



Norwegian Ecotourism Certification

First edition 2007

Foreword

Ecotourism is a means of running a business in which distinct local features and respect for nature, cultural heritage, environmental conservation and the local community are all important ingredients.

In this document, you will find the criteria of the new Norwegian certification scheme for ecotourism companies. For small-scale tourism businesses in Norway, these criteria will be useful pegs on which to hang product development; at the same time, a certification of the business can be the key to a new marketing tool and can lead to a fresh approach to business development!

Ecotourism is a growing global “brand”! International collaboration among ecotourism associations around the world is important to ensure good quality and a high environmental profile on ecotourism products and businesses. This is also an important measure in strengthening ecotourism as a recognised, global brand and seal of quality. Throughout the world an increasing number of national quality brands are now paving the way for good quality assurance and a high environmental profile of ecotourism products. In Norway, as in most other “new” ecotourism countries, the criteria are based on recommendations from The International Ecotourism Association and (TIES) the UN principles for ecotourism, issued in 2002. But most important of all, our own Norwegian outdoor traditions and people’s close relation to nature and culture have set the key frameworks in developing Norwegian ecotourism ,

“You don’t become an ecotourism business for nothing!” said one of the Ecotourism Norway pilot businesses. Yes, it *should* require something to become a certified ecotourism business. In Norway, we have other environmental and quality labels in tourism, and the ecotourism concept distinguishes itself from these, not just by being an environmental brand or a sign of quality, but by being a complete concept focusing on “offering memorable experiences and being a good tourism operator” – for guests, employees, the environment and the local population.

The criteria in this document are developed by GRIP, in close collaboration with tourism businesses in our dedicated ecotourism test group, the Directorate for Nature Management, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Innovation Norway/the National Tourist Board and many other stakeholders in Norwegian tourism.. Thanks to all of you for being a part of the team!

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Yours sincerely,

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Criteria for Norwegian Ecotourism certification

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What is ecotourism?

«Ecotourism is enriching nature and cultural experiences, organised by responsible tourism companies with consideration for their guests, the environment and the local community that they are a part of»

Seven basic principles for Norwegian ecotourism

An ecotourism business:

1. **is nature and culture based** and has ecotourism as an underlying philosophy for all its business activities.
2. **contributes actively to nature and culture conservation**, is aware of its own effect on the environment and always practices a precautionary attitude.
3. **is run as sustainably as possible**, constantly balancing ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations.
4. **contributes positively in the local community**, uses the local workforce, local products and services, works for increased collaboration and shows a general responsibility towards the community.
5. **contributes to preserving listed buildings and has local adaptation, local architectural style and distinctiveness as a general goal** in its choice of materials and solutions.
6. **places particularly high demands on hosts and guides**, and communications and interpretation is a central part of the product.
7. **offers memorable experiences and creates meeting places** that give employees and guests insight into local culture, community and environment.

1 Quality and management

1.1 Management

1.1.1 The business's vision

The business has a written vision that is deeply rooted in the founding principles of ecotourism. The vision is published on the business's website.

1.1.2 Overview of competence

The business has an overview of the relevant education/training and experience of each individual employee.

1.1.3 Safety and quality

A simple risk analysis is prepared for the business's various activities regarding quality, effects on the environment, and safety. Possible undesired events - with consequences and countermeasures - are listed.

The business has a "back-up" plan to ensure the best possible implementation and management of the guests' requirements in the case of unforeseen circumstances.

The business has a readiness plan for calling emergency services in the event of an accident.

All participants, managers and assistants use the necessary safety equipment.

Correct use of equipment is demonstrated with tour managers and guests before the activity begins.

Advance information is provided concerning what the organiser is responsible for, and what the participants themselves must provide in terms of safety equipment.

The business has practices to ensure that safety is evaluated according to the activity conducted, where this is relevant.

At least one employee who has first aid training takes part in each organised activity, and first aid equipment is available at all times.

The business can refer to practices and/or measures as documentation to ensure that requirement 1.1.3 is met.

1.1.4 Insurance

The business and all employees are appropriately insured.

Participants in all activities receive clear information as to whether or not they are insured by the organiser.

1.2 Follow-up and reporting

1.2.1 Ecotourism log

The business's guides keep a simple log of organised activities, focusing on quality assurance, environment and the guest's experience.

