

SUPPLY CHAIN ENGAGEMENT FOR TOUR OPERATORS

Three Steps Toward Sustainability



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This handbook grew out of a decision by the members of the TOI Supply Chain Working Group (SCWG) to create a document that would summarize the experiences and ideas of its members. The text of this handbook was written by Richard Tapper and Giulia Carbone, and incorporates comments and suggestions made by Eugenio Yunis, Xavier Font, Jamie Sweeting, Andrew Wanliss-Orlebar, Michaela Pawliczek, Guido Sonnemann and members of the TOI. The final draft was edited by Amy Sweeting.

TOI and CELB would like to thank the following individuals for contributing to the preparation of this handbook:

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First edition 2004

This handbook is the result of collaboration between the Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development and The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB).

The Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development is supported by the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Tourism Organization and UNESCO



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FOREWORD: CREATING A COMMON APPROACH

The Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development (TOI) is a group of committed tour operators that recognize the importance of collaboration, rather than competition, in successfully implementing their individual strategies and actions for sustainability. Since its launch in 2000, the TOI has provided a neutral platform for sharing and refining ideas and a mechanism for creating a common approach to sustainability that builds on and enhances the results of its individual members.

This handbook is the result of several years of collaboration between the TOI and Conservation International's Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB). During a workshop held in Rimini, Italy, in 2001, TOI members recognized that integrating sustainability principles into their supply chains was central to their commitment to sustainable development, and established the TOI Supply Chain Working Group (SCWG). The SCWG, which is facilitated by CELB, has met numerous times to discuss the challenges of integrating sustainability into the tour operators' complex supply chain and to develop possible solutions to these challenges. During these meetings, the member companies of the TOI were able to share an immense wealth of experience and ideas on how to effectively and efficiently integrate sustainability into their supplier selection processes and contracting procedures.

This handbook is meant to be used as an overall guide for tour operators seeking to integrate sustainability throughout their supply chains. We hope that you will work in partnership with your suppliers to develop a sustainability policy. Fully achieving sustainability goals will require actively supporting suppliers as they seek to meet these goals, by offering them incentives for good practice, showing them why your company has chosen to set certain standards and demonstrating the value to them of responsible environmental and social performance.





Within this document, we lay out a series of steps for companies to create and effectively implement a sustainable supply chain policy and management system. As companion pieces to this handbook, we have developed a series of Practical Guides to Good Practice, which are meant to be both distributed to suppliers as informational guides and used by tour operators as resources for determining what criteria and issues to include in their sustainable supply chain policy. To date, we have created Practical Guides for the accommodations sector and the marine recreation sector.

As you use this handbook to guide the development and implementation of your sustainable supply chain policy, we welcome feedback on examples of sustainable supply chain management and stories of your successes and achievements. Members of the TOI have found that, while individual company approaches may be effective in some cases, sharing experiences and lessons to develop a common approach has increased their ability to promote their sustainability goals throughout their supply chains and the wider tourism industry.

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INTRODUCTION

As intermediaries between tourists and tourism service providers, tour operators bring together a variety of tourism-related services to form a complete holiday package, which is then marketed to customers either directly or through travel agents. Each package generally consists of accommodation (often including some food provision), transport both to and from the destination, ground transport within the destination, and events or activities such as excursions and social activities (see Table 1).

Because most of the goods and services included in a holiday package are provided by a supply chain of subcontracted companies, organizations and agents, tour operators are not always in direct control of the environmental and social impacts of those products. Yet, consumers increasingly expect the companies they buy from to ensure that their products provide not just quality and value-for-money, but also safeguard environmental and social sustainability.

Companies must take responsibility for ensuring the sustainability of all the inputs that go into their products. For tour operators, who offer products comprised almost entirely of contracted goods and services, this means that effectively implementing sustainability policies requires working closely with suppliers to improve sustainability performance in all the components of a holiday – throughout the life cycle of a holiday package.

This handbook describes how tour operators can integrate economic, environmental and social sustainability criteria into their choices of service suppliers and their contracts with those suppliers. From establishing a sustainability policy and action plan and developing a baseline assessment of tourism service suppliers to enabling suppliers to meet set targets and reviewing and reporting on progress made, the document maps out a methodology for improving the sustainability of the tour operator's supply chain.

While this handbook presents a wide range of possible actions that tour operators can take, each company should select the actions that are most appropriate to its organization and the types of destinations and





suppliers with which it works. It is not necessary to try to implement all the actions at once; indeed, it is often better to start with a few achievable actions and then build on those in the future. What is important is that a company start to take action.

“Consumers are increasingly interested in the world behind the product they buy. Life cycle thinking implies that everyone in the whole chain of a product’s life cycle, from cradle to grave, has a responsibility and a role to play, taking into account all the relevant external effects.”

KLAUS TÖPFER
Executive Director

United Nations Environment Programme

The actions presented are applicable to tour operators of any size, from the smallest to the largest. Although the way each company is organized can differ – thus affecting the staff who will need to be involved in various actions – the handbook outlines the different roles that need to be brought together to develop and implement a sustainable supply chain policy and action plan.

TABLE 1 TOUR OPERATORS’ MAIN CONTRACTED PRODUCTS & SUPPLIERS

Elements of Tourism Products	Suppliers
Accommodation	Hotels, bed & breakfasts, self-catering, (serviced) apartments, campsites, cruise ships
Transport to and from destinations	Public transport (e.g. trains), airports, scheduled air carriers, air charters, scheduled sea passages, chartered sea passages, coaches, cruises
Catering and food and beverage	Restaurants and bars, grocery stores, farmers, fishermen, local commerce/ markets, bakers, butchers, food wholesalers
Ground transport	Car rentals, boat rentals, fuel providers, gas stations, coach rentals
Ground services	Agents, handlers or inbound operators in the destination
Cultural and social events	Excursion and tour providers, sports and recreation facilities, shops and factories
Environmental, cultural and heritage resources of destinations	Public authorities, protected site managers, private concessionaires and owners

THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

Working with suppliers to integrate sustainability into the supply chain can benefit tour operators, suppliers, customers and destinations.

