

SUSTAINABLE HOTEL INDUSTRY ECOLABELLING PROGRAM

IN ARGENTINA



Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria



Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

First Edition
August 2012

©2012, Asociación de Hoteles de Turismo de la República Argentina
All rights reserved.

FOREWORD

This document describes the objectives, scope and guidelines to apply a sustainable management ecolabelling protocol in the hotel industry led by the Argentine Association of Tourism Hotels (Asociación de Hoteles de Turismo de la República Argentina – AHT, as per its initials in Spanish).

Ecolabelling is a voluntary and third-party certification multiple-criteria based program that awards labels to those environmentally preferable products and services to other similar ones within the same category and based on life cycle considerations.

Ecolabelling is currently highly important in international tourism, in response to customers' and other tourism agents' current trends that demand for more environmentally respectful, socially responsible and sustainable accommodations and services.

AHT, as a non-profit organization, gathers high-end hotels in Argentina identified with their management quality and excellence and, in line with its mission and vision, with this project, AHT seeks to continue and reinforce the actions taken in its Sustainable Hotel Industry Program.

Given the absence of a nationwide voluntary standard or ecolabel in Argentina, as compared to the increasing number of global sustainable tourism certification programs, AHT proposes to establish a national ecolabelling system, based on a protocol that sets ecological and sustainable management criteria at different levels, as a model to recognize and certify the sustainable hotel industry.

This protocol is intended to be useful for the verification of the sustainable hotel management performance level, based on the principles of transparency, objective evaluation and involvement of interest groups in the system improvement.

The purpose is to foster the strengthening and adoption of good sustainable management practices and the quality of services at hotels and tourist accommodations, minimizing their impact and maximizing the benefits for the local communities of tourist destinations.

The application of this protocol will guide customers and tour operators when selecting, according to objective criteria, the hotel establishments that offer them environmental quality and responsible practices guarantees, by providing them with true and verified information on their sustainable management performance.

It is a voluntary standard based on principles of credibility, transparency and ongoing improvement, as well as in compliance with international regulations and applicable domestic laws so that their criteria entail a step forward in the requirements set forth by legal and regulatory rules.

It includes criteria regarding both management processes and measurable performance indicators of the organization's environmental, social, economic and cultural considerations.

It is compatible with the standards, management systems and certification programs applicable to the tourist accommodations industry, such as the series of IRAM-SECTUR Standards, ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and other international standards.

This protocol has been designed according to Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria established by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) for hotels and tour operators to apply for their international accreditation and recognition.

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

PREFACE

AHT is a non-profit entity, founded in 1977, that groups and represents the most important hotel establishments in Argentina, which are located in the main resorts and recognized for their excellent infrastructure and service quality.

The Association's mission is to group and represent the maximum reference in the Argentine hotel industry and the Argentine qualified business sector that is part thereof as regards matters and issues inherent to its common problems, encouraging the growth and development of its members, employees, advisors and the community of which they are part, in the understanding that the quality and excellence, as well as the care and respect for the environmental protection are the best ally for a sustainable hotel industry.

AHT takes part in strategic memberships with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Federation of Associations of Ibero-American Hotel Businessmen (FADEHI, as per its initials in Spanish), the Argentine Chamber of Tourism (CAT, as per its initials in Spanish) and the Argentine Chamber of Commerce (CAC, as per its initials in Spanish). AHT also has agreements for assistance and cooperation with renowned entities, institutions and organizations engaged in the tourism and hotel industry.

This protocol results from AHT's work and the expert advice provided by the Spanish consulting firm FORMAGRUPPO, and was approved by the consensus reached by the Association's Executive Committee in June 2012.

It has been validated by the Argentine Standardization and Certification Institute (IRAM, as per its initials in Spanish) pursuant to the existing agreement with AHT. IRAM is the main renowned and authoritative organization to verify and certify the hotels' and tourist accommodations' compliance with the requirements of this protocol.

AHT invites the authorities, government institutions and other entities engaged in the tourism and hotel industry in Argentina to the recognition and application of this protocol, in line with the last global sustainable hotel industry trends.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

0	INTRODUCTION.....	6
1	PURPOSE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION.....	6
2	TERMS AND DEFINITIONS.....	7
3	SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	11
3.1	SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....	11
3.1.1	Sustainability Diagnosis	11
3.1.2	Sustainable Management Policy	11
3.1.3	Legal Requirements.....	12
3.1.4	Sustainable Management Programs and Objectives	12
3.1.5	Awareness and Training	12
3.1.6	Purchasing and Sustainable Management of Resources	13
3.2	ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT AND CONSERVATION.....	13
3.2.1	Integration into the Environment	14
3.2.2	Conservation of the Destination’s Cultural Heritage	14
3.2.3	Conservation of Biodiversity and Landscape.....	15
3.3	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	15
3.3.1	Energy Management	16
3.3.2	Water Management	16
3.3.3	Prevention of Pollution.....	18
3.3.4	Waste Management.....	18
3.3.5	Soil Protection	19
3.4	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DESTINATION.....	19
3.4.1	Dialogue with the Local Community	20
3.4.2	Participation in Local Development Programs	20
3.4.3	Code of Conduct.....	20
3.4.4	Encouragement of Good Practices and Support Measures	20
3.5	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	20
3.5.1	Responsible Actions towards the Local Community	20
3.5.2	Human Resource Management.....	21

