its environmental impacts whereas energy, food, and water consumption as well. Often though, these resources are ignored from sustainability discussions. (Hunter & Shaw 2005, 47.)

Carbon footprint calculates the amount of greenhouse gas emissions caused by producing a certain product, action, or service and what kind of an environmental effect it has during its whole life cycle (Metsähallitus 2019). The human behaviour causes CO₂ emissions, which has an influence on the carbon footprint. In addition to CO₂ emissions, also methane and dinitrogen monoxide need to be acknowledged. (Sjöstedt 2018.) Unlike ecological footprint, the carbon footprint does not measure the damaged area but the amount of damage, usually in tonnes of emissions. This measuring method addresses the climate change in a holistic way. The planet does simply not have the required biocapacity to compensate all the caused emissions. (Global Footprint Network 2019.)

Life Cycle Thinking (LCT) on the other hand evaluates products' life cycle and its aim is to reduce products' environmental effects but also prevent actions which only change the environmental load from one phase to another (Euroopan Yhteisöjen Komissio 2003, 5). LCT has become a key concept in environmental thinking as it is a viewing aspect which considers the products' whole life cycle (Ilomäki, Tuomainen & Kautto 2007, 12). LCT has been considered as an important factor when making acquisitions for the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting. There are no unnecessary presents for the participants, and if there have been presents in the past, their life cycle has been considered carefully. The amount of waste has been minimised as a result of the way of thinking, and if there is waste, it is important to know where it goes. (Kukkonen 2019b.)

The responsibility lies in the corporations and in the contributor, as they are responsible for their acquisitions. Environmental responsibility for corporations means taking care of the ecological environment, using natural resources as efficiently as possible, and taking responsibility for the products. The corporations are responsible for knowing about their own actions and their consequences and being aware of the possible legislation. (Travelcon 2009, 6.)

2.4 Environmental Protection

Environmental protection secures human habitats from spoiling the environment and reduces the harms caused by the actions by anticipating (Riipi et al. 2014). The actions made towards protecting and saving the environment from injurious effects that humans have caused, are a part of environmental protection. The main target of environmental protection is to maintain the environment liveable and healthy in the future as well. (Tilastokeskus 2019.) Also waste management, advocating sustainable usage of natural resources, and preventing climate change, and promoting sustainable development act towards the target (Ympäristöministeriö 2016). Due to the country's technological skills, Finland has brought many solutions regarding the environmental protection and natural environment, consequently, air quality has been improved, forests managed better, and some water systems have purified (Lyytimäki 2014).

Further, there is also legislation regarding the environmental protection policies. The Environmental Protection Act's (527/2014) purpose is to prevent environmental pollution and emissions, prevent environmental damaging, secure biodiversity and support sustainable development, fight against climate change, promote the usage of natural resources sustainably, consider the pollutive impact thoroughly, and finally add opportunities for the community to act in a more environmentally friendly manner. (Environmental Protection Act 2014.) This legislation, and other legislations regarding this issue can be considered as a strength, as Finland has an effective environmental protection policy set for the community (Lyytimäki 2014).

In the colder northern climate, nature tends to recover from the damages more slowly than in other, warmer locations. As previously mentioned, Finnish Lapland is rather sensitive due to its unspoiled nature, and that is why environmental protection acts an important role in this area. However, the fact that nature is so fragile in Finnish Lapland, can also strengthen the environmental protection by taking more careful care of the surrounding areas. (Lyytimäki 2014.) Sustainable tourism has a positive impact on nature; thus, the environment has an important value for MFA and WWF Finland (VisitFinland 2019).

3 MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Catering Services, Food Waste, and Contributors' Responsibility

A majority of the environmental effects of food production come from the primary production phase, growing plants and animals (WWF Suomi 2019c). Environmental impacts of food products are gathered during its whole life cycle from production phase to becoming waste at the end (Savikko, Himanen, Rimhanen & Mäkinen 2019). When making public food and catering acquisitions, the emphasis should be on large assembly dining as a part of the local culture and the meaning of it to individuals' health and maintaining their overall wellbeing. Therefore, also high quality and overall economic sustainability is targeted. (Valtionneuvosto 2016.) The purpose of food is to be nutritionally satisfying but also bring pleasure, therefore, ecological food is also healthy (Räsänen et al. 2014, 19.) In Finland, consuming food and alcoholic beverages has the greatest environmental impact. Moreover, meat and dairy production have a vaster impact on greenhouse gas emissions than producing fish or vegetables. (Travelcon 2009, 46–47; WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017.) A total of 18 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions is caused by livestock production (Sage 2011, 19).

WWF Finland has established fish and meat guides to help individuals and organisations to reduce meat consumption, educating them about the environmental impacts of consuming, and choosing more responsible products when purchasing meat and fish (WWF Suomi 2019b; WWF Suomi 2019d). Also, focusing on favouring organic, seasonal, and certified products and catering local products, especially vegetables, creates an immense effect towards environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements (Ulkoministeriö 2017b). Further, reducing waste is possible by avoiding the usage of single packed products, plastic bottles, and disposable containers and replacing them with greener solutions (Letcher & Vallerio 2011, 20–21). MFA has chosen to exclude the use of plastic bottles in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting. There have not been plastic bottles in the previous meetings during the Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council, either. This solution is both environmentally friendly and cost effective. (Kukkonen 2019b.)

The emphasis on catering Arctic Council's meeting is in detail, especially when it comes to catering food, these solutions are easy to implement, yet effective ways towards environmental responsibility (Kukkonen 2019b). The food industry is an important energy consumer as it is one of the largest industrial sectors, hence knowing about the environmental effects of certain food products is essential. Food packing, food processing, food waste and its management, use of water and like mentioned previously, energy, create the most essential environmental impacts in food industry. (Norton, Tiwari & Holden 2013, 39–40.) In the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting these factors have been taken under careful consideration. The amount of plant-based foods served in the meeting is the same as the number of meat-based products, in addition, all plant-based products are vegan, not only vegetarian. The emphasis in planning the menus is highly in favouring vegetables, as all the salads are also vegan. Moreover, other dietary requirements such as gluten free and lactose free diets have been taken into consideration when designing the menus. Therefore, all the products served in the meeting are both lactose free and gluten free. This reduces the amount of bio waste and also creates a better image for the event. (Kukkonen 2019b.)

By catering same sized options of both plant- and meat-based foods, the person accommodated could more likely choose the vegan option (Kukkonen 2019b). Further, the origin of food has an effect on the environment, by supporting local food suppliers one advocates locality, promotes local communities and its culture, and reduces transportation emissions (Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö 2019; Havas & Jaakonaho 2019, 61). Also, the taste of fresh and clean foods, quality, and knowing about the origin of the food attract the consumers. A total of 59 percent of consumers think locally produced food as an important criterion when making purchases. (Heikkilä 2014, 7.) In the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting the fruits catered cannot be local or seasonal. Instead, organic products are preferred, for instance orange juice is replaced with berry juice and flavoured waters. The flavoured waters are, besides, attractive elements for table decorating. Flower bouquets have been left out of decorations, which reduces unnecessary waste. Therefore, using natural materials such as pine cones or branches of coniferous trees is more recommended. (Kukkonen 2019b.)

Moreover, ecologically and economically, wasting food is not sustainable. Wasting food causes methane emissions. (Silvennoinen, Koivupuro, Katajajuuri, Jalkanen & Reinikainen 2012, 3; WWF Suomi 2019e.) Approximately one third of the amount of produced food goes into waste each year (FAO 2019). How the food is catered in meetings has many aspects that need to be taken into consideration, if environmental responsibility is the aim of the meeting arrangements. Paying attention to using durable containers instead of disposable ones reduces waste and by cutting down the portion sizes food waste can also be reduced. Professional competence when designing the menus and portion sizes affects in reducing the amount of waste. (Silvennoinen et al. 2012, 40.)

The contributor is responsible for demanding environmentally responsible services from their cooperative partners, as cooperating with hotels, venue holders, and catering service producers is essential for meeting arrangements (Ulkoministeriö 2017b). Spreading environmental thinking to the service producers and meeting participants can have an extensive effect. Iceland as the current Chair of the Arctic Council has already adopted some principles when it comes to environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements. Furthermore, the cooperative partners can adopt other concepts of environmentalism as well, when the solutions are executed well and promoted. However, cooperating with some service producers is not always effortless as the partner companies do not have same values or enough knowledge of sustainable thinking. (Kukkonen 2019b.)

3.2 Acquisitions and Material Efficiency

“A part of the corporations’ environmental impacts is indirectly caused by making different acquisitions” according to the Travelcon’s (2014) manual on responsible meetings. The environmental impacts of the acquisitions are usually not seen directly nor noticed. The impacts are made when acquiring the supplies for the products, manufacturing, using, disposing, and finally recycling them. (Travelcon 2014.) Therefore, when making acquisitions, the emphasis should be in the planning phase. The evaluation phase for the product includes weighing the need

for the acquisition, the current state and cost of it, and searching for information on the current markets. (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2015.)

