



41ST CONGRESS OF THE ESCRS | 8-12 SEPTEMBER 2023

ESCRS Congress Sustainability Report

In partnership with GDS-Movement

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Executive Summary



ESCRS Sustainability Vision and Commitment



Our "Mission Zero" vision is to develop events with zero waste to landfills and zero net carbon emissions that are a role model for social and environmental responsibility.

In 2023, we are working together with partners and suppliers to minimize the environmental impact of our events, to regenerate ecosystems and communities, catalyse sustainability in the healthcare industry worldwide and increase the social impact of ESCRS.

We invite you to join us in this journey because we can achieve exponentially more positive impact together.



Ju J

Oliver Findl, ESCRS President

ESCRS Sustainable Event Strategy



Our Purpose

To Be a Catalyst

Inspire our members to improve the environmental and social sustainability of ophthalmic healthcare



To be an Exemplar

Lead by example by innovating and improving the sustainability of ESCRS operations and practices

Our Action Areas and Goals

Content

Inspire Action About Sustainable
Ophthalmic Care

Climate Action

Net Zero Carbon Emissions

Circular Economy

Zero Waste to Landfill

Diversity Equality
Inclusion
Socially Responsible



Aligned to UN SDG

















Principles for Action



Eliminate waste, emissions, and pollution

Use sustainability efforts to improve participants' event experience

Recycle materials and products



Design for inclusion and diversity

Switch to more sustainable materials

Regenerate people and planet

Our Approach: We are in this together!





To deliver a sustainable Congress requires commitment and collective action from participants, exhibitors, sponsors, organisers, and suppliers. Our approach is to engage, inspire, and catalyse collective action.

Engage

- Engage suppliers, exhibitors, and sponsors
- Educate suppliers to improve operational processes
- communicate our initiatives and progress

Improve

 Evaluate and and processes

Assess

- Assess supplier compliance
- Estimate carbon footprint

improve approach

Plan

- Co-create strategy: vision, objectives, and targets
- Develop action plan

Measure

• Calculate CO2

Compensate for

event emissions

through a portfolio

of certified carbon

offset projects

footprint

• Engage delegates and

Prepared in collaboration with the GDS-Movement

ESCRS 2023 Congress – Key Impacts



Total Carbon Footprint: 27259.25 tCO2e

Average Carbon Footprint per attendee: 1851.22 kgCO2e

Total Waste Footprint: 52.88 tonnes

100% of Congress's CO2e offset

49.8% of waste recycled

62% of food served: vegetarian or vegan

92% of assets: hired or made from reclaimed materials

Prepared in collaboration with the GDS-Movement

Performance Against Key Goals



Themes	Goals	Results
Inspire Action	Strengthen the promotions of the eyesustain.org initiative through partnerships with ASCRS and APACRS	Achieved
	Recruit at least 5 new organisations into the Sustainability Partnership Programme	8 new organisations joined the Sustainability Partnership programme
	Integrate YOFS into ESCRS sustainability activities	YOFS fully integrated in ESCRS activities
	Extend the overall congress programme with new sustainability track sessions	Sustainability integrated as a new education track and into the Sustainability Arena.
Zero Emissions	Eliminate 90% of single use plastic, polystyrene and PVC	Achieved. Eliminated 92%
	Reduce waste sent to landfill to less than 15%	Achieved. 50% of waste was recycled and 50% was incinerated
	Increase recycling to +50%	Achieved. 50% of waste was recycled
	+70% of all signage and branding to be made from more sustainable materials	Not achieved. Approx. 20% of signage was digital, the Sustainability Wall and ESCRS photo booth were made from paper-based falcon board. Remaining signage materials made from non-sustainable materials.

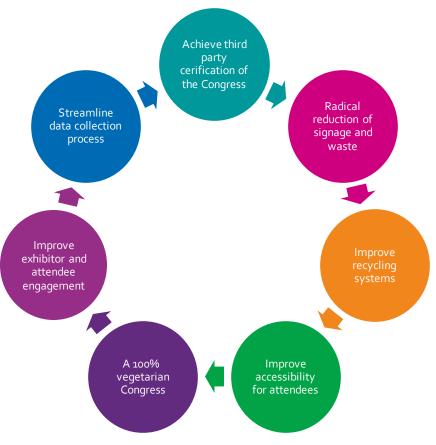
Performance Against Key Goals (cont.)



