

Shifting towards Sustainable Events by Using Alternative Energy and Energy-Efficient Devices

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Abstract

Energy plays a very significant role in all aspects of humankind. It is required for domestic, industrial and other usage. With regard to industrial activity, energy is used to power various equipment of a business, whether for lighting, operating the machines, devices or appliances. The events industry is no exception. Socially and economically, this is acceptable by all means. However, the concern is the use of fossil fuels in events which is harmful and destructive to the environment by causing global climate change. The article highlights that this is impacting the environment and threatening various social economic opportunities, including events. This article accentuates that there are other sustainable renewable alternative energies that can be used to generate and power equipment in business ventures, including events. The article analyses the complementary role of energy-efficient equipment with the use of renewable energy and shows that energy-efficient equipment will perform better functions and output than non-efficient fossil fuel energy equipment. The article points out that, in South Africa, there is a paucity of scholarly literature on the use of renewable energy and energy-efficient equipment in events, thereby creating a gap. It is against this scholarly inertia that this article makes a contribution by advancing an argument for the potential benefits of the use of sustainable renewable energy sources in events.

Keywords: Events, Fossil energy, Greenhouse gas, Global climate change, Interventions, Sustainability

1. Introduction

Numerous scholarly works have been written and studies have been conducted on issues surrounding the events industry, with ground-breaking results and insights into the effective organisation of events of all types such as sporting, business, culture, conferences, concerts, exhibitions, festivals and political events (Davenport and Beck 2001). However, there is a paucity of scholarly information on the importance of the use of renewable energies and energy-efficiency equipment in events. Available literature on the leisure industry only covers issues surrounding the need to use renewable energies in the tourism industry, but not in the events industry, thereby creating a gap in the use of sustainable renewable energy in events literature.

It is against the backdrop of this scholarly inertia that this article makes a contribution to the body of knowledge by analysing the potential of the use of renewable energy and energy-efficient equipment in events against fossil fuel that emits carbon dioxide. Events of different types can be used as platforms not only for leisure but also to promote socio-economic developments and growths (Theocharis, 2008). However, the organisation and staging of an event can also generate negative environmental and socio-economic impacts if the energy usage in organising and powering the equipment is from fossil fuel that emits greenhouse gas; of which scientific literature and reports have confirmed as the main cause of global climate change (Dornfeld et al. 2013). Climate change is now real as it is changing and impacting on the environment, industries and businesses (Revell et al. 2010). The events industry is no exception. Organisers of events need to know that their fossil fuel activities are contributing to global climate change and even having negative impact on businesses, hence the need to do everything possible to respond by incorporating and promoting sustainability into the business.

South Africa is one of the popular tourism and events hosting countries on the African continent and in the world (Cornelissen and Swart 2006). The hosting of the World Cup tournament in 2010 is a recent example. However, the concern is that these events are being hosted in unsustainable ways and manners. Even though there have been various interventions and other initiatives by the government advocating for the greening of events by using renewable energies as sources of energy, most of the events still resort to the use of fossil energies for different operations prior, during and

after the events. Worse still, equipment that is being deployed and used is non-energy efficient. These devices and appliances are sometimes powered by energy from fossil fuels (Jharrison and O'Shea 2010). If the attitude of "business as usual" is not controlled, changed or stopped, the manifestation of different devastating weather events and their destructive impacts on the environment – both on living and non-living things – will be out of control and even prevent the hosting of future events (Koons, 2008).

According to Soroos (1997), scientific reports and opinions have confirmed that global climate change is caused by human activities through the burning of fossil fuel, which releases harmful and noxious gasses into the atmosphere (IPCC, 2001). Organising and conducting events by using fossil fuels to power various equipment in events are products of human activities (Almadani, 2012). These activities are a confirmation of the scientific findings and reports of how various human activities are causing global climate change (Sherwood, 2001). Events that are organised and conducted by using fossil fuels and non-efficient equipment are considered to be part of the problem of global climate change (Acquire, 2002). South Africa, as a popular events destination, hosts various events on a yearly basis and the hosting of the mega event of the World Cup of 2010 is a very good example. Consequent upon these events activities, South Africa has become one of the major consumers and users of fossil fuels during these events, thus making the country a major emitter of greenhouse gas on the African continent (Bond and Cottle 2011).

