



Scandinavian Countries create worlds' 1st Sustainable Meetings Region

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Convention Bureaus, Destination Marketing Organizations, Venues and Agencies from the five Scandinavian member countries of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) today signed an Accord to create the world's first sustainable meetings region.

The Accord is the first of its kind in the world. It is a document outlining 10 specific actions to which all signatories commit, aims to advance sustainable development within the meetings and events industry. The Accord was signed at the annual meeting of the ICCA Scandinavian Chapter in Tampere, Finland.

Steen Jakobsen, Convention Director, Wonderful Copenhagen Convention Bureau and board member of ICCA and the Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) observes "Sustainability is a business imperative that we all understand. It's about good business and creating better communities. We recognize that only through collaboration, including the sharing of best practices and expertise, will we improve performance of our organizations for the benefit of our clients. This Accord documents our commitment to develop and deliver the best meeting experience possible."

Erika Eischer, Head of Congress Department, Tampere Hall and Chair of the ICCA Scandinavian Chapter comments: "Our clients are concerned about the ethical, social and environmental performance of their suppliers. We need to make it easier for our clients to organize a sustainable meeting in our destinations. As a first step, convention bureaux, congress centres and other meetings industry professionals from Norway, Iceland, Finland, Sweden and Denmark have agreed on a common set of indicators that we can all use to benchmark and transparently communicate our performance and progress."

Project lead, Guy Bigwood of MCI Sustainability Services, comments: "This project is unique in its scale and collaborative nature. For the last two years we have engaged the Scandinavian ICCA members to define a shared vision for the future of meetings and events. Now we have regional leaders from all Scandinavian countries who, with their signature, commit to taking action to measure and benchmark impacts, share knowledge, create products to help clients and develop socially responsible community action projects. We feel this innovative model of leadership collaboration will result in destinations that are positioned to capture new business from the rapidly expanding sustainable marketplace".



Over the next 6 months, the Scandinavian ICCA Chapter will expand the number of signatories to the Accord by reaching out to business leaders across the Scandinavian countries. They will encourage others to join their commitment to measure and improve environmental impacts and to further develop the holistic approach to sustainable business for which Scandinavia is recognized.

Eischer reflects: “We recognize our role as leaders and regard the commitment to this Accord as both an opportunity and a responsibility. We look forward to continued strong business returns and the chance to share our approach with others”.

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Scandinavian Sustainable Meetings Accord

In the spirit of collaboration of leadership and in recognition of the clear and present benefits and returns of sustainable business practices we, member organizations of the ICCA Scandinavian Chapter agree to work together to create a Scandinavian Sustainable Meetings Region.

We therefore commit to taking action together to advance sustainable practices within the meetings and events industry by

1. Publicly declaring participation in the Scandinavian Sustainable Meetings Accord and using our personal and business networks to encourage member organisations to sign this Accord.
2. Engaging our clients, partners and other interested parties in dialogue about economic, environmental and social sustainability for our industry.
3. Educating interested parties, sharing knowledge in sustainable business practices and recognizing ICCA members for their best practice and efforts in sustainable business.
4. Encouraging and supporting private-public collaboration with other destinations to share Scandinavian best practices and solutions and, in turn, to learn from others.
5. Providing resources to planners to identify responsible, sustainable and certified suppliers in our community in order to help planners create more sustainable events.
6. Advocating efficient, equitable and more sustainable use of resources.
7. Facilitating the increased use of environmentally friendly transport through better communication with visitors and collaboration with transport providers.
8. Calculating the CO2 footprint of a defined Scandinavian meetings industry and aiming to reduce this by 20% by 2020.
9. Upholding the highest standards of honesty and fairness and thus maintaining a society with integrity and strong ethical standards.
10. Giving back to the community by proactively creating links between the meetings industry and social responsibility initiatives.

To these above commitments, we dedicate leadership focus and attention so that the meetings industry we represent will be more sustainable.