

Italian Ecolabel Legambiente Tourism in Marche Region



Country/Geographical Area	ITALY Marche Region
Level implementation	Local
Scale	Roll out
Waste fraction / Specific Waste Type	Packaging/ Biodegradable waste, paper, packaging, soaps
Target Audience	Tourists and tour operators
Objective	The objective of Ecolabel LEGAMBIENTE Tourism is to promote sustainable culture and management methods in the tourism sector. Specifically, talking about waste prevention, the project wants to favor the use of bulk products in the food and hygienic fields, to increase and enhance tap water use, the local products, to use refills and concentrated packaging for detergents, to inform, to educate and to also raise awareness among guests, managers and tour operators.
Initiator/coordinator	LEGAMBIENTE Tourism Association
Other key actors involved	LEGAMBIENTE Marche, Marche Region - Department for Tourism, Provinces of Ascoli Piceno, Ancona, Macerata, Municipalities of: Ripatransone, Offida, Cossignano, Cupra Marittima, Grottammare, San Benedetto del Tronto, Senigallia, Fano, Conero Regional Park, Riviera Conero Association Hotel, Chamber of Commerce of Ascoli Piceno and Ancona
Duration	In Marche Region, the project started in different stages: in 2001 the “Riviera del Conero Project”, in 2004 the “Piceno project”, in 2006 the “Le Altre Marche project” from Macerata hinterland, in 2007 the “Senigallia Project”, in 2010, the “Fano Projects”
Number in PW Mapping	43
Name of partner(s) having contributed to factsheet & date	Legambiente Marche
Contacts	www.legambienteturismo.it

2. Context

In Marche Region, there are 916 tourist accommodation facilities and accommodation for 65.331 people (SISTAR Marche data); more than 50% of them are on the coastal strip. The tourism flow is concentrated in summer because the seaside is the main “product” for the tourism sector.

In Marche Region over 2.107.000 arrivals and over 11.378.000 nights (Marche SISTAR data) were recorded in 2009.

An evaluation of the quantities of waste generated by the tourism sector has never been done, but it is strategic to operate in this economic sector, if we consider the high attendance of tourists and the high consumption of single doses product in food and hygienic sector

3. Strategy

Objectives

Legambiente Tourism is the association created by Legambiente (Italian environmental association) in charge to follow the eco-label on tourism. Legambiente is based in Bologna and elsewhere in Italy and operates through regional offices. In Marche region, it operates through "non-profit organization Legambiente Marche". The staff carrying out checks of touristic structures involved in the project, is working in various locations of Legambiente and is properly trained on environmental issues and tourism.

The logo of "Legambiente tourism" in Italy is very recognizable as a graphical adaptation of the logo of Legambiente. This means that the customers seeing the logo in the accommodation links it readily to environmental issues.

The aim of Ecolabel LEGAMBIENTE Tourism is to disseminate the culture and the good practices of waste prevention in tourism sector. The information, education and awareness activities aims to change some organizational and management issues: replacing food and hygienic single doses with dispenser and bulk products, using tap water instead bottled one, using returnable bottles and concentrated products, and local products in a short distribution chain.

Preconditions

Before starting each project, in the territory there were training meetings and/or workshops with institutions, trade associations and tour operators to evaluate the real interest to adopt a more sustainable approach.

Procedure

Upon request by territorial actors (municipal administration, park authority, Chamber of Commerce, Hotel Associations, etc.) the Legambiente Tourism approach is presented to the audience.

If there is any interest to go on, a memorandum of understanding can be signed between Legambiente Tourism and the territorial actors. The accommodation facilities (hotels, agrotourism camping, etc.) can formally agree to it.

When the local group of facilities is constituted, there is a meeting to establish the sustainable actions to carry on during the year and that characterize that local group. The agreed actions are about energy, water, waste, food-and-wine, typical products, sustainable mobility, mitigation of noise, cultural and environmental promotion of location, information and training, and environmental sustainability communication for personnel and tourists.

At least, once a year, the structures are checked by a Legambiente Tourism operator to verify the standards. In case of default the structures are eliminated from the group and cannot use the LOGO in any of its forms. Each year, sustainability actions are discussed again and restrictive measures are taken for their adoption and control.