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

3.5.3	Human Resource Protection	21
3.5.4	Fair Trade.....	22
3.5.5	Accessibility	22
3.6	SAFETY.....	22
3.6.1	Safety & Health.....	22
3.6.2	Prevention of Risks and Emergencies.....	22
3.7	QUALITY	23
3.7.1	Service Quality.....	23
3.7.2	Customer Satisfaction	23
3.8	COMMUNICATION	23
3.8.1	Internal Communication.....	23
3.8.2	Guests’ Sensibilization and Information.....	23
3.8.3	External Communication	24
3.9	ONGOING IMPROVEMENT.....	25
3.9.1	Preventive and Corrective Actions	25
3.9.2	Sustainable Management Indicators.....	25
3.9.3	Sustainable Management Assessment.....	25
	Annex A (Informative) Requirement Application Levels.....	26
	Annex B (Informative) Sustainable Management Indicators	29

0 INTRODUCTION

Since 1999, AHT has been developing a strategic plan related to the Sustainable Hotel Industry in Argentina. To such end, a program was drawn up, where at the first stage the sensibilization and self-assessment of hotel organizations were carried out in order to be able to determine the progress or status of hotels to begin the way towards ongoing improvement. For this stage, AHT developed a manual of good practices, which enables the hotels that self-assessed to have a management tool that guides them in this course of action.

At a second stage, AHT developed this new ecolabel protocol, which is intended for defining the guidelines for a proper sustainable, socially and environmentally responsible management applicable to hotels and tourist accommodations.

This document is a management improvement tool that allows guiding the organizations in the industry towards a more sustainable tourism and hotel industry, by contributing criteria to streamlining the use of resources, minimizing negative impacts and maximizing the positive impacts on their environmental, cultural and social environment.

It is a management instrument that allows a three-level application – **elementary level, advanced level and excellence level** – and facilitates its gradual implementation and the ongoing improvement of the sustainable management.

The verification of compliance with the criteria set out in the protocol will give the organization the rights to use a specific distinctive brand or isologotype for each of the system levels.

This protocol also has supplementary documents, such as the Regulations and Practical Application Guide, which specify the tasks to be performed by an establishment to be able to meet the requirements set forth.

1 PURPOSE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

This protocol sets out the requirements for hotels in Argentina that voluntarily wish to implement a sustainable management system based on international responsible tourism principles, when the organization's Management:

- a) Requires a frame of reference for a sustainable management;
- b) Wishes to apply a program of good social and environmental practices;
- c) Hopes to improve integration into the environment and maximize the guests' satisfaction and experience.

Hotels are understood to be those establishments offering tourist accommodation services at premises with reception, services and duly-equipped rooms. The accommodation offer may include food, sports, recreational and leisure services.

This protocol is applicable throughout Argentina and given the differences in the various regions of the country, there are particular conditions that exempt certain requirements from being audited, the related reasons being duly documented.

2 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this protocol, the following terms and definitions are applied:

Action Plan: Tool that facilitates to fulfill the purposes set by an organization, through a proper definition of objectives and goals. The Action Plan allows strategically directing and organizing actions, processes, instruments and available resources towards attaining objectives and goals by using indicators that facilitate the follow-up and assessment of the actions, and can be used as a guide for timely decision-making.

Biodiversity: Variability among all kinds of living organisms, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part. The term refers to the diversity within and among species and ecosystems.

Carbon Footprint: A cumulative measure of the impact a product, service, activity, company or individual has on the environment, in terms of the amount of greenhouse gases produced, and measured in units of carbon dioxide. This impact usually results from energy consumption and other resources, and the pollution caused.

Code of Conduct: Set of principles voluntarily established by an organization to provide guidance on a responsible conduct.

Corrective Action: Action to eliminate the cause of a non-conformity (IRAM-ISO14001).

Cultural Heritage: All those tangible or intangible elements and expressions of societies, as a result of a historical process where the reproduction of ideas and material become factors that identify and distinguish that country or region.

Customer: Organization or person that hires the service for itself or for third parties (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Eco-efficiency: Capacity to deliver competitively priced goods and services that satisfy human needs and bring quality of life while progressively reducing environmental impacts and resource intensity throughout the life-cycle.

Emergency: Situation of danger or disaster that requires an immediate action (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Environment: Surroundings in which an organization operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, human beings and their interrelations (IRAM-ISO 14001).

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

Fair Trade: Alternative form of trade promoted by the United Nations Organization, non-government organizations and social movements that fosters voluntary business relationships between producers and consumers, based on social justice, equity and environmental respect principles. It is a trade system based on dialogue, transparency and respect, which seeks greater equity in trade paying special attention to social and environmental criteria. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers.

Guest: Customer who is registered at a tourist accommodation (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Good Practices: Group of actions undertaken to mitigate the environmental and social impacts and the losses of materials and resources through changes in habits and people's attitude to perform processes and activities.

Health: All the necessary measures to ensure harmlessness and healthiness within the food service processes at all phases, from reception, manufacture and distribution to its final consumption (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Hotel: Establishment capable of comfortably lodging guests or travelers, on a temporary basis, with reception, services and additional facilities, and that offers accommodation and, in most cases, food services.

Hotel Industry: Group of services providing guests and travelers with food and lodging for valuable consideration.

Impact: Any environmental or social change or adverse or beneficial effect, fully or partially resulting from an organization's activities, products or services.

