

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Capilano University Conference Legacy Impact Study

In Partnership with Destination Vancouver

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Introduction

Vancouver, British Columbia is a global destination for conferences and meeting events. In 2022, Vancouver hosted 18 citywide conferences which attracted 50,000 attendees from around the world. These conferences are important events that have benefits for the individual participants, the hosting associations, the sectors represented, the host destination, the region, the country, and for other countries around the world. Some of the general benefits of conferences held in Vancouver are clear—such as encouraging economic development and supporting the development of key local industries including agritech, the green economy, and life sciences. Yet the range of different short-term and long-term impacts that occur due to these events have not been studied in-depth. As a result, key knowledge that can help justify, retain, and attract conferences to Vancouver remain unanswered, such as: what are the short-term and long-term impacts of conferences? How do the impacts of first-time and repeat conference compare? And what lessons can inform future studies of conference impacts in Vancouver and other destinations?

The conference outcome and legacy framework developed by the BestCities Global Alliance provide a framework to begin answer these questions (see BestCities 2020). The BestCities Global Alliance is a network of 12 global Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), including Destination Vancouver, that are focused on encouraging positive impacts through conference and meeting events across five categories: economic, environmental, political, social, and sectoral. However, this framework does not include a comprehensive list of outcomes that occur due to conferences.

In order to fill the gaps, Destination Vancouver engaged Capilano University's Center for Tourism Research to study the impacts of conferences hosted in Vancouver.

The purpose of this project was to:

- I. Identify the short-term outcomes and the long-term legacies of conferences in Vancouver.
- II. Compare the outcomes of first-time and repeat conferences in Vancouver.
- III. Develop a methodological approach to guide similar studies in Vancouver and other destinations.
- IV. Identify general outcomes for DMOs and associations to empower them to undertake studies and host impactful conferences.

The project was undertaken from March to October 2022. Data was collected from five conferences that were hosted in-person at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The participating conferences were selected by Destination Vancouver and represent several of Vancouver's key local industries (see: InvestVancouver, 2022). The conferences were:

- I. The GLOBE Forum 2022 (March 29-31)
- II. The Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Annual Convention and Expo (May 1-4)
- III. The Pediatric Orthopedic Society of North America Annual Meeting (May 11-14)
- IV. The 61st International Spinal Cord Society Annual Scientific Meeting (September 15-18)
- V. The World Lottery Summit 2022 (October 16-20)

Supporting Literature and Key Concepts

This section introduces the key literature that informed the research design, and the key terms used throughout the report. The methodology was adapted from the meeting *legacy* and *outcome* resources developed and made available by the BestCities Global Alliance (2020a; 2020b), the Copenhagen Legacy Lab (2020), MeetDenmark (2020), and the Madrid Convention Bureau (2020).

The project focused on identifying and measuring meeting *legacies* and *outcomes* (hereafter referred to as conference *legacies* and *outcomes*). Conference *legacies* are the long-term impacts on wider society, that occur because of conference and meeting activities. A *legacy* is categorized based on the primary area of impact, in one of the following five categories: economic, environmental, political, sectoral, and social. The effects of conference *legacies* are wide-reaching and can occur at different scales, from the association or sector to the local, regional, national, and global level. As long-term conference impacts, *legacies* take time to develop. BestCities affirms “many *legacy* projects take months, if not years, to show results” (2022, para. 6).

Long-term conference *legacies* are driven by short-term conference *outcomes*. Conference *outcomes* are the actions that conference attendees take after attending an event (BestCities, 2020a). Conference *outcomes* are identified using the same five categories as *legacies* (i.e., economic, environmental, political, sectoral, and social), but have a shorter timeframe; occurring in the weeks to months following an event.

Conferences *legacies* and *outcomes* are measured through a strategic pathway that involves working with associations to identify long-term impacts and the *outcomes* that drive them (MeetDenmark, 2020). But how are *legacies* and *impacts* identified? BestCities (2020) has provided preliminary examples of *legacies* and *outcomes*, however, no comprehensive database exists.