Even though a developing country like South Africa is not legally bound under the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto Protocol, 1997), to reduce its emissions, South Africa has both administrative and political responsibilities to reduce its emissions because of its vulnerability to the impact of climate change (Roberts, 2008). The reduction of emission is the responsibility of all the governments who are members of the United Nations (Rondinelli and Berry 2000). This is because the impact of the changing climate is not restricted to a particular country, it is global and, as such, no country is immune from the devastating and catastrophes manifestation of the impact of climate change (Gordon, 2007). Scientific reports and evidence have confirmed that developing nations will be the hardest hit. Presently, the reality of this is showing in different patterns and dimensions. There have been incidents of flooding that eroded both human lives and farm products; there have been incidents of draughts and bumper harvests; rainfall is unpredictable and whenever it rains, it is usually torrential and uncontrollable; the climate is changing and various natural weather occurrences, which the rural people have been used to predict and know how to adapt to them, these days they are finding it very hard to make any meaningful prediction because the climate is precarious and unreliable (Bogardi, 2004). All these distorting and destructive climatic events are happening as a result of global climate change and it might not stop any time soon, unless there is both the political and the moral will to implement numerous national and international mechanisms on emissions reduction (Verweij et al. 2006). Consequently, any step taken, no matter how small or big, provided it will assist in emissions reduction, should be embraced as this will assist in the fight against global climate change (Odeku, 2012). By using renewable energy and energy efficient equipment in events, it is a way of reducing emissions because renewables do not emit carbon dioxides (Omer, 2008a). At the same time, participants at the events will derive maximum satisfaction as no standard will be compromised. This indicates that what fossil fuels can do, renewable energies can do better and are more sustainable (Jiang-Jiang et al. 2009).

In a progressive manner, government and various role players are now making frantic efforts to forge a new course in events organisation by initiating greening events. It is against the backdrop of these initiatives that this paper is motivated by the statement made by the South African Environmental Affairs Deputy Minister, Rejoice Mabudafhasi, at the Green Goal 2010 Programme launch, namely, that "The World Cup will be used to raise awareness of both local and global environmental issues and will be used to lay a foundation and set new and higher standards for greening future events in South Africa" (Nkosi, 2009). While this statement envisaged that there is need to green events, the immediate question that comes to mind is, to what extent have events been greened in South Africa? The answer is not far-fetched; the situations on the ground show that most events are still organised using fossil fuels, hence compromising the standards for greening events.

Given the foregoing, the focus of this paper is on possible and viable solutions whereby events can be organised and hosted by using sustainable renewable energies and energy-efficient equipment. These solutions are supported by scientific evidence, reports and opinions nationally and internationally (Sarkar, 2010). However, in order to get the desired result, there is need for change of mind-sets and perceptions by organisers and various players in the industry from 'not possible' to 'it is possible' and a buy-in to the idea of sustainability in business (Willard, 2005). Both the full support of the government and its regulatory authorities are also important, and this can be done by providing leadership and oversight by ensuring that all business ventures incorporate sustainability practices in their operations (Epstein, 2008).

The article draws on milestones achieved by the United Kingdom (UK) in organising green and sustainable events

and argues that, if it is feasible to present greening events in the UK, (Pernecky and Luck 2013), then South Africa can learn lessons from this and adapt the approaches and models in order to achieve the overall objective of carbon emissions reduction generally and particularly in organising and hosting events.

The significance of the paper to the events industry is manifold. Firstly, it will benefit policy makers, organisers and players, regulators, host countries, events managers, and suppliers of equipment for events. Secondly, it showcases viable and possible changes in mind-sets and "business as usual" without necessarily compromising the business. Thirdly, it promotes sustainable events hosting and organisation, culminating in best practices and good corporate governance in business. Fourthly, it confirms that, with the use of alternatives and efficient equipment, the environment will be benign for today's events and also for tomorrow. All these are attributes of the principle of sustainable use of energy for development, economic growth, job creation and leisure.

