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ShMILE

Sustainable hotels in Mediterranean Islands and area

A demonstration project in Corsica, Sardinia and Halkidiki for EU-wide promotion of the EU eco-label on tourist accommodation service

LIFE04 ENV/FR/000340

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D4-01

Quality Management in Tourism Accommodations: The European Flower

May 2006

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LIFE Environment Programme*



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ABBREVIATIONS

CCP	Critical Control Point
CEN	European Committee for Standardisation
CRIT	Critical Incident Technique
DM	Destination Management
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ELTAS	The European Eco-label for tourist accommodation services and camp-site services
EMAS	Eco-Management Audit System
EMS	Environmental Management System
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GEN	Global Eco-labelling Network
GG21	Green Globe 21
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IQM	Integrated Quality Management
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
IUCN	World Conservation Union's "Caring for the Earth"
NEAP	Australian National Ecotourism Accreditation Programme
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
QMS	Quality Management System
RM	Relationship Marketing
SD	Sustainable Development
SERVQUAL	Service Quality
SMEs	Small & Medium-sized Enterprises
TEDQUAL	Tourism Education Quality
UN-CSD	United Nation's Council of Sustainable Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
VISIT	Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainability in Tourism
WCED	World Commission on Environment & Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WHO-IHR	World Health Organisation – International Health Regulations
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Tourism Organisation
WTO-OMT	World Tourism Organisation – Organización Mundial del Turismo
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council

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PREFACE

“Quality Management in Tourism Accommodations: The European Flower” is an effort to approach quality management in the perspective of tourism, emphasising further on environmental management schemes and tourism ecolabels. It is divided in two parts. The first part refers to “Quality Management in Tourism Industry”, consisting of six chapters, while the second refers to “The Ecolabels in the Context of Environmental Management Schemes” that includes other three chapters.

This book was written for the purposes of the LIFE04 ENV/FR/000340 programme, being part of the education curricula that will be shaped for engineering, architecture and tourism management students. It can be used as an educational material by the academic staff of the partner universities –especially for deepening the knowledge of tourism management students, as well as by the hotel managers and technical staff, for cognitive enrichment on the importance and value of the principles of quality tourism management.

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PART I:
QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

CHAPTER 1:

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY: BASIC CONCEPTS

1.1 GLOBAL TOURISM

Tourism is an important industry in global economy, being one of the largest and fastest growing sectors, generating, according to World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 1995), 10,9% of world GDP and employing 10,7% of the workforce (exhibit 1). Tourism, world-wide, is highly important, comprising a wide variety of products and destinations; involving different and numerous stakeholders.

However, the increasing number and size of tourism companies and destinations and of their suppliers are considered to have a direct and indirect impact on the environment and the nature world-wide, leading to the emergence of sustainable tourism. The limits of the natural, economic and social resources and their capacity to re-generate, define the economic sustainability of the tourism sector.

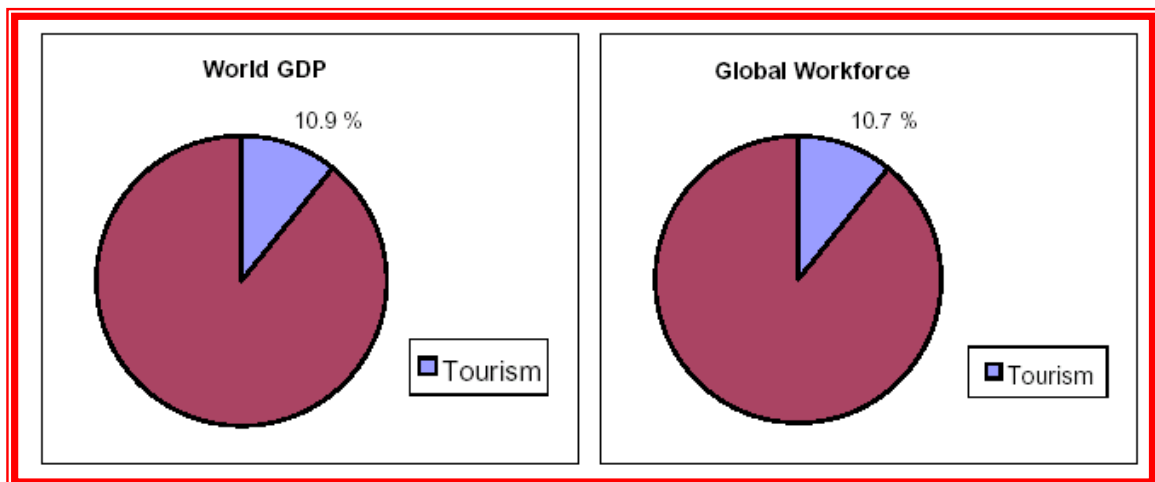


Exhibit 1: Percent of world GDP & Global Workforce
Source: WTTC, 1995

1.2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development “The Brundtland Commission”, 1987). The economic development of a country/ region is dependent on the sustained well-being of the physical and social environment on which it is based. Sustainable Development is being centred around the concern for the long-term health and integrity of the global environment, for meeting present and future needs and for improving the quality of life for current and future generations.

In this aspect, there are three key publications that have been crucial in the promotion of the concept of sustainability in development processes (EU, 2003):

1. World Conservation Strategy (WCS) launched in March 1980 promoted the adoption of sustainability measures in the face of a wide range of pressing global environmental problems.
2. World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) firmly established the concept and practice of sustainable development in the policy arena in order

to “make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987)

3. World Conservation Union’s “Caring for the Earth” carried the sustainability debate forward and slightly shifted the emphasis of sustainable development to “Improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems” (IUCN, 1991)

Specifically, within a Tourist Destination, various needs should be in balance, such as those of the visitors’, the economy’s, the natural environment’s, the built environment’s and the host communities’. Together the need of understanding the tourist, the changing market trends, and the limits of change that are acceptable to the social, economic and ecological elements is appropriate. To be all that achieved in the most desirable way, the destination must be managed holistically, and the information collected to be fed back into the system and evaluated to ensure objectives for the destination as a whole.

According to World Tourism Organisation (*Agenda 21 for the Travel & Tourism Sector, WTTC, WTO, Earth Council, 1996*), *Sustainable Tourism Development* “meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems”.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (1994) focuses on *Sustainable Development for Business*, which “requires adopting business strategies and activities that meet the needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders today while protecting, sustaining, and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed in the future”.

Sustainable Development for Business has interdependent economic, environmental, and social objectives, all of which should be integrated in the final decision-making, in order to achieve long-term viability.

1.3 QUALITY IN TOURISM DESTINATIONS

1.3.1 The Development of a Tourism Destination

The sustainable development of a tourism destination together with defining its level of carrying capacity should be clearly defined under a local or regional environmental plan for destination management organisations or companies to follow. A definition from WTO Education Council (2005) is that *Tourism Destination* “is a space having physical and administrative boundaries defining its management; and images and perceptions; defining its market competitiveness”.

A tourism destination has two interdependent elements (EC, 2000): its *internal reality*, e.g. a given space that is internally coherent (a set of actors working together) and makes its own decisions, and its *external reality*, based on its image and perception by the outside world, e.g. its meaning for the tourist.

The destination quality parameters are described, based on the geographical scope of a tourism destination; the exact position of it at a global scale. Each local destination expresses its uniqueness at the world tourist map (exhibit 2), focusing mainly at the discriminating factors (peculiarities, traditions, “know-how” etc).

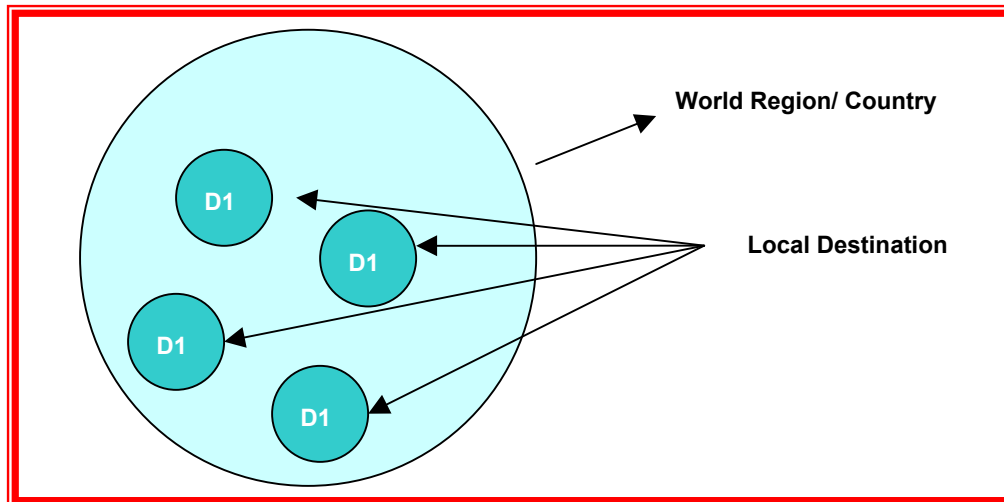


Exhibit 2: The Geographical Scope
Source: De Bruyn, 2006c

The Tourist Satisfaction Chain (exhibit 3) may provide a helpful tool to analyse the steps and policies each destination will have to undertake in order to promote holistically and qualitatively its tourism product. A policy plan incorporating both quality and environmental management schemes for a destination or a corporation is difficult, time-consuming and requires thorough research to be developed, but, in long-term, is a guideline, a path that can be followed towards success.

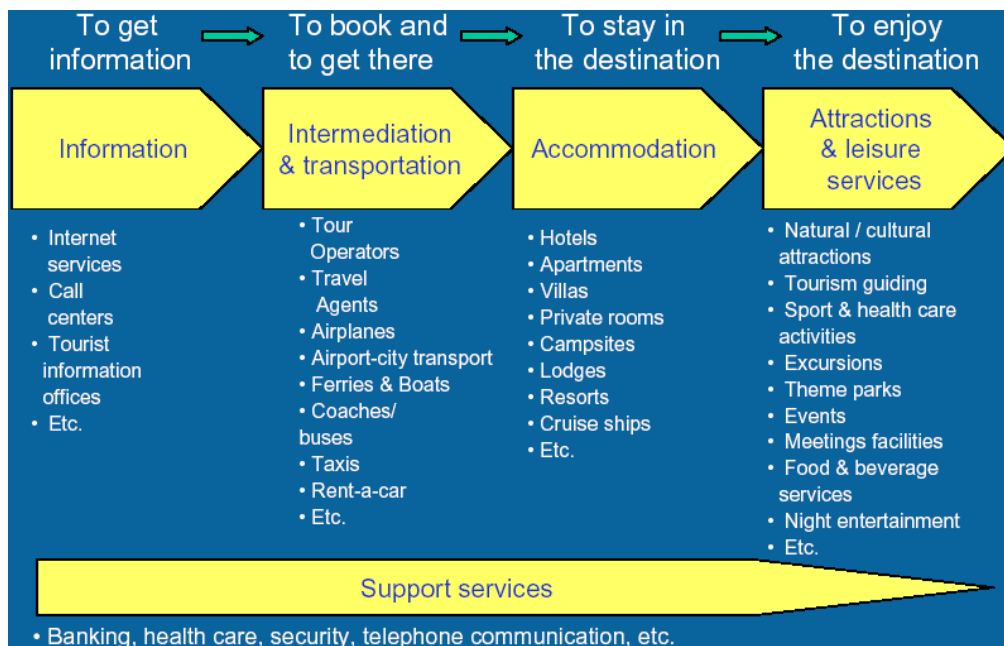


Exhibit 3: The Tourist Satisfaction Chain
Source: De Bruyn, 2006c

1.3.2 Main Stakeholders

The level of quality in a tourism destination preoccupies a number of stakeholders. First, the public sector, since it provides tourism services, public spaces and infrastructure for the tourism use. Secondly, the private sector, that refers to all the individual companies that participate directly or indirectly at the tourism industry.

Last, the non-profit organisations, such as associations of entrepreneurs and professionals, labour unions, civil society (local inhabitants), etc.

Generally, the quality of a tourism destination as a whole is regarded to be the sum of the quality provided by each individual person and organisation in direct or indirect contact with the tourist.

1.3.2.1 The Importance of a Management Body

At the context of quality, the introduction of a management body responsible for defining and managing tourism quality in the destination, based on a public-private partnership, is appropriate.

The main objectives of such a Body should be (EC, 2002):

- ❖ Generating awareness regarding quality issues among public and private organisations in the destination and the local population
- ❖ Defining quality values, criteria and indicators encompassing the whole quality chain
- ❖ Building up consensus (in charge of the management body) among local stakeholders regarding quality issues, priorities and action plans
- ❖ Monitoring quality improvement programmes, performance indicators and dynamising the overall quality improvement process in the destination

The management body can lead the elaboration process of quality indicators for the destination, but, first, should understand the overall scope of quality, assess the current situation of the destination to identify improvement priorities by sectors of activity/ cross-sectoral factors, define the core businesses as a tourism destination (urban, cultural, coastal, natural etc.) and, finally, use international references as a benchmark to establish its own list of standards.

1.4 QUALITY AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

1.4.1 Definition of Quality in Tourism Industry

Professionals in the tourism industry often see quality as a property of the destination. This kind of assessment, taking the form of a value judgement, is necessarily subjective since it involves an observer and his/ her own points of reference. In other words, we all are tourists at some time or another and we may all have our personal tastes and preferences. The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 8402 Standard defines the *Quality of a product or service* as “the totality of characteristics that bear on its ability to satisfy (the) stated and implied needs (of the user)”.

Subjective or aesthetic quality (EC, 2000a) should not therefore be confused with objective quality, meaning that quality connected with the satisfaction of users’ needs which is independent of the destination’s prestige.

The quality of a tourism product has two dimensions (EC, 2000a):

- ❖ The process/ product (quantitative standards)

The objective of the quality of the product involves the attention to the comfort and to the functioning of the departments of a tourist enterprise. Concerning the process/ product quality, the technical and physical characteristics of the building aspects should be taken care of.

- ❖ The customer satisfaction (qualitative standards)

The objective of the quality of the service is pursued through the utilisation of the human resources.

Concerning the service quality, the main aspects are (WTTC, 2005):

- The product of hospitality is perishable
- Services of hospitality are intangible
- The system to provide services is complex
- It is not always possible to experiment with the validity of services before the moment of selling them
- It is not possible to know in advance the demands and requirements of clients
- It is not always possible to standardise the interventions of the personnel
- The presence of the client is unpredictable
- The client can make impossible requests

1.4.2 Definition of Quality Management

Quality Management is closely linked to the concept of continuous improvement (EU, 2000a), it does not take the form of capital -in the sense of an asset, but involves work to make something evolve, it is implemented within a reference framework, and it uses tools and methods and involves repetition and evaluation (the quality loop).

The standard ISO 8402 defines Quality Management as “all activities of the overall management function that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities, and implement them by means such as quality planning, (quality control), quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system”.

Since this definition applies to all sectors, there are several working efforts from international organisations (WTO, ISO, CEN) to adapt this definition to the tourism sector. In other words, while the tourist sector does not have an international and global regulatory framework, a number of recent initiatives are moving in the same direction and reflect the concern shared by all those involved to achieve progress in this area.

1.4.3 Definition of Integrated Quality Management (IQM)

For a tourist destination as a whole, *Integrated Quality Management* can be seen as “a systematic quest for internal quality - economic improvement in the short-term, and external quality - local development in the long-term” (EU, 2000b).

Internal Quality is “the value that tourists receive throughout the chain of experiences characterising their visit from the initial information that they receive prior to departure to the ‘after-sales’ services” (EU, 2000b). This chain includes private links (private services purchased directly at market price) and public services such as general publicity, road maintenance, water management, public cleanliness, security, etc. Internal quality has short-term aims.

On the other hand, *External Quality* is “the development of sustainable tourism with a rational and renewable use of resources such as territory, energy, water, natural resources, the heritage etc., in order to prevent problems of congestion” (EU, 2000b). The aim of external quality is one of long-term equilibrium.

Integrated Quality Management of a destination was recently developed -around 1990s, because of more intense competitive pressures on both the supply and demand sides, the newness of quality management itself which was developed during the 1980s in the service sector, and the complex nature of the integrated quality management of a tourist destination. The complexity of integrated quality management is influenced (EU, 2000b) by the number and range of agencies involved, in producing and marketing the service, making co-ordination of their action very complex; by finding out who is involved, defining their function within the tourist service production system and their respective importance in the service that is provided; by facing the problem of pinpointing and characterising tourists’ expectations (since tourists are a very varied group that is difficult to survey), and

therefore of segmenting the different target groups and adapting services to meet their needs; by facing the complex problem of measuring the global performance of the system and ensuring improved living conditions for local residents.

The European institutional and cultural differences together with the lack of a standardised regulatory model for the quality management of tourist destinations, necessarily means that different destinations take different approaches. These approaches are shaped defining (EU, 2000c) whether or not there is a national, regional or local statutory framework for quality plans; what stage has been reached with thinking about and the practice of quality management in destinations; the degree of integration of the type and number of agencies involved in the integrated quality management approach, the ways in which these agencies are involved and their degree of involvement in decision-making, the design and implementation of the quality action plan and its evaluation, and the various measures implemented by the destination in order to meet the objectives of the quality plan, e.g. the processes.

1.4.3.1 Developing an Integrated Quality Management

The focus of most traditional quality management approaches is the individual tourist enterprise. For a destination, however, the number and range of actors involved necessarily requires a systemic approach that takes account of the visitors, those involved in the sector (internally and externally) and the local people with their representatives.

Tourism is an abstract, fragile, perishable, extremely diversified and fragmented product. It requires a “quality chain” made up of a number of links: tour operators, travel agents outside the destination, passenger carriers, travel agents in the destination, hotels and other service providers. Visitors will also be faced with a set of stimuli within the destination which, although not specifically designed for them, will have an impact on their perceptions: security, the state of the roads, pollution of all kinds, local services (post, telephone), etc. For visitors, the service provided by the destination then takes the form of a global experience shaped by multiple, frequent and varied interactions between all the factors of the system. Account therefore needs to be taken of the whole of a destination’s tourism system, from “visitors” initial planning to their return from their stay.

Any integrated quality management initiative for a tourist destination will take account of economic development in the broadest sense (including social aspects, employment, etc.), the environment, culture and the heritage, the market in its universal sense and the professionals, as well as the local communities concerned.

1.4.3.2 Integrated Quality Management Approach for Tourism Destinations

Integrated quality management can be approached in different ways. Most of these approaches originated in the private sector. In case of integrated quality management approaches are to be applied to tourist destinations, they need to be adapted by integrating the public dimension and by taking into account all the public and private agencies and their complex interactions involved.

Thus, the main considerations for shaping various tools, under a destination quality perspective, are the notion of integrated management, a dynamic scheme for defining the service, and a target group identification.

According to a study of the European Commission (2000c), *Integrated Quality Management for a Tourism Destination* is “an approach to managing a tourism destination which focuses on an ongoing process of improving visitor satisfaction, while seeking to improve the local economy, the environment and the quality of life of the local community”.

The main elements are focusing on visitors - improving the quality of what it is provided for them, satisfying their needs and influencing their activities, so they will

come back again or recommend to others, and are involving local people and local tourism enterprises in the management of the destination, as participants and as customers of the management process.

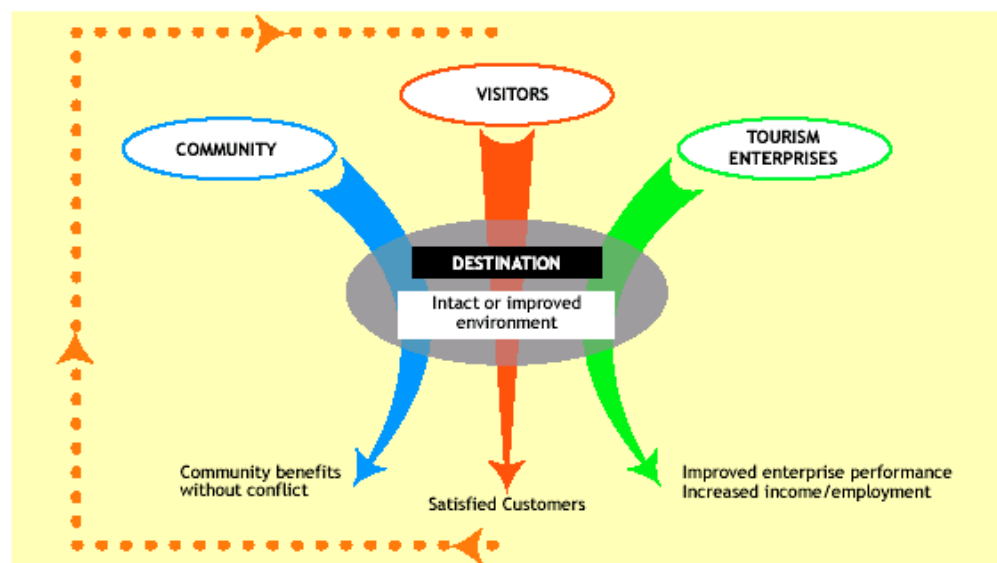


Exhibit 4: An IQM approach of a Tourism Destination
Source: European Commission, 200b

1.4.3.3 The fifteen core principles of IQM in Tourism Destinations

The European Commission (2006) recommends that tourism destinations aiming to develop and implement a quality approach to tourism should adopt and adhere to the following fifteen core principles of integrated quality management at every stage of tourism planning and development, by which they will manage to meet social, cultural and environmental needs whilst improving the competitiveness of the area as a tourism destination.

Principles	Description
Integration	Concern for quality, and the management techniques aimed at achieving it, should be integrated into all the tourism functions of the destination
Authenticity	Visitors look for and appreciate genuine experiences. The quality of the tourism experience should not be devalued or fabricated
Distinctiveness	Delivering quality should be concerned with bringing out the special, distinctive features and flavours of a destination
Market realism	Quality management should be based on an informed and realistic assessment of the area's potential in the market place, identifying competitive strengths and ensuring they are not eroded
Sustainability	Rural areas may often have fragile sites and small communities sensitive to intrusion and congestion, However, visitors are increasingly looking for unspoiled environments - delivering quality must be concerned with managing the impacts of tourism
Consumer orientation	Quality management is about getting close to the visitor, understanding their needs and establishing whether they are met
Inclusiveness	Quality should not be delivered to only the few - a good experience should be provided for all visitors, especially those with special needs

Attention to detail	Be creative, but also pay attention to detail - provide enough information, check on facilities, provide extra services
Rationalisation	A small number of good initiatives are better than many poor ones. Activities that are under resourced and of poor quality should cease, or be combined into stronger more sustainable product
Partnership	Working together is right in principle and essential for success. Quality cannot be delivered as a solo project - tourism enterprises/ organisations and community groups should work together
Interdependence	Quality rural tourism depends on, and in turn supports, many other activities such as agriculture, craft industries, transport and local services
Time	Improving quality takes time. Success depends on planning for steady, achievable progress year on year
Commitment	Personal enthusiasm and commitment to achieving quality is essential. This needs to involve the wider community
Accurate communication	Providing visitors with accurate and up to date information is key to matching expectations with reality and ensuring satisfaction
Monitoring	Quality management is all about regular monitoring and evaluation of impacts on the visitor, tourism enterprises, the environment and the local community

Exhibit 5: The 15 core principles of IQM
Source: Adapted from European Commission, 2006

CHAPTER 2:

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY: APPROACHES TO SUPPORT QUALITY IN TOURISM COMPANIES AND DESTINATIONS

2.1 BRIEF HISTORY

In 1950's the triptych of "Price - Quality – Delivery" was an issue of continuous pursuing, while in 2000's, next to that, the triptych of "Flexibility - Innovation – Differentiation" was emerged, differentiating the notion of quality and environmental management, extending it from industrial products to services & processes.

In Exhibit 6, the reader can recognise the evolution of WTO's working programmes, taking into consideration issues and trends at various chronological periods. Tourism appears as a powerful vehicle of globalisation expressed by reference to common standards, while quality standards for tourism industry still do not apply at an international level.

Year	Work Programme
1991	Quality of Tourism Services
2000-2003	Quality in Tourism Development (trade, social impact, safety & security standards)
2004-2005	Quality & Trade in Tourism
2006-2007	Competitiveness: Quality, Investment, Trade, Health, Safety & Security

Exhibit 6: The evolution of WTO working programmes

Source: Adapted from Handszuh, 2006b

2.2 QUALITY IN TOURISM

2.2.1 Quality Interested Parties

A number of interested parties appear to recognise the usefulness and appropriateness of quality in tourism (*Handszuh, 2006b*):

- ❖ *Consumers' (Tourists/ Visitors) interest* is to achieve consumer satisfaction and education
- ❖ *Companies' interest* is to manage competition, develop consumer loyalty, reduce costs and innovate
- ❖ *Staff' interest* is to achieve identification, pride, self-esteem, protagonism and empowerment
- ❖ *Government/ State's interest* is to improve and remunerate investments in public services, support other trades and enhance its political prestige
- ❖ *Environment's interest* is to achieve natural resources conservation and enhancement
- ❖ *Society's interest* is to achieve quality of life for all
- ❖ *World's interest* is to achieve mutual understanding, respect, sustainability and protect ethics

2.2.2 Quality Roles

Each interested party appears to have a recognisable role in this quality circle, in order to avoid further conflicts and malfunctions at the implementation of quality management methods.

This role recognition can be identified as follows (*Handszuh, 2006b*):

- ❖ *Consumers' (Tourists/ Visitors) role* is to demand and choose quality design and level, and demand access without discrimination
- ❖ *Companies' role* is to reach strategic decisions and be organised in a management level
- ❖ *Staff' role* is to execute commands and guidelines in respect of quality management methods and communicate with the other departments
- ❖ *Government/ State's role* is to fairly allocate resources and establish forms of intervention where appropriate
- ❖ *Society's role* is to accept to live with tourism under open market and globalisation, and to understand that tourism quality is in favour of society's interests and values

2.2.3 A Conceptual Framework of Quality in Tourism

Quality in Tourism, according to ISO 8402/9004-2, is defined as "the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs". Additionally, Quality in Tourism, according to ISO 9000:2000, is defined as "the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements".

WTO's integrated working definition for *Quality in Tourism* is "the *result* of a *process* which implies the *satisfaction* of all the *legitimate* product and service *needs, requirements* and *expectations* of the *consumer*, at an *acceptable price*, in conformity with *mutually accepted contractual conditions* and the *underlying quality determinants*, such as safety and security, hygiene, accessibility, transparency, authenticity and harmony of the tourism activity concerned with its human and natural environment" (exhibit 7). [Defined and modified by the WTO Quality Support Committee at its sixth meeting (Varadero, Cuba 9-10 May 2003)]

Basic Notions	Description
<i>Result</i>	☐ Quality is attained and perceived at a given time ☐ Quality cannot be in place without harmonious and active engagement of all the factors intervening in tourism experience ☐ Quality <i>result</i> can be measured by consumer satisfaction as well as by social, environmental and economic effects of the tourism activity concerned
<i>Process</i>	☐ Quality is not sufficiently attained by a single undertaking ☐ Quality work always has to be in place, it cannot discontinue because of the temporarily attained quality result. ☐ Quality implies a seamless or flawless process in which it is possible to identify and do away with the constraints of a supply which spoil the tourism product and are responsible for direct and indirect losses to the company or destination
<i>Satisfaction</i>	☐ The elements of subjectivity in quality perception are introduced by <i>satisfaction</i> ☐ Customers have different requirements and expectations, according to their characteristics ☐ Informed quality-driven marketing attempts to identify consumers, according to the different types and levels of perceived quality
<i>Legitimate</i>	☐ The elements of rights and entitlement are brought into the analysis by <i>legitimate</i> ☐ Consumers cannot expect to receive more than what they remunerate by payment or what has been determined by social and environmental limits

	☐ The role of tourism planners and entrepreneurs is to relate quality types and levels to remuneration and external limitations
<i>Needs</i>	☐ The notion of <i>needs</i> looks for satisfying people's basic and vital needs together with introducing attractions, strengthening experiences, etc., but without overlooking them ☐ The needs are primarily related to <i>the underlying quality determinants</i> ☐ Over time the expectations related to the type and volume of basic <i>needs</i> change and usually increase
<i>Product requirements</i>	☐ The notion of <i>product requirements</i> emphasises a need to relate a single service and facility use to the whole product and the total tourism experience
<i>Service requirements</i>	☐ The term <i>service requirements</i> relates quality to its human, personal and personnel dimensions which are often intangible and apparently difficult to measure, evaluate and quantify ☐ Exception: certain service elements are quantifiable [e.g. waiting time, frequency of service (e.g. cleaning), the number and type of services included in the basic price, etc.] ☐ The physical attributes of tourism facilities which are used primarily in facility classifications or grading are quantifiable
<i>Expectations</i>	☐ The term <i>expectations</i> relates to the requirement of positive communication and perception of the product characteristics to the potential consumer ☐ Expectations should be legitimate, there are limits to expectations, some expectations cannot be fulfilled even at a very high price which can be offered
<i>Consumer</i>	☐ The term <i>consumer</i> relates to individual (end) consumers, who may include groups of people (e.g. a family), corporate consumers (e.g. a company purchasing an incentive trip) and commercial intermediaries (e.g. a tour operator) ☐ The tour operators may request that the product quality be assessed and certified by its own representative or a recognised external third party
<i>Acceptable price</i>	☐ <i>Acceptable price</i> suggests that the client's expectations reflected in the price cannot be attained at any cost, and that "positive surprises" should not be too generous, otherwise this may imply excessive allocation of resources which do not receive adequate remuneration
<i>Mutually accepted contractual conditions</i>	☐ <i>Mutually accepted contractual conditions</i> introduce the element of commercial and legal nature in the private sector and is related to transparency ☐ Acceptance can be explicit or tacit (implicit), depending on the regulations governing the tourism sector in a given country or the type of transaction (e.g. contracts signage, or prior communication of the price on ordering a service)
<i>The underlying quality determinants</i>	☐ There should be common, irrevocable criteria of quality which are vital for the consumer independently of category or class of the product, establishment, facility or service sophistication ☐ They establish the minimum level of consumer protection under which quality, or total quality, is impossible to achieve, or when failing to meet any of such determinants will significantly reduce the quality of tourism experience

Exhibit 7: An analysis of Quality in Tourism basic notions
Source: Adapted from WTO definitions, 2006

A further analysis of *the underlying quality determinants* (exhibit 8 & 9) and their vital importance in the tourist satisfaction chain may clarify and simplify the objectives each tourism company or organisation should set for a balanced tourism development and economic propensity.