Acquisitions mainly focus on services and consumer purchases. As a major actor, the public sector can advocate energy efficiency and responsible choice-making and therefore be an innovative factor for developing that area. (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2016). The energy sector is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Finland (Ympäristöministeriö 2009). Therefore, energy efficiency also has to be considered when making acquisitions. There are specific environment and energy efficiency labelling to prove their quality. In fact, all environmental aspects have to be acknowledged in decision making processes. As a basic principle, only products with a long life cycle are durable. Also, only products that have been made from recycled materials should be acquired. (Suomen Ulkoasiainhallinto 2017.) In the production process, energy usage has to be as efficient as possible to minimise its overall usage, and by this, the emissions are reduced, and more responsible purchases are possible for the companies to make (Valtioneuvoston Kanslia 2006).

The Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting is a paperless meeting, meaning that all the materials are also found in an electric form, so there is no need for binders, and the reusable notebooks and pens are the only complimentary materials given to the participants. The products have been made from environmentally friendly materials, for instance, the pens are made from wood. Also, the lanyard is white without any printing, it is made from recycled plastic, and the lanyards have been collected back after every meeting, making it reusable. After the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting, the participants can, however, keep the lanyards as the meeting is concluding Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council. The nametags, along with the notebooks are also collected at the end of the meeting and utilized later, even though they have been in use. (Kukkonen 2019.) As previously mentioned, all the materials used in the meeting are printed on FSC-certified paper, which guarantees that the forests are well taken care of and brings social and ecological benefits (Ulkoministeriö 2017b; FSC Finland 2019).

A paperless meeting in this case means no printing or roll-ups. As an alternative, the posters are static, they stick well and are reusable. (Kukkonen 2019b; Ulkoministeriö 2017b.) A static poster can last up to couple of years, is cost effective, and easy to install. Besides, Finetag, a static poster utilized by MFA, is a Finnish innovation. (Grano 2019). There are also ecological umbrellas for the guests to utilize, in case it rains, and the journeys are made on foot. Despite all, cost efficiency has to be considered in a way that the acquisitions have to be reasonably priced (Kukkonen 2019b).

Material efficiency is an important matter to be considered when it comes to saving the environment, at the same time the costs can be lowered. Energy efficiency plays its role as by reducing material usage and energy usage the company can improve its material efficiency. In the meeting arrangements, transporting the materials as effectively as possible and using as little material in packing the product as possible, reduces the use of materials and transportation costs. (Ympäristöhallinto 2013.)

3.3 Transportation Services and Evening Programs

In Finland, approximately 16 percent of energy is used by the transportation services and a fifth of greenhouse gas emissions is caused by traffic (Travelcon 2009, 20; YLE Uutiset 2019). The transportation services affect to health negatively, add noise pollution and greenhouse gas emissions (Travelcon 2009, 20). Biking and walking are both good for the environment and for individual's health. Using public transportation reduces the CO₂ emissions and the need of oil. (WWF Suomi 2014.) Public transportation services, biking and walking routes are under improvement in Finland. As a result, individual car usage will be reduced. Improving these transportation services is important especially in big cities, where the population is growing. (Valtioneuvoston Kanslia 2006, 81–82.)

MFA aims to reduce travelling and strives to increase opportunities to hold video meetings and conferences (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2019). Moreover, meetings and conferences are designed to be held in locations which are reachable via public transportation. Also, within the meeting invitations city guides are included for the

participants to reach the locations by using public transportation services. (Suomen Ulkoasiainhallinto 2017.) However, sometimes holding face to face conferences is necessary, as sitting down in a meeting together is also important (Kukkonen 2019b). These face to face meetings and conferences are also essential ways to forward knowledge and information flow, this is why flying is an essential way to transport the attendees, as some of the them in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting are foreign and come from far away countries (McGee 2016; Kukkonen 2019b). When traveling long distances, flying is yet the fastest and the most convenient way of travel. When traveling short distances though, the difference is not so great. The emissions can be reduced by choosing the most efficient route, if flying is found necessary. (Niemistö, Soimakallio, Nissinen & Salo 2019, 46.)

In the ministerial meetings the participants are able to familiarize themselves with local sight-seeing, network with the local service producers, and possibly visit the local companies which support sustainable development (Ulkoministeriö 2017b). The transportation services to the sight-seeing destinations and to the meeting venues are designed in a way that walking or using public transportation services is possible. For example, trams, buses, bikes, and gondolas are efficient and environmentally friendly options to travel in addition to walking. The evening programs also have guides who have knowledge about the local environment, which enables the participants to experience local nature and know more about the local culture and nature. In the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting the transportation is handled with shuttle buses. In addition, all of the buses also have local guides. (Kukkonen 2019b; WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017.)

Transporting food products also causes emissions. According to the European Commission's Green Public Procurement (GPP) Toolkit the vehicles used for transporting the foods must fulfil the emission regulations, and the corporations have to have specified technical documentation regarding the emissions. The emissions coming from transporting the foods can be lowered when choosing local service producers and by utilising producers who follow the regulations set by the European Commission. (Euroopan Komissio 2002.)

3.4 Environmental Labelling System and Eco-labels

The purpose of the environmental labelling system and eco-labels is to help the consumer or organisation to recognise more environmentally friendly products, educate the consumers about environmentalism, and make more environmentally responsible choices. Furthermore, the labelling systems aim is to increase consumers' knowledge about the environmental effects of the products, the companies can also utilize environmental labelling systems and eco-labelling when making acquisitions. (Kierrätyskeskus 2019; Ympäristöhallinto 2019.) There are various different types of labels on the markets; EU Ecolabel, Nordic Ecolabel, Energy Star, The Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), and Finnish Organic Food Association (Kierrätyskeskus 2019). In addition to these official labels, there are other trustworthy labels, for example, Fairtrade, Demeter-label, and Eco-energy label (Ympäristöhallinto 2019). There are also ethical labels which inform the consumer about the impacts of the products on the social and environmental matters in the origin country (Kuluttajaliitto 2019).

WWF Finland recommends Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certificate which is considered as the most reliable certificate considering the environmentalism of fishing industry, to show that fishing is done in an ecologically sustainable manner. Thus, the objective of MSC is to secure the sustainable use of resources by reducing over fishing. All fish served in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting follows the regulations set by WWF, therefore, it supports making responsible choices. (WWF Suomi 2016; WWF Suomi 2018b.) Another certificate supported by WWF Finland is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which supports the economically responsible care of the forests along with advocating the overall protection of the forests (WWF Suomi 2016). FSC certification is the most commonly used label in the paper industry when it comes to securing the origin of the wood (Kuluttajaliitto 2019). MFA utilises only FSC certified materials in the meeting to support the wellbeing of the forests (Ulkoministeriö 2017b).

The labelling systems are a way the organisations can impact to the environmental effects and also a good help at making decisions regarding

acquisitions. The products labelled are the best products on the markets and the criteria is carefully combined by professionals and are publicly available. The companies can apply for the labels if they are filling the criteria, however it is voluntary. Moreover, the labels are completely neutral. (Kuluttajaliitto 2019.)

3.5 Green Office and Green Meeting Concepts

A day in the office also leaves its print to nature. Green Office helps the offices to be more environmentally responsible by educating the offices about their CO₂ emissions, usage of natural resources, and protecting our nature's diversity. The Green Office coordinators of organisations have important roles in educating their employees as they lead the offices and can make the workers committed by communicating with them. Energy tends to have the greatest environmental effects in the offices, being energy efficient reduces the electricity usage in the office. The acquisitions should be made responsibly by using durable products, this can reduce waste in the office, if waste occurs though, recycling is recommended. Also, transportation causes a major amount of the emissions within the offices and distance and video meetings are advocated. Finally, Green Office encourages the offices to serve more plant-based food options. (WWF Suomi 2019b.)

The Green Office concept has the same basic principles as the Green Meeting concept. The goal is to provide environmentally friendly solutions to Green Office-certified companies to improve their meeting arrangements' environmental responsibility. In meeting arrangement industry, providing concrete solutions to the companies and individuals who are not professionals in this industry helps them to adopt the important principles and absorb into their behaviours. (WWF Suomi 2019b.) WWF Finland and MFA have created a guide towards environmentally responsible meetings and are both keen on developing it even further with this project. This development project will also give direction to WWF Finland in their process of developing the Green Office concept and establishing the concept of Green Meeting.

4 THESIS PROCESS AND METHODOLOGIES

4.1 Thesis Process

Environmental responsibility acts an important role nowadays. Therefore, the purpose was to document the environmentally responsible solutions in the meeting arrangement process and provide improvement ideas and suggestions for the commissioners for them to develop the concept. Further, the intention was also to raise awareness of environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements within the participants of the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting and other stakeholders involved in the meeting arrangement process.

The thesis process started with the author's need to understand the nature of Minister-level meetings comprehensively and familiarise with the general meeting arrangement process. The Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting was a considerably large-scale meeting that invited Minister-level representatives, media members, and staff to Rovaniemi. Some specific factors concerning Minister-level meeting arrangements had to be taken into consideration and evaluated based on the certain regulations affecting the meeting arrangement process.

The topic of environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements is rather large, since there are various factors to be considered. Those factors included aspects regarding environmentalism but also meeting arrangements, therefore, the research process required studying a variety of theory about the topic in order to capture as wide perspective as possible. The observation and interview processes demanded wide knowledge and familiarisation of the topic, and both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to gather the most relevant information, as widely as possible. Table 1 identifies the different phrases of the thesis process and recognises the methods that were utilised.

