

# COMPENDIUM OF BEST PRACTICES

A brief report on sustainable  
tourism practices

## TOURISME

Improving Sustainability of Tourism SMEs  
Through Knowledge Transfer, International  
Cooperation and Multi-Stakeholder Engagement



Co-funded by the COSME programme  
of the European Union



Sant'Anna



This Compendium was based on a much more extensive one, with 100+ examples of good practices coming from across the world, existing in many different sectors and targeting various aspects of environmental management. The detailed Compendium publication can be found [here](#).

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**Image sources:** Freepik, Pixabay, Flickr, Hippopx, Piquesels, Wikimedia Commons, PxHere, URBAN-WASTE, DECISIVE, Ursula Bach

**July 2021**

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent colored squares in shades of green, orange, purple, and yellow, arranged in a layered, abstract pattern.

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### Glossary

**SME - Small and Medium Enterprise**

**CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility**

**GHG - Greenhouse Gas**

**CFL - Compact Fluorescent Light**

**LED - Light Emitting Diode**

**HVAC - Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning**

**NACE - The Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community, the industry standard classification system used in the European Union**

# INTRO DUCTION

Supported by the COSME programme of the European Union, this project revolves around the symbolics of windows. Not only they are associated with cars, trains and planes as well as also hotel rooms, but after all they represent opportunities, visions and inspirations- exactly what the TouriSME project wants to bring to SMEs operating in the field of tourism.



# Why TouriSME and this compendium?

Over the past decades, tourism has become one of the largest business sectors worldwide, currently employing more than 200 million people. In many parts of the world, tourism is indeed the most important source of income. Forecasts expect the number of people traveling for business or pleasure to continue increasing, especially in some regions. While providing a significant boost to many local and national economies, tourism was proven to pose a significant environmental and socio-cultural threat to many of the environments in which it is developed and pursued.

In the EU, tourism is one of the major economic activities with a high impact on economic growth, employment, and social development, being a powerful driver for EU's employment and growth objectives. The competitiveness of the European tourism industry is closely linked to its sustainability, which is understood through environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development.

Over the past decades, tourism has become one of the largest business sectors worldwide, currently employing more than 200 million people. In many parts of the world, tourism is indeed the most important source of income. Forecasts expect the number of people

## The TouriSME project's objectives



To design and implement trans-national and cross-sectoral support scheme including capacity building knowledge



To conduct transfer and scaling-up activities to enable sustainable growth of SMEs in the tourism sector



To support the uptake of innovative solutions for sustainable tourism



To support SMEs' participation in certification schemes

Cyprus



France



Italy



Spain



The TouriSME project's  
beneficiary countries

To achieve sustainability and improve competitiveness, TouriSME aims at fostering SMEs' capacities and skills to explore and take up solutions through a reinforced transnational and cross-sectoral collaboration among tourism SMEs and operators in Spain, Italy, France, and Cyprus.

The objective of this compendium is to provide an insight in best practices related to sustainable tourism. To this aim, the project partners not only thematically identified various practices related to sustainability within the tourism sector through a comprehensive study of both academic and grey literature but also analysed the replication feasibility of identified practices through expert assessment.

Speaking of the scope, the SMEs primarily targeted by this compendium and the good practices contained therein can be grouped in in the following tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation



Travel agencies and tour operators



Other reservation service and related activities

# How did we come to this?

To compile this compendium of best practices related to sustainable tourism, the project adopted a two-step approach. The first step implied a desk research where researchers prepared a list of sources (research articles, books, reports, etc.)

and subsequently conducted a comprehensive literature review. This resulted in a preliminary list of various existing practices based on which researchers searched practical cases for each identified practice to get further details such as their potential environmental, economic, and social benefits and how tourism organisations adopted such practices.

All identified practices, based on their underlying function, were categorized as follows:



The tourism industry is a significant contributor to global energy consumption and associated carbon emissions. Whilst the 5.45 million hotel rooms in Europe represent half the global total number, European accommodations are estimated to be responsible for just 21% GHG emissions arising from accommodations globally, suggesting better than average energy-efficiency in European accommodations.

## ENERGY SAVING



# ENERGY SAVING



Use of CFL  
and LED  
lighting  
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Installation of  
solar panels  
for electricity  
p. 12

Installation of  
secondary  
glazing  
windows  
p. 16

Daylight  
harvesting  
p. 14

Despite good energy performance of European accommodations, compared to their those elsewhere, energy-efficiency has been traditionally considered a low priority for most accommodations, and there is considerable scope for energy savings in this sector, contributing to cost and carbon emission reductions.

The total energy consumption for a typical hotel and the proportion of

energy sourced from electricity compared with fuels such as natural gas, propane, liquid petroleum gas, and fuel oil, varies considerably across accommodations depending on the level of services offered, building design, climate occupancy, local energy infrastructure, and local regulations. Electricity accounts for approximately 40% of the energy consumed in a hotel. Of this, approximately 45% is used for lighting, 26% for HVAC, 18% for

other, 6% for water heating, and 5% for food services. In short, there is a great potential for energy conservation across the hospitality industry. Hotels and similar accommodations may undertake several technological and non-technological practices to minimize energy consumption in guest areas, laundries, kitchens, and so on.

**Tourism Sector Activities:**



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

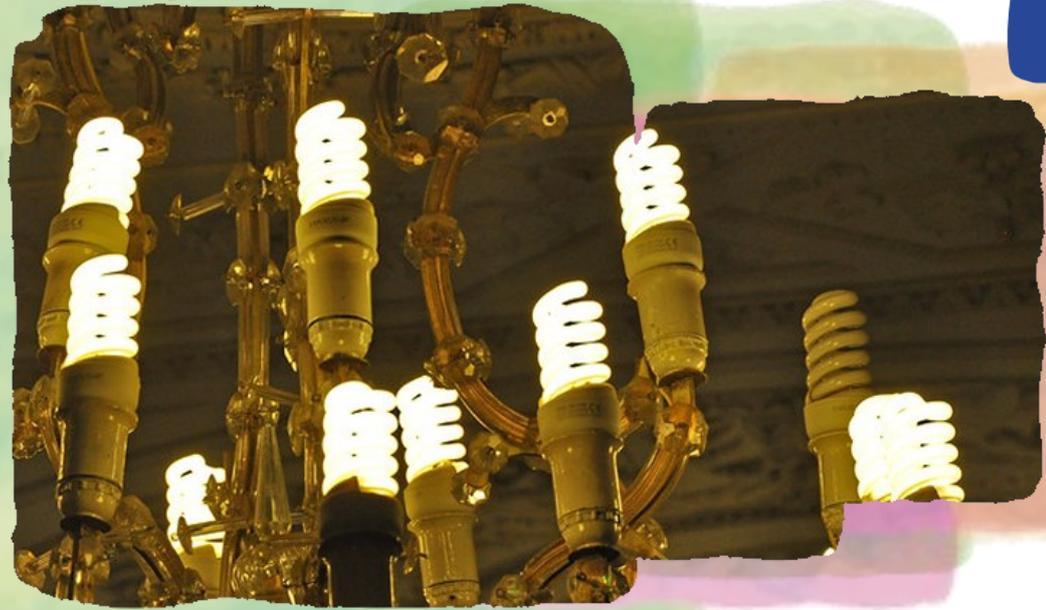


Travel agencies and tour operators



Other reservation service and related activities

**Use of CFL and LED lighting**



**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Whatever time of the day, lights are usually on and shining within a hotel. Typically, lighting accounts for 15 - 45% of electricity consumption in small hotels. With so much electricity being utilized every hour, hotels could benefit by investing in LED lighting. Installing LED lights in lobbies, guest rooms, bars, and even in the basement will all yield surprising results.

