



Labels and Certificates for Green Hotels

Mariusz Cembruch-Nowakowski

Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland

corresponding author's e-mail: mariusz.cembruch-nowakowski@up.krakow.pl

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world, creating employment, driving exports and creating prosperity in the destination regions. At the beginning of 2020 the tourism industry has generated 10.4% of global GDP (increase by 3.9% in comparison to 2019) and provided 319 million jobs (Travel & Tourism Economic Impact Report 2019). The World Travel Organization (WTO) predicted that around 1.6 billion tourists will travel in 2020. Unfortunately, Covid-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on the tourism that industry in 2020 and it may affect the industry in the coming years. In May 2020 WTO revised its forecasts, estimating that the number of trips by the end of 2020 could fall of about 60-80% (65% decrease in the number of foreign tourists arriving in the first half of the year) compared to the previous year, which could result in a fall in export earnings at the end of the year of 0.91-1.2 trillion dollars¹.

The hotel industry is one of the leading players in this sector. However, hotels activities, apart from their leading role in the development of tourism and a positive impact on the economy, have also a negative impact, primarily on the environment. That is associated with high consumption of water resources, energy, carbon dioxide emissions and waste generation (e.g. Gossling & Hall 2005, Kasim 2007, Dominiak 2009, Gossling 2015, Cembruch-Nowakowski, 2019). In the face of global climate change, there is a growing need to intensify pro-ecological activities limiting the negative impact of enterprises and service providers, including hotels, on the environment. For many hotels, reduction of natural resources consumption and recycling constitute an important part of their competitive strategy (Potoski & Prakash 2005, Wang 2012). One of the approaches

¹ International Tourist Numbers Down 65% in First Half of 2020, UNWTO. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwto.org/taxonomy/term/347/7/11/2020>

helping to achieve these involves systematization of pro-ecological activities by introducing at least minimum requirements regarding the need to apply the principles of sustainable development by all participants of the supply chain in tourism. In the hotel industry this could mean the introduction and application of environmental management systems (Gryszel, Jaremen, Rapacz, 2008 p. 368) based on the green hotel concept and the eco-certification. These will provide the opportunity to authenticate the efforts and allow the standardization of hotel facilities in the dimension of pro-ecological activities reflecting both; the care for the environment as well as the Corporate Social Responsibility, that of course has a wider meaning than just protecting the environment.

The quality of the various hotel services are ensured by the system of certificates. However, there are many different standards and it is difficult to compare and integrate various systems of certification. The certification procedures are costly and there are regions of the world where hotels do not have certificates. One can observe, however, that due to the fact that recent decades brought about the general reflection on the need to concentrate on the ecological aspects of hospitality industry functioning, especially the hotel sector, there is a growing interest of hotel owners to increase guests' awareness on the various ecological approaches undertaken by them. Also, the hotel guests are more interested in using the services of green hotels (Cembruch-Nowakowski 2019).

Ecolabels constitute relatively novel dimension of marketing communication, creating an opportunity for entrepreneurs to distinguish themselves from the competitors and increase the brand's value. To make the brand more visible and to communicate the ecological awareness the sets of standards are needed. Certification is an element of building trust and business credibility. However, it should be remembered that certification should be integrated into the corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy, which in the long run is expected to be beneficial both for the company and for the society. Although there is no consistent system of ecological standards number of labels and certificates promoting pro-ecological and sustainable development of the hospitality sector have been proposed.

This paper reviews the set of highly recognized labels and certificates defining the environmental standards and the wide range of activities oriented on the implementation of good sustainable development practices in tourism, with the emphasis on hotel's activity.

2. Nature of Eco-certification and Eco-labelling

According to Bellson, "to certify is to authenticate or verify in writing or to attest as being true or as meeting certain criteria. A certification mark is statutorily defined as indicator that goods or services in connection with which the mark is used, are certified by proprietor in respect of origin, material, mode of

manufacture of goods, or performance of service, quality, accuracy or other characteristics” (Bellson 2017, p. 40-41) The certificates “...are treated legally as special forms of trademarks. The processes of examination, registration and provisions for redress when infringed are all integrated into the trademark statutes of the world” (Bellson 2017, p. 32).

