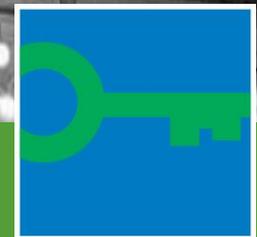




Green Key and the Sustainable Development Goals 2015 – 2030

Green Key

A programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education



I. INTRODUCTION

On 25-27 September 2015, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the Heads of State, Government and High Representatives agreed upon the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2015-2030.

They nominated 2015 as a landmark year for sustainability, as the transformative agenda for people-centred targets for the coming years is set to face contemporary global challenges. The economic, social and environmental dimensions of the SDGs seek to address poverty, hunger, disease, fear and violence, education, healthcare, social protection, sanitation, safety, sustainable habitats and energy.

Green Key is a leading standard of excellence in the field of environmental responsibility and sustainable operations within the tourism industry. This prestigious eco-label represents a commitment by businesses that their tourism establishments adhere to the strict criteria as stipulated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) in accordance with the vision of the Green Key programme's founders.

As the prospect of tourism constitutes an important component of a sustainably developing world, the Green Key criteria contribute to the efforts as stipulated in the SDGs towards achieving sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, and the sustainable use of resources. Indirectly, Green Key also campaigns against disparity, inequality, unemployment, health threats, natural disasters, conflicts, humanitarian crises and general environmental degradation.

This document constitutes Green Key's engagement and contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.



II. CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GREEN KEY AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY



Green Key actively promotes sustainable development of its participating establishments in an effort towards ending poverty through job creation in the hospitality and tourism industries. The programme encourages the employment of locals from diverse backgrounds, and supports local green activities or initiatives related to education, health, sanitation and infrastructure. It offers local entrepreneurs the possibility to develop businesses, thereby helping to benefit the local community and to reduce poverty.

2 ZERO HUNGER



Green Key encourages the use of food products that are organic, eco-labelled, fair trade labelled and/or locally produced. Green Key also encourages its establishments to actively work on initiatives supporting reduction of food waste. These initiatives encourage sustainable development, benefit local agriculture, stimulate the local economy, and ultimately, make a positive impact on ending poverty and hunger.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Green Key's contribution to sustainable development has a positive effect on healthy living and well-being. Green Key actively promotes employment and access to jobs to local disadvantaged groups, while not using child labour. The programme supports initiatives for sustainable healthy community development and welfare in the local population. The establishments engaged in Green Key support a healthy lifestyle by offering food products that are organic and eco-labelled.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Green Key considers information sharing, and training and education to be the most powerful tool in safeguarding a sustainable hospitality and tourism industry. When participating in Green Key, establishments commit to informing and training their staff, in order for them to be able to engage and take action with regard to matters of sustainability. In addition, establishments are required to inform and engage guests and suppliers, while active cooperation with local communities is strongly encouraged. The involvement of women, local minorities and multi-cultural staff aims to promote a culture of understanding, knowledge and experience exchange.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Green Key works to raise awareness and support for human rights and equality, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, or socio-economic status. Green Key actively supports the employment and empowerment of women and local minorities in all positions, aiming at strengthening their involvement in society and their workplace. As an important aspect of participating in Green Key, establishments engage in the development and implementation of their Corporate Social Responsibility which encompasses these issues.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



In the context of sustainable management and lowering the environmental footprint, Green Key promotes water saving initiatives and innovative solutions to reduce water consumption. All Green Key establishments monitor water consumption and incorporate water saving standards, and have proper sanitation and wastewater treatment facilities in place. Furthermore, participation in the Green Key programme requires that the establishments use water and release wastewater without creating a significantly negative impact on the environment and nearby local communities. Sharing of best practice examples of actions and technology is also a central part of participating in Green Key.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



