

ShMILE

Sustainable hotels in Mediterranean Islands and area



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SUSTAINABLE HOTELS IN MEDITERRANEAN ISLANDS AND AREA

www.shmile.org



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A D E M E



Alphééis



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1. INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

ShMILE is a demonstration project in Corsica, Sardinia and Halkidiki for EU-wide promotion of the EU eco-label on tourist accommodation service (ELTAS).

The main objective is to support effective and sustainable implementation of the ELTAS in the Europe by leading demonstration actions on involved pilot-sites and dissemination of final tools and results

The ShMILE project was co-funded by the European Commission under the LIFE-Environment Programme. ADEME, the French Agency for Environment and Energy Management, is the Beneficiary and Alphééis, expert in the energy and environment fields, is the coordinator of the 12 partners from 4 countries: France, Italy, Greece and Austria. This partnership groups different stakeholders: hotel owners (for example

ACCOR in France), public authorities, universities, national competent body for EU eco-label and consultants in the energy, environment and marketing sectors.

The ShMILE project started in October 2004 and ended in January 2007. The total budget is 1 million of € and the contribution of the European Commission is about 500 000€.

2. BACKGROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM

The tourism sector has a prominent role in economic terms. In the EU, it contributes about 7% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product), and France and Italy are two of the three most visited countries in the world. In turns, it has also social and ecological impacts on tourist destinations. It involves many activities that may have negative impacts, and many of them deal with the **tourist accommodation services**. In general, the concentration of tourism activities on specific, restricted period of the year, affects the environmental and cultural carrying capacity of tourist destinations.

Moreover, tourism is one of main external forces for local development, and this is true especially for many islands in the Mediterranean area that have, also because their geographical position, a developing economy, founded to a large extent on

the tourism service sector. The quality of tourism accommodation service determines **regional attractiveness and influences local investments and economical growth**. On the other hand, Chapter 17 of Agenda 21* points out the specificity and vulnerability of the islands nature: the progressive demographic growth and the social and economic development are increasing environmental pressure in these regions (e.g. growth of transport needs and associated greenhouse gas emissions, increasing of energy and water demand, of land use and waste generation).

The accommodation sector is uniquely placed to boost the change in negative impacts within tourism activities. For this reason, many labels attesting of environmental performance in tourist sector have been created.

The EU eco-label for tourist accommodation service was created in April 2003 to reward tourist accommodation services and tourists that respect the environment.

Since 2005, campsite services can also apply for the European Eco-label.

The Flower logo signals environmental good performance and added quality value when consumers are choosing their accommodation.

More details in the dedicated web-site: www.eco-label-tourism.com



Today, the implementation of the ELTAS stays innovative (about 90 tourist accommodations in Europe having the EU eco-label in April 2007), but also highly complicated and the application pack needs too much time for applicants. Hotel owners and managers need of short and practical tools helping them to really understand and implement the certification

process. Furthermore, most Competent Bodies haven't enough time and resources (namely technical resources) to effectively support applicants into the application process.

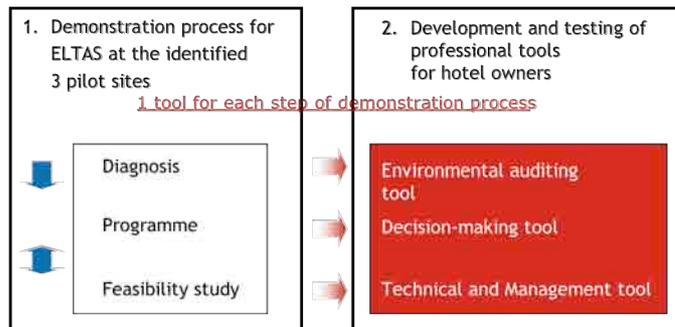
Further, we are facing a problem of lack of credibility and generalised ignorance about ELTAS certification scheme. A low market pressure, also due to the lack of brand recognition, gets worse this situation.

* Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations System, Governments, and Major Groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment.

3. THE SHMILE ACTIONS

The ShMILE project was organised through four main actions highly linked and transversal:

1. Demonstration actions at the three pilot-sites: diagnosis, program and feasibility study for ELTAS awarding;
2. Development of professional tools for ELTAS implementation addressed to hotel managers and staff, aiming to better understand and implement the certification process;
3. Development of training tools, ELTAS and environmental quality oriented, for engineer, architecture and tourism management students;
4. Dissemination of results.



4. PILOT-SITES

The main aim of the project was to develop tools, boosting implementation, training and education actions for EU-wide implementation of ELTAS. For ensuring their relevance, these tools (namely, technical and training tools) have been tested at three pilot-sites in order to guarantee their adaptation to tourism sector issues and to stakeholders needs.

CORALIA MARINA VIVA

PORTICCIO, CORSICA, FRANCE

The Coralia Marina Viva is a three-star hotel belonging to the international chain ACCOR. It's a site with a privileged location in Corsica Island, a natural and preserved site less than 2 hours by plane from Europe's major cities.

The services offered by the Hotel include: 324 hotels rooms; 120 apartments; restaurants; bar; freshwater swimming pool and a swimming pool separated for the children and several types of fitness equipment.



The Hotel carries out several actions aiming to reduce its environmental impacts: solar energy for domestic hot water production, strong sensitizing of staff and customers on energy consumption, follow up of energy and water consumption...

The Coralia Marina Viva Hotel follows the ACCOR environmental policy and charter, and carries out improvement activities for the EU eco-label implementation.