Eco-certification can therefore be defined as a strict procedure that checks and assesses whether a given product, service or process meets specific environmental standards or requirements. The products, services, processes or providing them legal entities can be granted the certificate after passing the certification procedure ensuring that they meet high standards. Certificates are usually issued by accredited institutions or entities enjoying general trust, fully independent from the entities applying for a certificate. The International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) has defined three general types of voluntary labels. Type I and III are indeed the ecolabells, as they are awarded to the entities which meet the requirements of multi-criteria procedure carried out by authorities assessing and quantifying environmental data of a products using life cycle approach². Eco-labels are usually graphic markings in the form of a logo which indicate that the product, service or entity providing them has met the required environmental criteria and complies with clearly defined safety standards approved by the appropriate certification procedure.

Both eco-certificates and eco-labels can be of international nature such as e.g. ISO 14001, GSTC or Green Globe Certificate or can be recognized only locally, e.g. ‘Nature’s Best Sweden’. The processes of eco-certification or ecolabelling can involve the procedures accredited by a state institution but they can also be initiated and conducted by non-profit organizations: associations, foundations or other entities. It is worth mentioning that Germany is the precursors of eco-labeling. Already in 1978 the Germany’s government initiated the ‘Blue Engel’ labeling program which aimed to set high standards for the design of environment-friendly products.

Thus the certification can be focused only on products, such as in the case of ‘Blue Engel’ certification, on services and processes in the enterprise, e.g. management as it is in the case of the Green Key Global label or on the objects or destinations such as the ‘Energy Star’ program or ‘Green Seal’, respectively. The objectives of eco-certification or eco-labeling can be diverse. It can include the endemic areas protection or care for natural diversity but also increase the effectiveness of dissemination of the concept of sustainable development, expansion and standardization of pro-ecological activities and the aforementioned corporate social responsibility, increase in the competitiveness of regions and

² Retrieved from: <https://globalecolabelling.net/what-is-ecolabelling/#types/2019/10/14>

entrepreneurs, increase of ecological awareness and improvement or maintaining the general well-being of a given community, including nurturing local culture or promoting ecological programs and ensuring their recognition.

For example, the 'Green Key' eco-labeling program is focused, among others, on hotel activities and has four main goals: environmental and sustainable education of the owner, the staff and the client, environmental and sustainable preservation by the reduction of the impacts of the facility, economical management as a reduction of the consumption induce a reduction of the costs and marketing strategy with the promotion of the label and the facilities awarded³. It is thus easy to perceive that the above-mentioned goals adopt complex approach by considering environmental, organizational and social orientation.

3. Benefits of using Eco certification or Ecolabeling

The benefits of introducing and using Eco-Certification and Eco-labels can be identified in several dimensions: environmental, socio-cultural, organizational and also economic. The environmental benefits cannot be underestimated; first of all it should be pointed out that every environment-friendly activity has a positive impact on nature and people. However, the main benefit of using Eco-certification is the contribution to the harmonization of pro-environmental and pro-social activities of various entities, and providing support to the sustainable development in the region. From the social side, it increases the ecological awareness of society (e.g. Poskrobko 2007, Nycz-Wróbel 2012) while contributing to the increase of the well-being of society and the given community by protecting nature and natural resources, as well as, the cultural heritage and traditional values. It also increases the level of social trust in relation to state institutions or entrepreneurs supplying certified products or services.

The main beneficiaries of eco-certification are the owners of these certificates or Eco-labels, i.e. entrepreneurs and service providers. They support the enterprise management system from the substantive side, mainly in the areas covered by certification. Compliance with the principles and requirements established by the certifying authority facilitates the increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of enterprises in various areas of their activities covered by certification, e.g. by reducing the operating costs, strengthening the organizational culture, and increasing the competitive position of the beneficiary. It provides tools to educate employees and can increase their sense of satisfaction, pride from belonging to an organization that adheres to the principles of sustainable development that is environment-friendly. It also creates the opportunity to raise employees' awareness of the importance of introduced environmental requirements and

³ Retrieved from: <https://www.greenkey.global/criteria/2019/10/14>

increase their efficiency in the implementation of tasks or consolidate the desired behaviour of employees in the area (subject to certification). It supports strengthening of organizational culture and facilitates employees' acceptance of new operating conditions. It contributes to increasing the image potential of the company, which means that it contributes to strengthening or improving the positive image of the company both in the external environment and among the company's employees. It facilitates the transfer of good practices in respect to the environment and values related to social responsibility to other participants in the supply chain and stakeholders of the company. It leads to an increase in the company's competitiveness in the area of quality and image by promoting positive enterprise activities and social responsibility.