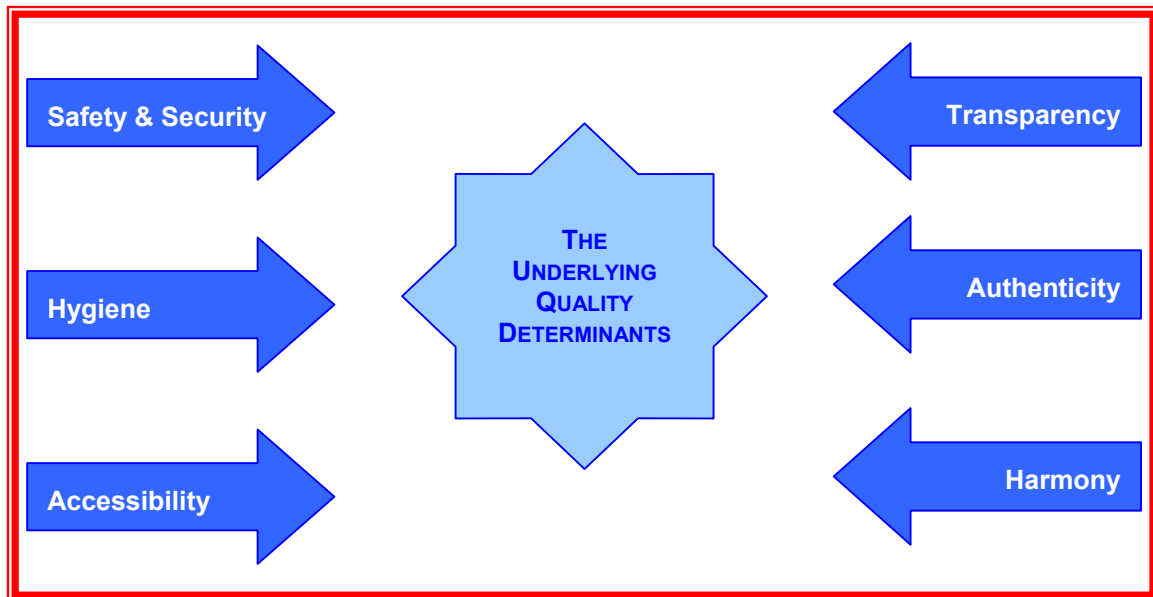


Exhibit 8: The Underlying Quality Determinants
Source: Adapted from WTO, 2006

Basic Notions	Description
<i>Safety & Security</i>	☐ A tourism product or service cannot represent danger to life, damage to health and other vital interests and integrity of the consumer, indifferently of the type of tourism ☐ Safety & Security standards are normally established by law (e.g. by fire prevention regulations) and should be considered as quality standards per se
<i>Hygiene</i>	☐ Hygiene plays an important role to the delivery of the tourist product or service, indifferently of classes and categorisation ☐ Food safety standards (often also established by law) must be met and be common to all types of food outlets, from street vendors to luxury gourmet restaurants to airline catering
<i>Accessibility</i>	☐ Physical, communication and service barriers must be done away with to allow, without discrimination, the use of mainstream tourism products and services by all people irrespective of their natural and acquired differences, including people with disabilities
<i>Transparency</i>	☐ <i>Transparency</i> provides for legitimacy of expectations and consumer protection ☐ <i>Transparency</i> relates to providing and effectively communicating truthful information on the characteristics and coverage of the product and its total price
<i>Authenticity</i>	☐ <i>Authenticity</i> is the hardest and most subjective quality determinant to attain, in a commercial world ☐ <i>Authenticity</i> has marketing and competition dimensions ☐ <i>Authenticity</i> is culturally determined and one of its results is making the product markedly distinct from other similar products ☐ <i>Authenticity</i> must meet consumer expectations

	☐ <i>Authenticity</i> diminishes and eventually terminates when the product loses its links with its cultural and natural background
<i>Harmony</i>	☐ <i>Harmony</i> within the human and natural environment pertains to sustainability which is a medium - and long-term concept ☐ "Maintaining the sustainability of tourism requires managing environmental and socio-economic impacts, establishing environmental indicators and maintaining the quality of the tourism products and tourist markets" (WTO Guide for Local Authorities on Developing Sustainable Tourism) ☐ There can be no sustainability without quality

Exhibit 9: An analysis of the Underlying Quality Determinants
Source: Adapted from WTO, 2006

2.3 TOURISM QUALITY STANDARDS

2.3.1 Type of Quality Standards

Quality standards in tourism industry may be identified in two categories (*Handsuh, 2006f*). First, the *mandatory standards* (or "hard" standards) that are established based on a national regulatory framework. These standards are meant to be strictly followed by companies, organisations or destinations, they are autonomous, they follow-up international binding standards, such as ICAO, EU directives, WHO-IHR etc. Thus, ISO/ CEN standards or elements can be forced only if established in regulatory framework. Second, the *voluntary standards* that are developed and adopted at industry/ sector/ activity level and include ISO/ CEN standards and/ or WTO-OMT standards (TSA, TedQual).

2.3.2 Role of Quality Standards

Depending on the type, there are definite roles for all tourism quality standards. The *mandatory standards* (or "hard" standards) are requirements or referents for conformity within regulatory framework, while the *voluntary standards* provide specifications on product, service or brand description, they are a reference value and, in some cases, can be used as successful benchmarks, by introducing innovation at all levels of a company or a destination and helping to ensure compliance with specifications (management) (*Handsuh, 2006f*).

2.3.3 Origin of Quality Standards

The quality standards are (*Handsuh, 2006f*) firstly, *industry/ company-driven standards under brands*, extending from national to international. Secondly, there are *national standards* focused on a specific activity or aspect, in this case the certification is undertaken from national standards bodies to ISO, such as sectoral (e.g. ICTE, Swiss 'Quality Seal of Approval'), or inter-sectoral (e.g. national quality awards). Thirdly, there are the *European standards* (e.g. EMAS, EFQM) and, last, there are the *international standards* (established by international organisations) based on-specific activity or aspect (e.g. WTO's 'Accessible Tourism for All'), such as sectoral (e.g. indirectly WTO's Global Code of Ethics for Tourism), or inter-sectoral (e.g. ISO 9000, ISO 14000).

2.3.4 Variety of Forms

Standards are expressed in a variety of forms (*Handsuh, 2006f*). Specifically, ICAO started from "recommended practices" (non-mandatory) to standards (mandatory), while WTO-OMT have not defined an exact form; usually there were given "recommendations", "guidelines", that were not binding. International Organisation for

Standardisation (ISO) standards are market-driven, international standards, providing certain specifications, procedures, guidelines, manuals and vocabulary. Speaking of best practices, ISO 9000 standards in fact are “a world-wide compilation of the best quality practices on which everyone has agreed” (*J.E. Ware, Chairman, ISO/ CASCO*). Facts & figures demonstrate the special role of International Organisation for Standardisation (www.iso.org, 2005). During 2005 there were almost 148 national standards bodies, while an approximate number of 3.000 technical bodies, such as technical committees, working groups etc., have been identified. In addition, interested parties can search information regarding quality issues through 14.300 bibliographic data items, including information on international standards, technical specifications, publicly available specifications and technical reports, while there are 4.200 standards under preparation (draft standards).

QMS/ EMS *	Description
ISO 9000-1	Quality management and quality assurance standards Part 1: Guidelines for selection and use
ISO 9004-2	Quality management and quality system elements Part 2: Guidelines for services
ISO 9001:2000	Quality Management Systems Requirements
ISO 9004:2000	Quality Management Systems Guidelines for performance improvement
ISO 14001:2000	Environmental Management Systems Specifications with guidance for use
ISO 18513	Tourism Services Hotels and other types of tourism accommodation Terminology

* Quality Management System/ Environmental Management System

Exhibit 10: Basic ISO documents

Source: Adapted from ISO, 2005

2.4 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

2.4.1 Definition of Quality Management Systems

The American Society for Quality (2006) acknowledges that the application of a Quality Management System in managing a process is to achieve maximum customer satisfaction at the lowest overall cost to the organisation while continuing to improve the process.

According to ISO 9000:2000, *Quality Management System* is “a system to establish a quality policy and quality objectives and to achieve those objectives”.

Quality... is the degree in which a set of inherent characteristics meet the requirements

System... is a set of mutually related and interacting elements

Management... is the co-ordinated activities to guide and control an organisation

Management System... is a system to establish policy and objectives and to achieve those objectives

2.4.2 Quality Management Systems for Tourism Companies & Organisations

2.4.2.1 International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) ISO 9000:2000

ISO is the world's largest developer of voluntary technical standards (EU, 2000a). ISO is a non-governmental organisation that produces Management System Standards and identifies international consensus on best practice.

To be more specific, ISO 9000:2000 focuses on Quality Management (exhibit 11) in operations and functions of organisations in manufacturing industry, and, later, in tourism industry.

Principle 1	Customer focus
Principle 2	Leadership
Principle 3	Involvement of people
Principle 4	Process approach
Principle 5	System approach to management
Principle 6	Continual improvement
Principle 7	Factual approach to decision making
Principle 8	Mutually beneficial supplier relationship

Exhibit 11: The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

The ISO 9000:2000 principles of Quality Management are analysed further (exhibits 12-19), providing definitions, identifying the key benefits and methods of applying each principle.

Principle	Organisations depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future customer needs, should meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectations
Key Benefit	☐ Increased revenue and market share obtained through flexible and fast responses to market opportunities ☐ Increased effectiveness in the use of the organisations resources to enhance customer satisfaction ☐ Improved customer loyalty leading to repeat business
Applying Principle	☐ Researching and understanding customer needs and expectations ☐ Ensuring that the objectives of the organisation are linked to customer needs and expectations ☐ Communicating customer needs and expectations throughout the organisation ☐ Measuring customer satisfaction and acting on the results ☐ Systematically managing customer relationships ☐ Ensuring a balanced approach between satisfying customers and other interested parties (such as owners, employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole)

Exhibit 12: Principle 1: Customer Focus
The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	Leaders establish unity of purpose and direction of the organisation. They should create and maintain the internal environment in which people can become fully involved in achieving the organisation's objectives
Key Benefit	☐ People will understand and be motivated towards the organisation's goals and objectives ☐ Activities are evaluated, aligned and implemented in a unified way ☐ Miscommunication between levels of an organisation will be minimised
Applying Principle	☐ Considering the needs of all interested parties including customers, owners employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole ☐ Establishing a clear vision of the organisations future ☐ Setting challenging goals and targets ☐ Creating and sustaining shared values, fairness and ethical role models at all level of the organisation ☐ Establishing trust and eliminating fear ☐ Providing people with the required resources, training and ...

Exhibit 13: Principle 2: Leadership
 The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	People at all levels are the essence of an organisation and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organisation's benefit
Key Benefit	☐ Motivated, committed and involved people within the organisation ☐ Innovation and creativity in furthering the organisation's objectives ☐ People being accountable for their own performance ☐ People eager to participate in and contribute to continual improvement
Applying Principle	☐ People understanding the importance of their contribution and role in the organisation ☐ People identifying constraints to their performance ☐ People accepting ownership of problems and their responsibility for solving them ☐ People evaluating their performance against their personal goal and objectives ☐ People actively seeking opportunities to enhance their competence, knowledge and experience ☐ People freely sharing knowledge and experience ☐ People openly discussing problems and issues

Exhibit 14: Principle 3: Involvement of people
 The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	A desired result is achieved more efficiently when activities and related resources are managed as a process
Key Benefit	☐ Lower costs and shorter cycle times through effective use of resources ☐ Improved, consistent and predictable results ☐ Focused and prioritised improvement opportunities
Applying Principle	☐ Systematically defining the activities necessary to obtain a desired result ☐ Establishing clear responsibility and accountability for managing key activities ☐ Identifying the interfaces of key activities within and between the functions of the organisation ☐ Focusing on the factors such as resources, methods, and materials that will improve key activities of the organisation ☐ Evaluating risks, consequences and impacts of activities on customers, suppliers and other interested parties

Exhibit 15: Principle 4: Process approach

The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000

Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	Identifying, understanding and managing interrelated processes as a system contributes to the organisation's effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its objectives
Key Benefit	☐ Integration and alignment of the processes that will best achieve the desired results ☐ Ability to focus effort on the key processes ☐ Providing confidence to interested parties as to the consistency, effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation
Applying Principle	☐ Structuring a system to achieve the organisations objectives in the most efficient way ☐ Understanding the interdependencies between the processes of the system ☐ Structured approaches that harmonise and integrate processes ☐ Providing a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities necessary for achieving common objectives and thereby reducing cross-functional barriers ☐ Understanding organisational capabilities and establishing resource constraints prior to action ☐ Targeting and defining how specific activities within a system should operate ☐ Continually improving the system through measurement and evaluation

Exhibit 16: Principle 5: System approach to management

The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000

Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	Continual improvement of the organisation's overall performance should be a permanent objective of the organisation
Key Benefit	☐ Performance advantage through improved organisational capabilities ☐ Alignment of improvement activities at all levels to an organisation's strategic intent ☐ Flexibility to react quickly to opportunities
Applying Principle	☐ Employing a consistent organisation – wide approach to continual improvement of the organisation's performance ☐ Providing people with training in the methods and tools of continual improvement ☐ Making continual improvement of products, processes and systems an objective for every individual in the organisation ☐ Establishing goals to guide, and measure to track, continual improvement ☐ Recognising and acknowledging improvements

Exhibit 17: Principle 6: Continual Improvement
 The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	Effective decisions are based on the analysis of data and information
Key Benefit	☐ Informed decisions ☐ An increased ability to demonstrate the effectiveness of past decisions through reference to factual records ☐ Increased ability to review, challenge and change opinions and decisions
Applying Principle	☐ Ensuring that data and information are sufficiently accurate and reliable ☐ Making data accessible to those who need it ☐ Analysing data and information using valid methods ☐ Making decisions and taking action based on factual analysis, balanced with experience and intuition

Exhibit 18: Principle 7: Factual approach to decision making
 The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

Principle	An organisation and its suppliers are interdependent and a mutually beneficial relationship enhances the ability of both to create value
Key Benefit	☐ Increased ability to create value for both parties ☐ Flexibility and speed of joint responses to changing market or customer needs and expectations ☐ Optimisation of costs and resources
Applying Principle	☐ Establishing relationships that balance short-term gains with long-term considerations ☐ Pooling of expertise and resources with partners ☐ Identifying and selecting key suppliers ☐ Clear and open communication ☐ Sharing information and future plans ☐ Establishing joint development and improvement activities ☐ Inspiring, encouraging and recognising improvements and achievement by suppliers

Exhibit 19: Principle 8: Mutually beneficial supplier relationships
 The principles of Quality Management: ISO 9000:2000 & ISO 9004:2000
Source: EC, 2000a; www.iso.org, 2005

2.4.2.2 European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)

European Foundation for Quality Management was created to promote a standard approach to management for all organisations operating in Europe to contribute to ensuring sustainable, quality practices. In 1991, EFQM introduced the “EFQM Excellence Model” (exhibit 20) based on a set of eight fundamental concepts as a framework for organisation self-assessment (Go et al, 2000).

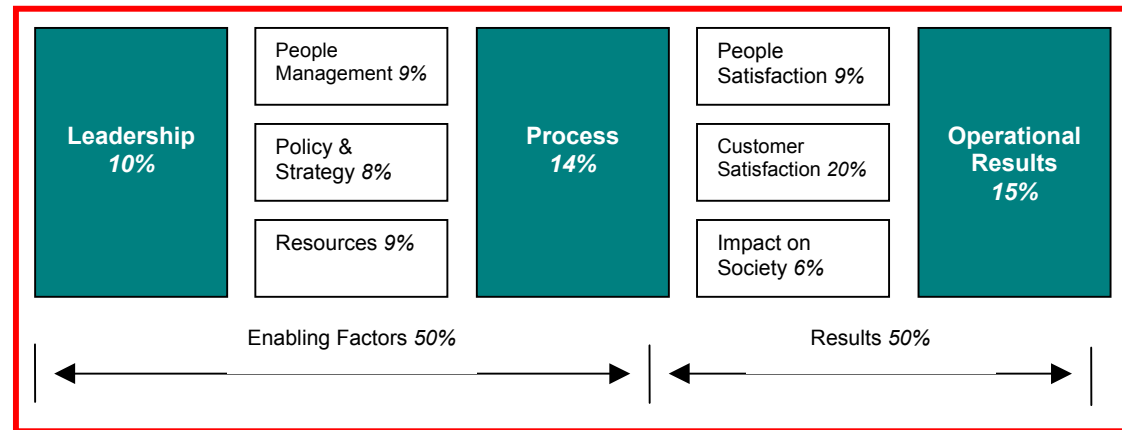


Exhibit 20: The EFQM model
Source: Go et al, 2000

The main characteristics of EFQM are that it expresses a facilitator and advisor role, it does not deliver certification to companies and organisations, but it awards prizes to best companies. The enabling factors (leadership, people management, policy and strategy, resources and process) are calculated based on introduced, systematic, measurable and ongoing improvement system, while the results (people satisfaction, customer satisfaction, impact on society and operational results) are evaluated based on trends, achieved objectives and comparison with other companies in the sector.

2.4.2.3 Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point is applicable to all food operations. In European Union countries, it is obligatory by law since 2002. This means that in each country the Ministry of Health is responsible for controlling that all companies have fully implemented the HACCP system. However, there is no international certification for the implementation of it.

There are eight HACCP principles that an applicant should take into consideration, before applying for a HACCP certification (HACCP, 2006):

1. Conduct a hazard analysis
2. Identify the Critical Control Points (CCP)
3. Establish critical limits for preventative measures associated with each CCP
4. Establish CCP monitoring requirements
5. Establish procedures for using the results of monitoring to adjust the process and maintain control
6. Establish corrective actions to be taken when monitoring indicates that there is a deviation from an established critical limit
7. Establish effective record-keeping procedures
8. Establish procedures for verification that the HACCP system is working correctly

2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (EMS)

2.5.1 Definition of an Environmental Management System

Environmental Management System (EMS) (EU, 2000c) is an organisational approach to environmental management. It provides a structured framework specifically designed to achieve continual improvement. EMS includes a range of techniques used to monitor or manage the impacts of business and industry operations on the environment, such as environmental audit and environmental impact assessment, as well as carrying capacity assessment and cost benefit analysis.

2.5.2 Prerequisites and Major Components of an EMS

The success of an EMS is determined by the level of cost effectiveness, whether an EMS is an economic viable investment and is in harmony with trade regulations, whether it is based on systems and performance, being so practical, usable and useful, focusing on continual improvement.

Continual improvement is achieved through an integrated process of the major components of an EMS starting from environmental policy to planning, implementation and operation, checking and corrective action and management review (exhibit 22). This vicious circle expresses the need of a continuous enhancement of environmental performance, considering meanwhile changes in issues and trends that influence any components during the process.

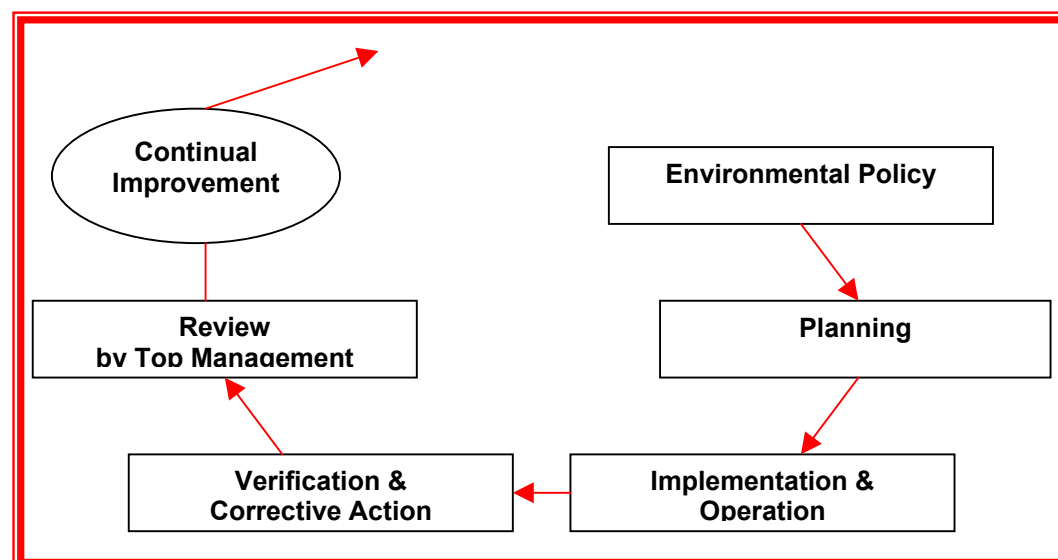


Exhibit 21: The major components of an EMS
Source: Instituto de Hospitalidade, 2004

To be more precise, the PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act) is applied on the above diagram (*Instituto de Hospitalidade, 2004*).

- ❖ **Plan:** establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver the results in accordance with the policy of the enterprise (in this case, environmental policy)
- ❖ **Do:** implement the processes
- ❖ **Check:** monitor and measure the results of the processes against the policy, objectives and goals and report the results
- ❖ **Act:** take actions to continually improve the performance of the management system

2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Environmental Management Standards set out the specific requirement that needs to be fulfilled by an organisation that wish to have an EMS.

2.6.1 Environmental Management Standards for Tourism Companies & Organisations

2.6.1.1 International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) ISO 14000

ISO developed the 14000 series of management standards (exhibit 23) to support the objective of sustainable development discussed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992 (www.iso.org).

It claims to be a practical set of tools, which facilitates more pro-active environmental management. It includes a wide range of more than 350 standards, which cover indicator monitoring, as well as aspects of environmental management.

ISO 14000 is the most recognised Environmental Management System (EMS) world-wide, and it is present in approximately 37.000 organisations to more than 112 countries. The adoption of ISO 14001 as the management system element of EMAS will allow organisations to progress for ISO 14001 to EMAS without undue duplication of effort (www.shmile.org).

Apart from providing tools for environmental management, the ISO 14000 standards brings, also, economic benefits by reducing the use of non-refined materials, by reducing energy consumption, by improving efficiency process, by reducing waste generation and disposal costs and by using renewable resources.

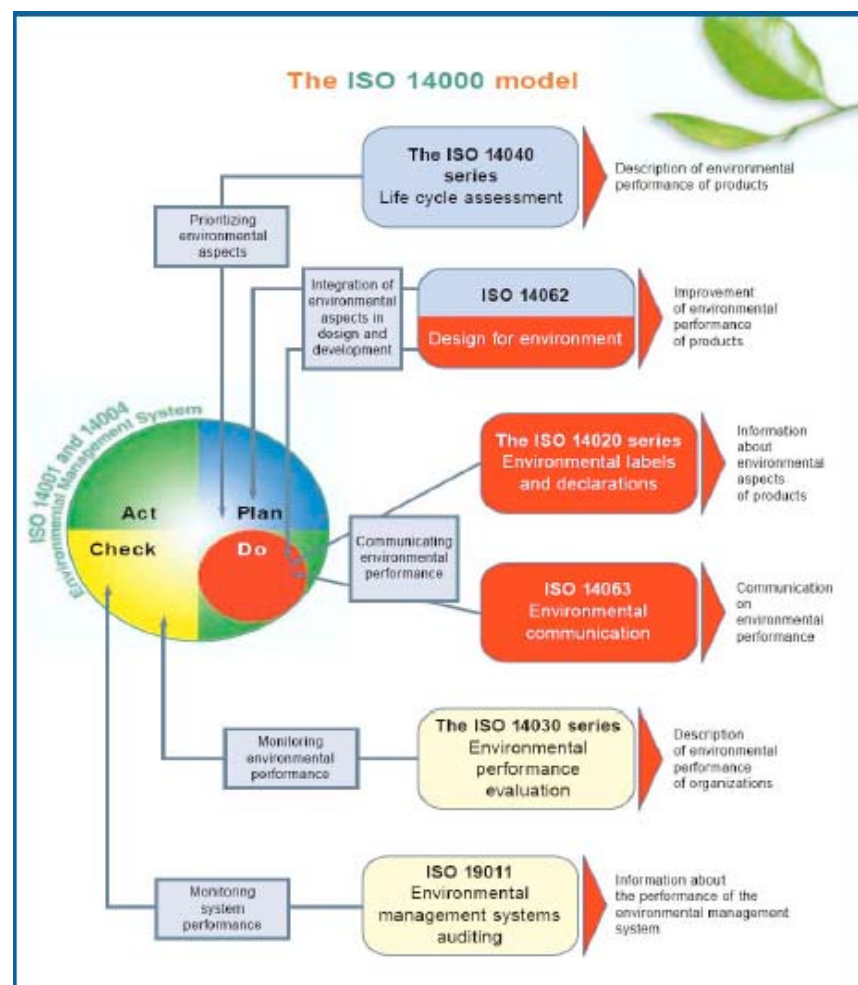


Exhibit 22: The ISO 14000 model
Source: www.iso.org, 2005

2.6.2 Environmental Management Standards for Tourist Destinations

2.6.2.1 Agenda 21

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992, concerned with the impact of world population and economic activities on the biosphere. Agreements reached at the Summit included Agenda for Action in the 21st Century, known as AGENDA 21, a framework of principles to guide international action on the environment. Although travel, tourism and hospitality were not specifically identified as key industry sectors, the Summit and AGENDA 21 are equally relevant for them (*European Commission, 2002*).

The key aspects of the AGENDA 21 (exhibit 23) include the establishment of effective participation structures for the participation of tourism agents, the design of a sustainable tourism strategy integrated into local development and linked with the destination's other productive and economic activities, and the identification and implementation of a set of actions for the economic, social and environmental sustainable development of the destinations.

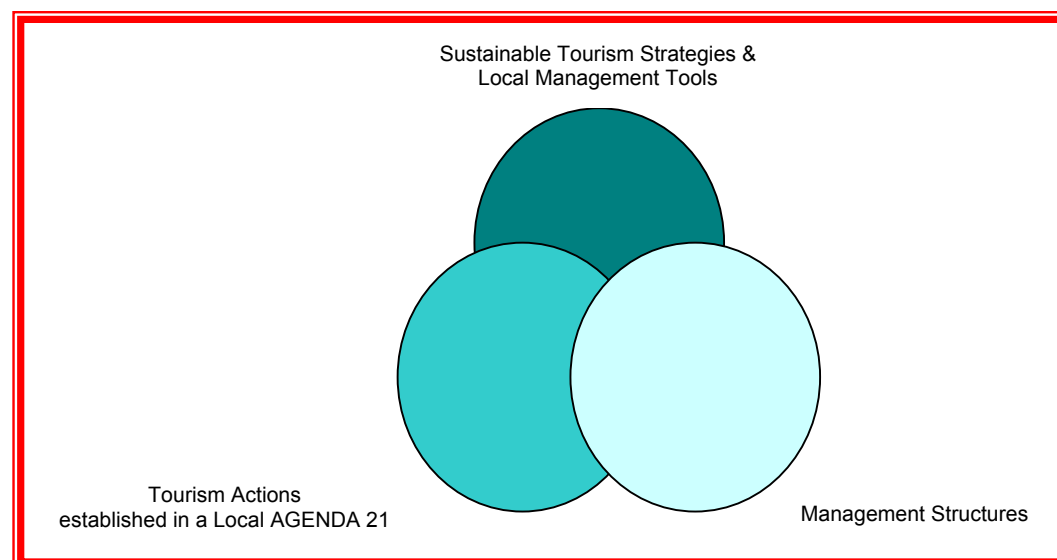


Exhibit 23: The establishment of AGENDA 21
Source: European Commission, 2002

2.6.2.2 Green Globe 21 (GG21)

Green Globe 21 is the worldwide benchmarking and certification programme which facilitates sustainable travel and tourism for consumers, companies and communities. It is based on Agenda 21 and principles for Sustainable Development endorsed by 182 governments at the United Nations Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992 (<http://www.greenglobe21.com/>, 2006).

Green Globe 21 has continuously lifted performance thresholds for sustainable tourism. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) developed Green Globe in 1993 and it was officially launched in 1994 as a membership and commitment-based programme. It was expanded in 1999 with the introduction of the Green Globe 21 Standard and commencement of independent auditing. It was further upgraded in May 2001, as part of continuous leading-edge improvement. It now includes actual measurement of environmental improvements through Benchmarking on an annual basis. As of 2004, there were participants in all continents and approximately 50 countries.

The Green Globe 21 Standard has three central requirements: commitment to 'year on year' improvement in relevant key performance areas, compliance with relevant environmental legislation and regulations, and a two-way communication with key stakeholders including staff, customers and key suppliers.

Green Globe 21 has prepared a series of short guides for each sector of the travel and tourism industry to assist companies in achieving certification to the Standard. Guides in the series (exhibit 24) include accommodation providers, tour operators, caravan and camp sites, food service, airports, airlines, cruise ships, marinas, car hire companies, exhibition halls and conference centres, visitor attractions, leisure centres, golf courses, natural protected areas, beaches and tourism destinations.