Table 1. Thesis Process and Research Methods

Period of time	Tasks	Research Methods
October 2018	Topic from the commissioner	
October 2018–December 2019	Pre-reading literature about environmental responsibility and meeting arrangements	Literature analysis
January 2019	Idea poster presentation	
January 2019–March 2019	Starting with writing process Compiling the essential theory Thinking about most suitable methodologies Submitting thesis project plan	Literature analysis
March 2019–April 2019	Finishing and polishing the content for theory Finishing methodologies Making observation templates Making interview templates	Qualitative & quantitative methods Qualitative method
May 2019	Observing in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting Conducting interviews & transcribing Categorising the transcribed material Analysing results	Qualitative & quantitative methods Qualitative method Qualitative method Qualitative method
June 2019	Analysing results	Qualitative method
July 2019	Analysing results	Qualitative method
August 2019	Polishing and making final additions Presenting the thesis in a seminar	

The objective of this study was to provide documentation of the environmentally responsible solutions and as a key result, develop the environmentally responsible meeting concept. Environmental responsibility is a wide perspective which includes multiple aspects. In order to gather the most important and relevant theories, the research process began by thinking about the most crucial factors affecting the environments' wellbeing. Those factors were then considered and thought through from the point of meeting arrangements.

4.2 Mixed Method Approach in Thesis Process and Methods Used

4.2.1 Concurrent Triangulation Design

The research process methodology may be quantitative or qualitative, or as in this case a mixed methodology (Richie, Burns & Palmer 2005, 129). The author chose the mixed method approach to be utilised in this thesis process, because the nature of the methodology was the most suitable for the research process. This approach includes a semi-structured interview, participant observation, structured observation, and a qualitative content analysis. The methods that have been chosen are the most suitable in order to gather the most relevant information, address wide aspects of the phenomenon, and most importantly, help with the development task of the thesis.

The mixed method approach is a combination of both, qualitative research and quantitative research methods. The mixed method approach collects, analyses, and interprets data from both methods used in the same study. The use of the mixed method approach enables one to address different aspects of a phenomenon in order to gain more extensive results. (Mahmood 2013.) To be more specific, the author chose concurrent triangulation design (Figure 2) to be utilised in the research since both qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously and the weight of each method is equal. At the interpretation phase the data collected from both qualitative and quantitative methods is combined and analysed to get the results. Further, the time used for concurrent triangulation design is shorter than in other mixed method designs since the data is collected concurrently. (Creswell 2009, 213-214).

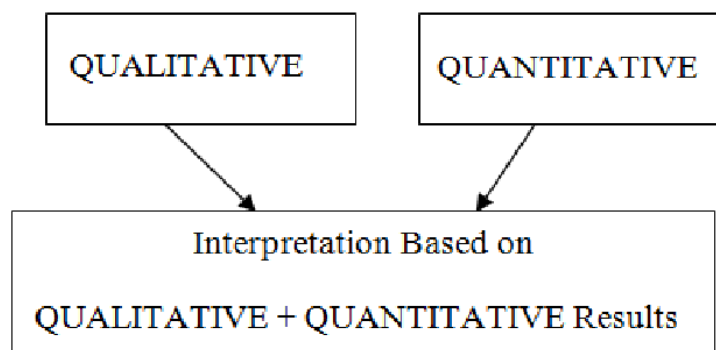


Figure 2. Concurrent Triangulation Design (Creswell 2009, 210)

Utilising concurrent triangulation design in the research process required immense effort from the author because of the use of two research methods. The research process began with a vast familiarisation of the phenomenon and planning of the research process and choosing the methods most suitable for the research. The process commenced with observing the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi in May 2019.

Participant observation and structured observation were both utilised when the meeting took place. The author compiled an observation template (Appendix 2) based on the previously completed research. After the observation period, the author analysed the results of the observation template and completed interviews (Appendix 1) to get a deeper understanding of the interviewees knowledge and behaviours. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse and interpret data collected during the research (Appendix 3).

Benefits of using concurrent triangulation design in the research was that the design combines the two research methods and points out the weaknesses and strengths of each method (Creswell 2009, 213). By utilising this mixed method approach, a variety of methods could be utilised and therefore the confirmation of the research was ensured. Also, by combining qualitative and quantitative methods, inconsistencies can be found and explanation for those can be searched or suggested. (The classroom 2019.)

4.2.2 Semi-Structured Interview

Paper's author utilised a semi-structured interview in this thesis for the reason that this particular method is flexible and conversation-like, the findings are depthful and thick, and the findings can be textually analysed (Richie, Burns & Palmer 2005, 130). Burns (1999) stated that "[i]nterviews are a popular and widely used means of collecting qualitative data." This method allows the author to collect primary data (Zohrabi 2013).

Applying interviewing into the research allowed the author to evaluate the stakeholder's knowledge of the environmentally responsible matters, the implementation and outcome of the project from their perspective, possible challenges that were faced and improvement ideas for the future reference. The author covered a list of topics with the respondents according to the semi-structured-interview template and modified the interview flow during the interview processes. The interview respondents were from different organisations and had different tasks regarding the meeting arrangements, therefore, the questions were adjusted slightly to get a deeper understanding of the individual's tasks specifically (Phellas, Bloch & Seale 2011, 183).

The interviews were conducted by using either mobile phones or the Zoom application and the duration of these interviews varied from 20 to up to 40 minutes. Moreover, the interviews were executed in Finnish, as it was the common language of all the interviewees and the interviewer. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewees and later on in the process, the interviews were transcribed in Finnish but translated into English and put into a matrix according to the interview themes.

All of the total of five interviewees that were considered, were willing to participate in the interviews. Furthermore, the tasks and responsibility areas of the interviewees differ from one another, affecting the length and overall nature of the interview. In the interview process the author wanted to interview the catering representatives, which included both the team responsible for the menu planning and the team responsible for the on-site catering, the concept designer, the conference coordinator and the project assistant. The persons interviewed work in different organisations and had particular tasks in the meeting arrangement process. The interview process started by acknowledging the interviewees' different responsibility areas, in order to modify the questions to fit their responsibility areas.

Catering acts an important role in this research, as mentioned previously, and there were two catering service producers who were chosen by MFA to be involved in this meeting's arrangement process. There are various aspects that

needed to be considered by both of the two catering teams, in order to be more environmentally responsible as targeted, but also cooperate efficiently together. The other catering team was responsible for planning the menus according to the guidelines set by the conference coordinator and the other catering team took care of actions related to the catering services at the venue and staffing.

The concept designer was anticipated to have knowledge about the overall arrangements within the venue, the structural elements of the site and the overall arrangements. The concept designer cooperated closely with the conference coordinator who was responsible for the coordination of the event together with the project assistant. These actors were interviewed to receive a good picture of the project as a whole. By interviewing these specific stakeholders, the author could accomplish a wider perspective of the whole meeting arrangement process. Also, the author could possibly point out features that were not noticed in order to improve the concept of environmental meeting industry. The interviews were anonymous, although, the interviewees might be recognisable by people involved in the meeting arrangement process.

The semi-structured interview template (Appendix 1) included open-ended questions and consisted of the main research themes relevant to the study. Aspects of meeting and conference arrangements, environmental responsibility, and these two topics combined, and finally, implementation of the project were included in the interview. The author wanted to begin the interview with meeting and conference arrangement related questions rather than environmental responsibility related questions, in order to perceive the interviewees values and observe if environmental aspects aroused at this stage already. The interviewees were asked if recording the interviews was acceptable, further, it was made sure that the author could use the findings for this research. The interview templates along with general information about the interview process are attached as appendices at the end of this research.

4.2.3 Participant Observation

Participant observation is a method used when conducting a qualitative research. By observing the physical surroundings in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting and the characteristics of participants gives the author a chance to observe the full situation and the open-ended, unstructured format the opportunity to gather information that might not have been considered before. (Taylor-Powell & Steele 1996, 3.) Participant observation is a method in which the author takes part in an activity as an insider, as the goal is to understand and interpret the groups' experiences by being involved with the individuals themselves (Richie, Burns & Palmer 2005, 85). The goal is to gain a deep understanding of a specific group and their knowledge on the research subject (Crossman 2018).

The author chose participant observation to be utilised in this thesis, as one crucial part of the research was to document by observing and analysing how the environmental factors were taken into consideration and how those were working in practice in the meeting. Participating in the meeting allowed the author to receive insider perspective of the solutions that had been used and collect the data needed for the analysis. Utilising this method allows to acknowledge and identify issues that had not been considered in advance, but also to observe which solutions were not implemented properly and should be considered more (Taylor-Powell & Steele 1996, 3).

The author took part in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting, which allowed her to observe the participants and the settings closely. Participant observation in this research focused on the details regarding environmental responsibility and aspects mentioned previously in this paper. All the relevant issues regarding catering, decoration, waste, transportation and other factors had been compiled in an observation template (Appendix 2) which was be utilised as a fundament for participant observation and structured observation. In addition to the observation template the author managed to compile data that could not have been gathered without of the utilisation of this research method. The observation results were compiled into a detailed diary, which helped to explain the results to the reader.

4.2.4 Structured Observation

Structured observation differs from participant observation by giving quantitative data. Data in structured observation is collected by carefully defined rules and pre-set guides or check lists, the author specifies in detail the observed subject. (Croll 2011; Biswas 2017.) The author focuses on relevant elements during the observation and because of the structured format, pre-set observation form has been gathered and the author will follow up with it (Croll 2011).