1.2.2 Guest feedback

Guests are invited to give feedback and tips as to how to improve the experience, quality and environment, either through questionnaires or other methods.

1.2.3 Annual review

Once a year, the ecotourism criteria, guidelines log (1.2.1) and guest feedback (1.2.2) will be reviewed, and various plans (1.2.3) will be updated as a basis for further quality assurance and development of the ecotourism business.

1.2.4 Status report

A short status report is sent annually to Norwegian Ecotourism. The annual review (requirement 1.2.3) forms the basis for the status report.

1.3 Planning

1.3.1 Laws, regulations and other relevant requirements

The business also has an overview of laws, regulations and other relevant requirements concerning its business and areas of operation.

The overview is available to the business's employees. It is reviewed annually and updated when necessary.

1.3.2 Overview of nature's assets

The business has an overview of the relevant assets of nature (plants, wildlife, cultivated landscape, etc.) that can be a resource for product development.

The business has particular knowledge of species or areas that are endangered or that can be negatively affected by the business's activities.

The overview is available to the business's employees. It is reviewed annually and updated when necessary.

1.3.3 Overview of cultural assets

The business has an overview of cultural assets (local culture, cultural heritage, cultural environment, etc.) that can be a resource for product development.

The business has particular knowledge of vulnerable cultural assets that can be negatively affected by the business's activity.

The overview is available to the business's employees. It is reviewed annually and updated when necessary.

1.4 Basic competence and training

1.4.1 Local knowledge

All employees, including sub-suppliers of activities, have good local knowledge of the destination and of the areas to be used.

The business has implemented measures to ensure good local knowledge.

1.4.2 Basic knowledge

All employees have thorough knowledge as to the business's ecotourism profile – and principles, service and the role of the host, and relevant safety requirements.

The business's employees have been given a definitive list of what is required of them in order for the business to be ecotourism certified.

The business has also implemented measures to ensure employees' necessary basic knowledge.

1.4.3 Staff assembly

The business has held a staff assembly where clarification of the ecotourism profile and the business's fulfilment of the ecotourism requirements were presented and discussed.

The employees have become familiar with the importance of meeting the requirements of ecotourism, their own quality goals, and customer requirements, at all times.

The employee assembly takes place at the beginning of each season, more often if required, but a minimum of once a year.

This requirement applies to companies who have employees or other relevant collaborative partners.

Documentation through minutes and formal description.

1.4.4 Questions from guests

The business has implemented measures to ensure that all employees are prepared for, and can answer, questions from guests and others as to what ecotourism is, and how the requirements of ecotourism are fulfilled.

Customer satisfaction is measured and corrective action taken where necessary.

1.4.5 Requirement of sub-suppliers

All sub-suppliers have been provided with a definitive list of what is required of them in order for the business to be ecotourism certified.

For requirements of preferred suppliers services/activities, see 2.2.3.

1.5 Requirement for internal and freelance guides/tour managers

1.5.1 Quality requirements for guides

The business has defined its own requirements for guides.

1.5.2 The Right to Roam and the Act relating to nature conservation

The business has implemented measures to ensure that all guides have detailed knowledge of the Right to Roam and the Act relating to nature conservation.

1.5.3 Documented knowledge

Internal and freelance guides have guide experience and/or they have completed relevant training that gives them necessary knowledge. It is documented through the overview of competence ref. 1.1.2.

All independent tour managers have a minimum documented proficiency in the applicable activity and knowledge in

- Communication and story-telling
- Norwegian Ecotourism's requirements for approved companies
- Local community and history
- Local area and the areas that are used
- Endangered species and local conservation areas
- Local cultural heritage and cultural environments
- Relevant legislation
- Relevant safety knowledge

1.5.4 Self declaration of guides

All recruited guides must have acknowledged in writing that they themselves are responsible for

- Providing inspiration and effective communication of knowledge.
- Ensuring that the principles and requirements of ecotourism are adhered to in all activities.
- Keeping a log of all arranged activities and paying particular attention to wear and tear, damage to nature, cultural heritage, signs of disturbance of fauna and environmental criminality.
- Being aware of your role as host and the safety of the guests, at all times.

1.5.5 Guide handbook

The business has a folder/file compiling all information that the business's guides should have knowledge of.