From a financial standpoint, improved sustainability can lower costs through greater operating efficiency, reduced waste generation, and reduced consumption of energy and water. Sustainability practices can also lead to increased revenue and shareholder value by generating more repeat business and attracting new business from customers who value good environmental and social performance. A strong positive reputation as a company that cares about sustainability issues, coupled with improvements to the quality of the tourism experience provided to clients, can result in increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, strengthened brand value, enhanced publicity and marketing opportunities, and better acceptance by local communities in destinations.

Good performance and a high-quality, sustainable product can also help a tour operator reduce the risk of conflict or problems with suppliers, governments, staff and local communities, and improve its status as a respected partner in destinations. This may mean enhanced access to key business resources such as capital, the ability to develop products to meet growing market demand, improved relationships with governments, and a motivated and loyal staff.

The costs and benefits of integrating sustainability criteria into the supply chain will vary for each company, depending on:

- Purchasing and contracting arrangements with suppliers;
- Availability of alternate suppliers in key destinations;
- Suppliers' current levels of sustainability performance and potential for change;
- Barriers to sustainability, such as external factors (see Box 1);
- A company's main sustainability and operational concerns (see Box 2); and
- Resources available to implement and promote sustainability throughout the supply chain.

ADDRESSING EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE SUPPLY CHAIN

BOX 1

In some cases, external factors that are outside the control of either a tour operator or its suppliers may affect the sustainability of the contracted company's services. For example, a destination's wastewater treatment system, waste management scheme, policies on the protection of cultural and natural heritage or social conditions may all influence the sustainability performance of suppliers. Where such external factors limit improvements in sustainability performance, it may be necessary to work in partnership with local and national government authorities.

It is important to recognize that the circumstances and priorities of some destinations, particularly in developing countries, may be very different from those of industrialized countries, and to avoid approaches that would impose undue burdens on a destination. At the same time, however, working more actively with suppliers based in the visited destination can generate action from local authorities by sending a clear message about visitors' and companies' priorities for action. As more suppliers begin to adopt sustainable practices, the public sector also needs to respond by supporting adoption of sustainable practices for public utilities and infrastructure, such as solid waste treatment facilities, recycling opportunities, wastewater treatment plants and public transport.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN SYSTEM

BOX 2

The following is a sampling of issues that tour operators may want to consider when creating a sustainable supply chain management system. When determining which issues to highlight in a sustainable supply chain policy, it is important to consider what a company stands for and what type of products it sells. A multi-stakeholder process that includes participants from each of a company's various groups of suppliers can help ensure that all relevant issues are considered.

Economic Performance Issues	Social and Cultural Performance Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee wages and benefits Local purchasing Revenue leakage Linkages with local suppliers and subcontractors Corporate responsibility-related payments 	<p>GENERAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal opportunities and non-discrimination Human rights (including implementation of the ECPAT Code against the commercial sexual exploitation of children) <p>WORKPLACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace conditions Labor relations (including fair treatment, fair wages, security of employment, working hours and employees' rights, such as freedom of association and collective bargaining) Health and safety Training and education Children in the workplace <p>SUPPLIERS AND SUBCONTRACTORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor relations and human rights practices Contracting with small and micro-enterprises, including those operated by indigenous, ethnic or minority groups Respect for rights of indigenous, ethnic and minority groups, and of local communities <p>COMMUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land and indigenous rights Consultation and participatory decision-making with the local population and affected stakeholders Contribution to community development Economic linkages with local communities
Environmental Performance Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy use Water use Waste management Wastewater management Contributions to biodiversity and nature conservation Chemical use Emissions (CO₂, ozone depleting substances) Land conversion Air, water and land pollution Toxicity of materials and products used Indoor air quality Noise Purchasing guidelines Built environment (including protection of architectural, historical and archaeological heritage) Environmental management systems 	

For a tour operator, effectively integrating sustainability into its supply chain will require the establishment of a coherent company policy and accompanying management system that set out clear targets and actions on economic, environmental and social performance. Building this system on already existing internal processes will help keep down the costs of implementation and promote integration within a company's overall operations.

To establish this policy, a company needs to conduct a baseline assessment of its tourism service suppliers' current performance on sustainability, in order to determine priority targets and actions. The management system should include procedures for monitoring, reviewing and reporting on progress made in integrating sustainability principles into the company's supply chain. This helps to ensure transparency and allow tour operators to adapt any policies or actions that are not achieving their stated goals. Progress can be measured against the initial baseline assessment.

1.1 CREATE A POLICY

GOAL

Develop a coherent policy for improving the economic, environmental and social sustainability performance of suppliers, and for integrating it into existing company management systems.

ACTIONS

I Build a team to develop and implement the policy

- I Bring together representatives of each area or department in the company that may have a role in implementing the overall policy, or which may be affected by it (see Table 2).
- I Create a management team to develop and implement the policy at each stage, drawing on expertise from all departments.
- I Consider inviting your company's suppliers to participate in the policy and planning process.

I Assess the company's strengths and opportunities

- I Assess the company's current position and policies and how they relate to sustainability issues.
- I Consider trends and potential developments, including product quality, supplier performance and markets, as well as the way the company interacts with its suppliers.
- I Identify opportunities to improve the sustainability performance of suppliers.

I Develop a policy

- I Elaborate a common vision that can be shared by all departments in the company, based on the results of the strengths and opportunities assessment.
- I Discuss the common vision with key staff, and invite their suggestions for policies and actions to implement this vision.
- I Based on these discussions and the common vision, develop and agree on a policy and strategic goals for improved supply chain sustainability, and on the types of methods that could be used to meet these goals.



