

**UFI Awards: The 2020 UFI Sustainable Development Award**  
(Best Waste Management)

**Company Name:** Royal Paragon Hall

**Objective:**

The organisation of events results in tons of waste being produced, leading to global issues such as greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere, overflowing garbage that affects people's lives and requires a lot of budget for management, among others. Royal Paragon Hall recognizes the importance of this issue, and as an environmentally responsible venue ready to demonstrate its commitment to waste management in order to increase effectiveness, we have the following objectives:

1. Minimize the effect of waste on the environment.
2. Encourage our team to be environmentally aware and adapt working practice to include waste reduction.
3. Spread the feeling of pride to our customers, who contribute to sustainable event organising together with the venue.
4. Cost saving.

**Challenge**

1. Royal Paragon is not a standalone venue, as we are located on the fifth floor of Siam Paragon. Therefore our waste management system has always relied on the building's central system, leading to challenges in developing our own waste management system.
2. Managing waste related to event organisation is not something the venue can manage alone. It requires cooperation from clients, and our team must also adjust their way of working. Ensuring awareness among all parties is a big challenge.
3. It is challenging to find a way to measure success in such a way that everyone can see the big picture and feel proud of their contribution.

**Implementation Plan:**

1. ***Build awareness in the team and encourage behavioral change in order to reduce waste within the team, before communicating with our clients.***

We feel this initiative should start from our own awareness and understanding, so that our team is informed about this issue and able to convince our clients to join the journey with us. We have included this in our main policy and have a commitment that everyone in our team must contribute and change their way of working in order to reduce waste. We also educate our team about waste management through educational courses as well as inviting guest speakers to talk about the impact of waste. Before each client's event, we have an internal meeting to prepare for it, and waste management is on the agenda to create a shared commitment and embed this topic in our DNA. Additionally, we have activities to encourage active participation in our team, such as organising Plastic Free Day to

encourage everyone in our team to make small changes in their everyday life in order to reduce waste. These changes include carrying their own tumbler when attending a meeting, using a tote bag instead of a single use plastic bag, and more. We asked them to maintain a log of the amount of waste reduced each day and share their photos on the company's LINE group to inspire each other.

**Result:** In 2019, our team's efforts on the Plastic Free Day reduced waste by 175.91 kilograms and helped reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 204.36 Kg.Co<sub>2</sub>e.

- 2. We created a tool to measure success from our waste management projects in order to help our clients feel proud of their contribution to sustainability.***

Our clients can visualise real results, which will encourage them to do more and join us on this journey. We have invested in the development of tools to measure the impact of our waste reduction, and we will display the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions are a direct impact of waste, but to make it even more visual, we compare the amount of greenhouse gas emissions to the amount of large trees planted. The numbers shown make our customers feel proud of their contribution to saving the environment, and can also be used to spread the word further. We are the first event venue in Thailand to have such a high level of awareness on this, and to be able to measure greenhouse gas emissions saved in order to display it for clients.

**Result:** In 2019, more than 90% of event organizers gave a positive response in the form, agreeing to organise sustainable events with us.

- 3. We have reduced greenhouse gas emissions through waste reduction; Minimizing Waste Production and Maximizing Recycling.***

This is done through three key initiatives: Reduce, Recycle and Reuse, with an aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from event organising waste from by 30,000 Kg.Co<sub>2</sub> / year, focusing on waste in four key areas.

➤ **General waste**

We aim to reduce general waste which cannot be reused such as plastic, styrofoam, paper, decoration, and fresh flowers, by finding alternative materials that can be reused. This includes replacing plastic bottles with glass bottles, which helps reduce plastic bottles by more than 8,000 kg a year; reducing paper documents by using online documents for more convenience, which cuts our paper use by 80%; and using potted plants instead of fresh flowers so that they can be reused and absorb greenhouse gas.

➤ **Food waste**

We have signed an agreement with catering services to reduce food waste at our events. We make sure there is as little food waste as possible, and the remainder of

our food is donated to organisations and those in need. Food scraps from our events are put to good use, such as making fertilizers and animal fodder.