LEDs have a great number of benefits – they are energy efficient (uses 75% less energy), emit low heat radiation, are dimmable, start instantly, and can provide directional light. LED bulbs will last at least 50,000 hours after being installed which denotes that a noticeable decrease in output will not happen for over 6 years. This, in turn, helps significantly cut down the maintenance costs that are connected with lighting.

**More info:**

[Eco-Management and Audit Scheme](#)

[No Grey Area](#)



**Tourism Sector Activities:**



Hotels and Similar  
Accommodations



Holiday and other  
short-stay  
accommodation

A photograph of a house with a grey tiled roof and a wooden balcony. A large array of blue solar panels is installed on the roof. The house has a yellow wall and a brick chimney. The background is a soft, painterly green.

**Installation  
of solar  
panels for  
electricity**

## Description of the initiative:

Hotels and similar accommodations are considered as the biggest energy consumers in the building sector, considering the number of rooms they have. Renewable energy has been adopted by business owners across various industries including the hospitality industry.

By installing solar panels on rooftops or on the ground, hotels can generate their own electricity. Moreover, the installation period is just 2 to 3 weeks. It is a relatively short process, so hotels usually do not have to shut down during the construction period. The payback can happen as quickly as 5 years after installation. As solar technology becomes more mature, the costs of solar PVs keep decreasing year after year, making solar energy more affordable, even to small hotels. Many hotels in the world already installed solar panels which were proven to be very beneficial for them.

Marriott-Lancaster (USA) installed solar panels producing 1.2 million kWh per year, just over the 1.18 million used by the hotel's 133 rooms. With no utility bill, the hotel stands to see a great return on its investment.

Hampton Inn Bakersfield (USA) has been saving \$8000 per month through the installation of solar panels.

### More info:

[Coastal Solar](#)

[Hospitality  
Technology](#)



# Daylight harvesting

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Travel agencies and tour operators



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation



Other reservation service and related activities



## Description of the initiative:

Daylight harvesting in hotels or offices is an energy management technique that reduces overhead lighting use by utilising the ambient (natural and artificial) light present in a space and dimming or switching off lighting when sufficient ambient light is present or when the space is unoccupied.

Daylight harvesting saves electricity costs and provides the health benefits of correct lighting.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts in China following the same approach installed a wall-mounted counter that alerts guests on how much electricity they are using, allowing them to turn off lights to help the environment

### More info:

[Leviton](#)

[Loytec](#)

[Stamford Advocate](#)





## Installation of secondary glazing windows

### Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Studies show that roughly half of a hotel's energy consumption is used for heating. Many hotels and B&Bs inhabit traditional buildings with single glazed windows that provide poor thermal insulation. Also, many hotels are usually situated near a busy road or within a noisy city center and thus receive complaints from guests.

Secondary glazing has become essential for many hotels and B&Bs as it offers a wide range of benefits including enhanced thermal and acoustic insulation. Secondary glazing doesn't just stop noise entering the building, it substantially lowers energy consumption and thus decreases heating costs. As it acts as a second barrier it prevents cold draughts from drawing warm air out of the guest rooms, it also seals in the warmth-air making hotel rooms warm up faster. This can lower the carbon footprint of the building and hotels and B&Bs can reduce annual heating costs too. Secondary glazing includes two efficient draught seals and with a low emissivity glass, heat loss can be reduced by up to 65% and noise levels by as much as 80% giving hotel guests a peaceful night's sleep.

**More info:**

[Arctic Glaze](#)

[PBC Today](#)



# WATER SAVING



It is reported that a tourist's consumption is usually higher than a resident's water consumption. Indeed, a European tourist consumes around 300 liters per day compared to a European resident consumption of 100 – 200 liters per day. Although statistical data for water use in the tourism sector (as a whole) is lacking, it is obvious that water use in hotels and similar accommodations is the highest compared to other tourism organizations.



# WATER SAVING



Installation of water-efficient bathrooms fixtures  
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Collection and use of rainwater  
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Optimising garden operations  
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The reasons for higher tourist water consumption in hotels and similar accommodations include maintenance of grounds (irrigation), daily room cleaning, daily laundry, maintenance of swimming pools, intensive kitchen activities, and a pleasure approach to showers and baths.

Although the share of tourism in global total water consumption is

less than 1%, it contributes significantly to water stress in hotspot areas, especially the Mediterranean within Europe. It is worth noting that average tourist water consumption in European sun-holiday destinations in 2007 ranged from 149 liters per guest per night on the Spanish Balearic Islands to 450 liters per guest per night on the Greek Aegean islands, but water consumption up to 880

liters is quoted for luxury tourism in Majorca.

Water typically accounts for approximately 10% of the utility bills in hotels but can vary considerably across different types of accommodation. The major areas of water consumption in accommodation are guest bathrooms, kitchens, laundry facilities, and communal toilet

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

Installation of water-efficient bathrooms fixtures



### Description of the initiative:

Hotel operations — particularly the kitchen, laundry, and bathrooms are completely dependent on water for everyday operations. For the record, the average water consumption per guest per night ranges from 394 liters in Europe, 839 litres in Barbados, 313 liters in Australia and New Zealand to 677 liters in South East Asia.

Bathrooms account for about 40% consumption of water in hotels. Therefore, water conservation and efficiency measures such as the installation of water-efficient fixtures in the bathrooms of hotels and similar accommodations are crucial. The installation of water-efficient fixtures selected through green procurement is the most effective approach.

The Yök Casa Cultura in Barcelona (Spain) installed Roca's L20 series of showerheads and faucets. They are equipped with aerators and Cold Start, meaning the hot water is only triggered if the handle is moved to the left. Most taps fire up the hot water every time whenever the handle is lifted in the middle position, wasting energy unnecessarily. They also installed toilets having a dual-flush system as it is the easiest for guests from all different cultures to understand without having to leave instructions.

#### More info:

[European Commission](#)

[Yök Casa Cultura](#)

[Roca](#)





## Collection and use of rainwater

### Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Rainwater collection systems divert rainfall water into storage tanks. Run-off systems can be installed on roofs and other impervious surfaces. Harvested rainwater should ideally be used for laundry operations, but it can be used for non-potable demand such as toilet flushing, irrigation, cooling towers, or general cleaning purposes.

