



The Integration of Biodiversity in CSR Processes in the Tourism Industry

Biodiversity Criteria for Tourism: Recommendations for Standards, Labels and Awards



Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety



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adelphi, www.adelphi.de
- Authors: Marion Hammerl, Herbert Hamele, ECOTRANS
Daniel Weiss, Adelphi; Stefan Hörmann, Global Nature Fund
- Design/Layout: Adelphi, Ecotrans
- Photos (cover): Landscape (Altmühltal): Herbert Hamele - ECOTRANS e.V.
Butterfly: dochl - fotolia.com (via Global Nature Fund)
Walkers: Eike Dubois - www.saarpfalz-touristik.de
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Contact:

Herbert Hamele, ECOTRANS e.V., Futterstr. 17-19, 66111 Saarbrücken, Germany
Tel.: +49 681-374679, Mail: Herbert.Hamele@ecotrans.de, Web: www.ecotrans.org

Content

1 Introduction	4
1.1 Project Objectives	4
1.2 Conclusions of the Baseline Study	4
2 Recommendations	6
2.1 Methodology	6
2.2 Preliminary Remarks	6
3 Recommendations for the Policies of Standards Organisation	8
3.1 Definition of Terms in the field of Biodiversity	8
3.2 Addressing the most important Aspects of Biodiversity	8
3.3 Considering a 'No-net-loss' approach	8
3.4 Exerting influence in favour of biodiversity	9
3.5 Monitoring the impact on biodiversity	9
3.6 Training in the field of Biodiversity for Certifiers and Certified Organisations	10
4 Recommendations for Criteria	11
4.1 Structure and Presentation of the Recommendations	11
4.2 Criteria for Businesses	12
4.3 Criteria for Destinations	23
4.4 Criteria for Tour Operators	35
5. Recommendations for the Organisers of Competitions (Awards)	44
5.1 Objectives and Calls for Applications	44
5.2 Application Form / Documents	44
5.3 Evaluation	44
5. Checklists and Knowledge Pool for six Tourism Sectors	45
6.1 Target groups and Content(s)	45
6.2 Benefits for the selected tourism sectors	45
7 Glossary	46

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Objectives

The recommendations presented in this document form part of the project *'The Integration of biodiversity-related aspects into the current processes for developing and implementing CSR in the field of tourism'* ([link to project](#)).

The project aims to make an important contribution by the tourism industry towards the protection of biological diversity by means of:

- the integration of biodiversity considerations into CSR processes, certification schemes and standards, awards and competitions which are of relevance to the tourism industry
- raising the awareness of tourism businesses about the protection of biodiversity, and for structured management of biodiversity through CSR processes, certification schemes and standards
- increasing the awareness of tourists about the value of biological diversity via communications channels and tools used by the tourism industry

The suppliers of labels and standards, awards and competitions for sustainable tourism are the direct target group of this project. First, the standards and criteria of 20 labels and 29 awards relating to biodiversity were analysed in order to identify strengths and weaknesses. Interviews were conducted with stakeholders in Germany, and the results were presented and discussed at a workshop held during ITB Berlin 2014. The baseline study has been published in German and English (links to Baseline Study: [German](#) - [English](#)).

1.2 Conclusions of the Baseline Study

Analysis of the guidance documents and strategies of the various standards and awards schemes shows that both focus on the main causes of the loss of biodiversity: the degradation of ecosystems followed by the overexploitation of natural resources. Feedback from the interviews with tour operators confirmed that these two drivers are given most attention. Much less attention is given to invasive alien species - an issue that has only recently come onto the political agenda.

It is not surprising; therefore, that standard organisations and awards concentrate on traditional measures for the protection of habitats and species. Much less frequently discussed are newer concepts such as No-Net-Loss or the mitigation hierarchy. The corresponding targets of the EU in terms of the elaboration of EU policy initiatives have clearly not yet reached the standard organisations and competition organisers. It should, however, be considered as positive that standards generally require the integration of biodiversity into the organisation's (environmental) management system.

If you consider that ecosystem services play a key role for tourism, and that this concept is also currently being discussed intensively in economic circles, then it is surprising that standards and awards do not address ecosystem services, but rather tend to focus exclusively on the protection of ecosystems.

The tour operators interviewed also did not regard biodiversity as a basis for ecosystem services. On the other hand, their dependence on biodiversity and the competitive advantages were cited as reasons for their commitment to the protection of biodiversity.

Very few standards and award schemes make reference to international conventions relating to biodiversity. CITES and the Ramsar Convention was mentioned a few times, but the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) only once.

Feedback received from the interviews and workshops reinforce the fact that biodiversity is seen as an issue for tourism - especially in relation to biodiversity and landscape protection. The importance of intact nature is recognised, and tourism actors are willing to take action in order to protect biodiversity. The industry representatives interviewed had a clear idea of where they can become active, and where barriers exist for their own activities.

However, to date the standards do not exhibit a holistic approach to biodiversity. The field of action is only occasionally addressed as part of the criteria for standards, and is also not defined in more detail by the award schemes. Most respondents stated lack of information and lack of awareness as the (main) reasons why biodiversity is not seen as a field of action for strategy and management. Specific goals and activities to manage biodiversity in the supply chain are often lacking. The majority of those interviewed advocated stronger integration of biodiversity in CSR standards and awards. In their view, more sector-specific information on biodiversity would be helpful, but this information should be easy to understand, concrete and practical, and should cost very little for the user, both in terms of time and money.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Methodology

The project team investigated the standard policy along with the criteria of 20 CSR standards and 29 competitions with reference to their relevance for biological diversity. The importance of biodiversity in the standard policy was analysed e.g. reference to international conventions or the main threats to biological diversity, and the definition of terms used such as 'environmentally sensitive areas' or 'biodiversity hotspots' the team assessed the concrete criteria with relevance to the conservation of biological diversity in terms of their efficiency, transparency and verifiability.

The bodies responsible for standards that determine the development and change of criteria and indicators are referred to in this report as *standard organisations*.

Conclusions were formulated on the basis of the *screening* results, and discussed with representatives of the standard organisations and organisers of competitions. The conclusions formed the starting point for a draft for recommendations, which in turn, was commented on in two rounds of feedback from representatives of the standard organisations and the BfN (Bundesamt für Naturschutz - the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation). This input has been incorporated in the current version.

2.2 Preliminary Remarks

The recommendations for the standard policy should be taken into consideration by all standard organisations.

The recommendations for the criteria were compiled from the perspective of the 'conservation of biological diversity', and exhibit the full range of options for tourism businesses, destinations and tour operators. All criteria have a potential positive effect on biodiversity. The implementation is the responsibility of the respective business / destination / tour operator (the organisation can implement directly), or alternatively it is within their sphere of influence (indirect = the organisation can exert influence). The recommendations include criteria for the fulfilment of nature protection legislation (legal compliance), but also include criteria that go beyond the legal requirements.

The authors are aware that the standard organisations need to proceed step-by-step with regard to the biodiversity criteria. The criteria that are marked as priority criteria (in red) should be implemented as a basis for all standards and labels. A standards organisation may initially include the criteria marked in green as optional /voluntary criteria, and then define them (e.g. on re-certification) as mandatory criteria after a certain time. The unmarked criteria complete the biodiversity performance, and can be integrated as optional criteria.

Within the framework of the 'Integration of Biodiversity into Current CSR Processes in Tourism' project, the project partners have the opportunity to discuss with standard organisations individually when revising their criteria. It is important that the labels and standards for the protection of biodiversity evolve continuously. Standard organisations, which have taken all the recommendations on board can, without risk of exaggeration, claim that their certified organisations attach great importance to the protection of biodiversity.