2 Running an ecotourism business

2.1 Environmental impact of business operations

2.1.1 Overview of use of resources

The business has an overview of

1. Energy consumption
2. Use of and need for chemicals
3. Types and amounts of waste
4. Use of and need for transport

The overview is updated annually and the previous year's documentation is saved.

2.1.2 About practices – in general

The business has practices that ensure environmental improvement in efficiency of energy and transport use, and ensures that the amounts of waste and the use of chemicals are minimised. See also purchasing requirements.

2.2 Purchasing

2.2.1 Choose the most environmentally friendly alternatives

The business has practices which always demand and prioritise the most environmentally friendly alternatives that satisfy the business's requirements, and strengthen the business's environmental profile. This can be products/services that are:

- Local services/locally produced products (local products and local businesses/traditions/distinctiveness), cf. requirement 4.2.4.
- Ecological products
- Environmentally labelled products and services (Swan label, EU flower label, Debio label or other official environmental labels that are relevant in Norway)
- 'Fair and ethical business' products
- Recycling of buildings and used furniture, equipment and material.

2.2.2 Awareness of endangered species and protected cultural heritage

The business has practices to never purchase or use goods or products that are completely or partly made of endangered/vulnerable species or that can lead to damage to listed/protected cultural heritage or other protected articles/materials.

2.2.3 Sub-suppliers of services

All preferred sub-suppliers in connection with operation, food, overnight stays, transport and activities, will at a minimum, satisfy the relevant, obligatory requirements in this

document, or are able to document that they fulfil the requirements of the Swan label, EU flower, or the Environmental Lighthouse for relevant services.

2.3 Energy consumption in buildings

Renewable energy in this context means non-fossil energy sources such as hydropower, bioenergy (wood, chippings, bio-pellets and biogas), heat pumps, wind power, wave and tidal power plants, solar or others).

2.3.1 Energy consumption

The business has taken measures to ensure that its energy consumption is minimised.

Heating boilers purchased during the period in which the certification applies, have at least 90% efficiency.

2.3.2 Renewable energy sources

At least 80% of the business's energy consumption comes from renewable, non-fossil energy sources. Documentation of total energy consumption, as well as distribution of energy sources, is submitted.

Exception: Svalbard (Spitsbergen)

2.3.3 "Green power"

The business purchases power from renewable energy sources with a certification of origin.

Exception: Svalbard (Spitsbergen)

2.3.4 Air conditioning

Air conditioning for cooling rented apartments or storerooms is not used.

2.3.5 Lighting

75% of all light bulbs are replaced by low-energy bulbs upon first approval. (class A cf. EU Directive 98/11/EF)

Upon second approval, all light bulbs are low-energy bulbs.

Exception: Historic lamps that cannot, or should not, be changed to low-energy bulbs.

2.3.6 Shower/bath

All tap mixers/shower heads have "economy heads".

2.3.7 Saunas

Saunas are heated using renewable energy.

2.3.8 Wooden bath tubs and jacuzzis

Water for wooden bath tubs and jacuzzis is heated using renewable energy.

2.3.9 Swimming pools

Heating of outdoor swimming pools is not permitted.

2.3.10 De-icing roads and farmyards

Electric de-icing is not used for defrosting/de-icing of roads, farmyards or other external areas.

2.4 Use of chemicals

2.4.1 Cleaning methods

Procedures are in place for washing and cleaning to ensure that environmentally damaging chemicals are not used for cleaning purposes.

Exception: Where it is a legal requirement to use chlorine or other health and environmentally damaging chemicals for disinfecting.

2.4.2 Detergents and cleaning products

At least 80% of cleaning products used are environmentally labelled. Approved environmentally friendly brands are the Swan label and the EU flower.

2.4.3 Dosage

There are practices and training regarding the correct dosage and use of detergents, dish washing liquids, and other possible chemicals.

2.4.4 Chemical toilets

Chemical toilets are not used by an ecotourism business.

2.4.5 Gritting of roads and areas

Salt or other chemicals are not used for defrosting/de-icing roads and farmyards.

2.4.6 Insect and pest repellents

Biodegradable materials are used for pest control.

If this is not effective, pest control is contacted, who then implement the necessary measures using the least environmentally damaging methods possible.