List of Sectors for which indicators have been developed			
Accommodation	Bus companies	Golf course	Trailer park
Activity	Community destination	Marina	Vehicle
Administration office	Convention centre	Railway	Vehicle rental
Aerial cableway	Cruise vessel	Resort	Vineyard
Airline	Ecotourism	Restaurant	Visitor centre
Airport	Exhibition hall	Tour company (wholesale)	Winery
Attraction	Farm stay	Tour operator	

Exhibit 24: Green Globe 21 sectors of interest

Source: Adapted from <http://www.greenglobe21.com/AboutCompany.aspx>, 2006

The principle objective of the Green Globe Standard for tourism destinations is to promote environmentally sustainable tourism development at destinations where there is a developed travel and tourism industry.

GG 21 standard provides governing authorities, travel and tourism companies and the communities that reside within the destination with a clear set of criteria for achieving 'year on year' improvement, a framework for application of the criteria, the process for meeting the criteria and the requisites for achieving GG21 recognition.

Green Globe Destination Recognition is aimed at recognising destinations that are making the effort to establish a sustainable tourism development trend by creating an Environmental Action Plan and Sustainable Destination Management System to tackle the issues that affect the location's ecological, economic and social well-being and enhance the overall quality of the place.

The main benefits are cost savings through the integrated focus on waste consumption, competitiveness through the Annual Benchmark Advisory Report, which allows comparison with Green Globe's own bench-line, consumers greater orientation towards environmental awareness (indicated by 84% of consumers), and community reduction of the Greenhouse Effect as part of the benchmark process.

GREEN GLOBE Certified



- This is the highest level of GREEN GLOBE qualification.
- Requires implementation of an integrated Environmental Management System.
- The logo is only used/issued once the operation has been successfully Benchmarked AND passed an independent on site assessment/audit.
- Certification is required annually in order to maintain the use of the logo.

GREEN GLOBE Benchmarked



- A GREEN GLOBE Benchmarked business has undergone an independent assessment of measurements against key indicators and passed.
- Requires the development of an Environmental and Social Sustainability Policy and annual collection of measures in key environmental and social performance areas.
- Benchmarking is required annually in order to maintain the use of the logo.
- This logo is only used after an operation is successfully Benchmarked. The Affiliate stamp is used up until this time.

GREEN GLOBE Affiliate/Awareness



- An Affiliate is the first step towards becoming a full GREEN GLOBE participant, that is, committing to Benchmarking and Certification.
- A GREEN GLOBE Affiliate is committed to gathering information about sustainable tourism practices and principles.
- An Affiliate is required to prepare an Environmental and Social Sustainability Policy, which must be submitted to GREEN GLOBE on renewal.

Exhibit 25: Green Globe 21: A multi-tier standard's certification logos
Source: <http://www.greenglobe21.com/>, 2006

2.6.2.3 Eco-Management Audit System (EMAS)

Eco-Management Audit System (EMAS) is a scheme adopted by the European Council in 1993 allowing voluntary participation in an EU standardised environmental management scheme. Originally was restricted to companies in industrial sectors, but since 2001 EMAS has been open to all economic sectors, including public and private services (www.europa.eu.int, 2002).

The objective of EMAS is to promote continuous environmental performance improvements of economic activities by committing organisations to evaluate and improve their environmental performance and provide relevant information to the public. EMAS regulations include the integration of ISO 14001 as the environmental management required, strengthening so EMAS.

2.7 CERTIFICATION OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Management Systems may be certified to ensure they satisfy the specific requirements of the Standard. Being certified to a Quality Management Standard ensures operations are being carried out according to the quality manual and procedures. All quality and environmental management schemes are audited within the organisation to satisfy management that the management system is functioning (internal auditing). Being certified to an Environmental Management Standard ensures the organisation is meeting all the requirements and is continually reducing its own impact on the environment.

There are organisations that certify management systems at a national or international level on a commercial basis. That is a third-party certification, e.g. to ISO 14001, ISO 9001, Green Globe etc. There are many of these standards and this can lead to confusion, particularly for the customer, as each may have variable

objectives and achievements. Thus, a proper research, before fostering a Quality and/ or Environmental Management System and proceeding to the appropriate procedures for implementation, is necessary, in order to examine the consistency of the scheme to your organisation's or destination's needs.

CHAPTER 3:

SERVICE QUALITY IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

"One single failure in an unexpected situation can turn a good quality assessment which was built up carefully over years into the opposite. In this way, even long-lasting relationships between customers and service providers may come to a sudden end. But the message for managers responsible for service quality is also: do not only be prepared for when things go wrong, also plan and create positive surprises for your customer".

Murphy, E.P., 1997 (cited in Staus & Hentschel, 1992)

3.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF CO-OPERATION AND ITS FORMS

Tourism belongs to the service sector, meaning that many ideas from service marketing and quality management have been put into practice in tourism organisations and companies, especially the larger ones.

It is preferable that organisations take the destination as a starting point for their quality improvement programme, instead of their own firm. When we talk about a tourist destination, the tourist product is an amalgam of various attractions, facilities and services. The tourist interacts with service providers and, as such, creates an individual and unique product. The tourist destination is actually the core product of the tourists' experiences, but it is the tourist who combines several secondary and additional sub-products, but only through co-operation individual interests can be satisfied.

The following forms of co-operation focusing on the consumer must be developed (Murphy, 1997):

- ❖ *Strategic alliance*, meaning a geographically restricted aggregation of sub-products.
 - the various sub-products must be adjusted to each other by strategic alliances between local/ regional organisations, based on the Tourist Opportunity Spectrum (the offer of opportunities a tourist expects at the destination)
 - a good knowledge and insight into the different organisations involved and the relative importance of their products/ services in the behaviour and experience of the tourist at the destination is required
 - the development of a cultural identity and image for the destination, and a shared interest in the quality of the physical environment
- ❖ *Sequential aggregation of sub-products*, meaning the sequential chain of these sub-products from the moment the tourist prepares his/ her vacation at home until the moment he returns home and evaluates his experiences, based on Service Chain.
 - a service-packet is being offered based on total quality concept (the various sub-products, the guarantees, the quality level of the total service and the savings offer a certain added value to the vacation experience)
 - more flexible opportunities for product differentiation and synergy between sub-products
 - relationship establishment between the service-chain and the customer
- ❖ *A combination of the above two forms*, meaning that the Tourist Opportunity Spectrum and Service Chain will persuade the tourist to visit the destination again, or to recommend it to friends and relatives.

According to Normann (1991), there are several different areas that the concept of quality refers to:

- ❖ the quality of the product or output
- ❖ the quality of the process

- ❖ the quality of production or delivery system
- ❖ the quality as a general philosophy pervading the whole organisation

This work will be mainly preoccupied to the quality of tourism as a general philosophy, giving the opportunity to the reader to understand the main benefits that a tourism destination and enterprise may achieve for economic, social and environmental prosperity.

3.2 PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY MODEL

Grönroos' (1990) Perceived Service Quality Model (exhibit 26) is a helpful instrument to understand factors that effect customer perceived quality in a company's service. The expected quality is directly influenced by the methods of marketing total tourism experience within an enterprise, the image created for a tourism product, the influence of the "word-of-mouth" advertisement and the customer requirements and needs. If the experienced quality (key questions for establishing an image are: what kind of services were provided? how these services were delivered to guests?) is equal to expected one, then total perceived quality has been managed holistically in the most successful manner.

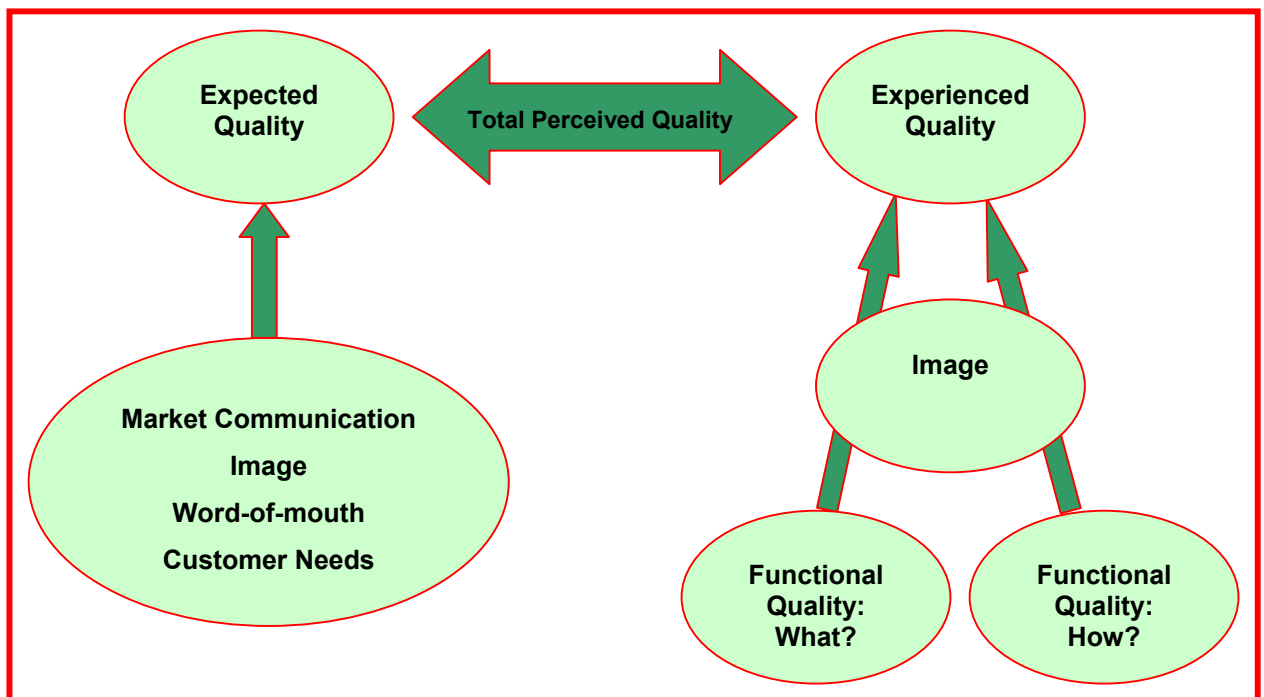


Exhibit 26: Model of the total perceived quality
Source: Grönroos, 1990

3.3 SERVICE QUALITY MODEL

Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry's (Edvardsson et al, 1994) Service Quality Model (exhibit 27) is a helpful instrument to define the objectives of quality management. It is basically customer-oriented and it helps to explain the co-service process.

According to this model, consumers' quality assessment will be influenced by a series of five distinct "gaps" (exhibit 28) in this co-service process. Quality Management Systems must attempt to close the five gaps in the model and to improve the quality of service as experienced by means of comparison between expected and perceived quality after the customer has received the service.

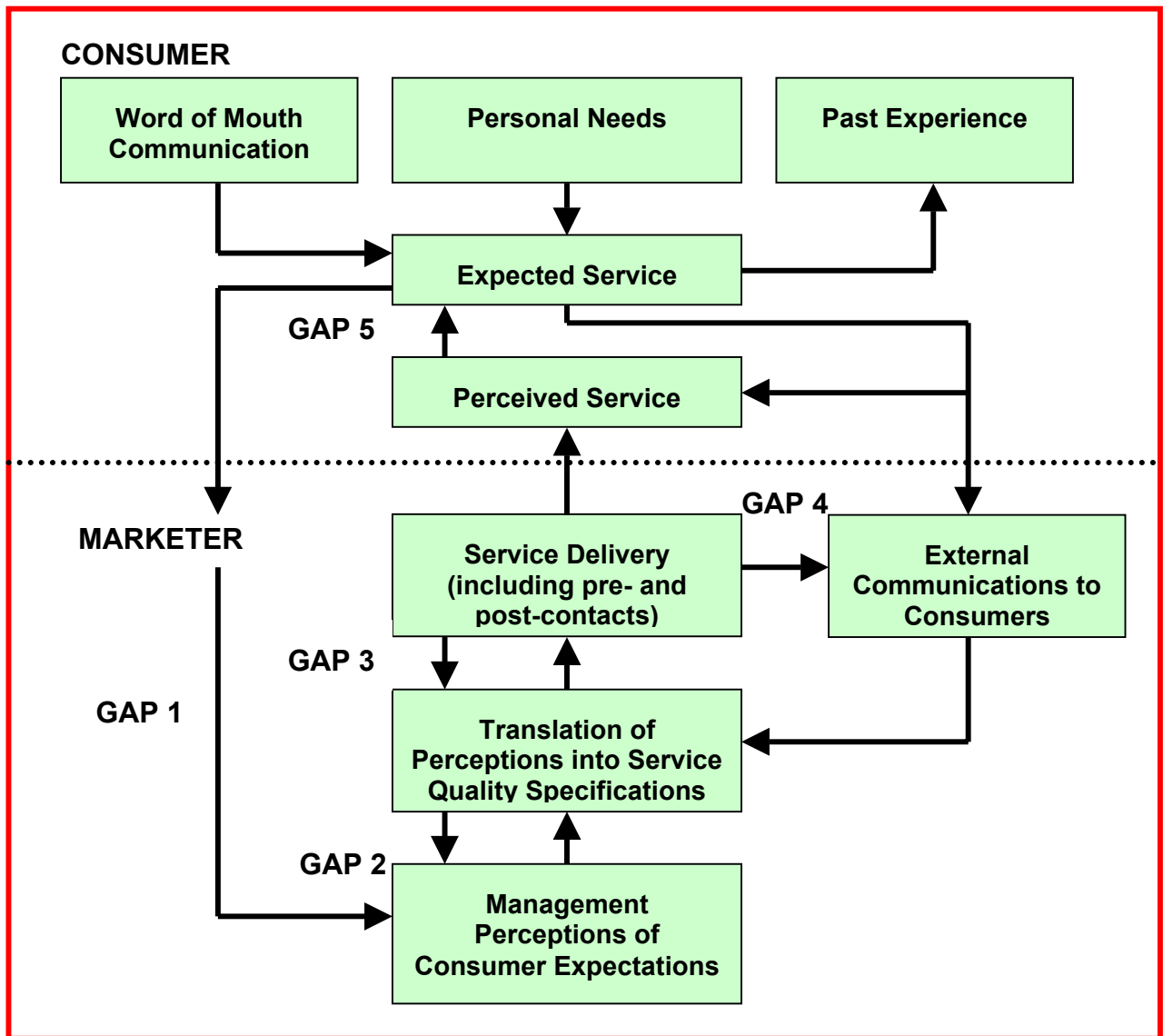


Exhibit 27: Model of service quality - The Gap analysis model
Source: Edvardsson et al, 1994

Gaps	Description
Gap 1	The difference between what the customer expects and what the management perceives the customer expects
Gap 2	The difference between what the management perceptions of consumer expectations of the service and its quality are, and specifications regarding service quality.
Gap 3	The difference between the specifications regarding service quality and the service which is actually delivered
Gap 4	The difference between the service delivery and what is communicated in marketing to the customer regarding the service
Gap 5	The difference between what the consumer expects and what the consumer perceives. The gap is influenced by the size and direction of the other four gaps.

Exhibit 28: The analysis of five gaps
Source: Adapted from Edvardsson et al, 1994

According to *Edvardsson et al (1994)*, the Gap Analysis Model for the management of destinations should take into account some extra inter-organisational factors that affect the different gaps (exhibit 29).

Gaps	Description	Activities
Gap 1	Destination Management (DM) should understand how the service should be designed, what support or secondary services the customer requires, and what the right quality for the customer would be	☐ marketing research orientation ☐ upward communication ☐ levels of management
Gap 2	DM should not reduce costs by placing internal restrictions on how service is to be performed, so that the staff can't meet customer expectations	☐ management commitment to service quality ☐ goal setting ☐ take standardisation ☐ perception of feasibility
Gap 3	DM should not only specify the quality of the service properly, but should pay attention to the personal contacts between customer and tourism staff as well	☐ teamwork ☐ employee-job fit ☐ technology-job fit ☐ perceived control ☐ supervisory control systems ☐ role conflict ☐ role ambiguity
Gap 4	The management should not promise the customer more than the destination can deliver, but, at the same time, should inform customers about the efforts being made to increase quality	☐ horizontal communication ☐ propensity to over promise
Gap 5	All items will indirectly influence gap 5 as well, where the emphasis is on delivering the promised and expected level of service experience	☐ reduce difference between expected and actual experience

Exhibit 29: The analysis of five gaps from a Destination Management perspective
Source: Adapted from Edvardsson et al, 1994

3.4 RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

In the service industry, it is the client who determines the quality of the service. Because services are unrepeatable, a certain quality can only be achieved if services are not offered anonymously. Service organisations, therefore, need to develop and maintain a good relationship with the client, which can be seen as a life cycle.

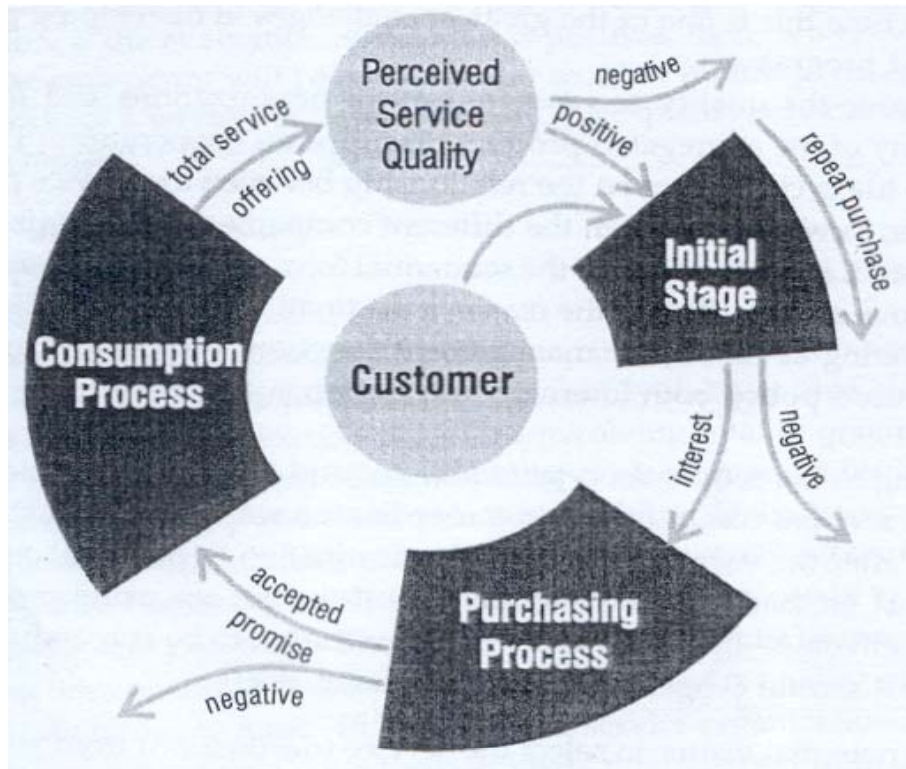


Exhibit 30: The customer relationship life cycle
Source: Postma et al, 1997 (cited in Grönroos, 1990)

Relationship Marketing (RM) (Postma et al, 1997) is defined as the process “to establish, maintain and enhance (usually, but not necessarily always, long-term) relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is achieved by a mutual exchange and fulfilment of promises.”

The main stages of Relationship Marketing are a) before the transaction (giving promises to establish the relationship), b) during the transaction (fulfilling the promises to maintain the relationship), and c) after the transaction (offering a new set of promises, with the fulfilment of earlier promises as a prerequisite) to enhance the relationship.

If the satisfied customer recommends the service organisation to his/ her friends and relatives, they might be persuaded to become acquainted with the service. Thus, the initial customer is functioning as a marketer him/ herself and relationship marketing can be seen as an instrument to communicate with the customer's network as well.

A destination service organisation needs to see marketing as its central management function, responsible for the whole communications policy, both internally (management) and externally (marketing) (Grönroos, 1990).

Researching in depth the relationship between the sequential type of alliance and the life cycle concept, for communication to be successful, the service organisations should (Postma et al, 1997):

- ❖ get the potential visitor to select the service (destination) from all information that he/ she receives
- ❖ give the potential visitor the benefit of the doubt, in weighing up the pros and cons of using the service
- ❖ use marketing in order to verify the promises about the service (destination) by adjusting the experience of the tourist with his/ her expectations and needs
- ❖ get the visitor to return to the same service (destination) or recommend it to others

3.5 MONITORING THE QUALITY

According to *Postma & Jenkins (1997)*, the perceived quality needs to be measured, both internally and externally.

Internal measurement refers to the measurement of objective criteria developed and/or posed by the destination organisation (technical quality, process quality, functional quality and relational quality - Total Quality Management/ TQM). The research methods that can be applied must also be objective - Attribute-based Methods.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry's (*Edvardsson et al, 1994*) *SERVQUAL Technique* attempts to measure the five main characteristics of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, corresponding with the gaps 1 to 5 in the gap model respectively. With SERVQUAL, the organisations are able to permanently monitor the internal routine service quality.

External measurement refers to the subjective expectations, needs, wants and experiences of the customer (expected quality, experienced quality, perceived quality). The research methods that can be applied must also be subjective - Incident-based Methods

Critical Incident Technique (CRIT) attempts to understand what is happening in the various "moments of truth" and the results are collected from small samples investigated in depth over time. It attempts to provide useful information for the development and the interpretation of the product, the widening of the domain of marketing and the quest for quality improvement. With CRIT, the organisations are able to understand customer problems and resolve them in a flexible way.

3.6 RISK OF ERRORS

Concerning the service quality provided at various tourist enterprises, it is appropriate to define the importance of the human factor. The hospitality industry is labour intensive, employing a high degree of human capital, meaning that the risk of error is high. The error can be made at any level (internal, and/or external) of the organisation, at managing, personnel or client level.

Levels	Key Questions
Managerial	☐ Which kind of decisions have been taken? ☐ For which reasons? ☐ Which particular ability do they reveal?
Personnel	☐ Which expectations have been expressed? ☐ Which criteria of judgement have been adopted? ☐ Are expectations proper or impossible?
Clients	☐ Which kind of performances have been achieved? ☐ Which was the object to attain? ☐ Which abilities have been employed?

Exhibit 31: Quality control of "Risk of Errors"

3.7 OTHER TOOLS FOR CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT

Apart from the internal and external measurement, there are some other tools to ensure quality of a product or service and enhance continual improvement to the tourism industry (exhibit 32).

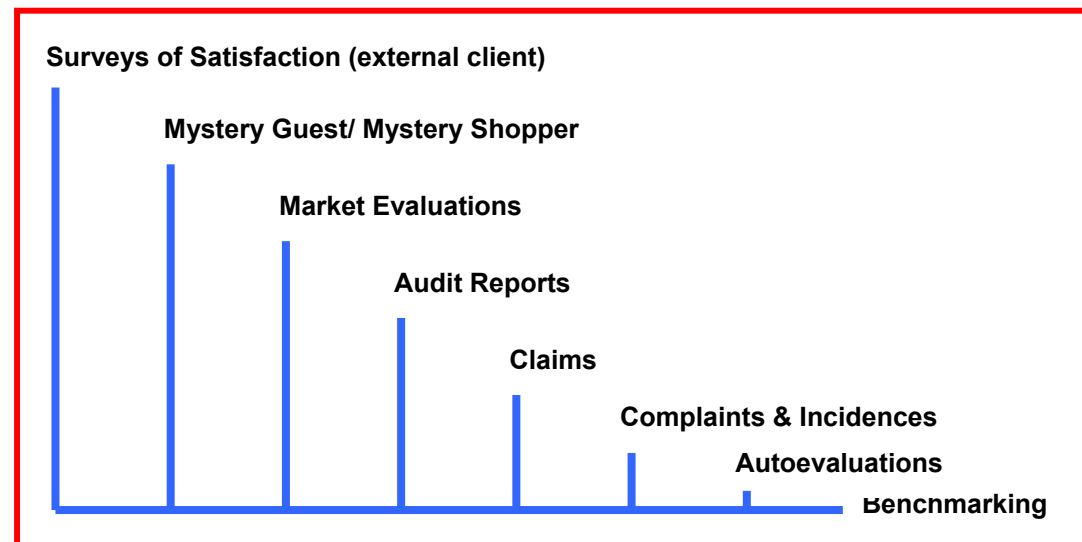


Exhibit 32: Continual Improvement Tools
Source: Reyad, 2006

- ❖ *Surveys of Satisfaction* are a valuable tool, where a guest may complete a questionnaire expressing his own subjective opinion of his/ her perceived experience while consuming the tourist product. A problem that may appear in such a case is that the guest-respondent may hesitate to answer sincerely to certain questions, thus testing the validity of the survey.
- ❖ *Mystery Guest/ Mystery Shopper* is a technique of secretly visiting companies/ organisations in question, to check the quality of services provided and to prepare and submit reports for management for feedback. This process is an ongoing one for continuous monitoring (exhibit 33).



Exhibit 33: Mystery Guest/ Mystery Shopper technique
Source: Reyad, 2006

- ❖ *Market Evaluations* are market reports, that are analysing current issues (e.g. competition, pricing policy etc.), useful for defining each company its strategic policies and marketing.
- ❖ *Audit Reports* are statements for inspection, correction and verification of business accounts, conducted by independent staff.
- ❖ *Claims* are developed in the form of a statement by the service provider and they have an informative form.
- ❖ *Complaints and Incidences* are oral or written complaints in specific forms, declaring incidents in “moments of truth” that led to guest’s dissatisfaction.
- ❖ *Autoevaluations* are these moments that managers, staff or other stakeholders evaluate the present situation, taking into consideration the market reports, complaints forms, “moments of truth” etc., for identifying the main source of malfunction, in order a solution to be provided.
- ❖ *Benchmarking* is the art of finding out how and why some companies can perform tasks much better than other companies. The aim of benchmarking a company is to adopt or improve upon its best practices (*Kotler, 1997*).

3.8 CREATING VALUE FOR THE GUESTS

Service Quality is a management tool that provides companies with a means of monitoring service from the customers’ perspective.



A Service Quality Management System (*Reyad, 2006*) is a result oriented approach. It deals with the characteristics of the service that really matter to end-user; it addresses service providers that have tangible results to expose to end users, consumers; it guarantees the customer the service they receive during their stay, and it provides staff with how to prove commitments to Service Quality.

By creating value for the guest, the lodging establishment can manage successfully to retain its guests. Managers must recognise the importance of client retention, since the attraction of a new consumer is regarded to be more expensive and time-consuming.

CHAPTER 4:**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM: A POSSIBLE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES**

"Technology will play an increasing role in providing a safe and healthy environment through environmental control and guest protection features; improved water quality and waste disposal process made possible by the advances in monitoring environmental variables and biotechnology applications which use bacteria to destroy harmful elements in the environment. Hoteliers who take advantage of these exciting discoveries will be one step up on the competition in winning business from safety-conscious guests."
Medlik, 2001 (cited in Michael Olsen, Into the new millennium)

4.1 TOURISM INDUSTRY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The tourism industry consists of various sectors, within which several enterprises operate, enhancing the income/ currency of a region/ country through tourist arrivals and expenditure, creating employment opportunities for a range of skills and capabilities, transforming the image of a destination through new investments on infrastructure or further refurbishment.

However, the increasing number of enterprises that operate directly or indirectly for the well being of the tourism industry may have also a negative impact to the environment. According to WTTC (2003), the key environmental issues are the global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer, the acid rain, the depletion and pollution of water resources, and the depletion and pollution of land resources.

Further to that, the main implications of resource depletion appear (WTTC, 2003) political instability or increased competition for land that could lead to loss of potential new tourism destinations and degradation of existing destinations; loss of landscape and wildlife that could cause a decrease in customer satisfaction with tourism products and hence lower propensity to travel to some destinations; higher fuel prices could lead to operational price increases and corresponding decreases in the number of travellers in this price-sensitive market.

4.1.1 Vision of Travel & Tourism and the Environment

Travel & Tourism is an integral aspect of modern societies, expressing nowadays a number of characteristics that could be the basis for the representatives of the tourism industry for the empowerment of the environment (WTTC, 2003).

- ❖ Global awareness of environmental damage is developing rapidly
- ❖ The resources of the world's largest industry can and must be harnessed to achieve environmental goals
- ❖ The industry has the potential to influence billions of customers per years and to use its leverage to achieve beneficial environmental effects
- ❖ The customer challenge will exert a growing pressure to achieve environmental improvements
- ❖ Environmental lobbies will add pressure to develop good environmental practice
- ❖ Self-regulation must be developed rapidly and effectively and used to influence the development of appropriate and workable regulations
- ❖ Corporate environmental mission statements are a vital first step toward self-regulation
- ❖ Environmental leadership must come from the major international companies

4.1.2 A Possible Allocation of Responsibility for Sustainable Development (SD) in Tourism

To all stakeholders, allocation of roles and responsibility (exhibit 34) for achieving sustainable development in tourism destinations and organisations, is advised. All companies at different levels of the tourism satisfaction chain must realise that quality is the competitive advantage in the today's demanding world, being so the discriminating factor that will lead to guests' satisfaction and economic prosperity.

