

Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism (BMIH5006)

Assessment 2 - Report

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Introduction

The hospitality sector is a significant consumer of resources and has the potential to influence the environment and local communities significantly (Xu and Gursoy, 2015). Sustainable hospitality entails the integration of environmentally favourable practices into all facets of the industry's operations. This includes the implementation of responsible tourism practices, the procurement of local and organic products, the conservation of energy and water, and the reduction of waste. This will result in various advantages for the industry, such as increased brand recognition, reduced operational expenses, increased visitor loyalty, and, most importantly, a beneficial effect on the environment (Legrand et al., 2022). The purpose of this report is to analyse the strategies hotels need to implement to be granted sustainable accreditation. The report analyses the challenges and benefits of integrating sustainability into the daily operations of hotels. Furthermore, the future of hospitality and the hotel industry is discussed in detail.

Compliance with sustainable accreditation granted by hotels

The current trend in the hospitality sector is towards sustainability and green practices. Sustainable practices embraced under the Green Key certification include energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, etc. This section looks at the requirements of hotels to achieve the ultimate levels of such measures.

Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency should be a top consideration if hotels aim to attain ECO certification. Renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, or geothermal energy can be used. Solar panels and wind turbines significantly reduce the use of fossil fuels, which translates to a reduction in greenhouse gases. Replace all traditional lighting with LED lights since they take up less power and are long-lasting (Krstinić Nižić and Matoš, 2018).



Figure 1: Steps for improving energy efficiency in hotels

Source: (Lal, 2024).

It will be essential to introduce intelligent energy management systems that can monitor and control energy usage at any time in the different areas of the hotel to perform at its best without wasting energy. Automated thermostats and occupancy sensors will be used to adjust heating, cooling, and lighting based on occupancy to save energy (Legrand et al., 2022). To decrease the wastage of electricity, hotels should ensure energy-efficient appliances and equipment have high energy performance.

Water Conservation

Water conservation is a vital component of sustainable accreditation. Hotels should be able to install low-flow fixtures in showers, lavatory sinks, and toilets to reduce the amount of water used without visitors realising that these changes are meant to sacrifice some of the comforts the guests are given (Wong and Lai, 2024). The fixtures can subtract essential water uses per individual and substantially contribute to overall conservation. Moreover, water recycling, including greywater systems, enables a hotel to recycle water from taps, showers, and laundry for landscaping purposes. In this regard, not only fresh water but also the overall watermark of the hotel have decreased. (Abdou et al. 2022) Explained that equally important, intelligent irrigation systems with weather-based controllers and soil moisture sensors can help optimise water usage.

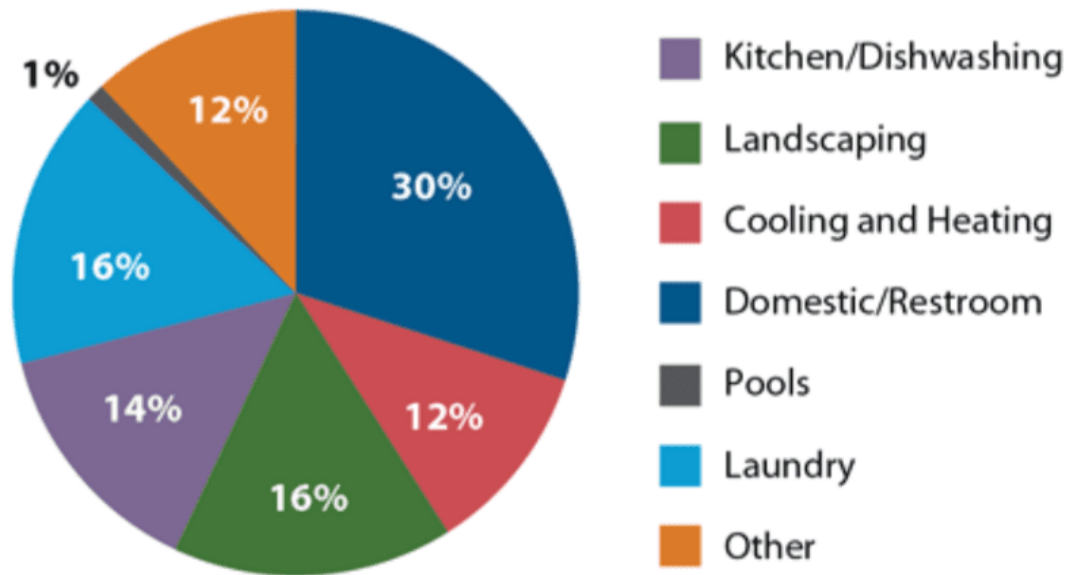


Figure 2: End uses of water in hotels

Source: (Revno, 2022).

