



European
Commission

EMAS

4 Sustainable Tourism

*Environmental commitment
that you can trust*



EMAS in the tourism sector

Why use EMAS for Sustainable Tourism?

Despite it being the third largest economic activity in the EU¹, the Tourism sector has been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is why the EU is helping the Tourism industry recover through its 2020 Industrial Strategy². The strategy provides for actions that will support the green and digital transformations of the industry.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the more and more perceptible effects of climate change have also led many tourists to rethink how they travel. They are increasingly looking for high-quality tourism services that demonstrates care for the environment, and they are willing to pay more for an eco-friendly experience.

EMAS-registered organisations and companies guarantee strategic environmental management systems, allowing tour operators, destinations and accommodation facilities to become increasingly sustainable³. Over 270 EMAS hotels and 373 other organisations in the tourism sector are registered under the EMAS scheme. Among them are such prestigious names as the Ritz Carlton and Scandic hotels in Berlin and educational tours operator Studiosus.

Protecting the natural resources and biodiversity that are the basis for most tourism products and services pays financially, ensures the long-term success of tourism operations and is an indispensable marketing tool nowadays.

EMAS stands for

Performance

EMAS supports organisations in finding the right tools to improve their environmental performance. Participating organisations voluntarily commit to both evaluating and reducing their environmental impact.

Credibility

Third party verification guarantees the external and independent nature of the EMAS registration process.

Transparency

Providing publicly available information on an organisation's environmental performance is an important aspect of EMAS. Organisations achieve greater transparency both externally through the environmental statement and internally through employees' active involvement

Choose EMAS, choose sustainability

Since 1999, EMAS has been helping tourism organisations improve their environmental performance. Tourism activities have an environmental impact in multiple different areas, so they can particularly benefit from EMAS's overarching yet effective environmental management approach. EMAS will help your business become more sustainable and communicate your green commitments to your customers in a credible, visible manner.

Focus: Customer Involvement

Tourism operators' environmental performance shapes and is shaped significantly by the behaviour of their customers. So bring your guests on board and get them to support your environmental efforts - boosting your environmental performance in the process!

For example, the EMAS-registered Camping La Ballena Alegre in Costa Brava, Spain, has equipped its bungalows to be energetically self-sufficient. Each bungalow has an indicator panel on consumption levels. Bungalows are

also equipped with chargers for e-vehicles. The campsite holds a competition every summer and the winner gets to stay for free stay the following year! EMAS registered educational tour operator Studiosus includes excursions to local environmental projects in its itineraries to raise guests' awareness about the ecosystem that they are visiting. Studiosus also asks its customers for feedback and improvement suggestions regarding sustainability actions.

Getting started

The implementation of EMAS can be tailored to the needs and resources of small and large organisations. Check out our dedicated EMAS website where you will find a wealth of literature available to guide you and take you through the steps you need to register. Onboarding EMAS is very much about involving everyone's expertise, inside and outside your business, and working together to find the best solutions.

Get stakeholder support

Tourism is very closely bound up with the communities that it operates in. Consider initiating an 'environmental roundtable' with local authorities, NGOs, community representatives and other tourism organisations, working together to develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy for your destination. You might also want to contact local environmental or research organisations to support you when assessing your indirect environmental impacts on the surrounding ecosystem (through your buildings, waste and use of resources).

Involve your employees

Your staff are the direct interface with your guests and the local community. They are the backbone of EMAS in your organisation! Sensitise your employees about environmental issues. Use their experience on the ground to identify effective solutions to environmental management challenges and viable ways of including guests in your environmental actions. Frequently inform your staff about your organisation's environmental achievements to turn them into enthusiastic environmental ambassadors vis à vis guests, suppliers and local stakeholders!

Additional Information:

EMAS online

www.emas.eu

EMAS Sectoral Reference Document on Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector

<https://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/emas/tourism.html>

European Tourism Indicator System Toolkit for Sustainable Destinations

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators_en

Tourism transition pathway – Co-creation and co-implementation process

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/tourism-transition-pathway_en

EU Ecolabel tourist accommodations

https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/eu-ecolabel-home/eu-ecolabel-tourist-accommodations_en

1. European Commission (2010): Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe. P 3.
2. https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/european-industrial-strategy_en
3. Statistics valid as of June 2022 (source: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/emas_registrations/statistics_graphs_en.htm)

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Contact

Additional information is available on the EMAS website www.emas.eu or through the EMAS emashelpdesk@adelphi.de