Level/ Organisation	Responsibilities
Host Community/ Region	❑ Definition of tourism philosophy and vision for the community/ region ❑ Establishment of social, physical and cultural carrying capacity for the host community/ region
Destination Management Community/ Organisation	❑ Co-ordination of implementation of community SD plan tourism ❑ Monitoring of levels and impact of tourism in the community/ region
Individual Tourism/ Firms & Operators	❑ Fair contribution to implementation of SD plan for tourism ❑ Observance of regulations, guidelines and practices for SD
Host Community/ Region	❑ Encouragement/ acceptance of tourism within parameter of SD plan
Visitors/ Tourists	❑ Acceptance of responsibility for minimal self-education with respect to values of host region ❑ Acceptance and observance of terms and conditions of host community SD plan for tourism

Exhibit 34: An allocation of Responsibilities towards Sustainable Development
Source: Adapted from WTTC, 2003

Activities	Programming	Common Features
• Co-ordinating the development of a tourism philosophy and vision for the community/ region • Specifying the major goals of the community/region with respect to tourism • Obtaining consensus concerning the social, physical, and cultural carrying capacity of the community/region in question • Identifying the specific action initiatives necessary to meet the tourism development objectives while respecting the destination's carrying capacities • Gaining agreement on the measures to be used in monitoring the impacts of tourism in the community/region • Gathering and disseminating information concerning the impacts of tourism on the community/region	• Maximum total visitation levels to a community/region • An obligatory tax to support tourism infrastructure planning, development, and maintenance • Community-supported legislation to protect and preserve unique resources and heritage sites • Community and industry consensus concerning architectural and signage standards • Support for standards and certification programs that encourage staff development and the delivery of high-quality service	• The need to make an overall commitment to the physical and human environment, to accept responsibility for environmental damage and take corrective action where necessary, and to promote and reward outstanding environmental performance • The need to develop policies and strategies that take account of land-use planning regulations and the need to protect some areas from further development • The need to develop management policies that enhance beneficial and minimise adverse impacts on the environment • The need to co-operate with other firms, sectors and countries

Exhibit 35: Features, Activities, Programming towards Sustainable Development
Source: Adapted from WTTC, 2003

4.2 A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICE: MANAGING ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE ACCOMMODATIONS SECTOR

The Joint initiative of THE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS & THE TOUR OPERATORS' INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT (www.celb.org, 2003) published a guide to good practice, aiming at discussing important issues in the accommodation sector towards environmental and social management, the main points of which are expressed at this chapter.

4.2.1 Energy Management

Definition

Hotels use significant amounts of energy for daily operations and recreational activities. In many facilities, energy costs are the second-highest operational costs after payroll.

Why should I care?

- ❖ Investments in more efficient energy use and improved housekeeping practices can lead to significant reductions in operating costs and energy bills, with relatively short payback periods
- ❖ Using renewable energy can reduce local air pollution, maintain destination quality and enhance the guest experience
- ❖ Energy efficiency and conservation practices can enhance reputation among guests and others who are concerned about reducing global energy consumption and the effects of climate change

What can I do?

- ❖ Start by assessing existing energy use to determine where the highest energy consumption takes place within your premises and the most likely places for efficiency improvements
- ❖ Continue to regularly monitor your energy consumption. Daily or weekly monitoring of energy use helps to identify abnormal consumption and to quantify energy savings when efficient equipment is installed or a good practice is implemented
- ❖ Encourage guests to follow energy-saving practices, such as switching off lights and air conditioning, closing window shades before leaving their rooms and using towels or linens for more than one day
- ❖ Work with employees to identify energy-saving practices, such as lowering heating or air conditioning to a fixed temperature when cleaning the room, or operating dryers and dishwashers only with full loads. If you have a swimming pool, turn off the pump in the evening
- ❖ Regularly monitor and service all equipment, to ensure that it is running as efficiently as possible. Upgrade older, inefficient equipment or replace with newer technology
- ❖ Use products that require less energy to maintain, such as coloured sheets and towels or eco-labeled cotton products that can be launched at lower temperatures
- ❖ Use sensors and timers to turn off unnecessary lights in intermittent-use areas, such as meeting rooms, storage areas and public and staff bathrooms
- ❖ Reduce the number of elevators and escalators running during times of low use
- ❖ When feasible, use renewable energy sources, such as biogas, wind or solar power
- ❖ Contact national environmental protection agencies involved in promoting renewable energy and energy-saving measures for help in implementing an energy management plan

4.2.2 Water Use Management

Definition

In many areas of the world, demand for water exceeds supply and is seriously minimising available water resources. Some of the most water-stressed areas in the world, such as the Mediterranean, are also home to some of the largest international tourism destinations. Guest demand for water usually far exceeds that of local residents. In addition to the water required for each hotel room and general hotel management activities such as kitchens and laundry, features such as swimming pools, lawns and golf courses can add significantly to total usage. Excessive water use can degrade or destroy local water resources, threatening the availability of water for local needs. Problems may be made worse in areas where high tourist season corresponds with periods of low rainfall.

Why should I care?

- ❖ Decreasing overall water use can lead to cost savings, especially during periods of drought, use restrictions or increasingly strict government regulations on water use
- ❖ Reducing water use can conserve and protect local water resources upon which a hotel and the local community depend
- ❖ Preserving the quality of local water resources can eliminate the need for costly drinking water treatment processes
- ❖ Water conservation can enhance reputation among guests and others who are concerned about reducing water consumption and protecting local resources

What can I do?

- ❖ Identify the main areas of water consumption in your hotel where significant water savings may be achieved
- ❖ Regularly monitor your water consumption for each area of the hotel (kitchen, laundry, rooms, etc.). Daily or weekly monitoring helps to identify leaks and to quantify water savings when efficient equipment is installed or a good practice is implemented
- ❖ Encourage guests to use their towels or linens for more than one day. Provide guests with tips about water-saving measures such as turning off the taps in the sink when shaving or brushing their teeth
- ❖ Work with employees to identify water-saving practices, such as avoiding leaving water running, or operating washing machines and dishwashers only when full
- ❖ Engage your housekeeping and engineering departments in an active campaign to detect and repair leaking toilets, faucets and showerheads
- ❖ Install water-saving devices such as low-flush toilets and low-flow shower heads and faucets. Low-flow fixtures in showers can reduce the flow of water by 50 percent without affecting the comfort level of the user
- ❖ Maintain your equipment regularly. The absence of preventive maintenance generates small but regular leaks, which can correspond to an important loss of water
- ❖ Use technologies that reduce water use through recycling
- ❖ Avoid wasteful landscaping practices, such as hosing outdoor surfaces and watering gardens during the day
- ❖ Use drip irrigation systems and choose drought-resistant native plant species for landscaping

4.2.3 Wastewater Management

Definition

Hotels can produce significant quantities of wastewater, both graywater, which mainly comes from washing machines, sinks, showers, baths and roof runoff, and blackwater, which comes from kitchen dishwashing and toilets. In a number of destinations, little or none of this waste is treated, and pollutants such as fecal

coliform bacteria and chemicals are discharged directly into the environment. Poor sewage treatment can lead to pollution of ground and surface water, and degradation of marine resources, such as coral reefs. Among people, inadequate treatment of human waste can cause infection, gastro-intestinal disease, leptospirosis and cholera. In some coastal areas, beaches have been closed to the public because of high levels of chemical and organic pollution.

Why should I care?

- ❖ Proper wastewater treatment can reduce the chances of contamination of local drinking and agricultural water supplies, reducing the need to buy or treat drinking water and improving relations with local communities.
- ❖ Effective wastewater treatment can avoid serious illness among guests and staff members and limit the risk of litigation from guests who become infected after drinking or swimming in polluted waters.
- ❖ Treating wastewater and sewage may avoid fines and clean-up costs.
- ❖ Avoiding the discharge of untreated wastewater or sewage can protect tourism resources by conserving marine habitats and reducing coastal pollution.
- ❖ Coastal pollution can decrease business as potential guests cancel trips and seek alternative destinations.

What can I do?

- ❖ Minimise wastewater discharge by reducing water use
- ❖ Collect waste oil and grease for separate processing
- ❖ Use biodegradable detergents and cleaning agents that are compatible with the wastewater treatment technologies
- ❖ Minimise the use of chlorine, bleaches, detergents and other chemicals that end up in wastewater
- ❖ Ensure all wastewater is properly treated before it is released into the environment
- ❖ If a municipal system is available, check that the wastewater collection network is really going to a wastewater treatment plant and is not just discharged directly into the environment
- ❖ If no municipal system is available, work with other businesses and organisations and the local municipality to support the development of modern municipal wastewater treatment systems
- ❖ If no municipal system is available, identify the best options for treatment on site. If feasible, use natural wastewater treatment options that use plants and natural bacteria to purify water, rather than chemicals
- ❖ Reuse treated graywater for washing floors, flushing toilets and irrigating gardens and golf courses

4.2.4 Waste Management

Definition

Hotels produce large quantities of solid waste, from packaging to food scraps to cleaning and maintenance materials, some of which is toxic. In many cases, this waste is collected in badly designed waste dumps, discarded directly into oceans or rivers, or simply dumped in areas out of sight of guests. In addition to visually degrading a destination, improper waste disposal can lead to water and soil pollution through leaching of contaminants from waste piles. Poorly designed waste dumps can result in fires, odours, flies and ineffective containment of wastes. Uncontrolled disposal of toxic items such as paint cans and batteries can severely contaminate water, air and soil resources, threatening the environment and human health. Even where waste is disposed of legally, land fills have limited capacity, which is a particular problem on small islands.

Why should I care?

- ❖ An effective waste management program can reduce hauling and disposal fees
- ❖ Reuse and recycling of products can cut product purchasing costs
- ❖ Improper or illegal waste disposal may lead to significant fines and clean-up costs
- ❖ Proper waste disposal may limit the risk of litigation from guests or area residents who become ill from hazardous wastes
- ❖ Effective waste management can protect a hotel's image by limiting visual degradation of the area and enhancing approval from guests. The visible effects of waste disposal is the most mentioned concern by guests regarding their holiday destinations
- ❖ Waste dumped directly into oceans or rivers can decrease the quality of tourism resources by reducing fish populations and making the water unsuitable for recreational activities

What can I do?

- ❖ Begin by reviewing the types and quantities of waste produced and current disposal methods and costs
- ❖ Develop your solid waste management program around the three R's: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle
 - **REDUCE:** Buy products in bulk and with less packaging, to reduce waste generation
 - **REUSE:**
 - Replace disposable items with reusable ones, such as rechargeable batteries, refillable soap and shampoo containers and cloth laundry bags
 - Require vendors to take back pallets and crates
 - **RECYCLE:**
 - Separate waste at the source, rather than having to go through all the trash after it is collected. For example, provide containers for recyclables in guestrooms and compost bins in kitchen work areas
 - Where there is a market for recyclables, recycle items such as paper, glass, metal and plastic
 - Compost organic wastes such as food scraps, leaves and tree cuttings
 - Provide waste bins for your guests in key areas, particularly by the beach and along nature trails
 - Keep solid waste in a safe, sanitary holding place until it is picked up by the municipality or other disposal entities
 - Work with other businesses and organisations and the local municipality to support the development of efficient waste separation, collection, recycling and treatment systems

4.2.5 Chemical Use

Definition

Excessive or improper use, storage and disposal of chemicals and other hazardous wastes in daily operations can result in pollution and contamination of local environmental resources. Use of pesticides, fertilisers and herbicides for gardening and to control insects can lead to toxic runoff into streams, coastal waters and groundwater. Chemicals used for cleaning guest rooms or in recreational facilities such as swimming pools can contaminate local soil and water supplies and may pose a potential hazard to human health. Leakage of CFCs and HCFCs from refrigerators, air conditioners and other cooling equipment, as well as chemicals used for dry cleaning, in aerosols, fire extinguishers and foams, contribute to the depletion of the ozone layer.

- Why should I care?*
- ❖ Reduced use and responsible handling of chemicals and hazardous wastes can maintain the quality of tourism resources by minimising the potential for air, water or soil pollution
 - ❖ Improper use, including overuse of chemicals poses a real threat to the health and safety of guests and staff members
 - ❖ Effective management of chemicals and hazardous wastes can reduce water treatment costs and the quantity and cost of chemicals purchased by the hotel
 - ❖ Proper use, storage and disposal of chemicals and hazardous wastes can ensure compliance with government regulations and reduce potential fines or clean-up costs
- What can I do?*
- ❖ Limit the number of chemical products used on your property
 - ❖ Reduce contaminants by using natural products such as salt, vinegar and baking soda to clean ovens, drains, windows and floors
 - ❖ Use biodegradable and environmentally certified (e.g. Green Seal, The Nordic Swan, the EU Flower) cleaning agents, paints, solvents and other products
 - ❖ Use automatic dosing for chemicals for cleaning and swimming pools, to ensure that the appropriate amounts of chemicals are used for each task
 - ❖ Train staff in how to handle and dispose of chemicals and hazardous materials responsibly and safely
 - ❖ Dispose of hazardous materials responsibly and according to local laws and international standards
 - ❖ Regularly monitor air conditioners, heat pumps, refrigerators, freezers and kitchen cooling equipment to detect and eliminate leakage of ozone-depleting CFCs and HCFCs
 - ❖ Convert existing equipment to utilise low-Ozone Depleting Potential (ODP) or zero-ODP chemicals. This generally requires replacement of existing equipment parts and/or change of lubricating oil. When purchasing new equipment, choose those that use zero-ODP chemicals
 - ❖ When making landscaping decisions, choose native plants that require less water, pesticides, fertilisers and herbicides
 - ❖ Use compost or other organic substitutes for chemical fertiliser
 - ❖ If possible, use fish, iguanas or other animals to control insects, in place of dangerous pesticides and other chemicals

4.2.6 Purchasing

Definition

Hotels purchase vast quantities of products, including cleaning and laundry supplies, food and beverages, equipment, vehicles, office supplies, furniture, bedding and toiletries for guest bathrooms. These products can have negative environmental impacts through their manufacture, distribution, use and disposal. Products can also have negative social impacts if they are produced using unfair labour practices. By working with suppliers and service contractors, hotels and hotel associations are in a position to promote environmental and social improvements in manufacturing and production. Product purchasing decisions also impact the levels of waste produced by a hotel, as well as the potential for local air, water or soil pollution generated through the use or disposal of these products.

- Why should I care?*
- ❖ Purchasing materials with a minimal environmental impact from manufacturing, use and disposal can maintain the quality of tourism resources by reducing the potential for air, water and soil pollution
 - ❖ Buying products made with less packaging or materials can lower waste disposal costs

What can I do?

- ❖ Purchasing environmentally and socially benign products can enhance reputation among guests and others who are concerned about wasteful or harmful product use
- ❖ Buying local, sustainable products can reduce waste and improve relationships with local communities by increasing tourism-generated income in the wider community
- ❖ When possible, purchase products that are certified for their environmental quality. Looking for products with reliable third-party environmental labels, such as Green Seal, the EU Flower or Nordic Swan, will allow you to take advantage of external expertise when making purchasing decisions
- ❖ When possible, buy fair trade products
- ❖ Take an active role in influencing and working with suppliers. Environmentally friendly products cannot always be identified with eco-labels. Working with suppliers will also help you to identify environmental issues and the best available products
- ❖ Where possible, require suppliers to have and adhere to an environmental policy and fair labour practices
- ❖ Ensure that on-site vendors use environmentally and socially sound practices
- ❖ Provide guests with information on locally produced alternatives to imported goods, such as bottled water, as well as a list of local products and services to avoid, such as souvenirs made from endangered species
- ❖ Buy paper products that have a high post-consumer recycled content and are not chlorine bleached.
- ❖ When feasible, buy products for which a recycling market already exists
- ❖ Buy products in bulk and with less packaging, to reduce packaging, storage, transport and disposal costs
- ❖ Buy local products and materials that require less transport, packaging and storage and may enhance community relationships and goodwill

4.2.7 Contribution to Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

Definition

Tourism development can have significant environmental impacts on both inland and coastal areas. Beyond simply reducing negative impacts, hotels can also seek opportunities to benefit biodiversity and nature conservation by contributing to improving the state of the environment at a local, regional or national level. Such action can be particularly important in countries where capacity and resources for environmental conservation are limited.

Why should I care?

- ❖ In many places, the natural environment is the basis of a holiday. Contributions to conservation can help to preserve natural tourism resources
- ❖ Support for conservation can minimise the risks of future environmental problems and preserve destination quality
- ❖ Contributions to conservation can enhance reputation among guests and others who are concerned about global and local biodiversity loss and environmental damage
- ❖ Promoting responsible ways to enjoy the environmental resources in a destination will improve the guest experience
- ❖ Supporting conservation efforts can generate positive publicity and improve reputation and relationships with local people and organisations
- ❖ Winning environmental awards for successful conservation programs can lead to positive publicity

What can I do?

- ❖ Work with government officials and other local groups to evaluate the local situation and identify the best strategies for benefiting conservation
- ❖ Partner with local or national groups to promote conservation
- ❖ Make financial contributions to local conservation efforts
- ❖ Sponsor environmental education in surrounding communities
- ❖ Provide in-kind support to biodiversity management
- ❖ When possible, set aside land as a private reserve
- ❖ Encourage staff to become involved in volunteer projects such as beach clean-ups
- ❖ Educate guests as to how they can make a positive contribution to local biodiversity conservation efforts

4.2.8 Contribution to Community Development

Definition

Tourism development can have significant impacts on local communities. Environmental damage from development may degrade or restrict access to resources, such as farmland, water or forests, upon which local people depend. In some cases, people may be displaced by hotels or other guest infrastructure. Local people who initially welcomed tourism as a source of employment, wealth, resources and infrastructure may find that development fails to provide them with the benefits they envisioned. Although hotels do generate jobs in many service and support sectors, these jobs often do not go to the local people who are most impacted by tourism development, particularly those who lack skills or start-up capital. Much of the revenue from tourism may never make it to local communities because of foreign ownership of hotels or use of imported goods. Finally, insensitivity to local cultures, traditions and practices on the part of guests or hotel staff may lead to conflict and anti-tourist feelings among local communities.

Why should I care?

- ❖ Contributions to community development can help to improve relations with local communities and minimise the risk of future conflicts
- ❖ Supporting community development can generate positive publicity and improve reputation
- ❖ Contributions to community development can enhance approval from guests and others who are concerned about local community welfare
- ❖ Providing benefits to local people can support conservation goals by offering alternative, relatively non-destructive sources of livelihood
- ❖ Improving economic linkages with local communities and businesses supports the sustainability of tourism destinations

What can I do?

- ❖ Help to develop and actively support locally run tourism-related businesses
- ❖ Buy locally produced goods and services. Buy from medium, small and micro-enterprises, as well as entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities and indigenous groups
- ❖ Employ local people
- ❖ Develop training programs covering both basic skills and those necessary for promotion, so that local people can be phased into management positions over time
- ❖ Provide language classes for local workers who do not speak the dominant language of the guests
- ❖ Encourage employees to volunteer in local communities and to follow environmental practices at home
- ❖ Provide information to guests on the area's cultural and religious characteristics and offer tips on how they can ensure that their own behaviour respects these

characteristics. Encourage guests to purchase locally produced products and support local service providers

- ❖ Work with local partners to support projects that increase community well-being
- ❖ Provide support for local schools
- ❖ Support local communities with old or unused products

4.2.9 Social Issues in the Workplace

Definition

The tourism industry provides employment for million people. There is a growing movement to ensure that tourism develops ethically and respects human rights. Most of the focus on human rights in the tourism industry has revolved around labour laws and poor working conditions (such as long hours, low pay, lack of job stability and limited career prospects), as well as the use of child labour or forced labour, child sexual exploitation and gender issues. Also included are non-discrimination issues, poverty issues, environmental and indigenous issues, including land rights, protection of human dignity and freedom of association and the rights to collective bargaining.

Why should I care?

- ❖ Respecting employees' human rights can ensure that operations comply with relevant laws and avoid fines and lawsuits
- ❖ Ensuring that employees are treated well and are fairly compensated can minimise the risk of antagonism and anti-tourist feelings and help promote a welcoming and supportive attitude toward guests
- ❖ Fair treatment of employees and local communities can bolster staff morale and enable a business to become an employer of choice
- ❖ Promoting equal rights among all employees can minimise friction between local and foreign employees and management and support staff

What can I do?

- ❖ Ensuring that dialogue and negotiations are conducted with freely elected workers' representatives can guarantee authentic consultations on management decisions affecting staff and their acceptance by staff, as well as a constructive long-term attitude of employees toward the goals of the hotel
- ❖ Respecting the rights of employees and neighbouring communities can help safeguard the reputation of the business
- ❖ Respecting the rights of indigenous communities can mitigate against adverse attention from non-governmental organisations or the media
- ❖ Undertake a study into the potential human rights impacts of your business on employees, local communities and other stakeholders
- ❖ Provide a fair living wage and benefits to all employees
- ❖ Sign formal contracts with all employees
- ❖ Adopt a formal position/policy on human rights that commits the business to upholding fundamental human rights
- ❖ Establish policies and guidelines to protect employees' health and safety in the workplace

4.2.10 Environmental Management Systems

Definition

The most effective way to implement all the pre-mentioned recommendations is by developing a broad environmental management system (EMS) that guides operating decisions. By providing a systematic method for integrating environmental and social considerations into business operations, an EMS can help a business evaluate, manage and reduce its impacts. Although the traditional name for such a scheme is an environmental management system, it can be used to guide both environmental and social activities. The key to a successful and effective EMS is ensuring the full

support, contribution and participation of all people who are involved, including employees, guests, business partners and local communities. Staff commitment and participation should come from all parts of the organisation, not just top management. Guest education is also an important part of an effective EMS, as many of its components, such as turning off lights and other electrical appliances, using less water or avoiding unsustainable local products, will require active guest support.

Why should I care?

- ❖ An EMS can allow a hotel or company to avoid duplication of effort by integrating environmental and social practice into operations in a systematic way
- ❖ Organising environmental and social activities under an EMS can allow more efficient use of a company's resources
- ❖ An EMS allows a company to monitor and assess its successes and failures related to environmental and social issues, identify problems and improve its performance based upon this information
- ❖ Having a single, public EMS can facilitate the buy-in of staff, guests, business partners and local communities

What can I do?

- ❖ Appoint a task force that includes staff from all departments and levels to design, implement and evaluate the EMS
- ❖ Conduct a thorough review of current practices at the hotel, identifying opportunities for improvement and setting priorities for action. This review should include energy use, water use, waste management, chemical use, product purchasing, community relations and potential impacts on the local environment
- ❖ Work with your staff and other relevant parties to develop and publish an environmental and social mission statement, standards, goals and action plan
- ❖ Designate a specific staff member or group to have responsibility for each component of your action plan and then report back to the task force. Provide these individuals with clear instructions on how to accomplish each goal
- ❖ Educate staff about goals and activities, through orientations, briefings, memos, incentive programs, performance reviews and other methods
- ❖ Communicate goals and activities to guests and advise them on how they can reduce their environmental impact and support local conservation and community development projects
- ❖ Regularly assess if goals have been met and evaluate successes and failures
- ❖ Use information collected during regular assessments to review your policy, goals and action plan, to determine what changes need to be made
- ❖ Provide regular feedback to staff, guests and the local community on achievements and acknowledge outstanding individual performance

4.3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEN R'S FRAMEWORK TOWARDS TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY

In small to medium-sized organisations the 10 R's can be introduced and implemented separately, depending on the capabilities of each operation, while in large organisations the 10 R's can be integrated within an overall Environmental Management System.

The above-mentioned issues can be summarised into the 10 R's framework by Middleton (exhibit 36).

R's	Description	Case Example
<i>Recognising</i>	...the issues, the problems, and the opportunities surrounding the principles of sustainability	☐ Unless we have a full understanding of the issues and problems we have no basis for evaluating and monitoring
<i>Refusing</i>	... to participate in activities that are deemed to be damaging to the sustainability of the operation	☐ For example, the illegal dumping of hazardous chemicals
<i>Reducing</i>	...the usage of energy and waste	☐ For example, placing presence sensors in rooms to control air-conditioning, using low pressure sprinkler systems
<i>Replacing</i>	...supplies and processes that may be deemed environmentally unfriendly	☐ For example, replacing energy-inefficient incandescent lights with energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs, and installing timers on outdoor lighting
<i>Reusing</i>	...supplies in order to be more economically efficient	☐ For example, recycle paper by using it on both sides for memos and scrap pads
<i>Recycling</i>	...those materials that the tourism operation can no longer use, by passing them on to other organisations to use as raw materials	☐ For example, old guest towels can be given to charities and the homeless or recycled for use as cleaning rags
<i>Re-engineering</i>	...traditional corporate management structures and operations to achieve further growth and better competitiveness	☐ For example, appoint a member of staff to develop programs to reduce waste and increase recycling
<i>Retain staff</i>	...for enhancing levels of economic business and for staff satisfaction	☐ For example, develop training programs on environmental issues in the workplace, or involve staff in industry seminars and training sessions
<i>Reward</i>	...groups and individuals within the operation for initiatives and implementation of sustainable practices	☐ For example, develop energy conservation programs for the workplace, with recognition or rewards given to those who make a special effort
<i>Re-educate customers</i>	...towards sustainability efforts and issues	☐ For example, incorporate best practice behaviour into information and promotional kits

Exhibit 36: The 10 R's framework
Source: Adapted from Middleton

CHAPTER 5:**QUALITY TOURISM****TOWARDS COMPETITIVENESS OF TOURISM COMPANIES & DESTINATIONS**

Competition in the tourism industry can be found in three levels: domestic, international and global. The market analysts should be aware of this multi-dimensional, horizontal, destination-wise function of tourism competition, in order to identify the main competitive markets for a certain destination, to examine their main characteristics (tourist arrivals and expenditure, supply of tourist product, levels of infrastructure etc.), to identify the main challenges aroused for planning and implementing the appropriate managerial techniques and policies towards the enhancement of a competitive sustainable tourism product.

Speaking of challenges in the tourism industry, it is proper to analyse the urge of investing in basic factors, such as quality rather than quantity, safety and security; the urge of investing in intangibles, such as positive surprises, service and staff; the urge to connect with the world market, such as use of new information technology, observation of benchmarks; and the urge of winning public and international support through partnership, international assistance and finance.

5.1 QUALITY AND SAFETY & SECURITY

Quality in tourism together with safe and secure environments make the national economy more competitive and attractive to international investment for both tourism development and other types of regional development.

The companies or organisations in order to gain from the positive results of quality in tourism regarding competitiveness should favour (*Handszuh, 2006d*) national exports and make imports cheaper, make international credit more accessible and cheaper, promote business ethics, and empower staff/ employees making them more confident, skilled, creative and entrepreneurial in the national economy.

Quality in tourism caters for a number of political benefits for the nation, the government and the businesses, too. Quality in tourism moves society away from violence and ensures quality for life for all, due to the strength achieved by true hospitality, skills and business favouring environment; the increased capability for international co-operation for development, poverty elimination and other millennium goals; the additional ability given to form or to contribute to pro-development international coalitions; the positive feeling towards international investors; the preservation and enhancement of cultural identity and authenticity as competitive values (*Handszuh, 2006d*).

Quality for all means certain roles for all. Thus, governments must allocate resources, such as basic infrastructure, education and training, promote incentives and services by legislation, and include priorities in international promotion and co-operation. On the other hand, businesses must adopt strategic decisions on determining and managing quality and safety & security issues, adapt more to customers' needs than wants, plan activities longer - rather than short-term, co-operate with other quality-driven companies and suppliers, and be open to partnership with the public sector by knowing, articulating and substantiating their own needs in public support.

Safety & Security in tourism is the most important underlying factor for tourism quality. It is vital to human beings, derives from the instinct of survival, implies inviolability of persons, respect for their mental and physical integrity and human rights and, also, implies an exercise of duties.

Risk of travellers and visitors in a destination originate (exhibit 37) from the human and institutional environment, such as terrorism, the tourism and related sectors, the natural environment and the same individual travellers being insecure, ignorant, carefree, abusing and unruly.

Date	Place	Location/ Target	Medium
A. Focus on terrorism attacks, due to globalisation			
September 11th, 2001	New York, Washington D.C., Pennsylvania, USA	public buildings	air transport of passengers
October 12th, 2002	Kuta, Bali, Indonesia	site of holidaymakers' entertainment	bombing
August-November 2002	Alicante, Spain; Mombassa, Kenya	holiday hotels	bombing
May 2003	Casablanca, Morocco	international restaurant	bombing
March 11th, 2004	Madrid, Spain	commuter trains near railway stations	bombing
October 2004 - August 2005	Taba - Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt	hotels, coastal camps	bombing
April 2005	Dahamp, Egypt	resort hotel	bombing
B. Focus on natural hazards			
December, 2004	Thailand, other Pacific islands	sea resorts and attractions	"tsunami" – sea phenomenon
April 2006	Peru	touristic places	volcano explosion
Various dates	USA, ASIA	touristic places	typhoons, other phenomena

Exhibit 37: Actual risks of travellers and visitors in various destinations

At the following table (exhibit 38) there is a list of possible market effects of a terrorism attack in world-tourism.

September 11th, 2001(New York, Washington D.C., Pennsylvania, USA)
☐ Contraction in international/ long haul tourism and volatility in marketplace
☐ Heavy investment in security
☐ New protagonism of "travel advisories"
☐ Growth of domestic and intra-regional tourism, shorter stays and customer-tailored holidays
☐ Price competition and lowering quality
☐ Search for quality products by the better off

Exhibit 38: Market effects of a terrorism attack in world tourism: The case of September 11th, 2001

Source: Adapted from Handszuh, 2006d

Safety & Security perceptions and travel decisions are based on (*Brunt et al, 2000*) objective statement of shortcomings, the impact of media, susceptibility of political use and weapon, stereotypes, cultural bias, ignorance, psychological factors in travellers and special objective conditions of travellers (e.g. health, disability, psychology). In other words, Safety & Security is threatened by the political

treatment, the role in media coverage, the approach by tour operators and the way of dealing with short- and long-term causes.