Consumers represent the social side, however, their position is very much associated with the business of the company because they are the main addressees of its basic activities. From the consumer's side therefore Eco-certification facilitates the decision processes regarding the choosing a supplier of environment-friendly products.

The eco-certification or eco-labelling increases the availability of information on the implemented ecological activities or on the benefit of the society of an enterprise / supplier of products and services. It is also important as it increases consumer confidence that the company's declarative space is consistent with the praxeological space in terms of environment-friendly activities.

The economic dimension of benefits is manifested in the use of a more responsible management of natural resources, reduction of social costs associated with avoiding exploitation and environment- unfriendly production (see Berger, 2015), increase the technical level and involvement in the development of new clean innovative technologies/processes.

4. Eco-labelling procedures

The Eco-certification process is generally based on a simple, multi-step algorithm. The starting point involves selection of an accredited certifying authority, which will then carry out an environmental analysis and initial environmental audit of the entity applying for the certificate/label.

The aim of the audit is to determine and evaluate the level of implementation of the requirements of the certifying authority defined as the environmental objectives and tasks that the beneficiary has to meet to obtain the certificate. After the assessing of implementation by the entity the actions aimed at achieving environmental goals and while determining the level of that process the final environmental audit is completed and the certificate is awarded.

According to research results published by the Word Resources Institute the certification processes carried out within various eco-certification programs

lasted from several days to several dozen months, with more than 74% of the 340 certification programs tested, taken between two weeks up to six months⁴.

The obtained certificate is granted for defined period of time (usually 2-5 years) but during that time the entity is subjected to cyclic inspections within the so-called internal audits that are aimed to monitor the quality standards of already implemented procedures in accordance with the environmental requirements of the defined certification program (Fig. 1). When the certificate validity period is ending, the entity may undergo again a comprehensive testing procedure called a recertification audit in case it intends to extend the certificate.

An example of such an approach is the 'Green Key' certification process, the 'Green Globe Certificate' or the 'Clean Tourism' certificate awarded by the Partnership for the Environment Foundation.

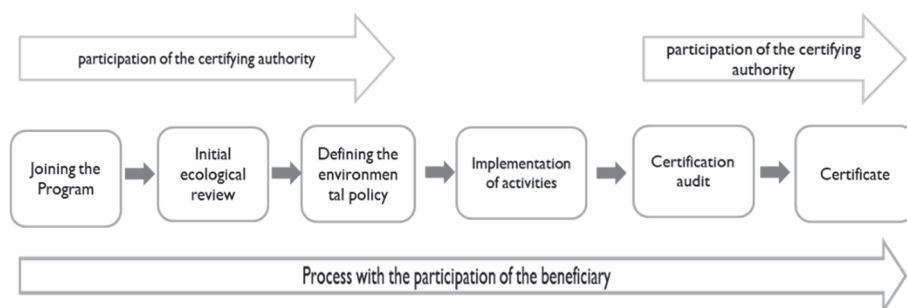


Fig. 1. The example of the certification process. (Own work based on literature)

4.1. Criteria of ecolabeling

The eco-certification systems are based on wide range of criteria allowing to evaluate the compliment of hotel activity to the ecological standards. Usually these criteria are based on already functioning systems designed by prestige international organizations such e.g. Global Sustainable Tourism Council, OECD, EU and consider the environmental standards. The sets of criteria which have to be considered while evaluating environmental aspects of hotel activity are strongly dependent type of the hotel. The parameters which have to be taken into account involve the size of the entity (large hotel chain vs hostel or bed and breakfast) and type of extra services offered, e.g. restaurant, catering, social events. There is, however, the set of criteria which have to be always considered during the certification procedure. They include:

- development and implementation policy including the environmental awareness,

⁴ Retrieved from: http://www.ecolabelindex.com/downloads/Global_Ecolabel_Monitor_2010.pdf/2019/11/17

- rational energy management (heat and electricity),
- economical water management, regulated sewage management,
- regulated waste management, waste segregation,
- having an efficient ventilation system and monitoring CO₂ emissions,
- development of green areas around the object,
- care for the preservation of the local natural and cultural heritage,
- environmental education of tourists and employees,
- ethical business conduct.