TABLE 2 KEY DEPARTMENTS TO INVOLVE IN A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN POLICY & ACTION PLAN

Main staff & departmental competencies	How they can be involved
Company Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide resources and top-level support for the program.
Contracting Director & Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use sustainability performance as a factor in selecting suppliers. • Incorporate sustainability clauses into contracts with suppliers (a company's buyers are the most important point of contact for suppliers and in some cases may be their only company contact).
Country & Destination Managers & Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss sustainability issues and the company program as part of regular contacts with suppliers. • Provide feedback and continuous follow-up with hotels and other suppliers. • Facilitate dissemination of policy and training and awareness materials. • Identify new local suppliers entering the tourism sector.
Human Resources Director & Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate sustainable action plans into job descriptions and staff appraisals.
Legal Advisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide legal advice on wording, inclusion and enforcement of sustainability clauses in suppliers' contracts.
Marketing Director & Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop marketing plan to reflect company's sustainable supply chain strategy. • Provide incentives to suppliers by offering additional promotion to those with good sustainability performance.
Production Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the cost implications of the sustainability-induced changes required in the supply chain and their impact on prices.
Quality/Health & Safety Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor quality and health and safety standards of suppliers. • Incorporate sustainability performance issues into monitoring of suppliers.
Sustainability Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide day-to-day management and coordination of the program. • Offer advice on sustainability issues, technical support, etc.
Internal Communications or Training Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance in development of training programs for staff and suppliers on sustainability issues.
<p>Note: The main staff, departments and titles may vary, as companies have different structures. Nevertheless, however a company is structured, it will be important to involve key staff from all relevant areas. This table can help to identify the different competencies that need to be brought together to develop and implement a sustainable supply chain policy and action plan.</p>	

1.2 CONDUCT A BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF SUPPLIERS

GOAL

Assess suppliers' current sustainability performance and their strengths and weaknesses, to generate data for designing a sustainability action plan, and to provide a baseline against which to measure progress over time and review and modify the sustainable supply chain policy and actions.

ACTIONS

I Prepare an approach for assessment

- I Develop assessment tools for measuring the sustainability performance of suppliers.
- I Select a sample of suppliers to involve in the assessment.
- I Consider prioritizing certain supplier groups, based on ability to influence them and the ease of addressing any identified impacts. Trying to tackle every type of service and every supplier or contractor at the same time can be very resource intensive.

I Assess suppliers' current performance

- I Use questionnaires, personal meetings and/or workshops to assess suppliers' current sustainability performance, strengths and weaknesses, their main concerns and the key areas requiring improvement.
- I Determine suppliers' general levels of awareness, technical capacity and desire to be involved in a sustainability program. In particular, it is important to understand their motives and values, and to identify any potential challenges or barriers to sustainability.
- I Identify any opportunities for additional cooperation with external stakeholders, in particular local authorities or NGOs.
- I Ask suppliers for information on how they select their own suppliers. They may already implement a range of good practices, such as buying food from local producers and organic and/or fair trade suppliers.

1.3 PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT AN ACTION PLAN

GOAL

Prepare an action plan for implementation of policies for improving the economic, environmental and social sustainability performance of suppliers, taking into account suppliers' strengths and weaknesses and existing company management systems.

ACTIONS

I Define actions and set targets

- I Define and agree on actions and targets to be achieved, based on the company's sustainable supply chain policy.
- I Ensure that targets are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-specific).
- I Set standards by which to measure suppliers' performance (see Box 3).



- Ensure that standards are achievable. It is better to set standards that are achievable and can provide real satisfaction for suppliers and staff, rather than set over-ambitious standards that are unlikely to be achieved.
- Develop an action plan to implement the strategy and meet set targets
- Agree on specific responsibilities for each department and the resources they will need to implement them, such as training or technical information. Incorporate departmental action plans in regular company procedures for reviewing progress and staff appraisal.
- Prepare a timetable for implementation of the overall plan and for each individual action.

I Get the word out

- Inform suppliers about the sustainability policy and action plan, and the benefits of improved environmental, social and economic performance, through normal company communication channels, dedicated workshops and personal meetings between suppliers and company representatives.
- Inform staff about the sustainability policy and action plan through training workshops, briefings and feedback materials, and internal capacity-building on how to raise awareness of the policy and provide support to suppliers (see Box 4).
- Establish a system to keep staff informed of progress, for example through staff newsletters and the intranet.

I Put the plan into action

- Consider prioritizing suppliers for involvement in the first stages of the program, based on economic and managerial considerations. It may be more practical to begin with just a few destinations and/or selected suppliers, rather than trying to introduce the program everywhere at once.
- Recognize that suppliers may have different priorities for improvements and are likely to make progress at different rates.
- Understand that change takes time. It is important to focus on achieving continuous improvements, rather than trying to achieve everything all at once. The key is to initiate programs with all suppliers to improve their performance and see measurable improvement over time.
- Consider working with other partners, including public authorities, NGOs and other tour operators operating in the same destination, to help encourage sustainability performance improvements amongst all suppliers, for example by developing a common approach in certain geographic or supplier areas.

SETTING SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE STANDARDS & PURCHASING CRITERIA

BOX 3

Setting standards for specific aspects of sustainability performance is a central part of any system of preferred contracting based on sustainability criteria. A company's standards should reflect the key sustainability issues that form the basis of its sustainability policy (see Box 2).

The standards will provide criteria that a company can use in selecting suppliers and in offering additional promotional opportunities and incentives to its suppliers (see Section 2.3). They can also be included in any contracts signed with suppliers (see Section 3).

Standards may be either performance-based (based on specific levels of performance), process-based (based on mandated procedures and practices), or both. Standards should be set sufficiently high so that they represent a real improvement by suppliers, but also at a level that is realistically achievable. They should also be flexible enough to accommodate different local socio-economic and environmental conditions and the varying sizes and technical capacity levels of suppliers.

It is useful to involve staff and suppliers in defining sustainability performance standards. A company's suppliers can provide valuable insight into local issues and conditions that may affect the potential to improve their sustainability performance.

In some cases, tour operators own and run accommodations or other facilities, and thus have direct control over the implementation of any sustainability measures. Such facilities should comply with, and preferably exceed, standards that tour operators require of other external suppliers with whom they contract.

INTERNAL TRAINING

BOX 4

Establishing a program for working with suppliers will also require internal actions by tour operators themselves. In particular, tour operators will need to consider how to promote the program within their companies and how to build staff capacity both to support suppliers in improving their sustainability performance and to monitor their progress. New staff training modules and awareness-raising exercises can be developed or incorporated into existing training programs.

Implementation of a sustainable supply chain strategy may also require changes to individual staff roles and responsibilities. For example, staff involved in health and safety monitoring of hotels may also become involved in monitoring some aspects of sustainability. Such changes will need to be agreed with relevant departments, which should be given appropriate resources and support, such as training, written guidance, technical information and advice. Keeping staff members informed of progress – for example by posting progress reports on staff notice boards and intranet sites or including information in staff newsletters – can also help encourage employees to promote and implement a new sustainability policy.



1.4 MONITOR AND REPORT ON PROGRESS

GOAL

Monitor and report on progress made in integrating sustainability into the company's supply chain, to ensure that goals have been achieved and to identify any potential problems.

ACTIONS

I Create and implement a monitoring system

- I Select appropriate indicators for monitoring performance. The Tour Operators' Initiative has developed tour operator-specific performance indicators for use with the Global Reporting Initiative's Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, available at: <http://www.globalreporting.org/guidelines/sectors/tourop.asp> and www.toinitiative.org/reporting.
- I Hold regular meetings with relevant individuals, to review progress and help sort out problems as they arise. Key staff in each area often understand best where and how improvements can be made, and involving them in the process helps to build and maintain their commitment to sustainability.
- I Ensure that monitoring is frequent enough to detect problems at an early stage, so that corrective action can be taken if needed.
- I Identify and refine the most successful approaches to improvement of sustainability performance across the company's supply chain.
- I Store information collected through monitoring in a central database.
- I Learn from successes and difficulties in implementing planned actions and modify plans accordingly; use the results of a progress review to plan for the year ahead.

I Report on performance

- I Report internally by communicating the results of monitoring back to staff, to show what has been achieved, recognize their commitment to the project and remind them of the program's objectives and targets.
- I Agree on the format for a public report on supply chain sustainability, for example as a separate report or a section of the company's annual report.
- I Consider using a third party to review the company's sustainability report before publication.
- I Disseminate regular reports on progress to demonstrate a commitment to improving overall sustainability performance in the supply chain to key stakeholder groups, including suppliers, staff, customers, media, destinations and others in the tourism industry. Reporting also helps to foster openness and discussion about problems and successes and enables companies to more effectively prioritize future activities.

Tour operators are well-placed to support suppliers in improving their economic, environmental and social performance. As tour operators interact directly with potential customers, they understand their clients' growing demands for high quality and sustainability. They also often have access to technology and information that smaller suppliers may have difficulty obtaining on their own. Because tour operators deal with a wide range of different suppliers, they can more easily gather information on a variety of best practices and facilitate the sharing of experiences amongst suppliers.

There are a number of ways that tour operators can enable their suppliers to improve their sustainability performance and meet set sustainability criteria and targets. Three of these measures – awareness raising, technical support and the provision of incentives – are discussed in this section. The appropriate mix of support measures for each company and supplier will depend on the results of the baseline assessment (see Section 1.2) and the approach that the company has chosen to adopt for implementing its sustainable supply chain strategy.

2.1 RAISE AWARENESS ON SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

GOAL

Raise awareness amongst suppliers on relevant sustainability issues and demonstrate why sustainability performance is important.

ACTIONS

I Develop awareness-raising messages on sustainability

- I Take into account feedback from suppliers, existing relationships with targeted supplier groups, the level of interest amongst suppliers in participating in the program, and suppliers' current capacity and priorities for performance improvement.
- I Design messages based on the dissemination channels that will be used to raise awareness, such as mailings, personal visits, workshops, etc.
- I Identify potential partners and support. Local partners, such as business associations or training institutes, can help open communication channels with local suppliers, especially amongst smaller enterprises, and may be influential in reinforcing awareness-raising efforts.
- I Keep messages simple. Focus on key issues that are important to the company's situation and its suppliers.
- I Provide information in the awareness-raising materials on the overall strategy and time frame for the company's sustainability program.

I Communicate sustainability messages to suppliers

- I Identify the characteristics of each group of suppliers, including their values and concerns, and select appropriate tools, media and styles to best reach these target groups. Tools might include workshops, bilateral meetings or dialogues, briefing materials and feedback forms for staff, checklists and questionnaires, or printed materials, such as leaflets, posters and manuals.
- I If questionnaires or checklists are used, indicate clearly what the information gathered would be used for. Consider preparing a summary report on the results, for example highlighting sustainability issues identified as priorities by suppliers and illustrating the general level of performance



for each of the issues addressed. Disseminate this summary report internally and to suppliers, to enable them to understand how they compare to other suppliers.

- Use personal communication wherever possible. Staff in contact with suppliers can provide up-to-date information on sustainability issues and the company's progress. Trained staff should be available to inform suppliers about environmental and social issues, provide contact phone numbers, make personal visits, etc.
- Ensure that sustainability issues are followed up and discussed regularly with suppliers.
- Encourage feedback from suppliers to help evaluate the effectiveness of awareness-raising activities and provide important information on the attitudes of target groups to sustainability issues. This feedback can be used to refine awareness-raising activities and plan future developments.
- Monitor the response to the awareness-raising actions. Check how suppliers and staff respond to the project, recognize and appreciate results, and support continuous improvement. A newsletter may be a good way to publicize examples of good practice and progress made by particular suppliers.

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE IN THE ACCOMMODATIONS SECTOR

The Tour Operators' Initiative and Conservation International have developed 'A Practical Guide to Good Practice: Managing Environmental and Social Issues in the Accommodations Sector'. The guide provides accommodation suppliers with information on energy management, water use management, wastewater management, waste management, chemical use, purchasing, contributions to biodiversity and nature conservation, contributions to community development, social issues in the workplace, and environmental management systems. The guide also provides a list of sources of further information on these topics. More than 30,000 copies of the guide have been disseminated by the members of the TOI to their contracted hotels world-wide. The guide has been translated into French, Spanish, Turkish and Portuguese. For an electronic version, see www.toinitiative.org or www.celb.org.

2.2 PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT ON SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS

GOAL

Support suppliers in improving their sustainability performance, particularly in areas that have been identified as priorities.

ACTIONS

■ Assess where support is needed

- Determine where technical support is needed amongst suppliers and establish targets for improvement.
- Identify the most appropriate technical support and capacity-building actions to match the suppliers' and company's targets.

■ Develop and deliver support

- Identify, develop and deliver the most appropriate and effective technical support tools for suppliers, including printed material, workshops, bilateral meetings or dialogues, briefing

materials and feedback forms for staff, training sessions, checklists and questionnaires, and telephone and on-line information and support services.

- Provide training and practical education opportunities to suppliers' staff at all levels, including managers, engineers, hotel maids, catering staff, guides, etc., on reducing resource use and procedures for waste separation and recycling.
- Offer links to networks of local, national and international advisers on sustainability and business issues who can provide on-line and on-site assistance to suppliers – for example local experts on environmental and socio-economic issues, possibly in collaboration with local trade associations and non-governmental organizations.
- Consider promoting the use of eco-labeling schemes to support improvement and provide information on technical issues tailored to a specific destination (see Box 5).
- Identify external sources of information and support. Numerous technical materials on environmental management and solutions are already available through international and national hotel associations, international organizations and NGOs. Arranging for suppliers to contact these sources directly can help such organizations disseminate their resources more widely and avoid overwhelming an internal team with requests for information and support, which might be difficult to meet with limited internal resources.

ECO-LABELS – 3RD PARTY VERIFICATION OF A SUPPLIER'S PERFORMANCE

BOX 5

Eco-labels are a useful tool for tour operators seeking to contract sustainable suppliers. Because suppliers' performance is assessed and monitored by an independent body according to externally set standards, using these schemes may reduce the level of resources required for implementation of preferred contracting of sustainable suppliers. However, the pre-set standards used by the certifying body may not fully match the requirements of a tour operator, and there are many different certification and eco-labeling bodies with different standards, many of which only apply to certain regions. Thus, it may be difficult to find an appropriate certifying body or scheme that is credible and rigorous.

Further information on eco-labels can be found in:

- The World Tourism Organization's 2002 report, 'Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism', which provides a world-wide inventory and comparative analysis of 104 tourism eco-labels, awards and self-commitments. Available at: <http://www.world-tourism.org/cgi-bin/infoshop.storefront>
- The UNEP report, 'Ecolabels in the Tourism Industry', which provides information on how credible and effective eco-labeling schemes should be structured. Available at: <http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/library/ecolabels.htm>

2.3 OFFER INCENTIVES TO SUSTAINABLE SUPPLIERS

GOAL

Build support for the sustainable supply chain strategy by recognizing and rewarding suppliers for improvements on key environmental, social and economic issues.



ACTIONS

I Create an incentive scheme

- I Establish sustainability performance standards (see Section 1 and Box 3) for the sustainability priorities set by the company's policy, to identify which suppliers will be offered additional promotional opportunities and/or other incentives.
- I Identify the most suitable incentive measures to reward suppliers making significant improvements, such as preferential contracting, promotional opportunities, awards and events, for example:
- I Indicate that suppliers who demonstrate improved performance will be the company's first choice when decisions are made on whom to contract in any destination or category. Preferential contracting offers a major incentive to suppliers to improve their performance.
- I Highlight good performers in catalogs and brochures with a special logo, making sure to provide clear information to customers about what the logo denotes.
- I List specific sustainability actions that each supplier has adopted in the catalogs.
- I Present certificates to suppliers who demonstrate the best sustainability performance.
- I Organize events – in a destination or at company headquarters – for groups of suppliers who are making good progress in implementing sustainability performance improvements.
- I Develop and agree on the internal procedures for providing the identified additional promotional opportunities and incentives.

I Get the word out

- I Inform suppliers about additional promotional opportunities and other incentives and the criteria that the company will use to allocate them.
- I Ensure that available recognition and reward opportunities and incentives are discussed with each supplier in personal meetings with a company representative.

I Verify supplier performance

- I Define mechanisms for collection of data on suppliers' performance in the identified action areas, such as questionnaires, personal visits, etc., and train staff to implement these procedures.
- I Create a monitoring and assessment system and procedures to verify suppliers' declared sustainability performance.
- I Establish a database to record information on suppliers' sustainability performance and ensure that the database can be easily used by all staff who need to access the information it will hold. Where appropriate, integrate the database with existing systems, such as health and safety databases.

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INTEGRATE SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA INTO SUPPLIERS' CONTRACTS

Full integration of sustainability issues into a tour operator's business practices will require alterations to the way purchasing choices are made and suppliers' contracts are written. Inclusion of sustainability criteria in suppliers' contracts highlights the importance of sustainability issues to the tour operator's core business and ensures that priority issues are addressed with suppliers from the start. Sustainability criteria can be incorporated into suppliers' contracts to set both minimum performance standards that all suppliers of a particular type must meet and further optional criteria that they are encouraged to achieve. Performance against sustainability criteria will need to be monitored and assessed as part of regular reviews of suppliers.

GOAL

Integrate environmental, social and economic criteria into suppliers' contracts and reward performance improvements by preferentially contracting suppliers that meet those criteria.

ACTIONS

I Set sustainability contracting standards

- I Establish the minimum sustainability performance standards to be included in suppliers' contracts, and link them to the performance standards set as part of an incentive scheme (see Section 2.3).
- I Set standards sufficiently high so that they represent good performance and real improvements, but also ensure that they will be realistic and achievable for suppliers.
- I Allow flexibility to accommodate varying local socio-economic and environmental conditions among different destinations and different types and sizes of suppliers.
- I Seek guidance on standards for different types of suppliers from relevant national or international bodies.
- I For each destination, review the sustainability performance of the full range of suppliers for each service or item and identify alternate supply options (see Box 6).

I Set a sustainable contracting system

- I Develop and agree on an internal approach and procedures for implementation of sustainability performance as a contracting criteria.
- I Draft contractual clauses to reflect minimum performance requirements on key issues and consider legal matters arising from incorporation of sustainability standards into suppliers' contracts.
- I Establish procedures to deal with suppliers that fail to meet minimum set standards or that have submitted false information. In serious cases and on specific issues (e.g. the ECPAT Code on commercial sexual exploitation of children), companies may decide to suspend contracts with suppliers who are in breach of contract conditions.
- I Consider appointing an individual staff member or a small team to develop and update standards and support materials, coordinate training for suppliers and staff, manage informational databases, coordinate monitoring, auditing and verification, and provide progress reports.



I Get the word out

- Run workshops to train staff on contracting procedures for sustainability issues and procedures for monitoring and auditing suppliers' sustainability performance.
- Set up a communications program to inform suppliers about the new contract clauses and contracting policy.
- Consider developing a parallel voluntary program with additional sustainability performance standards.
- Offer assistance to help get suppliers back into compliance, for example by making suggestions for improvements and sources of technical assistance.

I Monitor and evaluate the system

- Set up assessment and monitoring procedures to evaluate supplier sustainability performance in relation to standards set in contracts. For example, arrangements could be made for sustainability performance to be audited as part of existing health and safety audits.
- Arrange for this assessment and monitoring to be conducted by the supplier, the company or a third party, using checklists, questionnaires, site visits and staff interviews as appropriate. Customer feedback through surveys or informal comments can also be an important source of information.
- Establish a database to record information on suppliers' sustainability performance and ensure that the database can be easily used by all staff who need to access the information it will hold. Where appropriate, integrate the database with existing systems, such as health and safety databases.
- Ensure the confidentiality of any sensitive or confidential data in the database.

WHAT IF THERE AREN'T ENOUGH SUSTAINABLE SUPPLIERS?

BOX 6

Eco-labels are a useful tool for tour operators seeking to contract sustainable suppliers. Because Depending on the level of tourist demand for particular resorts and grades of hotel, a company may also need to contract with suppliers that have poorer sustainability performance (but which still meet its minimum standards) to provide sufficient capacity in a given season. In such cases, it may be valuable to work with competitors and colleagues operating in the same destination to promote the use of common procedures to encourage sustainability performance improvements amongst all suppliers. Informing local authorities about a company's sustainability program and actions can also help to identify common areas of interest and potential support. Where current performance on some aspects of sustainability is low, selection of suppliers can be based on whether or not they have realistic plans for integrating sustainability improvements into their businesses and are making satisfactory progress on these plans. Whatever approach is adopted, it is important to work in partnership with suppliers to enable and encourage them to improve, and to allow them realistic priorities and time frames for making improvements.

EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

There are many tour operators that are currently integrating economic, environmental and social sustainability criteria into their choice of suppliers. This section showcases the efforts of five leading tour operators to create a sustainable supply chain. From monitoring environmental performance, to training staff on sustainability issues – these examples illustrate how companies can develop a sustainable supply chain.

AURINKOMATKAT

Aurinkomatkat, a Finnish outbound tour operator, began integrating sustainability measures into its supply chain system in early 2000. The company developed sustainability criteria for partner hotels, based on existing tourism literature and using expertise from academia, with priority given to good water management and energy saving. Minimum criteria were established for partner hotels, including connection to a wastewater treatment system and water- and energy-saving measures.

The sustainability program has been implemented in phases, to give existing contract partners a several-year transition period to meet the requirements of the program and understand what will be expected in the future. The first phase of the program included monitoring of environmental performance, but did not actually require accommodation providers to meet all the requirements. Most of the monitoring of the program is done by the Manager for Sustainable Tourism, together with staff and agents at the destinations. The initial monitoring takes place through a checklist completed by a representative of the facility, which is then checked by Aurinkomatkat personnel at the destinations and verified annually in conjunction with the regular hotel check performed by destination staff.

All Aurinkomatkat staff have been trained in sustainable tourism through lectures and round-table discussions. Training continues through discussions, an intranet site, a newsletter on sustainable tourism and an information package. Responses to the program from Aurinkomatkat agents and accommodation suppliers in the destinations have been positive, and some hotel managers have provided information on their environmental performance before being asked to do so.

Aurinkomatkat informs its suppliers about the program and how to fulfill the sustainability criteria through letters and personal visits, depending on the destination. Because many of the accommodations are family-owned enterprises, the environmental program and the criteria are translated into the language of the destination. In some destinations, the Manager of Sustainable Tourism visits and arranges meetings for hotel owners and managers with tourism and environmental authorities.





To provide incentives for its partners to improve their environmental performance, Aurinkomatkat has created a sustainability classification system for its hotels and holiday apartments, which will soon be available to customers. Currently, this information can be accessed by sales personnel, who can assist customers in booking a more sustainable accommodation option. The classification system will soon appear beside the traditional quality classification in Aurinkomatkat brochures, web pages and marketing materials. The classification system is based on a 100-point scale. By meeting the minimum criteria of connection to a wastewater treatment system, and water- and energy-saving measures, a facility can achieve the 30-point minimum required for inclusion in the sustainability program. Additional points are awarded for having an environmental or sustainability policy, developing an effective waste management system, using renewable energy sources, implementing a sustainable purchasing policy and having a community relations program. Hotels can receive up to three stars for environmental performance, based on information provided by the contract partners and annual checks by destination staff.

In addition to company monitoring of sustainability, feedback from customers is collected through questionnaires and via the feedback option at the company web sites. If there is negative feedback from customers or if issues arise that compromise the criteria, a hotel may have its environmental classification downgraded.

By 2003, Aurinkomatkat had completed monitoring all of its existing partners and introduced environmental criteria into its partner hotels' contracts. Until December 2005, there will be no penalties for breaching the environmental criteria, because some contract partners may not fully understand what the policy and new requirements mean. However, after that, contracts will not be renewed without evidence of improvement in those practices that do not fulfill the criteria.

Concerned that integrating of environmental criteria into hotel contracts might increase the risk of losing touch with the socio-cultural and economic sides of sustainability, Aurinkomatkat has also integrated indicators for social, cultural and economic sustainability into the program. These criteria recognize that an 800-room hotel has a different scale of impact than a six-room holiday apartment hotel, and their resources are not comparable. A five-star multinational resort with eco-certificates is not always a "better" choice than a family-owned apartment building that has no environmental program but which employs the family next door and helps the local economy by encouraging tourists to buy food and other goods from local stores. Thus, the company has made it easier for small family-owned properties that cannot invest in environmental technology to the same extent as large hotels by giving an additional five points to small-scale locally owned accommodations. This will mean that a small family-owned hotel that uses water- and energy-saving measures and treats its sewage appropriately will meet the minimum requirements for inclusion in the sustainability program. Achieving a higher environmental classification will require more investment.

EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

LTU TOURISTIK

In summer 2000, LTU Touristik, a German tour operator that specializes in package tours to all continents, launched a campaign to help contracted hotels improve their environmental performance. The campaign was based on the company's experience with contracted hotels that showed that most hoteliers felt a general sense of responsibility for the environment, but needed suggestions for how they could implement good environmental practices. To determine where assistance was most needed, LTU Touristik's Environmental Department worked with a consultant to distribute a questionnaire to contracted hotels. The department also held personal meetings with hotel managers in a number of destinations, allowing them to learn firsthand about the contracted hotels' environmental practices and environmental impacts.

As the centerpiece of the campaign, the company developed a small manual, *Das Umweltfreundliche Ferienhotel* (The Environmentally Friendly Holiday Hotel) to give technical assistance to contracted hotels (those that are not directly operated by LTU Touristik). Topics addressed in the manual include drinking water, outside areas, energy, purchasing, waste and communication. Each section includes a general description of the problem and concise suggestions about how to solve it, presented in simple language and a user-friendly layout. Great importance is attached to explaining why actions should be carried out in the way described and symbols show how much time an action will take and the investment required. Many examples are given of how actions to improve the environment can save money.

The manual, which targets hotel managers and other staff members responsible for hotel operation, was launched in all destinations worldwide where LTU Touristik does business. Now in its 3rd edition, the 20-page manual is published in German, Greek, English, French, Italian and Spanish. In 2002, about 15,000 manuals were distributed, and several large hotel companies ordered the manual to use for staff training or reprinted it on their own.

Where possible, the manual was distributed personally to hotel managers. Tour guides, buyers and the head of the destination agency delivered the manuals during routine visits, explained LTU Touristik's objectives and offered initial suggestions for environmental practices. These representatives then reported back on the first reactions of the hotel managers to LTU Touristik's Environmental Manager. Along with the manual, hotel managers received a personally addressed letter and a one-page questionnaire about whether they were able to use some of the practices in the manual, whether they needed further information and which environmental protection measures they already implemented. Nearly 20 percent of all contracted hoteliers have offered feedback to the company.

If hoteliers need further assistance beyond these first contacts, LTU Touristik provides it through its Environmental Department's two-person technical assistance team, thus guaranteeing a continuous dialogue with hotels that want to improve their environmental performance. Training is offered to buyers, heads of destination agencies and tour guides, and





the Environmental Manager personally updates them on the campaign. Information is also provided on what type of technical assistance is expected from them and how to make an informal evaluation of the visited facilities. The company's web site provides all interested employees with more detailed information.

LTU Touristik has recognized that relying solely on manuals has its limitations, principally that there are no mechanisms for enforcement of the voluntary practices nor incentive for their implementation. The company's long-term goal is to be able to demonstrate the benefits of environmental action and to establish environmental standards for holiday hotels. As a next step, LTU Touristik plans to collect all information about environmental action introduced by the hotels and report its findings to other hotels and eventually to its clients.

MYTRAVEL NORTHERN EUROPE

In 1996, MyTravel Northern Europe (MyTravel NE), Scandinavia's leading tour operator, launched the 100 Steps Towards a Good Environment program at its in-house hotel chain, Sunwing Resorts. Based on the results and experiences from this program, the company developed a 50-step program for its external hotel partners in 2000. Today, more than 70 of MyTravel's contracted hotels, both large and small, have implemented the program.

The 50 Steps program lists 50 environmental actions that hotels are encouraged to adopt voluntarily. These actions are organized in 11 categories:

- | Resort service & information
- | Accommodation
- | Cleaning
- | Food & beverage (kitchens)
- | In-house supermarket (mini-market)
- | Restaurants/Bars
- | Repair and maintenance
- | Garden, beach & pool area
- | Purchasing & storage
- | Administration & control
- | Staff

The 50 Steps program was developed internally, based on the 100 Steps program and the Nordic Swan eco-label's criteria for hotels. The company's Environmental Director is responsible for the coordination of all activities.

MyTravel NE launched the 50 Steps program at a number of hotel partner meetings in the Canary Islands, Greece, Turkey and Mallorca. The company chose to proceed relatively slowly and involve only a few hotels at the beginning, as education of partners was and still is

EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

fundamental to the success of the program. Today, with more experience, MyTravel NE has increased the number of hotels participating in the program.

Once a hotel decides to implement the program, a one-day training session is held with key personnel (maids, maintenance workers, hotel management, etc.), and the hotel receives a detailed manual to support its work. The hotel is also required to appoint a coordinator for the program. A poster listing the 50 actions, printed and distributed by MyTravel NE, provides an opportunity for the hotel to communicate with its staff and customers about the program and show how many actions have been adopted.

Experience has shown that education and involvement of staff are critical to the success of the program. Therefore, MyTravel NE has translated the 50 Steps poster together with a more detailed description of each for display in hotel staff areas. This helps ensure that all personnel can be involved with the program and are able to answer basic questions about the hotel's environmental work and the 50 Steps program.

All actions do not have to be done at once, and hotels are encouraged to ensure that each step is completed before it is checked off on the poster. While MyTravel NE does not impose any fixed implementation time frame on hotels participating in the program, it does require that, within the first year, sewage and wastewater are treated in compliance with local laws and solid waste is separated into as many categories as can be processed by the local authorities.

Hotels that have chosen to participate in the program are highlighted in MyTravel NE's catalogs and on its web site with a leaf symbol. Eventually, figures demonstrating environmental performance, such as energy and water conservation, will also be included in the catalogs. Although MyTravel NE does not officially verify the implementation of the 50 Steps program, customer questionnaires include environmental questions, and MyTravel NE completes a yearly environmental audit of each hotel. Each year MyTravel NE also presents Environmental Awards to the hotels that receive the best results based on the customer questionnaires.

For contracted hotels that choose to participate in the 50 Steps program, details of the program are included with mandatory environmental standards as a clause in the Service Agreement signed by both the hotel and MyTravel NE. Suppliers can choose different performance level options in the Service Agreement. While some hotels decide to meet just the base level requirements, others opt for achieving higher performance levels, in order to earn a special environmental label in the company's marketing materials.

ORIZZONTI

In 1997, Orizzonti, an Italian inbound tour operator, launched an environmental program, *Attenzione per l'Ambiente* (Care for the Environment), aimed at opening up a constructive dialogue on environmental issues and raising awareness among its suppliers, authorities





at destinations and customers. The objective of the program is to generate interest among all stakeholders and stimulate good environmental management practices. The program includes materials targeting customers (through an informational brochure), decision-makers at destinations (through checklists for destinations) and suppliers (through environmental checklists).

The supplier checklist, which is specifically aimed at hotels and self-catering accommodation, was developed in cooperation with Check Soluzioni per il Turismo, an Italian tourism and environmental conservation consultant. The checklist takes into account existing national legislation and scientific guidelines on environmental management in tourism facilities, in particular the European Union's Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS).

An assessment of hotels and self-catering accommodations in seaside and mountain resorts was conducted before defining the criteria for the checklist, in order to identify and define the issues affecting the two main types of accommodation used by Orizzonti. Some suppliers were also asked to evaluate the checklist before it was used.

The checklist includes 33 questions grouped into two sections: water and energy saving, and pollution. Under water and energy saving, the checklist asks questions about low-energy and renewable energy equipment, variable temperature controls, water-saving faucets and toilets, re-use of gray water and rain water, and monitoring of energy and water consumption. Under pollution, the checklist asks about the use of non-toxic and renewable materials, internal air quality, solid waste separation and recycling, use of local products and client awareness programs. Suppliers are asked to answer each question by simply ticking yes or no (only two questions ask for quantitative information). Space is provided for establishments to provide further information about their environmental activities.

The program is coordinated by Orizzonti's Environmental Monitoring Office. The checklist is sent every year to accommodation suppliers by email with a cover letter introducing the program, summarizing the results of previous years and noting that all answers will be treated confidentially. The checklist was distributed for the first time in 1997, to 700 Italian hotels and self-catering facilities. The reply rate was about 25 percent. In 1998, an additional 115 hotels and self-catering facilities in France were added, and the reply rate was about 26 percent. In 1999, about 900 checklists were distributed, and a total of 233 (about 26 percent) were completed.

Using information collected through the supplier checklist, Orizzonti is able to inform customers about which facilities have implemented environmentally friendly practices and what these practices are, and can offer these facilities a marketing tool that recognizes their commitment to the environment.

The information is published in Orizzonti's brochures, with an introduction explaining the environmental program in detail and describing the checklist. An ECO symbol highlights the

EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

hotels that have adopted ecological initiatives. The 33 questions in the checklist are numbered, and the number appears next to the ECO symbol to indicate which actions have been implemented by each of the hotels that completed the questionnaire, allowing clients to make comparisons and informed decisions when selecting their accommodation.

Monitoring and evaluation of the effective implementation of the 33 criteria is conducted through customer feedback forms and routine visits by Orizzonti staff to the contractors. A customer feedback form (pre-addressed) is included in the brochure distributed with travel documents. The forms are collected and evaluated by the Environmental Monitoring Office. When customers file negative comments, Orizzonti requests explanations directly from the hotel manager. Technical support is offered, by both Check Soluzioni per il Turismo and Orizzonti staff, for suppliers expressing an interest in improving their environmental performance.

TUI NORDIC

TUI Nordic, one of the leading tour operators in Europe and part of World of TUI (TUI AG), has established a close relationship with the “Blue Village” hotels, in order to integrate sustainability practices into the Blue Village quality requirements. Blue Village hotels are quality properties in sun and beach destinations, designed for families and couples. TUI Nordic’s relationship with the hotels focuses particularly on promoting environmental and social responsibility and supporting the dissemination of sustainability information to customers.

The decision to pursue this partnership was based on the recognition that Blue Village customers support environmental actions, such as recycling and water saving, and that they regard engagement in responsible tourism development as part of a hotel’s quality performance.

In developing the sustainability requirements, the company decided to use two widely accepted Codes of Conduct, the hotel section of the World Wide Fund for Nature’s (WWF) Code of Conduct for the Travel and Tourism Industry, and the ECPAT Code of Conduct against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism. The company decided that these codes would permit a flexible approach to communication and allow different methods of implementation. This decision was supported by the fact that TUI Nordic, together with other stakeholders, had been active in the elaboration of both Codes. In a second phase of the program, UNESCO’s Ten Rules for Responsible Traveling were included in the information platform. These guidelines were developed in collaboration between the Nordic UNESCO World Heritage Foundation and TUI Nordic.

All Blue Village Hotels contracted by TUI Nordic are required to have implemented both the WWF hotel code of conduct and the ECPAT code on commercial sexual exploitation of children. In addition, the hotels must have in place an Environmental Management System (EMS),

appoint a staff person responsible for environmental matters, have a written environmental plan, use non-polluting products, give priority to local suppliers and goods, sort solid waste, treat wastewater and introduce water-efficient hardware. Blue Village hotels also have to inform their customers about UNESCO's Rules for Responsible Traveling through information in the reception area and in each room and briefings by trained tour leaders and hotel employees.

The company worked with Blue Village hotel managers to create a common communication system that would allow benchmarking between hotels, support the message of sustainability to customers and become a part of the Blue Village concept. The common platform also allows tour operators to use the same information in brochures and leaflets, thus reinforcing the sustainability concepts. Management in each hotel has been trained on the content of the Codes of Conduct.

Hotels monitor their own performance in implementing the Codes and report regularly to TUI Nordic's Concept Department. Each hotel also reports on performance and lessons learned at a yearly conference, giving them an excellent opportunity to exchange views and experiences. In promoting Blue Village hotels, TUI Nordic includes information on the hotels' environmental performance in its catalogs and on its web site.

Among the benefits of this program have been reduced operational costs for hotels, through lower water and energy consumption, and enhanced reputation and increased client satisfaction and loyalty for TUI Nordic.

The quality criteria and environmental requirements for each hotel are included in the Blue Village Product Agreement, which is an appendix to the ordinary agreement signed by TUI Nordic and the hotels.





THIS HANDBOOK IS A JOINT INITIATIVE OF:

THE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS

The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business provides a new forum for collaboration between the private sector and the environmental community. Created in a partnership between Conservation International (CI) and Ford Motor Company, the Center operates as a division of CI and is governed by a distinct executive board of leaders from the business and environmental communities. The Center engages the private sector worldwide in creating solutions to critical global environmental problems in which industry plays a defining role. The Center's Travel & Leisure program works with leading tourism companies to integrate conservation principles into their day-to-day operations and to influence the planning and management of key tourist destinations.

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THE TOUR OPERATORS' INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development (TOI) is a network of 25 tour operators that have committed to incorporate sustainability principles into their business operations and work together to promote and disseminate practices compatible with sustainable development. The Initiative was developed with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Tourism Organization (WTO/OMT). The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business is an active partner of the TOI, providing technical and financial assistance.

The TOI is coordinated by a Secretariat, hosted by UNEP, which ensures the implementation of the program of activities and continuous support to the members.

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Certified German Blue Angel & Nordic Swan Paper printed with vegetable oil-based ink