Although rainwater harvesting is not widely practiced, this practice can reduce total utility costs of hotels located in rainy climate areas by up to 35%. The use of rainwater in laundries minimizes or eliminates the use of water softening columns, reduces chemical consumption in laundry operations, and improves the quality of the laundry effluent, and facilitates its reuse for irrigation.

100 Accor hotels have installed rainwater recovery tanks to supply irrigation or car washing applications. A rainwater recycling system installed in the 250-room ETAP city-center hotel in Birmingham (UK) saves up to 780 m<sup>3</sup> of potable water per year (5-10% of consumption). This saving equates to about 6% of best practice water consumption for this size of the hotel.

**More info:**

[European Commission](#)

[Green Ideas for  
Tourism](#)

[Hagler Baily Services](#)





# Optimising laundry operations

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Large-scale professional laundry operators can provide a more efficient alternative to on-site laundry operations. Efficient large-scale and commercial laundry operations with a capacity of hundreds to thousands of tonnes of laundry per year typically achieve water use efficiencies of 5-6 liters of water per kg of linen, compared with in excess of 20 liters per kg for non-optimized small-scale laundry operations. Therefore, hotels may consider outsourcing their laundry operations.

The best practice for large hotels (over 500 rooms) and outsourced laundry providers is to operate continuous batch washers (CBW) with the counter-flow current. Another best practice is to recover energy from steam used in the drying process. Equipment-based recommendations include using front-loading washers that consume 40% less water than top-loading machines, using washers with adjustable load-size settings, and investing in a laundry water recycling system if the laundry supports more than 250 - 350 rooms. The laundry water recycling systems available on the market are generally expensive but can reduce water and en-

ergy consumed in washers by up to 50%. Typical operations-based recommendations include pre-sorting heavily stained items to minimize reprocessing, counting or weighing items to ensure that washers are loaded to capacity, tracking load sizes in a log to monitor the average loading of the laundry's washers, and consolidating loads and processing them in the largest possible washer.

**More info:**

[European Commission](#)

[Hagler Baily Services](#)



**Tourism sector activities:**

Hotels and Similar  
Accommodations

**Optimizing  
garden  
operations**

### Description of the initiative:

Gardens are an important asset to hotels, but hotels usually do not have a specific budget for their gardens, nor they do analytical costing for the maintenance of their gardens. Most hotels do no record actual planting and irrigation and so water consumption remains unknown to them.

It is estimated that most hotels in Jamaica use 10% - 20% of their total water supply to irrigate their lawns and gardens. Therefore, proper garden operations are crucial to ensuring the overall water efficiency of a hotel. Standard water conservation measures in gardens include using compost and mulch to improve the water retention characteristics of the soil and reduce evaporation in garden beds, irrigating lawns and gardens in the early morning hours to minimize evaporation, and controlling sprinkler operations with the use of timers and rain gauges. Although more complex, the use of greywater from sinks, showers, and laundry for irrigation can reduce a hotel's water consumption by up to 20%.

Some hotels are eager to run gardens for growing vegetables to enrich their kitchen. Gili Lankanfushi hotel in Malé (Maldives) cultivates vegetables and herbs in the backyard garden. Several other hotels by adopting a sustainable gardening approach are cooking several delicious meals too. Naturhotel Leithof hotel in San Candido (Italy) produces potatoes in their garden to cook a variety of meals for their guests.

### More info:

[European  
Commission Joint  
Research Centre](#)



# WASTE MANAGEMENT



The UN has been expressing concerns about environmental issues for the last few decades. Initially, the focus was on the manufacturing sector as the main culprit, but recent studies revealed a growing concern on the tourism sector whose activities also harm the environment. Indeed, tourists may generate up to twice as much solid waste per capita as local residents.

# WASTE MANAGEMENT



Tracking and  
measuring food  
waste  
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Waste sorting  
bins in hotel  
rooms  
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Installation of in-  
house filtered  
water bottling  
system  
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Reducing  
single-use  
plastics  
p. 32

Within the tourism sector, hotels and similar accommodations are the largest consumers of durable and non-durable goods resulting in large amounts of waste generated. Waste from this sector has similar characteristics to mixed household waste, and is composed of a diverse mix of materials, including organic and hazardous materials,

that increase the disposal's environmental impacts. Waste in the tourism sector often varies seasonally and is generated in areas sensitive to littering, potentially putting pressure on waste management facilities during peak season.

Waste management simply refers to the activities or actions required

to manage waste from its production to its final disposal. The EU aims at promoting sustainable waste treatment options such as preparation for re-use and recycling over landfilling. It is therefore essential for the hospitality industry to develop an effective waste management system aligned with national and local policies.



Tracking and measuring food waste

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations

### Description of the initiative:

Kitchens generate large quantities of organic waste, including peelings and trimmings, bones, uneaten returns from customer servings, out-of-date products, the oil used for frying, etc. Organic waste can represent 37 % of residual waste generated by accommodations and almost 50 % of residual waste generated by restaurants. It is estimated that the UK hospitality industry disposes of 400 000 tonnes of avoidable food waste per year, at a cost of almost 900 million euros.

To curb food wastage, InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has decided to use Winnow Vision AI-enabled technology, which will help its hotels achieve a 30% reduction in food waste. Through the use of an intelligent camera, smart scales, and AI-based smart meter technology, Winnow Vision analyses ingredients during food preparation, as well as plates returned to the kitchen, to assess which food items are most wasted and in what quantities. This builds up a bank of data which in turn informs buying decisions, shapes menus, and hones food preparation techniques. Winnow's technology has been successfully installed in seven IHG hotels in its Europe, Middle East, Asia & Africa (EMEA) region. One hotel already benefitting from this approach is IHG Fujairah Resort in UAE. In just six months, this resort has been able to reduce food waste by more than 50%. This practice can significantly reduce food waste and thus avoid greenhouse gas emissions.

#### More info:

[European Commission](#)

[InterContinental Hotels Group](#)



Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

Reduce single-use plastics



## Description of the initiative:

The Earth was not designed to digest plastic. Styrofoam and petroleum-based plastics do not decompose in the same way as organic material. Instead, they break up into a myriad of tiny pieces over time. The hospitality industry is a significant contributor to the 300 million tons of plastic produced globally every year (half of which is for single-use). Plastics do have a role to play within hospitality, but there are many instances where single-use plastics are stocked and used out of habit, rather than necessity.

Holiday Inn and Kimpton hotels are moving toward removing small toiletries in their 843,000 guest rooms and switching to bulk-sized bathroom amenities to reduce the waste footprint as a brand standard. Plastic straws have already been removed.

The Marriott group announced that it will replace most of its hotels' single-use shampoo, conditioner, and bath gel bottles with larger ones by 2020, preventing about 500 million of the tiny plastic bottles from reaching landfills yearly—equivalent to about 770 tonnes of plastic annually and 30% of its current plastic use for amenities. Plastic straws and stirrers are also out, averting the disposal of one billion straws per year.