In structured observation, the observation is operated from afar, from an outsider's perspective. In this case, utilising this research method allows the research to be more efficient, since participating in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting acknowledges the author to gain numerical data as a result. Therefore, by utilising structured observation in addition to participant observation the author was able to receive numerical data about the pre-set observation categories and compile charts of the results. (AlleyDog 2019.)

The author conducted a pre-set checklist (Appendix 2) which was utilised in the research process together with the participant observation template. The checklist included categories such as food, coffee, table decorations, paper usage, staff, waste and transportation. These categories were set based on theory and previous research gathered in order to collect the most relevant data for the analysis. The pre-set checklist allowed the author to get numerical data in addition to qualitative data collected via participant observation method. After the observation period the data was collected and turned into charts to help to identify the result.

4.2.5 Qualitative Content Analysis

Content analysis analyses qualitative data (Willard 2018). The aim of qualitative content analysis is to find out themes relevant to the research. In order to analyse the content successfully, the author has to be well familiarised with the content. The data gained will then be analysed and transformed into another, smaller form,

a summary of the results. (Zhang & Wildemuth 2019; Erlingsson & Brysiewicz 2017, 94.) Content analysis was chosen for the research to provide more insights to the phenomena and a broader understanding about the issues regarding it. Analysing and interpreting data conducted meets the requirements of qualitative content analysis. (Taylor-Powell & Renner 2003, 1.)

The qualitative content analysis process naturally began by collecting data and analysing it, the data was prepared for the analysis by transcribing the text, this technique helps to gather and process the data (Zhang & Wildemuth 2019). Transcribed text was then put into a content analysis template (Appendix 3) which enabled the author to point out the most relevant themes for the study. Transcribing as a part of qualitative content analysis gathers all the information found during the interviewing process (Willard 2018).

Qualitative content analysis is a method used to find out the interviewee's knowledge about the themes. In the content analysis template, the author pointed out a category in which the most important factors for the interviewees were compiled to see which factor they considered to be the most important for them. These results could then be analysed, and improvement ideas pointed out. The author also paid attention to the interviewees tone of voice and other reactions that could have implicated their thoughts. When transcribing well, the way the interviewee expresses him or herself can be done precisely, this can then be taken into consideration when analysing. (Zhang & Wildemuth 2019.)

4.2.6 Trustworthiness of Research in Mixed Method Approach

Mixed method approach was applied in the thesis process in order to collect the most significant data and information for the author to develop environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements. Mixed method approach compiles both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, therefore, it allows the author to choose from a variety of methods. Moreover, the author can use different processes to collect data by using both methodologies. The validity and reliability but also dependability and credibility have to all be considered in the research process. (Zohrabi 2013, 254; Nyika 2019.) In the case of using mixed method

approach, the author tends to compile a more holistic image of the phenomena, also validity credibility, and dependability and credibility tend to be enhanced (Ihantola & Kihn 2011, 3; Zohrabi 2013, 254).

It is vital for the author to consider the reliability and validity as they are matters of trustworthiness in quantitative methodology. For qualitative methodology, trustworthiness is a combination of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In mixed methodology, all the terms mentioned have to be considered. (StatisticsSolutions 2019; Nyika 2019.) Moreover, quality of the methods used is critical because the conclusions made at the end of the research are based on the research methods used (Zohrabi 2013, 258).

Validity in quantitative research defines if the elements used in the research are suitable, whereas reliability is one of the key factors when it comes to quantitative research process, the research has to provide stable and consistent results. (Zohrabi 2013, 258.) Dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability are matters of qualitative research, dependability can be compared to reliability, meaning that the findings are consistent, and the research process could be duplicated. Credibility deals with the author, how the research process is seen; are the findings accurate and true. Applicability has to do with the transferability, if the research findings content can be applied to other studies. Finally, confirmability means that the findings are concordant, the author has not affected to the results by expressing personal opinions. (StatisticsSolutions 2019.)

The interview process of this research was completed in Finnish and transcribed into Finnish afterwards, yet the answers were later on translated into English because of the language of this study. The interviews could have been implemented in English as well for more valid results, though the author chose to include an option to perform the interviews in the interviewees native languages. The author considered the validity issue before implementing the research but decided that the interviewees were capable of choosing the language of the interview, to provide more credible answers.

There were some limitations to the research that have an effect on the trustworthiness of the study as well. The nature of the observation methods varies from each other and since structured observation and participant observations were conducted from insider's perspective, the credibility was decreased. Completing these observations together was though the most suitable solution in order to get the most comprehensive results.

In this research, the methods have been chosen carefully, in order to complete the research as well as possible and provide the most suitable solutions to the research problem, in the most trustworthy manner. Quantitative research methodology part of this research includes structured observation, which provides numerical data about the most crucial factors of this study. The results are also reliable, because the observation can be conducted multiple times, yet it provides the same answer. Dependability of the qualitative methods used is valid, as the research can be repeated using the methods the author chose. The research is credible since the author chose the interviewees carefully and they are in a key position in this research and to compile the most accurate answers.

4.2.7 Limitations

Some limitations in this research process existed. The nature of the structured observation and participant observation vary in a sense that structured observation is operated from afar, from an outsider's perspective but differently, participant observation is conducted from insider's perspective. This causes slight conflict, since the author was participating the meeting as a conference assistant, therefore the author was an insider, not an outsider. In any case scenario, the author would have chosen one side, therefore the author, believes that the method requirements are fulfilled, and is therefore valid.

Another limitation that the author faced was the variety of the extensive environmental aspects of the meeting that could have been considered. There were some factors that the author had to leave out of the observation because of the limited resources. Those factors included observing the hotels where the guests were staying in and the food they were served, but also properly observing

the shuttle services provided to the guest since it was not possible to conduct this as the author was operating alone. There were many hotels where the guests were staying in, therefore the author focused on more essential factors on this meeting's arrangements.

Thus, the key results mainly focus on the most important environmental factors in the meeting, rather than all elements that could have been considered during the whole conference. The qualities that the author found most important were the factors that were observed on-site in Lappi Arena but also counting in some other factors regarding transportation services. The author of this paper was able to some extent to observe the transportation that was offered to the meeting participants and therefore was able to discuss that service briefly.

5 COMMISSIONER AND CASE OF ARCTIC COUNCIL'S MINISTERIAL MEETING 2019

5.1 Commissioners

The commissioners of this thesis are the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) together with World Wide Fund (WWF) Finland. Like previously mentioned, MFA, together with WWF Finland have created a guide for environmentally responsible meetings. WWF Finland is also establishing the concept of Green Meeting, in which this thesis' suggestions will be utilised. In its environmental strategy and program, MFA has agreed to consider all environmental matters and sustainable development in its all behaviours. The meetings organised outside the ministry are a part of its environmental strategy, therefore, WWF Finland and MFA have created the guide towards environmentally responsible meetings. The guide considers the meetings' ecological footprint and effect on climate change and helps the event organisers to make more responsible choices when organising meetings. (WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017.)

Finland had the chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2017-2019 and MFA coordinated Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council together with other Ministries and stakeholders (Ulkoministeriö 2019b). There have been several meetings and conferences arranged in Finland during its chairmanship of the Arctic Council, and their emphasis has been in the following themes; environmental protection, connectivity, meteorological cooperation, and education (Arctic Council 2019). From the meeting arrangements perspective, the focus has been on three environmentalisms' sectors; catering, acquisitions and other meeting arrangements (Kukkonen 2019). The guide towards more environmentally responsible meetings has been utilised in every Arctic Council's meeting in Finland, thus catering services, acquisitions, and transportation services along with evening programs have been planned in detail (WWF Suomi & Ulkoministeriö 2017).

Stated by the Arctic Council (2015) “Arctic Council is a leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination, and interaction among the Arctic States”. There are eight member states in the Arctic Council who rotate the chairmanship of the Arctic Council. Those countries are Canada, Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the United States of America. The work of the Council is divided into six Working Groups; The Arctic Contaminants Action Group, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group, the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response Working Group, The Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group, and the Sustainable Development Working Group. In addition, there are six organisations representing the Arctic indigenous people and they are called Permanent Participants. The Permanent Participants category enables the active participation of the Arctic indigenous peoples. (Arctic Council 2015.)

This thesis' development task included a need to document the environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements and a need for an even more detailed guide towards environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements. Arranging meetings affects the environment in a negative way. The improvement ideas and suggestions for a more environmentally responsible (green) meeting concept were compiled as a result of this study. The suggestions gather concrete and detailed solutions towards a more environmental responsible meeting industry and the suggestions are especially designed to be utilized by MFA and WWF Finland, in addition to the already existing guidelines on environmentally responsible meeting arrangements. The improvement suggestions will also help to establish the concept of Green Meeting as a part of Green Office concept.

5.2 Key Results and Environmental Responsibility in Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting

5.2.1 Catering Services, Waste Management, and Contributors' Responsibility

In the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting food was served during the Ministerial luncheon, media luncheon, staff lunch, and coffee, in several locations around the venue, Lappi Areena. The menus were designed by second-year students from Haaga-Helia Hospitality School of Helsinki to showcase their expertise (Ulkoministeriö 2019c). The food was made from ingredients that were in season and local. To ensure that the ingredients were environmentally friendly, the conference coordinator Annariina Kukkonen was provided with a list of ingredients used for food and drinks (Ulkoministeriö 2019c).