As one of the goals of this project was to develop a methodological approach to guide the future study of conference *legacies* and *outcomes* in Vancouver and other destinations, it was important to identify an established framework to guide the identification of the *legacies* and *outcomes* that could also be applied to other destinations. To this end, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) were chosen. The UNSDGs are a comprehensive framework created to guide global development through the achievement of 17 long-term goals, enacted through 169 target indicators (United Nations, 2022). Using this framework, conference *legacies* are represented by the 17 long-term sustainable development goals, which flow directly from related conference *outcomes*, or the different short-term indicators that exist for each development goal.

Methodology

The research team developed a sequential 4-step research process to study conference *legacies* and *outcomes*. The 4-step process was adapted from the Meeting Legacy Strategic Pathway, which uses an eight-step process to identify and measure conference *legacies* and *outcomes* (see: BestCities; 2020; MeetDenmark, 2020). The four steps of the process are: 1) pre-conference, 2) during-conference, 3) post-conference, and 4) legacy measurement. Figure 1 (below) compares the 4-step research design to the Meeting Legacy Strategic Pathway.

Figure 1. The 4-Step Conference *Legacy* and *Outcome* Measurement Process Compared to the Meeting Legacy Strategic Pathway.



Research Design: Key Considerations

Operationalizing the 4-step process involved three key research design considerations; how the study would be conducted, what data would be gathered, and who would be involved. First, the study used a *pragmatic* approach to collect data. The research team identified the most appropriate methods to collect data for each conference being studied and was flexible in how and when the methods were applied (i.e., pre, during, or post-conference). This was necessary because the different hosting associations had unique focuses, expectations, and rules moderating their participation in the study.

Second, the research design used a *mixed methods* approach to collect data. The benefit of using a mixed methods approach is that it uses both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a richer understanding of conference impacts by integrating measurable outcomes and rich descriptions. Using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods also helped mitigate the limitations inherent in relying on any single method. For example, survey data can quantify the meeting *outcomes* taken by many attendees but offers less depth of understanding as to what those *outcomes* look like in the real-world. Conversely, qualitative data (i.e., interviews and desk research) provide rich insights that illustrate the real-world meeting *outcomes* but are more difficult to verify numerically. Data was collected using the following methods: semi-structured interviews, electronic surveys, and desk research (i.e., secondary data).

Third, data was collected from different stakeholders involved in each conference. Contributing stakeholder perspectives included: conference organizers, attendees, media, public, and others. Collecting data from different stakeholders allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the conference *legacies* and *outcomes* from different perspectives and sources (e.g., surveys, conversations, social media posts).

The 4-Step Process

Each of the four steps of the conference *legacy* and *outcome* identification and measurement process are briefly explained below, including the goals, timeline, and data collection methods.

STEP 1: PRE-CONFERENCE DATA COLLECTION

- **Goal:** To identify appropriate *legacies* and *outcomes* for the conference. The *legacies* and *outcomes* identified during Step 1 will be measured during the subsequent steps. *Legacies* and *outcomes* are identified using the UNSDG framework of goals and indicators.
- **Timeline:** Two weeks to one month prior to the start of the conference.
- **Data collection methods:** 1) Interviews with three or four conference organizers and previous attendees; 2) Desk research on the conference, seeking insights into operations, attendees, goals, and history.
- **Step 2: During-Conference Data Collection**
- **Goals:** To measure and describe the *outcomes* identified during Step 1, and to identify any additional emergent *legacies* and *outcomes*.
- **Timeline:** During each conference.
- **Data collection methods:** 1) A 10-question electronic survey distributed to conference attendees. The survey is developed to measure the *outcomes* that attendees created because of attending. The survey content changed conference-to-conference based on the *outcomes* identified. 2) Desk research on the conference, seeking insights into operations, attendees, and *outcomes* created.

