

1.3 Hotelplan: Environmental Reporting



Description of Good Practice

The Hotelplan Swiss Group, a Swiss tour operator that offers mainly outbound package tours and guided tours, published an environmental report illustrating the actions the company has taken in different operational areas to improve its environmental performance. After the company's first environmental report was released in 1998, Hotelplan decided to produce a public report on its environmental activities, taking into account the Global Reporting Initiative's Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and Performance Indicators.

The environmental report is divided into two main sections: statements, which includes the company policy statement and letters signed by the CEO, the Delegate of the Board of Directors of Environmental Affairs and the Manager of Corporate Ecology, and descriptions of activities taken in four key action areas – product management and development, internal management, supply chain management and co-operation with destinations. Additional information includes the company's goals for 2004 (see Box 1), key financial figures, a glossary and a statement of support by another tour operator.

Among the activities described in the 2001/2002 report are:

- **Product Management and Development:** This section includes the results of a study to assess the overall impact of Hotelplan's holiday packages to Tenerife and Crete and a report on the company's efforts to better understand the ecological conditions of its destinations.
- **Internal Management:** This section includes the results of an analysis of environmental impacts generated at the company's headquarters.
- **Supply Chain Management:** This section highlights the progress made in the use of Hotelplan's Environmental Award and lists award winners since 1998.
- **Co-operation with Destinations:** This section discusses the company's actions to support conservation and social development, including details on projects supported, goals and benefits achieved and funds disbursed.

The analysis of Hotelplan's environmental performance at headquarters is supported by:

- Quantitative data, presented as inputs (energy and materials) and outputs (products, catalogues, waste disposal and outside transport) in a table that also includes data from the biennia 1998/1999, 1999/2000 and 2000/2001, thus providing the opportunity to verify the company's improvements.
- Diagrams to help visualize the changes in performance from 1998 to 2001, as well as the weight of the different areas in headquarters.
- The results of the comparative study of the environmental impacts of holiday packages in Tenerife and Crete are also supported by diagrams, which help visualize the different impacts.



HOTELPLAN'S ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

BOX 1: Hotelplan's Environmental Targets for 2004

Company-based target

- Take the triple-bottom-line approach by weighting ecological, economic and social aspects to form the basis for the company's commitment to sustainability.

Globally based targets

- Sign the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.
- Successfully transfer environmental reporting to sustainability reporting, in accordance with the guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

Destination-based targets

- Continually develop projects in all relevant fields (energy, water, waste), mainly at important Hotelplan holiday destinations.
- Increase the level of awareness about the company's Eco-Fund by expanding customer information and increasing information frequency.

The 2001/2002 environmental report was written in about six months by Hotelplan's Environmental Department, the Delegate of the Board of Directors for Environmental Affairs, and the Manager for Corporate Ecology, with the additional assistance of an external consultant and a specialist in sustainable communication. The cost of producing this report was approximately 35,000 Euro (US\$41,805).

Before printing the final report, an internal consultation between the Department for Corporate Ecology and the Quality Management Team of the Hotelplan Group took place. The draft report also had to be submitted to the Environmental Committee for final approval.

Implementation

About 6,000 copies of the 2001/2002 Environmental Report were printed on 100% recycled paper – 4,000 copies in German, 1,500 in English and 500 in French. The report has been distributed internally to every employee of the Hotelplan Swiss Group, every resident manager

and to partners at the destinations. The content of the report was disseminated outside of the Group through press releases to both the Swiss and international media, special presentations, partners and travel agencies. The report can also be purchased or downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.hotelplan.ch/de/environment/bericht.htm>

Benefits

Hotelplan has found that the benefits of publishing an environmental report include:

- Stakeholders find out what the company has done and which improvements it has made throughout the year;
- Customers have the opportunity to measure and evaluate the environmental activities of Hotelplan as a company in a global context;
- Hotelplan can demonstrate to the public that it is striving to integrate environmental issues into all aspects of its business structure and to include all stakeholders in the process; and
- Customer relations have improved and credibility has increased.

Comments

In the interest of transparency, it is important to publish not only positive results but also areas in which improvement is needed over the next months (see Box 1). This makes it clear that, although much has been done in the past, more will need to be accomplished in the future, through increased involvement of all stakeholders.

"For the very first time, the guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) have been taken into account – though only in part for the time being. A continual integration of the essential part of the GRI, the Tour Operator's Sector Supplement, so important for any tour operator, will not only help develop reporting towards full sustainability but also the operative commitment still mostly based on ecological considerations."

*Mr. Hess
Delegate of the Board of Directors of Environmental Affairs, Hotelplan*