5. Selected Labels and Certificates suited for green hotels

The aim of the studies presented here was to review the existing programmes used for environmental certification with the emphasis on these addressed to hotel industry, identify the institutions entitled to carry out the certification programmes, their role and importance for the development of the sector.

In order to reach that goal the following research questions were formulated: 1) Which institutions are entitled to perform the certification procedure and to issue the eco-certificates and eco-labels? 2) What kind of criteria the entity has to meet to obtain the given eco-certificate/label, 3) Is the eco label/certificate valid locally, internationally or globally.

The studies were carried out using the internet content. In order to create the list of eco-labels and eco-certificates important for hotel industry the set of 110 eco-labels listed in Global Ecolabel Monitor 2010 published by World Resources Institute and 464 records of eco-certificates listed in Ecolabel Index were considered. After excluding the overlapping records the final list of 468 positions was analysed. To identify the eco-program the set of the following key-words was used: hotel, hotel industry, motel, hostel, hospitality, tourism, tourism business and agrotourism. One has to be aware that the methodology used is oriented towards analysis of the more visible, generally functioning certificates/labels while some of local ones can be neglected. Based on such analysis it was found that from 468 programmes of certifications (excluding the most general ones: ISO 14001 or ISO 26000, ISO 50001)⁵, only 44 deal with eco-certification. They are oriented on certification of production and services offered by various sectors of the economy. Some of them are targeted towards widely defined tourism, evaluating various destinations, resorts, marines (e.g. Quality Coast, Vista). Only 18 of eco-labels/eco-certificates (what accounts for less than 4% of all) are directly devoted to the hotel industry. About 28% of them have a global nature, 39%

⁵ ISO 14001, ISO 26000 czy ISO 50001 are usually a normative reference and override the eco-certification programs run by third-party certifying organizations. However, they can themselves be used as ecotags directly used for the certification of hotel facilities.

function in several countries while 33% have a local, national character. They were established in a period of time 1989-2007. The oldest one is the global Green Seal certificate while the youngest one is Travelife. All certificates analysed were managed by non-profit organizations functioning as so called third-party. They were based on ISO 14024, ISO 2600, ISO 14020, ISO19019, ISO17021 standards and accreditation of GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council). The range of evaluating and advisory activities carried out by the auditing organization was very similar and usually involved complex analysis of hotel activities concentrating on organization management, human resource management and organizational culture, management of material resources and environmental issues that belong to the corporate social responsibility. The certification process although is quite demanding for the entities under evaluation is very beneficial for them. The certificate awardee can use it for the promotion purposes. It is also introduced to the reference list of the organization responsible for the certification process and co-operating organizations e.g. Tourist advisors. The added value of certification process is that it usually brings the changes in relations between the management and staff of the hotel as well as between hotel staff and customers.

5.1. Examples of the most popular eco-labels and eco-certificates used in hotel industry

The most popular certificate is the **EcoLabel**, known as EU Flower, developed by the European Union in 1992 year and recognized by the majority of the European travelers⁶. Mandatory criteria which hotel has to fulfill to be allowed to use the EcoLabel include: limited energy consumption, limited water consumption, reduced waste production, use of less hazardous to the environment, renewable resources and substances and promotion of environmental education and communication. and reducing the environmental impacts of the production and processing of food and drinks as the last link in the distribution process.

The international hotel chains are often using the **Green Globe Certificate**⁷. Located in USA, the Green Globe organization operates under the license from Green Globe Ltd UK, the owner of the worldwide brand. The Green Globe Certificate is currently being recognized intercontinentally in 83 countries. It consists of 44 mandatory criteria and over 380 compliance indicators. The indicators vary to some extent by geographical area and include local factors to ensure the harmonization with locally developed standards while maintaining the core criteria. The hotels have to satisfy requirements regarding not only the environmental issues by conservation of resources, reduction of pollution, conservation of

⁶ Retrieved from: https://ekonsument.pl/s222_ecolabel_european_flower_html/2019/11/14

⁷ Retrieved from: <https://www.greenglobe.com/green-globe-certification/2019/11/16>

biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes but also introduce the sustainable management involving implementation of sustainability management system, ensuring legal compliance, effective employee development/training and management, customer satisfaction, accuracy of promotional materials and supporting local entrepreneurs, as well as respecting local communities, promoting local culture and cultural heritage. The Green Globe Certificate is granted for one calendar year and can be renewed based on the on-site assessment by appointed qualified independent auditor. The procedure is quite expensive. Located in Poland, the Intercontinental hotel in Warsaw was awarded the Green Globe Certificate.