STEP 3: POST-CONFERENCE DATA COLLECTION

- **Goal:** To measure and describe the *outcomes* identified during Steps 1 and 2.
- **Timeline:** Two to eight weeks after each conference. This provides time for the *outcomes* to occur before they are measured.
- **Data collection methods:** 1) A 10-question electronic survey distributed to conference attendees. The survey is developed to measure the *outcomes* that attendees created because of attending. The survey content changed conference-to-conference based on the *outcomes* identified. 2) Desk research on the conference, seeking insights into operations, attendees, and outcomes created. 3) Follow-up interviews with conference organizers and participants.

STEP 4: LEGACY MEASUREMENT DATA COLLECTION

- **Goals:** To measure the achievement of the *legacies* that have occurred since the conference. The long-term *legacies* of the short-term *outcomes* identified and measured during Steps 1-3, are measured during this step.
- **Timeline:** Six+ months to Two+ years following each conference.
- **Data collection methods:** Using a pragmatic approach, the most appropriate methods should be used to measure each *legacy*. Measuring the long-term *legacies* did not fall within the temporal scope of this project and was not completed.

Ethics and Funding

The research plan was subject to review and approved by the Capilano University Review Ethics Board (REB) on March 21, 2022.

The research was completed by a four-person research team. The research team consisted of two Capilano University faculty members who served as primary investigators, and two Capilano University students who served as research assistants. The project was co-funded by Destination Vancouver and Mitacs, a not-for-profit national research organization.

Results

Overview of All Legacies and Outcomes

A total of 219 surveys were collected from respondents who attended the five conferences, and 47 pages of descriptive notes were gathered during interviews and desk research. Table 1 (below) presents the geographic “home” region of the survey respondents.

	Metro Vancouver Area	Another Location in BC	Another Canadian Province	International
Returning Conferences (n=110)	35	16	50	9
First-Time Conferences (n=109)	20	12	12	65
Total: 219	55	28	62	74

Table 1. Survey Respondents “Home” Location.

Together, attendees from the five conferences studied pursued 47 different short-term *outcomes*. These 47 *outcomes* contribute to 17 long-term *legacies*. All 17 of the UNSDG categories were represented in the data.

The 47 total *outcomes* were also organized using the five categories used by BestCities(2020). There were 20 economic, 5 environmental, 3 political, 9 sectoral, and 10 social *outcomes* identified.

See Appendix A (p. 14) for a descriptive table of all 17 *legacies* and 47 *outcomes*, including their category and measurement.

Comparing Repeat vs. First-Time Conferences

This section compares the *outcomes* of returning and first-time conferences. The study included two returning conferences: GLOBE Forum, and the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Annual Convention; and three first-time conferences: the Pediatric Orthopedic Society of North America Annual Meeting, the International Spinal Cord Society Annual Scientific Meeting, and the World Lottery Summit. Attendees of the returning conferences completed 110 surveys, and attendees of the first-time conferences completed 109 surveys. The similar number of surveys completed between the two

groups allowed for an easy comparison of their results. Data analysis was completed using a T-Test to compare the mean values of the two independent groups, Pearson's Chi-Square was used to compare the proportions, and correlation was also used to test the strength of the relationships between relevant variables. All T-Tests and Chi-Square were calculated to a 0.05 or 95% confidence interval.

The average value of returning conferences to attendees was 4.39/5. The average value of first-time conferences to attendees was 4.44/5. There was no statistical difference between the mean values of these groups. Therefore, while both types of conferences are valuable to participants, one type was not more valuable than other.

The returning conferences resulted in 44 *outcomes* that represent 16 *legacies*. The first-time conferences resulted in 45 *outcomes* that represent 11 *legacies*. There were 35 shared *outcomes* that occurred among both the returning and first-time conferences. Repeat conferences represented more *legacies* overall, but first-time conference *outcomes* were generally undertaken by a higher proportion of attendees. However, there were few significant differences between the *outcome* values between the returning and first-time conferences. See Appendix B (p. 23) for a comparison of each of the 35 shared *outcomes* between the returning and first-time conferences.