Hyatt Hotels Corporation is making a concerted effort at its 875 properties in 60 countries. Larger bottles will replace smaller ones in many hotel rooms, water stations will be situated around public spaces for refilling reusable bottles, and water will be served in carafes at business meetings and corporate events in place of single-use water bottles, where water quality is not an issue. Plastic straws and drink picks are no longer automatically provided, and Hyatt Hotels are increasing the use of recyclable to-go food containers. Refillable water bottles, instead of single-use plastic bottles, are offered to guests at check-in at many of its resorts.

### More info:

[Forbes](#)

[Radisson Hotel Group](#)





**Waste sorting bins in hotel rooms**

**Tourism sector activities:**



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

### Description of the initiative:

Tourism is responsible for a small share of waste generation within Europe, contributing towards 6.7% of total waste generation. Nonetheless, the quantities of solid waste generated by tourism enterprises are large in absolute terms. Tourists may generate up to twice as much solid waste per capita as the residents of that city.

On average, hotels generate around 1 kg of waste per guest per night. Any product that cannot be reused and becomes waste should be sorted into its component fractions so that, as much as possible, it can be recovered for recycling. It is estimated that at least 70% of waste generated at hotels can be recycled, provided that there is a functional and effective separation and collection system in-situ.

Keeping in mind that comfort in rooms is a main objective in hotels, there are different environmental practices that can be implemented without reducing well-being of guests while generating environmental benefits, such as placing individual small-sized bins (depending on the space available in the room) adapted for separation of different waste fractions.

The Hilton Slussen in Stockholm (Sweden) has implemented sorting bins in every room so that guests can sort their waste under three different categories and contribute to the recycling process: red box for hard plastics and metal, green box for organic waste and black box for paper.

Through this practice more than 125 tonnes per month is being sent to the landfill were reduced by 76%, reducing the total waste generated per guest per night up to 0.3 kg. In this way, the Hilton Slussen in Stockholm (Sweden) avoided landfill costs.

#### More info:

[Green Ideas for  
Tourism](#)

[Hilton Stockholm  
Slussen](#)





Installation of in-house filtered water bottling system

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations

### Description of the initiative:

The hospitality industry is a significant contributor to the 300 million tons of plastic produced globally every year. Studies show that single-use plastic bottled systems consume up to 31 times more energy than tap water systems. These bottles are often transported long distances, sit on a shelf, are consumed, and then tossed in the recycling bin. However, around 80% of such plastic bottles might end up in the landfill anyway.

The Landmark Mandarin Oriental in Hong Kong has started producing its own eco-friendly glass bottled water. The hotel has partnered with leading Swedish freshwater specialist, Nordaq FRESH, to introduce its own in-house, filtered and purified premium bottled water into guest rooms and suites along with bars, restaurants, and spas. Nordaq's patented filtration system removes impurities from local tap water, while retaining natural salts and minerals, making it healthy, refreshing, and balanced in flavor. This is served to guests "still or sparkling" in reusable glass bottles. Filtering and bottling on-site eliminates the need for single-use bottles and reduces carbon emissions generated by the traditional Hong Kong hotel approach of transporting bottled mineral water from Europe. When making trips out of the hotel, guests can use BPA-free compressive "Grab & Go" impact-resistant bottles or stainless-steel alternatives and are encouraged to fill their bottles at the guest lobby's complimentary "central oasis" water dispenser.

#### More info:

[Sustainable Tourism  
2030](#)

[Luxury Facts](#)

[Nordaq](#)



The concept of green procurement stems from pollution prevention principles and activities. Green procurement implies purchasing products and services that cause minimal adverse environmental impacts. It incorporates human health and environmental concerns into the search for high-quality products and services at competitive prices .

# GREEN PROCUREMENT



# GREEN PROCUREMENT



Calculated  
procurement  
of food stuff  
p. 40

Purchasing  
from local  
suppliers  
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Replacing  
liquid soap with  
soap flake  
dispenser  
p. 44

Buying fruits  
and vegetables  
on demand of  
guests  
p. 46

Green  
procurement  
of food and  
drink products  
p. 48

Green procurement policies can be applied to all organizations, regardless of size or sector. Green procurement programs may be as simple as purchasing renewable energy or recycled office paper or more involved such as setting environmental requirements for suppliers and contractors. Green procurement strongly discourages purchasing of

single-use disposable items instead it encourages purchasing of products that possess qualities regarding their recyclability, durability, energy efficiency and water, energy or carbon footprint.

A first step to develop a green procurement program is to create a policy statement. It is beneficial to create a policy statement to inform staff

about the hotel's purchasing preferences, guide future purchasing decisions, and notify customers about the hotel's purchasing practices. In this way, a hotel or any organization can eliminate non-green items and it can also help in finding suppliers that offer greener choices.



Calculated procurement of food stuff

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Food waste is a serious problem. To avoid food waste, Fine Hotels & Suites in the Netherlands follow a very decent approach. It estimates and procures almost an exact amount of foodstuff (fruits, vegetables, cooking ingredients, drinks, and other items) needed for guests. It even calculates, when replenishing the breaking buffet, the exact amount of food needed for guests.

**More info:**

[Fine Hotels and Suites](#)



**Tourism sector activities:**



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Other reservation service and related activities



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation



Travel agencies and tour operators

**Purchasing from local suppliers**



**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Sourcing and procurement in hospitality are key elements of determining what kind of experience customers will have. One of the most compelling hooks a hotel can apply to its marketing is a strong association with its region. People staying there can experience not just the place they are staying, but the whole area. This unique and valuable feeling of place can come across especially strongly when companies take a local approach to sourcing.

Besides, procurement of luxury or branded items from far locations do impact the environment in different ways. Thus, a good practice to engage in is to procure items from local suppliers. It reduces the carbon footprint and costs associated to transportation and creates an unique impression for visitors. On the other hand, it requires more planning and adaptation as some goods (consumables, food, etc.) might not be available locally, or seasonally.

Fine Hotels & Suites in the Netherlands purchase required materials or items from local suppliers and entrepreneurs where possible. For instance, it acquires old cheese and chocolate from neighbors, and catering for meeting facilities is done by a local business. In this way, this hotel supports local entrepreneurs and decreases carbon emissions. It is suggested that all tourism SMEs should purchase materials from local suppliers where possible.

**More info:**

[Fine Hotels and Suites](#)



# Replacing liquid soap with soap flake dispenser

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation



Travel agencies and tour operators



**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Most of the hotels usually provide liquid soap, which contains a lot of water. Block soap instead is more concentrated and therefore has some ecological benefits. For instance, it does not transport unnecessary water around and uses paper packaging instead of plastic bottles. Moreover, the solid blocks can easily be piled and allow a greater space efficiency in a truck.

The Yök Casa Cultura in Barcelona (Spain) has installed the soap flake dispenser which allows its guests to enjoy bars of soaps in a comfortable way.