Green Key is a voluntary eco-label awarded to around 3200 hotels and other touristic sites in 65 countries worldwide⁸. The program promotes sustainable tourism and aims to contribute to the prevention of climate change by awarding hotels with positive environmental initiatives. It aims on rise of ecological awareness of hotel staff and clients, introduces sustainable methods of operation and technology, reduced usage of resources and energy. The program was initiated in 1994 by nongovernmental organization in Denmark. Currently it operates in 40 countries and continues to grow in numbers and spread across the world. Hotels can be awarded a Green Key label when they adhere to national or international Green Key criteria. 130 criteria of 13 categories consider the environmental management (water, waste, energy, use of chemicals), technical demands, and initiatives for the involvement and awareness of guests, staff and suppliers, corporate social responsibilities, green activities, etc.⁹. The national criteria include the local legislation, infrastructure and culture. The Green Key label can be granted for one year at the time.

Travelife system was initiated in 2007 by British Travel Association (ABTA) and Dutch Association of Tourists Offices (Algemene Nederlandse Vereniging van Reisondernemingen) (*ANVR*) supported by *Metropolitan University (UK)*, *University of Lund (Sweden)* and European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism (*ECEAT*) – *Dutch non-profit organization promoting sustainable development in tourism*¹⁰. *Travelife methodology is a product of the LIFE project supported by the European Union. The core of that approach is based on the sustainable development concept proposed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Tour Operators' Initiative (TOI). It promotes sustainability in tourism. Hotel sustainability system is based on 163*

⁸ Retrieved from: <https://www.greenkey.global/our-programme/08/10/2020>

⁹ Green Key International. Eco-label for hotels and tourism facilities. Retrieved from: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55371f97e4b0fce8c1ee4c69/t/5e5c98a9c441026dcb74bc6/1583139230835/Green+Key+Brochure+2020.pdf/09/10/2020>.

¹⁰ Retrieved from: [http:// http://www.travelifecollection.com/certification/2019/10/09](http://http://www.travelifecollection.com/certification/2019/10/09)

management, environmental and social criteria in Gold Award (valid from January 2016) and 302 criteria in Gold Award of Excellence.

The criteria formulated for the management are in agreement with ISO 14001, while these concerning the business activity are in agreement with ISO 26000. Also, the OECD guidelines regarding the social responsibility, including human rights, working conditions, environmental protection, biodiversity and honest rules of doing business have to be taken into account while formulating criteria for Travelife certification. Certification program involves three steps. In the first step, in order to acquire the Travelife Status hotel has to undertake the commitment and establish sustainability mission statement, appoint a sustainability coordinator/manager, define job specifications and role profiles. The coordinator is granted a personal Travelife certificate and he/she introduces the good sustainability practices. When the baseline review on the situation in hotel indicates that the hotel operates according to the rules of sustainability development it can be risen to the status of Travelife Partner. Such hotel is entitled to use the logo of Travelife Partner and can take the necessary steps towards the Travelife Certificate. In the third step the online assessment system is carried out. That is followed by the audits performed by third parties - the independent auditor pays on-site visit and assesses the level of compliance with the international criteria of Travelife. When the results of the evaluation are positive the hotel is awarded Travelife Certificate.

Depending on the level of compliance with the standard, the bronze, silver or gold certificate is issued. There are already 17 000 hospitality objects world-wide which have registered to the program since it was initiated, from which 1500 have carried out the necessary audit and 500 were awarded the Travelife label. Travelife is a registered trademark and is owned by ABTA Ltd, London, UK. Travelife system is administrated by non-profit organization located in The Netherlands and supported by British Travel Association (ABTA).

Green Seal Certification is dedicated to businesses and services which meet the Green Seal standards¹¹. There are various sets of criteria that have to be met in order to obtain different levels of sustainability (bronze, silver, gold). The process includes annual compliance monitoring and a commitment for continuous improvement.