The actions about material saving and therefore waste prevention are slightly variables and relate to:

- Reduction and/or elimination of single doses in food sector
- Reduction and/or elimination of single doses in hygienic sector
- Use (partial or total) of bulk food products
- Use (partial or total) of tap water
- Use (partial or total) of returnable bottles
- Use (partial or total) of short distribution chain products
- Use (partial or total) of concentrated refill for hygiene products

Each year, more challenging activities were adopted. For example, regarding waste management, in a single memorandum of understandin, not only an obligation to separate waste but also an obligation to introduce, in common areas or room, some bins for separate collection, was introduced during time.

Instruments

The Ecolabel LEGAMBIENTE Tourism is a voluntary label. The tour operators join the approach voluntarily trying to qualify themselves as environmental friendly.

They have the managerial and communication tools.

Timeframe

The actions are agreed upon during appropriate sharing meetings; after 1-2 months, given to manage the actions, with at least 1 check, the application is verified.

This process is repeated each year for each structure.

Each year the actions get more restrictive.

4 .Resources

Financial Resources

Project costs concern the staff, the consumers' expenditure (telephone, fax, electricity...), the administrative expenses for local meeting and participation at fairs (travel, room rental, attendance fee for speakers), control structure expenditures, printing and distribution of informative materials.

An indicative cost of € 7,000.00 is related to the ricettive (Touristic) structures of Marche region. Each structure, adhering, pays a fee depending on the type of accommodation (e.g. B & B € 80.00, € 170.00 hotels, etc.). It is hard to make an assessment of costs and savings linked to management such as change in purchases (e.g. ecologic toilet paper instead of the traditional hygienic paper, buying large packs of jam instead of single-doses, saving electricity...)

Human Resources

For operators without special training, seminars are given, at least annually, on market planning, natural resource management (water conservation, energy and materials). They are also equipped, by Legambiente, with brochures, stickers and posters about environmental issues and they must have journals, regulations and information about environmental issues according to the voluntary agreements linked to the label.

The staff that follows the project is internal to the association (paid or voluntary). The national headquarters of Legambiente, foresee 5-6 people working full time. The commitment of the regional headquarters is estimated at 25% of a full time equivalent for a year. It is difficult to estimate, given the voluntary presences in the association.

Equipment

The equipment are training tools (relations during the meetings), information tools (project brochures) and the free distribution of compost makers by Macerata Province in "Le Altre Marche" Project.

Communication Tools

Press conferences, press releases, local meetings, conferences, workshops, training course, brochures, web site, newsletters.

Allocation of resources over time

The kick-off of each local project needs more sources to organize the different local meetings and the press release. Then, each project needs at least one meeting to define the commitments, the control of the structures and the printing of communication materials

5. Evaluation

Results

- Participation

In 2010, 39 accommodation facilities, divided in 5 local groups participated in the project in Marche Region.

Commitment to the project is voluntary, so the tour operators participating are already environmental friendly and have seen the environmental policies as a competitive factor. So, it is not possible to account for what they did before.

The aim that was defined during the kick off was to “quantify” results, not in terms of numbers but in terms of actions respected.

To verify the real participation to the project, once a year, the controls of each accommodation facility are executed. In 2010, 39 accommodation facilities were controlled, and one of these was in breach of its commitments and therefore excluded from the project, while three of them realized good interventions and received a special mention.

The participation could be increased acting on knowledge and on manager motivation to act more strongly on waste prevention.

- Avoided waste quantities (or toxicity)

Annually, Legambiente Tourism edits a national and regional research that estimates the plastic waste quantity that is prevented only by eliminating a single packaging of jam to guest every day for the opening period. In 2010, considering 457.140 attendances at regional level, 1,6 tonnes of plastic have been prevented. At national level 8,5 tonnes of plastic have been avoided for 6.587.500 attendances.

- Other results

The strategic approach of the project is the diffusion of best practices towards guest- tourist that could adopt and change his lifestyle.

Impacts

- Avoided CO₂ equivalents

1,6 tonnes of plastic were avoided which represents 5,7 tonnes of CO₂ emission avoided while 8,5 tonnes at national level represents 30,3 tonnes of CO₂ emission avoided

- Social Benefits

The first benefit is about more employment opportunities for each structure for a more sustainable management: other benefits are the creation of a short distribution chain for the supply for local economy. Another benefit is about the genuineness of food and the possibility to increase the Italian PDO (protected designation of origin) and PGI (protected geographical indication).

- Continuation over time

In Marche Region, the project started in 2001 and since more groups and structures have developed and an increase is expected.

At present, the availability and readiness to adhere to a more sustainable approach has increased considering that more and more tourists pay particular attention to the environmental policies adopted by accommodation facilities that they choose.

