



Global Tourism
Plastics Initiative

Toolkit

Recommendations for the Tourism
Sector to Continue Taking Action on
Plastic Pollution During COVID-19
Recovery



Tackling plastic pollution in COVID-19 times



1

Remove unnecessary plastic packaging and items to reduce cross contamination touch points;



2

Develop **robust cleaning and sanitization procedures** that encourage the adoption of reuse models;



3

Evaluate **the use of unavoidable plastic packaging** and items, enquire about their **recyclability and reassess needs** on a regular basis;



4

Engage suppliers, waste management providers and local governments to improve the effectiveness of actions, coordination and resilience;



5

Ensure open and transparent communication with staff and clients.



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Tackling plastic pollution in COVID-19 times

- 1. Remove unnecessary plastic** packaging and items to reduce cross contamination touch points;
- 2. Develop robust cleaning and sanitization procedures** that encourage the adoption of reuse models;
- 3. Evaluate the use of unavoidable plastic packaging** and items, enquire about their **recyclability and reassess needs** on a regular basis;
- 4. Engage suppliers, waste management providers and local governments** to improve the effectiveness of actions, coordination and resilience;
- 5. Ensure open and transparent communication** with staff and clients.

Source: GTPI, *Recommendations for the Tourism Sector to Continue Taking Action on Plastic Pollution During COVID-19 Recovery*, July 2020

Recommendations to reduce plastic use and cross contamination touch points

Single-use plastic items and packaging are not sanitization measures in themselves – the virus can survive on these - and can represent touch points.

- **Reduce touch points** where indirect contact with an infected person can happen
- **Remove unnecessary plastic packaging** and items to reduce touch points
- Every single use-plastic packaging/item should be **properly sanitized**
- Make only the necessary plastic items accessible and available to the guests (or available upon request)

Source: GTPI, *Recommendations for the Tourism Sector to Continue Taking Action on Plastic Pollution During COVID-19 Recovery*, July 2020



Tips to develop robust cleaning and sanitization procedures



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- Develop **clear and comprehensive protocols** for staff to ensure successful implementation of health and sanitization procedures
- **Safety and hygiene are critical** for both single use and reuse models
- **Reuse models allow stakeholders to directly ensure the application of sound hygiene and sanitization procedures**, gaining greater control over such processes
- Ensure that **staff use single-use gloves/ masks solely when it is necessary** from a health-related perspective
- Implement practices for **sound management of chemical products** to avoid impacts on human health (staff and guests) and the environment





Tips evaluate the use of unavoidable plastic packaging and items

- If single-use plastic packaging/items cannot be avoided, **give preference to recyclable/ compostable plastic** and/or plastic packaging/items with recycled content
- Consider the **capacity of the available waste management infrastructure** to process the increased stream of plastic waste in a sustainable and circular manner (recyclable or compostable)
- **Reduce, sort, and separate plastic waste** to avoid mixing with hazardous waste
- Treat decisions to introduce single-use plastic items and packaging as temporary and **review long-term operational needs** on a regular basis in light of the latest available scientific and public health advice



Engage suppliers, waste management providers and local governments

- **Enhance** (or establish where non-existent) **coordination mechanisms with suppliers** to increase influence and improve information flows in order to ensure application of established hygiene and safety protocols
- **Leverage this influence to reduce the amount of unnecessary plastic packaging** and items going into tourism operations
- **Increase engagement of waste service providers** to ensure non-hazardous (plastic) waste is collected and segregated until it is recycled or properly disposed
- Enhance **coordination with key relevant authorities and peers** to reduce hazardous waste

Source: GTPI, *Recommendations for the Tourism Sector to Continue Taking Action on Plastic Pollution During COVID-19 Recovery*, July 2020

Ensure open and transparent communication with staff and clients

- Reflect your efforts to tackle plastic pollution in **protocols and communication addressed to staff and partners**
- **Establish clear roles and expectations** of staff on how to reduce plastic use and implement reuse models while complying with hygiene and safety measures
- **Communicate to guests on how the planned measures are being implemented** (e.g. make cleaning timetables visible; assign staff to operate water refilling stations; etc.)
- **Provide guests with clear recommendations on use/hygiene protocols** of equipment/ items made available to them
- **Report, in a rigorous, transparent, and consistent manner**, on the actions taken to address hygiene via an enhanced plastics strategy

Source: GTPI, *Recommendations for the Tourism Sector to Continue Taking Action on Plastic Pollution During COVID-19 Recovery*, July 2020



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Frequently asked questions

1. Is **'wrapping up of the remote control in plastic film'** a useful sanitization measure?
2. Should the accommodation providers return **to single-sized amenities**, instead of existing **refillable** shampoo/soap/other dispensers?
3. Should **refillable water stations** be taken out of the operations?
4. Should **restaurants and catering services** give preference to **disposable cutlery** to respect hygiene standards?
5. Is **double packaging of food and beverage products** a recommendable practice from hygiene perspective?



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Is 'wrapping up of the remote control in plastic film' a useful sanitization measure?

- **Plastic film is not a sanitization measure in itself.** If the wrapped-up remote control is touched by a member of staff who has not cleaned their hands, this could become a point of transmission of COVID-19.
- **Instead of wrapping in plastics, all items available for guests to use should be properly sanitized.**



Should the accommodation providers return to single-sized amenities, instead of existing refillable shampoo/soap/other dispensers?

- Using single-sized amenities will require safety protocols from the (1) supplier to (2) preparation of room for guests and the (3) proper disposal of the content and plastic packaging left behind.
- Establishing cleaning protocols for refillable shampoo/soap dispensers can **meet hygiene requirements, while having more control** over the process of (1) cleaning the dispenser and (2) refilling it when necessary and reducing the burden on waste management processes.



Should refillable water stations be taken out of the operations?

- **Safety and hygiene of reuse models** should be ensured through sanitization protocols.
- No matter if it is a single use bottle or refillable container, **any material/object that could have been in touch with a guest or staff needs to be properly sanitized/cleaned.**
- Guests may consider bringing their **own refillable bottles to avoid use of single use plastic bottles** (when possible) and to have a **direct control on sanitization** of those.



Should restaurants and catering services give preference to disposable cutlery to respect hygiene standards?

- As long as dishes, silverware, and glassware are **properly cleaned and sanitized**, reuse models should be encouraged over disposable cutlery



Is double packaging of food and beverage a recommendable practice from hygiene perspective?

- **Plastic film is not a sanitization measure**, hence double packaging, beyond causing wasteful use of resources, gives a **false sense of security/protection**

