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An Overview of Ecolabels for Small to Medium Sized Tourism Enterprises
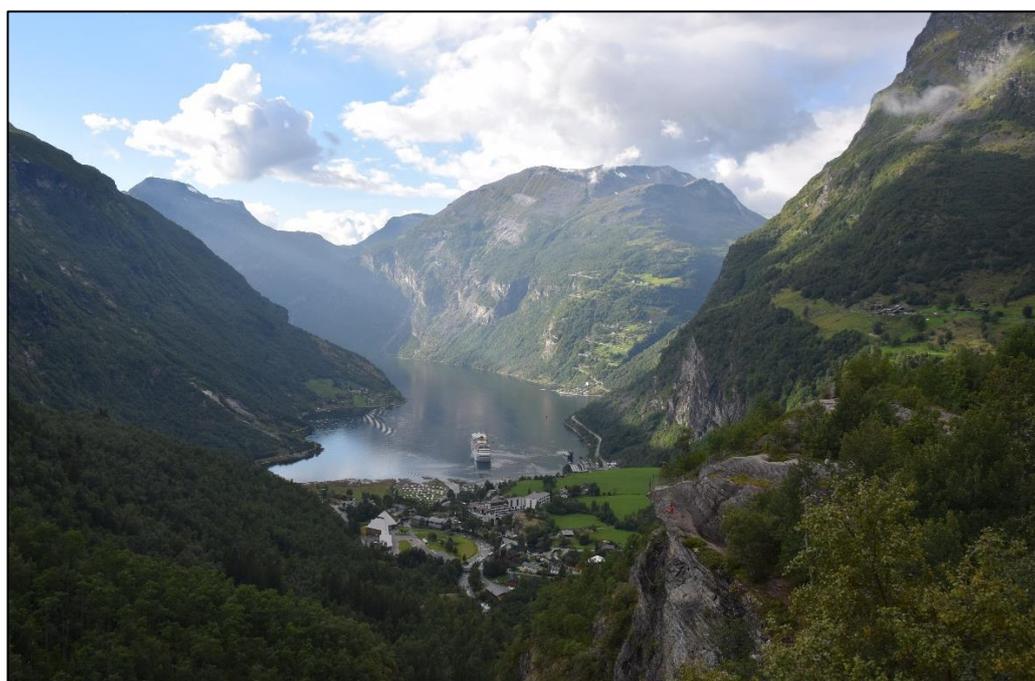
Report

An Overview of Ecolabels for Small to Medium Sized Tourism Enterprises

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Abstract

This report is an excerpt of the report "Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises. What, why and how". (Tippett, Yttredal, & Strand, 2020). It gives an overview of ecolabels for tourism enterprises and is a basis for comparing between them. The aim is to make it easier for small- and medium sized tourism enterprises to choose ecolabels and to certify.

If you wish to have more information about what ecolabelling is, why to certify and pros and cons of ecolabelling, we refer you to the main report.

This report has been produced as part of the Interreg VB project PROWAD LINK, Protect and Prosper: Benefits through linking sustainable growth with nature protection. PROWAD LINK aims to unlock the potential of natural heritage areas as a driver for sustainable development and job growth. The project partners are striving to engage with Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in nature conservation, to develop nature as a brand and create mutual benefits for both SMEs and the environment.

Partners in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands (The Wadden sea World Heritage site), Norway (Geiranger area, northern part of World Heritage site West Norwegian Fjords) and the United Kingdom (The Wash and North Norfolk Coast) are working together to develop sustainable products and services.

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Foreword

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The report is an excerpt of the report "Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises. What, why and how". (Tippett et al., 2020) (https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/sites/default/files/2020_Ecolabel%20report.pdf). It gives an overview of ecolabels for tourism enterprises and is a basis for comparing between them. The aim is to make it easier for small- and medium sized tourism enterprises to choose ecolabels and to certify.

Project partners:

- Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS; DE/DK/NL) *Lead Beneficiary*
- Landesbetrieb für Küstenschutz, Nationalpark und Meeresschutz Schleswig-Holstein / Nationalparkverwaltung (The Schleswig-Holstein Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation / National Park Authority; DE)
- Nationalparkverwaltung Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer (Wadden Sea National Park Authority of Lower Saxony; DE)
- Nationalpark Vadehavet (Danish Wadden Sea National Park; DK)
- Business Region Esbjerg (Business Region Esbjerg; DK)
- Miljø- og Fødevareministeriet, Miljøstyrelsen (Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark, Environmental Protection Agency; DK)
- World Wide Fund for Nature - Deutschland (World Wide Fund for Nature; DE)
- Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet (Norwegian University of Science and Technology; NO)
- Norfolk County Council (Norfolk County Council; UK)
- Rijksuniversiteit Groningen/Campus Fryslân (University of Groningen/Campus Fryslân; NL)
- Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit (Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality; NL)
- Waddenacademie (Wadden Academy; NL)
- Provinsje Fryslân (Province of Friesland; NL)
- Gemeente Ameland (Municpality of Ameland; NL)

Our thanks are also extended to all of the ecolabelling bodies who provided key input for the report.

The project team of Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Norway:

Else Ragni Yttredal   *Arron Wilde Tippet*   *Øivind Strand*

December, 2020

Executive Summary

This report gives an overview of a substantial proportion of relevant ecolabels for small and medium sized tourism enterprises – especially pertaining to the PROWAD LINK project countries Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, England and Norway. The aim of the overview is to make it easier for small tourism businesses to choose which ecolabel suits their purpose. The ecolabels in the overview were chosen out of over 400 ecolabels from the Ecolabel Index[1] and Destinet[2] websites as well as ecolabels identified by partner organisations within the PROWAD LINK project.

Best ecolabel to choose depends on business traits and goals, marketing strategies and more generally what the business is looking for. Ecolabels vary substantially in how they are developed, managed, the criteria they assess, their emphasis, costs and more. Certain ecolabel characteristics, however, can be used to compare and contrast them. Some key questions are listed below:

- What are the environmental and social focus of the ecolabel, and are these in line with what should be in focus of the enterprises' work toward sustainability?
- What types of business can the ecolabel certify?
- What is the geographical scope of the ecolabel?
- What are the monetary and human resource costs of certification and recertification?
- How trustworthy is the ecolabel, was it developed by a well-known body?
- How recognisable is the ecolabel for the business' main market?
- How many products/services does the ecolabel have?
- How does the ecolabel fit into the business image?

