



**GBTA** Summit  
**2025**

Sustainability Summit  
Washington DC, June 10

# GBTA Sustainability Summit

## Building the Business [Travel] Case for a Positive Change

**Post - Event Recap**





# A FULL DAY OF LEADERSHIP, STRATEGIC INSIGHTS, AND BOLD SOLUTIONS

The fourth annual GBTA Sustainability Summit brought together the brightest minds in business travel to explore the powerful intersection of people, planet, and purpose. Against a backdrop of rapid innovation and pressing environmental urgency, the Summit delivered a full day of thought leadership, strategic insights, and bold solutions.

## About GBTA Foundation

The GBTA Foundation's [Sustainability Initiative](#) aims to drive cross-industry collaboration among the users and providers of corporate travel services - including aviation, hospitality, ground transport, travel management and distribution - to support the deployment of solutions that help to manage and reduce carbon emissions from travel. Our work is possible thanks to the support of [GBTA's Sustainability Partners](#).



**121** attendees  
**88** different companies  
**4** hours of main stage  
**6** education sessions led by industry experts







## Keynote: Thriving Through Change – How Leaders Drive Sustainability in Uncertain Times

Chrissa Pagitsas, a recognized leader in sustainability and business resilience, kicked off the day with a powerful message: sustainability isn't a side project, it's the backbone of resilient, forward-looking businesses. Her talk challenged leaders to embrace disruption as an opportunity to embed sustainability deeper into their core strategy.



## The AI-Powered Travel Revolution: Is It a Gamechanger for Sustainability?

- ▶ **Greener Itineraries:** AI suggesting lower-emission routes, transport, and stays.
- ▶ **Carbon Forecasting:** Predicting travel emissions at booking for better planning.
- ▶ **Tech Tradeoffs:** Exploring AI's own energy footprint vs. sustainability gains.



## Beyond the Buzz: What's Actually Achievable in New Aviation Tech

- ▶ **SAF Scale-Up:** Corporate demand is key to expanding SAF supply.
- ▶ **Future Aircraft:** Electric/hydrogen planes are coming, albeit slowly.
- ▶ **Buyer Influence:** Travel policies can push airlines toward cleaner options.



*Excellent event. Made some very promising connections that I believe will help to move my company's sustainability priorities forward.*



*I thought it was a particularly well-organised and thoughtfully-curated event. Genuinely interesting and engaging sessions, and great to see accessibility given the limelight..*







## Integrating Rail into Corporate Travel Programs

Top 3 challenges preventing session attendees from using rail:

- #1 Routes
- #2 Technology
- #3 Time

Participants said that environmental considerations were “very important” to their travel decisions for work

86%

## Going Beyond Emissions: Integrating Nature-Positive Strategies into Sustainability Goals

“Companies and investors increasingly recognize that nature loss poses material financial risks. Around \$44 trillion in economic value (nearly 50% of global GDP) depends at least moderately on nature. For an industry reliant on pristine ecosystems and climate stability, the deep link between nature and climate is both a major risk and a powerful opportunity. Integrating both into sustainability strategies isn’t just good stewardship, it’s essential to the travel industry’s long-term viability.”

**Shannon Geiger-Risdon**  
Manager at Agendi, a specialist climate and sustainability consulting firm

## Understanding the SAF Landscape and How Your Organization Can Make a Difference

“Educating and collaborating across the business travel value chain on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) is key to reducing air travel emissions. Prioritizing SAF investments is essential to accelerate industry decarbonization, but high costs remain a challenge. Book & Claim programs allow business travel companies, airlines, and SAF producers to share costs and help scale SAF adoption, making air travel more sustainable and affordable.”

**Sean Newsum**  
Managing Director, Environmental Affairs,  
Airlines for America





## How to Put a Price on Carbon

"Implementing carbon budgets is increasingly driven by the need to attract and retain customers and respond to rising market demand for climate action."