The Viceroy Riviera Maya (Mexico) provides a piece of locally-made soap of guests' taste hand-cut by the 'soap concierge'.

**More info:**

[Yök Casa Cultura](#)

[Spring Wise](#)



Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

Buying fruits and vegetables on demand of guests



**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

The UN estimates that 33% of the world's food is wasted, while this number increases to 40% in the USA which could be sufficient to feed 2 billion people. Uneaten food has dire consequences: decomposing waste releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas. According to the UN, if food waste was its own country, it would be the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gas in the world, after the USA and China. It is worth mentioning that 1 in every 7 people in the world goes to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 die daily from hunger.

The Yök Casa Cultura in Barcelona (Spain) aims to avoid food waste at any cost. Therefore, they buy all fruit and vegetables fresh and only upon demand. This practice not only helps Yök Casa Cultura to buy fresh fruit and vegetables but also helps in reducing their food waste.

**More info:**

[Yök Casa Cultura](#)

[Eco Watch](#)





**Green procurement of food and drink products**

**Tourism sector activities:**



**Hotels and Similar Accommodations**



**Holiday and other short-stay accommodation**

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

The product category “food and alcoholic beverages” is the largest contributory group to major environmental pressure arising from production and consumption in the EU, accounting for 30% of EU environmental pressure, and 58% of eutrophication pressure. The upstream environmental impacts associated with the production of food and drinks consumed on accommodation and restaurant premises may be considerably greater than direct environmental impacts arising from on-site operations. Green procurement based on the selection of lower environmental impact products is therefore an important mechanism for accommodation managers to leverage environmental improvement. Although the environmental benefits of green procurement are often not reflected in environmental reporting, green procurement can be conveyed to clients as an important indicator of social responsibility and added value of the service provided.

Procurement personnel may seek the most sustainable brands or suppliers of the required main ingredients. The key criteria include environmental certification, organic labeling, country or region of origin. The technical

report for Retail Trade refers to relevant certification standards for the green procurement of various food products. An important component of best practice is the marketing of “green” food and drink, in advertising so that clients choose such products and are willing to pay any associated price premium.

**More info:**

[Joint Research  
Centre](#)



# GREEN BUILDING



Green building is the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation, and demolition. This practice expands and complements the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort. Green building is also known as a sustainable or high-performance building.



# GREEN BUILDING



Eco-renovation  
of an old  
accommodation  
p. 52

Improving  
building  
envelope  
p. 54

Green buildings are designed to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by efficiently using energy, water, and other resources, protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity and reducing waste, pollution, and environmental degradation.

For example, green buildings may

incorporate sustainable materials in their construction, create healthy indoor environments with minimal pollutants (e.g., reduced product emissions), and/or feature landscaping that reduces water usage (e.g., by using native plants that survive without extra watering).

Hotels and similar accommodations may feel that they might not be able to adopt the concept of green

building because it will cost them too much money. However, it is simply a common misconception. While it may cost hotels and similar accommodation a bit more to get started when they decide to go green, because green materials and products can be more costly, they should imagine the type of savings that they will be able to reap.

Tourism sector activities:



Holiday and other  
short-stay  
accommodation

## Eco-renovation of an old accommodation



## Description of the initiative:

Old accommodations were not built considering the environmental impacts. Due to the emergence of the sustainability concept, it is now very important for old accommodations to renovate themselves as per the current requirements.

The Yök Casa Cultura during the eco-renovation reused everything in the space. Leftover wooden doors were turned into headrests and old lamps were rewired. A great effort was put into restoring and protecting the mosaic floors from 1900. New walls were put on top of the tiles so that, in case someone wants to go back to the original distribution in say, another 100 years, they can. The same goes for the decorative ceilings. All the wooden sliding balcony doors were stripped of their paint, received new railings and double glazing to save energy and reduce the noise. Furthermore, whenever possible they used recycled and recyclable materials. Their kitchens for example were made from reused pallets and an upcycled countertop by Cosentio. Before buying something new, they tried to find it second hand, like for example all their mirrors and bathroom sinks. They avoided PVC wherever possible, too. In the open areas, they are growing a bee-friendly plant pergola.

The Yök Casa Cultura in Barcelona (Spain) sets a prime example for others. The Yök Casa Cultura transformed an over 100-year-old space into three eco-friendly apartments and an office while respecting all its original features.

The renovation aimed to use materials wisely, making sure that they are recyclable and cradle to cradle where possible. A special effort was made to reduce the water and energy consumption in the apartments. Moreover, they give priority to locally designed and produced materials, products, and furniture to reduce transportation, support the local economy and promote the regional culture. The trick was to create apartments in which responsible living is possible without sacrificing the experience.

### More info:

[Yök Casa Cultura](#)

[Yök Casa Cultura  
Manifesto](#)





## Improving building envelope



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation



Hotels and similar accommodations

Tourism sector activities:

## Description of the initiative:

The building envelope, the boundary between the interior and exterior of a building, performs a number of tasks including exterior protection (e.g. protection from the elements) and preservation of internal space requirements (e.g. thermal, light, and acoustic comfort, humidity conditions). The use of a range of building technologies to create an energy-efficient building envelope reduces both the thermal energy lost to the building's surroundings and the amount of energy needed to heat and cool the building. Heating, cooling, and ventilation are responsible for huge utility costs. The technologies deployed can address several sources of energy loss such as air leakage, wet insulation, and thermal bridging. Installation options include:

- Building insulation
- Fenestration (i.e. windows, doors, skylights)
- High efficiency glazing
- Air sealing
- Cool/green roofing
- Advanced building facades

Among the benefits, these include significant reductions to building energy use for both heating and cool-

ing, and in the event of blackouts, buildings can remain hospitable for greater periods of time. However, some of the disadvantages include significant upfront costs resulting in long payback for energy efficient technologies, and the fact that highly insulated buildings have a higher risk of moisture-related damage.

Although the amount of energy saved depends on the building and the technologies used, though ENERGY STAR buildings have been shown to reduce operating costs for corporate real estate owners by up to \$25,000 per year for every 10,000 square feet of office space. Insulation and air sealing through effective air barrier systems can reduce non-residential building electricity consumption by more than 25%.

### More info:

[Facility Executive](#)

[Sustainable Buildings Initiative](#)



# AWARENESS AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES



There are several technical measures that tourism organizations, particularly hotels and similar accommodations, may undertake for energy conservation, water conservation, waste management, and so on. However, technical measures alone are insufficient to achieve these objectives at the maximum level. Put differently, technical solutions alone cannot develop sustainable tourism since psychological and behavioral traits often undermine the viability of technical solutions. In short, both the technical solutions and pro-environmental human behavior are essential for developing sustainable tourism.



# AWARENESS AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES



Several studies show that despite their declared positive attitudes towards sustainable tourism, only a few tourists act accordingly by buying responsible tourism products, choosing environmentally friendly transportation, or behaving responsibly towards destination communities. Hence, it is important for tourism organizations, particularly hotels and similar accommodations, to also pay attention

to how to raise sustainability awareness among tourists and/or how to positively influence the behavior of their guests.