Themes	Goals	Results
Climate Action	+50% of food served is vegetarian or vegan	62% of food served was vegetarian or vegan *covers Messe Wien Exhibition Congress Center and the President's Dinner
	70% of food locally sourced (less than 160km)	30% of food locally and regionally sourced (within radius of 160km)
	+25% of delegates to arrive by climate friendly transport	16% of in person attendees arrived by climate friendly transportation (local public transportation, trains or cars vs planes)
	100% of unavoidable carbon emissions to be offset	Achieved
Socially Responsible	Increase balance of female speakers to 40%	31% female / 69% male speakers
	Integrate at least 1 community/charity partnership	A wide range of charitable projects were supported – including ophthalmology-related relief efforts arising from the conflict in Ukraine and Orbis project in Myanmar
	Integrate wellness activities throughout the Congress	Rayner, our Healthy Break Partner, supported the initiative by providing healthy snacks to the delegates.



Recommendations for 2024

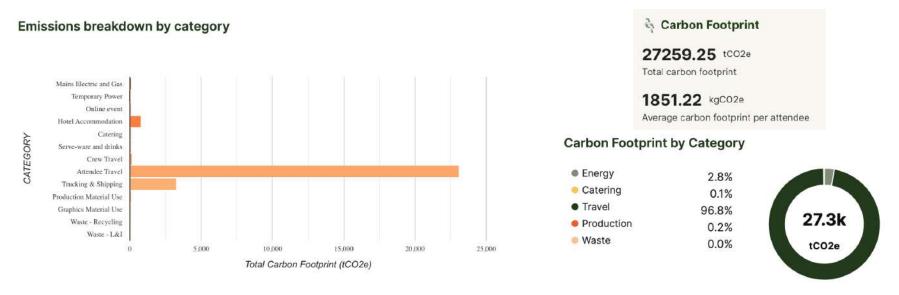


Initiatives and Impacts

Carbon Footprint



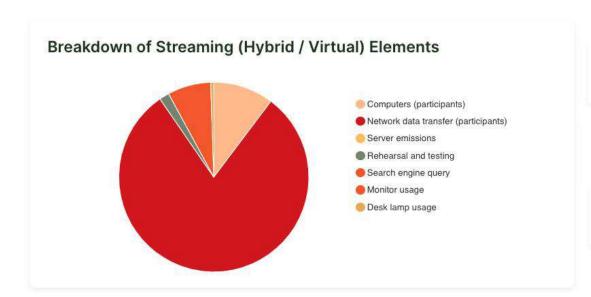
We calculated the congress's carbon and waste footprint using industry best practice methodologies as well as an advanced measurement tool called TRACE. The emissions from local event production, delegate and team travel, accommodation, food & beverage, venue, and online participation are included in the scope of our measurements.



Online Streaming



CO2 calculations of online streaming are based on 1237 individual attendees joining the Congress virtually from across the globe.



Emissions for energy for streaming / online

0.21 tCO2e

Streaming/online Energy emissions per attendee

0.17 kgCO2e

Circular Approach

We continued with the approach of designing waste out of the event, keeping materials and products in use, switching to more sustainable materials and implementing a high-performance recycling system advancing the one that is available at the venue and building on the success from 2022.



On site Attendee waste was separated into 5 streams:

- Paper
- Glass
- General Waste
- Plastic & Cans
- Compost

^{*}The compost stream is not a standard practice in Vienna and was created especially for the ESCRS Congress.

Circularity of Materials





In the realm of sustainable practices, these three compelling data elements underscore a commitment to environmental responsibility in the production of the congress.

Percentage of assets hired or made from reclaimed materials

92.2%

Hiring assets contribute to ESCRS Mission Zero by reducing the demand for new production, minimising resource consumption, and fostering a circular economy.

Percentage of materials reused, donated, repurposed

86.2%

Providing a second life to materials after the Congress contributes to significantly reducing waste, minimising environmental impact, and fostering a more circular and resource-efficient economy.

Percentage of materials recycled post event

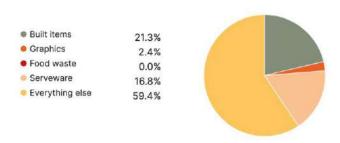
13.4%

Recycling production materials after the event reduces waste sent to landfills, contributing to a more environmentally responsible and circular approach to material usage.