This ensures that not only a little is applied, but only the requisite quantity needed by plants, and it is done in an automated manner. Leak detection systems also play a very important role in water conservation. These systems locate leaks and present very visual procedures to rectify them quickly, thereby saving water from being wasted and property from destruction (Abdou et al. 2022). Water conservation involves servicing and repairing water-saving initiatives regularly and in time.

Waste Management

Proper waste management would be a means of achieving eco-certification. The hotels should have a recycling system that ensures waste such as paper, plastic, glass, and metal is put in its proper form of garbage. Recycling bins will be conspicuously marked and placed in various strategic positions to allow for the participation of both staff and guests (Luo and Fan, 2019). Composting offers another great opportunity for organic waste. Hotels can manage food scraps and other biodegradable materials through a compost programme to create nutrient-rich compost for gardening and landscaping.



Figure 3: Managing waste in hotels

Source: (Sen, 2024).

This reduces not only the amount of waste going to landfills but also enriches the soil and advances sustainable landscaping practices. This is followed by the fact that hotels can reduce the production of waste by installing bulk dispensers for toiletries and working towards encouraging repeated use of towels and linens (Hensens, 2016). Hotels can also donate food surpluses, together with any other implements, to local organisations so that they are not wasted but serve society.

Sustainable Procurement

Hotels' desire to attain eco-certification will push them to practice sustainable procurement, which entails the acquisition of goods and services that are not harmful to nature and produced without the violation of human rights (Morales-Contreras et al. 2019). The purchasing approach of hotels should focus on recycled and local products, working with suppliers that uphold sustainable approaches and certifications. The procurement department of the hotel should be able to look for goods and services that are friendly to the environment and produced ethically, including suppliers of the same approach who are certified. Hotels should also be conscious that their food and beverage choices have environmental implications. Foods and beverages that are locally purchased, organic, and in season help reduce the carbon footprint of transportation and boost the local economy (Bostrom et al. 2015). Another key function of procurement will be to feature a vegetarian menu and minimise food waste through a strict menu plan and portion size.

Environmental education and engagement

Hotels have also been advised to create a culture of sustainability among employees and guests to maintain this eco-certification. Training and education regarding environmental practices for employees would help them understand their role in meeting the hotel's sustainability objectives. (DeBoer et al. 2017) explained that guest participation through information materials, in-room notices, and interactive measures will also help inculcate eco-friendly practices during their stay. The hotels can also organise programmes and plan events towards environmental awareness and conservation, for example, beach clean-ups, tree planting activities, or eco-tours. Other than improving customer experiences, such activities are evidence of the hotels' commitment towards sustainability (DeBoer et al. 2017).

Eco-certification is based on a process of continual improvement; consequently, hotels, through periodic evaluation of their environmental performances, identify new areas of improvement and proceed to new initiatives to be assured of the betterment of their sustainability agendas, including identification of new environmental technologies and practices and active participation in industry networks and forums. Regular audits and assessments by certification bodies keep hotels on track for compliance with standards and maintaining certification (Abdou et al. 2020). Transparent reporting and communication of sustainability efforts and achievements can build trust with guests, stakeholders, and the community. The figure below illustrates the environmental inputs and outputs in hotel business operations and operational business processes that influence environmental contamination, in addition to the activities that the hotel must undertake to become an ecologically sustainable hotel.