The certification is dedicated to hotels and lodging properties. The Standard was created 1989 and focuses on waste minimization, management of freshwater resources, energy conservation and management, wastewater management, pollution prevention, environmentally sensitive purchasing. The certification is

¹¹ Retrieved from: <https://greenseal.org/green-seal-standards./2019/11/07>

focused on raising the awareness of property owners, their employees, and their guests.

Green Tourism is a non-profit organization established in 1997. Their mission is to encourage and enable decision makers the sustainable choices that reduce their impact on the planet¹². Certificate covers all aspects of sustainability, from energy and water efficiency, waste management and biodiversity to social and ethical choices.

In addition to certification of international importance, there are also certificates of local range or on the regional level among which the following examples can be mentioned: European Ecotourism Labeling Standard (EETLS), Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST) for hotels – Costa Rica, Chile Sistema de Distinción en Turismo Sostenable – Chile, Eco-Certification Malta, Fair Trade Tourism – South Africa, Ecotourism Ireland Certification Programme, Hoteles + Verdes (AHT) – Argentina, Green Star Hotel Certificate – Egypt or the Japan Environmentally Sustainable Accommodations International Standard (ESAIS).

Depending on the type of hospitality properties the managers/owners are interested in various certification programs. While some of them are popular in all hospitality sector, certain are addressed only to the large hotel chains due to the cost of certification and the impact expected. Table 1 presents selected labels and certification programs in relation to the form of hotel business.

Clean Tourism Certificate is a local initiative developed by Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation. The program aim at alignment of activities of Polish hotel owners/manages to the European and global environmental standards. The criteria used in the evaluation process include limitation of the harmful impact on the environment by decreasing and monitoring the level of CO₂ emission, implementation of the organizational and technical improvements in organizational and human management, resource management and relation with stakeholders. The participants of the certification process are getting continuous support. They can also participate in the nationwide initiative aimed at exchange of experiences and promotions. The certificate is awarded by Certification Commission of Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation functioning under supervision of Pure Tourism Certification Chapter.

Table 1 presents classification of eco-certificates based on the type of hotel activity: large hospitality chains, bed and breakfast and independent properties or hostels. AS can be noticed various hospitality sectors apply and comply to the criteria of various accreditation schemes. Such differentiation is justified considering

¹² Retrieved from: <https://www.green-tourism.com/about/2019/11/09>

the complexity of certification procedures and the costs involved (accreditation fee, additional annual fee based on the turnover of Ecolabeled hotel).

Table 1. Labels and certificates in relation to the form of hospitality business;
Source: Own work based on literature

Large hospitality chains	Bed and Breakfasts	Hostels and small accommodations
Audoban International Bio Hotels Earth Check Ecolabel Green Globe Green Key Green Key Global Green Seal Green Tourism Green Tourism Business Scheme Travelife TripAdvisor GreenLeaders	Audoban International Bio Hotels Clean Tourism Earth Check EcoHotels Certified Ecolabel Ecolabel Luxemburg Green Globe Green Key Green Key Global Green Seal Green Tourism Green Tourism Business Scheme Nordic Ecolabel or "Swan" Travelife TripAdvisor GreenLeaders	Bio hotels Clean Tourism EcoHotels Certified Ecolabel Ecolabel Luxemburg Green Key Green Key Global Travelife Green Tourism Green Tourism Business Scheme Nordic Ecolabel or "Swan" TripAdvisor GreenLeaders

Table 1 presents selected certification programs for the hotel industry divided into three criteria for accommodation facilities. The aim of this procedure was to show the comprehensiveness of the eco-certification and eco-labeling approach to the accommodation business, hence the inclusion of the hostel sector and small accommodation facilities, which are an important contribution to the occupancy rate of the accommodation business and thus also to the ecological footprint created by the hospitality industry.

6. Conclusions

Considering the high impact of hospitality sector on environment it is necessary to develop ecological standards of best practices. Many hotel owners try to decrease the negative effects of hotel functioning. At the same time there is a growing number of clients who are interested in choosing the green hotel rather than the standard one. Unfortunately, the access to the information regarding that dimension of hotel activity is not easy. Thus there is a need to develop easily accessible/visible labels for eco-friendly hotels. Several examples of these have been presented in a current paper. One can hope that in the near future the quality standards of the hotels expressed in the number of stars will be accompanied by the eco-label.