The work undertaken in this project once again shows the importance of cooperation between the standard organisations. One standard alone cannot master the challenge of halting the loss of

biodiversity. But the standard organisations together can, and should, take advantage of synergies to make a significant contribution to the protection of biodiversity. Proposals for cooperation between standard organisations can be found in the recommendations for the standard policy.

3 Recommendations for the Policies of Standard Organisations

3.1 Definition of Terms in the field of Biodiversity

Standard organisations are designated as the bodies responsible for standards, which decide on the development and change of the various criteria and indicators. They also decide on the date of revision of standards, set the targets for their further development, guarantee that the formulation of criteria is scientifically based, and provide guidance on the application of their standards.

Recommendations:

- The standard organisation uses internationally recognised terms and definitions.
 - In cases where an organisation's own definitions must be used, the standards organisation provides clear and comprehensible explanations for users. These definitions should be agreed upon in collaboration with the stakeholders.
 - Standards should include a glossary in which all terms are defined.
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3.2 Addressing the most important Aspects of Biodiversity

The enormous importance of ecosystem services for the tourism sector is obvious. Feedback received from tourism stakeholders underlines that biodiversity is seen as an issue for tourism - especially in relation to biodiversity and landscape protection. However, to date no holistic approach to biodiversity can be observed in the definition of standards.

Recommendations:

The standard policy explains which aspects of biodiversity are covered, and why focus is placed on these aspects.

3.3 Considering a 'No-net-loss' approach

The 'No-net-loss' goal for biodiversity has been defined at both national and international level (see definition in the Glossary). The European Commission is working on a relevant policy initiative. Whilst other industry branches have meanwhile committed themselves to achieving this objective, the 'no-net-loss' approach has clearly not yet been addressed by the standard organisations and competition organisers.

Recommendations:

- The standard has the explicit goal of making a significant contribution towards halting the loss of biological diversity, and in creating the conditions to help achieve an increase in biodiversity.
- The standard organisation provides the framework conditions for making the contribution to biodiversity conservation measurable (see Monitoring).
- The certifiers / auditors check whether the certified business has acted in accordance with the 'avoidance hierarchy' in formulating its objectives and measures.

- The standard organisation coordinates and/or finances regional biodiversity projects in which all certified businesses in the region 'pay' in order to compensate for the unavoidable negative impacts on biodiversity.

3.4 Exerting influence in favour of biodiversity

Recommendations:

- The standard organisation supports round tables for the preservation of biodiversity in protected areas or High Conservation Value Areas. The organisation exerts influence regarding the creation of a sound Biodiversity Action Plan for the region / destination.
- Certified organisations are encouraged to motivate neighbouring tourism businesses and suppliers / service provider to participate in collective activities for the protection of biodiversity (e.g. creating a Biodiversity Round Table and a regional Biodiversity Action Plan).
- Information, working documents, positive examples etc. should also be provided to all non-certified tourism enterprises.

3.5 Monitoring the impact on biodiversity

Serious monitoring provides evidence that the certified businesses or products - and hence the standard - contribute to the conservation of biological diversity. This proof is increasingly being requested by companies, sponsors, funding bodies and consumers.

Monitoring the effects on biodiversity is a challenge for all standard organisations, and therefore is actually a task that organisations should try to implement together. A common monitoring framework for all standards used within the tourism industry, with consistent indicators at company level and for additional indicators or indicator species at the destination level, would be more meaningful and cost-effective than individual approaches. It must be ensured that the auditors can afford these additional requirements, in a technically reliable and qualitatively correct manner. Under certain circumstances specialists may be required, which can also increase the cost of the monitoring process.

Recommendations:

- Standard organisations should demonstrate that they contribute towards protection of the environment and its biodiversity. For this purpose, they should collect and review data related to direct and indirect impacts on biodiversity within the framework of a monitoring programme.
- Standard organisations agree upon a common framework for biodiversity monitoring in order to tackle this task together and generate comparable results. Monitoring includes the business level (biodiversity-relevant data which are collected as a part of certification), and a few key or indicator species. These are determined for the relevant region or destination in consultation with experts.
- The standard organisation regularly evaluates all of the data that has been collected for the certified organisations which is relevant for biodiversity. Other indicators, in conjunction with new or revised biodiversity criteria, are collected and evaluated during the certification process.
- In a few years the standard organisations will be able to define benchmarks for the different aspects of biodiversity.

- The standard organisation(s) publishes the results of the monitoring.

3.6 Training in the field of Biodiversity for Certifiers and Certified Organisations

Training for certifiers and their auditors, and for certified organisations, is also one of the areas that should be addressed jointly by the standard organisations in order to guarantee a minimum quality of training, exploit synergies and achieve cost-savings. In addition to training, the establishment of a common 'knowledge pool' can also help provide certifiers and certified organisations with important background information.

Recommendations:

- The standard organisation ensures that the protection of biodiversity develops into a robust (core) competence for standards. Biodiversity should be appropriately integrated into all offers / activities for the training of the certified organisations.
- The standards organisation ensures that the certifiers / auditors are trained by experts in order to guarantee their competence in all relevant aspects of biodiversity certification and assessment. Networking between the certifiers is encouraged.
- The standard organisation seeks the expertise of competent persons / organisations in order to ensure the quality of biodiversity training. Supplying links to the offers provided by regional authorities is also recommended.
- The effectiveness of training measures is regularly checked in order to continually improve its quality.

4 Recommendations for Criteria

4.1 Structure and Presentation of the Recommendations

The ensuing tables contain the following information;

Column A: Current Number of the Recommendations

Column B: Areas for Action

M	Management
A	Offer: Destination, businesses, supply chains
I	Information, awareness-raising
E	Commitment

Column C: Recommendation

The 'Recommendations' are formulated as elements for criteria, which should be aligned with the standards (structure, formulation etc.) of a label or competition, and integrated accordingly on an individual basis. Formulations used in the recommendations such as 'preferred' or 'exerts influence' should in this case be clarified.

Column D: Protected areas

Ecosystems	Against the destruction / degradation of ecosystems
Protection of species	Against the loss of biodiversity
Over-use	Against the overuse of natural resources
Invasive Species	Against non-resident invasive species

Column E: Possible Effect(s)

Direct	The organisation can directly implement the recommendation
Indirect	The organisation can exert influence

Column F: Possible Evidence or Indicators

Some elements are have additional **references** e.g. about where to find supporting information on the Internet.

4.2 Criteria for Businesses

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4.2.1 21 Elements for Mandatory Criteria

The following 21 elements should definitely be part of a standard for certificates or competitions, and should either be fulfilled immediately or prior to recertification with a label.

4.2.1.1 Recommendation for Immediate Implementation

The following 13 elements for mandatory criteria should be fulfilled immediately.

A	B	C	D	E	F
B1	M	The business knows and respects the legal regulations in the field of nature conservation and protection of species (legal compliance).	All	Direct	The business has an overview of the relevant nature conservation legislation. Even better: A list of relevant laws with links to the relevant legal texts is available.

Note: Review of the relevant legislation for biodiversity, e.g. BfN or

<http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=140>

B2	M	If a business is active in protected areas: The business knows the laws and regulations concerning the tourism uses of the protected area in which it carries out its business activities (e.g. specifications from the management plan). It is in contact with the authority, which is responsible for the protected area.	All	Direct	The business is familiar with the legal regulations and provisions of the Management Plan insofar as this is available. It knows the responsible authority, and can prove that it is in contact with it.
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Note: The business should motivate the destination to make available all statutory regulations and provisions of the management plan, which are relevant to the tourism sector.