Note: the asterisk () notation in Appendix B denotes results that are statistically different.*

The key comparative results are summarized below.

- All conference attendees intend to re-visit Vancouver as tourists (4.47/5 intention for returning conferences and 4.43/5 intention for first-time conferences). One key difference between the two types of events is that returning conferences attendees from British Columbia (excluding the Metro Vancouver area) were less likely to intend to revisit Vancouver as a tourist than any other group overall ($p < 0.0001$). Returning conference attendees from British Columbia were 20.6% less likely to intend to revisit Vancouver than international attendees and were 23% less likely to intend to revisit than attendees from other Canadian provinces. This could be because these individuals have visited Vancouver more than these other groups in the past and are more familiar with it as a tourism destination. However, further research is needed to explore this relationship in detail.
- Returning conference attendees are more likely to work with Indigenous populations (24.5% to 11.9% $p = 0.0159$).
- Returning conference attendees are more likely to invest money in new projects (31.8% to 15.6% $p = 0.0048$).
- Returning conference attendees are more likely to mention Vancouver when discussing a conference on social media (54% to 15.3% $p < 0.0001$).
- First-time conference attendees visit more local businesses than returning conference attendees ($p = 0.0252$). Most first-time conference attendees visit between 6-10 businesses during their stays in Vancouver, while most repeat conference attendees visit between 1-5 businesses during their stays.
- First-time conference attendees are more likely to extend their stay in Vancouver post-conference (46.5% of attendees vs. 23% of attendees $p = 0.002$).
- First-time conference attendees are more likely to undertake research because of attending a conference (35.8% to 14.5% $p = 0.0003$).

Key Relationships

Five correlations were identified within the data. These five correlations existed among both the returning and first-time conferences. However, in each instance, the relationships detected were stronger during the returning conferences. These relationships may become stronger over time as these conferences recur in Vancouver. The five key relationships are summarized below:

- The more local businesses that attendees visit during their stay in Vancouver, the more likely that they are to intend to revisit Vancouver as a tourist (returning conference $r=0.4571$ first time conference $r=0.2838$).
- The more contacts that attendees make during a conference, the more likely that they are to intend to revisit Vancouver as a tourist (returning conference $r=0.4153$ first time conference $r=0.2486$).
- The more local businesses that attendees visit during their stay in Vancouver, the higher they are to rank the overall value of the conference (returning conference $r=0.3557$ first time conference $r=0.2518$).
- The more local businesses that attendees visit during their stay in Vancouver, the more contacts that attendees make during a conference (returning conference $r=0.3486$ first time conference $r=0.2518$).
- The more contacts that attendees make during a conference, the higher they are to rank the overall value of the conference (returning conference $r=0.2285$ first time conference $r=0.2120$).

Discussion and Conclusion

Key Conclusions

Conferences in Vancouver are impactful. Five conferences contributed to 47 short-term *outcomes*, associated with 17 long-term *legacies*. The *outcomes* of conferences in Vancouver are diverse and wide-reaching. The *outcomes* are diverse in that they provide economic, environmental, political, sectoral, and social benefits. These benefits are wide-reaching in that they range in scale to impact attending sectors, the destination, the province, the country, and the world. Over time these *outcomes* will contribute to the enactment of 17 long-term *legacies* that contribute towards global sustainability. However, future research is needed to measure these long-term *legacies*.

Both returning and first-time conferences are impactful events that have both shared and unique *outcomes*. Returning conferences are important events towards enacting social justice and economic development *outcomes*. The comparative results show that returning conference attendees are more likely to work with Indigenous populations, and to invest money in new projects. First-time conferences are uniquely important events towards creating new knowledge and generating tourism activity. Attendees at first-time conferences are more likely to undertake research because of attending a conference. They also visit more local businesses and are more likely to extend their stay post-conference.

This was a preliminary application of the research design. We endeavoured to provide a clear and detailed description of the four-step process used to identify and measure conference *legacies*

and *outcomes* so that the process can be repeated in Vancouver and can be transferred to other destinations. New and repeated applications of the four-step processes will be useful towards refining and adding to the *outcome* categories and measurements developed (see Appendix A).