2. Methodology

The methodology for this study was based purely on desktop qualitative research. Scholarly literature analysed, examined, reviewed and used were sourced from the Internet, text books, government's strategic interventions and policies, instruments and legislations that are relevant to the issues surrounding the use of renewable energies in events, greenhouse gas emission reductions, energy efficiency and sustainability best practices. The study advances robust arguments for switching from non-renewable energy to power events, to sustainable green renewable energies in events, and submits that this is both economically and environmentally feasible. This study looks at success case studies in Europe and asks South Africa to learn from and emulate them.

3. Observations and Discussion

3.1 Significant issues inherent in the existing literature

The essence of an event is all about the convergence of people to create, operate, participate and recreate (Carnegie and McCabe 2008) in an experience and at the end of the day, share an experience and produce a measurable outcome (Silvers, 2004). Getz (2012) asserts that what makes events unique is that they are a "moment in time" and "aside from everyday occurrences". Events are leisure activities (Caltabiano, 1995) and work possibilities for people (Dale, 1995). Events bring people together and make them have a good time (Weisbord 1992). Kose et al. (2011) observe that events enhance the quality of people's life by providing significant social and economic benefits. Events are also regarded as services because they consist of intangible experiences of finite duration within a temporary, managed atmosphere (Shackley, 2001). The products of events are usually consumed immediately and are "highly heterogeneous and very difficult to store or control" (O'Neil et al. 1999).

Organising events entails bringing both human and capital together and manage the activities in order to lead to a successful event (Shone and Parry 2004). One of which is the energy required to power different equipment (Tassiopoulos, 2005). Managing event is therefore a task that requires assigning roles and responsibilities (Kose et al., 2011). Decision on what sort of energy to be used to power equipment to be used in an event is also crucial (Nutt, 1993). It is pertinent to mention that if the numbers of events occurring on a daily basis have increased tremendously and the energy component is fossil fuel, it is therefore imperative that, in order to minimise emission, there is need to ensure that events are organised and conducted sustainably using renewable energy (Arcodia and Reid 2005). Kose et al., (2011:1) assert that "regardless of size, events require a high degree of planning, a range of skills and a lot of energy." Unpacking the issue of energy, both human energy and energy to power the events are required to organise a successful event (Edwards et al. 2008). But the contention is that human energy should be geared towards acting responsibly and sustainably by using sustainable renewable energies to power the events (Utting and Unies 2000).

There are different types of events. Events could be small, medium or mega, depending on what the organisers plan them to be. In most cases, events can be for having a good time or for serious engagement of political or other challenging issues. Events can also be local, national and international, depending on the context in which they are organised. If it is for the occasion of the signing of international treaties, it will be considered to be of an international dimension. If it is an occasion for a political party to campaign for votes, it can be considered as local or national dimensions (ISO, 2012). There are three major players in events: firstly, the event owner – anyone who commissions and is responsible for the overall management of an event; secondly, the event organiser - who is anyone with the responsibility to manage the delivery of an event; and thirdly, event suppliers – any organisation providing products,

services or facilities such as lighting engineers, sound engineers, supplier of energy (Wang, 2013).

Energy is one of the major components used in organising any successful event, however, in most cases, organisers use energy from fossil fuels that emit Carbon Dioxide, thus causing global climate change (Hirsch, 2010). But energy from renewable energies and energy-efficient equipment in events will make an event sustainable (Roger, 2007). The study conducted by Jacobsson and Lauber (2006) reveals that the transition to low-carbon economy is possible if there is rapid diffusion and integration of renewable energy technologies. They indicated that there must be the willingness on the part of government to take this giant stride by ensuring that appropriate policy is put in place to realise this noble feat. The work of Dovi et al., (2008) shows that a sustainable future encompasses the use of renewable energy resources and improved efficiency in all sectors of human endeavours, which includes the organisation of events. Crucial reasons for advocating the switch to renewable energy are aptly put by Dovi et al. (2008:885) thus:

"The global warming related to CO2 emissions, coupled with steeply rising energy prices and the recent global financial institution melt-down are causing massive societal concerns and give rise to increasing demand for ways to improve societal and individual energy efficiency and for ways to shift increasingly demand for ways to improve societal and individual energy efficiency and of policies to support the development and implementation of technologies and management approaches we can employ to make the transition to more sustainable societies."