[...] it was wished to be responsible food and environmentally friendly and also the basis was that what was vegetarian food was also suitable for vegans [...]. (S1)

[...] the most important factor was that we bring this locality and also bring it cost-efficiently [...]. (S2)

The sustainable food was promoted in every table it was served. Further, it was promoted also on electronic screens around the venue: “[a]ll ingredients are chosen based on sustainability, locality and with respect to the season. The dishes are lactose and gluten free”. The dishes being special diet friendly is a way to consider all the participants. Also, the purpose was to decrease the amount of food waste that might be caused by making a large amount of food for only people with special diets. Further, the way that sustainability was promoted during the meeting was a great way to inform the meeting participants about the environmentally responsible meeting concept.

[...] we obviously use quality ingredients, and the quality comes from the fact that it is locally produced and seasonal products, and domestic ingredients can often be a little bit more expensive compared to ingredients

brought from somewhere else. [...] we left out many unnecessary things, as an example the use of bottles, so from which we got a lot of savings, we offered juice and water, which are in completely different cast with the prices, we also added the use of vegetables a lot, which clearly, when decreasing the use of meat, the costs are less. (S4)

In addition to savings, as a result of their decision not to use plastic bottles, MFA has saved over 10000 bottles during the whole chairmanship of the Arctic Council and only the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting saves over 2000 plastic bottles (Ulkoministeriö 2019e). The plastic bottles were truly left out, and the water was served in containers from which the participants filled up their durable glasses. According to Marie-Luise Blue's (2018) article, one 0,5 litre water bottle made of plastic has a carbon footprint of 82.8 grams of CO₂. The carbon footprint of the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting would have been much bigger if plastic bottles had been used as in meetings usually (Figure 3).

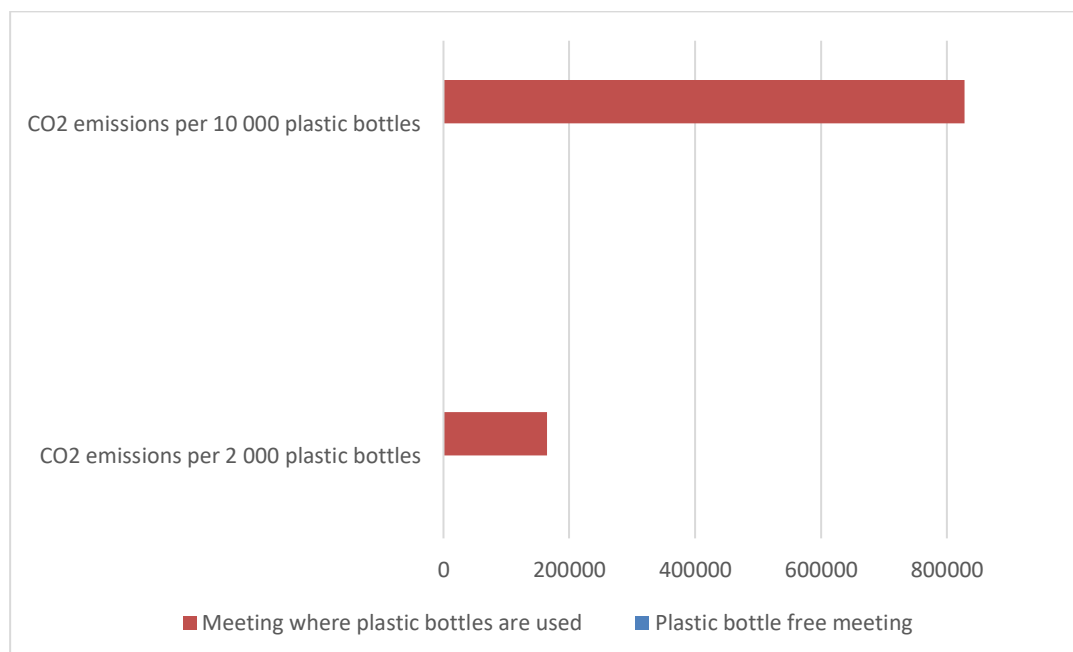


Figure 3. Estimate of the CO₂ Emissions Saved (see Blue 2018)

The observer visited the catering settings during the meeting, and a noticeable factor was that the catering staff had a large number of plastic bottles in the kitchen, that they had used to drink water from. The voluntary staff members that worked on-site, though, had been provided with durable bottles when attending

the training. The volunteers were asked to take those durable bottles with them to the meeting. When sustainability and responsibility are targeted, all the actors need to be taken into consideration and informed clearly about the principles, in this case no plastic bottles were supposed to be used at all. It would have been important to advise the catering staff also about the fact that plastic bottles are not appropriate and instead they could have used their own, durable bottles. The observer describes the scene the following way:

In the kitchen I noticed that all of the staff members had their own plastic water bottles sitting on the side. [...] but they could have used something else than plastic bottles like the rest of the organising team.

The author implemented the observation based on an observation chart (see Appendix 2), where all the most important factors about environmental food have been evaluated by grading and separated by each separate session, where food was offered (Figure 4). As can be seen in the chart, the criterion was fulfilled successfully, yet the only factor that can be noticed is that the staff lunch' catering was lacking from the quality of the other caterings. The most noticeable factors were the difference in the serving sizes of the plant-based foods and meat-based foods. The plant-based foods were catered in containers half the size of the meat-based foods. Also, the seasonality of the drinks did not meet with the guidelines, since pineapple and mixed berry juice were served. "There were non-seasonal or Finnish juices offered [...]" the author states in the diary made based on the participant observation. There was also no promotion of the environmental responsibility to be seen where the staff lunch was served.

As mentioned previously, when arranging environmentally responsible meetings, it would be important to consider all the actors involved, equally. Although, the staff lunch was not in a key element position in the meeting, the lunch could have been more environmentally responsible. Therefore, if the regulations set for the environmentally responsible food and catering instructions would have been followed through, the event could have been even more sustainable.

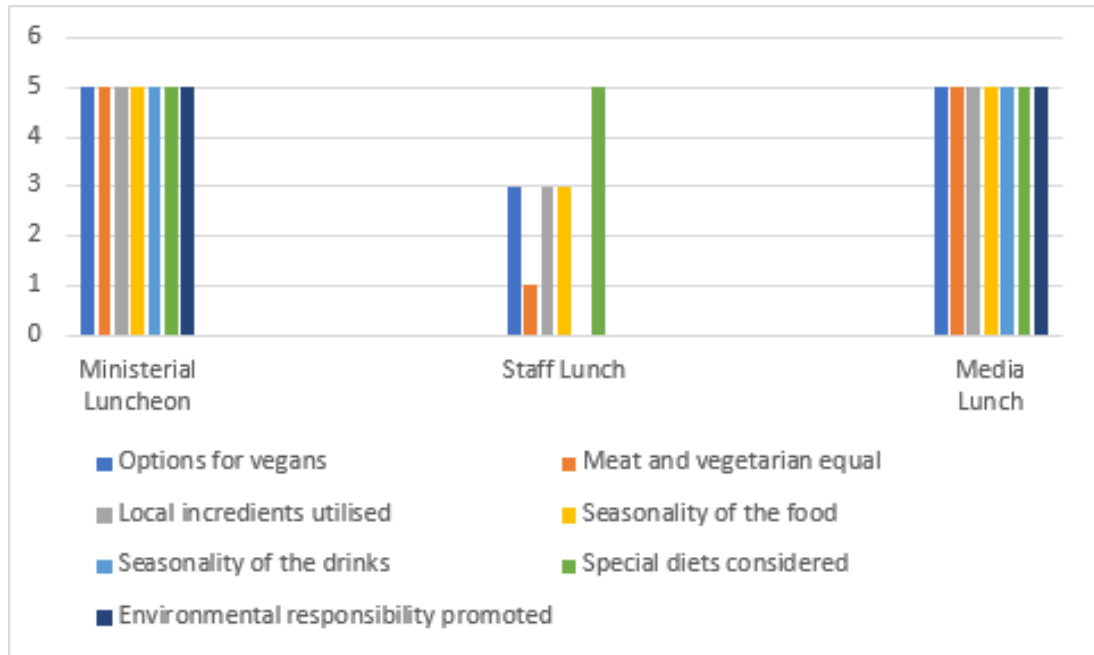


Figure 4. Comparing the quality of the three different lunches

During coffee, there were small cocktail bites served, where special diets were also considered.

The food that was served on the coffee tables was cocktail sized, which was good because the guest would not take too much food. The portion sizes were small.

Coffee and tea were both organic, there were no single packaged items and oat milk for coffee was served in same sized container as cow's milk. The author had remarked it in the diary: "There was even a same sized container used for oat milk as there was for cow's milk". There were food options for vegetarians but only one option for vegans. "There was only one salty option for vegans in addition to cinnamon buns", the observer noticed. In addition to the cocktail bites though, there were fresh fruit, nuts, cookies, and rye chips offered. For the cocktail bites there were napkins (eco-friendly), though, there could have been durable plates instead. The author noticed the fact during the observation.