Key Conclusions for Destination Marketing Organizations

The results have several implications for DMOs. The spread of COVID-19 disrupted global conference and meeting activities and led to an increase in online and hybrid conferences. As a result, some have questioned the value of in-person conferences. The results affirm that in-person conferences, both returning and first-time, are highly valuable to attendees and to the destinations that host them.

In-person conferences are drivers of tourism-activity. Attendees of both returning and first-time conferences are likely to re-visit Vancouver in the future (overall 4.45/5 intention to return as a tourist). One key difference between the different types of attendees is that returning conference attendees from British Columbia are less likely to intend to revisit Vancouver as a tourist than any other group overall. This could be because these individuals have visited Vancouver more often and are more familiar with it as a destination. DMOs should identify ways to engage in-province attendees at returning conferences to induce them to return as tourists in future.

To facilitate tourism activity, DMOs should also find ways to encourage conference attendees to visit local businesses. The more local businesses that attendees visit, the higher their intention to revisit Vancouver as a tourist. Similarly, DMOs should work with associations and conference organizers to provide networking opportunities. The more contacts that attendees make, the higher their intention to revisit Vancouver as a tourist.

The correlations identified between different variables (e.g., the more local businesses that attendees visit during their stay, the more likely that they are to intend to revisit) were all higher among returning conferences. This suggests that the strength of the relationships between key variables may strengthen over time as events repeat in a destination. Therefore, DMOs should encourage first-time conferences to return to strengthen the conference *outcomes* (and *legacies*) over time.

The results also highlight the range of *outcomes* that conferences have. The value of events is often tied to their economic *outcomes* for the host community. However, this study has highlighted that conference *outcomes* also have other areas of impact on the destination-level. More than half of the *outcomes* identified were non-economic (i.e., environmental, political, sectoral, and social). By identifying and measuring the *legacies* and *outcomes* of conferences, DMOs can identify the wider range of impacts that these events have, and then begin trace the scope of their impact at different scales (i.e., local → global).

A single conference has many *legacies* and *outcomes*. The challenge is to identify and measure the *outcomes* in the short term, and the *legacies* in the long-term. The identification and measurement process is complicated, because, as BestCities affirm, “*legacy* looks different for each organization and destination” (2022, para. 3). Therefore, individual associations may not have the knowledge or resources to complete these studies. DMOs can take the lead in identifying and measuring *legacy* and *outcomes* by following these actionable points:

- Build *legacy* studies into RFPs and the conference bidding process. This also support BestCities Madrid Challenge, which focuses on integrating *legacy* studies into the conference planning process for destination and associations. This will help to standardize

the awareness of *legacy* among associations and establish standard terms of participation regarding data collection between different conferences. One limitation of this study is that the individual conferences had different expectations regarding their participation, data analysis, information sharing, and other factors.

- Measure conference *outcomes* consistently on different scales. *Outcomes* occur from the local to global scale. When adapting the framework, more detailed results can be gained by purposely measuring *outcomes* among comparable attendee populations from different locations (local → global). Due to the exploratory nature of our research, we did not target equal proportions of survey respondents for each geographic population to identify their impacts at different scales.
- Provide intangible knowledge resources to help identify and measure *legacies* and *outcomes*. There is a lack of consistent knowledge regarding conference *legacies* and *outcomes* among associations—who may also have their own understandings about the *outcomes* of their events that have been informed by other sources. DMOs should be the arbiters of knowledge, and work with associations to ensure they understand the core concepts, and to help adapt the UN SDG framework to identify all relevant *legacies/ outcomes* for each conference.
- Provide tangible knowledge resources to help identify and measure *legacies* and *outcomes*. Associations may lack the resources to develop and administer instruments to measure conference *legacies* and *outcomes*. Therefore, DMOs can dedicate tangible resources such as survey software and staff to assist in studying local conference impacts.
- Be flexible in choosing data collection methods for each conference *legacy* and *outcome*. Each conference has unique *legacies* and *outcomes*, and once identified, these should be measured using the most appropriate methods available on a case-by-case basis. Using multiple, and mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) provides more nuanced understandings of the *legacies* and *impacts*. Different methods of data collection may also be more amenable to certain participant groups, who may be more receptive or averse to participating in a certain method.
- Engage difference voices in identifying and measuring *legacies* and *outcomes*. Different stakeholders (e.g., conference organizers, attendees, DMOs, residents, local industries, and others) all have different ideas about what *legacies* are and what *outcomes* will achieve them. The challenge is to identify and measure the *legacies* and *outcomes* among all the relevant stakeholder perspectives.

