

FEE- Foundation for Environmental Education



The Green Key has been adopted as the fifth FEE program. FEE is a non-governmental and non-profit organization aiming to promote sustainable development through environmental education (formal school education, training of staff and general awareness raising). FEE is mainly active through our five environmental education programs: Blue Flag, Eco-Schools, Young Reporters for the Environment, Learning about Forests and Green Key. (www.fee-international.org)

FEE is an umbrella organization with representation in 58 countries around the world. In Puerto Rico it is represented by OPAS (Organización Pro Ambiente Sustentable) (www.opaspr.org)

How can I get involved?

It's easy, access our web page at: www.opaspr.org download and complete the application; we then can begin the process. Or you may contact Lourdes Díaz, Green Key Coordinator, for introductory information on Green Key.

Benefits of Green Key

Such as other national and international eco-labels, Green Key brings recognition to those tourism installations that demonstrate improvements towards the environment by establishing sound environmental actions in its facilities, contributing towards the quality of life of the community and by promoting local culture. Green Key is also a great marketing tool that helps attract more guests and groups who are seeking hotels that are eco-friendly.

Since it focuses on environmental education seeking change in attitudes and having representation in the Island, its cost is very low in comparison to other certifications. In addition, OPAS through its consultants can provide tailored workshops and develop educational tools to help in the compliance with the criteria.

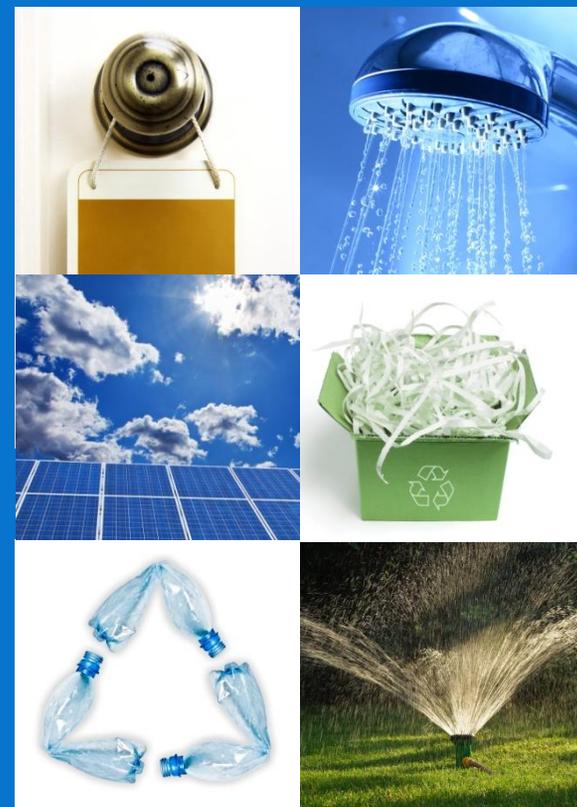
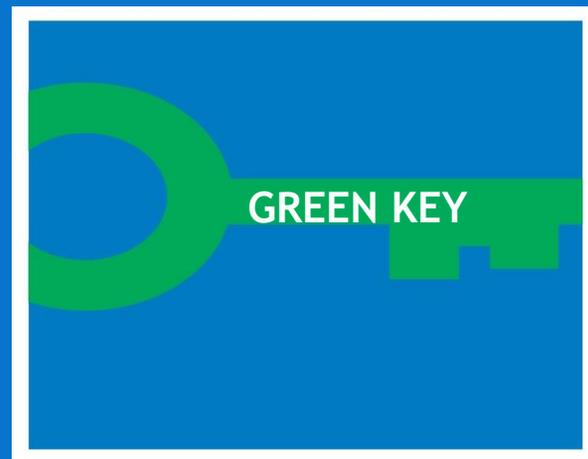
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www.opaspr.org
www.fee-international.org



OPAS

ORGANIZACION PRO AMBIENTE SUSTENTABLE



THE GREEN KEY INTERNATIONAL ECO LABEL

GREEN KEY: THE KEY FOR TRASFORMATION

International eco-label for tourism facilities

A voluntary annual certification for tourism facilities that aims to contribute to prevention of climate change and sustainable tourism by awarding and promoting sound environmental actions. It intends to change the practices and behaviors of tourism actors including enterprises, authorities, guests and local communities, and to involve them in increasing their responsibility towards their own environment.

Most eco-labels on tourism products consist, like the Green Key, of criteria in management and technical issues. All ensure approximately the same level of environmental content.

But the Green Key is unique in the sense that it focuses on environmental education. The criteria makes demands on staff, guests, and suppliers in involvement in the international work. In each country national operators, with the advice of a steering committee, look after national Green Key activities. Periodically, each awarded business receives control visit from the national operator and spot check visits from the international Green Key in all countries.

What does it focus on?

The criteria focus on environmental management, technical demands, and the involvement of guests, staff and suppliers, and cover fields such as water, waste, energy, environmental management, use of chemicals and open spaces and food & beverages.

Why Green Key?

Green Key is an international eco-label recognized both by WTO (World Tourism Organization) and UNEP (United Nation Environmental Protection) who's main object is to achieve a change in the practices in the operation of tourism facilities, with special focus on environmental education. For Green Key the process during the implementation of the criteria is very important and considered as part of the evaluation.

Finally, in terms of cost, Green Key is cost effective for the participants. Cost of most eco-labels represents a burden, especially for small properties. Since the FEE programs aim to promote sustainable development through environmental education, its interest is to have as much participation (through responsible practices) as possible in their programs. Cost should not be an obstacle for those who want to do their part in benefit of the environment through one of the programs.

How does it work?

The award is voluntarily applied and granted for one year at a time, during which control visits are made to check that certain standards are upheld and that all criteria are met. These facilities have to show that they have adopted environmentally sound practices and strategies within their operations in line with standardized international criteria, which are mandatory in each country, as well as more specialized national criteria, adjusted to national legislation, infrastructure and culture.

Why get involved?

Sustainable Tourism is good for business, not only is it part of corporate social responsibility, (CSR), but it represents savings in operational cost. The implementation of sound environmental practices is capable of transforming the facility into a sustainable one. Today this is very significant as we are going through a worldwide hurting economy. Many hotels, small and major chains around the world have been going green by adopting economically and environmentally sound practices and management schemes.

