

## The EU Ecolabel for Tourist Accommodation Services

Tourist accommodations must often compromise their sustainable initiatives in order to guarantee a certain level of quality for their guests. The EU Ecolabel tourist accommodations criteria provide efficient guidelines for hotels and camping sites looking to lower their environmental impact while offering enough flexibility to allow proper guest satisfaction.



#EUEcolabel

Tourist accommodations looking to become certified must adhere to twenty-two mandatory criteria, and receive at least twenty points under optional criteria. The criteria focus on environmental hotspots such as the over-consumption of water and energy, waste management and the use of toxic substances.

There is great potential to create lasting synergies between various EU Ecolabel products and other ISO type I label products for furniture and bed mattresses, floor coverings, detergent products, rinse-off cosmetics, paper and textile products as well as cleaning services, as the criteria privilege the use of above mentioned certified products outlined within the tourist accommodations criteria.



# Hotspots & Solutions

Tourist Accommodations induce an array of environmental hotspots, which the EU Ecolabel addresses:

Hotspots	Issue	EU Ecolabel Solution
<b>Hotspot 1: Lack of Environmental Engagement</b>	<i>Without a defined environmental action plan, it is difficult for companies to monitor and measure their environmental performance and progress.</i>	The EU Ecolabel helps companies to define the right targets for their engagement in favour of the environment and measure the impact of their actions by requiring an environmental management system with a precise environmental policy, action program and internal evaluation process. For example, training of staff and information provision is required to raise awareness on environmental practices. Data on the energy, water, food and product consumption per guest/night as well as the number of cleaning products used must also be monitored. Registering with EMAS and/or according to ISO 14,001 can aid companies in the implementation of such a strategy. Therefore, companies can obtain extra points (under an optional criterion), if certified with the Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) or ISO 14,001.
<b>Hotspot 2: Unnecessary carbon emission and use of energy</b>	<i>As result of poorly managed energy consumption, tourist accommodations can often consume large amounts of energy, which contributes to carbon emission creation.</i>	To reduce the overuse of energy due to inefficient installations, the EU Ecolabel ensures that preventive maintenance is performed on appliances and devices. Water heating appliances, household air conditioning and air-based heat pumps must respect at least an energy class A. Similarly, up to 50% (and 100% after two years of certification) of the lighting must be of type class A. Furthermore, temperature in common areas and rooms must be regulated with automatic switch off options, and hotels and camping sites cannot use any heating or air conditioning in outside areas. Finally, up to 100% of energy must be purchased from renewable energy sources depending on the number of contractors in the region.
<b>Hotspot 3: Inefficient use of water</b>	<i>An excessive amount of water can be often wasted in tourist accommodations due to inefficient systems and equipment.</i>	The EU Ecolabel provides solutions to minimise the amount of water wasted in tourist accommodations through requirements on the average water flow rate of taps (which should not exceed 8.5 litres/minutes) and toilet flushing (which should be equal or below 4,5L). Furthermore, hotels and camping sites cannot change sheets and towels every day unless explicitly requested by guests. Optional criteria also encourage tourist accommodations to have an optimised pool management policy, to recycle rainwater and grey water and finally to have efficient irrigation systems.

**Hotspot 4:  
Reducing  
pesticides and  
chemical  
substances**

*From cleaning to restoration services, tourist accommodations can have a detrimental impact on the environment through the use of pesticides and chemical substances.*

The EU Ecolabel limits the polluting effects of cleaning services performed by giving certified tourist accommodations the option of outsourcing laundry and cleaning services to providers awarded with an ISO Type I label. Tourist accommodations can also decide to purchase detergents, and rinse-off cosmetics with the EU Ecolabel or other Type I label which have less impact on the environment. Finally, they can receive additional points by using at least two organic farming produce in daily meal preparations, and banning all use of pesticides in outside areas.

**Hotspot 5:  
Excessive solid  
waste, and poorly  
managed waste  
disposal**

*Tourist accommodations create large amounts of solid waste which if poorly managed can end up in landfills instead of being properly recycled or recovered.*

The EU Ecolabel aims to reduce the amount of waste generated in tourist accommodations and to optimise its management. For example, hotels and camping grounds cannot use any single dose packages for nonperishable food stuffs, and disposable toiletries items are prohibited unless they are requested by guests. Disposable food service items can only be used if the tourist accommodations have an agreement with a recycler and disposable towels and bed sheets are not allowed. Adequate containers for waste separation must be provided in the rooms or on all floors, and waste must be separated into specific categories for better recycling and disposal.

**Hotspot 6:  
Reducing  
Transportation  
Carbon Emissions**

*The tourism industry often induces a large amount of carbon emissions due to transportation of guests and goods.*

EU Ecolabel tourist accommodations limit these emissions through detailing environmentally preferable means of transport, special agreements with transport agencies and by potentially offering eco-friendly transportation such as electric vehicles and bikes. Tourist accommodations can also choose to prohibit combustion motor vehicles in the maintenance of the grounds. Finally, certified hotels and camping sites have the option of providing at least two locally sourced and not out of season food products at each meal and collaborate with local producers.

**Hotspot 7:  
Excessive food  
waste**

*With kitchens open 24/7 for room service, and generous hotel buffets, the tourist accommodation industry is a big player in generating food waste.*

The EU Ecolabel limits food waste by requiring that tourist accommodations follow a documented 'food waste reduction plan', including food waste monitoring linked to an action program focused on optimising both food and packaging waste.