Key Conclusions for Associations

The results have several implications for associations who host or participate in conferences. The 4-step measurement process and the UN SDGs are applicable to different types of associations in different geographic locations. The *legacies* and *outcomes* identified here are a guideline for what may be occurring in other destinations. But each conference in every destination will have unique *legacies* and *outcomes* of their own. One challenge for individual associations is to identify and measure these appropriately. Associations should use the UN SDGs as a framework to identify *legacies* and *outcomes*. *Outcomes* can be adapted from the existing 169 indicators of the SDGs, or new *outcomes* can be created and added to the framework as required.

Associations should also take the lead in engaging conference attendees in identifying and measuring *legacies* and *outcomes*. Conferences where the associations were more involved in

data collection (e.g., engaging attendees about the research, distributing surveys on behalf of the researchers) had higher survey response rates than conferences where the research team took the lead independent of the associations. Associations are more familiar with their attendees than DMOs or researchers and can engage them more effectively than third parties.

Associations can help facilitate impactful conferences by:

- Facilitating networking between attendees. The more contacts that attendees make, the higher they rate the overall value of a conference.
- Providing opportunities for attendees to visit local businesses. While organizers may desire to keep attendees engaged at a conference, there are two benefits to providing opportunities for attendees to visit local businesses. First, attendees who visit more local businesses rate the overall value of conferences higher. Second, attendees who visit more local businesses also make more connections with other attendees.
- Returning to a destination. The relationships discussed in the points above are stronger among returning conferences. Associations that return to destinations and become returning events may become more impactful over time.

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Appendix A: Index of Conference Legacies, Outcomes, and Measurements

Legacy	Legacy Goals	Goal Indicators	Conference Outcomes	Outcome Measurements
1 NO POVERTY 	Reduce the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions	Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	New local jobs created <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of new local jobs created by attendees
			New jobs created <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of new jobs created by attendees
2 ZERO HUNGER 	Enhance agricultural productive capacity	Flows to the agriculture sector through increased investment, enhanced international cooperation, infrastructure development, agricultural research and extension services, and technology development	Growth of agricultural industries <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The proportion of attendees from the agricultural sector
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	Achieve universal health coverage	Coverage of essential health services including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all	Offering new health treatments <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of attendees offering new health treatments
			Developing new health treatments <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of attendees developing new health treatments
			Providing new or increased access to public services <i>(Political outcome)</i>	The number of attendees providing new or increased access to public services
	Substantially increase the recruitment, development, training, and retention of the health workforce	Healthcare worker density, distribution, and specialization	New healthcare professional <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of new healthcare professionals recruited or accredited
4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills	Proportion of youth and adults with relevant job skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship	Education and training increased <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of attendees pursuing new accreditation, training, or skills
			Education and research development <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The proportion of all attendees from the educational or research sectors
5 GENDER EQUALITY 	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life	Proportion of women in managerial positions, the number of women in the industry	Providing new opportunities for female professionals <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of new opportunities created for female professionals by attendees