Indicator: Numerical quantification to measure or compare the results actually obtained from processes, products or services (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Legal Requirements: Authorizations, obligations or requirements issued by a government authority (including international, national, regional, provincial and local authorities) and related to an organization's management considerations.

Management: Maximum authority in the Organization.

Natural Heritage: All those natural elements consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view.

Non-conformity: Non-fulfillment of a requirement (IRAM-ISO 14001).

Ongoing Improvement: Ongoing optimization process of the management system to achieve global performance improvements, according to the organization's policy.

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

Organization: Company, corporation, firm, business or institution, or a part thereof or combination therewith, either government- or privately-owned, that has its own duties and administration.

Procedure: Specified way to carry out an activity or process (IRAM-ISO 14001).

NOTE: Procedures may or may not be documented.

Protocol: Set of requirements, acts and procedures established for management.

Record: A document stating results achieved or providing evidence of activities performed (IRAM-ISO 14001).

Responsible Purchasing: Process that integrates ethical, environmental and social considerations into an organization's decisions to acquire goods and services.

Risk: Combination of the likelihood of an occurrence of a given hazardous event and the significance of its consequences (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Social Responsibility: An organization's actions to become responsible for the impact of its activities on the society and the environment, where these actions:

- are consistent with the society's interests and sustainable development;
- are based on ethical behavior, compliance with applicable intergovernmental instruments and laws;
- are integrated into the organization's activities in progress (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Stakeholder: Individual or group involved in or affected by an organization's performance.

Sustainability: Use of economically feasible, socially fair and environmentally responsible resources that meet the current needs, without compromising the capacity to access them in the future.

Sustainable Management Policy: Statement made by the organization's Management about its intentions and principles of action in connection with sustainable development.

Sustainable Management System: System used to develop and implement the "sustainable management policy" and manage its social and environmental impacts.

Sustainable Tourism: Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.

System: Group of mutually-related or interacting elements (IRAM-SECTUR 42200).

Tourism: Group of activities arising from the temporary and voluntary travel of persons outside their permanent place of residence, investing in their spending resources that do not derive from the place visited.

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

Tourist: Any person traveling to a place outside his/her permanent residence, staying overnight and staying therein for more than 24 hours.

Universal Accessibility: Condition to be met by environments, processes, goods, products and services, as well as the objects or instruments, tools and devices, to be understandable, usable and practicable by all persons under safety and comfort conditions and as independently and naturally as possible. It entails the «design for everyone» strategy and it is understood regardless of the fair adjustments that should be made (Law No. 51/2002, Section 2, on Equal Opportunities, Non-discrimination and Universal Accessibility for People with Disabilities – LIONDAU, as per its initials in Spanish).

NOTE: In addition to the abovementioned definitions, other definitions may be considered in IRAM-ISO 9000 and IRAM-ISO 14050 standards.

3 SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

3.1 SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The hotel's Management should ensure the implementation and maintenance of a documented management system applicable to all organization levels, which sets out the guidelines for a sustainable management according to the requirements established in this protocol.

3.1.1 Sustainability Diagnosis

The organization should perform an initial analysis of the key elements for its current sustainability management. This analysis should, at least, comprise the following areas:

- a) Existing management practices towards employees, suppliers and the local community (see points 3.1.5., 3.1.6, 3.5.1);
- b) The identification of legal requirements applicable to sustainability (see point 3.1.3.1.);
- c) The assessment of the main environmental and social impacts of its facilities, activities, products and services;
- d) The assessment of the efficiency in natural resources consumption and in waste management (see point 3.3.4.).

The results of this analysis should be documented and can be used as a frame of reference for the definition of its sustainable management system and policy, the compliance with the applicable regulatory and legal requirements, and the sustainability goals and objectives.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.1.2 Sustainable Management Policy

Management should define a Sustainable Management Policy that is suitable for the hotel's characteristics, and environmental and social environment, ensuring that:

- a) It includes a commitment towards compliance with the sustainable tourism principles;
- b) It includes a commitment towards compliance with legal and other requirements applicable to sustainable management;
- c) It includes a commitment towards preventing and minimizing negative impacts on the environment, and maximizing positive impacts;
- d) It includes a commitment towards ongoing improvement of sustainable management in its economic, social and environmental areas;
- e) It is documented, approved by Management and is kept updated;
- f) It is communicated to all people working for the organization, customers and stakeholders of the hotel's sustainable management;

- g) It is available for the public and translated into the most usual languages spoken by guests.

3.1.3 Legal Requirements

3.1.3.1 Record of Legal Requirements

The organization should ensure compliance with legal requirements and other applicable voluntary requirements, keeping an updated record thereof that evidences the review of effective compliance therewith.

3.1.3.2 Compliance Assessment

The organization has a procedure to periodically assess and update applicable voluntary and legal requirements, keeping records and evidence related to such assessments.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.1.4 Sustainable Management Programs and Objectives

Management should establish an action plan, which includes specific ongoing improvement objectives as regards sustainable management. Sustainable management objectives should have an order of priority. They should specify those responsible for their compliance, the description of programs and necessary means to achieve them, the goals and terms for their compliance and the anticipated follow-ups.

The term of fulfillment of objectives shall not exceed three years, after which period new objectives of ongoing improvement shall be approved, reviewing and updating the action plan.

To define objectives and the action plan as a whole, Management should consider the results of the sustainability diagnosis (see point 3.1.1.) at the advanced and excellence levels, and the commitments assumed in the sustainable management policy (see point 3.1.2.).