➤ **Energy waste**

We have initiatives to reduce energy consumption such as using energy-saving LED bulbs, moderating the temperature of our air conditioners, and using social media to encourage everyone to take public transport instead of driving their own vehicles. Additionally, we also accommodate eco-friendly vehicles, as our parking area has Eco Charger Stations for electric vehicles. From a randomized survey on event participants' means of transport, more than 60% said they came to the venue by public transport, while 30% of the remaining said they carpooled.

➤ **Water waste**

Water waste from Royal Paragon Hall is treated onsite before being released in order to ensure the quality of our water waste. The water is tested before being released into the public system. Additionally, we have instituted measures to reduce water waste, such as not using tablecloths and chair covers in our events in order to reduce the volume of water contaminated with washing chemicals and detergents that may contaminate water sources. In 2019, we reduced our year-on-year costs by 41% simply by not using tablecloths and chair covers.

Result

- We take our measurement on waste management seriously. From August to December 2019, in more than 30 events, we reduced our greenhouse gas emissions by 64,021 Kg.Co<sub>2</sub>. This is comparable to growing 7,114 trees to absorb the gas, or twice the amount that we have aimed for.
- According to the Pollution Control Department, Thailand spends a lot of money in managing more than 10 million tons of waste each year. Through collective efforts, in 2019 we reduced the amount of waste in our events by 14,262.32 kg. which has greatly saved our environment and reduced the expenses that the BMA would need to spend to manage the waste.
- By separating recyclable waste from general waste, we have passed on recyclable items to external organizations to be better utilized. In 2019, we collected and gave away around 4,658.32 kg. of recyclable waste.
- In addition to saving the environment, our effective waste management system also saved 5% of our cost per year.

**Performance and Outcomes**

1. Royal Paragon Hall has received ISO 20121: 2012 Event Sustainability Management System certification and a Green Meetings certificate from the Thailand Business Council for Sustainable Development (TBCSD). This reflects the effectiveness of our meeting management system.

2. In 2019, based on our greenhouse gas emissions report, Royal Paragon Hall purchased carbon credits to achieve carbon neutrality. We are the first venue in Thailand to become a ‘Carbon Neutral Venue’ certified by the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organisation.
3. Our management system is designed to be in line with the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
  - Goal 3 Good Health and Well-being, by reducing waste and contributing to a cleaner environment.
  - Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation, by reducing water waste from laundry and managing waste water to ensure it meets the standard.
  - Goal 7 Affordable and Clean Energy, by reducing energy consumption, such as by changing our lighting to LED bulbs and setting a suitable temperature for our air conditioners.
  - Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, by managing and minimising waste in our events.
  - Goal 13 Climate Action, by showing responsibility by purchasing carbon credits to make up for our greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Goal 17 Partnerships to Achieve the Goal, by partnering with all parties to ensure effective waste management.

### **Client Testimonial**

The first event to utilise these guidelines was the 52<sup>nd</sup> Diplomatic Red Cross Bazaar, which saw splendid collaboration from every party involved. The event reduced its carbon footprint by 9,276 kg.Co<sub>2</sub>e., the equivalent to growing 1,031 big trees. This is a testimonial from The Thai Red Cross Society, host of this event:

*“When the quality of life is affected by climate change, it is everyone’s duty to save the environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It might sound difficult, but I believe that everyone can do it. The report on the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions produced by Royal Paragon Hall shows us that managing waste in our events has had a major impact. I would like to thank Royal Paragon Hall for playing an important role in making The Diplomatic Red Cross Bazaar an international fair that helps both the public and the planet.”*

*Quotes from The Thai Red Cross Society  
Host of The Diplomatic Red Cross Bazaar.*

### **Next Step**

***“Royal Paragon Hall will have the most effective waste management system and become a Zero Waste Venue.”***

*Mr. Talun Theng  
Managing Director of Royal Paragon Hall*