2.4.7 Gardens and outdoor areas

Outdoor areas are tended without the use of chemical plant protection products.

For fertilisation, a fertiliser that is environmentally approved for ecological farming is used.

2.4.8 Environmentally labelled paper

All purchased toilet paper, kitchen paper and office paper is environmentally labelled. Approved environmental labels are the Swan label and the EU flower.

2.5 Waste reduction:

2.5.1 Disposable articles and batch packaging

Disposable products must not be used, kept in possession, or sold to the guests. This applies to single-portion food packages, disposable cups, plates and cutlery that can be replaced with other, more durable products.

Exception: When it is a legal requirement, or other solutions cannot be found.

2.5.2 Recycling of textiles, furniture and equipment

The business has practices to ensure that used, usable textiles, furniture, electronic equipment and suchlike are sold, or given away, instead of being thrown away.

2.5.3 Paper use

The business has practices that reduce the use of paper: This can be

- Communication via the internet
- Invoicing by e-mail
- Double-sided copying and printing

2.5.4 Returnable bottles, recyclable bottles and other packaging

The business purchases in bulk where appropriate, according to requirements.

All glass, aluminium and plastic drinking containers are returnable or are delivered for recycling.

The business has practices for delivering packaging for recycling or re-use, regarding what is possible, locally.

2.5.5 Disposable barbecues

Disposable barbecues are not allowed to be used or sold to guests.

2.6 The business's waste management

2.6.1 Waste separation

The business separates waste into the categories handled by the local system.

2.6.2 Overview of dangerous waste

The business has developed a list of dangerous waste and has practices for its safe management.

2.6.3 Disposal of dangerous waste

The business's employees sort dangerous waste and provide the correct management and disposal of it.

2.6.4 Separation of guests' waste

In companies that have a set plant or base, there are bins or other internal waste management systems, where the guests can sort waste in accordance with the local systems.

The guests are provided with information on waste separation.

2.7 Transport

2.7.1 Collective transport

Updated information concerning possible collective and/or other more environmentally friendly means of transport is available for resident guests and on the business's website.

2.7.2 Basic requirements for use of motor vehicles

The business has practices that ensure that the use of motor vehicles is kept to a minimum.

The business has practices to meet the guidelines for "economical driving". Relevant employees have been given information and necessary training.

Transport of guests and equipment in outlying areas is not by motorised means of transport.

Organised activities are not motor based.

Other rules for the use and purchase of motor vehicles and exceptions to requirement 2.7.2 can be seen below. Types of motor vehicles that are not listed in these criteria are not permitted.

2.7.3 Purchase of motor vehicles

On purchasing motor vehicles, environmentally friendly vehicles are selected that, as a minimum, fulfil the following requirements regarding climate emissions:

- Cars meet the Euro 4 requirement and can emit a maximum of 140g of CO₂ per kilometre.
- Cars with four-wheel drive meet the Euro 4 requirement and can emit a maximum of 180g of CO₂ per kilometre.
- Vans/dual-purpose cars/minibuses meet the Euro 4 requirement.
- Buses meet the Euro 4 requirement.
- Boats and snow scooters have four-cycle engines which fulfil the highest environmental requirements for petrol use and emissions. So-called day/cabin cruisers/off-road jeeps are not permitted.

2.7.4 Exception: Vintage vehicles

Vintage cars and boats that are over 30 years old and have a special cultural value can be approved upon application.

2.7.5 Exception: Use of motor vehicles for transport of goods

Cars and motorboats: cars and motorboats are permitted regarding the transport of operational equipment. Use of motorboats applies on seas, rivers and lakes where general use of motorboats is permitted.

Snow scooters: Transport by snow scooter for operational equipment cargoes is permitted

- in open scooter tracks in the counties of North Troms and Finnmark, or
- for other special permits for a limited number of trips in given routes in areas outside North Troms and Finnmark.

In Svalbard (Spitzbergen) it is not possible to apply for dispensation for snow scooter use within approved scooter-free areas.

All snow scooters and boats with four-cycle engines and the use of all permitted motor vehicles must also satisfy requirements 2.7.2 and 2.7.3.

2.7.6 Exception: Use of motor vehicles for transport of guests

Cars: cars and buses are permitted for the transport of guests.

