

Is a festival a liability to the environment?

This was said several times during the ILMC environment panel “Cleaning up Our Act” on Saturday 10 March in London. Once more the debate on the Co2 liability, occurring when festival guests are transporting themselves from their home to the venue was stressed as a major problem and it was said that as a responsible festival organiser you must act accordingly.

I miss competent people who will sit down and make the full mathematics for a festival’s liability to the environment. My point is that we must also calculate the positive influence it has on the environment when people leave their daily habits and check into a green field for a week.

During that week we have approx. 75,000 guests staying in our camping area. My allegation is that we can set off the following elements in the total score:

- 75,000 persons are only using their own car or other means of transport to a very limited extent.
 - 75,000 persons do not have as much electric light as if they were at home
 - 75,000 persons are spending a lot less warm water compared to if they were at home
 - 75,000 persons are spending a lot less clean clothes compared to if they were at home
 - 75,000 persons are saving a lot of energy by not preparing and cooling their food in their own kitchen
 - Many of our toilettes are not flushing which gives a large saving on the water consumption
- Naturally we have large PA systems, huge light systems and large screens – but in return:
- 75,000 persons are not watching TV at home
 - 75,000 persons are not playing music on their own “PA system”.

Could it be that in fact organising a festival has a very positive influence on the environment?

Last but not least I want to point out that instead we should be concentrating the energy and the resources to minimise the liability on the environment naturally coming from many people being together.

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