



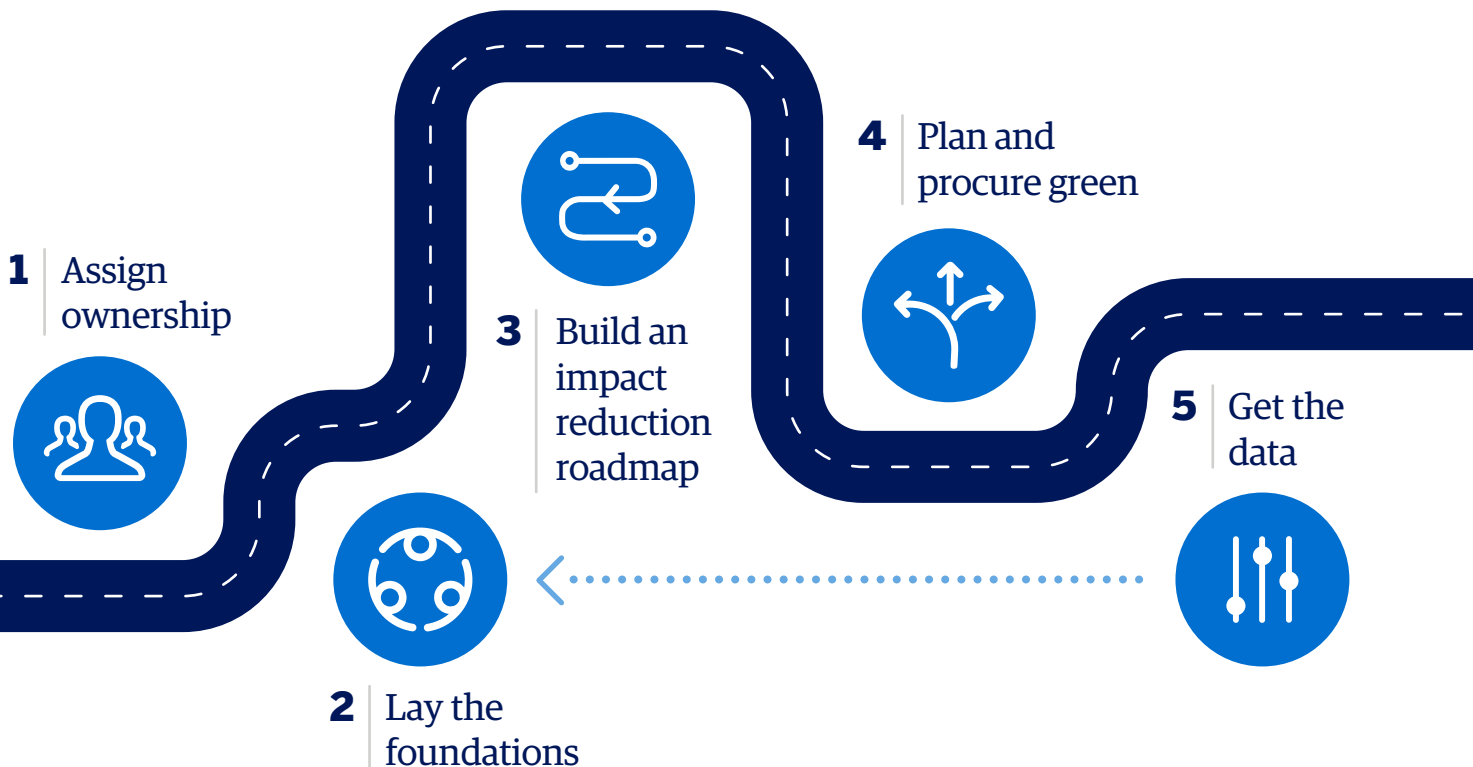
Now's the Time to Start Your Sustainable Meetings Journey

The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the UN’s body for assessing the science related to climate change - gave the world notice that **time is running out to curb global warming**. The key takeaway from the IPCC report: “if we act now, we can still secure a liveable sustainable future for all.”¹ And sustainability is not just an ecological imperative – it’s recognized as a competitive differentiator.²

Now is the time for companies to assess their climate transition plans to check they are on track to meet their targets. **Setting objectives is not enough – companies need an actionable route forward.** Most (80%) meetings owners say sustainability is a priority when planning and sourcing meetings and events but only 38% of companies say they currently incorporate sustainability practices in their policies.³

5 steps to sustainable meetings

American Express Meetings & Events has mapped out a 5-step pathway that meetings owners can use to build a sustainable meetings strategy – and **turn good intentions into actions**.





The first step - **assign ownership** – means appointing a project owner with the bandwidth and authority to lead the sustainability strategy and then give them the resources they need to get the job done. This is the critical enabler for building and delivering a robust sustainable meetings program. Don't let sustainability be yet another task on a meeting manager's already packed to-do list.



Lay the foundations by rallying the organization behind your green meetings journey. Engage your colleagues and bring key internal stakeholders onboard. Use education and engagement tools to build awareness, demonstrate progress, and drive adoption of sustainable meetings initiatives.



How are you going to reach your sustainable meetings goals? **Build an impact reduction roadmap** to identify your reduction priorities for both carbon and non-carbon emissions, like waste. Determine a baseline year as a reference to track emission reductions. Create a roadmap with measurable goals and milestones that aligns with your organization's wider sustainability goals.



Plan and procure green is about actioning your reduction priorities through robust sustainable planning. This can include sustainable checklists and setting out guidelines with the "do's and don'ts" for green meetings, aligned with your company's event culture. Identify supplier partners who can help you achieve your emission reduction targets and foster sustainability across a green supplier ecosystem.



Robust data insights are key to tracking and reporting progress on your sustainable meetings journey to your stakeholders.

Get the data and use it to galvanize internal stakeholders and suppliers in a positive feedback loop that can help you drive further sustainability improvements. When you have the data, you can showcase your brand or company's sustainability in action to your attendees, clients, and external stakeholders.

The 5 steps can help you **build a multiyear pathway to green meetings that addresses the key aspects of sustainability**, ranging from carbon emissions to waste management, biodiversity, and attendee wellbeing.

You can kickstart your journey by launching smaller initiatives that shadow the 5 steps. Pilot projects can help you demonstrate 'proof of concept', engage peers, and get buy-in from internal stakeholders and your leadership. As you gain confidence, your approach can become more sophisticated, and you can make the case for appropriate resource to accelerate your progress.

90% of organizations are reported to need some form of third party or professional guidance to help them with their sustainability programs.⁴ If you don't have the resource, bandwidth, or skills you need to start your sustainable meetings journey in-house, you can always reach out for external support.

Don't delay - it's time to take the first steps on the pathway to green meetings.

¹ Now or never: One of the biggest climate reports ever shows time is running out. NBC News. March 20, 2023. www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/climate-change-un-ipcc-rcna75670. ² Gartner Survey Reveals Significant Shifts in CEO Thinking on Sustainability, Workforce Issues and Inflation in 2022. May 18, 2022. www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2022-05-18-gartner-survey-reveals-significant-shifts-in-ceo-thinking-on-sustainability-workforce-issues-and-inflation-in-2022. ³ American Express GBT Meetings and Events Forecast 2022. November 2022. explorer.amexglobalbusinesstravel.com/Meetings-Events-Forecast-2023.html. ⁴ The State of Sustainability in the Global Business Travel Sector. Global Business Travel Association (GBTA). April 2022. <https://www.gbta.org/global-business-travels-landmark-sustainability-study-reveals-what-it-will-take-to-get-to-a-greener-future/>. ⁴ The State of Sustainability. GBTA. Ibid.