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	Improve water quality in communities, regions, and nations	Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping, and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater, and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	Growth of the water and waste-water sector <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The proportion of attendees from the water and waste-water sector
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	Facilitate access to clean, renewable, and efficient energy, and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology	Proportion of international cooperation, financial flows in support of clean energy, research and development and renewable energy production, new product implementation	Growth of the energy sector <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The proportion of attendees from the energy sector
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	Achieve higher levels of economic productivity in key local sectors	Growth of key sectors	Local information sharing <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of local speakers at the conference
			Local business partnerships <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of non-local attendees who added local businesses to their networks
			Intra-sector business partnerships <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who expanded their networks within their own sector
			Inter-sector business partnerships <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who expanded their network with another sector
			Key local sectors represented <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The proportion of attendees who represented key local sectors represented
			Increased local business opportunities <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of contacts that local attendees added to their networks
			Increased business opportunities <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of contacts that attendees added to their networks
			Local economic growth <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees investing in local businesses
			New technologies, products or practices developed <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees developing new technologies
	Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation	Development of new technology	Increased opportunities for minority professionals <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of opportunities created for minority professionals
	Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	Unemployment rate, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities	Local businesses visited <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of local businesses visited by non-local attendees

	Devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	Direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate	Extended stay in Vancouver <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees that extended their stay in Vancouver post-conference
			Destination promotion <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of mentions of the host community within public communications about the conference
			Intend to revisit Vancouver <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who intend to revisit Vancouver as a tourist
			Travelled with guest company <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees that travelled with a companion who was not involved in the conference
			Research undertaken <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who are undertaking research because of attending the conference
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	Enhance scientific research and upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors	Total number of research projects undertaken, efforts encouraging innovation, increasing the number of research and development workers, increasing research and development spending	Domestic information sharing <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees from Canada who presented at the conference
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to places where the need is greatest	Total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g., official development assistance, foreign direct investment, and other flows)	International Information Sharing <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of international attendees who presented at the conference
			Increased international business opportunities <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who made international connections
			Creating connections between the industry and your local community <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who created connections between the industry and their local community
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	Encourage corporate social responsibility	Total business contributions towards affordable housing, social service provision, transportation, environmental protection, or other efforts that distribute resources within the local community	Creating community-based solutions to net zero <i>(Environmental outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who created community-based solutions towards net zero
	Reduce the per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	Total solid waste collected and managed, levels of fine particulate matter collected at the municipal level	Development of new green technologies or innovations <i>(Environmental outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who are developing new technologies or innovations

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	Achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	Proportion of overall material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP reduced	Participating in green projects, challenges, or initiatives <i>(Environmental outcome)</i>	The number of attendees participating in green projects, challenges, or initiatives
			Implementing new green products and services <i>(Environmental outcome)</i>	The number of participants implementing new green products and services
			Developing new sustainable action plans or strategies <i>(Environmental outcome)</i>	The number of attendees developing new sustainable action plans or strategies
			Improved operating standards <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who reported they are improving their operating standards
			Improved local operating standards <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of local attendees who reported they are improving their operating standards
	Ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature	Extent to which global citizenship education, education for sustainable development is mainstreamed in national education policies, industry practices, and social discourse	Best practices shared <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The number of attendees sharing best practices globally
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning	Total greenhouse gas emissions per year	Developing new climate regulations <i>(Political outcome)</i>	The number of attendees developing new public legislation, regulations, or governing plans
14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts,	Number of ecosystem-based approaches to managing marine areas, including by strengthening their resilience, and act for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans	Growth of the oceans and fisheries sector <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The proportion of attendees from the oceans and fisheries sector
15 LIFE ON LAND 	Ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains, and drylands	Growth of the mining and forestry sectors <i>(Sectoral outcome)</i>	The proportion of attendees from the mining and forestry sectors

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels	Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services	Connections made with public representatives <i>(Political outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who made connections with public sector representatives
	Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels	Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability, and population group	Working with Indigenous populations <i>(Social outcome)</i>	The number of attendees who reported that they are working with indigenous populations
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	Mobilize additional financial resources from multiple sources	Total value of financial resources mobilized	New Investment <i>(Economic outcome)</i>	Total number of attendees investing money in a new project

Appendix B: A Comparison of Returning and First-Time Conference Outcomes

Note: the asterisk (*) notation in the table denotes results that are statistically different at 95% confidence.

