

Best Practice in Green Certification

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	Green Globe 21	Certification for Sustainable Tourism (Central America)	Audubon Green Leaf (Canada)	Green Tourism Business Scheme (UK - Scotland)	The Swan Ecolabel (Nordic)	Blue Flag (Caribbean)	Best Practice (based on all the codes)
Project/product planning and design	Guidelines for site selection, design, site disturbance, visual impacts, lighting.	Development of policies and programs to meet guidelines for physical/biological environment, hotel facilities in accordance with laws and regulations.	Not specified.	Not specified. Members may include business conference centres, city centre hotels, self-catering accomodations, restaurants, visitors centres, distilleries and transportation operators.	Provides licenses for products considering their environmental impact from raw material to waste.	Beach must comply with all regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal planning process which addresses ecological and social factors, has environmental standards or review process, site plan review, ● Formal review procedure (possibly with community participatory element)
Construction	Detailed specific requirements for methods to minimize impact, use of materials.	Not specified.	Inferred.	Conservation of building materials, recycling of construction and wood wastes.	Licenses available for specific construction materials.	Access for disabled persons to the beach and toilet facilities must be available. All buildings of the beach must be properly maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design standards for siting, design compatibility, aesthetics, impact reduction re ecological and cultural values ● Construction standards for site disruption during construction, debris, site cleanup ● Selection of local/suitable materials re protection of species, energy reduction, local benefits ● Accessible design
Sewage/liquid waste management	Requires suitable treatment, disposal of waste water.	Guidelines for tracking, monitoring, testing and certifying waste water with Ministry of Health guidelines. No discharge and efforts to re-use waste water.		Reed beds installed to treat effluent from shower block at camp site.	Waste water cleaned with specific filters, treatment system must be in place, must be collected, recirculated and re-used is possible.	No direct discharge of industrial, sewage or storm water to beach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 100% treatment of wastewater through either reticulated system to treatment plant or self-contained treatment (option to use composing or contained systems as long as all waste is removed to a suitable disposal facility) ● Stormwater - separation, controlled runoff, (encourage grey water re-use, water consumption reduction, use of natural systems for cleaning where appropriate)

Water Conservation	Range of reduction, recycling suggested with specific fixes such as smaller sinks, showers, grey water separation and re-use etc.	Specific measures include water-saving faucets e.g. low flow shower heads, low flush toilets. Management of rainwater, conservation plan that is monitored, recorded and promoted. Drinking water tested every 2 months. Chlorine-free treatment encouraged for pools.	Must have water conserving fixtures and dishwashers, must have re-use option for towels and linens.	Reduce consumption, avoid pollution of surface water, use low flow taps and faucets and water-less urinals, collect rainwater, test water, treat waste water w/out chlorine, use non-drinking water for gardens, use of eco-balls for washing clothes.	Chemicals that harm water-borne organisms not permitted.	Must comply with standards and requirements e.g. Class I Waters as defined by the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities.	Must have water management plan - to include technical measures (low flow toilets, showers) greywater recycling, education and awareness, laundry reduction programs etc, (In water short areas, use of water quotas and pricing, elimination of baths, sprinklers, or grey water reuse for irrigation. Must meet potable water standards for drinking water. (can have separate systems for drinking/cooking)
Energy Conservation	Energy efficient design, insulation, reduction of use, use of energy saving devices, heat recovery, monitoring, system-efficient vehicles.	Conservation plan that is recorded, analyzed monthly. Natural illumination used, preventative maintenance for equipment, at least 80% energy efficient lighting, at least 50% energy efficient equipment. Use of alternative light systems and new energy saving technology.	Use of energy efficient devices for HVAC systems.	Use of energy efficient appliances, technology, renewable energy, insulation, temperature controls, effective seals on appliances to prevent energy loss. Encourage use of public transportation.		Not specified.	Energy management plan which has elements of minimization of fossil fuel use, energy savings in washing, lighting, use of air conditioning and heating, (standards to reflect what is locally available or can be acquired)
Air Quality	Action to minimize emissions from motors, reduce use of toxics, eliminate DFC's, use clean fuels.	Not specified.	Smoke-free is best.	No smoking policy.	Not specified.	Not specified.	●Program /audit to minimize use of fossil fuels.
Noise	Action to minimize noise from generators, motors, transport.	Noise sensitive to natural environment and wild animal behaviour.	Referenced.	Not specified.	Not specified.	Not specified.	●Program to limit engine, tourist noise in areas sensitive to natural environment and wild animal behaviour..
Solid Waste Management	Use at least four of: reduce packaging, avoid disposables, compost waste, use recycled paper, train staff, clean litter.	Waste reduction and recycling programs required with goals monitored and recorded.	Recycling of stationary, copy paper, newspaper, cardboard, boxboard, glass, plastic, metals etc.	Reduce consumption, re-use waste, recycle, compact it. Extra points for providing recycling services.	Waste management plan must be submitted with details on sorting and processing of waste, including recycling, disposal and/or incineration.	Controlled sewage disposal. Waste disposal receptacles placed on the beach as needed.	●Waste reduction and recycling programs required with goals monitored and recorded. Range of approaches can be used, see examples from Green Globe, Green Leaf, Nordic, Blue Flag
Materials re-use and recycling	Part of solid waste - recycling.	Separation, composting, recycling emphasized for organic and inorganic waste. Re-use and recycling is standard.	Hotels get credit for re-using products (e.g. old table cloths become rags), recycling and composting	Recycle through local facilities, re-use opportunities for local business. Unclaimed property goes to charities. Printer cartridges recycled. Textiles re-used for cloths.	Must meet national regulations, rules and industry agreements on recycling of products and packaging for Nordic countries in order to get license.	Recycling receptacles placed as needed for beach size and capacity.	●Require monitored program for separation, composting, recycling emphasized for organic and inorganic waste. Re-use and recycling done for all suitable commodities (where market for waste can be found or developed)