B3	A	The business works exclusively with contractual partners who respect the legal requirements for nature protection and protection of species, as well as the requirements for tourism activities in protected areas (e.g. management plan).	All	Direct	Declarations of the contractual partners are available.
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B4	A	The business ensures that all its leisure facilities in which protected or endangered animal or plant species play a role are offered only if they meet all relevant requirements for	Protection of species	Direct	List of requirements and documentation of appropriate leisure / recreational facilities. Qualification of nature guide / guides. Confirmation by a
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		the conservation of species. Compliance with the legal requirements is certified by the appropriate nature conservation authority.			neutral body.
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Note: The business safeguards itself by means of written confirmation by the contractual partner regarding legal compliance. Upon notification of violations, the business can prove that the fulfilment of the legal requirements has been used as a criterion in the selection of the contractual partner.

B5	M	For hotels with outdoor facilities above a certain size: The initial position (baseline) with respect to biodiversity has been determined. Minimum: Establishment of biotopes on the premises and properties. An expert was involved in determining the initial position.	Ecosystems, species	Direct	Baseline report and maps available. The expert (nature conservation authority, NGOs, scientific institute) has signed the Baseline Report.
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Note: Step 1: Establishment of the initial position on the premises. For advanced users: The business also knows about the protected areas / High Conservation Value Areas in its surrounding environment.

B6	M	If, in establishing the initial position, habitats and/or protected species have been identified, the business undertakes Step 2: The business has created a plan to protect biodiversity on the basis of the initial position. This plan contains, whenever possible, measurable objectives and concrete measures to achieve the objectives. The responsibilities for the implementation of the measures, as well as a timetable, have been defined. Experts were involved in the creation of the plan.	Ecosystems, species	Direct	Biodiversity plan available. The expert (from the nature conservation authority, NGOs, scientific institute) has signed the Baseline Report.
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Note: Step 2: Plan for the protection of biodiversity (Biodiversity Action Plan)

B7	M	In regions suffering from water shortages, the business knows the sources of the drinking water that it uses. It exerts influence on the relevant authorities to ensure that a management plan for the water source(s) is implemented, and that regular monitoring is carried out by a neutral competent body. The business regularly requests the results of the monitoring, and	Ecosystems, overuse	In-direct	Water sources are known. Documentation about the exchange with the relevant authorities is available
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		participates in the implementation of the recommendations.			
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Note: Instruments for measuring water risks: World Resources Institute - Aqueduct

<http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/aqueduct>

World Business Council on Sustainable Development - Global Water Tool:

<http://www.wbcscd.org/work-program/sector-projects/water/global-water-tool.aspx>

B8	A	With regard to interior fittings, food and souvenirs, the business ensures that no products falling under the CITES agreement or which are under conservation for any other reasons are purchased, sold or processed. Flower decorations come from the region, or are products, which have a sustainability label.	Protection of species	Direct	Confirmation of the certified business. Checklist available.
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Note: Online search list (in English, Spanish and French) on CITES species and their regional incidence can be found under: <http://checklist.cites.org/#/en>

Use of local wood from sustainably managed forests / FSC certified products; no animal skins or elements of endangered species to be used for decoration. A Souvenir Guide and Species Protection Guide provide tips for tourists when buying souvenirs, and can also serve as a guide for businesses.

WWF Souvenir Guide: <http://www.wwf.at/de/artenschutz-ratgeber>; (*publication available only in German*)

TUI's Little Guide to Preserving Species - Fair Souvenirs and Biodiversity.

http://unternehmen.tui.com/damfiles/default/verantwortung/Nachhaltigkeit/artenflyer_web-b16905894a6b5e71dcda2ee128d3e95a.pdf (*publication available only in German*)

B9	A	Visits to dolphin and orca (whale) shows are not offered or advertised. Guests are made aware that they unwittingly support cruelty to animals and further capturing of wild and captivity-bred animals via their entrance fees for dolphin and orca shows.	Protection of species	Direct	Confirmation of the certified operation. Review of brochures, websites etc.
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Note: In addition to dolphin and orca shows, wildlife parks and other facilities where animals are not kept appropriately are also questionable. In dolphin and orca shows, there is the additional risk of the use of animals captured in the wild, which has direct negative effects on biodiversity. The business should only advertise the 'attractions' that can demonstrate appropriate animal welfare e.g. through confirmation by the responsible authority. See also ABTA's Animal Welfare Guidelines on:

<http://abta.com/about-abta/raising-standards/animal-welfare> and

http://67d8396e010decf37f335facf23e658215b1771a91c2df41e9fe.r14.cf3.rackcdn.com/publications/GWforAnimalsinTourism_web.pdf

In the case of dolphins, at least the minimum standards should be met - see the study: BMEL Survey on Minimum Requirements for the keeping of Mammals (2014).

http://www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/Tier/Tierschutz/GutachtenLeitlinien/HaltungSaeugetiere.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

B10	A	The business does not process or sell any products that originate from / farming which does not respect animal welfare, or from endangered animals. It regularly informs itself about endangered species in the region.	Protection of species	Direct	Confirmation of the certified business. Review of menus. Documentation regarding exchange with the responsible authority.
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Note: Animal welfare refers to a form of animal husbandry which is based on respecting the natural living conditions of animals, and which takes the innate behaviour of animals into particular consideration. Hence it tries, in specific contrast to factory farming, to adapt to the species-specific needs of the animals. Apart from ethical reasons, consumers / tourists connect the issue of animal welfare with the issue of biodiversity, even if such a connection is not mandatory from a business perspective. The destination is therefore well advised to consider the aspect of animal welfare. Not all farmers who sell products, which respect animal welfare, are certified. And not everything that is legally allowed is appropriate to the species (e.g. turkey feed). Factory farming is the opposite of animal welfare, and has a significant negative impact on the environment. For example, the import of animal feed (e.g. soya) contributes significantly to the destruction of ecosystems. Groundwater and soil is contaminated by nitrates, humans form resistance to antibiotics.

Concrete examples: Free-range eggs, organic meat conforming to the minimum EU standards for organic farming (German and EU Organic farming logo) are subject to policies with more stringent standards for animal welfare; Since early 2013 the label of the Animal Welfare Society "FOR BETTER ANIMAL WELFARE" goes beyond legal minimum standards, with a 2-step certification. For more information see: <http://www.tierschutzbund.de/produktlabels.html>; Foie gras should not be offered, nor fish from endangered stocks. See: Consumer Guides (WWF, Greenpeace) and the MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certification supports businesses in the selection of fish and seafood from sustainable fisheries and promote the abandonment of endangered species on the menu.

WWF Consumer Guide

http://www.wwf.de/fileadmin/fm-wwf/Publikationen-PDF/WWF_Einkaufsratgeber_Fische_und_Meeresfruechte.pdf (*publication available only in German*)

Greenpeace Fish Guide (2014) with recipes by Sarah Wiener:

<https://www.greenpeace.de/sites/www.greenpeace.de/files/publications/fischratgeber-rezepte-juni-2014.pdf> (*German version only*):

Link to list of endangered animal species in Germany:

http://www.bfn.de/0322_rote_liste+M52087573ab0.html

B11	I	The business informs its guests extensively about biological diversity in the holiday region, particularly with regard to rare and endangered animal and plant species and biotopes. The guest is informed about threats to biodiversity, and receives recommendations on how to avoid negative effects caused by his/her be	Ecosystems, protection of species	Direct	Information material, website, other communication tools. Number of guests who are informed (e.g. number of brochures distributed, number of visitors to the website).
B12	A	The field of action of biological diversity plays an important role in the training of the business's staff. Qualified experts from nature conservation organisations or authorities, or scientific institutes are involved in the training.	All	Direct	Training programme is available. Number of trained staff (%). Feedback from staff.
B13	E	The business is involved in the preservation of ecosystems and/or endangered animal or plant species, and finances appropriate protective measures. The commitment is appropriate and is communicated in a credible manner.	Protection of species	Direct	Evidence of the commitment to the protection of biodiversity is available. The organisation has a transparent and coherent explanation as to why the involvement is appropriate. The communication about this involvement is in keeping with the facts.