[...] cocktail sized bites were supposed to be placed on a napkin, instead of a small plate. Though, the napkins apparently were made from recycled material as requested by the organiser.

Afterall, implementing the concept in the Ministerial Meeting required good planning and the contributor was responsible for choosing the cooperating catering partners that were the most suitable based on their values for the meetings' caterings.

Responsibility is obviously to guide all cooperative partners in a way our concept works, therefore, everyone who worked at the event had a clear picture of what is important to us. (S4)

[...] our responsibility has been the most important in the briefing. And certainly, responsibility in that we looked after that it is implemented in a way that is desired. (S4)

[...] everything was completely planned [...]. (S1)

The respondents recognised some challenges when implementing the environmentally responsible meeting's catering services. Although the respondents managed to fulfil the wishes of the commissioner, there were some challenges that had to be solved. Catering the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting consisted of small components and those had to be carefully considered.

[...] the most challenging was [...] – maybe that you have to have these WWF recommendations, and also it has to be gluten free and Finnish. (S1)

[...] there was million so little pieces, that reasonability had to be considered at all times. (S2)

The challenges that aroused were rather small. The outcome fulfilled the expectations and the respondent's feelings about the implementation were great. Despite the requirements of the environmentally responsible meeting and the challenging settings of the venue, the cooperative partners were also pleased with the outcome of the meeting.

[...] very challenging conditions and a very challenging event – that I don't think that it could have been implemented better. (S1)

Some specific things were made clear right away and that was it, we worked based on that, we asked, and we got an answer right away. It was truly straight forward co-operation and with very, *very* good team spirit. (S2)

[...] the project went very well from the beginning to the end, all communication with [the contributor] was really easy and the feedback was proper, and it was said clearly if changes were needed. (S1)

5.2.2 Acquisition and Life Cycle Thinking

The subcontractor and event maker of this project, FactorNova, was selected based on Hansel partnerships, which aims to save the society's resources by increasing productivity (Hansel 2019). FactorNova's role in arranging the meeting was very large and the team worked closely together with the conference coordinator and project assistant (Kukkonen 2019). Environmental responsibility was the major actor in the Arctic Council's meeting in Rovaniemi, it was essential for all cooperative partners to own the same values but also be able to implement the meeting in the way the organising team desired.

[...] starting from the bidding competition, they have emphasized that the planning path needs to be followed, therefore it has been very important – along with sustainable development [...]. (S3)

[...] we responded comprehensively to their request, and we also responded to the sustainable development solutions on its completely own chapter [...]. (S3)

[...] it [sustainable development] has worked as a guideline basically in everything [...]. (S3)

The meeting venue was designed carefully by the organisers and all the details were considered carefully. All the furniture was rented from somewhere, donated, or recycled afterwards. Also, there were no flowers used for decorating the tables, to decrease the amount of unnecessary waste, instead there were decorative trees and plants which were planted afterwards. The author described the environmentally responsible decoration in the observation diary the following way:

All the furniture at the lounge and the decorational elements (vases etc.) were borrowed from Finnish brands such as Marimekko, Iittala, and Pentik. [...] the decoration had been implemented beautifully and responsibly.

[...] we do not buy new tables and chairs every time – it would be very cost heavy [...] (S3)

[...] we get everything rented, that we don't have to buy anything –but they would be multi purposed. (S4)

A lot of things are something we have used in previous meetings [...]. (S5)

[...] couches and chairs were rental products, but for example in the media centre those dead pine tree -tables are from Uhtua Design and those were loaned, all pine wood things go to be planted – the garden swings went to nursing homes and pillows and blankets were from Pentik – every piece was decorationally thought. The only decorations bought were some table cloths and those might have also gone to Lappia-house. (S3)

For a sustainable event, the life-cycle of the products must be well planned in order to avoid unnecessary purchases. By renting instead of buying, already existing materials can be utilised, renting is also cost-efficient. Though, in this kind of an event, there were textiles and posters that had to be acquired, not rented. More, those wall textiles and posters were donated to be made into art by the University of Lapland's Faculty of Art students, post event.

[...] we have noticed as event organisers to the fact that we bring temporary experiences, and these – usually temporary – sometimes long-term, but our temporary experiences also produce waste. (S3)

[...] stories have an important affect, where the things are coming from, what they are used for, and where they are going afterwards. (S3)

Waste management was also thought through in the Ministerial Meeting. As the author observed the surroundings of the meeting venue, it could be noticed that recycling was well organised. “They had thought through everything from bio waste to glass waste” the author had written in the observation diary.

The mass carpet covered a massive area of the venue and was necessary to have. Life cycle approach was applied to all supplies, even the life-cycle of the mass carpet was considered, which must have been the most significant acquisition for the meeting. The carpet was used to not only protect the floor, but also muffle the noises, tie dirt and dust, make standing more comfortable, and make the venue look tidier. The amount of carpet needed was 5000m², which is a rather large amount, hence it cannot be rented. Usually, the amount of waste coming from the carpets is considerable, consequently the carpet did not go to waste after the ministerial meeting. (Rahikainen 2006; Kukkonen 2019a.)

[...] perhaps from the environmental responsibility's point of view the most challenging factor was – firstly purchasing this massive mass carpet. [...] there is no such big amount available of the carpet, that would have suited for implementing this event – in a way that it would have gone to be recycled or [...] newly used this carpet. So it was our first breaking point that we had to buy this mass carpet, but we survived from that, and it was utilised in other purposes after that, it went to the university – some of the carpet – and also through a cooperation partner for road building material. (S4)

Usually, the meeting participants receive gifts when they attend a meeting or a conference. In the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi though, there were no gifts given to the attendees. The focus was, therefore, in memorabilia,

rather than in material, which then enabled the organisers to provide higher quality services for the guests. Also, there were saving made in the CO2 emissions when the gifts were left out.

[...] all the gifts were left out, and this – we made acquisitions very considerably, only the necessary purchases. (S4)

[...] some things might cost a bit more, but then a lot is left out, so it is compensated there. (S5)

5.2.3 Transportation Services and Evening Programs

Transportation services in the meeting were implemented based on the want to provide as good services as possible but reasonably, considering the environmental values. The transportation service provider “Pohjolan Turistiauto - yhtiöt” has a transport enterprise responsibility certificate licensed by Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi). “The responsibility model is an operational model based on the systematic management of transport enterprises and considers financial, safety, environmental quality perspectives”, states the Trafi (2019) certificate.

The service provider was responsible for the transportation services during the meeting. There were several shuttle services provided for the meeting participants to ensure that they could attend the meeting but also the welcome reception and farewell reception. The buses were implemented as shuttles to reduce the participants’ single car use. The buses were not supposed to be running if there were no people inside. Each shuttle service had their responsible bus host who was responsible for the buses not running unnecessary rounds, though the project assistant had the main responsibility of the service.

[...] we also had to consider the transportation, we had a pretty comprehensive transportation repertory – but then again, when we are in this level meeting and being there in the north where you cannot know directly about the weather [...] (S4)

Arranging the meeting in Rovaniemi created its own challenges. Rovaniemi is a city that is secluded far up north, approximately 823 kilometres from Helsinki. The location for the meeting, though, was important for the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting. For the organisers, it was sometimes, therefore, mandatory to travel from Helsinki to Rovaniemi.

Obviously, a lot of this planning had to happen face to face in there which meant that us, the organisers had to come to Rovaniemi quite often, especially at the end. A lot of course was taken care of by phone and email [...]. (S4)

[...] but then when you visit once a month during spring, and it was unquestioning [...]. (S4)

[...] we would have liked to come to Rovaniemi by train, but the time we had in this – we had small resources here in Helsinki taking care of this visit – that it would have not been possible in those terms that we could have travelled there every time by train. (S4)

[...] we are in the north and nevertheless we tried to get things from as close as possible, though some things need to be brought from Helsinki [...] (S5)

[...] you have to handle it by phone or email and when you come [to Rovaniemi] – the schedule has to be well planned. We did not come if there was no good reason to come. (S5)

As mentioned previously, FactorNova, was chosen according to Hansel partnerships. The company is a Helsinki based company, which meant that the two members from the FactorNova team also had to travel to Rovaniemi during the planning process. Not all the planning meetings could be held online or in Helsinki.

We visited Rovaniemi – we just counted – we visited six times all together. Might have been slightly less. (S3)

Also, one of the issues that arose because of the distant location of the meeting was that the subcontractors could be more considered about the packaging waste. The contributor could have been more aware of the possible issue which might come up when transporting such items such long distances. There should be detailed instructions about the packaging materials, since packaging material is mandatory to be used.

[...] if I say something that could be done better – I don't know how it would have been possible – but like packaging waste [...] (S3)

[...] we are in Rovaniemi and we are receiving very expensive and this kind of visual product and those have to be packed really well. In my opinion, our subcontractors could think how they could pack, like more environmentally friendly. (S3)

Luckily there are local producers – that those were also found and all – but we are talking about such large implementation [...]. (S3)

6 IMPROVEMENT IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE (GREEN) MEETING CONCEPT

6.1 Organisers' Responsibility in Meeting Arrangements

Organiser as a payer has the responsibility to require for certain quality of service from their cooperative partners. The following suggestions (Table 2) for the organisers are listed as first out of all the suggestions, since the author believes the organiser has the biggest affect in environmentally responsible meeting arrangements. If environmental responsibility is targeted, the most important concern for the organiser is to educate themselves thoroughly, before educating other cooperative partners involved in the arranging process.