Difficulties encountered

The waste prevention issue is new and opposed to the disposable and single doses culture that is prevailing in the tourism sector. Sometimes, in addition, the food security rules put up hurdles to adopt services and non-conventional food distribution. The rules on food safety (HACCP) are not always easy to translate from a practical point of view, when you avoid the single-dose and promote the product in bulk. Different institutions do not always work together.

In addition, the customers are accustomed to the packaging and are suspicious when they do not find it. However, we found that adequate and repeated information remove or decrease these suspicions

Monitoring System

Monitoring is represented by annual control visit made for each structure.

6. Comparison with similar action

In Italy, the project is spread in 17 regions and, in 2010, had 426 partners, of which 212 hotels, 75 agrotourism, 58 bed and breakfast/house vacation, 26 camping, 25 restaurants and bar, 9 bathing establishments, 6 holiday villages, 5 hostels, 5 residence and 5 not receptive sleeping accommodation (boat hire, visit center ...).

In different location

Brussels Capital Region Eco-dynamic" company certification scheme

Brussels Environment (IBGE) established a charter and a regional certification scheme (label) for private and public organizations, including hotels, that wish to be pro-active in terms of waste prevention and environmental management.

Phase 1: Office waste charter: In 1994, IBGE developed an "eco-consumption and waste management charter" to which private companies and public bodies could subscribe with the aim to reduce and better manage office waste (in accordance with the 1992 waste management plan). A range of tools were provided to participating organizations including a guide book on managing office waste, thematic training sessions and communication materials such as a paper prevention poster. In 1998, among the 240 participating organizations, 8 were awarded an ECO-IRIS "office" price.

Phase 2: Eco-dynamic certification scheme and charter: In 1999, at the request of participating organisations, the scope of the charter was broadened to include other environmental issues and the "eco-dynamic" certification scheme was created. This regional scheme takes an environmental management system approach (in a similar way as EMAS or ISO14001) and integrates waste prevention into other environmental considerations. The label is awarded for a renewable period of 3 years based on a ranking system that reflects three levels of achievement (1 to 3 stars) and that encourages improvement over time. The fact that it awarded free of charge is an advantage compared to other schemes such as EMAS and ISO14001 which tend to be too costly in time and money for SMEs to adopt

Article 12 of the charter explicitly refers to waste prevention: " Prevent the generation of waste through the purchase and rational use of products generating little waste (durable, repairable, with little packing...) and/or of less harmful waste"

For the award of the Ecodynamic label, a detailed check-list of environmental analysis criteria is used. 10% of these criteria focus on waste prevention, notably: the use of indicators to monitor purchases and waste generation; waste prevention through technological choices, procurement decisions, and optimal machine maintenance; and encouragement of behavioural changes among workers.

In order to help entities to implement an environmental management system, the eco-dynamic scheme provides them with different practical tools, such as:

- Training sessions on environmental management and thematic trainings sessions (a.o. on waste prevention)
- Guide on environmental practices in organisations (private or public)
- Examples of eco-efficiency actions (included data on costs, savings, ...)
- Tool (excel file) to calculate and follow indicators of environmental impacts.

Resources (budget & staff): average yearly budget is increasing due to the growing number of participating entities : 150 000 € budgeted in 2010, average yearly staff : 2 full time equivalents

Results: The office charter (phase 1) mobilised 240 organizations with a total of some 30 to 40 000 workers, between 1994 and 1998.

In June 2010, the "Eco-dynamic" Label (phase 2) counted 99 applicant entities and 165 labeled entities, some of which have been renewed for the third time (the label is awarded for a 3-year period) Among the labeled entities there are 19 labelled hotels or hostels.

Main Difficulties:

- Requires a lot of promotion in order to increase the number of applicants.
- Benchmarking for different waste flows and business sectors on waste generation and the effect of waste prevention actions is possible but not yet done, due to lack of time.
- While the integration of waste prevention into other environmental issues (phase 2) enables the companies to adopt an overall approach it tends to give less visibility and thus less priority to waste aspects than the office charter (phase 1) did.

Further information in Pre-waste Mapping report or from ecodyn@ibgebim.be
www.bruxellesenvironnement.be → professionnels → Entreprises écodynamiques
List of ecodynamic hotels at: www.gouterbruxelles.be/spip.php?article349

European Ecolabel

The European Ecolabel also applies to hotels "Tourist Accommodation Service" and their criteria are relevant to this Good Practise.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/ecolabelled_products/categories/tourist_en.htm

The User Manual EU Eco-label for Tourist Accommodation Service standards includes criteria for waste separation, as well as regarding disposable products and breakfast packaging:

"19. Disposable products"

Unless required by law, disposable toiletries (not refillable) such as shampoo and soap, and other products (not reusable), such as shower caps, brushes, nail files, etc shall not be used. Where such disposable products are requested by law the applicant shall offer to guests both solutions and encourage them with appropriate communication to use the non-disposable products.