Note: To ensure that the balance is correct, the business may orientate itself on the basis of the evaluation of interventions within the framework of the German Mitigation-Compensation Scheme. In countries without adequate legal requirements, the nature conservation agency or NGO can provide the business with suitable orientation.

4.2.1.2 Recommendations for Implementation on Recertification

The following 8 elements should be fulfilled as mandatory criteria for recertification.

B14	M	In planning new buildings / facilities, the business carries out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in which the biodiversity aspect is explicitly checked. All recommendations from the EIA are taken into account.	All	Direct	The EIA is available. The aspect of biodiversity is taken into account.
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Note: General Information on EIA:

<http://www.bmub.bund.de/en/topics/strategy-legislation/environmental-assessments/general-information/#c13917>

B 16	M	The company guarantees that the buildings / leisure facilities were not illegally built and subsequently legalized.	Ecosystems	Direct	Written confirmation is available from the business.
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Note: Not relevant for Germany.

B16	M	In regions where not all households are connected to the sewage system and/or the existing wastewater treatment plant does not work or functions badly, the business strongly exerts its influence in order to remove shortcomings immediately.	Overuse	Indirect	Documentation about the exchange with relevant authorities is available
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Note: Not relevant for Germany. In other countries the business can exert its influence through various committees and/or the destination's management structure.

B 17	A	In regions without public sewage systems and functioning wastewater treatment plants, the business installs its own treatment system in line with the volume and degree of contamination caused by the wastewater. Here the possibility of installing constructed wetlands is also examined. In addition to having good treatment capacity, these have the additional advantage of providing habitats for insects, amphibians and birds.	Overuse	Direct	Confirmation of the responsible authorities on the efficiency of its own wastewater treatment plant.
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Note: Not relevant for Germany.

B 18	A	Native plant species are exclusively used in the design of the outdoor facilities. At least 30% of the premises / property are designed in a nature-oriented way. The objectives for the further development of a nature-oriented design are determined in a plan for the outdoor facilities.	Protection of species, Invasive species		At least 30% of outdoor facilities / properties are designed in a nature-oriented way. The elements of the nature-oriented design, as well as targets for further development, are included in a plan for the development of the outdoor facilities / properties.
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Note: Nature-oriented design of premises: <http://www.naturnahefirmengelaende.de/> and Foundation for Conservation and Economy Switzerland: <http://www.naturundwirtschaft.ch/> (webpage available only in German)

B 19	A	The business exclusively processes or sells certified saltwater fish (MSC), certified fish from aquaculture (Naturland, Aquaculture Stewardship Council, EU organic farming logo, etc.) or fish from the region which can be proven to have been fished or farmed in an environmentally-friendly manner.	Protection of species	Direct	Evidence of goods purchased.
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Note: The standard .is based on the principle of continuous improvement e.g. first 30%, then 60%, then 100%.

B 20	I	In regions suffering from water shortages the business informs its guests about the situation regarding the water resources, and motivates its guests to support water-saving measures in an appropriate manner.	Overuse	Direct	Information material, website, other communication tools.
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Note: Currently not relevant for Germany. Tools for measuring water risks:

World Resources Institute – Aqueduct: <http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/aqueduct>

B 21	M	A business that operates in or close to protected areas and HCV Areas without legal regulations and/or a management plan exerts its influence to ensure that the responsible authority adopts a management plan for the area.	All	In-direct	Documentation of contacts with the responsible authorities.
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Note: The business can exert its influence over committees in the region. It is often represented in committees or boards for regional development or for nature conservation areas. Good reasons why the business should have a management plan: avoidance of the overuse of natural resources in the destination, thus avoiding risks and damage to the landscape, ecosystems and biodiversity through tourism activities. Legal and planning security. Ensuring the quality of the 'natural capital' in the destination = long-term security of business fundamentals.

4.2.2 Recommendations for Optional or Voluntary Criteria

The following elements should be offered as optional / voluntary criteria and, if implemented, lead e.g. to advantages in the evaluation of businesses.

B 22	M	A monitoring system is established for the development of biodiversity in the outdoor facilities / own property. Minimum: development of the existing biotopes plus the development of 1-3 indicator species. The indicator species were selected with the assistance of an expert. The monitoring is conducted at regular intervals (every 1-2 years). These results feed into the revised plan for the protection of biodiversity.	Ecosystems, species	Direct	Indicator species have been determined. A person responsible for monitoring has been named. A monitoring report is available. Monitoring results have been incorporated into the business plan.
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Note: Step 3: Monitoring. The implementation of criteria B5 and B6 is necessary for this. The standard should be monitoring for a certain period of time e.g. a requirement of 2 years from the creation of the biodiversity plan. Respect for criterion B18.

B 23	M	The business participates in the regional monitoring of endangered animal and plant species, which are used for tourism purposes (provision of data and/or financial support). Recommendations from the monitoring are implemented immediately.	Protection of species	Direct	Regional monitoring system is known. Documentation on the regular exchange with authority / NGO that carries out the monitoring
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Note: Regional monitoring can be carried out by regional nature conservation authorities, administrative agencies for protected areas, environmental organisations.

B 24	M	The business exerts its influence over the destination management in order to allow the evaluation of the environmental (and social) carrying capacity limits of the destination by independent experts, and to take these limitations into consideration in the development of the tourism destination.	Overuse	In-direct	Documentation about the exchange with the relevant authorities is available.
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Note: The business can exert its influence over committees in the region. Often it is represented in the committees or boards of the destination. Good reasons why the business should encourage the establishment of the carrying capacity: avoidance of overuse of natural resources in the destination, thus avoiding risks and damage to landscape, ecosystems and biodiversity through tourism activities. Basis for planning. Safeguarding the quality of the 'natural capital' in the destination = long-term security of business fundamentals.

B 25	M	The business motivates the agricultural associations(s) to identify itself / themselves as a GMO-free region.	Protection of species	In-direct	Documentation about the exchange with the relevant agricultural authorities is available.
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B 26	M	The business exerts its influence on the destination to avoid practices, which do not respect animal welfare. It exerts its influence on the authorities to carry out more stringent checks regarding fulfilment of the appropriate laws.	Protection of species	In-direct	Documentation about the exchange with the responsible authorities.
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Note: Animal welfare refers to a form of animal husbandry which is based on respecting the natural living conditions of animals, and which takes the innate behaviour of animals into particular consideration. Hence it tries, in specific contrast to factory farming, to adapt to the species-specific needs of the animals. Apart from ethical reasons, consumers / tourists connect the issue of animal welfare with the issue of biodiversity, even if such a connection is not mandatory from a business perspective. The destination is therefore well advised to consider the aspect of animal welfare. Not all farmers who sell products, which respect animal welfare, are certified. And not everything that is legally allowed is appropriate to the species (e.g. turkey feed). Factory farming is the opposite of animal welfare, and has a significant negative impact on the environment. For example, the import of animal feed (e.g. soya) contributes significantly to the destruction of ecosystems. Groundwater and soil is contaminated by nitrates, humans form resistance to antibiotics.