Products and Purchasing	Local, low impact products.	Policy with socio-env context. Suppliers manual provided to guarantee compliance. Non-toxic, non-corrosive, biodegradable, bleach and phosphate free cleaners and detergents. Reusable or recyclable packaging. 50% + of printed materials should come from chlorine free recycled paper.	Third party certification is best for "green" housekeeping, food services, building maintenance, appliances, office paper, sanitary paper, cleaning products, bed linens, carpeting, furniture, furnishings, fluorescent lamps, wood for renovations, other construction materials, paints/finishes, produce, food and heating fuel.	Preference given to local, organic food supported by accreditation schemes. Also FSC wood, fair trade and ecolabelled goods, recyclable paper and container products with pump action preferable.	Certified raw materials, specific limitations on harmful chemicals, low emissions to air and water, reduced energy consumption. Unbleached or bleached wood fibre, adhesives must not affect recyclability of product or be harmful.	Not specified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Program to seek local products, products which can be recycled or re-used. Regular monitoring of consumption. Consider use of third party waste audits or certification programs familiar to key clients (e.g if target Nordic guests use their program criteria)
Food - sourcing		Preference for fresh, certified organic foods. National or regional dishes offered. Canned food is industrial size in recyclable containers.	Not specified.	Buy in bulk, cook to order, local food used wherever possible.	Not specified.	Not specified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Menu should contain/favour locally purchased foods, local cuisine. Over longer term seek National recognition for local/national cuisine.
Food - reduction/use of waste food products		Separate, compost and/or recycle.	Composting food waste.	Compost food waste or give to local farmers.	Not specified.	Not specified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Separate and recycle/compost organica as part of overall waste reduction program. (includes using plant waste as animal food etc)
Beach		Participation in Blue Flag program for coastal areas.	Not specified.	Not specified.	Not specified.	Entire length of beach must be clean. Map of the beach must be available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (if applicable) Siting of structures and activities should meet ecologically based standards which recognize site sensitivities.
Community	Direct benefits to local community re: purchases, jobs, preferred access.	Direct and non-direct economic benefits, contributions to public health and infrastructure.		Community participates to protect local areas.	Community can choose products that are environmentally friendly.	Local authorities should encourage sustainable transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Indicators/monitoring put in place for key assets and fragile systems.
Partnerships				Railway company, tourism board, city council and district council.	Not specified.	Local community and beach operator must demonstrate that at least 5 environment-al education activities are offered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Appropriate process established to involve local community in planning and oversight process and to facilitate ongoing linkages between tourism property and surrounding residents.
Cultural Sensitivity	Show sensitivity, respect for customs, help partners, interpret local customs, control tourist actions.	Promotes local culture.		Support of local business and community through the use, promotion and sales of crafts.	Not specified.	Not specified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Plans/programs should involve local suppliers/guides etc - specific plan for this linkage (clear attempt to involve local historic and cultural representatives where these exist)