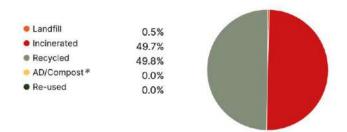
Waste Footprint



Where did waste come from? (by weight)



Where did waste go? (by weight)



Waste Footprint

52.88 tonnes

Total Waste Footprint

3.59 kg

Average waste per attendee

^{*}due to contamination, the compost waste was processed as general waste and incinerated after the event.

Food and Beverage

Together, ESCRS Congress Vienna 2023 and Gerstner developed delicious menus and customised meals to help achieve the event's ambitious sustainability goals:

- Eliminating single use plastic from the catering outlets packaging and beverage serving
- Red meat eliminated from the attendee and exhibitors offerings
- 62% of served food was vegetarian or vegan
- 30% of ingredients were locally and regionally sourced (from 160km radius)
- Leftover food stations was implemented to minimize the food waste on site





The President's Dinner



On behalf of Prof. Oliver Findl, President of ESCRS, the President's Dinner was organised in the iconic Hofburg Imperial Palace with special attention to:

- Choosing from locally sourced ingredients and beverages
- Austrian wine tasting
- Keeping red meat off the menu





Food Footprint



Total F&B emissions

39.56 tCO2e

Total Food emissions

22.44 tCO2e

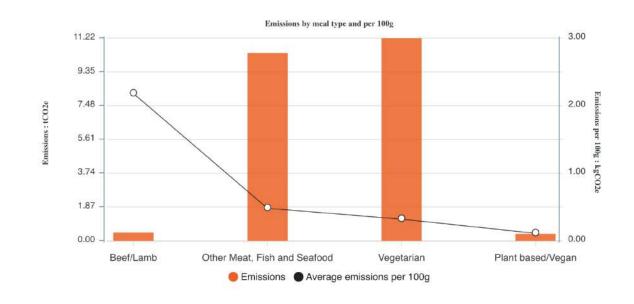
Total Beverages emissions

17.01 tCO2e

Contribution to overall emissions

0.1%

Emissions by meal type and per 100g



Delegate Engagement: Communications





Fully integrating attendee communication on the event's website serves as a powerful tool, enhancing engagement, inspiration, and education.

This seamless approach not only informs attendees about the ESCR Congress sustainability initiatives but also actively involves them in various activations, fostering a deeper understanding and commitment to environmental and social responsibility.

Delegate Engagement: Communications





The European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons (ESCRS) 15K followers

Help achieve Mission Zero by bringing your reusable water bottle or acquiring one during #ESCRS2023 registration in Vienna. Hear more on the subject from ESCRS President Prof. Oliver Findl by watching the video below.

https://lnkd.in/dUuzK5nE

Did you know the Vienna High Springs water originates in the Northern Calcareous Alps - the Schneeberg, Rax, and Schneealpe - about 150 to 180 km south-east of Vienna. Due to extensive source protection measures, Vienna's water has excellent quality.

The water flows to Vienna through 2 high springs pipelines by gravity alone, without a single pump. They each deliver 220 million litres daily.

Drinking this water from reusable bottles – such as the ESCRS bottle – is not only more sustainable, but also very refreshing – give it a try!

Play your role: https://lnkd.in/d_iXhE74





Extending this integration to social media channels broadened reach, fostering a community committed to positive change through ESCRS Mission Zero.

What's your role in the ESCRS sustainability journey?

"It takes a village to raise a child" - African Yoruba proverb

Sustainability only works if we are all involved and working together. It's on each of us to find ways to take action in our own sphere of control, whilst using our influence, as small as it may be, to encourage, or demand, those with power to do something about it.

Prepared in collaboration with the GDS-Movement

Delegate Engagement: Communications





The wall structure, produced by a local supplier, <u>Paper Town</u>, ensured the most sustainable approach was implemented by using Falcon Board as a base and reusable metal materials to support its structure.

ESCRS Mission Zero Sustainability Wall was installed on-site to raise awareness and educate attendees about:

- The Congress' environmental sustainability initiatives, emphasising attendees' role and impact
- Activities initiated by Young Ophthalmologists for Sustainability (YOFS)
- Tips and tricks to implement more sustainable practices in the operating room, with a new #StartNextMonday campaign
- An executive summary of SIDICS a tool for evaluating the sustainability of customised cataract packs used by hospitals and surgical centers

Delegate Engagement: Activations



ESCRS Mission Zero was designed to be a lot of fun and deeply rewarding. Participants discovered a new community of sustainably minded professionals, and their actions helped deliver positive impact. All it took was a little personal initiative to claim Mission Zero fun!