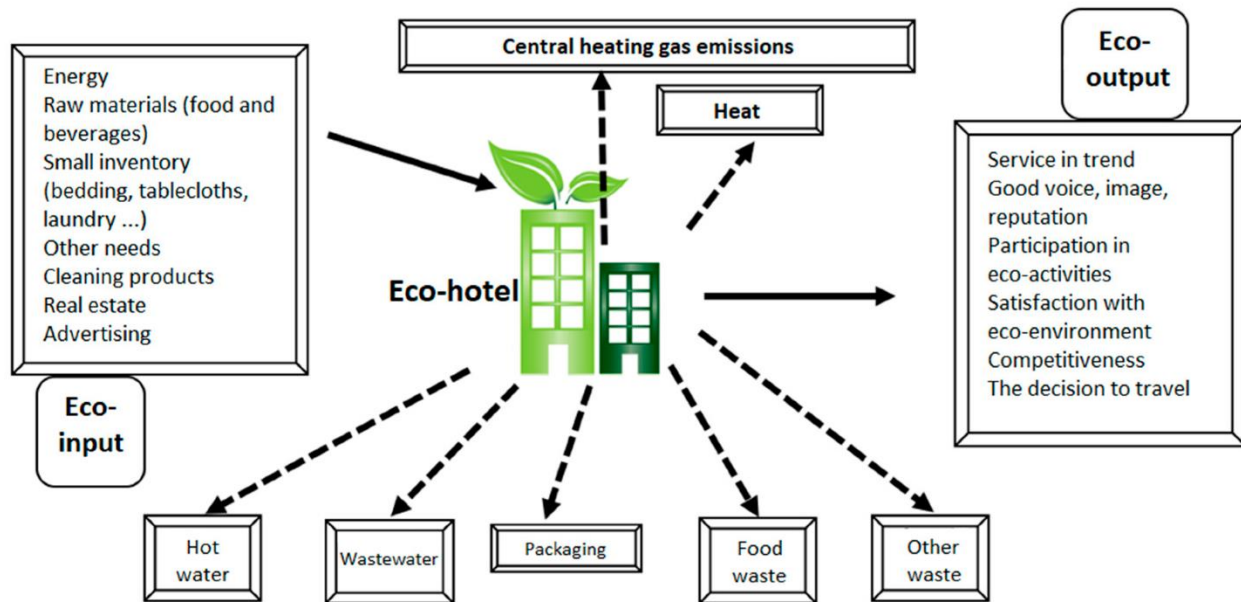


Figure 4: Pollution from business activities and processes in a hotel

Source: (Duric, Potočnik, 2021).

Benefits and challenges associated with integrating sustainability into a hotel's daily operations

Benefits	
Conservation of resources	Hotel sustainability helps a hotel save many resources, including power and gas, by improving the use of energy and water systems. Sustaining natural resources will mean retaining them in the future, hence saving money in the long run. (Melissen et al. 2016)
Reduced environmental impact	For their part, hotels work towards reducing their environmental impacts through sustainable measures. Hotels reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions through minimising waste, recycling, and using eco-friendly products, which helps combat climate change.
Improved operational efficiency	Sustainability initiatives enhance efficiency. Energy management systems optimise heating, cooling, and lighting, reducing unnecessary energy waste and

	increasing hotel efficiency (Kuo et al. 2022). Disposal management and procurement can be streamlined to save resources and materials.
Risk management and regulatory compliance	A hotel's uptake of sustainable principles enables it to achieve set criteria for environmental rehabilitation. This reduces the risk of legal challenges and penalties in the event of non-compliance. Proactive sustainability helps fill or adopt regulation changes claimed to have been affected (Legrand et al., 2022).

Challenges	
Initial investment cost	An issue related to sustainability integration at hotels is the large upfront investment involved. It can be cost-intensive for small hotels or those with low funds to invest in new renewable energy sources, energy-efficient equipment, and total waste management programmes (Robin et al. 2017).
Staff training and development	Sustainable integration must be worker-driven and participative. In other words, both continuous training and education must be provided to help employees understand sustainability and the role they will play. Working with very large or diverse teams means greater difficulty in engaging people and making them aware of sustainability.
Balancing benefits and cost	Sustainability will change long-term costs at the expense of the first cost-benefit equilibrium point (Chandran, Bhattacharya, 2021). Therefore, hotels have to plan and prioritise the effectiveness of operational sustainability initiatives, taking into consideration the achievement of both environmental and financial objectives without sacrificing quality.

Guest participation and continuous improvement	It is hard to make programmes such as towel reuse and recycling universal. Programmes of this sort may appeal to only a few guests. And so, the management of the hotel needs to look for ways in which sustainability can be marketed and customers motivated to participate. Sustainable management is not a one-time affair; it involves monitoring, evaluation, and enhancement periodically (Ullah, 2017). Holding on to eco-certifications and staying up-to-date with sustainable technologies and practices is time-consuming and costly. And in a business that is characterised by change, this can be tough.
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Future of the hotel and hospitality industries

The future of the hotel and hospitality industries will likely be sustainability-oriented. With growing environmental concerns, the hotel industry will have to implement stringent and innovative ways to be sustainable (Legrand et al. 2022). Some of the significant trends and developments expected in the sector include the following:

Technological Advancements

Advanced technologies will be harmonised with sustainability and advanced in a manner that makes a difference. Intelligent energy management systems, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence will efficiently use resources without waste (Zsarnoczky, 2018). Furthermore, innovations in renewable technology, such as more efficient solar panels and energy storage solutions, will make it easier for more hotels to afford sustainable energy sources.

Increased regulatory pressure

Stringent environmental standards and regulations are imminent and likely to be imposed by the government and regulators. Hotels will have to be within the regulatory

framework, which will be a reinforcing factor for the growth of sustainable practices. Proactive hotels will be ahead of regulatory requirements and will be more assured in the transitions they take and in reducing risks (Gursoy, 2018).

Consumer demand for sustainability

With the increased mass consciousness of prevalent environmental issues worldwide, travellers will increasingly make their personal choices based on sustainability. Hotels that can prove real commitments to sustainability through certification, open reporting, and visible activities are attractive to such guests (Luo, Fan, 2019). In this regard, there is likely to be a rise in demand for eco-certified accommodations.