This report is an excerpt of the report "Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises. What, why and how". (Tippett et al., 2020). To have more background information about what ecolabelling is, why to certify and pros and cons of ecolabelling, we refer you to the main report.

5 tips on ecolabelling

The background information leads us to give 5 tips on ecolabelling:

1. Ecolabel to:
   a. Learn about and improve sustainability of your business
   b. Learn how to cut expenses on for instance energy
   c. Improve your sustainability routines
   d. Give your business credibility
2. If your aim is to get market advantages of an ecolabel, make sure that the ecolabel fits your market. Check the list of ecolabels for tourism businesses and then the label thoroughly.
3. If your aim is to have a more sustainable business strategy, make sure that the ecolabel fits your company's line of business and your sustainability aims. Check the list of ecolabels for tourism businesses and then the label thoroughly.
4. Do not expect ecolabelling to lead to higher prices for your products or attract more customers unless the ecolabel is part of a totality of branding and marketing
5. For hotels or other tourism businesses in longer value chains, ecolabels give credibility and may lead to new contracts.

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[1] Ecolabel Index (http://www.ecolabelindex.com/) is the largest database of ecolabels covering over 400 ecolabels across the globe.
[2] Destinet (https://destinet.eu/) is an EU funded Sustainable Tourism knowledge hub, which includes a database of tourism ecolabels.

An overview of ecolabels covering tourism businesses

Following is an overview of different ecolabels covering tourism businesses. The aim of the overview is to make it easier for small tourism businesses to choose which ecolabel suits their purpose. The ecolabels in the overview were chosen out of over 400 ecolabels from the Ecolabel Index and Destinet websites as well as ecolabels identified by partner organisations within the PROWAD LINK project. Two criteria were used to pick the ecolabels presented in this report:

- Geographical Scope, only ecolabels who have a presence in the PROWAD LINK member countries United Kingdom, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands and Norway were included.
- The ecolabel can be used to certify a company or service directly related to the tourism industry (this excludes products, such as food and drinks that are produced in the PROWAD LINK geographical area).

Key information

To assess which ecolabel is suitable for a company, there is a need to have some key information about the label. Such information could be about the label's line of business, geographical scope, costs of certification and credibility to mention a few. Below we present what we perceive as key information for tourism enterprises. The information is further incorporated into the overview of ecolabels in the following section.

Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body

The ecolabel awarding institution may say something about the credibility of the label. Such awarding institutions can be of several types:

- For-Profit: private businesses, or business representation bodies, set up ecolabels to fit the needs of their customers, or members.
- Not-For-Profit: Non-government organisations, such as charities, set up ecolabels to address certain environmental or social issues important to their members.
- Governmental: Individual countries, or groups of countries, produce an ecolabel that can be used on products or services within that country, or region.
- Industry bodies
- National Park Authorities

Darnall, Ji, and Vázquez-Brust (2018) showed that consumers trust both governmental and non-governmental environmental organisations' awarding institutions over those governed by private business.

Geographical Scope

The geographical scope of an ecolabel is important as it indicates in which countries (with a focus on the countries participating in the project, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom) it is possible to obtain the ecolabel as well as indicating whether customers in a region will recognize an ecolabel.

Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel

Ecolabels for the tourism industry cover a wide range of areas, including:

- The tourist destination (a specific town or city, a national park or specified region)
- Accommodation providers, hotels, campsites, serviced apartments
- Restaurants
- Shops
- Transport

- Tourist activities

- and others

Ecolabels either focus on a specific area of the tourism industry, such as hotels or they may try to capture the whole tourism industry.

Cost

Knowledge about the cost of ecolabelling will be of importance to assess pros and cons of ecolabelling. The cost of ecolabel certification is often dependent on the type of tourism enterprise or activity, the size of the enterprise (employees, turnover, number of rooms in a hotel) and how often the certification needs renewed. Additional costs can include the daily/hourly costs of an audit to determine whether an enterprise has passed the ecolabel certification requirements. In this report, the costs for an enterprise to be certified for three years is included, unless otherwise stated.

Time to Achieve Certification

The length of the application process is an important factor for SMEs as time is a valuable resource. A short application process can allow for quick certification but could also indicate that the ecolabel is not scrupulous enough with their assessment criteria. Whereas, an extensive assessment may involve a site audit which may add additional costs to certification.

Period of recertification

Ecolabels have varying durations of certification from one to four years. The shorter the length of certification the more often an SME will have to invest both time and money for recertification. However, if an SME is focussed on continual improvement, regular recertification may be desirable.

Ease of access to Ecolabel Documentation

Important ecolabel documentation, such as the application criteria and costs can be freely available online or accessible after the applicant initiates the application process - which can take some effort. Poor ease of access means that documentation is unavailable and perhaps an application is required to gain access. Medium ease of access indicates that some documentation is available and excellent ease of access is used for ecolabel websites containing full relevant documentation.

Verification of Ecolabel Applications

Whether or not a product, service, or other, is verified by a third or second party is important as it provides legitimacy to the ecolabel. Third party verification by an accredited independent (from the ecolabel) verifier is the most rigorous type of verification. Rigorous verification ensures that ecolabels maintain a high standard and can prevent greenwashing. Second Party verification is carried out by the ecolabelling organisation and First Party is where the business applying for the ecolabel verifies themselves, this is the least rigorous type of verification.

Ecolabel Certification Criteria

Ecolabel certification criteria can cover environmental, social, economic and cultural aspects of a business and can number between 12 to 185 specific criteria. In this report, Ecolabels have been assessed for inclusion of criteria relating to a broad range of aspects which may be of interest to tourism enterprises. Those reading the report are encouraged to check which criteria of interest to them are included by the Ecolabels and to contact these ecolabels directly for more information.

General Management/Governance Criteria

Criteria in this category include those prescribing strategies, policies, adherence to legislation at the top tier of an enterprise.

Greenhouse Gas emissions

Criteria in this category include reporting Greenhouse Gas emissions, for example through the use of a carbon footprint.

Other Pollutants

Criteria in this category include reporting emissions of pollutants aside from Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

Energy Consumption

Criteria in this category include those which prescribe implementing an energy management plan, using green energy and reducing energy use.

Water Consumption

Criteria in this category include those which prescribe implementing a water management plan or reducing water use.

Wastewater Management

Criteria in this category are those that specifically mention wastewater management.

Waste Management

Criteria in this category are those relating to how enterprises manage waste and recycling.

Transport

Criteria in this category include those relating to sustainable transport options for hotel guests, for example.