For avoiding unwanted impact, there are some practical recommendations. It is important to recognise the need of single events to be dealt with locally, to show terrorist acts in context and proportion, to ponder adequately in travel warnings, to reconcile warnings with affected countries and to provide tourism personnel with the intelligence needed to solve possible crises.

Managing Safety & Security problems in tourism, also, requires (*Brunt et al, 2000*) an active and forward looking role of the tourism sector; prevention, risk control and crisis management; capacity building; co-operation and partnership in order to achieve definition and acceptance of responsibilities under the public (regulatory framework for tourism, public safety and security, law enforcement bodies, European Union's "blacklisted airlines", managing health information, public health emergencies) and the private sector (implementing the regulatory framework), transparency, assistance and services on Safety & Security.

Transparency in Safety & Security communication encompasses certain guidelines (*Handszuh, 2006d*), such as do not evade; do not confuse with promotion; talk constructively; inform and communicate objective risks and dangers; do not frighten but gain customer confidence; learn, educate and involve customers; indicate customers' responsibilities; inform of responsibilities of others; communicate assistance and Safety & Security services; be responsive to Safety & Security claims and crises.

Assistance and Safety & Security services to operate perfectly need (*Handszuh, 2006d*) knowledgeable Safety & Security focal points in tourism industry, access to reliable public services, availability of reliable private services and administrative framework for private Safety & Security services.

5.1.1 Safety & Security Systems in Tourism

A Safety & Security System for tourism is feasible to be built and implemented into a facilitation, meaning quality. *Medlik (1997)*, in his travel and tourism dictionary, refers that "facilitation is usually referred to measures taken by authorities to remove restrictions on movement, such as reduction and simplification of border controls". According to *WTO (2006)*, facilitation refers basically to the conditions, formalities, procedures and information requirements of measures and services for entry into a national destination (country), and for departure from a national destination, as well as for movements in the national territory and access to destination services and facilities.

Safety & Security information (exhibit 39) can be given to the public from the web sites, at the embassies and/ or consulates, at tourism information offices, at point of entry into national destination (on public security and transport from airports and stations).

Facilitation on Entry
☐ Entry visas (including transit visas): requirement, cost, waiting time, method for obtaining one (personal presence, through intermediaries, by mail, at border) ☐ Immigration service (passport and visa): forms to complete (scope, space, content, comprehension), waiting time, professionalism and attitude of immigration officers (education & training) ☐ Health formalities upon entry ☐ Security means and measures: equipment, written/ screen information, voice announcements ☐ Baggage service (waiting time, baggage handling)

☐ Customs and currency importation facilities: information on arrival, waiting time, declaration of imported items and currency, baggage search, green line, professionalism and attitude of personnel ☐ Currency exchange services (availability, fair and guaranteed exchange rates, safety of operations) ☐ Other formalities (e.g. airport or security charges) ☐ Personal hygiene services ☐ Facilities for arriving passengers with disabilities ☐ Access to safe public and private transport on arrival ☐ Co-ordination among entry services: planning, process, sequence, distance, sharing passenger information and services
Facilitation on Departure
☐ Relevant outward formalities, measures, facilities and services mentioned under entry ☐ Protection of species and objects of historical or cultural value ☐ Exportation of cultural items
Facilitation of Travel & Stay in national territory
☐ Links with local destinations via public or private transport ☐ Safety of national transport ☐ Obtaining transport tickets ☐ Harassment ☐ Access to banks/ use of payment cards ☐ Requirements for notifying police of whereabouts during travel on national territory
Exhibit 39: Safety & Security Systems in Tourism Source: Adapted from WTO, 2006

Apart from facilitation, some requirements should also be examined, in order an “ideal” safe tourism destination to exist (exhibit 40). If Safety & Security Systems include in their process a few more criteria together with the fact that the relevant governmental departments establish certain regulatory frameworks, then the path towards a safe and secure environment is open. Consequently, the consumers’ hesitation to travel because of terrorist attacks, or natural hazards etc. will diminish.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A SAFE TOURISM DESTINATION
☐ General and specific commitment by the government to aid visitors who fall victim to safety and security problems ☐ Adequate protection of tourism facilities and sites ☐ Staff at tourism enterprises, facilities and sites trained to deal with safety and security problems affecting customers and visitors
CRITERIA FOR AN “IDEAL” SAFE TOURISM DESTINATION
Definition and assumption of Responsibilities, by: ☐ The public sector by area of competence ☐ The private sector by activity, according to regulatory framework and voluntary commitment
Adoption of and compliance with safety and security standards by Area of Application: ☐ Fire prevention ☐ Food safety ☐ Other health safety requirements characteristic of destination ☐ Environmental standards ☐ Unlawful interference and terrorism ☐ Other relevant safety and security standards and practices characteristic of a destination

Adoption of information and education policy to attend crises and achieve Transparency:

- ☐ Identification of potential tourist risks and dangers
- ☐ Communication of potential risks and hazards to those concerned (visitors, commercial agents)
- ☐ Communication to those concerned of existing safety and security standards and practices in the destination
- ☐ Communication of measures, facilities and services to assist victims and visitors in emergencies
- ☐ System for collection, analysis and communication of tourism safety and security information

Existence and effective access to institutional, public and private measures, Facilities & Services:

- ☐ Immediate assistance (help lines, first-aid, emergency services, police services)
- ☐ Reliable health services (facilities, personnel, materials)
- ☐ Expatriate services (access to and collaboration with diplomatic and consular representatives)
- ☐ Travel assistance
- ☐ Insurance services
- ☐ Consumer protection
- ☐ Public repatriation facilities and services
- ☐ Compensation measures, including for victims of terrorism

Exhibit 40: Safety & Security Systems towards an "ideal" safe tourism destination

Source: Adapted from WTO, 2006

5.2 QUALITY AND CLASSIFICATION, BRANDS, CERTIFICATION, ETHICS & SUSTAINABILITY

During the first stages of a market analysis of a tourist establishment, the targeted market segment is to be determined. The classification or category of the establishment is determined by its facilities and services and is enhanced by the level of luxury provided to the customers, meaning that the highest the level of luxury, the highest the quality, the greater the spending ability of the guest, and the opposite. However, a unit to be commercially viable needs to market itself based on the actual facilities and services and the level of which are provided to the customer, taking into consideration that quality is for all spenders.

Today, branding is a strong force, despite it poses several challenges to the marketer. A manager faces issues such as, branding decision, brand-sponsor decision, brand-name decision, brand-strategy decision and brand-repositioning decision (*Kotler, 1997*). Branding is a concept that brings added value to a tourism establishment; it is not an obstacle to classification. Classification of lodging establishments is common, and in most countries it is obliged by regulatory framework. The common methods of rating are those of the American Automobile Association-AAA (diamonds) or Mobile Automobile Association (stars) or, in some cases, the classification on a system of categories (A,B,C etc.). The most common and easily comparable is the star-rating.

In addition, the application of a management system in the accommodation sector, means technical specifications, requirements, guidelines and processes under a specific standard to be adapted by the enterprise. After classification and branding, the application of a certification system can bring to the unit the desired competitive advantage.

The importance of ethics should be mentioned here. It is essential for the manager and staff to be aware of different cultures, religions, political beliefs etc. of the customers that caters or accommodates. These kind of matters require delicacy and diplomacy in most cases, for avoiding possible conflicts, for being aware of the customers' expectations and requirements.

Having delivered all the above to the guests, what it still remains is the application of sustainable development, which is a broad objective, involving economic, social and environmental dimensions. Sustainability is a long-term objective, meaning that it can be a long-term result of continuous quality driven development. On the other hand, quality is perceived instantly, meaning that it adds commercial, competitive value to sustainability plans.

The relationship between Quality and Luxury	
Luxury	Quality
Quantity/ abundance Space Availability of uses and services Type of expensive equipment/ materials used	Working condition and maintenance of equipment and materials Ergonomy, comfort, effective access to destinations, facilities, uses and services Seamless and humane service Meaningful experience
The relationship between Quality and Classification	
Classification/ Category	Quality
Physical and services characteristics of establishment Level of product/ service sophistication	Reaching expected level of consumer satisfaction within given category/ class Delivering products/ services as promised in good order
Category is static	Quality is dynamic
The relationship between Quality & Classification and Brands	
Brands	Quality & Classification
Brands are commercial trademarks distinguishing products within their generic types Each brand or sub-brand establishes its own type, content (scope) and level of quality Brands are therefore associated with determined quality characteristics Existence of brand attribution does not ensure compliance with quality characteristics unless quality is properly managed	If a general brand has developed related sub-brands, these can be compared to classification categories Branding is not an obstacle to grading establishments according to categories
The relationship between Quality and Certification	
Certification	Quality
First-, second- and third-party audits and certification Audits are always useful Certification should meet specific objectives	Quality can be indirectly audited and eventually certified in terms of technical specifications, processes and management systems
The relationship between Quality and Ethics	
Ethics	Quality
Assumed/ learnt/ result of education Permanent approach, proven by aptitude and demonstrated by attitude of notions, such as not to injure, justice, respect, participation Adapts to people's identities and needs	Derives from ethics as a basis, but needs to be trained Adds knowledge how to do things right (know-how) at all levels and at all times
The relationship between Quality and Sustainability	
Sustainability	Quality
Seeks fair economic remuneration and enhancement of environmental and social resources without damaging them	It is part of sustainability plan based on ethical ("no damage") and managerial considerations Many sustainability indicators substantiate quality requirements

Exhibit 41: The relationship between Quality and Classification, Brands, Certification, Ethics & Sustainability

Source: Adapted from WTO, 2006

5.3 INTERNATIONAL ISSUES AND TRENDS CONCERNING QUALITY IN TOURISM

5.3.1 The Main Syndromes of the Tourism Industry

The main initiatives for quality carried out by tourism companies on an individual level are focused on defining their own standards, adopting a brand and meeting its' standards, and beginning an internal quality management programme, aiming at achieving both short- and long-term perspectives.

The main issues related to quality management in local and national tourism destinations are three kinds of symptoms (exhibit 42). The first is the syndrome of the “elephant”, which deals with the rapid and unruly development of tourism, without before identifying the needs, the carrying capacity of a destination, the possible crises, in order to develop regulations or a regulatory framework and then implement it respectively. The only solution in this case is the step-by-step development examining further all the requirements, hesitations and developing the appropriate criteria. The second syndrome is the well known “push and pull”. Co-operation between the public and private sector is prerequisite to manage holistically the above-mentioned syndrome. Private and public partnership may contribute the best to a destination or a country, since both public and private interests are to be fulfilled together with keeping a social, economic, cultural and environmental balance for the tourism consumer. Last, the third syndrome is the “maze”. If there are no guidelines, no standards to be followed, regulatory framework that is overpassed by the enterprises, then chaos and anarchy prevails throughout the tourist satisfaction chain. The Tourist Satisfaction Chain is a helpful tool for identifying the starting point and the main sectors that quality management programmes should be applied, in order to establish quality in a tourism destination.

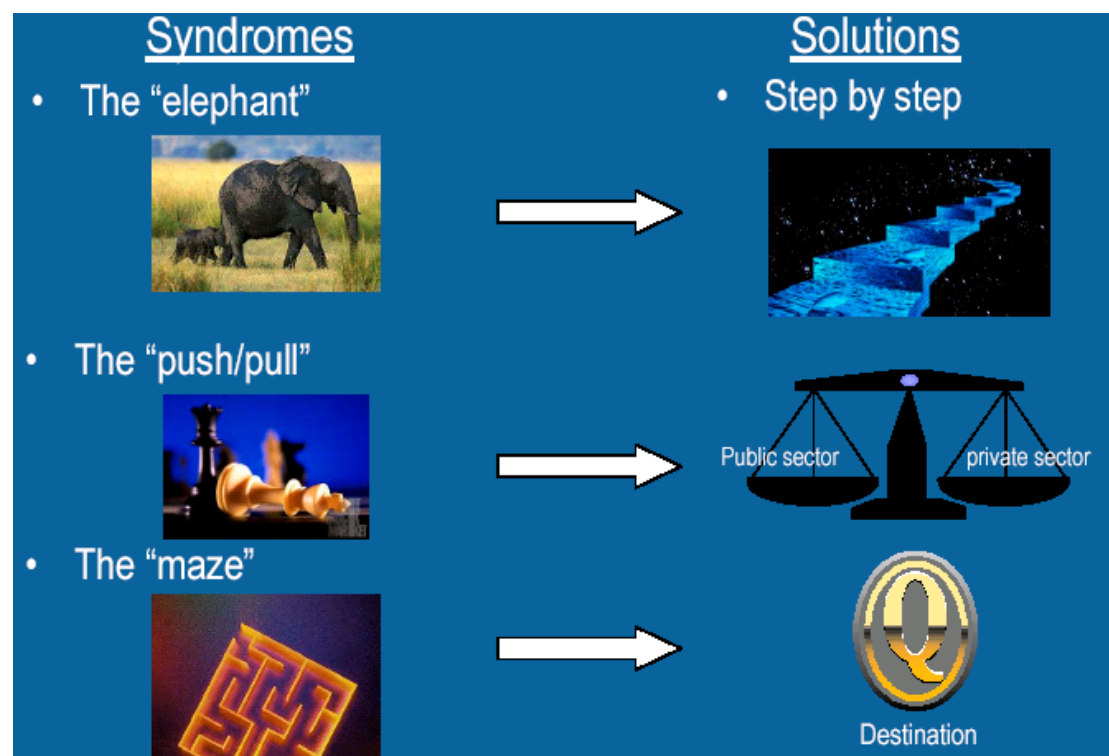


Exhibit 42: Main Quality Issues addressed at the Tourism Industry
Source: De Bruyn, 2006e

5.3.2 The major preoccupations for Quality in Tourism

There are a lot of arguments against or in favour of some realities that governments, policy-makers, entrepreneurs face today. In general, there are always arguments that reinforce both sides, so a balance of handling various issues is the best solution. Some of these preoccupations will be discussed (*De Bruyn, 2006e*). First of all, many believe that destinations should begin addressing quality in the accommodation sector. This is in part true, since the accommodation sector consists of a bulk amount of lodging establishments all around the world, thus if the hoteliers apply environmental quality programmes will eliminate the negative effects on the society and the environment, but usually it is not the sector in the worst state. The major concern in a tourism destination should be the totality of the activities provided to the guests, and not only those services provided from the accommodation sector.

Another point that requires further attention is the phrase that the public sector deals with the infrastructure, and the private sector with the service. It is obvious that the private sector cannot afford investments in infrastructure, while service is delivered by both the private and the public sector.

People, also, believe that the public sector does not play a key part anymore. It could be true considering the fact that quality cannot be imposed by means of regulations, but, on the other hand, there are few “self-regulation” initiatives on behalf of the private sector, while the public sector cannot “forget” the quality and concentrate only on promotion. A balance is the right solution.

Financing is always a problem and it is assumed by public sector, that plays the part of a “driving force”, but a real and desired trend from all the stakeholders that are really interested in implementing and establishing quality is the one dealing with public and private sector co-operation.

Finally, another issue that is discussed is that ISO 9000 is going to be the leader of Quality Systems for the tourism sector. Until today, there is no other scheme with such an expertise, which can be easily adopted also to the tourism sector. ISO 9000 is unique with international scope, can be used for “b2b” operations, “personalises” the quality of the enterprise, is a long-term approach and, most important, ISO is currently considering the possibility to adapt its 9000:2000 norms in the tourism sector. On the other hand, ISO is perceived as requiring heavy investment in administration tasks and an extra care to communicate to the consumer of tangible resources and benefits achieved.

The Tourism Industry is a service sector, depending mostly on its human resources, or otherwise on its “intangible resources” (exhibit 43). The future of the Tourism Industry is based on people qualifications and possibly certification, too.

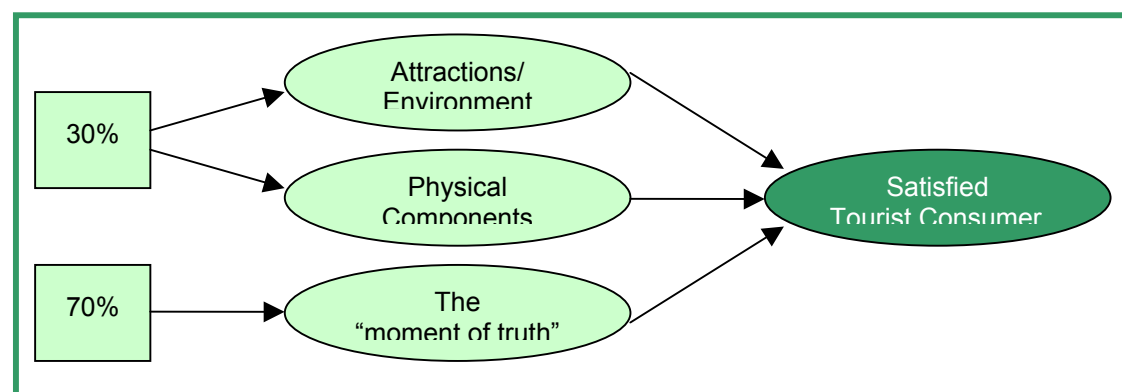


Exhibit 43: The Importance of “intangible resources”
Source: De Bruyn, 2006e

5.4 THE PRESENT SITUATION OF TOURISM QUALITY SYSTEMS

Today, there are no international norms which provide a complete response for the whole tourism sector, but there are numerous local, regional and national referents which can be used as examples of "good practice", while there are increasing claims for international standards.

In Tourism Companies there is a high level of interest, but a low or medium level of use, especially in Small- & Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). As far as the product certification is concerned, there is a need to refer to a high percentage of countries that already have a system of classification and categorisation for hotels and other lodging establishments, which is usually obligatory (80% of countries surveyed by the joint WTO/ IHRA survey in 2004). Also, there is a growing use of integrated commercial brands (e.g. Hilton, Disney World, Carlson-Wagons Lits travel) and open commercial brands (e.g. Best Western, Relais & Chateaux), which express a quality level implicitly or explicitly.

As far as the Quality Management Certification is concerned, there is a low level of use and certification of systems such as ISO 9000, although it is on the increase. Although the use of management schemes is growing, there is limited number of companies who are certified by environmental systems (e.g. ISO 14000).

In Local or National Tourism Destinations there is a high level of interest again, but a very low level of use. Very recent technology is still at a very experimental stage. As far as the product certification is concerned, there exist several initiatives (including the WTO), which establish indicators, but there are no certification systems.

On the other hand, Quality Management Systems also express several initiatives in national destinations (Spain, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy, Malta etc.) together with numerous initiatives in the field of the environment with public or private certification; more than 100 certification labels have been identified in the world but none of them stands out more than the others.

For both tourism companies, and local or national tourism destinations, there are three different Auditing & Certification Schemes (*GEN, 2006*). The first is called "Self assessment" by the tourism company, meaning that there are existing norms and standards, but each company implements the quality system and checks its own compliance level with the referred norm and standards by means of internal audits. The second scheme is the "Second party" certification, meaning that a government body or an association of companies certify the compliance level of an individual company against the norm and standards established by the institution itself. Lastly, there is the "Third party" certification, that is an independent institution or company carries out the audit and certifies the compliance level against a norm and standards of a system that has been established by another institution or company (exhibit 44).

There is a trend towards the last kind of audit and certification scheme, as it is regarded the most reliable system to ensure full independence in the auditing and certification process, which increases the reliability level as far as the customer is concerned. However, the cost of it is usually more or much more expensive than the other two options.

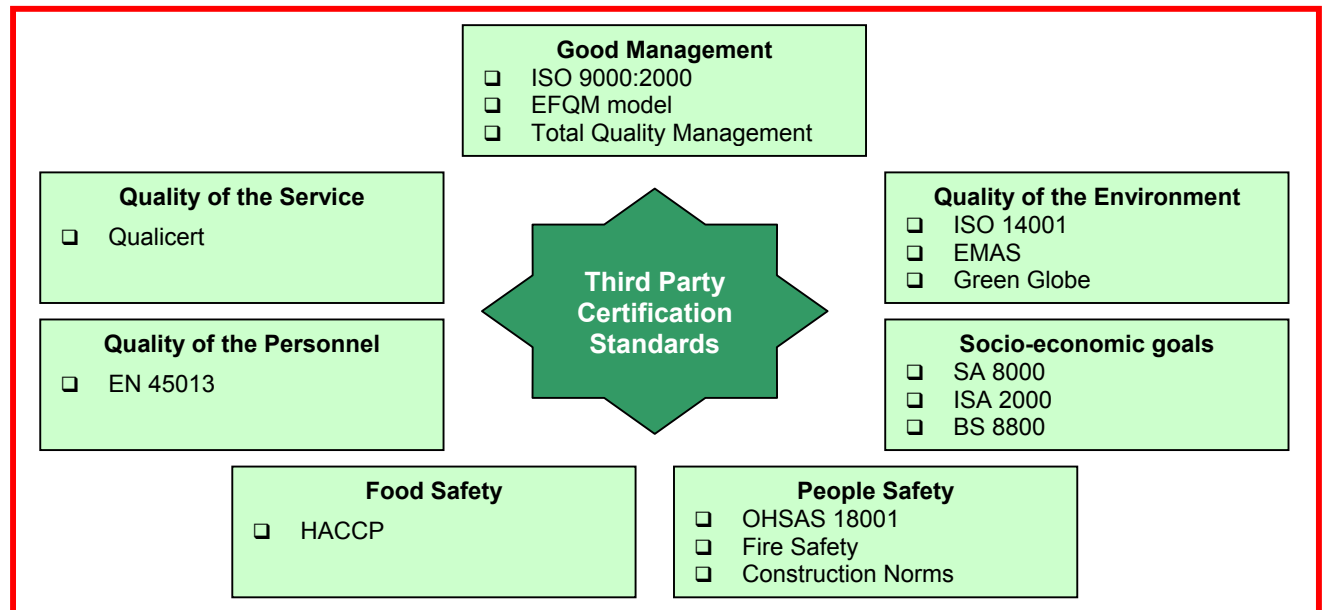


Exhibit 44: Third-party certification: Maximising the credibility level of our communication
Source: WTO, 2006

CHAPTER 6:

QUALITY ESTABLISHMENT, PROMOTION & MARKETING

6.1 PRODUCT QUALITY ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION IN TOURISM COMPANIES

The establishment of quality in tourism companies requires identifying, examining and analysing the different stages that encompass each function before the implementation of a product-service quality system.

During the first stage it is appropriate to identify the segment of the tourism market that is interested in quality and to define the level of quality desired. Then, the type of quality to be assured should be examined further towards covering the basic needs together with the tourist's expectations. At this point, the difference will be acknowledged at identifying the type of quality that can make the company more competitive at the destination-wised tourism market, aiming at exceeding the tourist's expectations. In addition, quality should be communicated world-wide, attracting more and more customers year over year; marketing quality means defining the proper packaging, the perfect price and proceeding to commercialisation. At the end, what matters most is to recognise the value of benchmarking as a starting point for further qualitative development, by making use of the "know-how" and the expertise of the best companies in the market.

6.1.1 Market Segment Identification

The segmentation of the tourism market is a primary process for all managers, in order to offer the appropriate quality level. Quality expectations and perceptions of a tourism product/ service differ, based on the different needs of each tourism segment, such as business travellers compared to holiday travellers, families compared to couples, individual tourists compared to groups etc., making the ratio of price-quality (P/Q) level of a tourism product/ service having a positive relationship (exhibit 45).

Standard Quality P/Q Lower Level	→	Basic Facilities & Services The cost is definite in the tourist's decision-making process
↓		↓
Comfort Quality P/Q Mid Level	→	Convenient/ comfortable Facilities & Services The cost is important in the tourist's decision-making process
↓		↓
Deluxe Quality P/Q Higher Level	→	Additional, of high level of detail, Facilities & Services The cost is indifferent in the tourist's decision-making process

Exhibit 45: 3-Levelled Decision Making Process, based on the Price-Quality Relationship
Source: De Bruyn, 2006d

Below is given an example of a safari product (exhibit 46), which expresses the three-levelled decision making process. It analyses the three levels of price-quality relationship, comparing them with ground transportation, accommodation meals services and itinerary facilities.

		Ground transportation	Accommodation & Meals	Itinerary of Park Visit
Standard Quality P/Q Lower Level	→	No 4x4 wheel-drive No A/C Ordinary seats	No A/C room Public bathrooms Fixed food menu Limited or no table service	Visit to the park can be the same for all levels
↓				
Comfort Quality P/Q Mid Level	→	4x4 wheel-drive No A/C Comfortable seats, best for taking photos	A/C room Private bathroom in each room Menu with some choice Some table service	Itinerary should not necessarily be different between quality/ price levels
↓				
Deluxe Quality P/Q Higher Level	→	4x4 wheel-drive A/C Comfortable seats with open rooftop, best for taking photos Availability of food & drinks on board	A/C room Private bathroom in each room Large range of menu choice Table service together with a buffet service	At the highest level, additional excursions and leisure activities are usually included in the package

Exhibit 46: 3-Levelled Decision Making Process, based on the Price-Quality Relationship, applied to a Safari product
Source: De Bruyn, 2006d

Many hotels have realised the importance of the Internet, as a mean of attracting new customers. This is expressed by searching in the Internet for various hotel web sites, where the managers with the help of web builders and marketing advisors have developed attractive sites with packages and solutions tailor-made depending on the targeted market segment, e.g. family product (exhibit 47), couples product (exhibit 48) or a luxurious one (exhibit 49) etc. The knowledge of web development and the proper use of it is a significant tool. In absence of internal expertise, outsourcing may be proved a good solution.

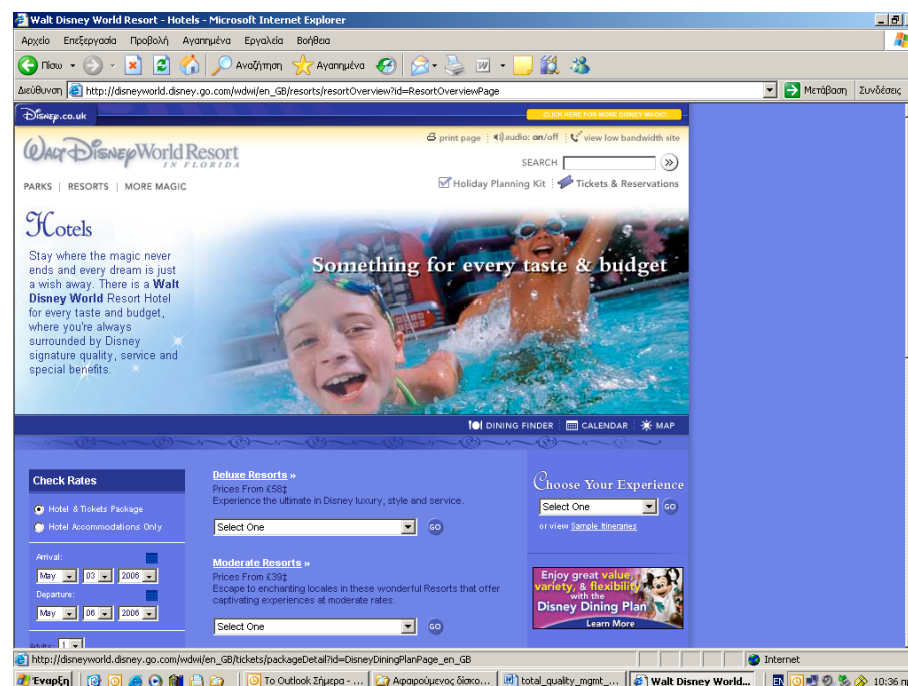


Exhibit 47: Decision Making Process, based on the Market Segment, applied to a Family product
Source: http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/wdwi/en_GB/resorts/resortOverview?id=ResortOverviewPage

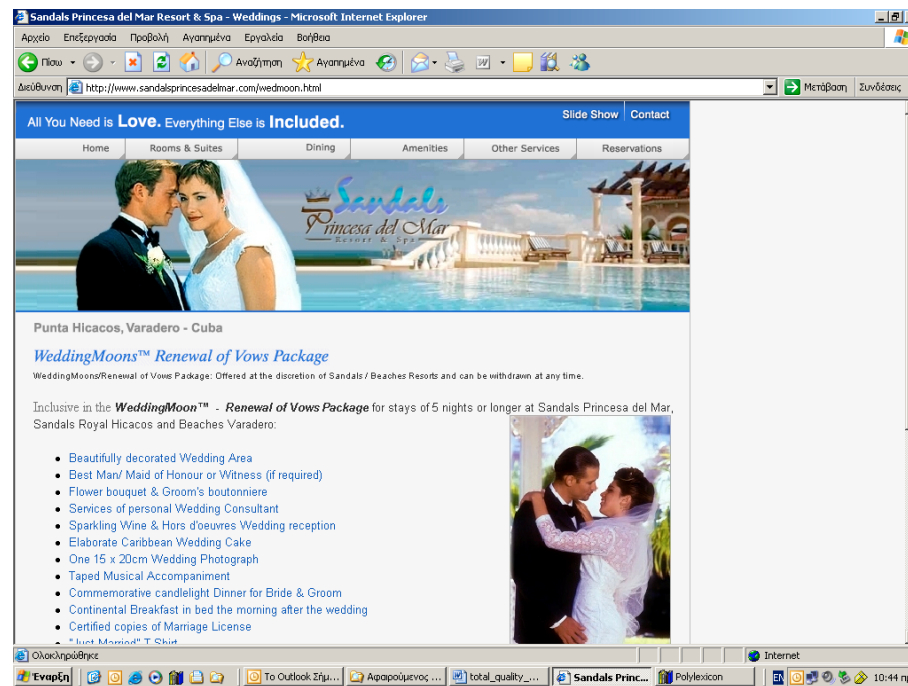


Exhibit 48: Decision Making Process, based on the Market Segment, applied to a Couples product
Source: <http://www.sandalsprincesadelmar.com/wedmoon.html>



Exhibit 49: Decision Making Process, based on the Market Segment, applied to a Lifestyle product
Source: <http://www.burj-al-arab.com/>

6.1.2 Type of Quality Identification

The basic needs, meaning issues such as security, safety, sanitation, cleanliness, transportation, reception service, minimum facilities and services, staff with basic education and training, and expectations, meaning the kind of “experience” a tourist is expecting, which contains many intangible elements such as emotions are two points that managers should recognise, in order to offer the appropriate type and level of quality (exhibit 50). The managers after identifying the type of quality they want to offer, the market segment, and the price, they must assure to deliver them in a satisfactory level.