Green Key promotes energy saving initiatives and innovative solutions to reduce energy consumption. The use of renewable energy sources are strongly recommended to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change. As part of participating in the Green Key programme, establishments monitor energy consumption, incorporate energy saving standards, and are required to ensure that their energy consumption does not make a significantly negative impact on the environment and nearby local communities. Sharing of best practice examples of actions and technology is also a central part of participating in Green Key.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Green Key engages in the sustainable development of establishments and the surrounding communities by promoting job creation and employment of local staff. Green Key addresses equitable employment and offers a platform for the development of entrepreneurship. It is a central part of the Green Key criteria to promote inclusiveness through informing and engaging staff, guests and suppliers.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Green Key supports innovation within the areas of environmental management and awareness raising. It promotes inclusiveness and engagement of staff, guests and suppliers in working with sustainability at the establishments and in the surrounding community, while good practices are promoted through Green Key's media for the inspiration of other businesses. Green Key actively promotes sustainable infrastructure within the areas of building and operation of its establishments, as well as the use of sustainable transportation.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Green Key's criteria are formulated to allow establishments of differing size, resource, and global location to be eligible to participate in the programme. Through Green Key, establishments in developing countries are encouraged to play an active part in the global economy. In addition, the Green Key criteria support the reduction of inequality at the local level through hiring of local staff, access for people with special needs and through active engagement in local community development.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Green Key establishments, regardless of their location in cities, smaller settlements or within natural surroundings, are actively engaged in ensuring that their premises and facilities are safe and sustainable. This includes management of resources (water, energy, waste, etc.) and involving staff, guests and suppliers. Green Key encourages building and renovation of establishments to be carried out using environmentally friendly products in respect to the local conditions and requirements and the natural and cultural heritage of surroundings. The programme reaches out to the surrounding community and environment by promoting, supporting and engaging in local activities and facilities. Moreover, Green Key actively supports local green transport infrastructure alternatives.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Green Key supports sustainable consumption and production patterns. Green Key establishments prepare and implement an overall policy and a concrete action plan which takes into account environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, health and safety issues. Staff in Green Key establishments are actively engaged in demonstrating sustainable management within the areas of water and energy saving, waste management, etc. Regarding food and beverage products, Green Key has a set of requirements for the products used to be increasingly more organic, eco-labelled, fair trade labelled and/or locally produced. The participating establishments set standards for their suppliers where, for instance, chemical cleaning products or purchased paper/brochures have good environmental standards.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



As climate change is the biggest challenge of our time, one of the main pillars in Green Key is lowering environmental footprint. This is done by requesting the participating establishments to practise a more sustainable management of their resources. Climate change education and training are core elements in Green Key, enabling staff, guests and suppliers to develop a true understanding and be able to make active choices in the fight against climate change. The promotion of eco-certified and renewable energy sources and sustainable transportation (including cycling) are concrete examples of how the Green Key criteria support this development. Moreover, Green Key encourages its establishments to monitor their carbon emissions, make an effort to reduce it and offset the remaining carbon.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



Green Key supports the protection of aquatic resources and the aquatic environment through the sustainable use of water and awareness raising around this subject. Restaurants in Green Key establishments actively avoid the use of products related to endangered fish and seafood species, and the establishments themselves are encouraged not to display and sell endangered aquatic plant and animal species and products within their premises. At the many Green Key establishments located near aquatic or coastal areas, guests are encouraged to use environmentally friendly and well-managed beaches, marinas and boating tourism operators participating in the Blue Flag programme.

15 LIFE ON LAND



Valuable landscapes, forests, rich biodiversity areas, and natural heritage sites are often the main reasons why tourists visit a destination. Green Key supports the protection of terrestrial ecosystems through its establishments providing information and actively encouraging participation in activities related to biodiversity, conservation and the sustainable use of the local terrestrial environment. Restaurants in Green Key establishments refrain from the use of products related to endangered species, and promote organic and locally produced food with vegetarian options.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Green Key is a programme encouraging engagement in sustainable development requiring accountability and promoting inclusiveness between stakeholders from different sectors at local, national, and international level. Green Key involves cooperation regardless of age, gender, religion and socio-economic status; and it promotes access for people with special needs, equitability in employment, engagement with minorities, local communities and entrepreneurs, as well as dialogue and consent of nearby indigenous and local communities where activities persist. It works towards peaceful and just societies, inclusive and accountable, with a strong presence of diverse groups, and encourages guests visiting the Green Key establishments to be actively involved with sustainability activities, the staff and the local community.



Green Key's global profile involves cooperation and partnerships between multiple stakeholders from the public, private and NGO sectors at the various levels. At the local level, between staff within the establishment and guests, suppliers and the surrounding community, and at the national and international level between NGOs, corporate partners, authorities and other partners concerned with sustainable tourism. Partnerships between these actors are crucial in ensuring that they are fully committed to work towards the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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