Table 2.

1. Educate yourself. Organiser must be aware of the environmentally responsible meeting arrangements concept and recognise the requirements themselves, before educating others.
2. Educate others. After the organiser is familiar with the concept, educating others is a good way to spread the word about the concept.
3. Be passionate. Organiser must be passionate about the concept and have genuine will to succeed, it will have a positive affect on others as well.
4. Make choices based on environmental responsibility. Organiser can also have an influence on the companies they cooperate with.
5. Communicate. Organiser must communicate with the cooperative partners closely to ensure the requirements are fulfilled as desired.
6. All the actors should act the same way. Make sure the kitchen staff, catering staff, organising team, volunteers, and all possible actors involved are following the same principles. The concept loses its reliability if someone is not fulfilling the regulations.
7. Advertise. Use social media and other digitalisation to educate others about the concept and the solutions you are offering. If there are exhibitor at the event, make sure they have the same aspects and values.

The contributor may require certain services from their cooperative partners or even choose the partners they want to cooperate with, based on their

organisational values. The solutions above are realistic and easy to implement so they can be adopted easily. Adopting the following principles requires a want to succeed in becoming more environmentally responsible as an organisation. The author, therefore, wants to highlight the importance of the organiser's responsibility as the contributor. The organiser is not, however, only the contributor, as the organiser can in addition effect on spreading the word about environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements.

6.2 Environmentally Responsible Food

Food has an important role on environmentally responsible meeting arrangements. There are many simple solutions that can be made if paying a little more attention to the detail when planning. By following the suggestions (Table 3), it can be seen how small the solutions can be and also it can be noticed that environmentally responsible food is also nutritional and healthy.

Table 3.

1. Favour plant-based products. Consider offering vegetarian or vegan options instead of only meat-based options.
2. Think about the portion sizes. Request for smaller portion sizes from the service producer. There is less food wasted when the portion sizes are small.
3. Ask for certified and organic products. Ask the cooperative partner for certified and organic foods and products.
4. Follow the meat and fish guides set by WWF Finland. Only offer meat and fish that are good for the environment, diversity, and eutrophication.
5. Acknowledge special diets. Make sure that most of the food offered is suitable for people with intolerance in gluten and dairy. Also consider offering vegan food, not only vegetarian. When there is no need to make separate dishes for people with special diets, there is less food waste.
6. Reduce the use of single-packed products. Acquire products that are in big containers. These products last long and create less waste.
7. Offer same quality foods to everybody. Make sure that the employees are offered food according to the same principles as the guests.

The most important acknowledgement from the above suggestions comes back to the importance of organiser's responsibility. The organiser must have a clear vision about the foods they want to offer and the information about the foods have to be clear for the catering staff members. For the organiser it is, therefore, crucial to follow through with the environmental responsibility, if it is targeted. The organiser should also be aware of what happens behind the scenes and make sure the same principles are followed through.

6.3 Catering Services and Catering Staff

Catering services are an important part of meeting arrangement process. As previously has become apparent and can be seen from Table 4, it is the organiser's responsibility to require for a certain quality of service from the catering service producers. The organiser not only communicates, but also supervises the work and requires for certain products. Improved results come when all parties are communicating well and open for suggestions.

Table 4.

1. Require certified and organic products. Ask the cooperative partner for certified products.
2. Make sure the principles are followed through. Make sure the same requirements are fulfilled at every point where food is offered. Also pay attention to the less showing parts such as staff meals.
3. Communicate with the catering staff members. Communicating cannot be highlighted more. Educate the cooperative partners about the importance of environmentally responsible food solutions and they might adopt the environmentally responsible principles to their own companies.
4. Reduce the use of napkins and check the material. Small solutions such as napkin placement may reduce the use of them. Place napkins somewhere else than next to the coffee cups and/or plates.
5. Avoid using plastic. Serve water and other beverages in big containers instead of single use bottles. Require everything to be served from durable dishes and containers, even if there are eco-friendly options available. This helps to reduce waste.

As can be recognized, the catering staff themselves have to follow the regulations given by the organising committee of the event. The catering staff, however, have the opportunity to improve their services within the company. This should be one of the targets of the organisers as well, to promote environmental responsibility and demonstrate how simple and effortless these solutions are in practice.

6.4 Acquisitions and Life Cycle Thinking

Acquisitions are often seen necessary when arranging meetings. However, Table 5 demonstrates that it is not always essential. There are many solutions that can be done to avoid unnecessary acquisitions. By acquiring less, money can be saved, and it can be used to other, more memorable components. For example, lanyards, name badges, pens, napkins, and other decorative elements can be manufactured from more responsible materials.

Table 5.

1. Only buy, if necessary. Think about the products life-cycle and story. Where does the product come from, what is its purpose, and where does it go afterwards. The amount of waste can be reduced in the purchasing phase already.
2. Rent. Think, if there is something that can be rented instead of purchased. Renting is usually cheaper as well and any unnecessary purchases can be avoided.
3. Think about the material. Be responsible and learn about the materials that are used for producing the product. Favour products made from recycled materials, for example.
4. Pay attention to the table decorations. Instead of flower bouquets, prefer natural elements such as pine cones or plants that can be planted afterwards. Flower bouquets increase the amount of waste, which can be avoided by making more responsible choices which also have a story behind them.
5. Leave out the gifts. Consider leaving gifts and conference bags behind and spending the funds on memorable experiences instead.

Renting furniture or other material is a great way to make savings when arranging meetings. By renting, the organisation avoids making unnecessary acquisitions for a single event. There is no need for manufacturing new products when renting. The less consumed, the better for the environment. Also, there is more money

left to use for entertaining and creating long lasting memories, which is often more valuable for meeting attendees.

6.5 Waste Management as a Part of Meeting Arrangements

Waste management is often not considered as an important part of meeting arrangements. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged as a crucial factor of environmentally responsible meeting concept. In Finland, waste management is often well implemented, however, it should be clear to the catering service producers and venue designers, which kinds of recycling possibilities there should be. Table 6 offers suggestions for improved event waste management.

Table 6.

1. Discuss about the waste management system. Discuss about possible solutions in order to recycle as well as possible.
2. Use durable products. Avoid using disposable containers, plates, and cutlery.
3. Track your event's waste. Minimise your events waste and try to reduce the amount every time.
4. Ask about the food waste. Find out what will happen to the left-over food and suggest improvement ideas. Nowadays there are companies that offer solutions to left-over food.
5. Packaging material. Ask for alternative and more ecological packaging material to be used if your event requires transporting material from longer distances.

Waste management is sometimes considered self-evident. Attention is payed if recycling is not possible or handled poorly. Waste management in meetings, however, is not as self-evident. There is a recycling option available for most products in Finland, therefore, those recycling opportunities should be included in meeting arrangements.

6.6 Transportation Services and Alternative Options

Location can have a big effect on the environmental responsibility of an event. If the event is in a small city where everything is located close to each other,

naturally, less transportation services is needed. When walking distances are small, there are options such as walking or biking. However, it is not always possible to organize events in these kinds of locations. Transportation services can still be planned in a more environmentally responsible way as Table 7 demonstrates.

Table 7.

<p>1. Transportation of the materials. Is there an alternative location closer to the place where you are acquiring the materials, or can the material be acquired from local producers. If transporting from far away, the materials usually have to be packed well and that requires a lot of packaging material to be used.</p>
<p>2. Shuttle services. Arrange shuttle services to the participants so they do not have to get taxis or use single cars, in case of bad weather or if the venue is not within walking distance.</p>
<p>3. Walking, biking, public transportation. Tell the participants about the transportation options in the city of the meeting. Usually, there are other, cheaper and more environmentally friendly options than getting a taxi.</p>
<p>4. Transportation companies. There are many companies that offer transportation services. Check if there are companies that have certificates of responsible service in your area.</p>

Location of the meeting venue, nature of the event, and location of the evening programmes all have an impact on the capacity of the transportation services needed. By planning well, emissions can be saved on transportation. Also, for the participants comfort, it is sometimes necessary to provide transportation services, in this case, shuttle services are an environmentally responsible solution. The organiser must control that the busses are running effectively and instruct the bus hosts to act accordingly.

6.7 Evening Programmes

Evening programmes are a part of meeting arrangements. The participants often look forward to attending these more informal events and learning about the local culture. Promoting local workers and culture as a part of meeting arranging is

important and the foreign participants are often interested in purchasing local products as well as learning about the history of the location.

Table 8.

<p>1. Think about the location. Favour locations close to the participants hotels or within a public transportation system so that they could walk to the meeting venue.</p>
<p>2. Offer evening programs within walking distance from the meeting venue. Arrange conference dinners and other evening programs close to the hotels the participants are staying or within public transportation system.</p>
<p>3. Advocate local culture. Arrange evening programmes in historic venues to educate the participants about the local culture. Take them to local shops to support the local workers.</p>
<p>4. Instruct the evening programme venues about the guidelines. Follow the guidelines when organising evening programmes as well. Offer food according to the same principles. Even consider offering completely vegetarian or vegan foods as well.</p>

The same guidelines set for the meeting arrangements should be implemented in evening programmes as well. All the previously mentioned suggestions should therefore be fulfilled in the evening programmes as well. Evening programmes are a good opportunity to showcase the local culture, produce, and people. As a result of a successful evening programme, the meeting participants might want to visit the meeting destination again in the future.