Tourist Segment	Basic Needs	Expectations
30 pax Group 2 nights	Transfer to park and internal transportation	Standard tour guiding Meeting time schedule
Individual Tourist 4 nights	Guiding Accommodation on a full-board basis Complementary leisure activities	Some flexibility to adapt tour guiding to their personal needs No "rush" to visit park
12 pax Group of members of an association of amateur zoologists 4 nights	Safety regarding sanitation in food service, prices, delivery of programme content, personal security	Expert tour guiding High flexibility to adapt tour guiding to their group needs

Exhibit 50: Basic needs & Expectations, as applied to a visit to a National Park
Source: De Bruyn, 2006d

6.1.3 A Competitive Type of Quality Identification

The type of quality that should be provided by the managers is the differentiating point that will aim to satisfy or, more preferably, to exceed the tourist's expectations, in order to discriminate and make a destination more competitive.

According to WTO (2006), value (positive) is influenced by what we give to tourists – results produced for the guest, quality process and feelings, while effort (negative) is determined by what we ask from tourists –price, inconveniences, discomforts, insecurities and uncertainties (exhibit 51). This "value for effort" ratio is developed to emphasise the need to exceed client expectations, creating so differential advantages.

Services	Sensations
☐ Air conditioning ☐ Transfer to and from hotels ☐ Private parking ☐ Full buffet service at a set price ☐ Private dining rooms for groups ☐ Coffee menu (different choices)	☐ Genuine décor: local architecture and interior design ☐ Menu of local specialities with explanation ☐ Smiling and friendly waiter/ waitress with a genuine uniform ☐ "Show cooking" (display) in front of clients ☐ Dishes "to share" (for 2 or more) ☐ Live music ☐ Pleasant food smells in the dining room
Price	Other efforts (Inconveniences/ discomforts/ insecurities/ uncertainties)
☐ Price is high in comparison to food portions ☐ Only 2 types of credit cards are accepted ☐ No half portions or special price for children are available ☐ Wine menu: no half bottles or wine by the glass are available (full bottles only)	☐ No place to park the car ☐ "10 minutes" waiting at the entrance door without anybody to attend you ☐ You made a reservation but they cannot find you on the list ☐ Some dishes from the menu list are not available anymore ☐ Long waiting time between courses ☐ Some plates are not properly cleaned!

Exhibit 51: "Value for effort" formula, as applied to a Restaurant
Source: De Bruyn, 2006d

6.1.4 Marketing Quality

Packaging, price and commercialisation are few points that require flexibility, modernisation and attractiveness, in order to market quality and correspond and respond to tourist's needs.

Travel & Tourism evolves over time, transforming business imperatives. The evolution of tourism consumer (e.g. changes in needs, requirements, expectations etc.) creates new trends in the tourism industry, that business operators must consult and adopt at the stage of re-positioning their company's product or service. From mass tourism, the consumer feels inclined to individual, tailor-made tourism services or products (exhibit 52, 53), apart from the usual standard package, based for example on the "Sea-Sun-Sand" triptych.

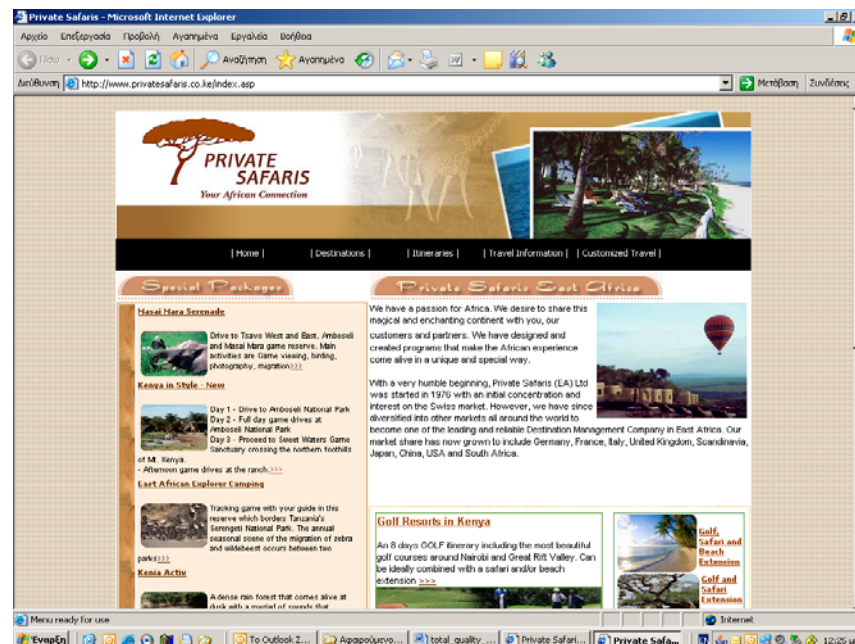


Exhibit 52: Individual, tailor-made, or standard packaged tourism services/ products
Source: <http://www.privatesafaris.co.ke/index.asp>



Exhibit 53: Individual, tailor-made, or standard packaged tourism services/ products
Source: <http://www.expedia.com/daily/home/default.asp>

6.1.5 The Importance of Benchmarking

There is no need to “reinvent the wheel”, meaning that the managers should make use of benchmarking, in order to learn from the best, whether they are competitors or not. Various techniques and management methods have been used and tested, and they can be used in the context of healthy competition. It is not about trying to replicate other company practices, nor to obtain confidential information; it is about building on the success of others to improve future performance. Benchmarking should be looked at the best companies, based on a product and market segmentation similar to the interested party, or on a different product, but with similar market segmentation and average expenditure. However, managers should never ignore the fact that nowadays, due to the Internet transparency, clients can easily compare and choose the best suitable solution.

According to Global Environmental Management Initiative (1994), “Benchmarking is an important component of total quality environmental management... Benchmarking is a process of comparing and measuring an organisation's business processes against best-in-class operations to inspire improvement in the organisation's performance. The insights gained from benchmarking provide organisations with a foundation for building operational plans to meet and surpass industry best practices and promote an overall awareness of environmental improvement opportunities”.

Benchmarking gathers the knowledge about the know-how, the judgements, the enabling factors, but such a tacit knowledge leads sometimes to missing facts and explicit knowledge. Benchmarking is always carried out with the goal of putting improvements into action.

Benchmarks measure performance in terms of numbers, speed, distance etc. Benchmarking is action, through which one discovers the specific practices responsible for high quality performance, together with understanding how these practices work, and subsequent actions in applying these to one's operation.

In addition to the above, it should be noted that there is no single set of best practices that works everywhere, every time. One single “best practice” does not exist, because best is not best for everyone. Each tourism operation is somewhat different in geography, political situation, vision, culture, environment or technologies. The practices that are best for a company are those that are appropriate for the particular stage of development in which the firm finds itself. They will change as the company itself changes. “Best practice” in this case is not meant to represent “the one” practice to consider; it means those practices that have been shown to produce superior skills.

Benchmarking goes beyond the current global moves to eco-labelling, certification and accreditation in the tourism industry. Some benefits of Best Practice Benchmarking in tourism are that it enables operations to (Wight, 2001):

- ❖ benefit from the discoveries and practices of others, so that they do not have to struggle to reinvent the wheel (and there is little need to invest time, research effort, cost etc., particularly when it may have already been done better or more cheaply or effectively)
- ❖ re-examine their current processes and operations, which often leads to improvement by that fact alone
- ❖ accelerate change for the better, by using proven practices, demonstrating use, overcoming inertia and possible complacency and revealing gaps in operations
- ❖ view totally different ideas “outside the conventional mould” of the current operation. Some ideas may come from non-similar operations, as well as similar operations, and thus may present innovative perspectives or gaps in practice
- ❖ make implementation more easy, and speedy, due to the involvement of the “owners” of the process

- ❖ better understand their markets and their competitors
- ❖ develop a stronger reputation
- ❖ gain faster awareness of important trends or innovations, and how they can be applied advantageously
- ❖ avoid the cost of making their own mistakes

Companies who decide to do their own benchmarking should address some key questions (exhibit 54). For environmentally conscious tourism companies the benchmarking process aims to obtain information for all types of tourism operations and relevant market segments, look at all seasons, examine all sizes of operations, look at all geographic areas and ecosystems and examine all areas of company practice (core competencies), from environmental protection, to community relationships, to the development of new product etc.; not simply “business” practices.

Step 1	What will we benchmark?
Step 2	Who will we benchmark against?
Step 3	How will we obtain the information?
Step 4	How will we analyse the findings?
Step 5	How will we use the findings?

Exhibit 54: Key Questions for Benchmarking
Source: Wight, 2001

6.1.6 Prioritise for the Quality Improvement Process?

The managers should determine the priority in the Quality Improvement Process, by evaluating the cost of non-quality and quality. For assessing the costs of non-quality, the managers should, first, trace, record and evaluate the costs (losses, additional costs or/ and reduced incomes) resulting from not taking the proper decision. Afterwards problems may or may not be solved. Secondly, they should identify the costs by using the Five (5) Gap Analysis Model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry's Service Quality Model, that was mentioned at previous chapter.

Quality Assurance is a long-term consistency, which also represents a cost, but a welcomed and a lower one than that of non-quality. The manager should identify, record and weigh up the impacts of cost-profit of quality. The main categories of quality costs are prevention and inspection costs (internal or/ and external process), internal error costs and the costs of attracting new customers (to substitute those that are lost, because of non-quality issues).

Considering all the above each manager will be in a position to prioritise towards a Quality Improvement Process. The Cost-Benefit ratio of quality could be achieved through an equation of the costs of non-quality and of quality assurance towards the benefits of operational cost savings and client return rate and active recommendation.

6.2 QUALITY COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION OF DESTINATION-FOCUSED TOURISM ORGANISATIONS

The promotion of a tourism company/ destination is appropriate, in order to communicate the quality product establishment and implementation. For this to happen, there are several techniques, such as internal promotion among entrepreneurs, organisations' managers, professionals, local population, and/ or external promotion among the final customer, travel intermediaries, opinion leaders.

6.2.1 Branding and the Promotion of a Tourism Company

Brand is “a distinguishing name/ symbol intended to identify the goods or services of one seller and to differentiate those goods or services from those of the competitors” as *Prof. David A. Aaker* refers in his book “*Managing Brand Equity*”.

Therefore, a brand is a mean of identification of a product/ service assurance delivery, of an expectations fulfilment promise. The promotion of a tourism company (exhibit 55) or a destination (exhibit 56) is enhanced by the power of branding.



Exhibit 55: Application in tourism companies: First- & Second-party certification
Source: De Bruyn, 2006a



Exhibit 56: Application in tourism destinations: First- & Second-party certification
Source: De Bruyn, 2006a

6.2.2 Internet and the Promotion of a Tourism Company

Additionally, it should be mentioned that the promotion of a tourism company/ destination is enhanced, also, by the power of Internet.

The Internet is a powerful medium for the tourism industry. The number of customers that using the Internet, in order to look at various lodging establishments, compare prices, or book a (tailor-made) package, are increasing continuously. However, there are some questions on the reliability of the information provided to the customers, emphasising the importance of an appropriate control tool.

In a web site should be clear the definition of the number of functions that are offered to the customer by the tourism destinations and company-specific web sites, as a mean and a method of informing, and -possibly- of “dynamic packaging” or/ and of online booking and purchasing.

Together it is important to check the levels of reliability of the information provided by the tourism service providers. If it is a well-known and “reliable” brand, there is no need for any special endorsements. But, if it is an unknown brand, there is a need for the endorsement of a third party to make the quality statements “reliable” from the tourist’s point of view.

Quality “endorsers” can be an announcement of an incoming tour operator in the official web page of the national tourism board/ entrepreneurs association, national classification system, quality certification by an international organisation (like ISO), etc.

In conclusion, brands are considered to be a valuable tool during the decision-making process of a tourist consumer for choosing a specific tourism company/ destination, having a great influence in consumer’s mind. Thus, brands can support an Environmental Management System/ Quality Labels, in order to communicate - using various marketing methods and the power of internet- to all parties the importance of quality in the tourism sector.

6.3 QUALITY IN MARKETING FOR TOURISM COMPANIES & DESTINATIONS

Improving the quality of tourism products and services (exhibit 57), and adding value for money while increasing consumer choice is one of the numerous key tasks for New Tourism (WTTC, 2003). The effect of agreeing and implementing quality standards at all levels and in all areas is a shift towards Travel & Tourism that continues to serve the private sector’s own needs, while embracing the wider interests of the countries and communities in which quality issues operate.

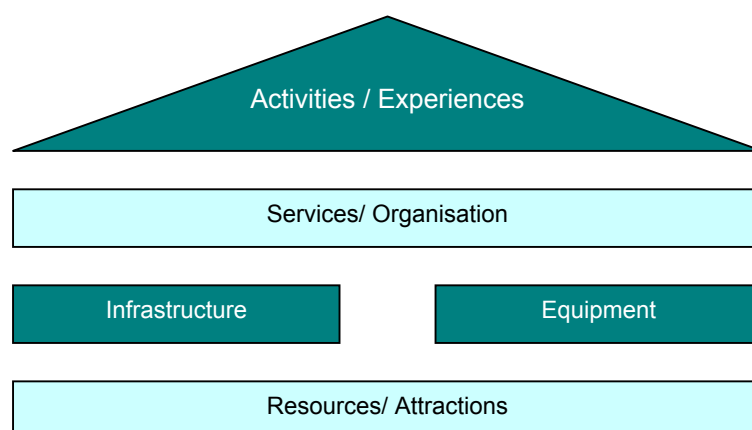


Exhibit 57: The Tourism Product
Source: De Bruyn, 2006f

Marketing efforts of quality implementation and customer's satisfaction must have a logical sequence. For that, managers must deal with the management of four steps: resources, product/ market concepts, product structuration, and commercialisation and promotion (exhibit 58).

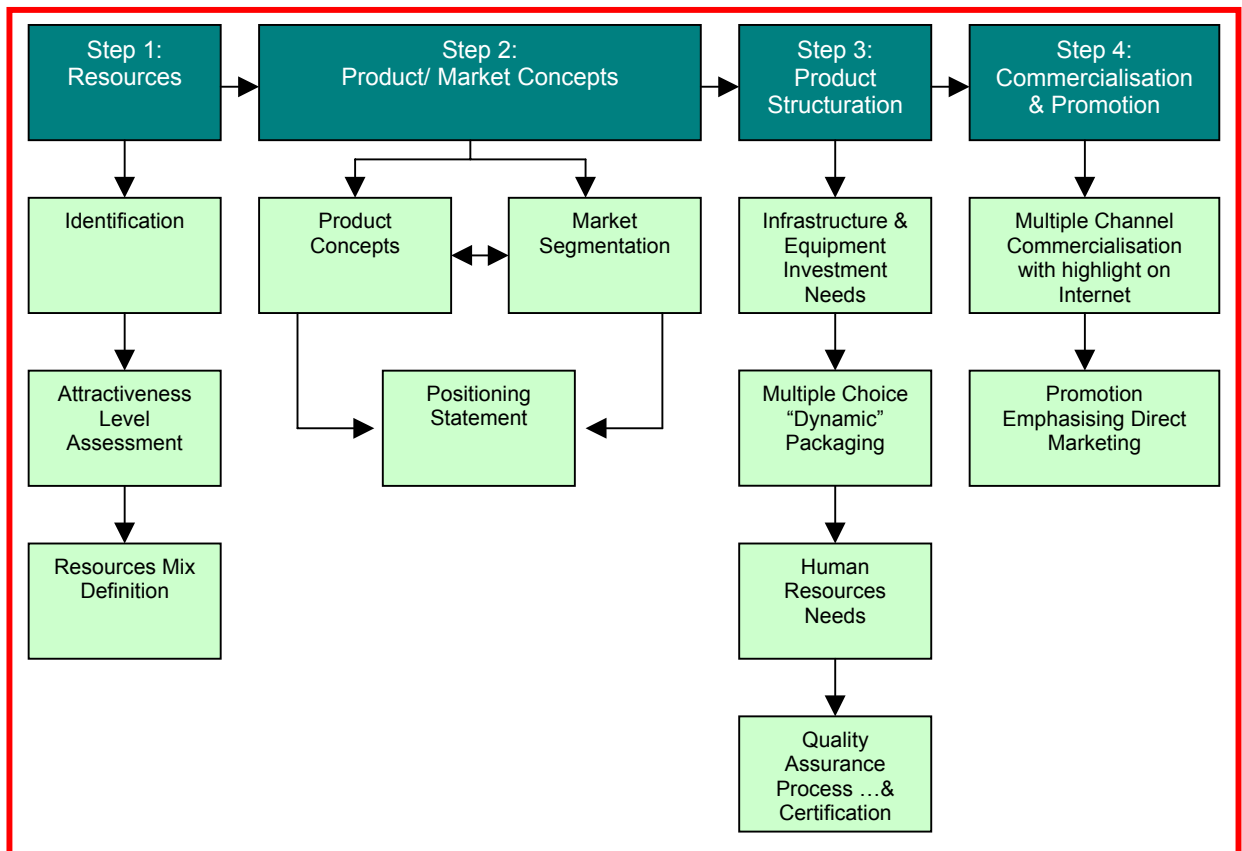


Exhibit 58: The Tourism Product Process towards Quality
Source: De Bruyn, 2006f

6.3.1 Identification, Assessment and Prioritisation of Tourism Resources

The first step during the communication of a quality product is identification, assessment and prioritisation of tourism resources. A helpful tool for recognising, evaluating and prioritising the various resources world-wide is to define the level of their importance, according to their uniqueness, recognition and interest (exhibit 59).

Level	Resources
Level 1	Unique in the world (exhibit 60)
Level 2	International recognition (exhibit 61)
Level 3	High interest (ability to attract tourists to the destination)
Level 4	Fair interest (only when the tourist is already at the destination)
Level 5	Limited interest (once the tourist is on-site, as a complementary attraction/ activity)
Level 6	No interest for tourism purposes

Exhibit 59: The level of tourism resources towards prioritisation
Source: De Bruyn, 2006f



Victoria Falls



Naoronaoro Crater



Parthenon, Acropolis



The Silk Road



Mountain Gorilla watching

Exhibit 60: Level 1: Unique in the world **Exhibit 61:** Level 2: International recognition

6.3.2 Identification and Prioritisation of Markets & Products

The second step is the identification and prioritisation of markets and products. Traditionally, there was a focus in geographical markets, but today there is a trend to focus on segmented products with markets of different geographical areas (exhibit 62), because of growing requirements and more sophisticated demand.



Exhibit 62: Basic market segmentation in Sardinia
Source: http://www.sardegnameb.it/dett_sezioni_uk.asp?IDCategoria=1

6.3.3 Product Structuring

A third step refers to product structuring and positioning. As far as product structuring is concerned, traditionally, there were standard products for all public and there was little flexibility to meet different needs and expectations. Nowadays, there is an increase in the level of attractiveness and range of products offered (exhibit 63), with many variants and through a combination of “packaging” a la carte, because of growing requirements and more sophisticated demand, greater competition between destinations and companies.

As far as positioning is concerned, traditionally, it was related to the destination's products. However, today it is related to the values which the destination can and wants to offer to its priority market, meaning a growing power of the brands, because of growing requirements and more sophisticated demand, greater competition between destinations and companies.



Exhibit 63: Basic market segmentation in Greece
Source: <http://www.outdoorsgreece.com/activities.php>

6.3.4 Commercialisation & Promotion

The last step deals with the utmost aim of the whole process, the commercialisation and promotion of a quality product. Traditionally, there were individual clients versus tour operators and fixed and evolving prices depending on occupation. Nowadays, there is multiple commercialisation channels and methods for all clients, “dynamic packaging”, significant weight of last-minute offers (exhibit 64) and new transport forms of “low-cost” air travel companies, because of growing requirements and more sophisticated demand, greater competition between destinations and companies.

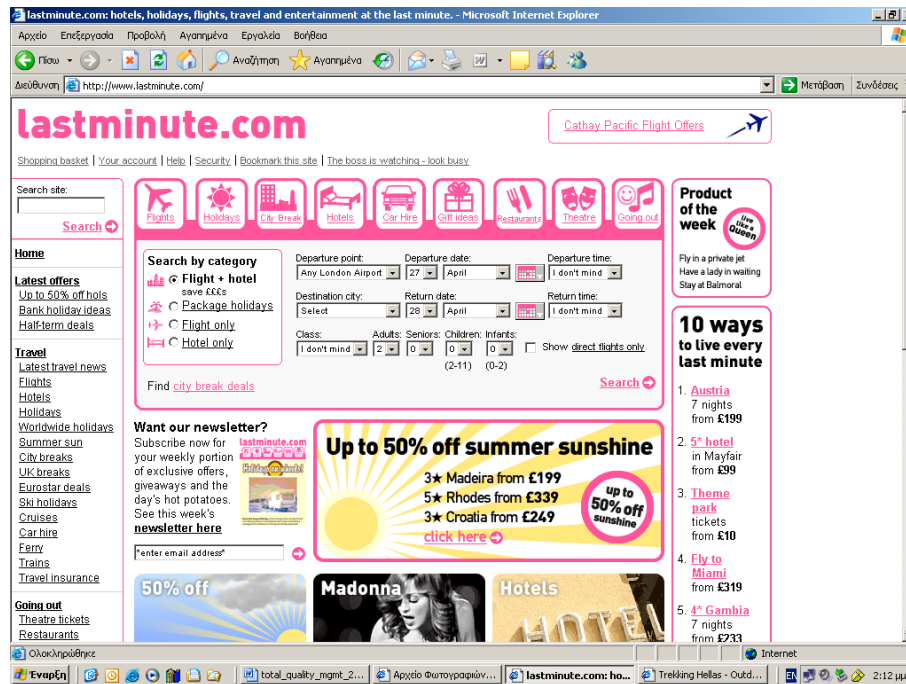


Exhibit 64: Tailor-made, last minute offers
Source: <http://www.lastminute.com/>

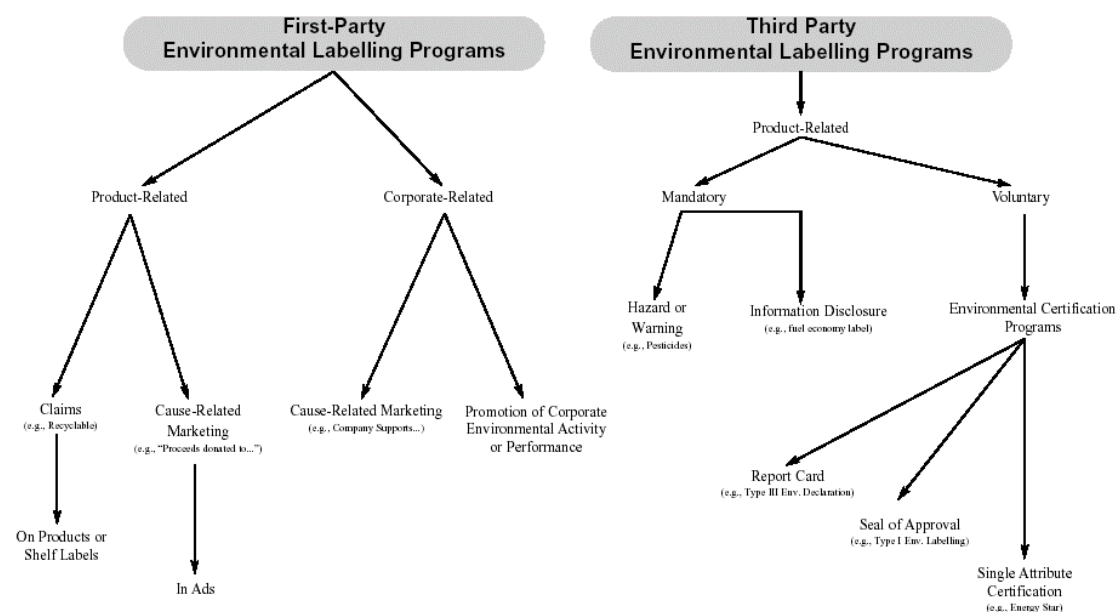
PART II:
THE ECO-LABELS IN THE CONTEXT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SCHEMES

CHAPTER 7: THE ECO-LABELS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION TO ECO-LABELLING

According to Global Ecolabelling Network (2004), an *Ecolabel* is “a label which identifies overall environmental preference of a product (e.g. good or service) within a product category based on life cycle considerations. In contrast to a self-styled environmental symbol or claim statement developed by a manufacturer or service provider, an ecolabel is awarded by an impartial third party to products that meet established environmental leadership criteria”. Additionally, *Wight (2001, cited in Dooley and Kirkpatrick, 1993)* defines *Ecolabel* as “a term used to describe an officially sanctioned scheme in which a product may be awarded an ecological label on the basis of its ‘acceptable’ level of environmental impact. The acceptable level of environmental impact may be determined by consideration of a single environmental hurdle which is deemed to be particularly important, or after undertaking an assessment of its overall environmental impact”.

Ecolabelling is only one type of environmental [performance] labelling, and refers specifically to the provision of information to consumers about the relative environmental quality of a product. There are many different environmental performance labels and declarations being used or contemplated around the world.



Copied (with minor modifications) from: **Environmental Labelling Issues, Policies and Practices Worldwide**, United States Environmental Protection Agency, December 1998, page XV.

Exhibit 65: Classification of Environmental Labelling
Source: Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), 2004

As has been identified by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), the overall goal of these labels and declarations is:

“...through communication of verifiable and accurate information, that is not misleading, on environmental aspects of products and services, to encourage the demand for and supply of those products and services that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement”.

ISO (2004) has undertaken efforts to attempt to standardise the principles, practices and key characteristics relating to three major voluntary environmental labelling types:

- ❖ Type I - environmental labelling (e.g. ecolabels)

A voluntary, multiple-criteria based, third party programme that awards a license which authorises the use of environmental labels on products indicating overall environmental preferability of a product category based on life cycle considerations.

- ❖ Type II - self-declaration claims

Informative environmental self-declaration claims.

- ❖ Type III - environmental declarations (e.g. report cards/ information labels)

Voluntary programmes that provide quantified environmental data of a product, under pre-set categories of parameters set by a qualified third party and based on life cycle assessment, and verified by that or another qualified third party.

[Draft Working Definition]

Unlike Type III environmental declarations (*GEN, 2004*), ecolabels reflect a determination and recognition of a product's environmental performance leadership characteristics rather than simply a presentation of quantified environmental data. In this respect, the ecolabels "flag" leadership products in the marketplace rather than requiring consumers to undertake their own comparative analysis.

7.2 ORIGINS OF ECO-LABELLING

Sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental consciousness raised the global interest and led to the notion of Eco-labelling. In few lines, the main stages of development can be summarised as follows (*GEN, 2004*):

- ❖ The growing global concern for environmental protection on the part of governments, businesses and the general public
- ❖ The recognition that environmental concerns could be translated into a market advantage for certain products
- ❖ Environmental declarations and claims such as "recyclable", "eco-friendly", "low-energy", "recycled content", that attracted consumers who were targeting in reduction of the adverse environmental impacts through their purchasing choices
- ❖ The need for credibility and impartiality towards the companies' assertions that their labelled products were environmentally preferable alternatives led to the formation of private and public organisations providing third-party labelling
- ❖ Such labelling took the format of *ecolabels* awarded by programmes/ schemes operated at a national and regional levels
- ❖ There are many other third-party labelling schemes in place, or being developed, which are "hybrids" of ecolabelling because they have narrower focuses than a normal ecolabelling scheme:
 - focus on a single sector (e.g. the tourism industry)
 - address only one environmental issue (e.g. marine quality, energy conservation)
 - consider only a single life cycle phase in their application (e.g. product use)
 - address and recognise more than simply environmental performance aspects
- ❖ In a typical ecolabelling scheme, product categories and ecolabelling criteria are determined by an independent organisation with assistance from a complementary technical advisory group.
- ❖ Companies which want to participate in an ecolabelling scheme make application and submit their products for third-party compliance testing and/ or verification. If

approved, the companies pay licensing fees for permission to use the scheme's distinctive ecolabel symbol for a specified period. Use of the ecolabel is restricted to the approved product or department, and is usually monitored by the managing agency.

7.3 MAIN OBJECTIVES OF ECO-LABELLING

Ecolabelling has become a useful tool for governments in encouraging sound environmental practices and for businesses in identifying and establishing markets for their environmentally preferable products. Thus, commitment to clear objectives has been critical to the success of ecolabelling programmes around the world. According to Global Ecolabelling Network (2004), the main objectives are:

❖ Protecting the environment

Environmental conservation and protection is generally a primary objective. Ecolabelling serves as a market-based instrument intended to bring about environmental improvement. Specific objectives may include:

- encouraging the efficient management of renewable resources to ensure their availability to future generations
- promoting the efficient use of non-renewable resources
- facilitating the reduction, reuse and recycling of industrial, commercial and consumer waste
- encouraging the protection of ecosystems and species diversity
- encouraging the proper management of chemicals in products

❖ Encouraging environmentally sound innovation and leadership

Ecolabelling schemes, through the awarding and promotion of an ecolabel, offer a market incentive to environmentally innovative and progressive businesses. By offering products that reduce stress on the environment, the businesses can establish or reinforce a market niche and positive corporate image among consumers, thereby realising an advantage. Generally, ecolabelling criteria are set to reward only the top environmental performers in a product category. Most products gradually and incrementally raise standards to encourage producers and service providers to keep pace with new and emerging performance improvement opportunities and market shifts.