**Phil Charm**  
Co-Founder, Clarasight

- Step 1:** Determine a carbon price
- Step 2:** Nudge travelers at the point of sale
- Step 3:** Measure impact of their choices
- Step 4:** Reinvest in decarbonization



## How to Become a Hotel Sustainability Data Superhero

The top 3 climate criteria in supplier selections are:

- #1** Sustainability policies and targets
- #2** Sustainability certifications
- #3** Calculates and reports emissions



## Building a Convincing Business Case for SAF

**78%** of participants said Finance team involvement was crucial in building the business case for SAF

Participants agreed that it would be helpful to connect with peers to learn from their SAF purchases when formulating their own SAF strategy

**100%**







## GBTA Revealed its Sustainable Business Travel Pathway

“Even in times of economic uncertainty and a changing political climate, one thing remains certain: sustainable business is good business. The transition pathway provides companies across the world with the insights and tools needed to embed sustainable travel practices at every level of their operating model.” - Delphine Millot, Managing Director, GBTA Foundation

Free Download



The [GBTA Acceleration Challenge 2025](#) is officially open! Submit the free and confidential maturity assessment before September 23 to get your company score and a customized report. Download the questions [HERE](#).



## Purpose-Led Travel: Making Travel Accessible for All

- ▶ **Equity in Focus:** Addressed barriers to inclusive, sustainable travel.
- ▶ **Design for All:** Advocated for proactive policies to serve diverse needs.
- ▶ **People + Planet:** Accessibility as a core sustainability goal.



## Champions for Change: Discussion Hubs on Transforming Travel for Good

Participants brainstormed sustainable travel innovations for 2050

- ▶ Digital Travel Concierge
- ▶ Next-Gen Urban Mobility
- ▶ Future Travel Reporting







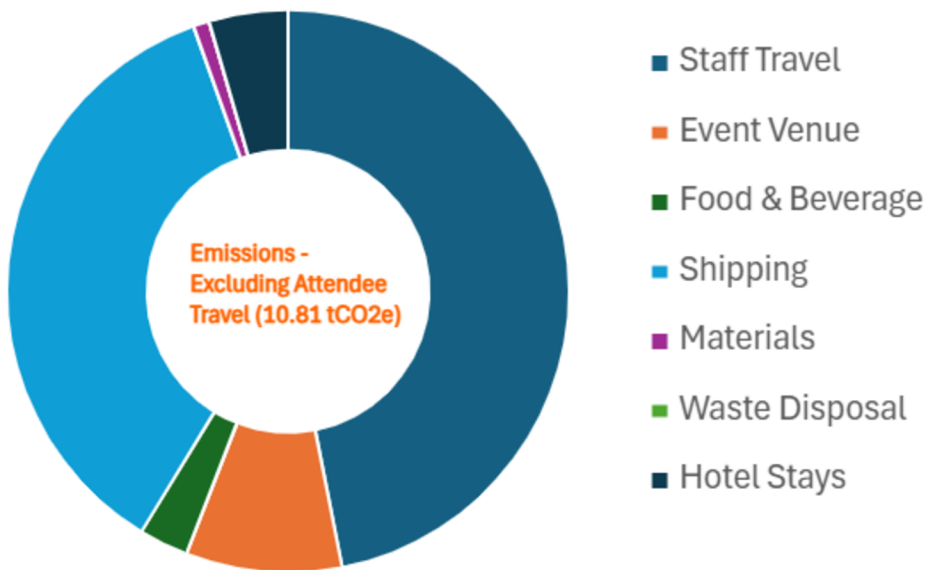
## THANK YOU TO OUR SUMMIT SPONSORS







## Carbon emissions statistics



## All main stage sessions were transcribed through Wordly

An AI translation platform providing audio translation, captions, subtitles, and transcription

### Accessibility Highlights

- ▶ The summit took place at the historic Gallaudet University, which commits to a bilingual environment that features both English and American Sign Language
- ▶ Mobility ramps and elevator accommodations were available to all speakers and attendees

## Detailed footprint

	Emissions (t CO2e)	Percentage (%)
Emissions - Excluding Attendee Travel		
Staff Travel	5.07	46.9%
Event Venue	0.97	9.0%
Food & Beverage	0.306	2.8%
Shipping	3.87	35.8%
Materials	0.1	0.9%
Waste Disposal	0	0.0%
Hotel Stays	0.49	4.5%
TOTAL	10.806	
Emissions - Including Attendee Travel		
Attendee Travel	96.94	90.0%
Staff Travel	5.07	4.7%
Event Venue	0.97	0.9%
Food & Beverage	0.306	0.3%
Shipping	3.87	3.6%
Materials	0.1	0.1%
Waste Disposal	0	0.0%
Hotel Stays	0.49	0.5%
TOTAL	107.746	

