

BIODIVERSITY SELF-CHECK

Tourist accommodations



European Living Lakes Association (ELLA)



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With the help of this biodiversity self-assessment, you, as a hotel, will be able to determine your commitment to biodiversity conservation and identify potential areas for action.

Intact nature and biodiversity are the pillars of tourism and are fundamental to the economic success of a tourist accommodation. The beauty of natural landscapes attracts large numbers of visitors, tourism needs clean water and clean air as well as healthy and tasty food so biodiversity is one of tourism's greatest assets - it is its natural capital. Tourism therefore depends on biodiversity, and tourism has not only the obligation but also the need to protect it. This task is responsibility of everyone involved in tourism, as the loss of ecosystems such as forests and wetlands, the overexploitation of natural resources and the drastic decline of animal and plant species in the around the world have not stopped.

Biodiversity is colourful and heart-warming. There are multiple options through which tourist accommodations can become involved in protecting it: by disseminating information about the region's nature to guests, training staff on biodiversity issues or the natural design of buildings and outdoor facilities, enhancing the well-being of guests and creating biodiversity refuges, etc. Supporting conservation projects contributes to protecting the destination's natural capital.

Negative effects on biodiversity can be minimized in tourist accommodations by reducing and properly managing waste, treating wastewater, using certified products and materials and offering high quality environmental products and services. Most of the measures you are taking for climate protection are also positive for biodiversity – and vice versa. Biodiversity offers so called “nature based solutions” addressing climate mitigation and also adaptation to the impacts of climate change, e.g. the biodiversity friendly green roof or façade. It is useful, to revise your climate strategy and look for synergies.

Environmental quality as a selection criterion is gaining importance among tourists, and their expectations of tourism offers with regard to biodiversity protection are becoming increasingly high. This increased environmental sensitivity means that quality seals and certificates have to meet a greater number of biodiversity protection criteria.


The biodiversity self-check

- offers tourist accommodations the opportunity to identify their biodiversity hotspots and determine their current impact on biodiversity.
- includes proposals for practical measures that contribute to the conservation of local biodiversity.
- contains references to best practice examples, key stakeholders, legal bases and standards compiled on the DestiNet tourism and sustainability platform (www.destinet.eu)
- contains the lexicon collected in the knowledge database www.destinet.eu
- covers the areas in which an accommodation can have an impact on biodiversity: purchasing/supply chain, customer information, buildings and outdoor facilities, education and training, protected areas and landscape development, management and corporate social commitment.
- is the first step towards the integration of biodiversity as an aspect of the company's environmental management.

What is biodiversity?


Biodiversity or biological diversity refers to the variety of life on Earth. This includes the diversity of plants, animals and genetic diversity, as well as the diversity of habitats.




Biodiversity-related areas	Completed	In preparation	Not completed	Costs	Links and Knowledge Base
 Purchasing/supply chain					
<p>Printing material and stationery products (restaurant menus, napkins, toilet paper, printer paper, etc.) are of recycled and/or certified origin.</p>				😊	<p>- Sustainable wood and paper products (FSC)</p>
<p>The hotel does not sell souvenirs made from endangered animal or plant species or any of their components.</p>				😊	<p>- Endangered species worldwide: - Information on CITES - CITES Checklist</p>
<p>The restaurant uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified sea fish, certified fish from aquaculture or fish from the region that is caught or farmed in an environmentally friendly manner and can be verified. • Certified organic and/or locally grown products produced in an environmentally friendly manner. • Products with sustainability or fair traded certification that are not grown in the country/region (e.g., coffee, tea, chocolate). • Products produced with respect for animal welfare. 				😊	<p>- Marine Stewardship Council. Certified sustainable fish and seafood seal (MSC). - Aquaculture Stewardship Council. Certified farmed seafood seal (ASC) - Examples of sustainability labels: Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade, GEPA - Organic Standards with ambitious biodiversity criteria: Bioland, Demeter, Naturland - For conventional produced products: certified with the Global G.A.P Biodiversity Add-On Standard; 4C Coffee Standard</p>
<p>Hotel and restaurant avoid the use of plastic cups, plates, bottles and bags and uses alternative materials (e.g. banana leaf plates, Drinking water dispenser on each floor, re-fill bottles as a gift for the guests).</p>					
<p>Floral ornaments are regional or sustainably certified.</p>				😊	<p>Examples of sustainability labels for flowers and plants: - Fair Flowers Fair Plants</p>
<p>Measures are taken to minimize food waste.</p>				😊	<p>https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/restaurant-food-waste/ https://www.upmenu.com/blog/reduce-food-waste/ https://foodprint.org/blog/restaurants-food-waste/</p>
<p>Detergents used are biodegradable.</p>				😊	
<p>Towels, sheets and table linen are mainly made of organic cotton.</p>					<p>- Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)</p>
<p>In regions with water scarcity: - detailed information on water sources is requested. - the company exerts its influence on the responsible authorities to ensure the implementation of a drinking water source(s) management plan and to ensure monitoring by a neutral entity</p>					<p>https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/water-scarcity</p>