❖ Building consumer awareness of environmental issues

Ecolabelling programmes can also serve to heighten consumer awareness of environmental issues and of the implications of their choices. In countries where there is a high degree of consumer awareness, a trusted ecolabel that provides reliable information on the environmental impacts of products in the marketplace may be all that is required to promote the selection of ecolabelled products. In countries where consumers are not as highly motivated by environmental concerns, ecolabelling can be used to promote environmentally beneficial actions.

7.4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ECO-LABELLING

Guiding principles are important to be identified and applied during the development, promotion, establishment and implementation phase of an ecolabelling scheme, in order the scheme to be legitimate, proper and sound. These principles may include the following characteristics (GEN, 2004):

- ❖ *Voluntary participation* in an ecolabelling scheme of manufacturers, importers, service providers and other businesses to participate. Schemes should also be tailor-made for their products.

- ❖ *Compliance to environmental and other relevant legislation* on a local/ regional scale, thus avoiding challenge with the varying regulatory requirements that may exist in different jurisdictions and avoiding imposition on foreign scheme applicants what could be perceived as “unnecessary obstacle to trade”.
- ❖ *Consideration of “fitness for purpose” and level of overall performance* enhances the credibility of both the ecolabel and the ecolabelling scheme, which otherwise could suffer.
- ❖ *Based on sound scientific and engineering principles*, consumers can be assured that they can trust the ecolabel and that the licensing of applicants is treated fairly.
- ❖ *Criteria must distinguish a leadership* segment of a product category from the rest of the category, in order to avoid and/ or effectively address potential challenges of arbitrariness and/ or irrelevant leadership criteria.
- ❖ *Criteria must be credible, relevant, attainable and measurable/ verifiable*.
- ❖ *Organisation independence* of vested commercial or other interests, striving for some degree of balanced representation of stakeholders, so there is not any actual or perceived excessive influence by specific sector or individual stakeholder interests.
- ❖ *Open and accountable process* that can be observed, monitored and questioned at any time, while also the establishment of it can be characterised as being fair, consistent and uniformly applied procedures. Also, public criteria review is an essential feature of an open process (e.g. media, government information networks, public hearings, direct contact with stakeholders/ interested groups requesting comments. A good quality management system is a strong asset and highly desirable.
- ❖ *Flexibility* and adaptiveness in technological and marketplace developments, by exercising periodic review (usually every three years), in order to ensure that standards criteria levels keep pace with new developments.
- ❖ *Consistency with ISO 14020 and ISO 14024 guiding principles* that may provide greater perceived legitimacy and soundness for ecolabelling schemes in place and under development.

7.5 STAKEHOLDERS OF ECO-LABELLING

During this study, it is already mentioned that the stakeholders of eco-labelling are the major participants and interested parties that influence directly or indirectly decision making for adopting, communicating and implementing an ecolabel scheme. Major participants are (GEN, 2004):

- ❖ **Government**
Many schemes are initiated and funded by government departments or agencies. Besides providing input (directly and/ or indirectly) in scheme development, management and delivery areas, government at different levels can exert significant influence and demand through its procurement initiatives and activities.
- ❖ **Programme management authority** (e.g. Programme Managers)
An independent body typically oversees and directs the programme delivery activities (e.g. technical marketing and administrative aspects). The level of involvement in delivery may range from co-ordinating functions and liaison among different delivery agencies to performing the actual day-to-day operational tasks.

- ❖ Industry and commercial associations, retailers and companies
Industry and commercial sector awareness, interest and direct involvement are essential to programme success. It should be recognised that industry represents product producers and service providers, as well as procurers.
- ❖ Consumers
Consumer demand generates market impact. Consumer requirements and preferences must be determined, recognised and reflected in various scheme initiatives and outputs.

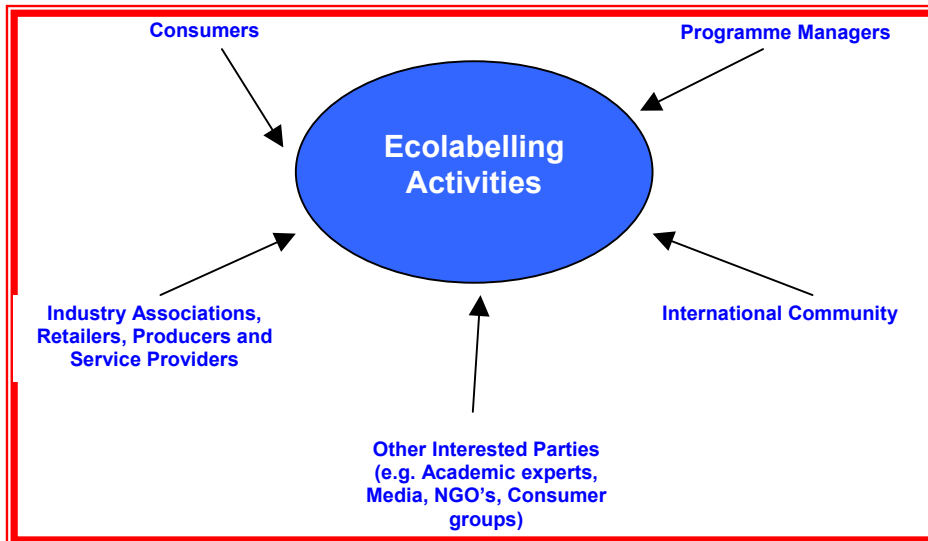


Exhibit 66: Eco-Labeling Participants
Source: Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN), 2004

The interested parties are (GEN, 2004):

- ❖ Academia
Incorporating leading-edge research and expertise into the criteria development and review processes can improve the quality, cost effectiveness and efficiency of outputs.
- ❖ Media
Important group for promoting ecolabelling to consumers and industry.
- ❖ International Community
It may include foreign consumers, industry representatives and participants, and other potential interested parties (eg. Academic experts, media, NGO's etc.). Due to globalisation of markets, an increased requirement for ecolabelling schemes has arisen, in order to expand their consultative efforts beyond domestic borders.

7.6 SOME INDICATORS OF SUCCESS OF ECO-LABELLING

For an ecolabel scheme to be successful, it is proper some indicators to be satisfied, such as (GEN, 2004):

- ❖ Improvement in environmental quality of certified products
 - higher environmental standards for products
 - support the need to and implement routine review and revision processes to address technological and market advances, especially for product categories in which certified products and licensees exist

❖ Industry participation

An ecolabelling scheme is a voluntary policy instrument, using the marketplace rather than regulation to achieve environmental goals. A few success indicators are:

- credibility aspects
- fee structure
- fairly assessed scheme
- no discrimination against companies based on size, location and other factors
- an expanding number of licensees, indicative of a substantial and continuous increase in both criteria categories and/ or enhance their corporate image
- the levels of voluntary “drop-outs” and determined instances of non-compliance (the more successful a scheme, the greater the potential costs associated with leaving or being de-licensed)
- the revoking of a certification criteria standard due to overall industry improvement making the initially developed environmental leadership criteria no longer appropriate
- overall industry involvement in criteria category selection, criteria development and review, and marketing activities incorporating an ecolabel

❖ Consumer recognition and demand

- Consumer recognition
- It takes several years to build consumer and industry confidence (tracking consumer recognition).
- Ecolabel recognition
- The involvement of and support by environmental NGO's,, consumer organisation and the media contributes to an increase in the level of consumer awareness of environmentally preferable products in certain countries
 - low levels: initial education work may be necessary prior to, or in conjunction with, the introduction of ecolabelling
 - high levels: initiatives may be necessary to promote the ecolabel and the products that display it
- Consumer demand

Greater impacts are also realised when ecolabelling criteria are used as “guidance tools” to identify greener products for government procurement and institutional purchasing.

7.7 THE PLAYERS IN ECO-LABELLING

An ideal ecolabel scheme must include all players within its process, having distributed specific roles for each one (*Font, 2001d*). The successful implementation of such a scheme is determined by the co-operation of all parties. Private and public partnership is essential and crucial.

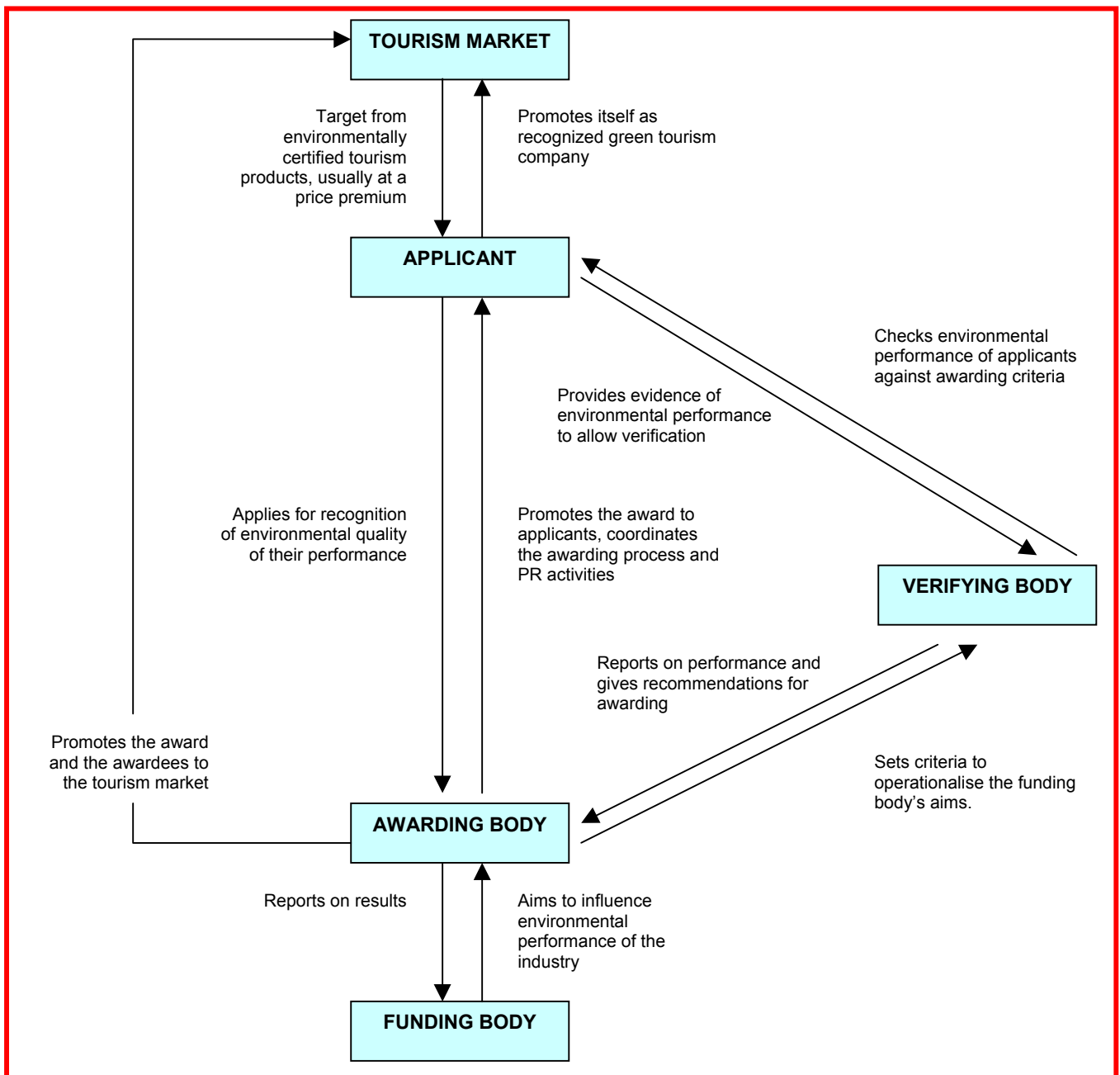


Exhibit 67: The main players in tourism ecolabels
Source: Font et al, 2001d

1. The Tourism Market

The importance of the environment as part of a holiday destination means that tourists may look for ecolabels to ensure their destination has a clean, pleasant surrounding.

Understanding the consumer's environmental behaviour will provide the ecolabel organiser with the tools to sharpen their marketing strategies to ensure that tourists are aware of how good environmental practice benefits them as individuals.

The development of ecolabels has been mostly a top-down approach, recognising the industry's need to clean up its act and introducing methods to do so.

2. The Funding Body

Funding bodies are the organisations that pay for a large part of the costs of development or management of an ecolabel. Funding bodies tend to be governmental or non-profit organisations, and in a smaller number of cases, industry associations or tourism companies. The current trend is to include both public bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to guarantee credibility and transparency of the label, while also engaging industry associations and large tourism companies to ensure the industry commitment to applying for the label, and therefore the long-term survival of the label. Tourism ecolabels are run at a loss; very few can finance themselves through the cost of application. This price pays only for the verification process, but soon funding bodies will ask for greater independence and self-sufficiency from the awarding bodies.

The success of a tourism ecolabel needs to be assessed against the objectives of the funding body through the improvement of environmental performance of the industry and through the benefits of associating the funding body with “good causes”.

3. The Awarding Body

Ecolabels show a concentration on developed countries. For small ecolabels the funding and awarding body are the same organisation, and therefore, in such a case, the awarding body will be the operational arm of the funding body.

The most powerful and useful approaches to ecolabelling must be third party seals of approval, involving outsourcing the task to an independent body that receives an annual grant in aid.

An awarding body may target many different sectors of the industry, basically differential between providers of tourism products (such as hotels, airlines, attractions and destinations) and distribution channels (travel agents and tour operators).

4. The Verifying Agency

The awarding body will have prepared a list of criteria to verify the tourism company's performance and management, and a briefing for a verifying agency to undertake this task. The verifying body has the difficult task of operationalising these criteria, which are too often the result of compromises, showing their weaknesses at this stage.

Due to their cost and economies of scales, EMS's are fully implemented by large tourism companies. Smaller companies even though they are environmental conscious and responsible, they do not have the backing to prove it.

Thus, tourism ecolabels have responded by keeping their criteria to simple facts, mostly verified through site visits and little paperwork, although some recent labels are demanding stricter environmental management structures.

5. The Applicant and the Tourism Industry

The main reason that tourism companies want to be seen to be environmentally respectful is that it sells to prospective customers, and it is beneficial for a company when dealing with the public sector, non-profit organisations, traders and company employees. Companies might want to preserve environmental resources, and influence others in this practice, or tourism companies may want to be seen environmentally friendly to gain corporate advantage through enhanced image, or, another point, is that companies may want to make savings or increase revenues from environmental practices and a green image, ranging from incentives to higher selling prices to cost savings

7.8 THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AN ECO-LABEL

The management of a project such as an ecolabel development is a demanding task, incorporating the following (*Font et al, 2001b*):

- ❖ the available finance
- ❖ the available resources
- ❖ the time period
- ❖ the fulfilment of the project aims
- ❖ the satisfying of the project partners

The main stages of the Project Management Framework are (*Font et al, 2001b*):

- A.** Definition of a *Steering Committee*
- B.** Definition of a *Project Manager*, who is accountable to the Steering Committee
- C.** Existence of a *Detailed Specification* of the project (project's aims, anticipated outcomes, methods and activities for achieving the aims)
- D.** Preparation of a *Budget*
- E.** Identification of a *Critical Path Analysis* (the timing of the activities of the project)
- F.** Preparation of a *Dissemination Strategy*
- G.** Division of *Working Phases* & Definition of specific and measurable outcomes of its activity
- H.** Organisation of *Regular Meetings* (including in their agenda issues such as review of outcomes of last period against objectives, planning of objectives for next period, review of budget, dissemination, review of whole project)
- I.** Writing the *Final Technical & Financial Reports* of the project by the Project Manager

The process of developing an ecolabel (exhibit 68) consists of three phases: positioning and planning; development and consultation; management and marketing (*Font et al, 2001b*).

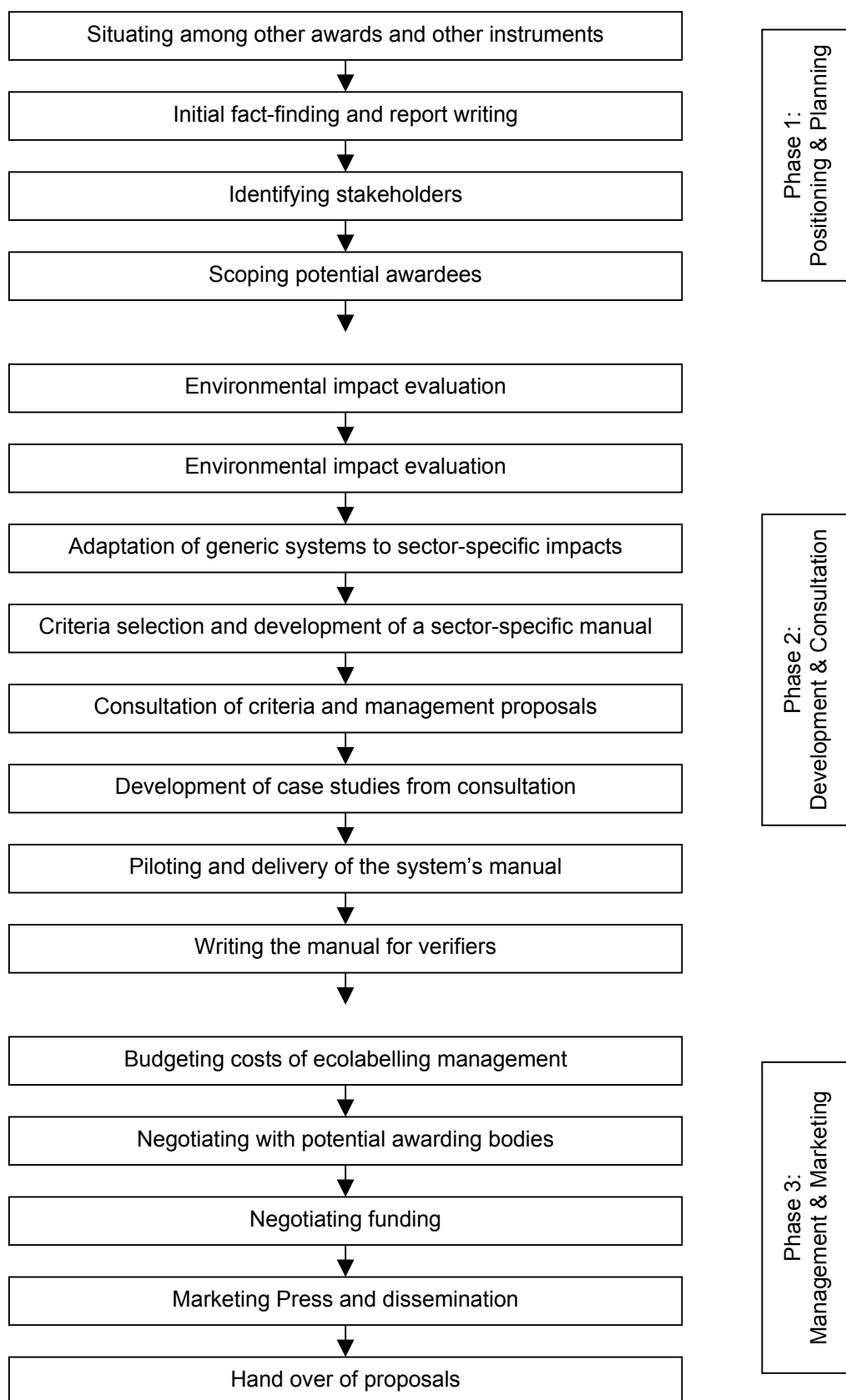


Exhibit 68: The process of developing an Ecolabel
Source: Font et al, 2001b

Phase 1: Positioning and Planning

- ❖ Situating among other awards and other instruments
Organisations developing tourism ecolabels, in order to avoid competition, they ought to ensure they understand how their new ecolabel can relate to others, how it can complement them, and the possibilities for co-operation with them. Together also to assess the alternative instruments available to promote environmental performance within the specific sector in tourism in which they are going to operate.
- ❖ Initial fact finding and report writing
Gather initial information and literature, in order to find out the state-of-the-art in the sector targeted, including the markets, consumer behaviour, products, suppliers etc.
- ❖ Identifying stakeholders
A list of stakeholders should be compiled and information sent to them regarding the development of the ecolabel, inviting them for their initial comments and contributions, and suggestions for other contacts.
- ❖ Scoping potential awardees
The target market the ecolabel is aiming, it will determine the difficulty of the scoping task. Data regarding the potential awardees should be saved in a database for ease of use, as it will become the basis for the consultation and future targeting of potential awardees. Depending on the country and the size of the database, it may be necessary to register it to comply with national data protection legislation.
- ❖ Identifying ecolabel's expected impact on tourist behaviour
-For many awards, the appeal of receiving the award is peer recognition, not increased consumer awareness or purchases.
-The ecolabel organiser may not be able to reach the tourist markets, let alone influence them, since this is a costly exercise.

Phase 2: Development and Consultation

- ❖ Environmental impact evaluation
-An initial identification of key environmental impacts can be carried out through reviewing the literature.
-It is necessary to understand the current environmental performance of the target market.
-The development of a working list of priorities for the ecolabel's criteria.
- ❖ Adaptation of generic systems to sector specific impacts
The organisers of a new ecolabel will benefit from adapting the generic systems to the specific impacts, thus providing a basic framework for the management of it.
- ❖ Criteria selection and development of a sector specific manual
Companies wanting to apply for the ecolabel will benefit from criteria that are clearly stated, explaining what is meant by each of them, what the tourism company has to do to achieve those criteria and what the evidence in terms of outcomes will be once each criterion has been met. It is important also a manual to be written for the potential awardees. The length and depth of which will depend on the industry requirements and the availability of alternative sources of information.
- ❖ Consultation of criteria and management proposals
Consultation will be crucial in order to ensure the relevance of the proposals to the industry's needs and abilities.

1. The criteria previously selected need to be tested
 - finding out the current industry's ability to understand what is expected of them
 - whether those systems are currently in practice
 - whether companies feel they could implement them
 - help adapting the criteria
 - help simplifying the wording
 - help deciding on the strictness of the criteria
2. It will be necessary to consult the relevance of the ecolabel and the proposals to manage it
 - the industry's willingness to apply for this award
 - perceived benefits from it
 - the application method and cost
 - the verification methods
 - the period of verification
 - long-term collaboration for improving the information available to applicants (e.g. training courses, leaflets and newsletters etc.)
- ❖ Development of case studies from consultation

Best-practice case studies found at an earlier stage, through a time-consuming research, that will be added to the manual of applicants (e.g. examples of a policy, how to conduct a site review, how to write a programme of actions, methods to operationalise an environmental programme, methods to keep records of actions, examples of environmental improvements and how these were monitored, how to carry out an internal audit etc.)
- ❖ Piloting and delivery of the system's manual

Piloting can help ensure that potential users understand what is suggested and expected of them.

 1. The team developing the ecolabel can engage a small sample of tourism companies in testing the manual, by providing them with the material and support.
 2. The team can assess the environmental performance and management when the manual is not available, as well as checking whether they will have the information necessary for verification without the manual's help.
- ❖ Writing the manual for verifiers

The manual for verifiers will be a combination of the manuals for applicants, the criteria for verifying and the process of verification, which may be on site, desk or a combination of both.

Phase 3: Management and Marketing

- ❖ Budgeting costs of ecolabelling management

The costs of running an ecolabel are:

 - Office administration costs
 - Verification costs
 - Regional or worldwide co-ordination costs (if applicable)
 - Marketing costs
 - PR event costs

External funding will be necessary to create the infrastructure within the awarding body and to initially establish the award within the participating countries, but there should be a realistic business plan which can generate a self-financing scheme in the medium-term.

❖ Negotiating with potential awarding bodies

For an award to be run consistently and within several countries in Europe one or more organisations are required to administer and manage the award and to provide the verification service for qualification to the scheme. The organisation will need expertise to administer and verify the award. Alternatively, it should have links with other companies who can provide this expertise.

Also, an award needs a strong emblem for it to quickly gain recognition. Association with organisations of good reputation and authority would give an award credibility and integrity.

❖ Marketing, press and dissemination

- prepare a press-release to outline the ecolabel development process
- develop a website at an early stage in the project and use a short web address and position the site in the major search engines
- during data collection, information should be disseminated immediately as a marketing exercise
- develop a publication strategy (e.g. academic and professional journals for technical aspects, newspapers and magazines for general interest)
- participate in and/ or organise conferences
- have a high-profile event, which will attract interest in terms of participants and press for the final proposals for an ecolabel

7.9 STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Eco-labels are easy to be created, generally are immature and are a commonly accepted method to improve practice. Their effectiveness can be assessed by (Font, 2001c):

- ❖ The funding body's objectives
- ❖ The ecolabel's development
- ❖ The market share of certified products
- ❖ Consumer awareness of the ecolabel
- ❖ Influence on consumer decision making
- ❖ Ability to influence industry's performance

Tourism Ecolabels to be developed specific strategies must be considered, in order managers to achieve the desired competitive advantage and quality plus in their tourism enterprises (exhibit 69).

Development Strategy	Methodology
Market Penetration	• review certification criteria • enhance the label's brand image • reduce application costs
Market Development	• target new countries • target new sectors
Product Development	• reposition from ecolabels to quality labels • provide ancillary services • act as a distribution channel for certified products
Diversification	• joint marketing by keeping the chain of custody • merge with other labels • take over labels with funding difficulties

Exhibit 69: Methodology towards a Strategic Analysis of Ecolabels
Source: Adapted from Font, 2001c

CHAPTER 8:**ISSUES & TRENDS OF ECO-LABELLING: THE FUTURE IN TOURISM ECO-LABELS**

8.1 IMPORTANT ISSUES IN TOURISM ECO-LABELLING

According to *Buckley (2001c)*, the most important issues in tourism Eco-labelling are recognition and reliability; maturity and penetration; thresholds and tiers; equity and effectiveness; legislative base and ecolabel add-on; ecolabel design and benchmarks; ecolabels and international trade.

1. Recognition and Reliability

An ideal tourism ecolabel scheme would appear to need:

- brand name and audit process
- local implementation
- detailed technical criteria for different types of tourism activity or service
- multiple labelling levels
- high transparency
- public accessibility of information

2. Maturity and Penetration

Consumers need confidence that every product in the sector has been considered for ecolabelling and either accepted or rejected, so that the absence of a label means as much as its presence.

3. Thresholds and Tiers

A single-tier ecolabel

- the technical criteria may need to change over time, if the overall level of environmental performance in the sector evolves

A multi-tier ecolabel incorporates:

- a basic entry level,
- a mid-level which is the main one used by consumers,
- a top-level to recognise the highest performers (e.g. GG21, Australian National Ecotourism Accreditation Programme NEAP)

4. Equity and Effectiveness

Equity issues arise if there are significant differences in environmental impacts between ecolabelled and unlabelled tourism products in the same area, and the products with better environmental performance are more expensive.

5. Legislative Base and Ecolabel Add-on

Tourism ecolabels may be an effective component of a policy bundle or pyramid, if they are coupled with environmental regulations which set a basic threshold for environmental performance which all tourism products must meet, with ecolabelled products providing an optional best-practice add-on for a small extra.

Particular aspects of environmental performance which one country incorporates into an ecolabel scheme, may already be required by law in another country.

6. Ecolabel Design and Benchmarks

Tourism ecolabels may be constructed in many different ways and may be based either on inputs or outputs. Thus, they need a) benchmarks against which to compare, b) routine reporting of corporate environmental performance and c) guidelines for best practice, something that consumers and corporations may use to judge existing environmental performance and plan improvements.

7. Ecolabels and International Trade

Economically, tourism is an export from less to more developed nations. Thus, the product is consumed in the less developed nations where it is produced: product and process are inseparable.

8.2 ECOLABELS FOR TOURISM: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

There are a lot of benefits a tourism company may gain from by using a tourism ecolabel. The most important ones are (*Hamele, 2001*):

- ❖ Ecolabels can help tourism suppliers to identify critical issues, speed up the implementation of eco-efficient solutions, and lead to effective ways of monitoring and reporting on environmental performance
- ❖ While ecolabels can help to sell tourism products, they also decrease the use of resources such as energy and water, reducing costs for the operator. Ecolabels are thus both a marketing and an environmental management tool.
- ❖ Ecolabels provide consumers with easily accessible and recognisable information on best educational practice within a product group
- ❖ Guarantee an external source of monitoring and public reporting
- ❖ Provide SMEs with an instrument which is less costly than working with EMAS
- ❖ Raise environmental awareness among all stakeholders
- ❖ Advance good environmental practice in the tourist sector

However, nowadays, there is a lot of discussion concerning the development of a common European ecolabel scheme for Tourism. Such an ecolabel shall have the following main characteristics (*Hamele, 2001; www.eco-label-tourism.com, 2006*):

- ❖ The label must be *selective*. The label is only given to those accommodations which fulfil the criteria.
- ❖ It must be *transparent* (a clear indicator of the level of environmental performance of the specific accommodation), but also protective with regard to confidential information provided by individuals, public companies, interest groups, interested parties or other sources.
- ❖ It must work with a *multi-criteria* approach, it is not based on a single parameter.
- ❖ It must be *voluntary*, it is for the establishment to decide whether or not to apply.
- ❖ It shall have a *European dimension*. This avoids having to make an application in every country, including time-consuming and costly procedures and eliminates consumer confusion.