3.1.5 Awareness and Training

3.1.5.1 Training and Sensibilization Plan

The organization should implement and keep in place a training and awareness plan for its employees, which ensures their involvement with the sustainable management system, as well as the proper fulfillment of their duties and tasks related thereto. The organization should keep an updated record of training and awareness actions performed.

3.1.5.2 Sustainable Management Manual

The organization should anyhow have a sustainable management manual, which includes the sustainable management policy (see point 3.1.2.), the organization's structure, the main responsibilities and duties of the relevant personnel from the hotel's different management areas, the good practices and guest communication policies. This manual should be available and should be furnished to all new staff.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.1.6 Purchasing and Sustainable Management of Resources

3.1.6.1 Responsible Purchasing Policy

The organization should establish responsible purchasing policies and practices. These practices should include:

- a) Encouraging and giving priority to purchases from local suppliers;
- b) Encouraging and giving priority to the acquisition of ecological products or those with less environmental impact;
- c) Giving priority to hiring and acquiring products or services from companies that show good environmental or sustainable management practices;

3.1.6.2 Sustainable Use of Resources

The organization should have procedures that ensure the sustainable use of resources, including:

- a) Good practices in the use of paper, giving priority to the use of paper free from chemical compounds or recycled;
- b) Minimizing the use of chemical products and training personnel in their responsible use;
- c) Having updated safety cards of toxic or hazardous products.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.1.6.3 Management and Control of Resources

The organization should have an updated record of purchases and consumption of the greatest environmental impact resources, which evidences the periodic assessment of inputs and suppliers, and the degree of application of responsible purchasing policies and practices.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.2 ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT AND CONSERVATION

The hotel's Management should be aware of the need to contribute to conserving and improving the social and cultural environment of the destination where the hotel is located, establishing the adequate measures to ensure its preservation.

3.2.1 Integration into the Environment

3.2.1.1 Design and Construction

The hotel's design and construction complies with all the local rules and regulations for use of land, respecting the architectural typologies of the area and the spatial planning and zoning criteria, as well as protected areas or cultural heritage elements.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.2.1.2 Sustainable Architecture

The hotel, or any of its elements, has been designed considering the sustainable or bioclimatic architecture principles to improve its integration into the environment, the reduced impact of its premises on the landscape and the optimized use of resources, respecting its natural and cultural environment.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.2.2 Conservation of the Destination's Cultural Heritage

3.2.2.1 Preservation and Spread of Cultural Heritage

The organization supports and contributes to preserving the destination's tangible and intangible historical and cultural heritage through the active cooperation with local associations or authorities in activities of conservation and spread of its values.

The hotel has updated and complete information about the destination's main cultural resources, means of transport, timetable, among others.

If food service is provided, local food products should be included in the offer to the customer, promoting consumption among customers.

If there is a store of sale to the public, the hotel should have and promote the sale of local products typical of the destination's culture, handicraft or food. No objects of historical or archeological value are sold and intellectual property rights of local communities are respected, as well as fair trade principles.

If possible, the hotel integrates into the interior decoration objects typical of the destination's culture and handicrafts.

3.2.2.2 Visitors' Respect for the Cultural Heritage

The organization has a code of conduct or good practices for guests' visits to places and buildings belonging to the destination's historical and cultural heritage in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize the tour experience of these visits.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.2.3 Conservation of Biodiversity and Landscape

3.2.3.1 Impact on Biodiversity and Landscape

The negative impacts on biodiversity and landscape have been taken into account in building the hotel. The hotel's premises and outside elements do not cause a notorious visual alteration of landscape.

3.2.3.2 Preservation of Flora and Fauna

For landscape and gardening purposes, the hotel uses native flora species, particularly in natural landscapes, taking measures to avoid the introduction of invasive alien species.

The display, consumption, sale or marketing of wildlife species should observe international and local standards, and ensure a sustainable use thereof. No captive wildlife species are held, except local authorities expressly authorize so.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.2.3.3 Preservation and Spread of Natural Heritage

The organization supports and contributes to preserving the destination's biodiversity and landscape through the active cooperation with local associations and/or authorities in activities of conservation and spread of its natural values.

The hotel has updated and complete information about the destination's protected natural areas, zoning, means of transport, among others.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.2.3.4 Visitors' Respect for the Natural Heritage

The organization has a code of conduct or good practices for guests' visits to the destination's natural areas in order to avoid negative impacts on biodiversity and landscape and maximize the tour experience of these visits.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The hotel's Management should be aware of the need to contribute to conserving the environment through a proper management of its environmental impacts, which is aimed at improving the eco-efficiency in the use of resources, the prevention of pollution and the fight against climate change.

3.3.1 Energy Management

3.3.1.1 Consumption Control

The organization should have an updated record of data on consumption of the different sources of energy used at the hotel, which allows its follow-up, measurement and assessment in order to improve the energy management.

3.3.1.2 Energy Saving

The organization should have documented work guidelines or procedures of good practices in energy saving in fixtures and equipment, ensuring the personnel's knowledge and permanent observation thereof.

The hotel should have a preventive maintenance plan for energy-consuming fixtures and equipment to avoid failures and breakdowns that entail energy losses.

3.3.1.3 Energy Efficiency

Any reform, change of fixtures or acquisition of new equipment shall be made applying the best available and feasible technologies to optimize energy consumption. Priority will be given to the acquisition of equipment and devices that ensure the maximum energy efficiency (lights, boilers, cooling chambers, electrical appliances).