Menanteau et al. (2003), confirming various manifestations of climate change calamities, insisted that government must take responsibility and emphasised the European States' willingness to pursue ambitious objectives for producing electricity from renewable energy resources. In South Africa, the government has intervened in numerous ways to advocate the use of renewable energies through various strategic interventions such as implementing policies on promotion and diffusion of renewable energy, strengthening legislative and institutional frameworks on renewable energy, ensuring compliance and possibly enforcing the law on the use of renewable energy (Angel and Rock 2009). Events organisers have the corporate responsibility (Flint, 2013) to incorporate sustainable best practices by conducting self-evaluation (Rabe et al. 2005). Ancillary to the use of renewable energies in events is the significance of the use of energy-efficient equipment (Gupta, 2005). To this end, energy-efficient devices and renewable energy are considered to be mutually beneficial for organising sustainable green events, while renewable energy generates green energy that is friendly to the environment; energy-efficient equipment uses the energy and produces better output than equipment using fossil fuels (Skinner, 2000). It makes both economic and business sense for events practitioners to switch to renewable energy and energy-efficient equipment because the cost of powering is cheap, efficient and reliable and can last longer without developing technical faults and, more importantly, are friendly to the environment (Al-Saleh et al. 2008). All these activities will lead to sustainable events that are beneficial to all (Dincer and Rosen 1999).

When people derive maximum satisfaction by attending an event, this implies that the organiser has organised a successful event and this will naturally culminate in economic gains (Friedmann, 2003). However, there could be a bad side to an event if it was organised and conducted in unsustainable ways and manners (Zhenhua, 2003); especially if the energy used in the events is from fossil fuels that emit greenhouse gases causing global climate change (Moser and Dilling 2004). Greenhouse gas is defined in section 1 of the National Environmental Management Act: Air quality Act 2004, (APPA, 2004) as "gaseous constituents of the atmospheric both natural and anthropogenic that absorb and re-emit infrared radiation, and includes [sic] carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide." Glazewski (2004) observed that scientific evidence indicates that a majority of this is caused by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuel and deforestation. This will negatively impact on events, erode profits and threaten social economic growth and development just because the issue of sustainability has been treated with levity by the organisers. For this reason, the enjoyment, adventurousism and good time participants had during such events will now be sources of problems tomorrow. Tomorrow, in this sense, means that, as a result, emissions of greenhouse gasses from the events activities, contributing to global climate change, might compromise future generations to have the same opportunity to organise and enjoy their own events (Lazarus, 2008). Further implication of this is that beneficiaries of good events of today that exploit and deplete the natural resources in order to organise and enjoy events can put a strain on local resources such as water and energy, and create significant waste (D'Mello, 2009). There should be both self-restraint and legal restraint to stop the irresponsible ways of resource utilisation, this is because the environment is at the receiving end and this might deprive future generations from benefiting from the natural resources (ISO, 2012).

It is pertinent to mention that discussions around the use of renewable energies and energy efficient equipment in events is part and parcel of acting responsibly and sustainably as this promotes sustainable practices (Kubba, 2010) where people enjoyed during the events but the atmosphere is not polluted, there is no carbon emissions causing global change and at the same time the organisers also benefit by saving costs in all aspects (Purcella, 2007). Therefore,

sustainability is an integral part and core component in discussions around the use of renewable energies and energy efficient equipment in events (Noam, 2010). These are all aimed at ensuring a clean and healthy environment now and in the future (Ottinger, 2010).

3.2 Sustainable Best Practices Initiatives in Events

Even though it is important to have policy and law in place to regulate and ensure that events are organised in sustainable ways, the organisers of events also have a corporate responsibility to make sure that the issues surrounding sustainable events feature prominently in their business plans and actions before, during and after events (Davidson and Rogers 2012). This can only be achieved if the organisers take responsibility and act responsibly. Self-initiatives can begin from: ability to monitor energy usage in each room; using of energy-saving light bulbs; energy efficient air conditioning; common transport to the venue to reduce the number of automobiles that will be driven to the venue; invariably saving energy and reducing carbon emissions; ample ventilation to avoid the use of air-conditioning if possible and so on (Grayson and Hodges 2004). Jones (2012:35) has warned that:

"business as usual within the events industry can't continue. Our industry can't keep producing mountain ranges of rubbish or leave clouds in legacy. No matter the type of events, everything coming together of people for a purpose can be done so with consideration for sustainability."