	Completed	In preparation	Not completed	Costs	Links and Knowledge Base
Biodiversity-related areas					
i Guest information					
Guests are informed about biodiversity of the region and receive recommendations on appropriate behaviour to avoid damaging biodiversity.				😊	Many positive examples. One of them is https://www.galoresort.com/sustainability
Guests are offered the opportunity to actively participate in conservation projects in the region and/or support the projects financially.				😊	Example: Lake District Foundation: https://www.lakedistrictfoundation.org/
The hotel offers activities to explore nature and the biodiversity of the region in a respectful way.					
No visits to dolphin or orca shows or other activities where animal welfare is disregarded and a suitable environment for the animals is not guaranteed.				😊	- Guide to good practices for animal welfare in the tourism sector
The customer satisfaction questionnaire includes questions related to biodiversity. The results will be available for biodiversity monitoring in the region.					
🏠 Buildings and outdoor facilities (when applicable)					
The exterior surface (at least 30%) is designed and maintained in a natural way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding pesticides and herbicides Promoting structural diversity and wilderness in certain areas of the facility (unmowed grass margins, dead wood, dry stone walls, hedgerows with native shrubs, etc.). Using of native plants Having facades and roofs with natural coverings 					Recommendations for measures and positive examples see: https://www.biodiversity-premises.eu/en/
The company has information on invasive alien species in the region.					Many countries publish guidelines on invasive alien species, e.g. Hungary = https://termeszetvedelem.hu/invasive-alien-species/ http://www.iucngisd.org/gisd/100_worst.php
An inventory of habitats (e.g. ponds, meadows, hedgerows) on the premises is available and their condition and development is known (photographic documentation).					
Every 2 – 3 years, monitoring of 1 – 2 indicator species (animal or plant) is carried out.					The regional nature conservation authority or the NGO can support the selection of appropriate key indicator species and finding an expert for the monitoring
Construction, materials and interior design					
No use of materials/products from endangered species (non-certified wood, stones from non-sustainable sources) during construction.				😊	- Sustainable wood and paper products (FSC) - Fair Stone for more sustainably produced stone material

	Completed	In preparation	Not completed	Costs	 Links and Knowledge Base
Biodiversity-related areas					
Certified materials such as furniture and flooring with FSC certification are used for the interior design. No materials/products prohibited by the CITES International Convention are used.					- Sustainable wood and paper products (FSC) - Information on CITES - CITES Checklist
<i>In case of new construction: An environmental impact assessment (EIA) will be carried out with a special focus on impacts on local biodiversity.</i>					
<i>In regions where there is no adequate waste and wastewater treatment, the company exerts a strong influence to improve this situation.</i>				😊	
Education / Training					
Nature conservation and biodiversity are an important part of staff training.					
Protected areas and landscape development					
<p>If the tourist accommodation is located in a protected area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitats and endangered species in the area are known Activities that threaten ecologically sensitive species or areas are not offered or will be offered for very limited groups and with qualified guides. 					- International map of protected areas EU Natura2000 sites: https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/
<i>The requirements and restrictions for tourism activities are taken into account (e.g. requirements of the protected area's management plan).</i>				😊	
<i>The company encourages authorities in its region to include biodiversity protection in tourism planning.</i>				😊	
Commitment					
<i>The company is involved in the protection of endangered ecosystems, animals and plants by supporting (financially) protective measures.</i>					- International Red List of Endangered Species (IUCN) Example: Lake District Foundation: https://www.lakedistrictfoundation.org/
<i>Staff is encouraged to participate in biodiversity protection projects (corporate volunteering).</i>					https://www.goodera.com/blog/corporate-volunteerism-guide
<i>The company encourages other tourism stakeholders to commit to the protection of threatened ecosystems, animals and plants in the region.</i>				😊	
Strategy/management					

Biodiversity-related areas	Completed	In preparation	Not completed	Costs	Links and Knowledge Base 
<i>The company is aware of and respects tourism regulations regarding conservation and environmental protection.</i>				😊	
<i>The company is aware of the authorities responsible for nature conservation.</i>				😊	
<i>One staff person is responsible for managing and monitoring the implementation of biodiversity-related activities as well as the impact of these activities.</i>					
<i>The company is familiar with sustainable tourism certificates.</i>				😊	
<i>The company encourages those responsible for tourism management in the region to establish objectives for the conservation and promotion of biodiversity.</i>					

The road to becoming a biodiversity-friendly tourist accommodation - 10 steps to a successful engagement

1. Are you environmentally engaged? Use the biodiversity self-check to determine your current commitment. All measures that are already being implemented can be counted in the "**Completed**" column and those that are planned for the near future in the "**In preparation**" column.

2. If you answered most of the questions with "**Completed**" or "**In preparation**", your company has already started to take steps towards biodiversity protection - congratulations, you are on the right track! You can find more suggestions on how to intensify this commitment at www.destinet.eu.

3. Make your company an example of good practice and a model for others. You will find a form for the submission of your measures as a model on DestiNet (in German - sorry): <http://destinet.eu/topics/natural-cultural-heritage/biodiversity/germany/gute-praxis>

Are you not only committed to biodiversity but also to other environmental aspects? Then apply for a national or international sustainability certificate. You will find more information on seals, certificates, regulations and calls for applications in the knowledge database.

5. As a certified best practice example, it will be published in DestiNet - a source of information for travel agencies and "green" online booking portals.

6. If you answered "**Not completed**" to most of the questions, you should increase your commitment. There are many measures for biodiversity protection that can be implemented without much effort.

7. Every start is easy! Determine what you would like to implement in the short, medium and long term. The measures that require a minimum investment (human, financial) are marked in the list with a 😊 symbol.

8. Other recommendations for biodiversity protection can be found in "Biodiversity criteria for tourism: recommendations for standards, labels and competitions": <http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=226>.

9. Get advice and support! In the DestiNet knowledge base there is a selection of national and international contacts ("Who is Who?") - contact NGOs and administrations involved in nature conservation in your country! Global Nature Fund experts can conduct an in-depth Biodiversity Check.

10. Recommend the "biodiversity self-check" to others. Apart from your involvement in the areas of your operation, contribute in some other way to sustainable tourism in your country.