MELITON BEACH PORTO CARRAS

NEOS MARMARAS, HALKIDIKI, GREECE

The Porto Carras Grand Resort is located in a hidden paradise in Northern Greece, on the western coast of Sithonia: the central peninsula of Halkidiki.

Porto Carras is the largest complex in Greece, extended over a total surface of 1.800 hectares, including 470 hectares of vineyards and has several kilometres of private coast and beaches.



The Meliton Beach Hotel, five stars, is part of this complex. It provides 480 rooms and suites, large and children lagoons, restaurant, pool and beach bars and a thalasso-therapy and SPA centre.

Meliton offers high quality services and while respecting the environment: a desalination plant to be self-sufficient in water, local waste treatment plant for water, green management of soils, alternative transportation means for customers...

SU GOLOGONE HOTEL

OLIENA, SARINIA, ITALY

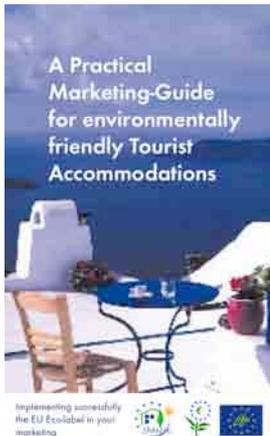
Su Gologone is a four-star hotel placed in the heart of Sardinia, in the territory of Oliena. Its name comes from the near famous water spring.

The Hotel features 68 tastefully decorated rooms. The interior presents several regionally representative styles. This does not interfere



with modern facilities: air conditioning, Jacuzzi, beauty and health centre, sauna....

The hotel constantly informs customers and staff about local biodiversity and local traditions. Besides, the hotel creates awareness on personnel and local population about typical Sardinian meals, furniture and manufactured products.



- **Marketing guide:** a handy guide helping players in the hotel sector to set up a green marketing strategy and to save energy and money, by including the economic and environmental benefits of implementing the EU eco-label. Available in English, French, Italian and Greek.



- **Handbook “Sustainable building issues and certification in Tourist Accommodation Services”:** three education modules for architecture, engineering and tourism management students, helping to develop local skills and to improve local market growth and competitiveness
 - Quality Management in tourism accommodation: the European flower (tourism module)
 - Renewable energies and sustainability in tourism accommodations (engineering module)
 - Sustainable development and environmental policies, planning, architecture and services (architecture module)

Hotel managers and staff may also use this handbook in a user-friendly format in training programmes.

- **Information documents.** Two brochures have been edited (October 2006 and October 2007) in order to present the project issues and results. Available in English, French, Italian and Greek.

To learn more about the ShMILE tools and results and available languages: www.shmile.org



The ShMILE web-site is regularly up-dated and it will maintained also after the end of the project until 2009.

All final results are available on demand to Partners of the project.

Very high reproducibility potential has given by the concrete commitment of the Hotel Groups involved in the project. Further, the direct involvement of other main stakeholders, like public authorities have guaranteed very high transfer of knowledge and results. All final products of the project have been designed in order to be uplifted and used by identified

target groups in other geographical areas and economic, cultural and environmental contexts for EU-wide implementation of ELTAS. Namely, the professional tool-box and the training and education packages will have a lasting impact after the completion of the project through several ways: integration in professional training sessions, integration in masters and post-graduate courses...

A direct possible application of the results of the project is in the camping sites; anyway this transfer needs specific analysis. It's possible to transfer some results, but it could be necessary a modification of some tools.



6. LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Looking at the results of the project, it's possible to confirm the innovation and the necessity to carry out a lot of work in the field of the European eco-label for the tourist accommodation services. Actually, a deep failure in recognizing the brand has been proved at different levels: hotel owners, public authorities, and architects....

At the same time, a very positive trend has been confirmed: the interest of different stakeholders contacted for the improvement of environmental quality in the tourism sector.

The economic interest and viability of the project is to place the ELTAS as an additional environmental surplus, as well to enrich it with marketable and quality increasing arguments.

This project has contributed to put in act these objectives namely by “helping people to make environmentally friendly choices”, in order to promote environmental communication and education, and also “working with the market” by encouraging the tourism sector to assess and to improve its environmental performance by ELTAS adoption.

7. DISSEMINATION ACTIONS

The objective of the Dissemination Plan was to contribute to enlarge the knowledge and skills of the different stakeholders and potential user groups about implementation of the ELTAS.

The Dissemination Plan included namely:

- the identification of different categories of stakeholders interested to project's issues;
- the organization of three National Workshops and of one International Workshop;
- the development of the project web-site and the dissemination of project results in the partners' web-site;
- the design and the publication of the project results;
- the presentation of the projects progress and results at conferences and in specialised press.

Three National Workshops have been organised:

- 28 October 2005, Sophia Antipolis, France
- 4 November 2005, Halkidiki, Greece
- 4 November 2005, Cagliari, Italy

In order to reach the larger number of potential stakeholders, 2 types of final events have been organised in place of International Workshop:

- **EU ECO-LABEL & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM CONFERENCE, 8 November 2006, Paris**
- **PARTICIPATION WITH A STAND TO THE INTERNATIONAL SALON EQUIP'HOTEL, 5-9 November 2006, Paris**

Proceedings of Conference (CD-ROM) with presentation of ShMILE project and results are available on the project web-site www.shmile.org



Equip'Hotel is the International Exhibition for public and private actors of the accommodation and restoration



8. SHMILE PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership of the project involves four European Countries (France, Italy, Greece and Austria) and 12 Partners with different background according to their responsibilities in the project:

- technical consulting in energy, environment and marketing,
- hotel owners and managers,
- public authorities
- and national Competent Body for the EU eco-label.

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