Collaboration and industry standards

Inter-industry collaboration will increase between hotels in defining and adhering to common sustainability parameters. Industry associations and networks can enforce the sharing of good practices, resources, and innovations. Standardised certification and benchmarks shall be established to ensure uniformity and credibility in sustainability efforts.

Holistic sustainability approaches

Future sustainability efforts will likely take a more holistic approach, encompassing not only the environmental but also the social and economic dimensions. Hotels will increasingly look to community engagement, fair labour practices, and local sourcing to deliver environmental and positive social impacts (Kim et al. 2019). This will take a much more comprehensive view in line with broadened definitions of sustainability and corporate social responsibility. According to a poll carried out in 2022, over 40% of corporate travel managers expressed interest in working with hotels that have adopted sustainable practices. For 3.4 percent of respondents, these requirements were not important; however, for 2.7 percent of them, who said they would not use accommodation services from hotels without any sustainability policies, these factors were crucial.

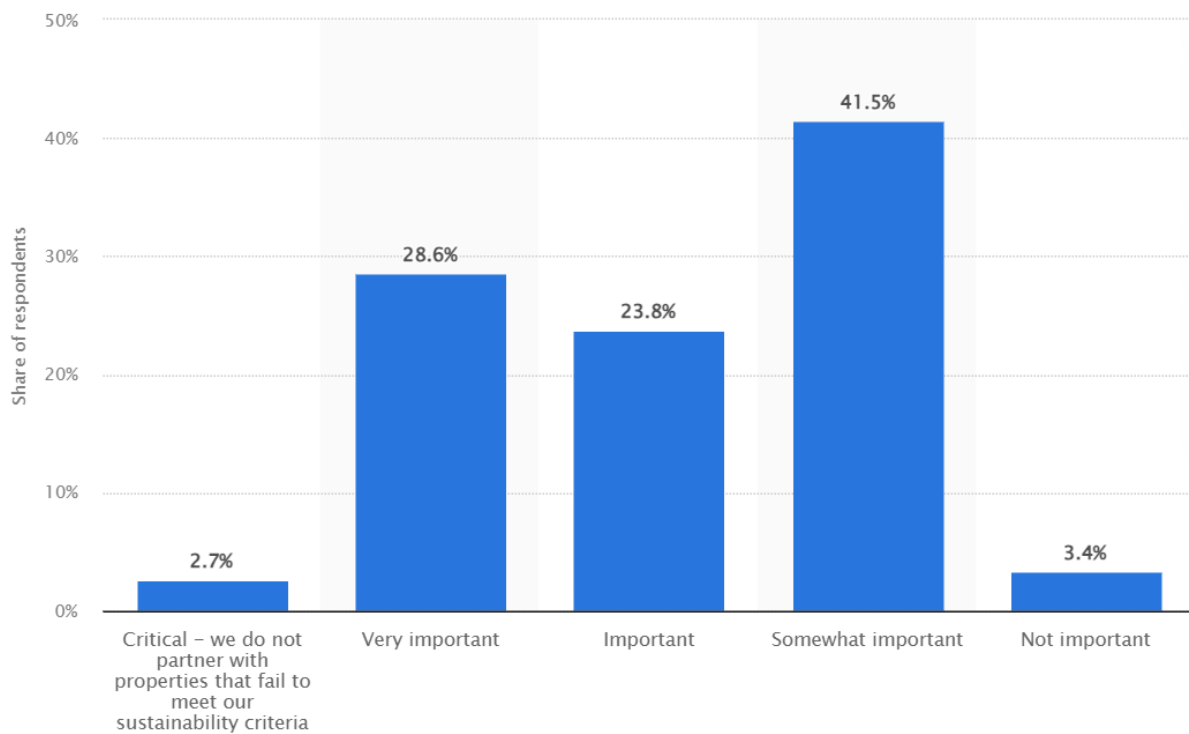


Figure 5: Importance of hotel sustainability for business traveller

Source: (Statista, 2022).

Continuous innovation and adaptation

The hospitality industry must be extremely flexible and creative to keep pace with adjusting technologies, regulations, and changing consumer preferences. Continuous improvement is a must, and hotels will have to revisit and continuously change their sustainability strategies to achieve better results and stay in the competition.

Conclusion

To conclude, it has been examined that integrating sustainability benefits the hotel through conservation of resources, reduction in environmental impact, operational efficiencies, and enhanced reputation. Some challenges will be met, such as the initial investment of costs, engagement with the staff, and guest participation; however, the long-term benefits are much more pronounced. The future of the hotel and hospitality industry lies in better sustainability, driven technologies, and regulatory pressures, if not for consumers demanding such green practices. A practical and innovative holistic

approach to sustainability by hotels will not only accrue eco-certification standards but also contribute more to the susceptible future of the industry.

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