

Sustainable Hospitality Guidelines

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The World Economic Forum is committed to improving the sustainability performance of its events. As part of its [Sustainability Strategy 2021](#), the Forum's approach included obtaining ISO 21021 certification for sustainable event management in 2018 and subsequently renewed this certification for the Annual Meeting 2024.

The hospitality sector is responsible for 8% of global greenhouse gases and has an important role to play to support the Forum's sustainability strategy. Furthermore, according to impact assessments, overnight stays account for 10% of the carbon footprint at Forum meetings.

Many hotels have already implemented sustainable actions and policies and the purpose of this document is to share the Forum principles and guidelines for our accommodation providers. The aim is to raise awareness of the impact of the overnight stays of Forum participants and staff during the event and support hotels in seeking additional improvements to limit this impact on resources. Making longer-term changes in operational practices to protect the planet goes hand-in-hand with enjoying the social and financial benefits of sustainable hospitality management.

These guidelines contain recommended sustainability standards for accommodation providers. To be effective, the elements of this checklist must be integrated from the start of the process and shared with suppliers working on the project.¹

Principles

The Forum's hospitality guidelines are supported by a set of strong principles that aims to:

- Reduce the negative environmental impact of events including reduced water and energy consumption
- Reduce the consumption and maintenance costs to hotel
- Create positive awareness among stakeholders of environmental standards and social responsibility
- Support fair working conditions and employee well-being along the value chain
- Support the well-being of guests, promote ecological consciousness and influence guest choices
- Create positive value for local communities through engagement with producers or local suppliers
- Respond to the findings of the Forum's environmental and social impact assessment studies
- Create opportunities for engagement in sustainability practices with the Forum's stakeholders

Guidelines

Based on the principles outlined above, the Forum has defined guidelines that should be implemented as far as possible while also taking into consideration the risks and opportunities associated with the local context.

Responsible procurement

In accordance with the [Sustainable Procurement Policy](#) in the Forum's supply chain, it is important for hotels to:

- Choose local products over imports where possible, conscientiously
- Select products with minimal packaging or those where the supplier takes back and reuses the containers
- Request alternative packaging to single-use plastics
- Employ local craftsmen for repairs and maintenance
- Collaborate respectfully with suppliers through transparent communication and paying fair prices for goods and services

1. If you are working with the event logistics supplier PublicisLive, note that it is ISO 20121 certified and endorses all points outlined in these guidelines.

Efficient resource use

Valuable resources can include water, energy, office materials, soft furnishings and single-use plastics.

- Hotel switches to renewable energy providers, install solar panels for electricity and heating water; use energy-saving devices (e.g. LED lights, triple glazing, motion sensors, room card connected to turn off lights and air-conditioning when guest not in room)
- Facilities management team to measure and monitor the hotel water and energy consumption and have water-saving devices in place (e.g. low-flow shower fittings, dual-flush systems, modern dishwashing equipment that recycles water)
- Housekeeping teams to make efficient use of energy and water when cleaning rooms as well as eco-friendly cleaning products
- Hotel laundry has modern energy-efficient washing machines and staff briefed to operate machines only when full and use low temperature settings
- Hotel communicates that bed linen and towels will be changed only if guests opt in (opting out should be the default)
- Guests encouraged to participate in conservation efforts through attractive signage or incentives
- Hotel management encourages paperless initiatives (e.g. digital check-in, QR codes to reduce printed menus, reusable wooden tags for doors or in-room communications to replace signs made of card, reduce distribution of printed newspapers to guests)

Catering

Best practice food and beverages operations within the hotel may include guest breakfasts, in-house bars and restaurants, in-room dining, and the hosting of official meals or receptions for Forum side events.

- The Food and Beverages management team should be familiar with the Forum's [Sustainable Catering Guidelines](#) which include guidelines for balanced menus, responsible food and beverages sourcing, food packaging efficient kitchen equipment, communications and avoiding food waste
- Donate non-consumed food to staff canteens or local initiatives (e.g. 4Reasons)
- Participate in the [TableForTwo](#) scheme to eliminate global hunger and reduce health issues related to unhealthy eating

Waste management

The scope of waste management includes waste from all areas of hotel operations.

- Ensure the hotel makes the most of all existing recycling options and collects relevant data to demonstrate waste management responsibilities
- Organize the separate collection and disposal of all recyclable materials: paper and card, confidential documents, glass, aluminium, plastic, organic, compostable food containers, batteries, etc.
- Have sufficient sorting bins, appropriate signage (in local language if necessary)
- Ensure all hotel staff (cleaning teams, kitchen staff, housekeeping, management, sub-contractors, etc.) are trained in effective recycling
- Actively participate in local donation programmes for items such as old bath towels or decorative items (e.g. Caritas or Brockenstube)
- Replace plastic bottles for shampoo and shower gel with refillable dispensers in bathrooms

Communication

Create awareness among guests on how to support sustainable actions. For example:

- Inform guests of the CO₂ per guest per night and offer climate-neutral stays
- Encourage guests to take the complimentary shuttles
- In-room signage for guests to use water wisely and to turn off air conditioning when not needed
- Communicate specific sustainability measures (including any of the above) to staff and suppliers, especially as their engagement is key to success (e.g. posters in back-of-house areas on how hotel staff can save water or energy in their day-to-day operations)
- Communicate on website or social media platforms on sustainability (e.g. hotel sustainability strategy, responsible procurement policy, CRS charter, code of conduct, health and safety policy, membership of Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, green seals, certifications, or alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, etc.)

Health and safety

- The place of work should be adapted for the health and safety of guests and employees
 - The hotel should have an AED (defibrillator) and trained staff must be available on site at all times
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Accessibility

- Ensure the hotel is equipped for all types of disability and that facilities provide dignity for all

Staff and working conditions

Employers should provide job security and be an enjoyable environment in order that staff are comfortable and prepared in their role and can be engaged with the hotel sustainability policy. For example:

- Legal requirements for the minimum working age and maximum working hours must be respected
- Changing and break-room facilities will be provided for catering staff employees
- Ensure events are sufficiently staffed and that temporary staff for events in particular are given necessary training
- Have a code of conduct, such as the Forum's [Code of conduct for vendors](#)
- Staff mobility – encourage staff to use public transport or walk to work
- Staff training so employees are aware of the sustainability actions in their specific area of work and can also inform guests about the hotel sustainability practices in general
- Encourage innovation and provide staff incentives to engage with sustainability plans

Any feedback on these guidelines should be addressed to sustainability@weforum.org.