Wildlife Conservation, biodiversity, ecosystems

Criteria in this category are those that address issues of conservation, such as wildlife protection, biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation.

Communication strategy

Criteria that fall into this category are those prescribing that communication of an enterprise's sustainability endeavors are communicated to customers and other stakeholders.

Staff Training

Criteria that fall into this category are those prescribing the training of staff in some aspect of Sustainability.

Societal Benefits

Criteria that measure how much an enterprise engages with, and assists, local communities.

Cultural Respect

Criteria that protect or promote local culture, such as including local art in hotel design and furnishings.

Food Supply Chain (fair-trade, local or organic)

Criteria that fall into this category include those requiring purchased food to be either local or certified fair-trade or organic.

Other Supply Chain Certified

Criteria that fall into this category include requiring the whole, or part of the supply chain to have achieved environmental certification, for example, all toiletries purchased should be EU Ecolabel, or equivalent, certified.

Economic Sustainability

Criteria that fall into this category include requiring an enterprise to report their financial performance and requiring an enterprise to support local entrepreneurship.

Number of Businesses (Products) Awarded to

An indication of an ecolabel's success with both enterprises and consumers can be the number of registered certifications. The unit of certification in a label varies. It can be destinations, enterprises, products or services or a mix of these.

Ecolabel Development: Recognised Standards followed?

The majority of ecolabels follow a set of international standards to develop the criteria they use to assess businesses/products/services for qualification. International standards can be used to improve the transparency of ecolabels and accountability of the organisations who have developed the ecolabel. If the labels adhere to international standards, they will in general refer to one of the following:

GSTC

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) was set up by UN-agencies in collaboration with non-governmental organisations and national/provincial governments. GSTC has developed international standards for certification in the tourism Industry. GSTC sets out criteria across four pillars: Sustainable management, socioeconomic impacts, cultural impacts and environmental impacts.[3] Several tourism ecolabels are accredited by GSTC, which means that they follow the GSTC criteria or a similar set of criteria. Tourism Enterprises can also choose to be certified directly under GSTC; this can be done through a third-party verifier.[4]

ISO

The International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) is an independent, non-governmental organisation which has developed 23043 different standards across most industries since 1947[5]. Three important, interrelated, ISO standards for SMEs in the tourism industry are the ISO 14001, for Environmental Management Systems, ISO 9001, for Quality Management and ISO 26000 for Corporate Social Responsibility.

ISO 14001[6]

The ISO 14001 for Environmental Management Systems is referred to by several tourism ecolabels, particularly those with certification for accommodation, as most of them require some form of environmental management system in place as part of the qualifying criteria.

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[3] More information on the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC): https://www.gstcouncil.org/about/about-us/

[4] More information on direct certification by the GSTC https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/become-certified-hotel/

[5] More information on the International Standards Organisation (ISO): https://www.iso.org/home.html

[6] More information on ISO 14001: https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html

ISO 9001[7]

ISO 14001 is often combined with the ISO 9001 standard for Quality Management Systems as the two standards complement one another. ISO 9001 sets requirements around an organisation's need to prove its ability to deliver products or services that meet customer and regulatory requirements and to improve customer satisfaction through effective implementation of the system.

ISO 26000[8]

The third ISO standard that tourism ecolabels may refer to is ISO 26000 for Corporate Social responsibility (CSR). This standard provides guidelines, not requirements, on how an organisation can be responsible in accordance with society's needs.

Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)

Ecolabels are awarded at least two ways: a pass/fail; or a tiered approach where a pass is divided into different levels of achievement to encourage continual improvement.

Tourism Ecolabels

Following is a presentation of 20 ecolabels (including 3 Environmental Management Systems) perceived most relevant to small and medium tourism enterprises in the PROWAD LINK partner areas and other protected areas. They are presented in alphabetical order.

Table 1 and 2 provide a summary of these 20 ecolabels and is arranged in descending order by the number of Areas of Tourism covered by each ecolabel.

All information in the following tables has been gathered directly from ecolabel websites and direct correspondence with the ecolabelling bodies.

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[7] More information on ISO 9001: https://www.iso.org/iso-9001-quality-management.html
[8] More information on ISO 26000: https://www.iso.org/iso-26000-social-responsibility.html

Table 1: Summary table of main characteristics of Tourism Ecolabels. All the information has been gathered between January and March 2020, therefore specific details, such as costs may have changed. [Gov. = Government, FP = For Profit, NP = Not for Profit, NI = No Information, Var = Variable, * = excluding auditing costs, + = ISO plus GSTC and EMAS, ᵃ = Can be 3ʳᵈ or 2ⁿᵈ party certified, ᵇ = 2ⁿᵈ party certified.]

	Scope		Cost		Other Characteristics				Areas of Tourism Covered											
	Europe/Global	Limited	Minimum 3 Year Cost (Euros)	Months to achieve	Based on:	Awarding Body	3ʳᵈ Party Verified	Businesses Certified	Accommodation	Activities	Attractions	Events	Food & Drink	Marinas	Other Tourism Bus.	Supply Chain	Tour Operators	Tourism Offices	Tourism Shops	Transport
EMAS	Eur		Var.	12	ISO	Gov.	Yes	3694	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ISO 14001:2015	Glob		Var.	NI	ISO	NP	Yes	300000	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Earthcheck	Glob		5100*	6-12	GSTC	FP	Yes	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Biosphere	Eur		600*	1	GSTC	NP	Yes	216	x	x	x	x	x				x		x	x
Green Globe	Glob		1950*	3-6	ISO	FP	Yes	132	x	x	x	x	x		x				x	x
National Park Partnership Programme		DE	150*	3-6	Other	Gov.	Yesᵃ	1400	x	x	x		x		x			x		x
Green Tourism		UK	591*	Var.	NI	NP	Yes	2415	x	x	x	x						x	x	
Ecotourism Norway		NO	585*	3-12	Other	Gov.	Noᵇ	15	x	x	x		x		x		x			
Eco-Lighthouse		NO	828*	2-3	NI	NP	Yes	5300	x	x		x	x							x
The Green Key	Glob		1500*	Var.	GSTC	NP	Yes	3100	x		x	x	x				x			
Nordic Swan		NO, DK	9000	3-6	ISO	Gov.	Yes	25000	x			x	x			x	x			
Tourcert	Glob		6800	8	ISO+	FP	Yes	340	x							x	x			
Certified Green Hotel		DE	7500*	1	NI	FP	Yes	107	x			x								
Dehoga		DE	715*	NI	NI	FP	Yes	120	x				x							
Global Sustainable Tourism Council	Glob		Var.	NI	GSTC	NP	Yes	>5000	x								x			
NEPCon	Glob		6640	4-6	GSTC	NP	Yes	90	x								x			
EU Ecolabel	Eur		1400*	2	ISO	Gov.	Yes	77358	x											
Green Sign		DE, NE	2370*	1.5	ISO+	FP	Yes	225	x											
Travelife	Glob		960*	1	GSTC	FP	Yes	975	x											
Green Table		DE	240	0.5	NI	NP	Yes	90					x							

Table 2: Common qualifying criteria covered by each ecolabel. Criteria are for accommodation except for the Green Table certification, which focusses on Restaurants. *Full details of criteria cannot be accessed without submission of an application to the ecolabelling body.