For setting ecolabel criteria, the following requirements should be tested (*Hamele, 2001*):

1. Feasibility and market study

- ❖ analysing the nature of the European tourism market
- ❖ characterising the main different types of services
- ❖ grouping them and analysing options for product groups

- ❖ assessing best environmental practices and environmental impacts
 - ❖ identifying barriers and success factors
 - ❖ commenting on options for flexibility
 - ❖ investigating synergies and links to EMAS
 - ❖ setting up an indicative priority list for feasibility and action at the European level
2. Life cycle considerations
3. Improvement analysis
- ❖ the theoretical potential for environment improvement in conjunction with possible changes induced in the market structures
 - ❖ technical, industrial and economic feasibility and market modifications
 - ❖ consumer attitudes, perceptions and preferences, which may influence the effectiveness of the ecolabel
4. Proposal of the criteria

At the end, a common ecolabel for the lodging establishments may help to (*Hamele, 2001*):

- ❖ improve the recognition of best environmental practice for the consumer (one official label for accommodation in different destinations compared with many different labels, mostly private ones currently)
- ❖ stimulate the use of an ecolabel by tour operators (one label on accommodation in different destinations in tourist brochures, on the Internet etc.)
- ❖ serve as a valuable tool for internationally operating providers of tourist services (the use of one system/ set of criteria will limit the costs of applying for the ecolabel in different countries)
- ❖ encourage more direct and indirect co-operation and co-ordination among different national and regional ecolabels (a European ecolabel could serve as a guideline for national and regional initiatives)
- ❖ provide a valuable example of European best practices in tourist accommodation for other areas in the world

8.3 ECOLABELS FOR TOURISM: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Environmental policy-makers face several challenges from international schemes, such as regional conditions, potential misuse, institutional context and free trade. Thus, some recommendations (*Kahlenborn, 2001*) for a common international Tourism Ecolabel should be considered.

The policy-makers should take an active role in setting up new international ecolabelling schemes for preventing industry-driven, less environmentally efficient schemes from acquiring a central position; giving support to well-thought out initiatives for introducing such schemes, especially in areas where no such schemes or no efficient schemes currently exist; considering mutual recognition of national/ regional schemes; extending a scheme in a second step instead of introducing new national and regional schemes in a first step.

Also, they should understand that the greater market reach of international ecolabelling schemes makes the misuse of such labels likely (eg. introduce international minimum standards) and carry out a research to overcome the structural obstacles for international schemes.

In addition, policy-makers may introduce safeguards into future international agreements (eg. avoid any inadequate criteria, ensure the possibility of further growth of the scheme), since free trade agreements are interfering more and more with ecolabelling efforts.

Finally, they must ensure the autonomy of the international labelling bodies, which results in the diminishing role for the national authorities, in order to avoid any conflicts and misunderstandings.

If an international tourism ecolabel is to be developed under clear guidelines, criteria and conformity with ecolabel compliance, then the main environmental benefits will be more transparency and clarity; positive impact on the behaviour of the industry; new markets; efficiency.

8.4 THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE OF TOURISM ECOLABELS

Currently, there are many more tourism ecolabels in Europe than elsewhere, especially small-scale schemes, and especially in and around Germany (*Buckley, 2001b*). However, some of the small tourism ecolabels established over the past decade seem to have become inactive, but, on the other hand, more have arisen.

By far the majority of tourism ecolabels are for the accommodation sector and are based principally on energy, water and resource conservation and waste management. New national tourism ecolabels are incorporating more and more quantitative and substantive performance criteria and older ones are being revised to include such criteria. Global tourism ecolabels have not yet subsumed regional, national and local ones, but projections for the future estimate that the global tourism ecolabels will expand, without this implying that tourists will pay any attention to them. (*Buckley, 2001b*).

If regional, national and local ecolabels are subsumed into any of the global schemes it is most likely to be Green Globe 21 (*Buckley, 2001b*), since that is one of the latter's explicit aims. The proliferation of small local ecolabels is likely to continue even if they also become linked into global schemes.

Specialist national and regional ecolabels are likely to survive, because they contain far more technical environmental information than the global schemes, are hence more meaningful to environmentally concerned tourists.

The main influential factors for the future of Tourism Ecolabels are (*Buckley, 2001b*) the overall level of environmental concern amongst tourists from various countries, which affects demand for environmental performance labels. Also, the increasing pollution and environmental deterioration worldwide, which affects tourist demand for environmental quality labels. In addition, national and multilateral government frameworks for corporate environmental reporting and community right-to-know, which may allow individual consumers, or environmental and community groups, to establish their own independent environmental assessments of different tourism companies directly, bypassing generalised ecolabel schemes.

The possible developments in international trade law relating to ecolabels, any changes in the structure of the global tourism industry such as a possible trend to franchising or purchase of small independent tour and accommodation providers by large international chains, and/ or changes in the global structure of tourism marketing, eg. possible increased use of the Internet, e-commerce and any associated quality assurance programmes are factors of great importance.

CHAPTER 9:**THE EU ECO-LABEL FOR TOURIST ACCOMMODATION SERVICES (ELTAS) & CAMP SITE SERVICES: THE EUROPEAN FLOWER****9.1 THE EUROPEAN ECO-LABEL FOR TOURIST ACCOMMODATION SERVICES AND CAMP SITE SERVICES AS ADDED VALUE IN QUALITY**

The Eco-label-scheme is a consequence of the EU “strategy of sustainable development” as it has become a paramount objective of the European Union since the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997. Thus it integrates the three main pillars of sustainability: environment, society and economy (EC, 2006).

The European strategy on sustainable development in the field of tourism can rely on many actual documents of the EU but also of the WTO and UN institutions. The documents of the global sustainable development process since Rio de Janeiro, the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development and the various other EU strategic documents on central and sector issues in relation to sustainable development contain key objectives which need also to be applied to the tourism sector or are particularly relevant for it. Moreover, key objectives are already largely formulated in the various tourism specific documents at global level. A future study for sustainable European Tourism must focus on adding or formulating more specifically those elements that are specific for Europe and its tourism sector).



The European Eco-label for tourist accommodation services was created in April 2003 to reward tourist accommodation owners and tourists that respect the environment. Since 2005, camp site services can also apply for the European Eco-label. The ELTAS signals environmental good performance: it's an added quality value when customers choose an accommodation. The Flower logo distinguishes the EU Eco-label. Enterprises bearing the Flower Logo have officially been distinguished as being amongst the most environmentally friendly in their area.

For the European Eco-Label different lodging establishments can apply, such as a hotel chain, or a city hotel palace, a mountain hut, a B&B or a farm house or a camp site etc. The Regulation defines under Article 2 (www.eco-label-tourism.com, 2006), that the product group “tourist accommodation service” shall comprise the provision (for a fee) of sheltered overnight accommodation in appropriately equipped rooms, including at least a bed, offered as a main service to tourists, travellers and lodgers. The provision of overnight accommodation may include the provision of food services, fitness activities and/or green areas.

By using ELTAS, there are different benefits for the environment, the lodging establishments, the tour operators and the guests (www.eco-label-tourism.com). The most important are:

1. The Environment

The ELTAS and eco-labelled enterprises care for the environment and health:

- ❖ low interior air emission (caused by paints and cleaning chemicals)
- ❖ less polluted ambience and neighbourhood (no use of pesticides, fertilisers etc.)
- ❖ wholefood from regional organic farming

2. The Accommodations

The European Eco-label offers a lot of advantages for tourist accommodation services.

1. Show a company's high quality and environmental performance by using an official logo from the European Commission

The European Eco-label is the best way to inform the guests about the efforts regarding environmental measures and quality improvements in an enterprise. The European Eco-label is an official trademark with a high reputation based on strong and reliable criteria. It- label is a guarantee for high environmental performance.

2. Eco-efficiency for cost-advantages

Most of the environmental measures require some time and effort, but on the other hand they offer added value. They help to discover ecological and economic weaknesses in an enterprise and in some cases innovations will take place. Reducing the consumption of natural resources like energy and water helps reducing your costs.

3. Sense of well-being

Environmental commitment stands for healthy lodgings, healthy nutrition and a healthy environment for the guests and the employees. Environmentally friendly tourist accommodation use e.g. natural building materials, have non-smoking areas and avoid the use of hazardous chemicals; linen is washed with more environmentally friendly detergents.

4. Meet the expectations of the guests

An enterprise's commitment meets the expectations of its guests. They will recognise the high environmental performance as a "plus quality". The European Eco- label helps to express this message. It is an advertising plus. It improves the holiday experience effect for the guests and supports the company's communication line.

Most of the guests want accommodation with positive effects on their health and many of them like accommodation in harmony with nature. The German Traveller Analysis 2002 (www.eco-label-tourism.com) showed that 41.8 % of tourists like environmentally friendly accommodation, 45.8 % want effective environmental protection at their destination and 59.1 % dislike outdoor waste pollution.

Almost 50 % of the guests surveyed said that the environmental situation is very important, in particular for guests coming from Germany, Austria, Great Britain and France (www.eco-label-tourism.com cited in Dietmar Kepplinger: *Gibt es den "Gruenen Gast"*, WU-Wien, Institut für Tourismus und Freizeitwirtschaft, Juni 1999).

5. Reinforce the marketing tools of an enterprise

As an eco-labelled accommodation service, the enterprise is entitled to use a number of marketing tools:

- ❖ The use of the official logo, e.g. as a fixed element in the advertising brochures and leaflets.
- ❖ Marketing guide: successful marketing requires professional work. It contains written texts, hints and tips and checklists.
- ❖ Furthermore the efforts of the marketing team focus on media-events, tourist events, advertising and PR-measures etc. This will also help to improve a company's image.

The use of the EU Eco-label distinguishes an enterprise on the market at European level, as it is a trademark officially recognised throughout Europe.

3. Tour Operators

Guests are looking for environmental responsibility in the hospitality industry. Consequently, tour operators are trying to offer accommodations certified with the Eco-label. According to many surveys on tourism more and more guests demand

environmentally friendly tourist accommodations. By offering accommodations with the EU-Eco-label there is a chance to enter an important market and to gain a competitive advantage.

4. Guests

The EU Eco-label for tourist accommodation services is the EU's official label for eco-friendly tourist accommodation services.

The ELTAS aims towards responsible treatment of the environment. Facilities labelled with the EU Eco-label do not only offer an exquisitely laid out table, but also seasonal products by regional suppliers. For example, the rooms are squeaky clean due to eco-friendly cleansing and washing agents, while table cloths and laundry are being cleaned without chemical substances for the client's relish.

The ELTAS is incorruptible when it comes to investigation. The examination of a tourist accommodation service on its ecological benefits is performed by independent testers. This fact guarantees the EU Eco-label's homogenous high standard Europe-wide.

The ELTAS offer luxurious, gourmet style accommodation to the customer. Nameless tourist accommodation services across Europe, starting with farms up to mundane city hotels, decided to give to the guests the highest standard possible concerning the quality of their environment. Those accommodation services do not miss the words ecological management in their vocabulary.

The ELTAS enhance health and well being issues. This kind of accommodation services gives the guest the luxury of a carefree vacation. Environment and health are the main priorities concerning the use of raw materials. They provide natural furniture, gentle chemicals for cleaning, for a guest's well being.

The ELTAS could not ignore also the importance of leisure time and fun. It is a good reason to step out of the daily routine and step into the fun. The guest can leave worries behind, relax and regain energy. The European Eco-label stands for quality and ecological responsibility in the European tourism and leisure time economy. Economical and social responsibility for a destination is of the utmost importance.

To help the environment, certified accommodation services can offer:

1. a natural and healthy atmosphere in house and garden
2. natural materials for beds and bathrooms
3. fresh air and pleasant ambience in non-smoking areas
4. easy to do waste separation in guest rooms
5. waste and energy optimized management
6. instructions for saving water in bathrooms and toilets
7. information on public transport

9.2 THE APPLICATION AND VERIFICATION PROCESS

During the application process, the interested party, first, must get in contact with the Competent Body, which is the national organisation responsible for the application for the EU-Eco-label in every EU Member State. The Competent Body gives information on the application procedure, distributes the application pack and is responsible for the verification of compliance prior to the awarding of the Eco-label. The application pack comprises a verification form and a user-manual, designed to accompany the applicant through the process of application. Applicants must provide a detailed dossier showing how the technical criteria have been met. The verification documents are self-declarations, declarations and other relevant documents from qualified professionals. The Competent Body may make further checks on data submitted. If the application is in conformity with the requirements and the application

fee is paid the applicant will be awarded the Eco-label with the right to use the logo inside his/ her accommodation and in advertisements.

The criteria are divided into two main sections, the mandatory criteria and the optional criteria. All the criteria in the mandatory section must be fulfilled, if applicable. If it is not possible to fulfil a mandatory criterion, the applicant shall explain why this is the case. The criteria in the optional section need to be fulfilled according to the requirements set out in the scoring system.

An application fee is payable when an application is made. The basic fee is 300 EURO to max. 1,300 EURO. Reductions of 75% apply to micro enterprises (with up to 10 employees) and mountain huts and of 25% to small and medium-sized enterprises. The annual fee is based on sales. It shall amount to 0.15% of the annual volume of sales which is calculated as the average delivery price multiplied by the number of overnight stays. Reductions of 50% on the annual fee apply for all companies. (*www.eco-label-tourism.com, 2006*).

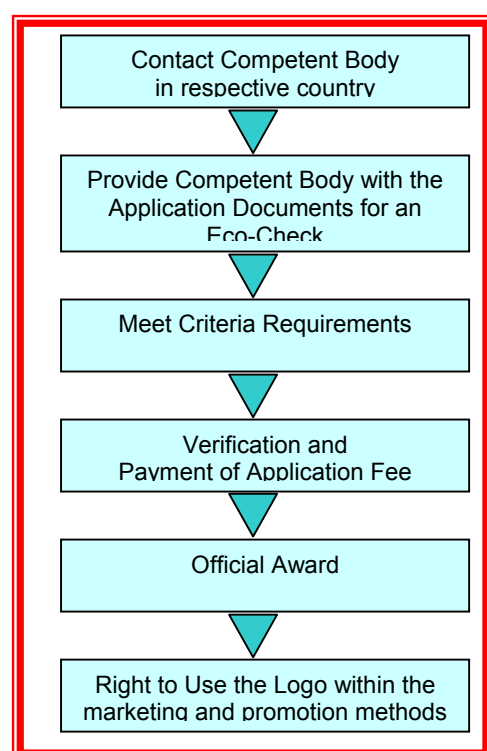


Exhibit 70: The Application and Verification Process
Source: *www.eco-label-tourism.com, 2006*

Applicants must proceed to an eco-test, meaning that each interested party, manager, hotelier etc. should check its accommodation and assess its environmental performance based on a series of technical criteria (exhibit 71). Afterwards, all the appropriate verification documents can be prepared and submitted to the Competent Body for awarding.

Technical Criteria	Description
Energy	☐ Energy-efficient electrical equipment ☐ Electricity from renewable sources ☐ Appropriate thermal insulation ☐ Automatic switch-off systems (light, heating...) ☐ Collection of energy consumption data

Water	☐ Water-saving taps and showers ☐ Water-saving dishwashers, washing machines, WC's etc. ☐ Flexible change of towels and sheets ☐ Appropriate waste water treatment
Staff training on	☐ Environmental issues ☐ Right dosage of detergents and cleaners ☐ Effective waste, water, energy and resource management ☐ Maintenance and servicing of the equipment
Information for guests on ..	☐ Local environmental facts and news ☐ Environmental measures taken at the accommodation ☐ Ways to save water and energy ☐ How to separate waste ☐ Modes of public transport
Eco procurement	☐ Energy and water efficient equipment ☐ Eco-labelled products ☐ Refillable bottles ☐ No disposable bottles, toiletries, cups, plates and cutlery
Dangerous chemical substances	☐ Eco-labelled indoor paint, varnish and detergents ☐ Appropriate use of chemical substances ☐ Collection of chemical consumption data
Waste	☐ Waste separation ☐ Appropriate disposal of waste ☐ Avoidance of disposable and hazardous products ☐ Separation and disposal of hazardous waste
Others	☐ No smoking areas ☐ National Eco-label ☐ Bioclimatic architecture ☐ Food from local and organic farming ☐ Use of photovoltaic and wind energy ☐ Heat pumps, district heating, heat recovery ☐ Use of rain and recycled water ☐ EMAS or ISO 14001

Exhibit 71: A summary of the ELTAS Technical Criteria
Source: www.eco-label-tourism.com, 2006

For the evaluation of a company's environmental performance, a point ratio is used, defining the ability or non-ability to conform the criteria that were set up for awarding of Eco-Label. Specifically, the evaluation method is analytically referred to the application manual and in any case the representatives of the Competent Body are always willing to provide possible clients with the appropriate information.

To simplify and clarify further this evaluation, a client must be aware of the following scale:

❖ Up to 9 points

No Eco-label in sight. More detailed information on the Eco-label criteria can shorten a company's way to best practice. It is better to contact the respective Competent Body.

❖ to 20 points

A company having achieved up to 20 points is on the right track for the EU Eco-label. At this point, it is proper to get the complete catalogue with all 84 criteria (mandatory

and optional) in detail. The Competent Body will give you the support you may require.

❖ 21 to 30 points

In case a company has 21 to 30 points, then the EU Eco-label seems to be the right tool to show to the guests the environmental performance. A contact with the respective Competent Body will lead the tourism enterprise to get the complete criteria document and information on the application procedures.

9.3 SUSTAINABLE HOTELS IN MEDITERRANEAN ISLANDS AND AREA (ShMILE)

9.3.1 Introduction on the ShMILE project



The main objective of the project under the title: “Sustainable Hotels in Mediterranean Islands and Area” is to support effective and sustainable implementation of the ELTAS around Europe. This will be done through demonstration actions in the Mediterranean Islands and area, and through EU-wide dissemination of end products.

The ShMILE project is one of the 12 French projects supported by the European Programme in 2004. It is part of the policy area “Eco-Labeling”. Alpheis, expert in energy and environment fields, is the coordinator of the project that groups 13 partners from 4 countries: France, Italy, Greece and Austria.

The main participants in FRANCE are:

- Alpheis (expert in the energy and environment fields), promoter and the coordinator of the project
- ACCOR Hotels
- ADEME (eco-certification and RES integration in buildings)
- AFNOR (French competent body for the European eco-label)
- ENSAM (training and education in the field of renewable energies and sustainable development)

The main participants in ITALY are:

- RAS (Regione Autonoma Sardinia)
- University of Sassari, Department of Architecture and Planning

The main participants in GREECE are:

- Alpha MENTOR, Studies & Project Management , co-ordinator for the Greek partners
- Porto Carras Grand Resort
- ATEI, Department of Tourism Management
- Prefecture of Halkidiki, Department of Tourism

The main participant in AUSTRIA is:

- G&L Wien, Environmental marketing and communication

This partnership involves different stakeholders: hotel owners, public authorities, universities, relevant certification bodies and consultants in the energy, environments, tourism and marketing fields.

In the project there are three hotels involved as pilot sites: Coralia Marina viva (ACCOR), Porticcio, Corsica, France; Su Cologone Hotel, Oliena, Sardinia, Italy; Meliton Beach Porto Carras, Neos Marmaras, Halkidiki, Greece.

The expected results of such a project are the following:

- ❖ Professional training packages for hotel owners and managers and their operational staff aiming to help them in the certification process, from audit until applying to competent bodies, as far as the successful obtaining of ELTAS.
- ❖ Marketing guide helping players in the tourist accommodation sector to set up a green marketing strategy, including the economic and environmental benefits of the ELTAS implementation.
- ❖ Education curricula for architecture, engineering and tourism management students in order to develop local skills and improve local market growth and competitiveness.

9.3.2 Main Actions of the ShMILE project

The ShMILE project is applied for hotel organisations and tourist associations, hotel owners and technical and management staff, tourism agencies and tour operators, consultants, engineers, architects, and municipalities and public authorities willing to influence the policies dealing with the environmental impact of the hotel sector.

For the satisfaction of all interests of stakeholders, the ShMILE project identified five actions: eco-label audit; sustainable decision-making process; demonstration actions for ELTAS; training and education; dissemination.

Action 1: Eco-label audit

The main objective of this task is to develop and to test an on-site auditing tool for diagnosis and monitoring of accommodation services according to the EU eco-label criteria.

This tool has already allowed the carrying out of audit of the three pilot sites, based on the mandatory and the optional criteria of the ELTAS. These criteria are grouped in the following categories:

- ❖ Energy
- ❖ Water
- ❖ Dangerous Chemical Substances
- ❖ Waste Other Services
- ❖ General Management

The audit tool aims to assess the situation of a tourist accommodation, compared with the requirements of the eco-label certification. It will be also used to set up improvement scenarios in short and mid-term.

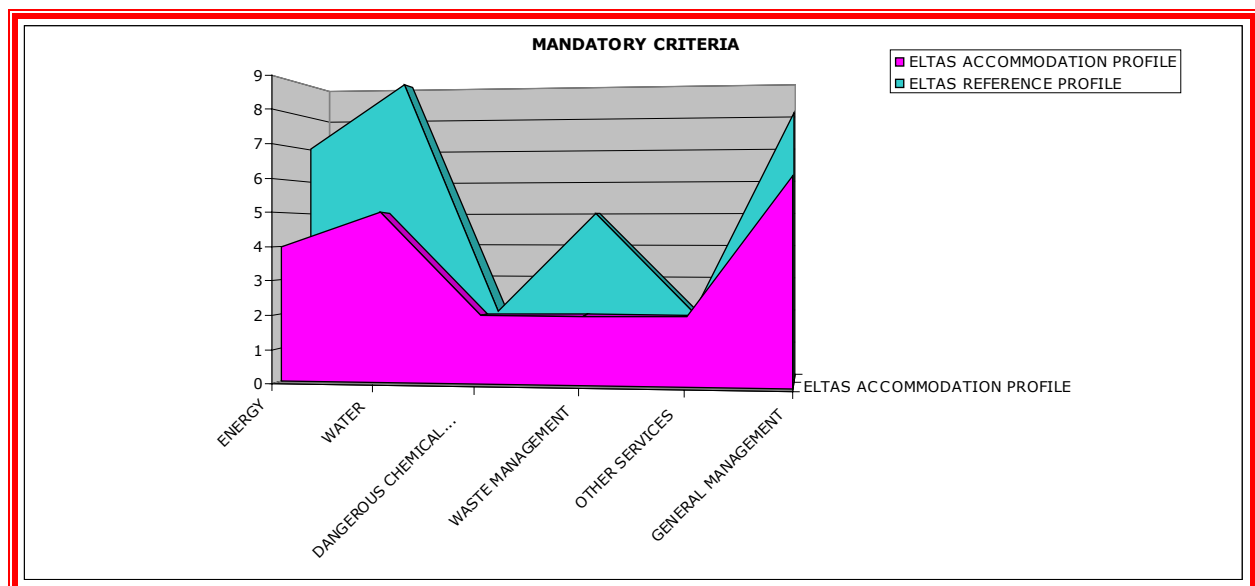


Exhibit 72: Comparative figure for Mandatory Criteria for French pilot site
Source: ShMILE project, 2005

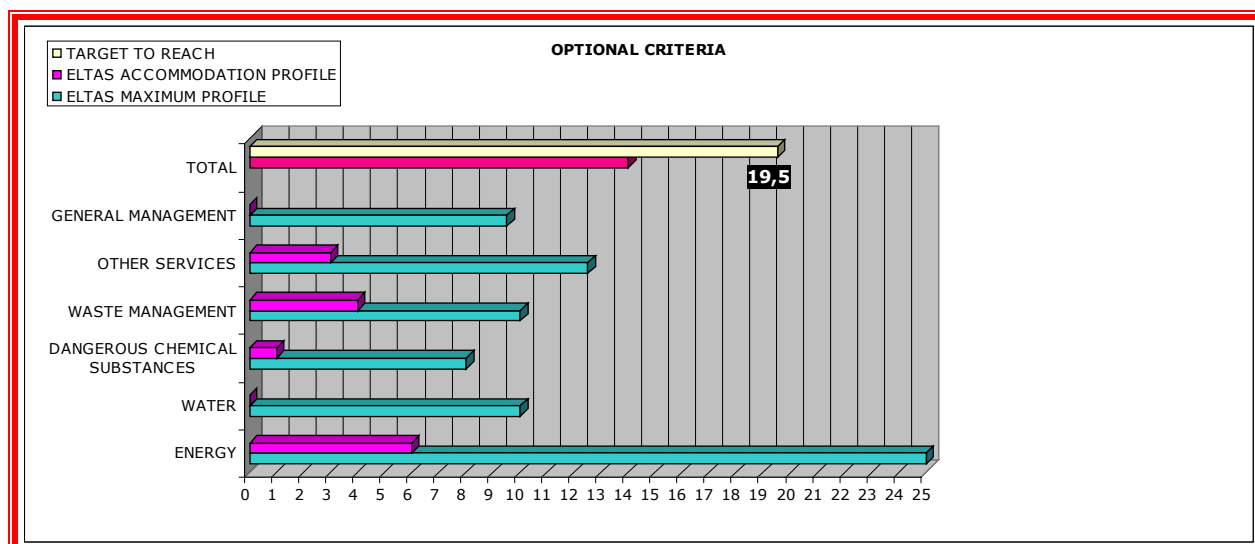


Exhibit 73: Comparative figure for Optional Criteria for French pilot site
Source: ShMILE project, 2005

Action 2: Sustainable decision-making process

This actions involves the development of a decision-making tool, aiming at supporting hotel owners and managers in the decision making process towards the ELTAS certification. At the end, according to the economical and regulatory framework, on the basis of results of the aforementioned audit, the targets for improving pilot-site's environmental quality have to be defined.

Action 3: Demonstration actions for ELTAS

For each category of ELTAS criteria, the best technical and management solutions should be identified. The objective is to identify these solutions according to a multi-criteria approach, in order to successfully apply for the ELTAS. At the same time, an eco-label feasibility study for the three pilot-sites will be realised.

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* Documents and presentations, as they become available to the WTO Secretariat, corresponding to the WTO-OMT seminars on quality systems and management in tourism held in Vilnius, Lithuania, 4-6 November 2004; Santiago, Chile, 13-15 December 2004; Cairo, Egypt, 5-7 April 2005; and Yaoundé, Cameroon, 20-22 June 2005; San Salvador, El Salvador, 28-30 June 2005; and Lusaka, Zambia, 5-7 September 2005. [<http://www.world-tourism.org/quality/E/pres.htm>, viewed 30/09/2005]

APPENDIX

USEFUL WEB SITES

American Society for Quality

<http://asq.gr>

Benchmark Hotel

<http://www.benchmarkhotel.com>

Online benchmark tool for hotels to track and compare their environmental performance

Centre for Sustainable Design

www.cfsd.org.uk/

Information on eco-design, sustainable products and services, integrated product policy. Access the Journal of Sustainable Product Design at (<http://www.cfsd.org.uk/journal/index.html>).

European Commission

<http://www.europa.eu.int>

European Committee for Standardisation

<http://www.cenorm.be/cenorm/index.htm>

Global Action Plan for the Earth (GAP)

<http://globalactionplan.org>

Information about the Household EcoTeam Program, the Livable Neighborhood Program, and the Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign.

Global Ecolabelling Network

<http://www.gen.gr.jp>

Green Globe

<http://www.greenglobe21.com/>

One of seven world-wide sustainable tourism certification bodies

Green Seal - Greening the Lodging Industry (USA)

<http://www.greenseal.org/greeninglodge.htm>

Comprehensive purchasing and operations guide for the industry, "Greening Your Property." Certification program to help travelers, meeting planners, and government and corporate travel buyers identify environmentally responsible lodging properties

Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP)

<http://www.ecotourism.org.au/neap.asp>

European Committee for Standardisation

<http://www.cenorm.be/cenorm/index.htm>

International Centre for Responsible Tourism

<http://www.icrtourism.org>

Sharing best practice in all aspects of responsible tourism: reports, news, events, projects around the world.

Works toward continuous improvement in the environmental performance of the global hotel industry. Produces Green Hotelier Magazine, the Environmental Management for Hotels best practice manual and other tools.

International Ecotourism Society

<http://www.ecotourism.org>

International Hotels Environment Initiative

<http://www.ihei.org>

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

www.iied.org/smg/index.html#suscon

Sustainable consumption workbook, documents on links between production/ consumption and trade.

International Institute for Sustainable Development

<http://www.issd.org>

International Organisation for Standardisation

<http://www.iso.co.uk>

Certification for tour operators and naturalist guides in Australia

Online Tourism Magazine

<http://www.hospitalitynet.org>

Online Tourism Magazine

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

www.oecd.org/env (click on "Environmental Impacts of Production and Consumption")

Studies and reports on sector-level concerns (agriculture, construction household consumption (food, travel, energy, water and waste), sustainable consumption indicators, and issues associated with technological change and improvements in resource efficiency.

ResponsibleTravel.com

<http://www.responsibletravel.com>

Marketplace for eco-travel trips around the world that benefit local communities and conservation of habitats.

Sustainable Hotels in Mediterranean Islands and Area.

<http://www.shmile.org>

The European Eco-label for tourist accommodation services and camp-site services

<http://www.eco-label-tourism.com>

<http://europa.eu.int/ecolabel>

Tourism Concern

<http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk/>

Membership organisation campaigning for ethical and fairly traded tourism.

Tour Operators Initiative

<http://www.toinitiative.org/>

A group of tour operators from different parts of the world have joined forces to create the Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development

UNEP Sustainable Tourism

<http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/>

United Nations website on sustainable tourism

Visit

<http://www.yourvisit.info>

Database of environmentally certified hotels in Europe.

World Tourism Organisation

<http://www.world-tourism.org>

World Travel & Tourism Council

<http://www.wttc.org>