Until recently it was expected that in the near future the hotels quality standards expressed in the number of stars will be accompanied by eco-labels. Unfortunately, the prolonged Covid-19 pandemic may significantly slow down these processes. Nevertheless, the certification itself is gaining interest and can be also important during the pandemy. Various actions involving eco and safety procedures are proposed by the international and national tourism organizations that may provide security to the visitors/guests while mitigate the effects of the pandemy on the tourism industry. For example. UNWTO formulated the Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism, with the aim to help the sector to emerge stronger and more sustainable from the COVID-19 crisis. The Polish Tourism Organization developed the project entitled "Rest in Poland – safe (Odpooczywaj w Polsce – bezpiecznie) aimed at increasing tourists' confidence in services offered by accommodation facilities by introducing new certification procedures ensuring a high level safety of offered services in accordance with GIS guidelines¹³.

References

- Bellson, J. (2017). *Certification and Collective Marks. Law and Practice. Elgar Intellectual Property of Law and Practice*. Cheltenham, Glos: EEP Ltd., UK. DOI: 10.4337/9781785368806
- Berger, S. (2015). K. William Kapp's Theory of social costs. *History of Political Economy* (2015) 47 (suppl_1): 227-252. Retrieved from: https://read.dukeupress.edu/hope/article-abstract/47/suppl_1/227/38842/K-William-Kapp-s-Social-Theory-of-Social-Costs?redirectedFrom=fulltext. Doi:10.1215/00182702-3130523
- Bügler, T. (2013). *Handbook to achieve the ISO 14001 Certification in the Hotel Industry*, Thesis presented to the Department of Bachelor Studies of the University of Applied Sciences HTW Chur , Switzerland.

¹³ Turystyka a pandemia – jakie wsparcie otrzymały firmy turystyczne? Retrieved from: <https://www.radoczapark.pl/blog/blog/turystyka-a-pandemia-wsparcie-otrzymaly-firmy-turystyczne/7/10/2020>.

- Cembruch-Nowakowski, M. (2019). Green Hotels – Exception or Norm? *Prace Komisji Geografii Przemysłu Polskiego Towarzystwa Geograficznego [Studies of the Industrial Geography Commission of the Polish Geographical Society]*, 33(3). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24917/20801653.333.11>
- Commission Decision of 2009/578/EC of 9 July 2009.
- CSVE (2013): Statistics of wind projects in the EIA process [online]. Czech Association of Wind Energy website [cit. 17.05.2011]. Retrieved from: <https://www.csve.cz/clanky/statistikapoctu-projektu-vetrnych-elektren-v-procesu-eia/347>
- Deming, W.E. (1950). *Elementary Principles of the Statistical Control of Quality*. JUSE.
- Dominik, P. (2009). Zrównoważony rozwój. Ekologia w hotelarstwie i gastronomii. *Przeгляд Gastronomiczny*, 4.
- Gössling, S. (2015). New performance indicators for water management in tourism. *Tourism Manage*, 46, 233-244.
- Gössling, S., Hall, M.C. (2005). *Tourism and global environmental change: Ecological social, economic and political interrelationships*. Contemporary Geographies of Leisure Tourism and Mobility. http://ecolabelindex.com/downloads/Glo-bal_Ecolabel_Monitor2010.pdf
- <http://greenseal.org/green-seal-standards>.
- <http://odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl/hasla-encyklopedii/iso-26-000/>
- <http://travellifecollection.com/certification>
- <http://tripadvisor.com/GreenLeaders>
- <https://acca-spa.com>.
- <https://biohotels.info/en/holiday-regions>.
- https://ekonsument.pl/s222_ecolabel_european_flower_.html
- <https://globalecolabelling.net/what-is-eco-labelling/#types/>
- <https://greenglobe.com/green-globe-certification>.
- <https://greenkey.global/criteria>.
- <https://greenleafecostandard.net/the-standard.html>
- <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55371f97e4b0fce8c1ee4c69/t/5e5cc98a9c441026dcb74bc6/1583139230835/Green+Key+Brochure+2020.pdf> 09/10/2020.
- <https://ecolabelindex.com/ecolabels/>
- International Tourist Numbers Down 65% in First Half of 2020, UNWTO. Retrieved from: <https://www.unwto.org/taxonomy/term/347/7/11/2020>
- Kasim, A. (2007). Towards a Wider Adoption of Environmental Responsibility in the Hotel Sector. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 8(2), 25-49, DOI: 10.1300/J149v08n02_02
- Luttrupp, C., Lagerstedt, J. (2011). Design and The Ten Golden Rules: generic advice for merging environmental aspects into product development. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 14, 1396-1408. DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2005.11.022.