Pursuant to this, the application of the principle of sustainable best business practice becomes a tool to drive and attain events sustainability (Bhe et al. 2004). In the words of Frost (2012:1), "it makes sense to take an organised, processed approach to managing economic, environment and social impacts. In addition, what gets monitored and measured gets reduced, so there are likely to be lower overheads". The benefits of organising a sustainable event, where the core elements of the concept of sustainable development are meticulously applied will produce sustainable results in all aspects of the events (Dass, 2004).

3.3 Case Studies: Lessons from Success Stories

While searching for relevant literature in the course of writing this article, the web pages of two event companies were visited and accessed for purposes of presenting case studies on how they have incorporated and implemented sustainable best practices in their businesses. The case study of Quadrant Media & Communications based in Cardiff, United Kingdom provides a typical hypothetical example of how an event can be organised in a sustainable green manner (Jenkins, 2012). Pursuant to its framework of good practice for events, the agency will do preliminary investigations of where the event will take place; consider the infrastructure that will enable them to use energy-saving light bulbs and how they can incorporate renewable energy into the energy mix. As part of its energy-efficiency measure, non-essential equipment and lights will be turned off during the event to save energy and cost. If it is a hall or spacious room, window blinds will be opened. If it is a closed venue, air conditioning is set at optimum temperature of 19°C. Energy use is constantly monitored to avoid wastage. After practising this, the agency evaluated each event against the set objectives of sustainability. The following is what they found out: there was a drastic reduction of energy use culminating into substantial savings. All the three elements of sustainability were achieved without compromising the standard of the business, and, lastly, they reported that other clients approached them and they won more events business.

However, the information retrieved from the web page of Chocolate Orange Events Company, based in South Africa, was full of semantics and rhetoric with regard to the issues surrounding sustainability and environment. The company says that one of its goals is to organise events in a socially and environmentally responsible manner (McLeod, 2009). This is expected to be seen in the context that the company is operating in a sustainable way. However, a cursory look at the contents of the whole web page did not show or disclose any example of where and how the company has successfully organised or hosted any event using renewables or applying the concept of sustainability. If they have done this, it would have been one example from South Africa.

In 2007, B58901, the British Standard for sustainable events management was introduced in the United Kingdom to provide a platform for event managers to access and evaluate the sustainability of their events. The standard stipulates an event sustainability model to ensure an enduring and balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress (Wang, 2013). The standard requires all aspects of the event to be sustainable, and designed and realised as ecologically responsible as possible (Wang, 2013).

In order to receive certification from the B58901, there are laid down procedures that must be followed by events

managers, these are, namely: planning, implementation and feedback. The planning is the pro-event stage, where all that will be used and goes into the events is evaluated for compliance with sustainability. The implementation stage provides the necessary oversights. The extent to which effective sustainable measures has been applied throughout the processes is very important. The feedback stage is the last stage wherein the organiser evaluates their activities in order to know whether or not they have met the sustainability standards they have set. Compliance with these procedures will earn the organiser a certification accordingly. Even though the B58901 is a good procedure to be followed and applied in events, it has not been generally accepted by the events industry. Notwithstanding whether it is being accepted or not, the B58901 has become a useful tool to measure and evaluate the standard that should be met in order to certify whether an event is sustainability compliant. This model was used in the London 2012 Olympics, which was applauded as a good example of sustainability in events. South Africa can learn lessons from the UK by emulating and adapt the model.

4. The Role of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in Events

It is generally accepted that the number of events happening on a yearly basis has increased tremendously in the past years and it will continue in this trajectory (Pillkahn, 2008). The use of fossil fuels accounts for the major energy consumption and use in these events. If these trends continue, greenhouse gas emissions from these activities will aggravate global climate change and have negative impact on events. Sheffield (1997:315) asserts that "the improved efficiency of energy use and renewable energy sources will be essential to stabilizing the atmosphere, while providing a decent standard all over the world". Substantial and potential quantities of all types of renewable energies exist in the world. According to Sheffield (1997:317), "roughly half of these energy resources are in developing countries." South Africa, as a developing country, has a tremendous amount of renewable energy sources spread around the country, the sunlight is abundant and located in every nook and corner of the country, it is not only inexhaustible, it is the only energy source, that is completely non-polluting (Omer, 2008b:1791).