Conference Outcome	Return Conferences	First-Time Conferences
Overall value of the conferences for all attendees	4.39/5	4.44/5
Percentage of local attendees who created new jobs (Economic outcome)	14.2%	11.1%
Percentage of all attendees who created new jobs (Economic outcome)	14.5%	11.9%
Percentage of all attendees from the educational or research sectors (Sectoral outcome)	24%	26.67%
Percentage of all attendees who created new opportunities for female professionals (Social outcome)	29.1%	32.2%
Local information sharing (Economic outcome)	26.24%	26.19%
Percentage of non-local attendees who added locals to their networks (Economic outcome)	45%	42.2%
Percentage of all attendees who expanded their networks within their own sector (Economic outcome)	50.5%	82.6%*
Percentage of all attendees who expanded their networks with another sector (Economic outcome)	82%*	45.9%
Key local sectors represented (Economic outcome)	60%	77.34% *
Number of new contacts local attendees added to their networks (Economic outcome)	Most added 6-10 contacts	Most added 6-10 contacts
Number of new contacts non-local attendees added to their networks (Economic outcome)	Most added 6-10 contacts	Most added 6-10 contacts
Percentage of all attendees who invested in local (Vancouver) businesses (Economic outcome)	11.8%	4.6%
Percentage of all attendees who developed new technologies, products, or practices (Economic outcome)	20%	21.3%
Percentage of all attendees who created new opportunities for minority professionals (Social outcome)	23.6%	31.2%
Number of local businesses visited by non-local attendees (Economic outcome)	Most visited 1-5 local businesses	Most visited 6-10 local businesses*
Percentage of all non-local attendees who extended their stay in Vancouver post-conference (Economic outcome)	23%	46.5%*
Destination promotion (Economic outcome)	54%*	15.34%
Non-local attendees' average intention to revisit Vancouver as a tourist in the future (Economic outcome)	4.47/5	4.43/5

Percentage of all non-local attendees who travelled with a companion that that was not involved in the conference (<i>Economic outcome</i>)	19.1%	26.7%
Percentage of all attendees who undertook research (<i>Sectoral outcome</i>)	14.5%	35.8%*
Domestic information sharing (<i>Economic outcome</i>)	63.42%	08.55%
International information sharing (<i>Economic outcome</i>)	40.48%	19.05%
Percentage of all attendees who expanded their networks with someone from another country (<i>Economic outcome</i>)	34.2%	74.3%*
Percentage of all attendees who created connections between industry and their local community (<i>Social outcome</i>)	33.6%	25.7%
Percentage of all attendees who created community-based solutions to net-zero (<i>Environmental outcome</i>)	16.4%	19.1%
Percentage of all attendees who developed new green technologies or innovations (<i>Environmental outcome</i>)	20%	21.3%
Percentage of all attendees who participated in green projects, challenges, or initiatives (<i>Environmental outcome</i>)	26.4%	25.5%
Percentage of all attendees who implemented new green projects, challenges, or initiatives (<i>Environmental outcome</i>)	33.6%	36.2%
Percentage of all attendees who developed new sustainable action plans or strategies (<i>Environmental outcome</i>)	30.9%	35.8%
Percentage of all attendees who improved their operating standards (<i>Sectoral outcome</i>)	37.3%	47.7%
Percentage of local attendees who improved their operating standards (<i>Sectoral outcome</i>)	34.3%	44.4%
Percentage of all attendees who shared best practices with others (<i>Social outcome</i>)	40%	64.2%*
Percentage of all attendees who made connections with public representatives (<i>Political outcome</i>)	22.5%	23.9%
Percentage of all attendees who are working with Indigenous populations (<i>Social outcome</i>)	24.5%	11.9%
Percentage of all attendees who invested money in a new project (<i>Economic outcome</i>)	31.8%*	15.6%