Motorboats on sea: motor boats *on sea* are permitted for the transport of guests. Transport of guests for organised activities is covered by requirement 2.7.7.

Motorboats on rivers and lakes: In rivers and on lakes where motorboats are generally permitted and where there are no relevant alternatives, a motorboat can be used to transport guests *upon arrival and departure*.

Snow scooters: For businesses that have particularly limited access during the winter, and where no appropriate alternatives currently exist - on the basis of an application – use of snow scooters can be permitted for transport of guests *upon arrival and departure*. For second ecotourism approval, non-motorised transport accounts for at least 2/3 of the season's guest transport (measured in number of people).

Businesses cannot apply for dispensation for driving where general permission does not apply. In Svalbard (Spitsbergen) it is not possible to apply for dispensation for snow scooter use within approved scooter-free areas.

All snow scooters and boats with four-cycle engines and the use of all permitted motor vehicles must also satisfy requirements 2.7.2 and 2.7.3.

2.7.7 Exception: Use of motor boats for organised activities

In relation to organised group activities at sea, motorboats with drivers can be used as a means of transport. The following boat types/motor sizes are permitted:

- Small boats with four-cycle engines up to 17 feet: Max engine 15hp.
 - Smacks or similar boat types: Max engine 25hp.
 - Traditional fishing boats up to 50 feet. Effective speed: max 8 knots (equates to approx. 15 km/hour).
 - The vehicle satisfies the same requirements as “on use and purchase of motor vehicles”, cf. requirements 2.7.2 and 2.7.3
- In cases where a motorboat is used, the activity must fulfil the following additional requirements:
 - The activity has a particularly high level of guidance and instruction.
 - The boat is the means of transport, not the main experience.

2.7.8 Exception: Rental of small boats

Companies that offer the rental of rowing boats and/or sail boats, can in addition, offer the rental of small, four-cycle engine boats:

- The maximum amount of motorboats must not exceed 50% of the total number of rental boats.
- The maximum horsepower regarding boat size:
 - 15 foot boats: max. 10hp
 - 16-17 foot boats: max. 15hp

When renting boats, the business has practices for registering the users and for where and for how long the guests plan to be out, mobile phone numbers and a signed “own responsibility” waiver.

Information is provided on “economical” use of the motor and on conduct at sea – and maps and necessary safety equipment must always be used.

2.7.9 Non-motorised means of transport

When using non-motorised means of transport, for transport or for the activity, practices ensuring respect for the environment, wildlife and other people in the area are adhered to.

2.7.10 Climate quotas

The business purchases climate quotas for using motorised vehicles regarding its own operation and activity-related transport.

When using motor vehicles for activity-related transport, the climate quota portion must be specified in the guests account.

Clear information regarding the chance to purchase voluntary “climate quotas” for journeys to and from the destination can be found on the business’s website.

3 Use of nature and culture

3.1 Interaction with nature and the cultural landscape

3.1.1 Planning of activities

Activities are planned and organised with the goal of having the least possible need for motor vehicles regarding transport to and from the activity. See also 2.7.

3.1.2 Practices for activity and interaction

The business has practices which ensure that activities and interaction do not lead to wear and tear on nature or the cultural landscape.

The business has guidelines that ensure responsible conduct regarding visits to cultural heritage sites and other cultural environments.

3.1.3 Choice of route

At the risk of negatively affecting wildlife, vegetation, cultural heritage and the cultural environment as a result of the business's activity, transport will be channelled so as to avoid the area.

3.1.4 Size of group and visit frequency

The business has set a maximum limit for safe group sizes for the various activities and excursions. This is devised with consideration for disturbance, wear and tear, and safety and with consideration for communication and quality of experience for its own guests and other visitors to the area.

The business has practices which ensure that the size of the group and the frequency of visits does not exceed what is considered safe, in relation to the environment and the quality of the experience.

3.1.5 Noise

The business has guidelines for internal tour guides and can document measures that must ensure that interaction and activity in nature leads to the least amount of noise possible – in respect of the participants, of others who are out in nature and in consideration of wildlife.

3.1.6 Picnics and camping

The business prioritises the use of existing picnic and campsites where they are available, and has practices to ensure that picnicking and camping do not lead to permanent, negative influences on the surroundings.

