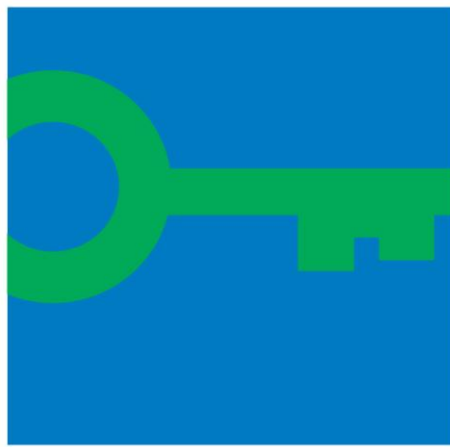


THE GREEN KEY

AN ECO-LABEL FOR
LEISURE ORGANISATIONS



**The Green
Key**

**FACTSHEET
FOR
NATIONAL OPERATORS**

15th October 2009

I. Introduction

Tourism represents pressure on the environment. To encourage directors and owners of tourism accommodations to reduce their environmental impact the Green Key programme was created. Today the Green Key is an eco-label for environmental management in leisure organisations.

The Green Key pursue 4 goals:

- **Environmental education** of the owners, the staffs and the client
- **Environmental preservation** by the reduction of the impacts of the facility
- **Economical management** as a reduction of the consumption induces a reduction of the costs
- **Marketing strategy** with the promotion of the label and the facilities awarded

In 2009 there are three sets of baseline criteria. One for campsites, one for hotels, youth hostels and conference, holiday centres and one for attractions.

This factsheet gives you the basics facts for understanding the produces and organisation of the Green Key. For more and more specific information we refer to the Green Key Handbook. This is available on request and at the internal pages of the international Green Key internet site.

II. History

The Green Key has been created in 1994 in Denmark by HORESTA, a professional federation of hotels. In 2002 the label was adopted as the 5th international programme of the FEE. For this historical reason this programme counts an International Steering Committee (ISC) composed by two delegates of HORESTA and two delegates of the FEE (the political responsible for the program and an appointed member) plus the international coordinator. The ISC meets twice a year.

III. Procedures at national level

As a FEE programme, the Green Key has some common rules for an international coherence. Those rules of procedure have to be respected in every country, this is the responsibility of the national operators.

a. National Operator

In each country a national steering group is responsible for the Green Key campaign. Most likely you contact the FEE representative in your country to discuss how to start with the campaign. Information about your FEE representative is found at www.fee-international.org (Choose: Organisations -> Full and associate members).

b. Rewarding businesses

The Green Key is an eco-label that rewards organisations in the leisure branches for environmentally friendly performances on the basis of international baseline criteria. It is awarded for a 1-year period, and has to be reviewed every year. The national operator is requested to set up a verification procedure at least every year. It can be an on-site visit or a questionnaire put in writing.

c. National Jury/Green Key Board

In order to give credibility, reliability and seriousness to the label at national level, there must be a jury or a Green Key board in each country. It has to be composed by: environment experts, tourist experts, professionals, consumers and other that seem relevant for the Green Key. The Jury or Green Key Board will have to be balanced and not only represent tourism industry or environment concerns.

d. Controls

Every rewarded accommodation has to be on-site visited the first year, and then, at least every 3 years.

IV. Criteria

For every set of criteria a target group is described. The criteria are divided into the **categories** mandatory and optional criteria (O). The mandatory criteria are to be fulfilled in every Green Key establishment. In the formulation, they can be with or without a time frame.

National Operators can decide to rewrite the baseline criteria to **one particular** group or kind of business where they apply to on a international level. By example in your country a lot of campsites are situated on active farms, they have in common that there are no facilities like restaurants, pools, receptions, etc. If this group have a strong wish for a Green Key label, it can be decided to use the baseline criteria for campsites to developing a National set of criteria for this particular kind of rural camp sites.

The optional criteria are designed primarily for applicants who wish to pursue more rigorous environmental management. They are a tool that the national operators can and should use for environmental education towards professionals.

All the optional criteria must be in the national set of criteria, even if they remain optional. The way they are used is to be decided by the national operator.

National adaptation:

The international criteria should be adapted to national conditions and in order to do so the national Green Key criteria set can contain up to a maximum of 20 percent national additions. This does not mean that 20% extra national criteria must to be added, this is the free space that National Operators have to nationalize the criteria. The international coordinator estimates when then 20 percent national additions have been reached. There are mainly three ways to make national additions:

1. Some of the optional criteria from the international criteria can be made mandatory in the national set of criteria.
2. Mandatory criteria can be strengthen;
3. Extra criteria can be added, which are not part of the international criteria set.

The International Steering Committee focuses on the topics in the international criteria set and they are unlikely to accept national additions that involve other issues.

V. Partnership with professional federations

The coordination encourages national operators to build up technical partnerships with professionals

a. Why?

Professional federation will be great help for the adaptation of criteria, in the frame of the Green Key towards hotels, campsites and other types of accommodation managers, in the reliability towards the public.

b. How?

The best is to start to contact them very soon, before the launch of the campaign, so that they could give their opinion about criteria, and give a help to find candidates...and they could be members of the jury/board.

VI. International Validation

In order to assure a homogeneity to the label, some points have to be validated by the International Steering Committee: the number and the list of awards every year, the composition of the National Jury / Green Key Board, the number of on-site visits.

VII. Logo/brand

The official logo and brand characteristics are described in the document: Corporate Branding Guidelines - FEE 2008 (and also in The Green Key Handbook). It is important to know that:

- The official name of the label is “The Green Key”, this can be translated in a national language.
- Only national operators who respect the rules of conduct can use the name “The Green Key” and the logo.
- Only organisations which respect the criteria and have been awarded by the national jury / Green Key Board can use the name “The Green Key” and the logo.



I) The programme today

In 2008 the Green Key is present in 13 countries: Denmark, France, Belgium, Lithuania, Estonia, Portugal, Italy, Morocco, Tunisia, Netherlands, Cyprus, Sweden and Japan.

Two new countries are developing the programme: the United Kingdom and Canada. They will join us when they are ready.

Today more than 600 tourism facilities are awarded internationally.

FEE Netherlands hosts the coordination until 31st December 2012.

II) Website and contact information

The international website is www.thegreenkey.org

The contact of the international coordination:

St. Keurmerk Milieu, Veiligheid & Kwaliteit

P.O. Box 102

NL-3970 AC Driebergen

The Netherlands

Phone +31 (0) 343 52 47 20

Fax: +31 (0) 343 52 47 80

Email: GKIC@kmvk.nl

NL_Website: www.greenkey.nl

Contact: Mr. Erik van Dijk