	Common Qualifying Criteria for Tourism Ecolabels																
	Number of criteria covered	General Management/ Governance	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Other pollutants	Energy Consumption	Water Consumption	Wastewater Management	Waste Management	Transport	Wildlife, Biodiversity, Ecosystems Conservation	Communication strategy	Staff training	Societal benefits	Cultural Respect	Food Supply Chain (fair-trade, local or organic)	Other Supply Chain Certified	Economic Sustainability
EMAS	12*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	NI	x	x	x
Earthcheck	70	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	x
Biosphere	17*	NI	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Green Globe	40	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x
National Park Partnership Programme	41	x	NI	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	NI	NI	x	x	NI
Green Tourism	18*	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI
Ecotourism Norway	99	x	No	x	x	x	NI	x	x	x	NI	NI	NI	x	x	x	NI
Eco-Lighthouse	152	x	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	NI	NI	NI	x	x	NI
The Green Key	144	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nordic Swan	78	x	NI	NI	x	x	NI	x	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	x	x	NI
Tourcert	89	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Certified Green Hotel	80	NI	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	x	NI	x	NI	NI
Dehoga Umweltcheck	14*	NI	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	x	NI	NI
NEPCon	185	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	NI	NI
EU Ecolabel	44	x	NI	NI	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	x	x	No	x	x	NI
Green Sign	92	x	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	NI	x	NI	NI	x	x
Travelife	128	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI
Green Table	12*	NI	x	NI	x	x	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	x	NI	NI
Global Sustainable Tourism Council	168	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ISO 14001	NI**	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NI	NI	x	x	NI

Biosphere Responsible Tourism

BIOSPHERE

The Biosphere Responsible Tourism ecolabel covers businesses across Europe and the Americas. It was founded in 1999 by the Responsible Tourism Institute, a non-profit organisation with links to both UNESCO and the European Union. The Biosphere ecolabel can be applied to both destinations, tourism companies, such as hotels and shops, as well as cultural and historic sites of interest. Biosphere is relatively low cost to SMEs, costing a minimum of 200 Euros per year and taking 1 month or more to achieve certification but does require annual renewal. Biosphere follows the GSTC International Standard, which implies that it covers a range of environmental, social, economic and cultural issues. An additional benefit of Biosphere certification is that they offer their customers support in terms of training opportunities in Sustainability and assistance with developing a marketing strategy. Despite Biosphere's large geographical coverage, it has only certified 216 business.

Ecolabel	Biosphere Responsible Tourism
Established	1999
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Non-Profit, Responsible Tourism Institute, Spain
Website	https://www.biospheretourism.com/en
Geographical Scope	Europe and South America
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Active Tourism, Campsites, Catering Services, Convention Centres, Destinations, Golf, Events, Holiday Rentals, Hotels, Museums, Shops, Sites of Tourist Interest, Theme Parks, Tour Operators, Transport
Cost	600 Euros minimum for 3 years (excluding any additional auditing costs) https://www.biospheretourism.com/en/biosphere-certification/83
Time to Achieve Certification	1 month plus
Duration of Certification	Annual Renewal
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	17 (only main categories are communicated by Biosphere, the submission of an application is required to access full criteria)
Focus of Criteria	Broad range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation cultural, economic, environmental, social issues covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	216
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC Accredited
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Tiered and Pass/Fail
Extras	Training and Marketing benefits

Certified Green Hotel

The Certified Green Hotel ecolabel covers hotels, apartments, events and conference ships across Germany. It is a for-profit Ecolabel governed by the Association of German Travel Management. It is a relatively high cost ecolabel at 2500 Euros per year, but it can take less than one month to achieve certification, which lasts for 3 years. Multiple environmental and social criteria are covered by this ecolabel, but it is not clear whether international standards were used in its development. 107 businesses have been certified as Green Hotels across Germany and, as customers, they have gained access to assistance with marketing as offered by the ecolabel.

Ecolabel	Certified Green Hotel
Established	2011
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For-Profit, Association of German Travel Management
Website	https://www.certified.de/
Geographical Scope	Germany
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Hotels, Serviced Apartments, Event Locations, Conference Ships
Cost	7500 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs)
Time to Achieve Certification	Less than 1 month
Duration of Certification	3 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	80
Focus of Criteria	Focus on Environmental issues (excluding wildlife/biodiversity) with some socio-economic issues covered, such as green supply chain
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	107
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	No standards followed – used expert advice to develop ecolabel
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Tiered: Good, Very Good, Excellent
Extras	Marketing Benefits

Dehoga Umweltcheck

The Dehoga Umweltcheck (environmental check), established in 2006, is an Ecolabel targeted at SMEs in the hospitality industry in Germany to give them a cheaper alternative to expensive Environmental Management Systems, such as ISO 14001 and EMAS. It falls under the umbrella of the Viabono GmbH, a private enterprise which administers its own ecolabels but also provides administrative support to several different ecolabels in the German Tourism sector. Dehoga Umweltcheck does not follow an International Standard as such but takes elements of ISO 14001, in terms of monitoring of energy, water and waste, and ISO 26000, in terms of an environmentally and socially responsible supply chain. It is a low-cost ecolabel at 250 – 450 Euros (plus an extra tariff per restaurant seat or hotel room) for 2 years certification. Dehoga Umweltcheck has certified 120 German businesses to date and offers assistance with marketing in addition to certification.