3.3.1.4 Guests' Awareness and Information

Customers are suggested to participate in energy saving by implementing saving measures at rooms, the awareness and appropriate information for the efficient use of lighting and air-conditioning systems.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.3.1.5 Renewable Energies

The hotel has sources and systems of renewable energy to perform its activities.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3.2 Water Management

3.3.2.1 Consumption Control

The organization should have an updated record of data on consumption of the different sources of water used at the hotel, which allows its follow-up, measurement and assessment in order to improve the efficiency in its use.

If the hotel is not connected to a public supply network and has an own system of water collection, it shall have the appropriate administrative authorization and shall install a water consumption control and measurement system in a maximum one-year term.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.3.2.2 Water Saving

The organization should have documented work guidelines or procedures of good practices in water saving in fixtures, ensuring the personnel's knowledge and permanent observation thereof.

The hotel should have a preventive maintenance plan for water-consuming fixtures and equipment to avoid failures and breakdowns that entail increased consumption.

3.3.2.3 Water Efficiency

Any reform, change of fixtures or acquisition of new equipment shall be made applying the best available and economically feasible technologies to optimize water consumption. Priority will be given to the acquisition of equipment and devices that ensure the maximum water saving in public and service areas, and rooms.

3.3.2.4 Guests' Awareness and Information

Guests will be suggested to participate in water saving by implementing saving measures at rooms, the awareness and appropriate information for the efficient use of water-consuming devices.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.3.2.5 Wastewater

The hotel should have appropriate preventive measures to avoid discharging pollutants into water and have documented work guidelines or procedures that reduce such discharge.

If it is not connected to a public drainage network, the hotel should have a sewage treatment system, thus ensuring its proper management.

3.3.2.6 Discharge Control

If it is not connected to a public drainage network, the hotel should perform or ensure that periodic analysis and controls of its sewage quality parameters are performed.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3.2.7 Water Reuse or Recycling

The hotel should have systems that facilitate rainwater or wastewater reuse or recycling for the risk of green areas or other authorized uses.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3.3 Prevention of Pollution

3.3.3.1 Atmospheric Emissions

When available, the hotel should give priority to the consumption of less polluting fossil fuels and have a preventive maintenance plan that ensures the proper operation of boilers and combustion equipment to control its atmospheric emissions.

The hotel should not use refrigeration equipment, extinguishers or other equipment that contain substances that are harmful to the ozone layer, according to effective regulations.

3.3.3.2 Noise Pollution

The hotel should have measures to mitigate noise emissions from equipment and machinery, ensuring they are adequately soundproof and maintained. Likewise, the necessary good practices shall be observed to ensure guests' noise comfort, reporting them to both employees and customers.

3.3.3.3 Control of Atmospheric and Noise Emissions

The hotel will make periodic measurements and will keep an updated record of the main polluting parameters of its atmospheric emissions, as well as the average levels of daily and night noise in inside and outside areas.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3.3.4 Carbon Footprint

The organization should have implemented a system to calculate the carbon footprint of stays and events at the hotel, which will be promoted and spread among customers offering them systems or mechanisms to offset the associated emissions.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3.4 Waste Management

3.3.4.1 Waste Identification

The organization should identify all the waste that may be generated at the hotel, defining amounts, qualities and flow thereof in each case.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.3.4.2 Minimization, Prevention and Awareness

The organization should have documented work guidelines or procedures of good practices to minimize waste and prevent the associated risks, ensuring the personnel's knowledge and permanent observation thereof.

3.3.4.3 Waste Segregation

The organization should have a procedure and systems of appropriate containers to ensure the differentiated segregation of waste generated, including its delivery to authorities, institutions or companies that favor its reuse or recycling, when possible.

This differentiated segregation will be made at least for paper and cardboard waste, glass, plastic containers and batteries.

3.3.4.4 Waste Disposal and Storage

The waste generated at the hotel should be kept in storages or containers signaled to such end, under adequate safety & health conditions. Waste is stored, delivered and finally disposed of avoiding any adverse effect on the environment and people's health.

3.3.4.5 Hazardous Waste

The organization should identify all toxic or hazardous waste for the environment and people's health generated at the hotel, store it under adequate safety conditions to avoid as much as possible the health and environmental risks, and deliver it to distributors or authorized managers for its collection, assessment and/or final disposal.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.3.4.6 Waste Management Record

The organization should keep an updated record of waste management, which includes the types and amounts generated, management ways, delivery dates to third parties and final disposal.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.3.5 Soil Protection

The organization should have measures to protect the erosion and pollution of surrounding natural soils, when applicable. At the hotel's outside premises, natural soils will be preserved, as long as possible, avoiding its crushing or infrastructure construction.

All storages of fuels or hazardous substances for the environment shall be under good conservation conditions to ensure they do not leak and to avoid the release of chemical compounds to the soil. A record of periodic reviews of their safety is kept.

3.4 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DESTINATION

The hotel's Management should be aware of the need to actively contribute to the destination's sustainable tourism development, becoming actively involved in initiatives that foster the preservation of its cultural values and the local community's socioeconomic development.

3.4.1 Dialogue with the Local Community

Management should have an open and transparent dialogue with the local community's authorities and social representatives in connection with its activity and the initiatives of its social environment, keeping cooperation and communication channels.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.4.2 Participation in Local Development Programs

The hotel should cooperate with local and regional authorities in all sustainable development programs and projects where its participation and support are required. Likewise, it will participate in the local community's social life, facilitating the use of its premises, when possible.