Encouraging guests to explore attractions by public transport/ foot  
p. 58

Reuse of towels and bed linen  
p. 60

Training employees on sustainability practices  
p. 62

Encouraging guests to take away their leftover food  
p. 64



Encouraging guests to explore attractions by public transport/foot

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and similar accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

### Description of the initiative:

Sustainable mobility has become very important not only for residents but also for tourists to promote sustainable tourism. Hotels and travel agencies may contribute to the sustainable tourism agenda in several ways. For instance, hotels and travel agencies may encourage and guide guests on how to explore the city through public transport or bicycle or on foot.

Hotel GSH in Bornholm (Denmark) is building an extension which they claim will be the first carbon-negative building of Denmark. Carbon-negative buildings are designed to absorb more carbon than they consume during their lifetime. The structure was designed by architecture studio 3XN and its sister studio GXN. The new wing includes 24 rooms, a conference center, and a rooftop spa.

To achieve a carbon negative structure, the extension would be built using a cross-laminated timber structure, insulated with wood fibers and clad in wooden panels. The building will use a passive design to provide ventilation – the skylight windows and open areas will eliminate the need for mechanical cooling. The building components are also designed for reuse with reversible joints, to reduce waste. Waste will also be reduced by building furniture from the wood offcuts of construction and debris from local granite quarries. Solar energy will provide heating for the water, and renewable energy.

#### More info:

[Yök Casa Cultura](#)

[Yök Casa Cultura  
Manifesto](#)





Reuse of towels and bed linen

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and similar accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

## Description of the initiative:

Bedding and towel laundry lead to significant energy and water consumption. A typical room with 4 kg of laundry requires up to 60 liters of water. Beddings and towels are normally changed every day for guests staying several days. However, such a practice could be reduced to only 1 to 2 times a week or at guests' request.

Pro-environmental appeals to encourage guests to reuse towels and bed linen is often effective to limit their indirect water consumption. Literature shows that comprehensive message designs can increase towel reuse by 6.8% and bed linen reuse by 1.2%, compared to existing in-room messages. It is also noted that when encouraged, 70% of guests adhere positively to this approach.

There are many approaches to promote the reuse of towels and bed linen to guests in a way that excites them and motivates them to take part. The three most common techniques are providing facts that emphasise the reduced environmental impact you desire for the hotel, indicating the hotel's policy that guests must

comply with and telling guests everyone else is doing it, so they should too!

The reuse of towels and bed linen leads to water and energy savings, as well as reduces chemical use. If guests are convinced to use their towels and bed linen for two days rather than one day, resource use can be reduced by 50% in such hotels, representing a considerable potential to align environmental and economic benefits. Even though the laundry of bedding and towels only accounts for a small share of water use in hotels, laundry is also energy-intensive and requires the use of detergent, while towel and bed linen replacement is time-intensive. Both aspects represent additional cost factors, i.e. energy and detergent costs as well as staff working time. Empirical assessments show that the daily cost associated with providing fresh towels is estimated to be about \$1.50 per hotel room. Hotels can conserve water and save energy with guests' towel reuse activities while decreasing their detergent consumption and labor costs. It is also worth noting that 1 in 3 people globally does not have access to safe drinking water. This simple practice can conserve water for future generations.

### More info:

[Yök Casa Cultura](#)

[Science Direct](#)

[Green Ideas for  
Tourism](#)





# Training employees on sustainability practices



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and similar accommodations



Travel agencies and tour operators

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Employees' efforts are key to the successful implementation of green practices. Therefore, hotels that are looking to implement sustainable or green practices should consider the knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and behavior of their employee. Attempting to implement new policies with employees who are unwilling to change their behavior could increase staff turnover and reduce the success of the programme. Selecting the right employees and providing in-depth training on environmental issues are thus important strategies for ecologically conscious hotels.

Although some employees appreciate and derive greater job satisfaction from working for environmentally-conscious organizations, there is concern among hotel managers that the introduction of environmental policies can "result in resistance from employees" who are unwilling to change their routines. They emphasize that this resistance to change is normal, as most people prefer to stick to what they call "habitual behavior".

Training employees on sustainability issues do not necessarily need to give ecological or chemical knowledge

about substances and liquids used in a hotel. Indeed, the hospitality industry does not recycle used materials, but rather participates in the process of preparation for recycling and cleaning, or in reducing the negative effects which appear in a hotel's daily operations. In this regard, it would be more important to elaborate a proper approach towards nature, that would eventually grow into a holistic attitude and become part of the hotel's corporate culture. Such training by default should include knowledge of the dangers and risks, inherent to any activity, combined with proactive behavior to avoid or minimize the negative impacts on all concerned parties – the hotel, the guests, nature, the destination, and other stakeholders.

**More info:**

[eHotelier](#)

[Next Tourism  
Generation](#)



Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and similar accommodations



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation

Encouraging guests to take away their leftover food



## Description of the initiative:

According to the UN, if food waste was its own country, it would be the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gas in the world, after the USA and China. On the other hand, 1 in every 7 people in the world goes to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 die daily from hunger. Hence, food waste is a critical issue at the global level.

There are always times when guests are not able to finish all the food that they have ordered, and yet, more often than not, they perceived that it might be awkward asking the staff to pack up uneaten food, and indeed many luxury hotels do not even do so. In contrast, in developing countries such as India and Pakistan, it is a normal practice that guests may take home their leftover food.

Maison De Sushi and Yee Hwa in Qatar have adopted a stricter approach to tackle food waste. For every piece of food left after the meal is finished, guests may have to pay fines of \$1.40.

Fine Hotels & Suites in the Netherlands encourage guests to take food for their lunch from the breakfast buffet to decrease food waste.

### More info:

[Fine Hotels and Suites](#)

[Hotelier Middle East](#)



# SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY



The term “sustainable mobility” was first introduced in 1992, five years after the Brundtland report. The objective of sustainable mobility is “to ensure that our transport systems meet society’s economic, social and environmental needs whilst minimizing their undesirable impacts on the economy, society and the environment”. It is worth mentioning that all the definitions of sustainable mobility stress that it is not enough to refer to environmental aspects, although they are of primary importance, but also social and economic impacts must be taken into account. Put differently, strategies to pursue the objective of sustainable mobility cannot be limited to producing/using less polluting transport systems, although this is of fundamental importance.

# SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY



Promote public  
transport in  
tour packages  
p. 68

Providing  
sustainable  
mobility to  
employees  
p. 70

Sustainable mobility can play an important role in the development of sustainable tourism as tourism-related transport, especially road and air traffic, is on the rise, and contributes considerably to greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and climate change. Developing and encouraging the use of different modes of transport with low impact on the environment,

e.g. cycling, walking, car-sharing, fuel-efficient transport systems, and the use of electric vehicles is a key to reducing the tourists' ecological footprint. To achieve this, consistent and innovative sustainable mobility strategies and measures need to be formulated and introduced at the destination as well as the business level.