The government has rolled out a White Paper on Energy Efficiency in the belief that it will serve as a platform to bring role players in line with the idea of being efficient without compromising standards and at the same time operating business in a sustainable way. Energy efficiency refers to "the effective use of energy to produce a given output (in a production environment) or service (from a consumer point of view), i.e., a more energy-efficient technology is one that produces the same service or output with less energy input" (South Africa, 2011:5).

It is pertinent to mention that the national electricity utility, Eskom, has been very proactive in the areas of energy-efficient lightning and the saving of electricity (Sarkar and Singh 2010). Eskom has rolled out and distributed free energy-efficient bulbs to both domestic and commercial customers for use at home and offices (Heffner et al. 2010). However, this is not the case in events because of the sophistication involved in operations where sophisticated equipment and lightning are used to serve a wider audience. In this situation, non-efficient bulbs are still being deployed and used. The use of renewable and efficient energies will play significant roles in greenhouse gas emissions reduction because these two energy concepts are reliable, durable and sustainable (Wilkins, 2012).

These days, events should be organised in a sustainable way in order for future generations to have their own events which they are entitled to. If we continue with the use of fossil fuels which are non-renewable natural resources, this will definitely compromise the organisation and enjoyment of leisure events and needs of future generations (Omer, 2008b:1791). According to Kumar and Sinha, (1995:885), "transition to a sustainable energy age is not only indispensable to save the earth's biosphere and climate but also because what remains in the ground of finite resources has to be conserved for better uses of future generations rather than just burning it up for short-sighted energy needs".

In 2002, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, there was a general commitment and understanding from the international community on shifting from non-renewable energy sources to renewable energies sources (Spalding-Fecher et al. 2005). The essence of this is to accelerate the shift towards consumption and use of sustainable energy; reduce environmental degradation and pollution caused by carbon emission causing pollution and global climate change; increase the diffusion of energy-efficient appliances and devices (technologies); and ensure clean and safe environment for both present and future generations. (Omer, 2008b:1791).

The overall benefits of using renewable energies and energy-efficient equipment are many (Dincer, 2000). Renewable energies contribute about 20% of the global energy supplies (Duchin, 1995). In South Africa, even though no report exists that stipulates specifically the quantity of renewable energies consumption and use in events, generally, renewable energy contributes about 9% of the energy mix and supplies are from solar, biomass, wind, waste (Christensen et al. 2006). These sources are secured, abundant, locally based, diverse and more importantly, they are all

environmentally benign because they do not cause any harm to the environment nor contribute to climate change.

Fossil fuels are depleting and unreliable, so in order to mimic developments in zero emissions solutions and have sustainable long-term solutions to energy supply in events, renewable energies are the most viable options (Baietti et al. 2012). The use of energy-efficient equipment in events is a direct way of reducing energy consumption and consequently greenhouse gas emissions (LiveEarth, 2009).

5. Shifting to Sustainable Renewable Events: Challenges and Opportunities

It is difficult to change entrenched culture and attitudes which have been cultivated, inculcated and practised for years. In South Africa, events practitioners are used to cheap energy sources mainly from Eskom to power their equipment (Krupa and Burch 2011). They perceive sustainable renewable energies deployment as expensive, and as something that will alter their production and organisation activities. The goals of organisers in most cases are to make profits from the events. At times, they perceive sustainability as the survival of the event but not an environmental concern. Research conducted by Ensor et al., (2011:315) revealed that festival leaders conceive sustainability not as an environmental concern, but as a matter of festival survival. This is a dilemma because it is expected that leadership should be at the vanguard of promoting sustainability. If sustainability is now perceived just in the context of survival of the business without considering the impact on the environment there and then, the concept of sustainability is being misconstrued. Consequent upon this, they might want to continue to stick to their guns and care less about the consequences of global climate change which is now real. The concept is holistic and talks directly to socio-economic growth as a whole, and environmental sustainability is core. This is the reason why education about climate change and sustainability is paramount (Ensor et al. 2011). However, the study conducted by Merrilees and Marles (2011) on green practices of business events, showed that green practices are feasible even though the concept is only just evolving. The study accentuates that the issues surrounding sustainability in events should be considered with the issues associated with reducing negative environmental outcomes of business activity, hence the need to incorporate sustainability as a core part of the business brand.