3.1.7 Barbequing and lighting fires

Set fire areas must be used on repeated excursions to the same area.

The business has practices to ensure that barbequing and lighting fires does not occur on or up against ruins, stone walls or rock faces, etc. Disposable barbeques are not permitted, cf. 2.5.5.

3.1.8 Litter

The business has implemented measures to ensure that waste is not left in the area where the organised activity and interaction occurs. This applies to both personnel and guests.

3.1.9 Sanitary conditions

Where there are no toilets, sanitary waste must be composted or buried. Larger, fixed camping areas must have toilets.

3.1.10 Labelling/signposting

The business does not put up signs or other labelling in the countryside.

Exception: Where it is in the interests of safety or on organised nature trails and suchlike, a separate need for some form of fixed information in nature, the following requirements must be fulfilled:

- Necessary permission must be sought.
- Signposting/labelling must be done in accordance with relevant authorities and in a such a way that does not appear to spoil and disturb nature and the cultural environment.
- Temporary labelling must be removed immediately after use.

3.2 Interaction with wildlife

3.2.1 Disturbance of wildlife

The business has guidelines and training which ensures that activities and interaction cause minimal disturbance to wild animals' natural behaviour and minimal stress on wild animals.

3.2.2 General guidelines when coming into contact with wild animals

The business has practices which ensure that the following points are adhered to by organisers and guests:

- Never move between adult animals and their young.
- Never surround a single animal, or a group of animals. Animals must always be able to move away from you.
- Always be careful and keep your distance, animals must not be put under stress.
- Never try to touch wild animals.
- Never scare wild animals.

3.2.3 Guidelines when coming into contact with sea mammals

The business has practices which ensure that the following points are adhered to by organisers and guests:

- Approach from the side, slowly, max. 5 knots.
- Switch the engine off at least 100 metres from the animals.
- Max 3 boats in a 100-metre radius from the animals.
- Keep the lowest possible noise level: do not rev the engine, do not use a depth finder, do not use a horn.
- Leave the area slowly, and increase your speed gradually after a 400-metre distance from the animals.

3.2.4 Feeding of wild animals

Wild animals should not be fed as a way to get them to approach.

3.2.5 Organiser's responsibility

The business is responsible for the tour managers being careful and keeping sufficient distance from wild animals, so that unnecessary disturbance can be avoided. Ref. requirement 1.5.4.

3.3 Harvesting nature

3.3.1 Viable gleaning, hunting and fishing

Norwegian ecotourism companies can offer activities that include viable harvesting of sustainable resources.

Exception: Hunting of mammals in the sea.

The business exercises particular caution in cases where there can be doubt as to the resource's limit and always practices an extensive precautionary attitude.

3.3.2 Information about harvesting

Companies that offer harvesting as an activity must give their guests information as to which species can be harvested and which cannot.

If harvesting is part of an activity, in communication with guests and guides, importance must be placed on informing them that you must "not harvest more than you need".

Harvesting as an ecotourism product is for the guests' own consumption, not for commercial sale.

3.3.3 Avoid spreading of diseases in river systems

Businesses in areas where fishing in water and river systems takes place must inform of the danger of contamination, and how to avoid contamination being transferred from one river system to another.

Where relevant, the business has arranged for drying and disinfecting of fishing equipment. With the exception of the requirement for not using environmentally damaging chemicals, see instructions www.regelhjelp.no

3.3.4 Marine harvesting

The business has practices and guidelines to ensure there is no deliberate fishing for fish, or caged crustaceans, under the minimum length.

The business must provide comprehensive information concerning which species this applies to and that fish/crustaceans under the minimum length must be released again with caution if they are unintentionally caught.

3.3.5 Hunting

Businesses that offer hunting experiences have practices to check that the participants fulfil formal requirements (legislation) and have a legitimate hunting licence.

Hunting never takes place in areas where the business itself offers animal safari or similar activities. This applies when the offered activities take place within the same season.

3.3.6 Harvesting of berries and mushrooms

The business has implemented measures to ensure that protected or endangered plants, mushrooms or lichens are not picked, damaged, destroyed or collected. The business provides information regarding protected species in the area.

4 Profile and market

4.1 Local network

4.1.1 Local business

The business is registered locally and pays taxes to the region.