Ecolabel	Dehoga Umweltcheck
Established	2006
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For Profit Viabono GmbH Germany
Website	https://www.dehoga-umweltcheck.de/
Geographical Scope	Germany
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Hotels, Restaurants
Cost	715 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs) * * for a 10 room hotel. https://www.dehoga-umweltcheck.de/kosten.html
Time to Achieve Certification	No Information
Duration of Certification	2 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Excellent
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	14 (only main categories are communicated by Dehoga; the submission of an application is required to access full criteria)
Focus of Criteria	Focus on Environmental issues (excluding wildlife/biodiversity)
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	over 120
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Hybrid, EMS plus Green/Ethical supply chain
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Tiered - Bronze, Silver, Gold
Extras	Assistance with marketing

Earthcheck

EARTHCHECK

Earthcheck is an ecolabel with global coverage. Established in Australia back in 1997, Earthcheck is governed by a for-profit enterprise which offers certification across the tourism sector. Earthcheck is GSTC accredited and thus covers a range of environmental, social, economic, and cultural criteria. It is a high cost ecolabel, with a minimum annual fee of 1700 Euros and a certification process that can take between 6-12 months. Information about Earthcheck has poor availability as an application is required to obtain details on qualifying criteria.

Ecolabel	Earthcheck
Established	1997
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For-profit – Earthcheck, Australia
Website	https://earthcheck.org/
Geographical Scope	Global
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Accommodation, Activities, Administrative Offices, Aerial Cableways, Airlines, Airports, Attractions, Beverage Producers, Buildings, Casinos, Catering Services, Convention Centres, Communities (Towns, Cities, Precincts), Cruise Liners, Cruise Vessel, Destinations, Display and Retail, Exhibition Halls, Farm stays, Golf Courses, Laundry Facilities, Marinas, Railways, Restaurants, Spas, Theme Parks, Tour Companies, Tour Operators, Trailer Parks, Vehicles, Vehicle Rentals, Vineyard, Visitor Centres, Wineries.
Cost	5100 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs)* *prices may have changed
Time to Achieve Certification	6-12 months (can include onsite auditing)
Duration of Certification	1-2 years depending on risk associated with a company's environmental impact.
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor – application required
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party by accredited verifier
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	70
Focus of Criteria	Wide range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation cultural, economic, Environmental, Social issues covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	Information not available
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC accredited
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Tiered approach offering Benchmarked, Silver, Gold, Platinum.
Extras	No Information

Eco-lighthouse

Eco-lighthouse is a Norwegian ecolabel that is able to certify a wide range of businesses both inside and outside of the tourism industry. It is a not for profit Ecolabel that was set up by the business community in collaboration with local/national Government. Eco-lighthouse is another type of Environmental Management System with multiple social and environmental qualifying criteria, specific to a variety of industries. Over 5300 certificates have been issues by Eco-lighthouse at an annual cost of 158 Euros (excluding 354 Euros minimum establishment fee). It takes around 2 to 3 months to achieve certification which lasts for 3 years.

Ecolabel	Eco-Lighthouse
Established	1996
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not for Profit - Local/National Government & Business Partnership, Norway
Website	http://www.eco-lighthouse.org/
Geographical Scope	Norway
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Activities, Basic Overnight Accommodation, Catering, Conferences, Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes, Transport Companies,
Cost	828 Euros NOK minimum for 3 years (excluding any additional auditing costs)
Time to Achieve Certification	2 to 3 months
Duration of Certification	3 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Medium
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	152
Focus of Criteria	Focus on environmental issues (excluding wildlife/biodiversity) with some socio-economic issues covered, such as green supply chain
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	5300 valid certificates
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	EMS but not as extensive as ISO 14001
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	No Information

Ecotourism Norway

The Ecotourism Norway ecolabel is a not-for-profit ecolabel for a range of tourism businesses in Norway, including accommodation, tourism activities and food and drink. Founded in 2008 by Innovation Norway, it is now administered by Hanen, the Norwegian Rural Industry Representation Organisation. It is a low-cost ecolabel at around 585 Euros for 3 years certification and can take 3 months to a 1 year to achieve certification. However, only 14 businesses are currently certified by Ecotourism Norway and the certification is not based on any International Standards and businesses are 2nd part verified (verified by Hanen) rather than 3rd party verified (by a separate organisation).

Ecolabel	Ecotourism Norway
Established	2008
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Governmental, Innovation Norway
Website	https://norsk-okoturisme.hanen.no/
Geographical Scope	Norway
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Activities, Bed and Breakfast, Farm Production, Meetings and Events, Farm Stay, Food and Refreshments, Boating Adventure
Cost	585 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs)
Time to Achieve Certification	3-12 months
Duration of Certification	4 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Medium - some documentation accessible online
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	2nd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	99
Focus of Criteria	Focus on environmental issues, including wildlife/biodiversity, socio-economic issues such as supply chain also covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	14 Businesses
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	No information
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing and networking benefits

EU Ecolabel

The EU Ecolabel is a well-established (1992) ecolabel with Europe wide Geographical Coverage. It is equivalent to the Nordic Swan and is governed by the European Commission. Accommodation and consumer products (food and other) can be certified by the EU Ecolabel and with over 77,000 products certified and 385 tourism businesses. It is a reasonable cost ecolabel, costing 350 Euros to join and 350 Euros per year, with certification taking 2 months minimum to complete and lasting between 2 and 4 years. The EU Ecolabel follows the ISO 14020 for products and covers a range of environmental criteria but no social criteria.

Ecolabel	EU Ecolabel (Nordic Swan for Norway and Denmark)
Established	1992
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Governmental, European Commission
Website	https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/
Geographical Scope	Europe, including non-EU countries
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Tourist Accommodation, Campsite Services Consumer Products (food and other)
Cost	1400 Euros for three years (micro-Enterprise) 2850 Euros for three years (SMEs) (excluding any additional auditing costs). https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/eu-ecolabel_fees.pdf
Time to Achieve Certification	2 months minimum
Duration of Certification	2-4 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor - Documentation is accessible on request
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party by accredited verifier
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	44
Focus of Criteria	Strong focus on environmental issues (excluding wildlife/biodiversity), some socio-economic issues, such as supply chain, also included
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	Tourism - 358 Licenses (385) Overall 1,623 licences (77,358) 2019 figures
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Followed ISO 14020, ISO/IEC Guide 65
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Certification is Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing benefits (Digital Toolkit)

European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme

The European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), established in 1995, is a type of Environmental Management System (EMS) which can be third party verified. It was developed by Governmental Bodies, including the European Commission and DG Environment. 3694 Businesses across 12664 sites have been awarded EMAS certification, which can take around 1 year to achieve. Certification can last 2 years for SMEs and the costs of certification are dependent on the fees charged by the third-party verifier.