According to Simiker (2011:2), "sustainability is the capacity to endure. For humans, sustainability is the long-term maintenance of well-being which has environmental, economic and social dimensions and encompasses the concept of stewardship, the responsible management of resource and use." Consequently, a company is said to be doing very well if its performance can be measured by a triple bottom line of environmental, economic and social equality (Simiker, 2011). These are considered nowadays as the attributes of a company making sustainability a core in its brand. This should be the case in the events industry.

While it is not proposed that there should be a spontaneous and drastic shift towards renewable energies, it is proposed that there should be a gradual transition which might culminate to an outright shift, all things being equal. This entails a change in attitudes by jettisoning entrenched business as usual. With the right mind-sets, attitudes and proper education, organisers and practitioners might start to consider how they could conduct their businesses sustainably. Also, the South African government must stop the rhetorical attitude. There should be more of the implementation and performance of various policies, measures and strategies on emissions reduction. Invoking the popular saying, "where there is a will, there is always a way." With the proper support from the stake holders, the government and its agencies, and with the right supportive political and administrative wills, there is the likelihood that there will be a way.

6. Greening Events: Strategic Interventions and Implementation in South Africa

The South African government has enlisted the support and involvement of government parastatals, private businesses, non-governmental organizations, national and international agencies in its quest to greening industrial activities in the country; leisure and events industry inclusive. Even though South Africa has no obligation under international treaties to reduce its carbon emissions:

"South Africa has already expressed this commitment by inscribing in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 16 Cancun Agreements its voluntary commitment to reduce its emissions below a 'business as usual baseline' by 34 per cent by 2020 and 42 per cent by 2025; the extent of which will be dependent on financial, technological and capacity-building support by developed countries" (NPC, 2010:18).

This is a voluntary initiative taken by South Africa to join other countries in taking action to reduce carbon emissions, on a just and equitable basis, and to make the necessary domestic reforms (NPC, 2010:18). With regard to

domestic reforms, the South African government has put in place various strategic and policy interventions that will reduce emissions in all aspects of the country's developmental and economic growths. The government has also set up various institutions to implement these interventions.

7. Conclusion

Events are good in all respects and they are needed as part of leisure, adventurism, education or recreation. The key indispensable component in any event is energy. Energy is needed to power events. However, all scientific evidence and reports have demonstrated that the uses of fossil fuels that emit greenhouse gas are dangerous and harmful to the environment. The events industry is a viable business and promotes economic growth and developments by creating jobs and other social economic services. The events industry is now part of the problem of global climate change because of the use of fossil fuels to generate energy in order to power events activities. To be part of the solution, the events industry needs to start the processes of transiting and shifting to renewable energy which has been scientifically proven not to emit greenhouse gas and is, at the same time, cheap and viable, yet the sources are not finite as compared to fossil fuels. By using renewable energy voluntarily, organisers are contributing to sustainable development both in terms of the business and social economic aspects. The government should continue to encourage the events industry to become sustainable. They can do this by reconstructing or improving infrastructure networks to accommodate renewable energy as part of the energy mix. At the same time, the government should up its oversight responsibilities by implementing policies that promote renewable energy and enforce the law to compel compliance.

8. Recommendations

Even though it is difficult to shift immediately to an outright use of renewable energy in events, the possibility of gradual transition is feasible. Undoubtedly, this will progress to an outright and complete shift towards the use of sustainable renewable energy to power events. There should therefore be an enabling environment, coupled with policy and legal interventions, to produce this result. Against this backdrop, the organisers are not expected to be left alone to go the long route alone. The government should partner in the endeavour by making significant inroads in terms of revisiting infrastructure networks to accommodate the new model. Financial institutions will have to play a major role by making credit facilities available to the role players, but at a very reasonable interest rate. Since global climate change is an international issue, the international community and its developmental outfits and agencies will have to continue to play vital roles of assisting event-organisers in developing countries since most of them derive their the foreign exchange earnings from hosting events that drive jobs creation, economic growth and development.

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