Exception: companies that operate in a larger area and that have most of their guests in another region. It can, for example, apply to coastal boats and organised trips.

4.1.2 Active participants in local tourism

The business is a member of the local destination business/tourism network, where this exists.

4.1.3 Local workforce

The business uses the local workforce, when this exists and also satisfies the business's requirements.

4.1.4 Local purchasing

The business has guidelines for purchasing local materials, and uses local suppliers of goods and services where they exist and also satisfy the business's requirements.

4.1.5 Landowners

The business has an overview of landowners, other users and affected parties in the company's operational area.

If an uncultivated area is frequently used, the initiative must be taken to inform the landowner.

4.2 Profile and Branding

4.2.1 A clear ecotourism profile

The business has established illustrate concrete measures to illustrate that ecotourism is part of the business's profile.

4.2.2 Requirement of the website

The ecotourism business's website reflects that it is an ecotourism business, and it provides information on the website as to what Approved Norwegian Ecotourism entails and which quality requirements apply.

From the business's website, there should be a link to the Norwegian Ecotourism website:

www.ecotourismnorway.org

4.2.3 Comprehensive information in the business

If the business has a base or camp that is used over a number of days, it provides supplementary nature, cultural and environmental information, as a service for guests and other visitors.

4.2.4 Local culinary traditions and local raw materials

The business prioritises meals based on local raw materials and/or local culinary traditions.

4.2.5 Labelling of food

Organic food and local dishes and products are clearly labelled on menus and at buffets, or they are presented verbally.

4.2.6 Local history, legends and stories

The business contributes to preserving, and communicating, local story-telling traditions through gathering stories and typical local objects that can help to communicate the place's history, distinctive features and local culture. The business actively uses cultural heritage and cultural environments in the communication of the area's history.

4.2.7 Souvenirs

Businesses that sell "souvenirs", or suchlike, offer locally produced products. The business does not sell products of unknown origin.

4.2.8 Language

Information is available in relevant languages for the business's market, provided in at least Norwegian and English, as well as in Sami where this is the local language.

4.2.9 Preserving buildings and other cultural heritage

The business preserves its own listed buildings and follows cultural heritage principles regarding restoration.

When required, the business itself provides, or ensures that others take responsibility for, necessary care and maintenance of cultural heritage and environments that are important parts of the tourism product.

4.2.10 Local adaptation on new buildings

New buildings must be in keeping with the landscape and existing cultural environments. When restoring or constructing new buildings, local, environmentally friendly and recycled materials are given priority, where they suit the business's needs.

4.3 Hosting and service

4.3.1 Host

The business has specified its own practices for the host's role as communicator and host.

4.3.2 Training

The host, and other key people who have contact with guests, have completed training in verbal communication and story-telling.

4.3.3 Customer guarantee concerning availability

The business has practices which ensure that questions are answered within 24 hours.

The business has practices which ensure that the guests on paid excursions have the host's undivided attention during the event.

4.3.4 Customer follow-up

The business has created a customer register and has a system for regular follow-up.

4.4 Marketing

4.4.1 Clear marketing profile

The ecotourism profile is clear in all marketing. The information is correct, and does not promise more than the guest can expect to receive.

4.4.2 Information and marketing

The business information and marketing material is accurate and does not promise more than guests can expect to get.

4.4.3 Addressing environmentally conscious target groups

The business works actively to sell to organisations (tour operators, travel agencies, companies) that have an environmental profile and a clearly stated goal concerning the reduction of their own environmental and climate pressures. The business prioritises the ethical and environmentally conscious user in its active marketing.

4.4.4 Packages offered in marketing are organised for longer stays

The business offers "ecotourism-experiences", either alone, or together with other operators, organised for longer stays in the area.

Length of stay: By the second approval, at least 75% of packages offered to markets dependent on air transport are of a minimum length of one week or more. This is in accordance with the company's own marketing.

4.4.5 Own marketing activities and climate challenges

The company's marketing is directed towards closer markets, limited to Europe, as an active contribution to reducing the climate pressures.

4.4.6 The climate promise

The business has given "Klimaløftet" (the Climate Promise: Norwegian Government's campaign on reducing GHG emissions: <http://www.grip.no/Klima/klimalofket.htm>)

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