

Local Entrepreneurs in Touristic Nature Areas - 5 Tips on Ecolabelling

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organisation



The Wadden Sea
World Heritage Site
since 2009



WADDEN SEA
WORLD HERITAGE

What are Ecolabels?

Tools which “provide information about a product or service in terms of its overall environmental character, a specific environmental aspect, or any number of aspects” (International Standards Organisation, ISO, 2000).

Ecolabels have been used to indicate the environmental aspects of products since 1928 with the introduction of the Demeter label for biodynamic food production

There are now well over 400 ecolabels worldwide (Ecolabel Index, 2020) that cover a range of products, services and business types.

What should you look for in an ecolabel?

- What types of business can the ecolabel certify?
- What is the geographical scope of the ecolabel?
- What are the environmental and social focus of the ecolabel?
 - Are these in line with the enterprises' targets for sustainable development?
 - Do they follow the International Standards Organisation (ISO) or GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council)?
- What are the monetary and human resource costs of certification and recertification?
- How trustworthy is the ecolabel, was it developed by a well-respected institution?

Summary table of main characteristics of Tourism Ecolabels. [Gov. = Government, FP = For Profit, NP = Not for Profit, NI = No Information, Var = Variable, * = excluding auditing costs, + = ISO plus GSTC and EMAS, a = Can be 3rd or 2nd party certified, b = 2nd party certified.]

	Scope		Cost		Other Characteristics				Areas of Tourism Covered													
	Europe/Glob bal	Limited	Minimum 3 Year Cost (Euros)	Months to achieve	Based on:	Awarding Body	3 rd Party Verified	Businesses Certified	Accommod ation	Activities	Attractions	Events	Food & Drink	Marinas	Tourism Bus.	Other Tourism	Supply Chain	Operators Tour	Tourism Offices	Tourism Shops	Transport	
EMAS	Eur		Var.	12	ISO	Gov.	Yes	3694	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ISO 14001:2015	Glob		Var.	NI	ISO	NP	Yes	30000 0	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Earthcheck	Glob		5100*	6-12	GSTC	FP	Yes	NI	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x
Biosphere	Eur		600*	1	GSTC	NP	Yes	216	x	x	x	x	x				x			x	x	x
Green Globe	Glob		1950*	3-6	ISO	FP	Yes	132	x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x
National Park Partnership Programme		DE	150*	3-6	Other	Gov.	Yes ^a	1400	x	x	x		x		x				x			x
Green Tourism		UK	591*	Var.	NI	NP	Yes	2415	x	x	x	x							x	x		
Ecotourism Norway		NO	585*	3-12	Other	Gov.	No ^b	15	x	x	x		x		x		x					
Eco-Lighthouse		NO	828*	2-3	NI	NP	Yes	5300	x	x		x	x									x
The Green Key	Glob		1500*	Var.	GSTC	NP	Yes	3100	x		x	x	x			x						
Nordic Swan		NO, DK	9000	3-6	ISO	Gov.	Yes	25000	x			x	x		x	x						
Tourcert	Glob		6800	8	ISO+	FP	Yes	340	x						x		x					
Certified Green Hotel		DE	7500*	1	NI	FP	Yes	107	x			x										
Dehoga		DE	715*	NI	NI	FP	Yes	120	x				x									
Global Sustainable Tourism Council	Glob		Var.	NI	GSTC	NP	Yes	>5000	x									x				
NEPCon	Glob		6640	4-6	GSTC	NP	Yes	90	x									x				
EU Ecolabel	Eur		1400*	2	ISO	Gov.	Yes	77358	x													
Green Sign		DE, NE	2370*	1.5	ISO+	FP	Yes	225	x													
Travelife	Glob		960*	1	GSTC	FP	Yes	975	x													
Green Table		DE	240	0.5	NI	NP	Yes	90					x									

Ecolabel	The Green Key
Established	1994
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Non-Profit, Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Denmark
Website	https://www.greenkey.global/
Geographical Scope	Global, most prominent in Netherlands and Denmark.
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Attractions, Conference Centres, Restaurants, Campsite and Holiday Parks, Hotels and Hostels, Small Accommodation, Supply Chain
Cost for 3 years of certification	1500 Euros minimum for three years (excluding any additional auditing costs) www.greenkey.global/costs-policies
Duration of Certification	1 year (for 1 st two years then certified for 3-year periods)
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3 rd party verified
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	Over 3100 across 66 countries
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	GSTC accredited



Ecolabel	Partner Nationale Naturlandschaften
Established	2008
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Governmental (authorities of national parks/biosphere reserves), Germany
Website	http://partner.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/
Geographical Scope	Germany (within a national park/biosphere reserve)
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Accommodation & gastronomy, destination management organisations, agriculture, nature experience, education
Cost for 3 years of certification	150-2700 Euros for three years certification, depending on the size of the business.
Duration of Certification	3 years maximum
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	Varying 2 nd or 3 rd party , depending on national park.
Focus of Criteria	Range of Environmental, excluding wildlife/biodiversity, and socio-economic criteria covered
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	More than 1400
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	Minimum standards set by umbrella organisation Nationale Naturlandschaften e.V. (National Natural Landscapes)

**Nationale
Naturlandschaften**



Ecolabel	Green Tourism Business Scheme
Established	1997
Type of Ecolabel Awarding Body	Not for Profit, Green Business UK
Website	www.green-tourism.com
Geographical Scope	United Kingdom and Ireland
Areas of Tourism Covered by the Ecolabel	Attractions, Activity Providers, Bed & Breakfast, Conferences/Events, Corporate Offices, Guest Houses, Holiday Parks, Hostels, Hotels, Restaurants and Pubs, Retail, Self-Catering, Serviced Apartments, Serviced Accommodation, Venues
Cost for 3 years of certification	591 Euros for three years http://www.green-tourism.com/fees
Time to Achieve Certification	Online Application (no onsite audit)
Duration of Certification	Annual renewal
Verification of Ecolabel Applications	3 rd Party
Focus of Criteria	Wide range of environmental/social criteria covered less focus on economic sustainability
Number of Businesses (products) Awarded to	2415 (2011 figure)
Ecolabel Development - Standards followed?	No Information



More information on Ecolabels

Prowad Link Ecolabel Report – Tippett, Arron Wilde; Yttredal, Else Ragni; Strand, Øivind. (2020) [Ecolabelling for tourism enterprises: What, why and how.](#)

Ecolabel Index (<http://www.ecolabelindex.com/>) is the largest database of ecolabels covering over 400 ecolabels across the globe.

Destinet (<https://destinet.eu/>) is an EU funded Sustainable Tourism knowledge hub, which includes a database of tourism ecolabels.



Thank you!

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References

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