Tourism sector activities:



Travel agencies and tour operators

Promote public transport in tour packages



## Description of the initiative:

Transport services are indispensable for the development of the tourism sector. However, they are also the main source of emissions. Strengthening and providing more sustainable patterns of mobility makes it possible to reduce the environmental impact of the increase in mobility generated by tourism. In this context, promoting public transport and non-mechanised means of transport such as walking or cycling, along with the improvement of public transport services and information to newcomers in order to become more useful and accessible for visitors, can play an important role to tackle the global challenge of reducing emissions.

Therefore, travel agencies and tour operators should promote public transport at any cost through their offer. In particular, travel agencies may do so by giving some special offers or discounts to clients. Travel agencies or tour operators may also promote public transport by highlighting money-saving options or promotional offers available at the chosen designation.

TUI Deutschland provides all air package holiday clients with a second class rail ticket for travel to and from airports in Germany that includes the use of all public transport in twelve major German public transport associations.

Bensbus offers low-cost transfers from Grenoble airport to many major resorts in the French Alps by grouping everyone and putting them all on one big bus.

### More info:

[EU Joint Research Centre](#)

[Sustainability](#)





Providing sustainable mobility to employees

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and similar accommodations

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

Implementing a sustainable mobility plan at company level has many benefits for a company, its employees and the environment. By promoting public transport, cycling and other practices among employees, the company will reduce its carbon footprint as well as costs associated to the parking space, its maintenance, and costs linked to lateness due to traffic congestion. In addition, employee productivity is increased, as employees who use active or public transportation will probably arrive at work more alert, ready and focused than those who drive. Also, these initiatives are considered a social benefit and give the workplace a positive, eco-friendly image.

Some examples of practices that can be adopted are the promotion of the use of public transportation, as discount fares and refunds are available for employers and employees in many cities/regions (tax credit, annual passes discounts, etc.), signing up for corporate car sharing or electric car taxi service providers, setting up a bike-sharing program for employees and provide amenities like bike racks and showers, implementing a carpooling program for commuting and business trips

or promoting teleconferencing, teleworking and more flexible work schedules that fit with public transportation

The Victoria Hotel in Sliema (Malta) is committed to sustainable tourism. It does not only encourages its guests to adopt more sustainable mobility options but also encourages its employees to use sustainable mobility options. AX The Victoria Hotel is fully aware of the impact that its employees can make. Therefore, it has invested in some measures to encourage alternative methods of transportation between the workplace and its employees' homes. Employees are offered to use on-site bicycle parking facilities or shared shuttle transport.

**More info:**

[Victoria Hotel](#)

[Equiterre](#)



Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a type of international private business self-regulation that aims to contribute to societal goals of a philanthropic, activist, or charitable nature by engaging in or supporting volunteering or ethically-oriented practices. CSR helps an organization be socially accountable—to itself, its stakeholders, and the public. By practicing CSR, organizations can be conscious of the kind of impact they are having on all aspects of society, including economic, social, and environmental.

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Travel agencies  
offsetting  
carbon  
emissions  
p. 74

Increasing  
emotional well-  
being during the  
pandemic  
p. 76

Food  
donation  
p. 78

CSR in tourism can be defined as a guiding business policy whereby tourism organizations integrate social and environmental concerns in their own business mission, strategies, and operations as well as in their interaction with their stakeholders. Simply put, CSR is a tourism organization's contribution to sustainable development.

CSR was first implemented in the tourism sector in the late 1990s by international hotel corporations. Today, many hotel chains publish annual CSR reports on their websites including many best practice examples.

In the past few years, travel agencies and tour operators have become increasingly engaged in implementing

CSR measures due to growing consumer awareness and sensibility towards ecologically and socially compliant behavior.

Tourism  
sector  
activities:



Other reservation  
service and related  
activities



Travel agencies and  
tour operators

## Travel agencies offsetting carbon emissions



## Description of the initiative:

Travel from airplanes, cars, and other methods is a leading cause of carbon emissions. The aviation industry is responsible for roughly 3% of global carbon emissions, while just a short flight from San Diego to Cancun, for example, emits the same amount of carbon into the atmosphere that it would take 20 trees ten years to absorb.

TripZero (USA), another travel agency, offers free of charge to offset its clients' carbon footprint.

Pangaea Travel Consultants (USA) in partnership with Carbonfund.org (USA) launched a program to provide its clients with 100% carbon natural travel. This program has been offering travelers to offset their carbon footprint and help contribute to the solution. This program was the first of its kind to offset carbon emissions for its clients' travel, start to finish, free of charge. This program includes emissions caused by air travel, hotel stays, cruises, and everything else

GreenHotelWorld, an online travel agency, has partnered with Expedia and myclimate and lists more than 130,000 hotels in 107 countries, with detailed information on how green their practices are to ensure all clients' stays are carbon neutral — by compensating the carbon emissions of the less eco-responsible accommodation options free of charge. GreenHotelWorld guarantees to offset 26.6 kg carbon dioxide per overnight stay booked through their website, which corresponds to the global average energy use per guest per night.

### More info:

[CSRWire](#)

[Carbonfund](#)

[Goodwings](#)

[TripZero](#)





Increasing  
emotional well-  
being during the  
pandemic

Tourism  
sector  
activities:



Hotels and similar  
accommodation

**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

The Coronavirus pandemic does not only hit the hospitality industry economically but also has negative effects on the mental health and well-being of the employees within the sector.

The management and employees of the Fiesta Inn Monterrey Fundidora (in México) did brainstorm on how to counteract the decreasing physical and emotional well-being. They found an innovative way to fight the stress and negative influence of the pandemic and so created a personal oasis on the rooftop of the hotel.

Initially, one employee presented the idea of installing a rooftop garden and relaxation area on the 7th floor of the hotel. All employees were then immediately excited about it and started to come up with different possibilities. As a result, the employees of the hotel collectively contributed to the creation of the beautiful oasis. The management was happy to see that all the employees designed the garden with lots of love and hope and with the prospect of being able to welcome back the hotel's guests to a beautiful garden that can then also be enjoyed by them. Besides the sense of ownership and team-spirit that has been generated through the collective construction of the garden, planting new green areas and gardening are additionally beneficial to handling stress during difficult times. To ensure the sustainability of the area, the flower boxes, the furniture, and all other necessary equipment were built from recycled materials, and the area is being lit through LED lighting. The towel basket has, for example, been made out of an old vacuum cleaner. Also, guests can enjoy a wonderful view of the eastern Sierra Madre while sitting down in a wooden swing. Finally, all the herbs and fruits that are harvested in the garden are used to flavor different dishes in the kitchen of the hotel.