Ecolabel	European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)
Established	1995
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Governmental, DG Environment, European Commission, Austria
Website	ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/emas_for_you/
Geographical Scope	EU, including Norway
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Any Type of Business or Organisation
Cost	No details emashelpdesk@adelphi.de
Time to Achieve Certification	1-year internal process
Duration of Certification	Up to 2 years for SMEs
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Medium
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd Party Verified
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	12 broad categories of criteria
Focus of Criteria	Focus on the setting up of an Environmental Management System, broad range of criteria covered, excluding cultural and social aspects
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	3694 Businesses across 12664 sites
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	ISO 14001
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	emashelpdesk@adelphi.de
Extras	No Information

Green Globe

Green Globe is another ecolabel with global coverage. It was established in 1993 by the for-profit, Green Globe Certification, USA. Green Globe can certify businesses across the tourism industry, from accommodation to transportation. 132 businesses, mostly in Germany and the Netherlands, have been certified across Europe. Annual membership fees for Green Globe is a minimum of 650 Euros and it takes between 3-6 months to obtain certification. Multiple environmental and social criteria are assessed by Green Globe during certification and they communicate that they use ISO 14020 to develop the ecolabel.

Ecolabel	Green Globe
Established	1993
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For-profit, Green Globe Certification, USA
Website	https://greenglobe.com/
Geographical Scope	Global
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Attraction, Business (Whole Sale / Retail), Congress Centre, Meeting Venues, Cruise Ships (River & Ocean), Golf Course, Hotel & Resort, Meeting & Events, Organization, Restaurant, Spa, Health Centre, Transportation (Mass Transportation, Bus, Company, Limousine Service, Car Rental), Travel Industry (Tour Operators, Destination Management Company, Meeting & Incentive Industry)
Cost	1950 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs) https://greenglobe.com/contact-in-your-region/
Time to Achieve Certification	3-6 months (onsite audit required)
Duration of Certification	1
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor - registration required
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	40
Focus of Criteria	Broad range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation cultural, economic, environmental, social issues covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	132 in Europe, most prominent in Germany and Netherlands, less so in Denmark, Norway and UK
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC accredited
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Certified, Gold and Platinum
Extras	Marketing and Networking benefits

Green Key

The Green Key is a not-for-profit ecolabel administered by the Foundation for Environmental Education since 1994. It is most popular in the Netherlands and Denmark, at least in Europe, and has certified over 3100 businesses across 66 countries. A range of tourism businesses can be certified by the Green key and comes at a reasonable cost of between 500 and 1000 Euros. Green Key follows the GSTC standard and thus covers environmental, social, economic and cultural criteria. Certification is required annually for the first 2 years and then at 3-year intervals.

Ecolabel	The Green Key
Established	1994
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Non-Profit, Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Denmark
Website	https://www.greenkey.global/
Geographical Scope	Global, most prominent in Netherlands and Denmark.
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Attractions, Conference Centres, Restaurants, Campsite and Holiday Parks, Hotels and Hostels, Small Accommodation, Supply Chain
Cost	1500 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs) https://www.greenkey.global/costs-policies
Time to Achieve Certification	Varies, some countries have a fixed length of time for the certification process (onsite audit required).
Duration of Certification	1 year (for 1st two years then certified for 3-year periods)
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Application required
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party verified
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	144
Focus of Criteria	Full range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	Over 3100 across 66 countries
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC accredited
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Certification is Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing Benefits (Links to online booking companies)

Green Sign

The Green Sign Ecolabel is a for-profit ecolabel administered by the German company GreenLine Hotels GmbH. 225 Hotels have been certified by Green Sign across Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and Poland. Green Sign follows the GSTC standard and thus cover a range of environmental, social, economic and cultural qualification criteria. Certification comes at a minimum cost of 2370 Euros and lasts for 3 years.

Ecolabel	Green Sign
Established	No Information
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For Profit, GreenLine Hotels GmbH, Germany
Website	https://www.greensign.de/zertifizierung
Geographical Scope	Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Poland
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Hotels
Cost	2370 Euros minimum for 3 years (excluding any additional auditing costs) https://www.greensign.de/images/PDF/infracert_antragsformulare_01_2019_GreenSign_en.pdf
Time to Achieve Certification	6 weeks
Duration of Certification	3 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	92
Focus of Criteria	Focus on environmental criteria, excluding wildlife/biodiversity, with some coverage of socio-economic criteria
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	225
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Incorporates ISO 14001, EMAS, ISO 26000 and GSTC
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Tiered Approach
Extras	Marketing and Networking benefits

Green Table

greentable®

Green Table is a relatively new ecolabel, established in 2015, which focusses on German Restaurants. Green Table is a not-for-profit ecolabel which has certified 90 restaurants to date. It was not developed using internationally recognised standards, rather using guidance from the Sustainable Restaurant Association. Multiple environmental and Social criteria are covered by the ecolabel and certification can take just 2 weeks. The cost of Green Table is the lowest of all ecolabels at 60 to 180 Euros per year and certification lasts 3 years. Green table is not 3rd part verified, rather a desk study is carried out by Green Table to assess restaurants.

Ecolabel	Green Table
Established	2015
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not-for-profit Green Table, Germany
Website	https://www.greentable.de/restaurants/
Geographical Scope	Germany
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Restaurants
Cost	240 Euros for 3 years https://www.greentable.de/restaurants/
Time to Achieve Certification	2 weeks
Duration of Certification	3 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	2nd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	12
Focus of Criteria	Focus on environmental criteria with some socio-economic issues covered, for example around local/Fairtrade supply chains
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	90
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Sustainable Restaurant Association Standards
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing benefits

Green Tourism

The Green Tourism Business Scheme is a not-for-profit ecolabel administered by Green Business UK since 1997. It covers a wide range of tourism businesses in the United Kingdom and Ireland and had certified 2415 businesses in 2011. Green Tourism makes reference to ISO 14020 standards in its literature, but it is not clear if a specific international standard was followed to develop this ecolabel, however 3rd party verification is required to achieve certification. The online application process means that time required to achieve certification is dependent upon the business being certified. The certification fees are relatively low at between 150 and 650 GBP (excluding the 75 GBP registration fee) and annual renewal is required.