- Nycz-Wróbel, J. (2012). Świadomość ekologiczna społeczeństwa i wynikające z niej zagrożenia środowiska naturalnego (na przykładzie opinii mieszkańców województwa podkarpackiego). Rzeszów. *Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Rzeszowskiej. Ekonomia i Nauki Humanistyczne*, 286.
- Para, A. (2013). Zasady zrównoważonego rozwoju turystyki – bariery i szanse dla branż. Warszawa: Szkoła Główna Handlowa. *Zeszyty Naukowe. Turystyka i Rekreacja*.
- Poskrobko, B. (red.). (2007). Zarządzanie środowiskiem. Warszawa: PWE.
- Potoski, M.; Prakash, A. (2005). Green Clubs and Voluntary Governance: ISO 14001 and Firms' Regulatory Compliance. *American Journal of Political Science*, April, 49(2), 235-248.
- https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm.
- <https://ecolabelindex.com/ecolabel/green-globe>
- Turystyka a pandemia – jakie wsparcie otrzymały firmy turystyczne? (2020, October 7). Retrieved from: <https://www.radoczapark.pl/blog/blog/turystyka-a-pandemia-wsparcie-otrzymaly-firmy-turystyczne>.
- Turystyka Odpowiedzialnie, Pierwszy w Polsce branżowy serwis poświęcony turystyce odpowiedzialnej i zrównoważonej. Magazine Basic created by c. bavota, 2015
- Wang, R. (2012). The investigation of Green Best Practices for Hotels in Taiwan. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 57, 140-145.

Abstract

The last decades brought about the environmental awareness of hotel customers and owners resulting in reflection on the need to introduce pro-ecological changes in practices and services offered by the hospitality sector. The idea of “green hotels” is generally accepted. To structure these positive changes and to help customers to select hotels supporting pro-ecological practices one needs to establish clear and easy to understand system communicating the level of particular hotel involvement in that concept. These is evaluated by certification institutions and organizations. Their activities involve certification and labelling and they are also part of practices related to the implementation of sustainable development in tourism. Wide range of criteria considered by certification organizations include these related to environmental protection, alternation of the negative effects of improper management of natural resources, as well as, the so-called corporate social responsibility. Unfortunately, there is no consistent system of ecological standards. The current paper provides an overview of the most important labels and certificates promoting the pro-ecological and sustainable development of the hotel sector. It also analyses selected, leading eco-certification systems in terms of their applicability in various hotel segments.

Keywords:

certificates, ecolabels, green hotels, hospitality sector, pro-ecological practices

Etykiety i certyfikaty w zielonych hotelach

Streszczenie

Ostatnie dziesięciolecie przyniosły wzrost świadomości ekologicznej zarówno właścicieli hoteli jak i gości hotelowych wskazującą na potrzebę wprowadzenia zmian pro-ekologicznych w sposobie funkcjonowania i usługach oferowanych przez hotele. Powszechnie zaakceptowano koncepcję „zielonych hoteli”. Istnieje potrzeba usystematyzowania działań podejmowanych przez właścicieli hoteli i ułatwienia gościom hotelowym decyzję dotyczącą wyboru hoteli zachowujących standardy pro-ekologiczne. Wciąż brak jest spójnego systemu standardów ekologicznych. Problem ten próbują rozwiązać instytucje i organizacje wydające eko-certyfikaty i eko-etykiety. W swych działaniach stosują one szerokie spektrum kryteriów związanych z ochroną środowiska, ograniczeniem negatywnych efektów niewłaściwego zarządzania a także społecznej odpowiedzialności biznesu. W niniejszej pracy dokonano przeglądu najważniejszych certyfikatów i etykiet promujących praktyki pro-ekologiczne i działania zapewniające zrównoważony rozwój w sektorze hotelarskim. Przeprowadzono także analizę wskazującą na potrzebę doboru typu certyfikacji do danego segmentu hotelarstwa.

Słowa kluczowe:

certyfikaty, eko-etykiety, proekologiczne praktyki, sektor hotelarski, zielone hotele