The hotel should support the creation of development infrastructures and the provision of basic services to the community, particularly those related to education, culture, health and environmental protection.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.4.3 Code of Conduct

The hotel's Management should keep a documented ethical code of conduct towards the local population for its employees and guests. The destination's community representatives participate in its preparation.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.4.4 Encouragement of Good Practices and Support Measures

The hotel should foster the development of good social and environmental practices among the local community and will set measures to support entrepreneurs and small companies to promote their products and services among its guests and customers.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.5 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The hotel's Management should implement socially responsible actions and practices towards its employees, the local community and other interest groups as key element to contribute to a sustainable development.

3.5.1 Responsible Actions towards the Local Community

The hotel actively contributes with philanthropic or solidarity campaigns for social purposes carried out in the area of its local community, such as donations, food banks, and assignment of premises.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.5.2 Human Resource Management

3.5.2.1 Recruitment Policy

The organization should give priority to the recruitment of local residents, including the necessary personnel for management or responsible positions. The hotel has a recruitment policy or procedures that ensure the non-discrimination of applicants for their origin, gender, race or belief, encouraging the recruitment of workers with disability.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.5.2.2 Internal Promotion and Training

The organization should perform ongoing personnel training actions in relation to their job positions to improve their professional qualification and facilitate their internal promotion. Equal opportunities, based on the organization's diversity, are ensured in internal promotion processes.

3.5.2.3 Labor Rights

The organization should ensure compliance with its workers' labor rights by:

- a) Abolishing child exploitation and forced labor;
- b) Keeping employment and compensation conditions that ensure that employees maintain a decent quality of life;
- c) Ensuring the labor union right.

3.5.2.4 Flexibility and Reconciliation

The organization should have a documented plan or policy that contemplates flexibility and reconciliation measures related to its employees' work and family life.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.5.2.5 Work Climate and Grievance Procedure

The organization should establish a procedure to assess the employees' work climate and has open channels for grievance procedures and complaints from the organization's employees, keeping an updated record of the results thereof.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.5.3 Human Resource Protection

The organization should establish a procedure to fight against any form of work harassment or exploitation and to prevent labor risks, according to national and international standards.

3.5.4 Fair Trade

The hotel should establish mechanisms to favor the purchase and hiring of fair trade-derived products and services, reporting the goods and services acquired from its customers.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.5.5 Accessibility

The hotel should ensure the basic conditions of accessibility and non-discrimination of people with disability, encouraging the universal accessibility to its premises and services by identifying, starting up and following up specific actions.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.6 SAFETY

The hotel's Management should consider service quality and safety-related matters as key elements of the tour experience and, therefore, of a sustainable management.

3.6.1 Safety & Health

The organization should ensure compliance with the necessary requirements to guarantee the safety & health at the establishment. The organization should identify other risks for the public health at its premises and have maintenance, cleaning and disinfection procedures, when necessary.

If fixtures use water for their operation, such as swimming pools, cooling towers or others, it should have a maintenance plan and perform periodic controls of the physical-chemical and microbiological quality of water.

3.6.2 Prevention of Risks and Emergencies

The organization should ensure that it has adopted and has in operation all the necessary measures to ensure the customer's safety at the premises in connection with the prevention of fire, accidents and other emergencies identified, and it has information about escape routes.

Documented emergency plans should be established, which include procedures to be ready and respond to the prevention and mitigation of risks for people's health and the environment. When possible, the organization should conduct periodic tests on such procedures (simulation cases).

The hotel should keep a documented record of maintenance of extinguishing equipment and emergency response.

3.7 QUALITY

3.7.1 Service Quality

The organization should have customer service procedures that ensure the proper service provision.

The organization should keep documented procedures to maintain and clean the areas or premises of use for guests.

3.7.2 Customer Satisfaction

The hotel should have a system to receive suggestions and complaints from customers, keeping an updated record of their reception and response.

The organization should have a system to assess customer satisfaction, including sustainable management considerations. It should evidence this assessment through records and show that timely corrective and preventive actions are taken.

3.8 COMMUNICATION

The hotel's Management should effectively and transparently communicate its main sustainable management-related aspects among its interest groups, particularly its employees and customers, to ensure their involvement and participation in the system.

3.8.1 Internal Communication

The organization should establish procedures for the internal communication among the different levels and functions related to sustainable management, including communication channels to receive improvement suggestions from employees.

3.8.2 Guests' Sensibilization and Information

3.8.2.1 Information to Customers

The hotel will have a service to provide guests with information about cultural and natural resources of the area, which favors their knowledge and make them sensible of their responsible behavior at the destination. This information service may be based on informative sheets, leaflets, promotional material or audiovisual tools.

The hotel shall at least have, and actively offer the customer, information about:

- a) The cultural and natural characteristics of the destination;
- b) The historical and cultural heritage that may be visited;
- c) The natural heritage and protected areas, as the case may be, including basic information about their landscape, ecology, fauna and flora;
- d) The local customs, lifestyles, handicrafts and gastronomy;
- e) The possibilities of cultural activities, events, routes and tours;

- f) The possibilities of less impact or collective transport (walking routes, rental of bikes).

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.8.2.2 Guests' Sensibilization

The hotel will inform guests upon their arrival about its sustainable management policy and actions undertaken, as well as the destination's conservation and spread actions performed.