To qualify for a prize, participants were asked to complete 5 tasks by taking photos of designated sustainability initiatives, thereby providing evidence. 260+ participants were rewarded with ESCRS-branded, organic cotton, fairly-produced and -sourced T-shirt.





Corporate Partner Engagement



We would like to thank our generous sponsors whose support has empowered the 41st Congress of the ESCRS to be the change we need to see in the world. Their involvement is key to our sustainability success together.

ESCRS 2023 Net Zero Partners





ESCRS 2023 Healthy Break Partner



Exhibitor Education and Engagement



To support the exhibitors, we produced a sustainable exhibiting guide and a consulting support package to help bring corporate and personal sustainability values to life.



We asked exhibitors to champion social and environmental responsibility at the ESCRS event – from ordering sustainable catering to offsetting emissions – and their commitment helped us to create a congress that supports both people and the planet.

Sustainable Exhibitor Award





This award recognises exceptional exhibitors who have truly embraced environmentally responsible behaviour and sustainable work practices both during and after the Congress. Entries were open to all custom build and shell scheme booths.

18 applications were evaluated offline and on site by a panel comprising 2 experienced events and sustainability leaders. The winners were announced at Opening Ceremony of the Congress.



The shortlisted finalist for the Sustainable Exhibitor Award 2023

Rayner
Carl Zeiss Meditec AG
Johnson & Johnson Vision
CSO Costruzione Strumenti
Oftalmici
BAUSCH+LOMB
LKC Technologies



Sustainable Exhibitor Award

The winner of the custom build stand category





In the custom build stand category, the winner is **Carl Zeiss Meditec**, awarded for outstanding contributions:

- Design and bio construction of stand using recycled and recyclable materials
- Waste reduction through digitalisation of promotion materials and reuse of stand
- Recycling of wet lab waste (an x factor)
- Measurement of impacts
- Overall commitment to a sustainable exhibition experience for staff and visitors

Sustainable Exhibitor Award

The winner of the shell scheme stand category





In the category of shell scheme stand, the winner is **LKC Technologies**, awarded for outstanding contributions:

- Making exhibiting sustainable for a small company
- Simple and effective reusable shell scheme design
- Renting of materials and furniture
- 95+% reduction in paper usage by using QR codes
- Focus on low carbon transportation for team members

On site Initiatives





In Vienna, drinking water is so important, it's protected by the constitution so that it can be enjoyed by all, now and in the future. It is piped directly from freshwater springs in the Styrian/Lower Austrian Alps in the Schneeberg, Rax, Schneealpe and Hochschwab regions.



22 water stations were implemented on site to support ESCRS Missions Zero.

Congress attendees were encouraged to bring their own water bottle to Vienna or pick one at a registration area and enjoy the pure, crystal clear spring water!



On site Initiatives





Did you know that your individual efforts can significantly increase the event's sustainability contributions? Every single action has an impact, especially if everyone participates, so let's do it together to ensure it's a positive impact.

Attendees were encouraged to leave their badge and tracking device at the Registration area for upcycling, when leaving the event.

Sustainability Programme





The ESCRS Sustainability Arena - a newly created and engaging learning format - witnessed some of the most renowned international surgeons answering tough questions from the next generation of ophthalmologists and finding out whether they were saving the planet... or saving themselves!

The 4 sessions on sustainability were delivered during the ESCRS Congress.

Carbon Offsetting Approach



Climate Impact Approach



MEASURE

Total Carbon Footprint 27 259.25 tCO2e

96.8% of our footprint comes from flying.

REDUCE

Reduce energy use

Reduce waste

Improve recycling and composting

Reduce food miles

Reduce/eliminate red meat

Promote train travel

OFFSET

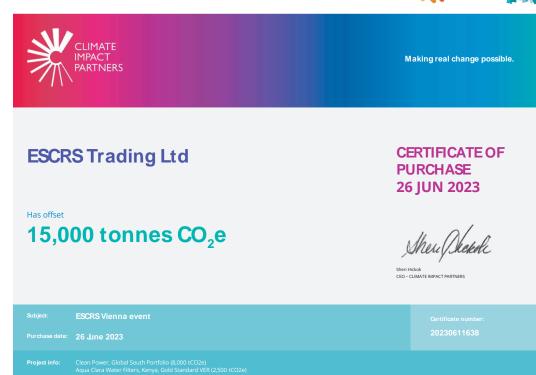
Unavoidable emissions were offset through Climate Impact Partners supporting 6 projects delivering measurable social, environmental, and economic impact to people and the planet.

Offset Portfolio Approach Before the Congress



We offset our unavoidable emissions through a portfolio of projects with Climate Impact Partners.

15 000 tCO2e were offset prior to the Congress.



Offset Portfolio Approach After the Congress





We offset our unavoidable emissions through a portfolio of projects with Climate Impact Partners.

The remaining 12 260 tCO2e were offset after to the Congress.





We selected 6 certified projects that were carefully vetted for positive social,

economic, and environmental impact.

Aqua Clara Water Filters, Kenya

Health Impact



Gold Standard Certified

Providing clean cooking and safe water to remote communities.

Less than 50% of Kenyans have access to safe drinking water. This project supplies families and schools in Kenya with affordable water filters thanks to community led microfinance loans. These filters clean the water so that families don't have to boil it for it to be safe.





We selected 6 certified projects that were carefully vetted for positive social,

economic, and environmental impact.

Solar Water Heating, Asia

Health, Livelihoods, and Micro Renewables



Solar water heaters (SWH) provide households, small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) and institutions with plumbed hot water. They run on clean, renewable energy from the sun instead of carbon emissions heavy grid electricity.

CDM- and Gold Standard-certified



We selected 6 certified projects that were carefully vetted for positive social,

economic, and environmental impact.

Orb Rooftop Solar, India

Health, Livelihoods, and Micro Renewables



Gold Standard Certified

The region's regular blackouts lead rural householders to burn toxic kerosene or other fossil fuels for energy and lighting when load shedding takes place. Orb Rooftop Solar has supplied more than 160 000 solar power and solar water heating systems, reducing health risks and cutting approximately 55 000 tones of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (CO2e) a year.





We selected 6 certified projects that were carefully vetted for positive social,

economic, and environmental impact.

Clean Water and Cooking, Guatemala

Health and Livelihoods Impact



Gold Standard Certified

More than 50% of rural Guatemalans have no choice but to consume and use water with faecal or chemical contamination, leading to diarrhea disease and chronic malnutrition. This pioneering project distributes water filters and stoves through carbon finance payment plans manageable for low-income households. This means clean water and less harmful fumes in the home. The stoves are designed to use less fuel than traditional stoves, and the filters remove the need to cook water, which lessens the demand for fuel from national forests.





We selected 6 certified projects that were carefully vetted for positive social,

economic, and environmental impact.

Clean Power Portfolio, Global South

Economic Impact



CDM-certified

Clean power is one of the most effective ways to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from traditional energy generation. Carbon finance from the carbon offsets pool can be key to scaling and speeding up the global energy transition to clean power. Put the two together and you have more capital for net zero solutions, worldwide, but especially in regions that would benefit greatly from such support.





We selected 6 certified projects that were carefully vetted for positive social,

economic, and environmental impact.

Renewable Energy Portfolio Global

Sustainable Infrastructure



CDM, VCS, Gold Standard

Renewable energy projects in this portfolio are vital to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the growing global demand for energy and build sustainable infrastructure. Energy generation is one of the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, and renewable energy investment is a fast and effective solution to reduce these emissions. Carbon finance, delivered by companies who offset their emissions, provides essential funds to support the development of global renewable projects.

Key Learnings and Recommendations



Key Recommendations



Planning

- Make sustainability a priority and agenda item from Congress initiation date
- Create a Green Team with key stakeholders including the venue, catering, agency, production company, and destination representatives

Procurement

- •Communicate sustainability requirements with all suppliers well in advance by adding it in the RFP process
- Create a Sustainable Procurement Policy and make sustainability part of the procurement and selection process

Measurement

- •Ensure each supplier is coached, equipped, and can provide measurement data 2 weeks after the event
- Ensure that sustainability measurement requirements are part of the contract
- •Improve the registration measurement process to gather more accurate and timely attendee travel data

Production

- •Choose more sustainable signage options (e.g. falcon board), completely eliminate the use of PVC
- •Reduce the number of graphics by 25% by rethinking design
- •Remove year and location branding from the lanyards and signage, allowing these materials to be reused in the future
- •Incentivise exhibitors to choose more sustainable materials, catering, and booth activities

Prepared in collaboration with the GDS-Movement

Key Recommendations (cont.)



Food and Beverage

- Increase the amount of locally and regionally sourced ingredients
- Offer 100% vegetarian or vegan options at the Congress from 2024
- Continue offering surplus food stations, implementing a better management of these stations
- Implement a comprehensive and monitored compost management system to ensure efficient and effective decomposition.

Climate

- Increase the "delegates arriving by climate friendly transport" target to 35%
- Partner with local railway providers to promote discounted train rates for Congress delegates
- Continue the mandatory carbon offset fee
- Offset 100% of non-avoidable carbon emissions by investing in a certified portfolio of projects

Content and Programme

- Initiate the goal of a better balance of female to male speakers early on in the planning stage of the programme
- •Increase the number of sustainability focused sessions at the Congress
- Produce a one-day co-located event on sustainability with eyesustain.org partners

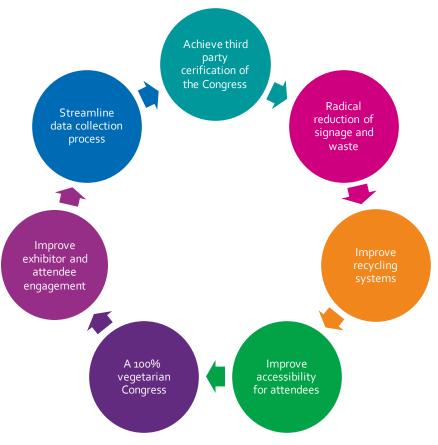
Impact and Legacy

- Implement a framework to measure and report on the Congress's positive handprint and legacy
- Create a legacy initiative with the local destination community

Prepared in collaboration with the GDS-Movement



Recommendations for 2024



About ESCRS Overview and Scope



About ESCRS



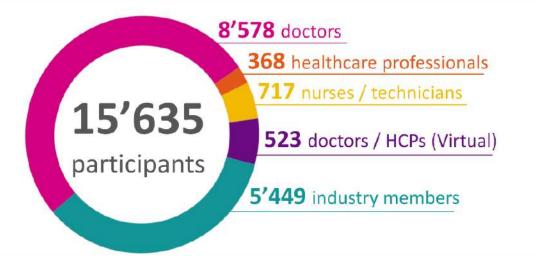


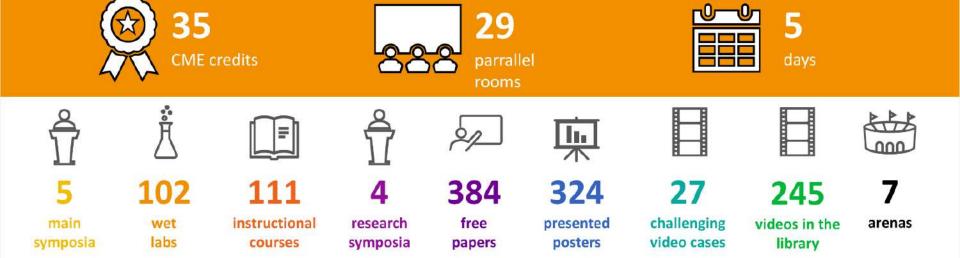
ESCRS was founded in 1991 to promote education and research in the field of implant and refractive surgery and to advance and promote the study and practice of ophthalmology. ESCRS seeks to promote and support research in the field of intraocular lens implantation and refractive surgery and the dissemination of the useful results thereof.

ESCRS has over 7500 members from 130 countries world-wide.

ESCRS's 41st Congress was held 8th – 12th September at Messe Wien Exhibition and Congress Centre, Vienna, Austria









Thank You to the ESCRS 2023 Congress

Sponsors

ESCRS 2023 Net Zero Partners





ESCRS 2023 Healthy Break Partner



Thank you to all ESCRS Congress 2023 Suppliers

























This report was prepared by the GDS-Movement with valuable data and editorial support provided by the ESCRS team.

Event carbon and waste footprint data was measured using industry best practice methodologies as well as an advanced measurement tool called TRACE. The emissions from local event production, delegate and team travel, accommodation, food & beverages, venue and online participation are measured. Where data was not available, impact data was estimated using the GDS-Movements database of sustainable events.



GDS-Movement unites and enables tourism and event professionals to create flourishing and resilient places to visit, meet and live in.

Our mission is to co-create sustainable and circular strategies, mindsets and skill sets that will enable destinations of the future to thrive, and society and nature to regenerate.

www.gds.earth