Ecolabel	Green Tourism Business Scheme
Established	1997
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not for Profit, Green Business UK
Website	www.green-tourism.com
Geographical Scope	United Kingdom and Ireland
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Attractions, Activity Providers, Bed & Breakfast, Conferences/Events, Corporate Offices, Guest Houses, Holiday Parks, Hostels, Hotels, Restaurants and Pubs, Retail, Self-Catering, Serviced Apartments, Serviced Accommodation, Venues
Cost	591 Euros for three years http://www.green-tourism.com/fees
Time to Achieve Certification	Online Application (no onsite audit)
Duration of Certification	Annual renewal
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Poor - Application required
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd Party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	18 broad categories of criteria
Focus of Criteria	Wide range of criteria covered but less focus on economic sustainability
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	2415 (2011 figure)
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	No Information
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Tiered Bronze, Silver, Gold
Extras	Discounts from Green Suppliers, Marketing benefits

GSTC

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) does not directly certify any products or services but provides an accreditation program through its partner ASI/Assurance Services International to accredit Certification Bodies (https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/gstc-accredited-certification-bodies/), which in turn can certify hotels, tour operators and destinations that adhere to the GSTC Criteria. GSTC also recognizes several ecolabels as having equivalent certification criteria, including NEPCon, Green Key, Green Globe, Earthcheck and Biosphere. GSTC certification criteria is extensive, covering environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects of enterprises. GSTC certification criteria began in 2008 now recognizes more than 30 tourism ecolabels as equivalent, therefore the number of businesses using GSTC several thousand, if not more. The cost of undertaking certification based on GSTC criteria is dependent on the certification body undertaking the certification.

Ecolabel	The Global Sustainable Council (GSTC) Criteria
Established	2008
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not-for-profit, Membership Organisation, Australia
Website	https://www.gstcouncil.org/about/about-us/
Geographical Scope	Global
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Accommodation, **Destinations,** Tour Operators
Cost	Costs are dependent on the certification body https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/gstc-accredited-certification-bodies/
Time to achieve certification	Dependent on the certification body https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/gstc-accredited-certification-bodies/
Duration of certification	3 years.
Ease of access to Ecolabel Documentation	Documentation on criteria is readily available
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party by accredited verifier
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	168
Focus of Criteria	Full range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation
Number of Businesses (products) awarded to	Greater than 5000 (all ecolabelling bodies that are accredited by GSTC can use the GSTC ecolabel)
Ecolabel Development Standards followed?	GSTC
Type of award (pass/fail or tiered approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing, training benefits

ISO 14001:2015

The International Standardization Organisation (ISO), based on of Geneva, Switzerland, does not certify any products or services directly. In order to gain certification of one of the many ISO standards, an accredited Certification Body must be used. In order to determine whether a particular Certification Body is accredited, it is pertinent to check with your National Accreditation Body; the International Accreditation Forum (https://www.iaf.nu/) members list contains details of each National Accreditation Body. ISO 14001:2015 provides guidelines to undertake an Environmental Management System (EMS) which is flexible enough to be used by any type of enterprise. Normal practise would involve an enterprise employing a consultant to assist them with developing the EMS and then having this certified by the accredited Certification Body. The first ISO 14001 standard was produced in 1996 and there are now over 300000 enterprises certified.

Ecolabel	ISO 14001:2015
Established	19996
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not-for-profit, Non-Governmental Membership Organisation, Switzerland
Website	https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html
Geographical Scope	Global
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Any tourism enterprise
Cost	Costs are dependent on the certification body
Time to achieve certification	6 months
Duration of certification	3 years, may vary
Ease of access to Ecolabel Documentation	ISO charge a fee to access all documentation
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party by accredited verifier
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	The number of criteria depends on the specific enterprise pursuing the Environmental Management System under ISO 14001.
Focus of Criteria	Strong environmental focus, can include socio-economic criteria
Number of Businesses (products) awarded to	300000
Ecolabel Development Standards followed?	ISO 14001
Type of award (pass/fail or tiered approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	Dependent on the certification body

National Park Partnership Programme
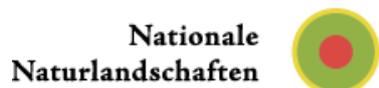
The German ecolabel *Partner der Nationalen Naturlandschaften* (Partner of National Natural Landscapes) aims to foster regional sustainable development, to raise awareness and provide information to guests, to protect the environment and promote the national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in Germany. There are minimum criteria and extra regional criteria in each national park or biosphere reserve. The label is characterised by a participatory approach even though formally the awarding institution is in most cases a governmental one. The awarding committee which also takes care of the further development of the criteria includes not only the national park authority but also NGOs and representatives of the labelled businesses. The label has a validity of 3 years. In order to initiate a further improvement with regards to sustainability, the recertification criteria are stricter. Information about the assessment process and the qualifying criteria are online available. As extra benefit the labelled SME get access to the regional network of labelled businesses and organisations, benefitting of marketing and training offers. For instance, the National Park Authority Schleswig-Holstein and the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park Authority are in charge of regional networks, both labelling with *Partner Nationalpark Wattenmeer* due to close cooperation.

Ecolabel	Partner Nationale Naturlandschaften
Established	2008
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Governmental (authorities of national parks/biosphere reserves), Germany
Website	http://partner.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/
Geographical Scope	Germany (within a national park/biosphere reserve)
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Accommodation & gastronomy, destination management organisations, agriculture, nature experience, education
Cost	150-2700 Euros for three years certification, depending on the size of the business.
Time to Achieve Certification	3-6 months
Duration of Certification	3 years maximum
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Medium
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	Varying 2nd or 3rd party , depending on national park.
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	41
Focus of Criteria	Range of Environmental, excluding wildlife/biodiversity, and socio-economic criteria covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	More than 1400
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Minimum standards set by umbrella organisation Nationale Naturlandschaften e.V. (National Natural Landscapes)
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/fail
Extras	Marketing, Networking and Training Benefits

NEPCon

NEPCon is a global not-for-profit ecolabel established in 1994 by NEPCon Global. NEPCon is able to certify both accommodation and tour operator businesses and has certified 90 to date, all in South America, although NEPCon do now offer their services globally. It can take between 4-6 months to become certified by NEPCon and certification lasts for 3 years (although annual audits are a requirement). NEPCon has applied for GSTC accreditation but already claims to follow this accreditation. NEPCon offers its customers assistance with marketing and training in sustainability.

Ecolabel	NEPCon
Established	1994
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not-for-profit NEPCon, Global
Website	https://www.nepcon.org/certification/tourism
Geographical Scope	Global
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Accommodation, Tour Operators
Cost	6640 Euros for three years
Time to Achieve Certification	4-6 months
Duration of Certification	3 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Excellent
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	185
Focus of Criteria	Wide range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation, strong focus on wildlife/biodiversity and protection of local culture
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	90
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing and training benefits

Nordic Swan

Nordic Swan is the most well-established ecolabel, being conceived by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 1989. Nordic swan has certified 25,000 products across the Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Conference facilities, hotels, restaurants, supply chains and products can be certified by Nordic Swan. Nordic Swan was developed using the ISO 14024 standard and thus has a focus on environmental criteria, although it does cover some social issues, such as the adherence to relevant work, environmental and health regulations. It can take between 3 to 6 months to gain certification by Nordic Swan and certification lasts between 2 to 4 years. It typically costs 9000 Euros for three years of certification, but more accurate prices can be obtained from the Nordic Swan's National Offices.

Ecolabel	Nordic Swan
Established	1989
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Governmental, Nordic Council of Ministers
Website	www.nordic-ecolabel.org/
Geographical Scope	Nordic Countries (Norway and Denmark in Project Area)
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Conference Facilities, Hotels, Restaurants, Supply Chain. Products (Food and Other)
Cost	Typically, 7130 Euros for three years Contact National Office for details http://www.nordic-ecolabel.org/contact
Time to Achieve Certification	3 to 6 months (onsite audit required)
Duration of Certification	2 to 4 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Medium
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	78
Focus of Criteria	Focus on environmental criteria but supply chain criteria also included
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	25000 products certified
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	ISO 14024 Type I Ecolabel
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	No Information

TourCert

TourCert is another international certification programme which focusses on destinations, accommodation, tour operators and other tourism businesses. It is a for-profit ecolabel established in 2009 and appears to adhere to a mix of international standards, including ISO 14001 and ISO 9001. It can take 8 months to achieve certification after which businesses are certified for between 2 and 3 years. 340 destinations and businesses are currently certified by TourCert which provides them with additional benefits, such as training on CSR.

Ecolabel	Tourcert
Established	2009
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For Profit, TourCert, Germany
Website	https://www.tourcert.org/en/
Geographical Scope	International
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Destinations, Hotels and other Accommodation, Tour Operators and other Tourism Businesses
Cost	6800 Euros minimum for three years https://www.tourcert.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/TourCert-Certification_Prices_2018-1.pdf
Time to Achieve Certification	8 months
Duration of Certification	2-3 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Excellent
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd Party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	89
Focus of Criteria	Wide range of environmental, socio-economic and cultural criteria covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	340
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Mix of EMAS, ISO 14001, 9001
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail. Can carry out a company check before being certified.
Extras	Training benefits

Travelife

Travelife is another for-profit ecolabel with a global coverage. Established in 2007 by ABTA Ltd UK, Travelife is now a GSTC accredited ecolabel which has certified over 975 hotels. It takes 1 month minimum to achieve Travelife certification and costs 320 Euros per year minimum for 2 years of certification. Marketing benefits are also offered to certified hotels.

Ecolabel	Travelife
Established	2007
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	For-Profit ABTA Ltd UK
Website	https://travelifestaybetter.com/the-certification-process/
Geographical Scope	Global
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Hotels
Cost	960 Euros minimum for three years (excluding additional auditing costs)
Time to Achieve Certification	1 month plus
Duration of Certification	2 years
Ease of Access to Ecolabel Documentation	Excellent
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3rd party
Total Criteria Assessed by Ecolabelling Body	128
Focus of Criteria	Wide range of criteria due to GSTC accreditation
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	975
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC Accredited
Type of Award (Pass/Fail or Tiered Approach)	Pass/Fail
Extras	Marketing benefits

Glossary of Terms

This glossary has been created using the ISO 14050:2010 (ISO, 2009) definitions, unless otherwise stated

Accreditation – third party attestation related to verification body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific verification tasks

Certification – procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a product, process or service conforms to specified requirements

Ecolabel (Environmental Label) – provides information about a product or service in terms of its overall environmental or sustainability character, a specific environmental aspect, or any number of aspects (ISO, 2000)

Ecolabelling Body – third party body and its agents which conduct an ecolabelling programme

Environment – surroundings (global and within an organisation) in which an organisation operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans and their interrelation

Environmental Claim – statement, symbol or graphic that indicates environmental aspect of a product, a component or packaging (ISO, 2000)

Environmental Criteria – environmental requirements that the product, or service, shall meet in order to be awarded an environmental label

Environmental Label / Environmental Declaration – claim which indicates the environmental aspects of a product or service

Environmental Management System (EMS) – part of an organisations management system used to develop and implement its environmental policy and manage its environmental aspects

Environmental Impact – any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organisation's activities or products

Life Cycle – consecutive and interlinked stages of a product or service system, from raw material acquisition to final disposal

Life Cycle Assessment – compilation and evaluation of the inputs and outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) (of a World Heritage site) – The text on which a World Heritage site receives its' status. The OUV underlines how the site lives up to UNESCO criteria for such status and thus describes the responsibility of the nation state (UNESCO, 2020)

Self-Declared Environmental Claim – environmental claim that is made, without independent third-party certification, by manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers or anyone else likely to benefit from such a claim

Sustainable development - most often defined as: «... development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."(United Nations, 1987). A balance between social, environmental and economical dimensions are generally perceived to be the main element of sustainable development

Sustainability - term often used interchangeably with sustainable development. UNESCO defines the difference between sustainable development and sustainability as the difference between the endpoint and the processes and pathways to achieve sustainability (UNESCO, 2020)

Sustainable entrepreneurship - sustainable entrepreneurs aims to balance between the three elements of sustainable development: economic health (prosperity), social equity (people) and environmental resilience (planet) within their enterprise and value chains (Greco & de Jong, 2017)

Sustainable development goals (SDGs) - in 2015 the UN General assembly adopted 17 goals and more than 100 sub-goals of global sustainable development. The goals focus on social, economic and ecological aspects (UN General Assembly, 2015)

Third Party – person or body that is recognised as being independent of the parties involved, as concerns the issues in question

Transparency – open, comprehensive and understandable presentation of information

Verification – confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled

Verifier – person or body that carries out verification

Verification Body – body that performs verifications of environmental impacts in accordance ecolabel criteria

World Heritage Site - status given to an area by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific a and Cultural Organization). To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten cultural or natural selection criteria (UNESCO, 2020)

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