Disposable drinking systems (cups and glasses), plates and cutlery shall only be used if they made out of renewable raw materials and are biodegradable and compostable according to EN 13432.

Context

This criterion applies to the waste section and its aim is that to avoid unnecessary production of waste.

Condition for application

This criterion is applicable to all tourist accommodations providing the guest with toiletries and serving food and/or drink. Please note that dispensers are not considered disposable products.

Assessment and verification: The applicant shall provide a declaration of compliance with this criterion, together with relevant documentation explaining how the criterion is fulfilled (including any legislation requiring use of disposable products), and consistent documentation regarding the refillable products and/or on the information conveyed to the guests, concerning the encouragement to use nondisposable products (if applicable)

For demonstrating that disposable drinking systems (cups and glasses), plates and cutlery meet this criteria evidence of compliance with EN 13432 must be provided.

Compliance and documents to be attached

The applicant shall

- a. enquire if there is legislation requiring the tourist accommodation to provide the guest with disposable toiletries or other single-use products;
- b. declare whether it provides disposable cups, plates and cutlery and supply proof of compliance with EN 13432 of the products;
- c. identify alternatives, accordingly to legislation requirements, to provide the guest with nondisposable toiletries, the preferable solution are dispensers;
- d. provide an indication of any legislation in act and/or the alternatives provided for point a);
- e. provide a declaration of the adequate disposal for the disposable renewable, biodegradable and compostable products.

Electronic Verification Form: Mandatory Criteria, Row 47-50

Note: the items to which the criterion refers are those offered within the structure for internal use, not for outside sale in the shops.

20. Breakfast Packaging

Except where required by law, no single dose packages shall be used for breakfast or other food service, with the exception of dairy fat spreads (such as butter, margarine and soft cheese), chocolate and peanut butter spreads, and diet or diabetic jams and preserves.

Context This criterion refers to the waste management section and its aim is to reduce package waste from single breakfast/food packaging.

Condition for application This criterion is applicable to all tourist accommodations serving food and/or drink to guests.

Assessment and verification: The applicant shall provide a declaration of compliance with the criterion and a detailed explanation on how the accommodation fulfils, together with a list of single dose products used and the legislation requiring this.

Compliance and documents to be attached

The applicant shall

- a. enquire of any law requiring single dosage packages;
- b. substitute single dose packaging with some other solution, where not explicitly required by law;
- c. provide a detailed explanation on how the tourist accommodation fulfils the criterion;
- d. provide any other appropriate documentation.

Note: Some alternative ways of serving and offering food without compromising on health and safety

- *Protective Plexiglas shield over open food*
- *Dispensers for liquid spreads such as honey and certain types of jam and jelly*
- *Covered containers for spreads, yoghurt and other dairy products*
- *Cooled containers with transparent cover for fresh products*
- *Staff serving certain products on demand from the kitchen instead of keeping it on the table or the buffet*

7. Lessons learnt & recommendations

At national level, the project, is divided into small local networks adapted to the socio-economic context.

It was found that the operators are much more receptive to the requirements of applications in areas where there are parks (natural reserves) and in areas where the environmental interest of local/regional administrations is real and translating into concrete policy actions from which the whole community benefits and people are more willing to make investments in the environmental sector.

Opportunities & Challenges

The tourism sector strongly weighs on the waste production, considering the management methods that are adopted today. This is a great opportunity for waste prevention.

Tourism can also represent an important cultural tool in order to give a guidance for the guests' behaviour, influencing the attitudes and the awareness of tourists themselves.

For this reason, the sector has to be considered as strategic, and there is a need for reorganisation and education for a great number of tourism entrepreneurs.

Key factors of success

Ease to organize a service of “low waste quantity” and giving regulatory information about food safety, quality hygienic and food products offered in an aesthetically pleasing way.

We have to highlight all its food-ethic-environment values in contrast with single doses and disposable, seen as safer, and offered in a snappy way.

Reccomended improvements/adaptation

Involvement of social-economic local actors on waste prevention issue

Recommended indicators and monitoring

- Number of participating tourist accommodation infrastructures
- Numbers of actions implemented
- Kg of Waste and CO2 avoided...