The organic labels (German state label / EU Bio-Label) stand for organic production and respect for animal welfare. The relevant legislation provides for minimum standards in organic farming. The label of the Animal Welfare Society "FOR MORE ANIMAL PROTECTION" has been in existence since the beginning of 2013, whose requirements go beyond minimum legal standards (a 2-step certification). For more information: <http://www.tierschutzbund.de/produktlabels.html> (webpage available only in German)

B 27	A	The business is informed about invasive alien species in the region, and informs the nature conservation authority if these spread to the premises / property.	Invasive species	Direct	Documentation about / link to information regarding invasive alien species is available.
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Note: The use of invasive alien species in the design of garden / outdoor areas of tourism establishments may lead to their spread in the open landscape and consequently the displacement of native species. Neobiota (alien species) lists are generally found on the website of the State Environment Ministries see e.g. <http://neobiota.naturschutzinformationen-nrw.de/site/> (webpage available only in German). For Germany-wide lists and information:

<http://www.neobiota.de/> (webpage available only in German)

B 28	A	The business does not process or purchase any GMO products.	Protection of species	Direct	Confirmation of / by the certified business.
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B 29	A	A certain proportion of the products which are processed / sold come from certified organic farming. Products that are not grown in their own region / country (e.g. coffee, tea, cocoa) have a sustainability label (e.g. Fairtrade, UTZ, Gepa, Rainforest Alliance).	Protection of species	Direct	List of the products sold / processed and proportion of organic products or products with a sustainability label.
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Note: In the standard e.g. a fixed percentage can be given, which is then increased every three years (e.g. 10 - 20 - 30%). Or the criterion requires a continuous improvement, with the accompanying proof that the operation has increased the proportion of products from certified organic farming every year.

B 30	A	The business supports the cultivation of indigenous species in agriculture by encouraging and offering traditional species. It motivates farmers to grow traditional plant varieties and to raise traditional animal breeds.	Protection of species	Direct	Menu; Contact with farmers, agricultural associations.
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Note: Association for Crop land Livestock Diversity e.V. (including Pro Species, Rara, Slow Food Germany, Society for the Preservation of Crops e.V. etc.)

Links: <http://kulturpflanzen-nutztiervielfalt.org/node/29> ; <http://www.prospecierara.de/de/home>
(webpage available only in German)

B 31	I	The business conducts regular surveys amongst its customers on biodiversity in the destination, and makes the results of the biodiversity monitoring available.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Direct	Number of customers surveyed. Results of the survey.
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B 32	I	The business offers its guests / tourists the possibility to become actively involved in projects regarding nature protection / biodiversity in the holiday region. The financial support of projects in the holiday region is also warmly recommended to guests / tourists.	Protection of species	Direct	Information material, website, other communication tools. Number of guests who have participated in nature conservation activities.
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B 33	I	The business informs its guests about the positive effects on biodiversity of using products from organic farming, as well as about products with a sustainability label.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Direct	Information material, website, other communications tools.
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B 34	E	The business regularly involves its staff in projects to protect biodiversity, which are run by NGOs and/or conservation agencies (Corporate Volunteering). The voluntary involvement of employees in nature and biodiversity protection is promoted.	Ecosystems, species	Direct	Proof of the involvement / commitment of employees. Staff feedback.
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B 35	E	The business motivates other businesses to become involved with endangered plant or animal species in the region, and to make an appropriate contribution to the financing of the protection measures.	Protection of species	In-direct	Documentation about its exchange with other businesses in the region is available.
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4.3 Criteria for Destinations

Status: October 2014

4.3.1 29 Elements for Mandatory Criteria

The following 29 elements should definitely be part of a standard for certificates or competitions, and are either satisfied immediately, or prior to the recertification with a label.

4.3.1.1 Recommendations for immediate Implementation

The following 15 elements for mandatory criteria should be fulfilled immediately.

A	B	C	D	E	F
D1	M	The destination knows the legal regulations in the field of nature and species protection and guarantees the legal compliance of its activities.	All	Direct	List of relevant laws or a link to the appropriate legal texts. Confirmation of legal compliance.

Note: Legal compliance is, inter alia, relevant to the DMO's own projects! For an overview of relevant legislation for biodiversity e.g. BfN or

<http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=140>

D2	M	The destination respects the legal regulations and requirements for the tourism usage of protected areas (e.g. as contained in the management plan). It informs the tourism businesses in the destination, and exerts its influence to ensure that the business activities are carried out exclusively within the framework of the permitted uses	All	Direct	Legal regulations and the requirements relating to tourism in the management plan are known. These requirements flow into the tourism planning process. The businesses are informed about the legal regulation and relevant requirements.
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Note: Direct relevance for the DMO's own projects.

D3	A	The certified destination ensures that all leisure activities offered in the destination in which endangered animal or plant species play a role are offered exclusively if they meet with all the requirements for the protection of species. Compliance with legal requirements is confirmed to the nature conservation authority.	Protection of species	Direct	Legal requirements are known. Qualification of nature guides / guides / rangers. Confirmation by the competent nature conservation authority.
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Note: Relevant for the DMO's own projects, as well as for the activities of the businesses themselves.

D4	M	If no management plan has been established for a protected area, the destination exerts influence on the responsible authorities to ensure that a management plan is formulated and implemented.	All	Indirect	Documentation on the contacts with the relevant authorities is available.
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Note: In addition to the protection of the 'natural capital' resource, the management plan means planning security for the DMO's own projects, as well for the activities of the businesses.

D5	M	The destination knows about any studies / plans of the initial position with regard to biodiversity in the destination, or has established the initial position itself in the form of a Baseline Report. Minimum: Recording of the current situation with regard to the biotopes / ecosystems in the destination. Experts were involved in establishing the baseline.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Baseline report is available. Expert(s) were involved in its preparation, and have signed the Baseline report. Proof of the exchange between the destination and the responsible authority (nature conservation authority, protected area management) about the starting position is available.
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Note: For advanced destinations as well as protected areas and High Conservation Value Areas within a radius of 20 km around the destination: Destinations in or in the vicinity of protected areas or High Conservation Value Areas also include the current situation with regard to protected and endangered animal and plant species.

D6	M	The destination has integrated activities for the protection of biodiversity in its tourism planning on the basis of the initial position. The destination has defined, as far as possible, measureable objectives and concrete measures in order to achieve these objectives. The responsibilities for implementing the measures and a timetable have been determined. Experts were involved in determining the objectives and measures.	Ecosystems , protection of species, overuse	Direct	Biodiversity plan available or biodiversity has been involved in the tourism planning. The expert (of the nature conservation authority, NGOs, scientific institute) has signed the plan.
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Note: If the DMO does not carry out any tourism planning itself, it should exert influence on the planning authorities. If the planning competence lies with the DMO, conservation authorities, regional NGOs or scientific institutions can support the destination in the choice of indicator species. Conclusions can be drawn regarding the development of biodiversity as a whole on the basis of the development of these indicator species.

D7	A	The field of action of biodiversity is an important part of the training of staff in the destination. Qualified experts are involved in the training.	All	Direct	Training programme. Proportion or number of trained staff.
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D8	A	The destination offers regular training courses on the theme of biodiversity for tourism businesses in the destination. Qualified experts are involved in the training.	All	Direct	Training programme. Proportion or number of trained businesses and staff
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D9	M	In regions suffering from water shortages: The destination knows the sources of the drinking water in the destination. It influences the responsible authorities to ensure that a management plan for the drinking water source(s) will be implemented, and that regular monitoring is carried out by a neutral competent body. The destination regularly asks to see the results of the monitoring and participates in the implementation of the recommendations for action.	Overuse	Indirect	Description / maps of the drinking water resources (groundwater, rivers, lakes), documentation about the contacts with the responsible authorities.
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Note: Currently not relevant for Germany. Instruments for measuring water risks: World Resources Institute – Aqeduct: <http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/aqueduct>
World Business Council on Sustainable Development - Global Water Tool: <http://www.wbcsd.org/work-program/sector-projects/water/global-water-tool.aspx>

D 10	A	In regions suffering from water shortages, the destination motivates tourism businesses to take measures to reduce water consumption (per guest, per overnight, and in absolute terms).	Overuse, Ecosystems	Indirect	Documentation. Water consumption in the destination.
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D 11	A	In areas without public sewers and functioning wastewater treatment plants, the destination promotes the installation of on-site treatment systems, which correspond to the volume and degree of pollution by wastewater with financial resources, information and free advice.	Overuse, Ecosystems	Indirect	Support programme. Documentation of contacts with the responsible authorities.
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Note: Not relevant for Germany.