6.8 Summary of Improvement Ideas and Suggestions

As a summary, the improvement ideas above will hopefully help the commissioners to develop the environmentally responsible meeting concept and help with establishing the concept of Green Meeting. The suggestions were found based on the authors participant observation and structured observation in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting, semi-structured interview, and qualitative content analysis. However, it is up to the commissioners if they are willing to utilise these suggestions to improve the concept of environmental responsibility in (green) meeting arrangements.

In environmentally responsible meeting arrangements, the emphasis must be even more on the contributor's responsibility. The contributor is responsible for instructing their cooperative partners towards the desired outcome of the event. Therefore, well working communication among all actors in the organising team is crucial. If environmental responsibility is targeted, the contributor must be aware that all the actors involved in the organising process are aware of the requirements of an environmentally responsible meeting. The contributor is also responsible for observing that the requirements are followed through in every aspect.

The concept itself was working comprehensively to start with. The conference coordinator was keen on the topic and had personal interest towards the concept. The coordinator was passionate to develop the concept to reach better outcomes. To ensure that the guidelines for environmentally responsible meetings are followed, the meeting organiser must have the authority and personal motivation to work towards the goal, environmental responsibility. The suggestions to the guidelines consist of small details, which are, nonetheless, very important. Also, the importance of considering the less visible actors, such as kitchen staff, is valuable. The environmentalism as a whole loses its value, if there are some factors that are less considered.

7 CONCLUSION

The focus of this thesis was on environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements. The Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting ended Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council where the environmentally responsible meeting arrangements were evaluated and documented. As the target of this thesis was to improve the concept of environmental responsibility in meeting arrangements. The concept has been developed during Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2017-2019 in various meetings. As a result, this thesis documented the solutions of environmentally responsible meeting arrangements in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting, gave improvement ideas and suggestion for the environmentally responsible meetings concept but also helped to establish the concept of Green Meeting that provides environmentally responsible solutions to companies as a part of the Green Office concept.

Initially, the objective of the research was to document the environmentally responsible solutions in the Ministerial Meeting, in order to have documentation of the solutions in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting after Finland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council. During the research process, there were solutions that were found useful in order to develop the environmentally responsible meeting concept and those solutions were gathered to improve the existing guidelines for responsible meetings. The solutions were gathered in a way that the event organiser finds it easy to follow the guidelines and the gap to being more environmentally friendly when organising events would not be as big. The suggestions offer concrete solutions that require the contributor's interest towards the topic of environmentalism.

Environmental aspects such as greenhouse effect, sustainable development and environmental responsibility, ecological footprint, carbon footprint and life cycle thinking, and environmental protection are all matters that are important to nature's wellbeing and need to be considered when arranging meetings. Nature's own systems are harmed by human actions and by making better choices, organisations can have an impact to the already changing environment. Being considerate about the effects of human actions to the environment and taking

responsibility of everyone's own actions works towards a more environmentally responsible culture. Environmental aspects were an important subject to MFA during the chairmanship of the Arctic Council, which also led to this development project.

Catering services, food waste, contributor's responsibility, acquisitions, material efficiency, transportation services, and evening programs are all parts of meeting arrangements. Contributor's responsibility is to plan the events well enough to minimize the environmental effects of that certain event. Good planning is the key to a more environmentally responsible event and the fact that consuming food has the greatest environmental impact, good planning can minimize the impact. Planning needs to be done well when making acquisitions for events, if unnecessary acquisitions are not made, there are also savings in the cost. Part of environmental responsibility is promoting healthy lifestyle by offering nutritional food, further, encourage event participants to walk or bike, if possible, instead of using single cars. Public transportation is another solution that decreases emissions caused by event arrangements.

The research approach utilised was a mixed method approach, as it offered the most suitable methods for this particular research. Several research methods were applied, including semi-structured interview, participant observation, structured observation, and qualitative content analysis. Some of the methods were suggestions from the commissioner, but the author had the freedom to choose the most suitable research methods that ended up being almost the same that were wished to be utilised. By using these methods, the aim was to obtain as much information as possible from environmentally responsible catering services, venue designing, acquisitions, transportation services, evening programs, and waste management. Though, the topic of environmental responsibility being so large, it had to be limited. Thus, the author mostly focused on the elements taking place at the actual meeting venue.

The key results found in this research process were mainly found during the observation in the Arctic Council's Ministerial Meeting. Observing enabled the author to be involved in the meeting arrangements closely and without being able

to observe, most of the key results would have been left out. Key results of this thesis emphasized the important role of the organiser as the contributor and the contributor's responsibility. Even though contributor's responsibility was considered from the start, it grew its importance during the research. Promoting environmental responsibility works towards involving more actors in environmentally responsible meeting concept and being aware of it, since it is not a familiar enough topic yet. Also, as a key result, for the concept to maintain its value, all the actors that are involved should be equally treated and offered the same quality of services and instructed the same way.

Use of the mentioned resources do contribute to climate change. However, by following the detailed guidelines set to the event, the event organisers can minimise these environmental impacts. There is still a long way to a completely environmentally responsible meeting industry, therefore, environmental responsibility should be considered in all Minister-level meetings to make it more of a norm in meeting industry. Due to the limitation of this study, as a suggestion for the future, more attention should be paid to the hotels and where the guests are staying. The same principles regarding foods, electricity, location of the hotels, and plastic should be considered in places where the guests are staying. Also, in the future, flying needs to be considered more carefully and how these kinds of meetings can be arranged without having to fly the participants to the meetings.

Nonetheless, this thesis gives proof of the environmentally responsible meeting arrangements but also suggests improvement ideas to the commissioners to develop the environmentally responsible meeting concept. Thus, it is up to the commissioners if they want to improve the concept and take the results of this thesis to a new level. Moreover, as the author's contact person from MFA Annariina Kukkonen stated: "Environmental responsibility is the new black", points out that environmental thinking has become more important recently and the statement also suggests that the concept will be developing even further in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Semi-structure Interviews

Appendix 2. Participant Observation and Structured Observation

Appendix 3. Qualitative Content Analysis

Appendix 1. Semi-structured Interview

Semi-Structured Interview

Background information of the interviewee

- Name
- Organisation
- Position in the organisation

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Research Topics	Questions
1. Meeting and Conference arrangements	<p>Could you describe your role in organising the conference?</p> <p>What were the most important factors to you to be considered when organising an event?</p> <p>Why was your organisation chosen to take part in organising this conference?</p> <p>What is the contributor's responsibility when organising meeting or conferences?</p> <p>What is the most challenging factor to be considered when organising this event?</p>
2. Environmental responsibility	<p>How would you describe environmental responsibility?</p> <p>What is the value of environmentalism to you?</p> <p>What are the most important values when it comes to environmental thinking within your organisation?</p> <p>How environmental responsibility is related to meeting and conference organising?</p> <p>What can be improved within your organisation when it comes to environmental thinking?</p> <p>What can be improved within the venue organisers?</p>
3. Conference arrangements and environmental responsibility	<p>How are these elements combined in the event in your opinion?</p> <p>How do these matters support one another?</p>
4. Analysing the outcome	<p>How the event was implemented?</p> <p>What could have been done better?</p>

General Information about the interview

- 5 interviewees
- Can be conducted in Finnish or English
- Interviewees working in different organisations and positions
- Conducted via Zoom, Skype or mobile phone
- Semi-structured interview; theme interview including open-ended questions
- Target is to collect information and analyse their knowledge regarding the research topic

Estimated length 0,5– 1hours

Interview flow

1. Describing the research topics to the person interviewed followed with basic rules of the interviewing process (e.g. there is no need to answer all the questions asked or discuss about a topic if they feel uncomfortable to do so)
2. Asking permission for recording the interview as well as using the research material for this project (making sure the interviewees know that they might be recognisable by some actors involved in the meeting arrangements)
3. Background information of the interviewee (Name, organisation, and their position in the organisation)
4. The interviewees perception about meeting and conference arrangements
5. The interviewees perception about environmental responsibility
6. Meeting and conference arrangements combined with environmental responsibility
7. The interviewees analysis of the outcome
8. Thanking the person interviewed for their time and for sharing their knowledge

General issues about the interview

This interview is confidential. We ask permission for tape recording the interview as well as for using the research material in Multidimensional Tourism Institute for research purposes.

During the interview the following themes re discussed:

- Meeting and conference arrangements
- Environmental responsibility
- Conference arrangements & environmental responsibility

Appendix 3. Qualitative Content Analysis

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		(S1)	(S2)	(S3)	(S4)	(S5)
2	CATEGORIES TASKS AND DUTIES IN THE EVENT	SAMPLES OF TRANSCRIBED TEXT	SAMPLES OF TRANSCRIBED TEXT	SAMPLES OF TRANSCRIBED TEXT	SAMPLES OF TRANSCRIBED TEXT	SAMPLES OF TRANSCRIBED TEXT
3	MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER					
4	CHALLENGES					
5	CONTRIBUTORS RESPONSIBILITY					
6	AQUISITIONS					
7	ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY					
8	ORGANISATIONAL VALUES					
9	COST					
10	ANAYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION					
11						