Sensibilization elements intended for guests will be placed in common areas and rooms, which favor their involvement and participation in sustainable management.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.8.3 External Communication

3.8.3.1 Sustainable Management Communication

The hotel will include in all its promotional materials, both in printed and e-media, a remarkable mention to its sustainable management system and policy.

In all external communications on media, such as press releases and interviews, its commitment towards sustainable tourism shall be also mentioned.

3.8.3.2 Responsible Marketing

The hotel's promotional materials and messages should include true, clear, complete and accurate information on the results of the sustainable management and the environmental quality of the destination. Messages and other marketing actions should not be misleading, ambiguous or create false expectations about the tourism offer of the hotel and its destination.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.8.3.3 Sustainable Management Report

The organization will prepare, with a maximum three-year frequency, a detailed report on the results of its sustainable management. This report will include at least the following:

- a) Description of the organization, premises and services;
- b) Sustainable management policy;
- c) Description of its sustainable management system;
- d) Results of action plans carried out and improvement objectives in place;
- e) The hotel's contribution to the destination's sustainable development;
- f) Data about the evolution of the main sustainable management, economic, social and environmental indicators.

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

The information and data included in this report shall be complete, true and accurate, and should be validated by the organization's certification entity. The report shall be made available to customers and other stakeholders, at least on the organization's web site and in printed format at the hotel's premises.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

3.9 ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

The hotel's Management should establish a system to identify, analyze and define actions that ensure the ongoing improvement of sustainable management.

This system should consider the changes in the organization and the environmental and social environment, including amendments to laws, employees' and guests' suggestions, non-conformities detected, and the results of the assessment of customer satisfaction and sustainable management considerations.

3.9.1 Preventive and Corrective Actions

The organization should have a procedure to detect non-conformities and establish preventive and corrective actions when there are deviations or noncompliance with the sustainable management system, its objectives or the requirements of this protocol.

The results of preventive and corrective actions undertaken shall be recorded and taken into account for the need to make changes in the policy, the objectives or the sustainable management system.

3.9.2 Sustainable Management Indicators

The organization should keep an updated system of sustainable management indicators, which allows following up and assessing the main social and environmental considerations and the related processes, as well as the degree of compliance with action plans and objectives set. The calculation of sustainable management indicators should ensure data accuracy and traceability.

This requirement is only applicable to the advanced and excellence levels of sustainable management.

3.9.3 Sustainable Management Assessment

The hotel's Management should periodically review and assess the sustainable management system to ensure its effectiveness, efficiency and proper operation.

Inputs for the review of sustainable management shall be based on documents and evidence, and contribute updated information on the system operation.

The results of Management's review and assessment of sustainable management, as well as the potential changes in the system derived therefrom, shall be recorded.

This requirement is only applicable to the excellence level of sustainable management.

Annex A (Informative) Requirement Application Levels

The following table shows shadowed the requirements that are applicable to the different sustainable management certification levels (Elementary, Advanced, Excellence). The use of this table combined with reading the requirements applicable to each level will allow you to know your sustainable management level upon applying for your certification.

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	Level 1 Elementary	Level 2 Advanced	Level 3 Excellence
3.1. SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM			
3.1.1. Sustainability Diagnosis			
3.1.2. Sustainable Management Policy			
3.1.3. Legal Requirements			
3.1.3.1. Record of Legal Requirements			
3.1.3.2. Compliance Assessment			
3.1.4. Sustainable Management Programs and Objectives			
3.1.5. Awareness and Training			
3.1.5.1. Training and Sensibilization Plan			
3.1.5.2. Sustainable Management Manual			
3.1.6. Purchasing and Sustainable Management of Resources			
3.1.6.1. Responsible Purchasing Policy			
3.1.6.2. Sustainable Use of Resources			
3.1.6.3. Management and Control of Resources			
3.2. ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENT AND CONSERVATION			
3.2.1. Integration into the Environment			
3.2.1.1. Design and Construction			
3.2.1.2. Sustainable Architecture			
3.2.2. Conservation of the Destination's Cultural Heritage			
3.2.2.1. Preservation and Spread of Cultural Heritage			
3.2.2.2. Visitors' Respect for the Cultural Heritage			
3.2.3. Conservation of Biodiversity and Landscape			
3.2.3.1. Impact on Biodiversity and Landscape			
3.2.3.2. Preservation of Flora and Fauna			
3.2.3.3. Preservation and Spread of Natural Heritage			
3.2.3.4. Visitors' Respect for the Natural Heritage			
3.3. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT			
3.3.1. Energy Management			
3.3.1.1. Consumption Control			
3.3.1.2. Energy Saving			
3.3.1.3. Energy Efficiency			
3.3.1.4. Guests' Awareness and Information			
3.3.1.5. Renewable Energies			
3.3.2. Water Management			
3.3.2.1. Consumption Control			
3.3.2.2. Water Saving			