Environmental Management System	Have risk assessment and EMS done - recommended to ISO 14001 standard.	Not specified.		Management green file or workbook required.		Environmental Management of the beach must take into account sensitive species and habitats. Must have an internationally recognized warning system for environmental pollution with safety risks.	●Facility should have EMS in place - beginning with the planning process and risk assessment. This should be the integrating framework for all of the plans and efforts contained in this list. (ideally has third party validation - maybe via international certification)
Training	Staff trained in key ecological values, certified guides, evaluation of capacity.	Staff training in hotel environment program and incentives provided for participation. Designated staff person responsible for each conservation plan, its goals and schedule.	Staff education in principles of ecotourism.	50% or more of staff must be trained. Specialist training available for key staff members. Specialist advice provided.		Not specified.	●Must have a Training program re EMS and its components, and specific training modules for e.g guides, interpreters, groundskeepers, hotel staff
Operator Behaviour	Specific codes for tours, boats, snorkelling, riding, walking, bicycling, vehicles etc.			Promotion of green travel by rail, pedestrian routes, bicycles and use of electric cars.	Not specified.	Management of different users and uses of the beach to avoid conflict and accidents.	●Information program for tourists, effort to direct tourists to trained guides and eco-sensitive tours, training for guides and operators linked to the facility (required, given)
Wildlife	Actions to minimize impact on wildlife, inappropriate contact, habitat disturbance, specific standards for impact on endangered species.	Participates in and/or supports protection of natural protected areas. Specific actions to protect flora and fauna from extraction. Complies with trade laws on selling illegal products from species.		Measures taken to reduce intrusion on visual landscape and preserve, conserve and enhance habitats to increase biodiversity.	Chemicals that harm water-borne organisms not permitted.	Health of coral reefs near beach is monitored.	Program contains specific plans/actions to promote conservation, particularly in the ecosystems occupied or used. Participates in and/or supports protection of natural protected areas. Specific actions to protect flora and fauna from extraction. Complies with trade laws on selling illegal products from species.
Conservation	Identification of sensitive ecosystems and avoidance/mitigation/enhancement. Extensive criteria for active site and system conservation, contribution to conservation efforts by firm, tourists.	Continuous environmental improvement of surrounding areas and/or country. Restriction of non-native plants to hotel gardens. Avoids use of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.		Specific actions taken to attract wildlife through use of bird boxes, careful selection of native plant species. Support of wildlife or landscape initiative.		Not specified.	See wildlife above. Opportunities provided for visitors to contribute financially or otherwise to habitat conservation.
Natural Experience	Focus on natural experience and nature education.	Gardens and natural areas nearby for guests.		Info provided on wildlife packages, visits, reserves, parks etc. Offer bikes and walking routes for guests.		Not specified.	Marketing and pre-visit materials stress natural /sensitive tourism and appropriate tourist behaviours

Marketing	Educational and accurate marketing, re: product, conservation, expected experiences and tourist behaviours.			Businesses may not be using environment or nature as marketing tool. Use of website and email to post other GTBS and use of well-known eco brands.	Well known symbol of swan is recognized by 50-80% of tested group in Nordic countries.	Blue Flag also available for boat owners/users with own set of criteria.	Marketing plan which identifies correctly the ecological nature of the product and experience and shows expectations of the experience and behaviours. Educational element
Guest Education	Extensive standards for type and nature of interpretation, professional guiding, information on assets.	Guests informed of conservation, recycling and specific environmental measures adopted by property. Manual provided with sustainability mission and policies. Communication and involvement of guests in conservation efforts. Info on local plant species, natural areas.	Guests provided with brochures and towel re-use cards.	Display with environmental policy, pay back scheme, towel agreements, no smoking policy, offers with other GTBS accomodations.	Through consumer activity, people learn about environmental impacts from range of products.	Info about the Blue Flag campaign, rules governing beach use, water quality and sensitive environmental areas must be displayed.	Guests informed of conservation, recycling and specific environmental measures adopted by property. Manual provided with sustainability mission and policies. Communication and involvement of guests in conservation efforts. Info on local plant species, natural areas.
Tourist Satisfaction	Monitor and maintain guest satisfaction, re: ecotourism authenticity and quality of experience.			Feedback from guests monitored. Increasing landscaping provides guests with space for activity.	Not specified.	Potable water should be available. Adequate number of trained lifeguards and lifesaving equipment must be available.	Monitor and maintain guest satisfaction, re: ecotourism authenticity and quality of experience.
Monitoring Program	Requires monitoring of participation levels, reaction to learning, visitor exit surveys, ecological impacts of construction and operations.	Customer feedback measurement. Inspection of facilities every 6-12 months.	Annual inspections.	Regular monitoring activities, monthly for energy use, regular monitoring of waste in kg/month, biodiversity action plans, natural or built heritage, advertising and marketing activities.	Independent laboratories test products. Swan label is valid for 3 years, then criteria are revised and company must reapply for certification. Ensures ongoing improvements through increased criteria requirements.	Blue Flags are awarded for one season only. Failure to comply with imperative criteria will result in withdrawal of Blue Flag.	Regular monitoring activities, monthly for energy use, regular monitoring of waste in kg/month, biodiversity action plans, natural or built heritage, advertising and marketing activities.