**More info:**

[Green Key](#)





## Food donation

Tourism  
sector  
activities:



Hotels and similar  
accommodation



Holiday and other  
short-stay  
accommodation

### Description of the initiative:

The UN estimates that 33% of the world's food is wasted, while this number increases to 40% in the USA which could be sufficient to feed 2 billion people. Uneaten food has dire consequences: decomposing waste releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas. According to the UN, if food waste was its own country, it would be the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gas in the world, after the USA and China. It is worth mentioning that 1 in every 7 people in the world goes to bed hungry and more than 20,000 children under the age of 5 die daily from hunger.

The Stadsvilla Mout in Schiedam (the Netherlands) often donates leftover (uneaten) sandwiches from meetings at the hotel to the construction company next door.

The Hilton in Virginia (USA) announced an innovative food donation initiative to all of its managed hotels across the USA and Canada, representing one of the largest hotel food donation programs to date. It expects to donate nearly 100 tonnes of food over the next year — enough to feed more than 160,000 people — while also diverting millions of pounds of food waste from landfills. The Hilton is doing so by encouraging its 300 managed hotels in the USA and Canada to partner with local food rescue organizations to feed the hungry in their immediate communities. Each hotel will set a food waste diversion and donation goal for 2020 and report their progress so top performers can be recognized each month. Hotel teams will be able to select organizations to work with from a robust directory of food donation and diversion partners from across the country, as well as connect each other to share best practices.

#### More info:

[EcoWatch](#)

[Hilton](#)

[Fine Hotels and Suits](#)



# OTHER EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES



Previous sections pointed out various practices (technological and non-technological) that tourism organizations may undertake for energy conservation, water conservation, waste management and more. This last section brings additional practices that couldn't be easily classified elsewhere.

# OTHER EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES



**Formulation of  
a sustainability  
policy  
p. 82**

**Appointing  
an internal  
green team  
p. 84**

**Policy to  
encourage  
sustainable  
travelling  
p. 86**

While many of the previously described and presented practices can easily be categorised according to the field of environmental management they are aiming at, many of existing practices require a combination of several or require complementary actions. For instance, separating organic waste, though a waste management practice but to produce biogas a tourism

organization might have to collaborate with a biogas plant. If a hotel wants to recycle bed mattresses, a waste management initiative, but this hotel cannot do this task alone and therefore it will have to collaborate with a partner having relevant expertise. However, some practices could not be purely (directly) classified into previously mentioned categories and so they are

separately listed in this section. For instance, appointing a specific team, training employees, and giving compensation to employees are purely related to the policy of the organization and are not directly related to energy conservation, water conservation, waste management, and so on.

**Tourism sector activities:**



Hotels and Similar Accommodations



Other reservation service and related activities



Holiday and other short-stay accommodation



Travel agencies and tour operators

# Formulation of a sustainability policy



**Description  
of the  
initiative:**

A very important step towards sustainability for an organization is the formulation of a policy or management plan. A sustainable management plan:

- Can guide decision-making, management, and the daily operations of the business.
- Can develop the business considering the environmental, socio-cultural, quality, and health & safety issues.
- Demonstrates management commitment to comply with environmental laws and other regulations.
- Develops a monitoring and audit program to ensure compliance.
- Outlines mitigation measures to minimize the impact of the business activities on the surrounding environment.
- Presents mitigation strategies and actions for the control of pollution, waste minimization, and resource conservation by effectively practicing sustainable practices.

It is worth mentioning that a concise policy (or mission statement) can help hotels navigate difficult

times. As is true with many sectors of the world economy, 2009 was the worst year for the hospitality industry. Meeting planners and business travelers moved to online conferences whenever possible and overnight vacations became a luxury for many people. Despite these financial problems, hotels and their investors understand the importance of developing a sustainable product and have been investing in green technologies. The hospitality industry is currently facing difficult times due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Nevertheless, hotels with a sustainability policy and/or management plan may sustain their business.

**More info:**

[Environmental Leader](#)

[Sofitel Dubai](#)





**Appointing an internal green team**

Tourism sector activities:



Hotels and Similar Accommodations

## Description of the initiative:

Green teams can be invaluable during the initial phase of a sustainability programme being implemented at any hotel or other similar enterprise. Green teams can also provide continuous momentum that is necessary to create an enduring culture of sustainability.

A green team is usually responsible for coordinating environmental audits for water, waste, energy, carbon emissions, and purchasing and monitoring of performance against established goals. The key to the success of a green team is ensuring that there is representation from all levels of seniority. The team will hugely benefit from the enthusiasm and fresh ideas of junior staff members who are closely attached to the hotel's working practices, but it must be balanced by senior staff members who have the authority to ensure that proposed initiatives are effectively implemented. A green team should have a reach that extends throughout the entire hotel. Most importantly there should be representatives from different departments such as Facilities, Housekeeping, Purchasing, Catering,

and Front of House. This will make sure that the whole spectrum of the hotel's operations is considered. Senior management must stand behind the actions of a green team. This means more than just agreeing on a budget for their activities.

The Hotel Villa Magna in Madrid (Spain) established a green team, made up of all the heads of departments and hotel managers, to ensure that each department carries out its sustainability tasks. The General Director and the Operations Director lead and supervise the team, which meets once a month to continue promoting green initiatives.

Ilala Lodge Hotel (Zimbabwe) appointed a green team that has been successfully nurturing the seeds of environmental sustainability at their hotel.

### More info:

[Green Steps](#)

[Hotel Villa Magna](#)

[Ilala Lodge](#)





Policy to encourage sustainable travelling

Tourism sector activities:



Travel agencies and tour operators

### Description of the initiative:

Tourism has global impacts through the carbon dioxide emissions of aeroplanes and other forms of transportation that contribute to human-induced climate change. It is estimated that tourism contributes about 5.3% of global greenhouse gas emissions, 90% of which is due to transport.

Travel agencies and tour operators can play an important role in boosting sustainable tourism development. A good approach is to do choice editing before offering travel packages to clients. It is important not to offer flight packages where convenient alternatives exist.

Studiosus, a German tour operator that specialises in educational holidays, aims to decrease energy use for transportation by three percent per passenger on its tours. The company's measures to achieve this goal include increasing the use of trains and buses for their European holidays, using more non-stop flights and promoting local transport at its destinations. In addition, Studiosus has a 'Stop the Engine' campaign for bus companies to encourage tour buses to turn off their engines while waiting for passengers, rather than leaving them to idle.

A good example to implement the above-mentioned practice can be found in Germany, where tour operators must comply with a specific criteria to be a member of the Forum Anders Reisen (an association). According to such mandatory criteria, no flights are offered up to 700 km and flights are offered between 700 km to 2000km only if the client stays in the destination for more than 8 days.

#### More info:

[EU Joint Research Centre](#)

[One Planet Network](#)



This Compendium was based on a much more extensive one, with 100+ examples of good practices coming from across the world, existing in many different sectors and targeting various aspects of environmental management. The detailed Compendium publication can be found [here](#).

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Co-funded by the COSME programme  
of the European Union