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

3.3.2.3. Water Efficiency			
3.3.2.4. Guests' Awareness and Information			
3.3.2.5. Wastewater			
3.3.2.6. Discharge Control			
3.3.2.7. Water Reuse or Recycling			
3.3.3. Prevention of Pollution			
3.3.3.1. Atmospheric Emissions			
3.3.3.2. Noise Pollution			
3.3.3.3. Control of Atmospheric and Noise Emissions			
3.3.3.4. Carbon Footprint			
3.3.4. Waste Management			
3.3.4.1. Waste Identification			
3.3.4.2. Minimization, Prevention and Awareness			
3.3.4.3. Waste Segregation			
3.3.4.4. Waste Disposal and Storage			
3.3.4.5. Hazardous Waste			
3.3.4.6. Waste Management Record			
3.3.5. Soil Protection			
3.4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DESTINATION			
3.4.1. Dialogue with the Local Community			
3.4.2. Participation in Local Development Programs			
3.4.3. Code of Conduct			
3.4.4. Encouragement of Good Practices and Support Measures			
3.5. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY			
3.5.1. Responsible Actions towards the Local Community			
3.5.2. Human Resource Management			
3.5.2.1. Recruitment Policy			
3.5.2.2. Internal Promotion and Training			
3.5.2.3. Labor Rights			
3.5.2.4. Flexibility and Reconciliation			
3.5.2.5. Work Climate and Grievance Procedure			
3.5.3. Human Resource Protection			
3.5.4. Fair Trade			
3.5.5. Accessibility			
3.6. SAFETY			
3.6.1. Safety & Health			
3.6.2. Prevention of Risks and Emergencies			
3.7. QUALITY			
3.7.1. Service Quality			
3.7.2. Customer Satisfaction			
3.8. COMMUNICATION			
3.8.1. Internal Communication			
3.8.2. Guests' Sensibilization and Information			
3.8.2.1. Information to Customers			
3.8.2.2. Guests' Sensibilization			

Sustainable Hotel Management
Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

3.8.3. External Communication			
3.8.3.1. Sustainable Management Communication			
3.8.3.2. Responsible Marketing			
3.8.3.3. Sustainable Management Report			
3.9. ONGOING IMPROVEMENT			
3.9.1. Preventive and Corrective Actions			
3.9.2. Sustainable Management Indicators			
3.9.3. Sustainable Management Assessment			

Annex B (Informative) Sustainable Management Indicators

The following table shows examples of indicators that may be used to follow up and assess the performance of the organization's sustainable management system in connection with its economic, social and environmental considerations.

In the case of those organizations that apply for the excellence level of sustainable management, these indicators should be taken into account to prepare the sustainable management report (3.8.3.2) in order to ensure data comparability among the different organizations, regardless of the possibility of including additional and specific sustainable management indicators.

These indicators have been based on the indicators proposed in the global sustainable tourism criteria set by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS	Description – Units of Measurement
ECONOMIC INDICATORS	
Operating or net margin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income before taxes / annual revenues
Employment volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average number of employees / year
Net employment creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in the number of workers, as compared to the prior year / prior-year employment volume
Hotel occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of stays (guest/day) registered / year ▪ Average occupation percentage / year
Investments in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voluntary contributions and investment of funds in the community (including donations)
Local recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of employees from the local community in management and operating positions
SOCIAL INDICATORS	
Employee training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of hours for sustainable management training and sensibilization / Number of employees
Responsible purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of the cost invested in purchases of goods and services from local suppliers, as compared to the total volume of inputs ▪ Percentage of the cost invested in ecological or socially responsible purchases, as compared to the total volume of inputs ▪ Number of products with certified ecological labels
Suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of suppliers with a social or environmental behavior certification
Contribution to the destination's sustainable tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of initiatives of cooperation with or participation in local sustainable development projects ▪ Number of initiatives of cooperation with or participation in natural heritage promotion activities ▪ Number of initiatives of cooperation with or participation in local culture promotion activities
Social action projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of hours invested by employee / year ▪ Money invested / year

Sustainable Hotel Management

Sustainability Requirements, Specifications and Criteria

Customer Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Index of customer satisfaction with the hotel's service quality ▪ Index of customer satisfaction with the hotel's sustainable management practices ▪ Percentage of suggestions received that have been implemented as sustainable management improvement measures
Work climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average employees' assessment of the organization
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of the hotel's rooms suitable for people with special needs ▪ Percentage of the hotel's total area that meets universal accessibility criteria
Risks and emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of accidents or emergency situations that have entailed a risk for the environment and/or people's safety & health
ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	
Investments in eco-efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cost of investments in fixtures and equipment that improve the energy efficiency, the use of resources or environmental protection measures / revenues or total amount of annual investments made
Consumption of materials (paper, cleaning and hygiene products, wood, other consumables, among others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Volume of material consumption by guest / per stay ▪ Percentage of biodegradable chemical products over total chemical products used
Energy consumption by source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consumption of the different energy sources stated in kWh per guest and day (kWh/stay)
Energy Saving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of lighting or air-conditioning equipment with a minimum A-level energy efficiency over total
Renewable Energies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of global energy consumption coming from renewable energy sources
Water consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water consumption stated in m³ per guest and day (m³/stay) ▪ Percentage of water consumption devices that include saving systems or technologies over total ▪ Percentage and/or total volume of water reused
Greenhouse gas emissions: Carbon Footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kg CO₂ equivalent / stay ▪ Kg CO₂ equivalent / attendant to events
Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of total waste that has been reused, recycled or assessed ▪ Volume of recycled or assessed waste per guest (kg / stay) ▪ Percentage of hazardous waste delivered to an authorized manager or entity over total types of hazardous waste identified



hoteles+ verdes

E-mail: info@hotelesmasverdes.com.ar
www.hotelesmasverdes.com.ar



Design by:

