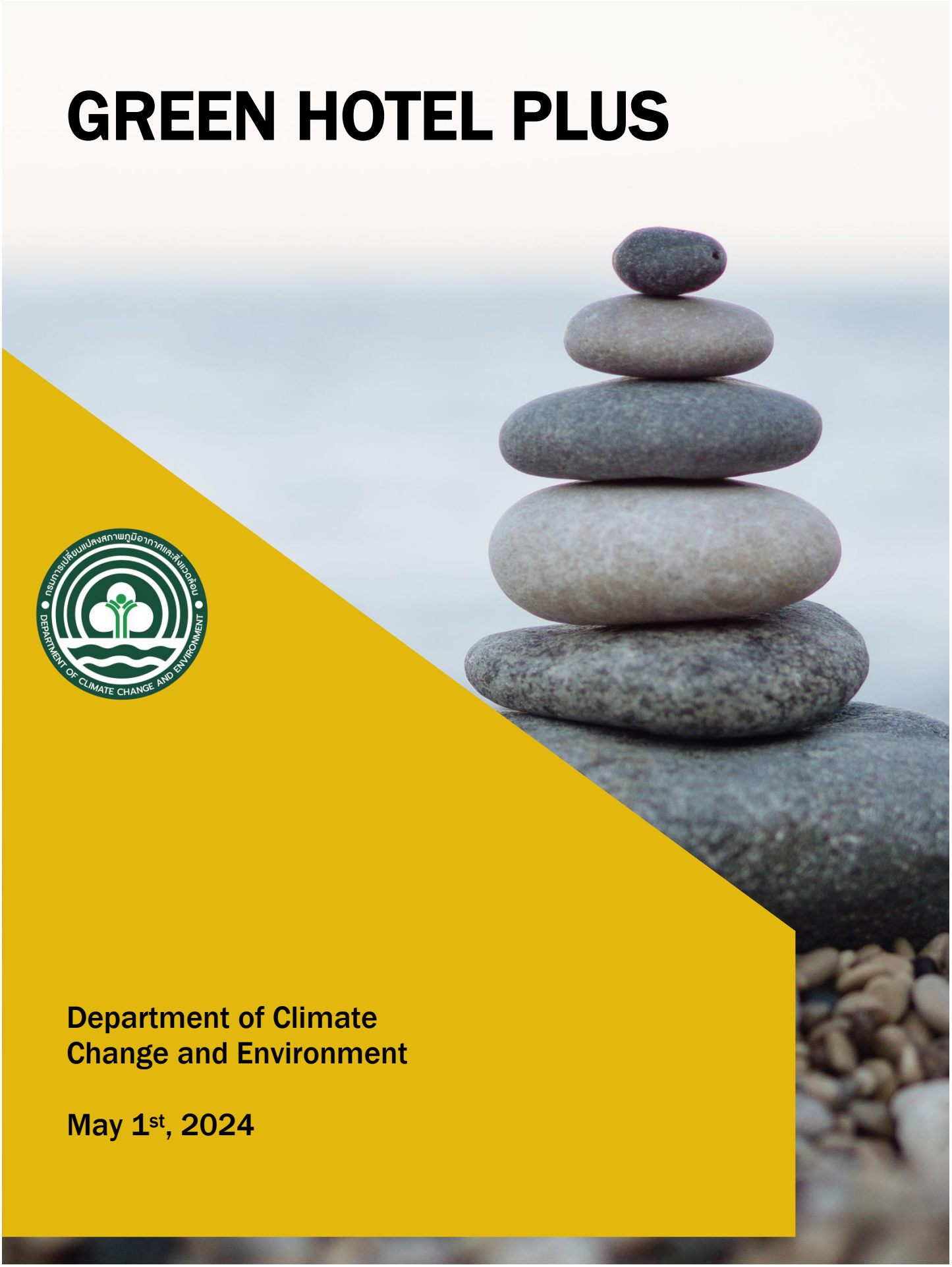
GREEN HOTEL PLUS



Department of Climate
Change and Environment

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INTRODUCTION

The “Green Hotel” project promotes environmentally friendly hotels in Thailand. It was implemented in 2016 by the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP), which recently evolved into the Department of Climate Change and Environment (DCCE) in order to support and drive sustainable production and consumption in Thailand’s hotel industry.

In 2022, the EU SWITCH-ASIA Tourlink project collaborated with the DCCE to upgrade the criteria for Thai Green Hotels by introducing a new level, aligning it with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) standard – an international benchmark for sustainable travel and tourism.

The DCCE recognises the importance of catering to high-value tourists who contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment. This approach also serves to stimulate sustainable economic growth in the Thai hotel industry and among its suppliers. Therefore, **“Green Hotel PLUS”** was developed to upgrade the criteria for Thai hotels within the Thai standards ecosystem.

Green Hotel PLUS aims to be Thailand’s first GSTC-recognised green hotel standard. The new level will enable Thai hotels to progress through existing bronze, silver, and gold award levels to cost-effectively reach an internationally-recognised hotel standard with Thai language support.

STANDARD CRITERIA FOR "GREEN HOTEL PLUS"

The criteria for "Green Hotel PLUS" consist of seven sections:

SECTION 1: AN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY AND SUSTAINABLE OPERATING POLICY

This section focuses on providing a long-term Sustainability Management System (SMS) for the organisation. The management system should be appropriate for the size and scope of the organisation. The SMS must take into account environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, human rights, health, safety management, risks, and crises. The SMS should be driven by continuous development and improvement. It consists of two sub-sections and 20 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 1.1: Setting policies and goals for sustainability management.

Thirteen criteria are applied:

1.1.1 The organisation has established policies and long-term goals including action plan and monitoring and evaluation system for appropriate sustainability management.

1.1.2 The organisation has documents and a procurement system which supports products and suppliers with environmental certification.

1.1.3 The organisation has documents and policies for reducing energy consumption or setting the reduction target according to the type of energy.

1.1.4 The organisation has documents and policies for reducing transportation requirements.

1.1.5 The organisation has sustainability policies and operational goals that take into account environmental issues, including wastewater and effluent management, garbage and food waste management, greenhouse gas reduction, hazardous substance management, occupational health and safety, noise and pollution management, as well as other environmental issues.

1.1.6 The organisation has documents and policies for avoiding the introduction of invasive species.

1.1.7 The organisation has sustainability policies and operational goals that take into account social and cultural issues.

1.1.8 The organisation has documents and policies demonstrating awareness of and compliance with existing international, national, and local good practices and guidance for tourists visiting culturally or historically sensitive sites and indigenous communities.

1.1.9 The organisation has sustainability policies and operational goals that take into account economic and quality-of-life issues.

1.1.10 The organisation has sustainability policies and operational goals that take into account human rights issues.

1.1.11 The organisation has sustainability policies and operational goals that take into account risk and crisis management issues.

1.1.12 The organisation operates according to concrete sustainability management policies and goals.

1.1.13 The organisation develops action plans based on its sustainability management policies and goals,and monitors and evaluates its progress in order to continuously improve its policies, goals, and operational performance.

Section 1.2: Legal compliance

The organisation complies with all applicable local, national, and international legislation and regulations, including, among others, health, safety, labour, and environmental aspects. Two criteria are applied:

1.2.1 The organisation complies with laws/rules/regulations related to occupational health, safety, labour, and the environment.

1.2.2 The organisation complies with the relevant laws/rules/regulations at local, national, and international levels.

Section 1.3: Right to occupy land

The organisation must abide by the legal regulations on the acquisition of rights on land, water resources, and possession of property in accordance with the principles of the rights of local and indigenous people. Such acquisition must be approved by local and indigenous people without force by providing accurate information and prohibiting forced and involuntary migration. Three criteria are applied:

1.3.1 There are land ownership documents and possession rights, including water rights.

1.3.2 There is documented evidence that key resources, including land and water sources, have been acquired with the free, prior and informed consent of local communities or indigenous people.

1.3.3 There is evidence to show that the acquisition of land and water rights and property does not require the involuntary resettlement of the local community.

Section 1.4: Preventing sexual exploitation and harassment

The organisation has a policy against unfair exploitation or sexual, commercial, or other forms of harassment. This is especially true for children, youths, women, minorities, and other vulnerable groups. Two criteria are applied:

1.4.1 The organisation implements a policy against commercial, sexual, or any other form of exploitation and harassment, including children, women, minorities, and other vulnerable groups.

1.4.2 There are policies and operations in place against child labour and child tourism unless allowed by law.

SECTION 2: PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

This section focuses on creating methods, processes, or activities to encourage personnel in the workplace to gain the necessary knowledge, ability, and skills to work in environmentally friendly operations in a sustainable way. It consists of four sub-sections and 16 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 2.1: Working group and operational plan

Employees in the organisation are involved in the development and implementation of the SMS. Two criteria are applied:

2.1.1 The organization has appointed a working group to contribute to the development and establishment of sustainability management, that covers personnel from all departments.

2.1.2 The organization has appointed a working group on sustainability management, that covers personnel from all departments and the duties and responsibilities of each department to support sustainability implementation are clearly defined.

Section 2.2: Training and site visits

The organisation participates in personnel development and implements the SMS, providing personnel with guidance, training, and site visits periodically to support their roles and responsibilities according to their individual duties. Five criteria are applied:

2.2.1 Training and study tours for employees, regarding their roles and responsibilities in environmental issues, are organized regularly.

2.2.2 Training and study tours for employees, regarding their roles and responsibilities in social and cultural issues, are organized regularly.

2.2.3 Training and study tours for employees, regarding their roles and responsibilities in economic and quality of life issues, are organized regularly.

2.2.4 Training and study tours for employees, regarding their roles and responsibilities in human rights issues, are organized regularly.

2.2.5 Training and study tours for employees, regarding their roles and responsibilities in occupational health and safety issues, are organized regularly.

2.2.6 Training and study tours for employees, regarding their roles and responsibilities in risk and crisis management issues, are organized regularly.

Section 2.3: Equal opportunity

2.3.1 The organisation offers equal employment opportunities without discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

2.3.2 The organisation offers equal employment opportunities in management positions without discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, religion, disability, or in other ways.

Section 2.4: Promoting a good working environment

The organisation respects workers' rights and creates a safe and secure working environment. Employees are paid at least the minimum wage and provided with training, experience, and opportunities for advancement. Six criteria are applied:

2.4.1 National and international labour standards and regulations are followed.

2.4.2 Wage levels are regularly monitored and reviewed against national norms for the cost of living, with staff paid at least the minimum legal wage.

2.4.3 Employee training and opportunities for advancement, covering all aspects of sustainability management, including environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, human rights, health and safety issues, are offered and recorded, including the level and frequency of the training received.

2.4.4 Employee contracts include support for health care and social security.

2.4.5 Safe, secure, and hygienic facilities are provided for all employees.

2.4.6 Employee satisfaction and grievance mechanisms are followed up.

SECTION 3: PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

This section focuses on communicating information and news about environmentally friendly and sustainable operations to executives, employees, service users, and local communities to enhance the understanding of personnel in the organisation as well as create long-term, sustainable cooperation between organisations and localities. It consists of four sub-sections and 10 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 3.1: Public relations and the communication of sustainability information

The organisation communicates its sustainability policies, operations, and performance to its network partners, including customers, and seeks to collaborate with them. Four criteria are applied:

3.1.1 The organisation communicates its policies and goals for sustainability management to its executives, employees, customers, key suppliers, and appropriate community stakeholders for thorough awareness.

3.1.2 The organisation prepares regular reports on its sustainability activities and performance, which are presented to management and communicated to employees and customers.

3.1.3 The organisation publicises knowledge and creates awareness about sustainable operations for employees and customers.

3.1.4 The organisation arranges campaign activities on sustainable operations to encourage participation among employees and customers.

Section 3.2: Accurate promotion

Promotional materials and marketing communications are accurate and transparent in terms of the organisation and its products and services, including sustainability claims. The organisation does not promise more than it can deliver. Two criteria are applied:

3.2.1 The organisation promotes its products and sustainable operations and services through accurate promotional materials or marketing communications.

3.2.2 The organisation prepares public relations and promotional media using transparent and accurate information concerning actual locations, products, and services.

Section 3.3: Customers' information

The organisation provides information and communicates on the surrounding natural environment, local culture, and cultural heritage. This includes guidelines concerning the appropriate conduct when visiting natural areas, cultural life, and cultural heritage. Two criteria are applied:

3.3.1 The organisation ensures that information/interpretative materials on the natural and cultural heritage of the local area are available and provided to customers.

3.3.2 Staff receive information and training on the natural and cultural heritage of the area and can provide information and guidance on appropriate behaviour to customers.

Section 3.4: Survey on customer satisfaction

The organisation monitors customer satisfaction and takes corrective action (if necessary), including addressing sustainability concerns. Two criteria are applied:

3.4.1 There is a system for surveying opinions and evaluating the satisfaction of service users, including the sustainability aspects.

3.4.2 A report is prepared to evaluate the satisfaction of service users with guidelines for responding to comments and improving operations.

SECTION 4: SUPPORTING LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PROCUREMENT

This section focuses on providing active and fair support for local infrastructure and social community development initiatives through the employment of local people, selecting products and services from local distributors, and supporting local entrepreneurs in developing and selling sustainable products and services. It consists of three sub-sections and 10 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 4.1: Local procurement

In the purchase or presentation of products and services, the organisation provides fair trade opportunities to local distributors contingent upon the products or services meeting a sufficiently high-quality standard. Three criteria are applied:

4.1.1 The hotel regularly audits the source of products with sustainable local products being preferred when possible.

4.1.2 The proportion of goods and services purchased from locally owned and operated businesses is measured, and local suppliers are preferred when possible.

4.1.3 A proportion of distributors is not locally owned.

Section 4.2: Training and site visits

The organisation supports local entrepreneurs in developing and selling sustainable products and services based on the nature, history, and culture of that area. Three criteria are applied:

4.2.1 The organisation supports local entrepreneurs in the sale of sustainable products and services that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture.

4.2.2 The organisation provides advice and support to local service providers to develop sustainable products and services that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture.

4.2.3 The organisation creates joint ventures and partnership opportunities with local entrepreneurs.

Section 4.3: Training and site visits

The organisation procures goods and services supporting products and suppliers that are environmentally friendly and sustainable, including capital goods, food, beverages, construction materials, and other consumable products. The use of environmentally friendly products and services should be selected from products with labels containing facts about their environmentally friendly nature. Four criteria are applied:

4.3.1 The organisation uses products and services that are environmentally friendly by considering the certified label or proven evidence of the products, i.e., energy label, ecolabel, etc.

4.3.2 The organisation purchases locally available goods, food and services. The use of unnecessary packaging is considered, especially plastic and foam, as well as purchasing in large quantities as appropriate to minimise waste and food waste.

4.3.3 The organisation purchases and uses food and consumable and disposable goods carefully to minimise waste and food waste.

4.3.4 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data, and presents guidelines for senior managers on improving the procurement of environmentally friendly products and services and managing waste and food waste and food waste.

SECTION 5: ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

This section focuses on supporting, taking action, and participating with localities in conserving resources, reducing pollution, and conserving biodiversity, ecosystems, and landscapes, as well as creating opportunities and a good working environment. It is important that the organisation does not pose a risk to basic services such as food, water, energy, medical care, hygiene, or the original way of life for local people. Additionally, it should consider the impacts on the surrounding environment. It consists of 14 sub-sections and 60 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 5.1: Energy management

The organisation monitors energy consumption according to usage patterns, with the aim of reducing overall energy use to a minimum while increasing the amount of renewable energy. The organisation should publicise, educate, and create awareness among employees and service users towards energy conservation. Five criteria are applied:

5.1.1 The organisation conducts energy reduction activities.

5.1.2 The organisation employs efficient technology or equipment for minimising energy use.

5.1.3 The organisation uses renewable energy sources and monitors them continuously.

5.1.4 The organisation publicises knowledge and creates awareness among employees and visitors towards various forms of energy conservation.

5.1.5 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data in terms of energy used per tourist/night, and presents guidelines for senior managers on improving energy management.

Section 5.2: Transportation management

The organisation finds ways to reduce transportation needs and encourages customers, employees, suppliers, and internal users to use clean energy sources and alternative transportation systems as well as resources efficiently. Five criteria are applied:

5.2.1 The organisation has a transportation system in place for managing the efficient and sustainable use of resources.

5.2.2 The organisation provides and facilitates alternative transport options (e.g., bike rental, car sharing, pick-ups) for guests and staff.

5.2.3 The organisation uses clean energy or environmentally friendly transportation systems for round-trip transportation, tourism, and delivery.

5.2.4 The organisation provides information and promotes awareness in local suppliers, employees, and customers towards alternative (climate-friendly) transport options for arrival, departure, and during their visit to minimise transport use.

5.2.5 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses transportation data, and presents guidelines for senior managers on the improvement and management of transportation.

Section 5.3: Water management

Water risk is assessed, with water consumption measured by type and steps taken to minimise overall consumption. Water sourcing is sustainable and does not adversely affect environmental flow. In areas of high water risk, context-based water stewardship goals are identified and pursued. Five criteria are applied:

5.3.1 The organisation assesses and documents the water sources and risks. Water originates from a legal and sustainable source that has not been previously affected and is unlikely to affect environmental flow in the future.

5.3.2 The organisation conducts water-saving activities.

5.3.3 The organisation employs efficient technology or equipment for minimising water use.

5.3.4 The organisation publicises knowledge and creates awareness among employees and visitors towards various forms of water conservation.

5.3.5 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data in terms of water used per tourist/night, and presents guidelines for senior managers on the improvement and management of water. Water consumption is measured by type (if appropriate).

Section 5.4: Wastewater management

Wastewater, including grey water, is effectively treated and only reused or released safely, with no adverse effects on the local population or environment. Four criteria are applied:

5.4.1 The organisation ensures efficient and safe management of food scraps, oils, and grease before entering the wastewater treatment system with no adverse effects on the local population and environment.

5.4.2 The organisation has a suitable effluent and wastewater treatment management system in accordance with legal and international wastewater quality requirements.

5.4.3 The organisation reuses reclaimed or treated water appropriately and safely without adverse effects on the local population and environment.

5.4.4 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data on wastewater, and presents the guidelines to senior managers for improving wastewater management.

Section 5.5: Solid waste management

Waste, including food waste, is measured with mechanisms in place to reduce waste and, where reduction is not feasible, to reuse or recycle it. Any residual waste disposal will have no adverse effect on the local population or the environment. Four criteria are applied:

5.5.1 The organisation has a solid waste management plan and takes action to reduce, separate, and reuse or recycle waste generated by employees, customers, and suppliers.

5.5.2 The organisation uses a government-run or approved facility for solid waste disposal, and there is evidence that such a facility has no negative impact on the environment or local population.

5.5.3 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data in terms of the amount of solid waste disposed of per tourist/night, and presents guidelines for senior managers for improving solid waste management.

5.5.4 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data on solid waste, and presents guidelines to senior managers for improving solid waste management.

Section 5.6: Greenhouse gas emissions

Significant greenhouse gas emissions from all sources controlled by the organisation are identified, calculated where possible, and procedures implemented to avoid or minimise them. Offsetting of the organisation's remaining emissions is encouraged. Six criteria are applied:

5.6.1 The organisation identifies sources of GHG emissions and removal.

5.6.2 The organisation estimates the quantity of direct and indirect GHG emissions/removal.

5.6.3 The organisation conducts GHG emission reduction activities.

5.6.4 The organisation publicises knowledge and creates awareness among employees and visitors towards GHG emission reduction in various forms.

5.6.5 The organisation uses carbon offset mechanisms to achieve the reduction target.

5.6.6 The organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data in terms of GHG emissions per tourist/night, and presents guidelines to senior managers for the improvement and management of emissions.

Section 5.7: Harmful substances

The use of harmful substances, including pesticides, paints, swimming pool disinfectants, and cleaning materials, is minimised and substituted when available by innocuous products or processes. All storage, use, handling, and disposal of chemicals are properly managed. Six criteria are applied:

5.7.1 The organisation uses substitutes or products produced from natural extracts or processes that do not create toxic substances to minimize the use of harmful substances, including pesticides, paints, swimming pool disinfectants and cleaning materials, where possible.

5.7.2 The organisation stores chemicals, especially those in bulk, and handles them in accordance with appropriate standards.

5.7.3 The organisation properly uses and disposes of various chemicals in the area in accordance with international standards.

5.7.4 The organisation provides customers with information about the use of harmful substances containing chemicals, including pesticides, paints, swimming pool disinfectants, and cleaning materials that may affect the local environment, such as sunscreen, insect repellents, etc.

5.7.5 The organisation has occupational health and safety procedures in place, such as the provision of appropriate fire protection equipment or systems, preparation of first aid

equipment or systems, inspection, and establishment of measures to prevent infectious diseases, as well as the prevention and control of disease transmission, etc.

5.7.6 The organisation provides an inventory of harmful substances and material safety data sheets (MSDS). In addition, the organisation monitors, prepares a summary report, analyses data on harmful substances, and presents guidelines to the executive for improving the management and minimizing the use of harmful substances, including pesticides, paints, swimming pool disinfectants and cleaning materials.

Section 5.8: Minimising pollution

The organisation implements practices to minimise pollution from noise, light, runoff, erosion, and ozone-depleting substances, as well as air, water, and soil contaminants. Three criteria are applied:

5.8.1 The organisation reviews and identifies potential sources of pollution from noise, light, runoff, erosion, and ozone-depleting substances, as well as air, water, and soil contaminants.

5.8.2 The organisation implements actions to minimise and eliminate pollution, including noise, light, runoff, erosion, and ozone-depleting substances, as well as air, water, and soil contaminants, from its sources.

5.8.3 The organisation inspects and follows up on various customer activities to ensure they do not cause pollution, including noise, light, runoff, erosion, and ozone-depleting substances, as well as air, water, and soil contaminants, taking timely corrective action when activities are causing pollution in the area.

Section 5.9: Biodiversity conservation

The organisation supports and contributes to biodiversity conservation, including through appropriate management of its own property. Particular attention is paid to natural protected areas and those with high biodiversity value. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimised and rehabilitated, with a compensatory contribution made to conservation management. Six criteria are applied:

5.9.1 The organisation provides monetary and other support and manages its own property appropriately to support biodiversity conservation in the hotel grounds, local area, and biologically sensitive areas.

5.9.2 The organisation is aware of and mitigates activities with the potential to disturb wildlife and habitats as well as rehabilitate natural ecosystem disturbed.

5.9.3 The organisation demonstrates awareness of natural protected areas and those with high biodiversity value to employees and customers.

5.9.4 The organisation engages with non-profit organisations involved in local conservation.

5.9.5 The organisation makes a compensatory contribution where any disturbance has occurred.

5.9.6 The organisation records monetary and other support for biodiversity conservation in the local area.

Section 5.10: Invasive species

The organisation takes measures to avoid the introduction of invasive species. Native species are used for landscaping and restoration wherever feasible, particularly in natural landscapes. Three criteria are applied:

5.10.1 The organisation uses or expands the seeding of native species for landscaping.

5.10.2 The organisation has programmes for eradicating and controlling invasive species to ensure invasive species are not introduced or spread.

5.10.3 The organisation monitors for the presence of any invasive species and takes the appropriate action to ensure invasive species are not introduced or spread.

Section 5.11: Visits to natural sites

The organisation follows the appropriate guidelines for the management and promotion of visits to natural sites to minimise adverse impacts and maximise visitor fulfilment. Three criteria are applied:

5.11.1 The organisation is aware of and complies with existing guidelines for tourist visits to natural sites.

5.11.2 The organisation provides guidelines for visiting natural sites and informs visitors.

5.11.3 The organisation engages with local conservation bodies to establish/identify issues concerning visits to specific sites.

Section 5.12: Wildlife interactions

Interactions with free-roaming wildlife, taking into account the cumulative impacts, are non-invasive and responsibly managed to avoid adverse effects on the animals concerned and the viability and behaviour of populations in the wild. Four criteria are applied:

5.12.1 The organisation is aware of and complies with existing local, national, and international regulations and guidelines concerning wildlife interactions, including wildlife viewing.

5.12.2 The organisation engages with the development and implementation of local codes and guidelines for wildlife interaction, including wildlife viewing, as required, based on advice from wildlife experts.

5.12.3 The organisation has measures in place to minimise wildlife disturbance and interaction, especially feeding, which should not be permitted unless specifically sanctioned by

internationally accepted standards or, where standards are not available, guided by expert advice from an independent wildlife expert.

5.12.4 The organisation monitors and addresses impacts on wildlife wellbeing.

Section 5.13: Animal welfare

No species of wild animal is acquired, bred, or held captive except by authorised and suitably equipped people and for properly regulated activities in compliance with local and international law. The housing, care, and handling of all wild and domestic animals meet the highest standards of animal welfare. Three criteria are applied:

5.13.1 The organisation is aware of and complies with relevant laws and regulations concerning captive wildlife, animal welfare, and tourism activities.

5.13.2 The organisation has experienced, appropriately qualified, and fully licensed personnel responsible for the welfare of captive wildlife.

5.13.3 The organisation inspects the conditions of captive wildlife, domestic animals, and their housing and handling and takes action to ensure high standards of animal welfare.

Section 5.14: Wildlife harvesting and trade

Wildlife species are not harvested, consumed, displayed, sold, or traded except as part of a regulated activity that ensures their utilisation is sustainable and in compliance with local and international laws. Three criteria are applied:

5.14.1 The organisation is aware of and complies with relevant laws and regulations concerning wildlife harvesting and trade.

5.14.2 The organisation informs visitors about regulations concerning wildlife harvesting, consumption, and trade, as well as the need to avoid buying illegal products/souvenirs derived from threatened species of wildlife notified by IUCN or CITES.

5.14.3 The organisation has a properly managed and strictly enforced approach to conservation. Only legal and scientifically based use and consumption of wild foods, wild species, and hunting activities are permitted.

SECTION 6: LOCAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

This section focuses on ensuring the organisation operates according to good practices as well as national and international guidelines agreed upon with local people for managing and promoting tourism in the community and historically and culturally fragile places to maximise benefits and reduce negative impacts on local areas. This includes participation in protecting, preserving, highlighting, and assimilating the authentic elements of local and contemporary traditions and cultures compatible with the organisation's operations. It consists of nine sub-sections and 27 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 6.1: Community service

The activities of the organisation must not jeopardise the provision of basic services, such as food, water, energy, healthcare, or sanitation, to neighbouring communities. Two criteria are applied:

6.1.1 The organisation has communication/feedback/grievance mechanisms in place for the local community.

6.1.2 The organisation monitors the impact on basic services of food, water, energy, and sanitation to the surrounding local communities and takes action to prevent negative impacts as necessary.

6.1.3 The organisation is monitoring the impact on basic services, such as food, water, energy, and sanitation, on the surrounding local communities.

Section 6.2: Local employment

Local residents must have equal opportunities for employment and advancement, including in relation to management positions. Three criteria are applied:

6.2.1 The proportion of total employment from people already residing in the local community is measured and managed with local residents actively encouraged to apply for employment.

6.2.2 Local people are given opportunities for advancement, including in management positions; and a proportion of local people are employed at administrative and management levels.

Section 6.3: Participating and supporting local communities

The organisation must focus on creating the maximum social and economic benefits for local communities and minimising negative impacts. Three criteria are applied:

6.3.1 The organisation engages with local communities to assess potential benefits/impacts and identify needs and opportunities to support community development.

6.3.2 The organisation supports the local community in implementing educational, training, or development programmes related to health and sanitation, as well as those dealing with the impacts of climate change.

6.3.3 The organisation supports the local community in gaining access to the tourism facilities and services on offer.

Section 6.4: Participation with other tourism businesses

The organisation is involved in planning and managing sustainable tourism in tourist destinations as appropriate. Three criteria are applied:

6.4.1 The organisation is a member of organisations involved in sustainable tourism management in the area.

6.4.2 The organisation is involved in cooperation between the local community, NGOs, and other local organisations.

6.4.3 The organisation is involved in planning and organising meetings and events related to sustainable tourism.

Section 6.5: Local livelihoods

The activities of the organisation do not adversely affect local access to livelihoods, including land and aquatic resource use, rights of way, transport, and housing. Two criteria are applied:

6.5.1 The organisation has a mechanism for the local community to communicate negative impacts on the local way of life, including livelihoods, access to natural resources, rights of way, sites, and traditions of historical, archaeological, cultural, and spiritual significance, taking action to prevent negative impacts as necessary.

6.5.2 The organisation evaluates and monitors negative impacts on the local way of life, including livelihoods, access to local housing, access to natural resources, rights of way, sites, and traditions of historical, archaeological, cultural, and spiritual significance, taking action to prevent negative impacts as necessary.

Section 6.6: Cultural interactions

The organisation follows international and national good practices and locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites to minimise adverse impacts, maximise local benefits, and enhance visitor fulfilment. Four criteria are applied:

6.6.1 The organisation engages with communities/managers of culturally or historically sensitive sites to review guidance and create and agree on additional guidelines as necessary.

6.6.2 The organisation participates and supports local communities in cultural or historical activities.

6.6.3 The organisation provides guidance to travellers on how to visit historical, cultural, and indigenous areas responsibly.

6.6.4 The organisation implements specific measures to avoid inappropriate interactions with children.

Section 6.7: Protecting cultural heritage

The organisation contributes to the protection, preservation, and enhancement of local properties, sites, and traditions of historical, archaeological, cultural, and spiritual significance while not impeding access to them by local residents. Three criteria are applied:

6.7.1 The organisation makes and records monetary contributions for the protection of historical, archaeological, cultural, and spiritual heritage.

6.7.2 The organisation provides in-kind or other support for historical, archaeological, cultural, and spiritual heritage.

6.7.3 The organisation provides guidance to travellers on how to visit historical, archaeological, cultural, and spiritual heritage.

Section 6.8: Presenting culture and heritage

The organisation values and incorporates the authentic elements of traditional and contemporary local culture in its operations, design, decoration, cuisine, or shops while respecting the intellectual property rights of local communities. Three criteria are applied:

6.8.1 The organisation uses and promotes local arts and crafts products that are not from the forest or sea through design and decoration or distribution as souvenirs.

6.8.2 The organisation supports local communities to preserve their cultural heritage by participating in local cultural practices while integrating traditional and contemporary culture into food, exhibitions, shops, and other services.

6.8.3 The organisation respects copyright and intellectual property rights on the presentation of local cultural heritage.

Section 6.9: Artefacts

Historical and archaeological artefacts are not sold, traded, or displayed except as permitted by local and international law. Four criteria are applied:

6.9.1 The organisation does not trade historical and archaeological artefacts except as permitted under local and international law.

6.9.2 The organisation does not display historical and archaeological artefacts except as permitted under local and international law.

6.9.3 The organisation provides documents or reports where artefacts are used, with laws and bylaws identified that permit such use.

6.9.4 The organisation has a system for preventing visitors from removing and damaging artefacts.

SECTION 7: LOCAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

This section focuses on organisational planning, location planning, design, construction, renovation, business operations, and demolition in accordance with the requirements of the city plan or land use plan and related laws by taking into account the ability to support and create harmony with the natural and cultural environment of the area. It consists of one sub-section and 13 criteria, as detailed below.

Section 7.1: Buildings and infrastructure

Planning, siting, design, construction, renovation, operation, and demolition of buildings and infrastructure. Thirteen criteria are applied:

7.1.1 Land use is in accordance with the requirements of the city plan or land use plan and related laws, including environmentally protected and sensitive areas and cultural heritage protection.

7.1.2 Planning, site selection, design, construction, renovation, operation, and demolition of infrastructure and buildings are in accordance with the requirements of the city plan or land use plan and related laws, including environmental protection areas and cultural heritage protection.

7.1.3 Planning, siting, and design should consider the natural and cultural environment.

7.1.4 Site selection, design and occupancy should consider the protection of biologically sensitive areas and the carrying capacity of the ecosystem.

7.1.5 Site selection, design and occupancy should consider the archaeological integrity, cultural heritage and sacred sites.

7.1.6 Site selection, design and occupancy should consider the integrity and connectivity of natural resources and protected areas.

7.1.7 Site selection, design, and occupancy consider the impacts on wildlife habitats, including those of threatened or protected species.

7.1.8 Site selection, design, and occupancy does not encroach on water sources and wetland or block the flow of water.

7.1.9 Site selection, design, and occupancy consider natural disaster risk factors and climate change.

7.1.10 An impact assessment report is available for various areas.

7.1.11 Locally appropriate and sustainable materials, craftsmanship, and wisdom are used in planning, design and construction.

7.1.12 Native and endemic plants or those able to withstand weather conditions are used in landscaping and decoration, with invasive species avoided.

7.1.13 Information and access to sites, buildings, and activities is provided to people with special needs, where appropriate and possible.