D 12	A	The destination advises its tourism businesses that they should have their interiors fittings, food and souvenirs checked and should ensure that any products which fall under the CITES agreement, or which are under conservation for any other reasons, are not purchased, sold or processed. The destination makes the appropriate checklists and information available.	Protection of species	Direct / Indirect	Documentation about the exchange with businesses. Checklists are available.
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Note: Online search list (in English, Spanish and French) of CITES endangered species and their regional incidence can be found under: <http://checklist.cites.org/#/en>

Use of local wood from sustainably managed forests / FSC certified products; no animal skins or elements of endangered species to be used for decoration. The WWF's Consumer Guide gives advice on souvenir purchase. Consumer Guides (WWF, Greenpeace) and MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certification support the business in the choice of fish and seafood from sustainable fisheries, and promote the abandonment of endangered species on the menu.

Link to a list of endangered species in Germany:

http://www.bfn.de/0322_rote_liste+M52087573ab0.html

D 13	A	Visits to dolphin and orca (whale) shows are not offered or advertised. Guests are made aware that they unwittingly support cruelty to animals and further capturing of wild and captivity-bred animals via their entry fees.	Protection of species	Direct	Information material, catalogues, website
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Note: In addition to dolphin and orca shows, wildlife parks and other facilities in which animals are not kept appropriately are also questionable. In dolphin and orca shows, there is the additional risk of the use of animals captured in the wild, which has direct negative effects on biodiversity. The business should only advertise the 'attractions' that can demonstrate appropriate animal welfare

e.g. through confirmation by the responsible authority. See also the ABTA Animal Welfare Guidelines on:

<http://abta.com/about-abta/raising-standards/animal-welfare> and

http://67d8396e010decf37f335facf23e658215b1771a91c2df41e9fe.r14.cf3.rackcdn.com/publications/GWforAnimalsinTourism_web.pdf

In the case of dolphins, at least the minimum standards should be met - see the study: BMEL Survey on Minimum Requirements for the keeping of Mammals 2014:

http://www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/Tier/Tierschutz/GutachtenLeitlinien/HaltungSaeugetiere.pdf?__blob=publicationFile (available only in German).

D 14	I	The destination informs tourists extensively about the biological diversity in the holiday region, and in particular about rare and endangered animal and plant species and biotopes. The tourist is informed about the risks to biodiversity, and receives recommendations on how to avoid negative impacts through his/her own behaviour.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Information material, websites, and other communication tools. Number of copies distributed, clicks, proportion of tourists who have been reached (%).
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D 15	E	The destination commits itself to the protection of ecosystems and/or endangered animal or plant species, and funds appropriate protective measures - particularly for habitats, animal and plant species, which particularly benefit the destination. The commitment is appropriate and is communicated in a credible manner.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Proof of the commitment to the protection of biodiversity is available. The organisation has a transparent and coherent explanation of why the commitment is appropriate. The communication about the commitment is in keeping with the facts.
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Note: Link to Payment for Ecosystem Services 'Natural Capital Markets - Status Quo and Outlook'

http://www.naturalcapitalmarkets.org/uploads/media/Markets_for_Natural_Capital_-_Status_Quo_and_Prospects.pdf

Appropriate commitment: The German Mitigation-Compensation Scheme, with its respective evaluation of biotopes, or the recommendations of nature conservation authorities or NGOs can provide assistance.

4.3.1.2 Recommendation for Implementation on Recertification

The following 14 elements should be fulfilled as mandatory criteria for recertification.

D 16	M	The destination evaluates the cumulative negative effects of tourism planning on the environment / biodiversity (e.g. through strategic environmental assessments). The results are published. The recommendations and evaluations are implemented.	Ecosystems, protection of species, overuse	Direct	The DMO is in exchange with the responsible planning authorities (urban land use / land-use planning). Tourism plans take the effects on biodiversity into account. Strategic Environmental Assessments for formal planning are available. Results were taken into consideration in tourism planning.
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Note: Strategic Environmental Assessments for formal plans are required by law upwards of a certain size. Over and above the legal requirements, the destination should evaluate the potential cumulative negative effects in order to avoid this e.g. SEA also for informal tourism planning.

General information:

<http://www.bmub.bund.de/en/topics/strategy-legislation/environmental-assessments/general-information/>;

Integrating Ecosystem Services in SEAs: <http://www.proecoserv.org/news-a-highlights/94-sea-guideline.html>

D 17	M	The destination has concluded a voluntary agreement on no-go areas with the responsible nature conservation authorities e.g. primary ecosystems, core areas of Areas of High Conservation Value (HCV), Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas. Experts were involved in the selection of the no-go areas. The tourism businesses were informed about the no-go areas.	Ecosystems, protection of species, overuse	Direct	Maps and descriptions of the no-go areas are available. The agreement between the destination and nature conservation authorities to respect these no-go areas is available. Proof that the businesses have been informed is provided.
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Note: The zones and their uses are identified for protected areas with a management plan. The recommendation particularly concerns protected areas without a management plan and non-protected areas (Areas of High Conservation Value, etc.), or areas where indigenous peoples live.

D 18	A	The destination is committed to ensuring that illegally built infrastructure in protected areas is not subsequently legalised (hotels, leisure facilities etc.).	Ecosystems, protection of species, overuse	Indirect	List of retroactively legalised infrastructure (built since 2005) is available, as well as evidence of the commitment.
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Note: Not relevant for Germany.

D 19	M	Monitoring of the impact of tourism activities on biodiversity in the destination has been set up or integrated into the existing monitoring. Minimum: effects on the existing biotopes plus the impact on the development of a few indicator species. The indicator species were selected with the help of an expert. The monitoring is carried out at regular intervals (every 1-2 years). The results feed into the review of tourism planning.	Ecosystems, protection of species, overuse	Direct	Indicator species have been determined. A person responsible for the monitoring has been designated. A Monitoring Report is available. The results of the monitoring have been integrated into the biodiversity plan and tourism planning.
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Note: The destination can conclude an agreement on biodiversity monitoring with the regional nature protection authority or NGO.

D 20	M	If regional monitoring for the development of biodiversity is present, then the destination becomes involved by providing data and financial support for monitoring when needed. Recommendations from the monitoring results are implemented immediately.	All	Direct	Documentation about the participation in / support for the monitoring system. Monitoring reports are available.
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D 21	A	The destination publishes an annual environmental or sustainability report. This report reports regularly on the development of biodiversity (objectives, measures, results of the monitoring).	All	Direct	Environmental or sustainability report. Quality of the reporting.
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D 22	A	At least 30% of a company's premises and property are designed to be nature-oriented. The nature-oriented elements, as well as targets for the development of the property, are set out in a management plan.	Ecosystems, protection of species, invasive species	Direct	Management plan for a company's own premises and property.
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Note: Natural design of premises see: <http://www.naturnahefirmengelaende.de> and *Foundation for Nature and Economy*, Switzerland: <http://www.naturundwirtschaft.ch/>

D 23	A	The destination informs and motivates tourism businesses to design at least 30% of the outdoor facilities and property in a nature-oriented way It motivates the business to publish management plans for the further nature-oriented development of the property.	Ecosystems, protection of species, invasive species	Indirect	List of tourism businesses and their nature-oriented outdoor facilities public spaces / properties.
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Note: Natural design of premises see: <http://www.naturnahefirmengelaende.de/> (webpage only available in German) and *Foundation for Nature and Economy, Switzerland*: <http://www.naturundwirtschaft.ch/> (webpage only available in German)

D 24	A	The destination regularly informs hotels and restaurants about products originating from properly implemented (certified) animal welfare practices in the region. It motivates businesses to process and sell these products.	Biodiversity, animal welfare	Direct / indirect	Documentation of the information. Written confirmation of the businesses. Selling / processing of products that respect animal welfare. Proportion of businesses that sell or process products that respect animal welfare.
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Note: Animal welfare refers to a form of animal husbandry which is based on respecting the natural living conditions of animals, and which takes the innate behaviour of animals into particular consideration. Hence it tries, in specific contrast to factory farming, to adapt to the species-specific needs of the animals. Apart from ethical reasons, consumers / tourists connect the issue of animal welfare with the issue of biodiversity, even if such a connection is not mandatory from a business perspective. The destination is therefore well advised to consider the aspect of animal welfare. Not all farmers who sell products, which respect animal welfare, are certified. And not everything that is legally allowed is appropriate to the species (e.g. turkey feed).

Factory farming is the opposite of animal welfare, and has a significant negative impact on the environment. For example, the import of animal feed (e.g. soya) contributes significantly to the destruction of ecosystems. Groundwater and soil is contaminated by nitrates, humans form resistance to antibiotics.

The organic labels (German state label / EU Bio-Label) stand for organic production and respect for animal welfare. The relevant legislation provides for minimum standards in organic farming. The label of the Animal Welfare Society "FOR MORE ANIMAL PROTECTION" has been in existence since the beginning of 2013, whose requirements go beyond minimum legal standards (a 2-step certification). For more information: <http://www.tierschutzbund.de/produktlabels.html>

D 25	A	The destination promotes the sale / processing of certified saltwater fish (MSC), certified fish from aquaculture (Naturland, Aquaculture Stewardship Council -ASC, EU organic farming logo, etc.) or fish from the region which are proven to have been fished	Protection of species	Direct / indirect	Documentation about the exchange with tourism businesses. % of the businesses which only sell fish from certified sources.
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		or farmed in an environmentally-friendly manner.			
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Note: Links to Standards and guidelines: Consumer Guide (WWF, Greenpeace) and MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certification supports the business in the selection of fish and seafood from sustainable fisheries and promotes the abandonment of endangered species on the menu.

WWF Consumer Guide:

http://www.wwf.de/fileadmin/fm-wwf/Publikationen-PDF/WWF_Einkaufsratgeber_Fische_und_Meeresfruechte.pdf (publication available only in German)

Greenpeace Fish Guide (2014) with recipes by Sarah Wiener:

<https://www.greenpeace.de/sites/www.greenpeace.de/files/publications/fischratgeber-rezepte-juni-2014.pdf> (publication available only in German)

D 26	A	The destination pursues the goal of continually increasing the proportion of products, which originate from certified organic agriculture.	Protection of species	Direct / indirect	Information for tourism businesses. Proportion of tourism businesses (%) that sell or process products from organic agriculture. Proportion of certified products in the tourism sector (cumulative).
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D 27	A	Regarding products that are not grown in their own region / country (e.g. tea, coffee, cocoa), the destinations support products with sustainability label (e.g. Fairtrade, UTZ, Gepa, Rainforest Alliance). It pursues the goal that the proportion of products with a sustainability label should increase continuously.	Protection of species	Direct / indirect	Information for the tourism businesses. Proportion of the tourism businesses that sell or process products with a sustainability label.
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Note: Sustainable procurement and standards: <http://www.kompass-nachhaltigkeit.de/> (webpage available only in German); <http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/>; <http://www.gepa.de/en/welcome.html> ; <https://www.utzcertified.org/en> ; <http://www.fairtrade-deutschland.de/bot/fairtrade-in-english/> ; Information on different sustainability labels <http://label-online.de/> (webpage available only in German);

See also biodiversity criteria for food standards: <http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=229>

D 28	E	The destination motivates the tourism businesses to become involved with endangered plant or animal species in the region, and to make an appropriate contribution to the financing of protective measures.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Indirect	Documentation about the exchange with businesses in the destination is available. Proportion of the businesses that are involved (%).
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D 29	I	The destination offers tourists the opportunity to actively participate in projects for the protection of nature / biodiversity in the holiday region e.g. in the form of activities for reforestation or rubbish collection. The financial support for projects in the holiday region is warmly recommended to tourists.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Indirect	Information for tourists. Number of tourists who have participated. Evaluation of feedback from tourists who have participated.
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Note: Recommendation: The following 14 elements should be fulfilled as mandatory criteria for recertification.

4.3.2. Recommendations for Optional or Voluntary Criteria

The following elements should be offered as optional criteria and, if implemented e.g. should lead to advantages in the evaluation of destinations.

D 30	M	The destination has the ecological (and social) carrying capacity limits of the destination evaluated by independent experts, and takes these limits into account in the development of the tourist destination.	Ecosystems, protection of species, overuse	direct	Report on the carrying capacity of the destination is available and is taken into account in the tourism planning.
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Note: There are numerous methods, which can be used for evaluating the capacity limits. Increasingly, the Tipping Point Method, which is often used in the context of climate models, is being chosen for tourism planning. Scientists suspect that in there are tipping points in climate change (e.g. spontaneous, fundamental changes in global heat transport due to changed water or air currents), which cause dramatic climatic changes within a very short timeframe. The assessment of the capacity limits helps to preserve the 'natural capital' of the destination.

D 31	A	The destination is informed about invasive alien species in the region, and passes this information to the tourism businesses.	Invasive species	Direct	Documentation
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Note: Neobiota (alien species) lists can generally be found on the website of the State Environment Ministry e.g. for North-Rhine Westphalia:

<http://neobiota.naturschutzinformationen-nrw.de/site/> (webpage available only in German)

Nationwide lists and information: <http://www.neobiota.de/> (Portraits of invasive and potentially invasive species).- webpage available only in German

D 32	A	The certified destination exerts its influence to avoid non animal friendly practices. It influences, inter alia, the responsible authorities to exert stronger controls to ensure compliance with the relevant animal welfare legislation.	Protection of species	Indirect	Documentation about contacts with the relevant authorities or with committees that deal with appropriate animal welfare.
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Note: See Recommendation N° 24.

D 33	A	The destination motivates aquaculture businesses to become certified (Naturland, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), EU organic farming logo, etc.). Certified and environmentally friendly fished / farmed fish are promoted as a unique selling proposition of the destination.	Biodiversity	Indirect	Documentation about the exchange with tourism businesses. % of the certified aquacultures.
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Note: links to the relevant standards:

<http://www.asc-aqua.org/> ; <http://www.naturland.de/welcome.html>

D 34	A	The Destination motivates farmers and their associations to become a GMO-free region'.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Indirect	Documentation about the exchange with agricultural businesses or associations is available.
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D 35	A	Coastal destinations motivate the local / regional fishery to become MSC-certified.	Biodiversity	Indirect	Documentation on the exchange with fishing businesses and associations is available.
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D 36	A	The destination supports the diversity of local varieties in agriculture by motivating and supporting farmers to grow traditional (ancient) plant varieties and/or breed animals of ancient races. It motivates the tourism businesses to ask for traditional / old varieties, and to market them as a	Biodiversity	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with farmers, farmers' associations, trade, associations for the protection of agro-diversity
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		"unique selling point".			
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Note: List of organisations working for the protection of ancient farm animal breeds and plants: Associations for Crop land Livestock Diversity, such as Pro Species Rara (<http://www.prospecierara.de/de/home> (webpage available only in German), Slow Food Germany, Association for the Conservation of Plants e.V., (<http://kulturpflanzen-nutztiervielfalt.org/members>); Arche Warder Animal Park (Centre for rare and endangered breeds), regional associations such Pommern-Arche.

D 37	I	The destination informs its guests about the situation with regard to drinking water resources in the holiday region, and motivates the guests to support water savings in an appealing way.	Overuse	Direct / indirect	Documentation of information provided to tourists. Feedback from tourists.
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Note: Not (yet) relevant for Germany. Tools for the measurement of water risks: World Resources Institute – Aqueduct: <http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/aqueduct>
World Business Council on Sustainable Development - Global Water Tool: <http://www.wbcsd.org/work-program/sector-projects/water/global-water-tool.aspx>

D 38	E	The destination regularly involves its employees in projects run by NGOs and/or nature conservation agencies to protect biodiversity (corporate volunteering). The voluntary commitment of employees to nature and biodiversity protection is promoted.	Ecosystems, protection of species	direct	Evidence of the commitment. Feedback from the employees.
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4.4 Criteria for Tour Operators

Status: October 2014

4.4.1 21 Elements for Mandatory Criteria

The following 21 elements should definitely be part of a standard for certificates or competitions and should either be fulfilled immediately or prior to re-certification with a label.

4.4.1.1 Recommendations for Immediate Implementation

The following 13 elements for mandatory criteria should be fulfilled immediately.

A	B	C	D	E	F
R1	M	The tour operator knows and respects the legal regulations for nature and species protection as well as the relevant provisions for protected areas (e.g. from the management plan) in which it carries out its own activities.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Management plan / plans are known. Requirements have been integrated into the tourism planning.

Note: Overview of legislation relevant to biodiversity e.g. BfN or: <http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=140>

R2	A	The tour operator contracts only with destinations, hotels and organisers of leisure activities which guarantee their conformity with laws relating to nature conservation and protection of species (Legal Compliance).	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Confirmation of legal compliance of the destination and contractual partners.
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Note: Review of relevant legislation for biodiversity e.g. BfN or: <http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=140>

R3	A	The tour operator preferably contracts with companies who can demonstrate that biodiversity is an important part of their (environmental) management.	All	Direct	Share of the contractual partners (%) with an environmental management system in which biodiversity is a field of action.
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Note: Examples of entrepreneurial biodiversity indicators: <http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Lang=ENG&Menu=233>

R4	M	The tour operator motivates its destinations to include the protection of biological diversity in tourism planning. The plan includes a description of the initial position, goals / objectives regarding the	Ecosystems , protection of species, overuse	In-direct	Biodiversity plan is available, or biodiversity has been taken into account in the tourism planning phase. The experts (from the nature conservation authority,
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		protection of biodiversity (if this is measurable), and concrete measures which will be used to achieve these objectives. The responsibilities for the implementation of these measures are determined, and a timetable is set. Experts were involved in the creation of the biodiversity objectives and measures.			NGOs, scientific institute) were involved in the development of the goals and measures (attestable).
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Note: Instruments for measuring water risks: World Resources Institute – Aqueduct

<http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/aqueduct>

World Business Council on Sustainable Development - Global Water Tool:

<http://www.wbcsd.org/work-program/sector-projects/water/global-water-tool.aspx>

R5	M	In regions suffering from water shortages, the tour operator demands that the destination provides detailed information on water sources. They ask the responsible authorities to ensure that a management plan for the water source(s) is implemented and that regular monitoring is carried out by a neutral competent body. The tour operator regularly asks to see the results of the monitoring, and participates in the implementation of the recommendations for action.	Ecosystems , overuse	In-direct	Documentation of contacts with the relevant authorities.
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R6	M	In regions suffering from water shortages, the tour operator favours contracting with tourism enterprises who have taken measures to reduce water consumption (per guest and overnight, as well as in absolute terms).	Overuse	Direct	Share of the contractual partners (%) who can prove a continual reduction in their water consumption. Share of the contractual partners (%) with water consumption in accordance with the regional / national benchmark (if information on the benchmark is available).
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R7	A	The field of action of biodiversity forms an important part of the training of the tour operator's employees. Qualified experts, nature conservation organisations and/or authorities are involved in the training.	All	Direct	Training programme. Proportion or number of trained staff.
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R8	A	The tour operator obliges its contractual partners to check the interior decorations and fittings, food and souvenirs and to ensure that no items protected under the CITES agreement or which are under conservation for other reasons are purchased, sold or processed,	Protection of species	Direct	Written confirmation of the contractual partners is available. Information is available about CITES and products which are under conservation for any other reasons.
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Note: CITES website: <http://www.cites.org/eng>

Online search list (in English, Spanish and French) of CITES species and their regional incidence under: <http://checklist.cites.org/#/en>

R9	A	Visits to dolphin and orca shows are not offered or advertised. Guests are reminded that they unwittingly support cruelty against animals and also finance other wild-caught and captive-bred species with their admission fees.	Protection of species	Direct	Information material, catalogues, websites.
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Note: In addition to dolphin and orca shows, wildlife parks and other facilities in which animals are not kept appropriately are also questionable. In dolphin and orca shows, there is the additional risk of the use of animals captured in the wild, which has direct negative effects on biodiversity. The business should only advertise the 'attractions' that can demonstrate appropriate animal welfare e.g. through confirmation by the responsible authority.

See also the ABTA Animal Welfare Guidelines: <http://abta.com/about-abta/raising-standards/animal-welfare> and

http://67d8396e010decf37f335facf23e658215b1771a91c2df41e9fe.r14.cf3.rackcdn.com/publications/GWforAnimalsinTourism_web.pdf

In the case of dolphins, at least the minimum standards should be met - see the study: BMEL Survey on Minimum Requirements for the keeping of Mammals (2014)

http://www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/Tier/Tierschutz/GutachtenLeitlinien/HaltungSaeugetiere.pdf?__blob=publicationFile (*publication available only in German*)

R10	I	The tour operator informs guests / tourists extensively about biodiversity in the holiday region, especially regarding rare and endangered animal and plant species and biotopes. The tourist is informed of the threats to biodiversity and is given recommendations to help avoid the adverse effects caused by their behaviour.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Information material (number of brochures distributed), website (number of visitors), other communication tools. Proportion of tourists who have been reached (%).
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R11	I	The tour operator informs its guests about the situation regarding water resources in the holiday region, and motivates the guests to support water savings in an appealing way.	Overuse	Direct	Information material (number of brochures distributed), website (number of visitors), other communication tools. Proportion of tourists who have been reached (%).
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R12	M	The tour operator conducts regular surveys amongst its customers regarding biodiversity in the destination, and makes the results of the biodiversity monitoring in the destination available.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Documentation about the participation in and support for the monitoring system and monitoring reports are known.
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R13	E	The tour operator commits itself to the protection of ecosystems or endangered animal and plant species, and finances the appropriate protective measures. It hereby ensures that its commitment is appropriate, and that its communication is credible.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Evidence of the commitment to the protection of biodiversity is available. The organisation has a transparent and coherent explanation of why this commitment is appropriate. The communication about the commitment corresponds with the facts.
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Note: Appropriate commitment: Assistance is offered by the German Mitigation-Compensation Scheme with its respective assessment of biotopes, or the recommendations of nature conservation authorities or NGOs.

4.4.1.2 Recommendations for Implementation on Recertification

The following 8 elements should be fulfilled as mandatory criteria for recertification.

R 14	A	The tour operator ensures that it does not contract with any illegally constructed infrastructure or infrastructure subsequently legalized after 2005.	Ecosystems, biodiversity, overuse	Direct	Written confirmation of the contractual partners.
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Note: Not relevant for Germany.

R15	M	The tour operator voluntarily commits itself to no-go areas e.g. core zones of protected areas, core areas of Areas of High Conservation Value (HCV), Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas. These no-go-	Ecosystems, protection of species	Direct	Maps and descriptions of the no-go areas are available. Agreement between the destination and nature conservation authority to respect these no-go areas.
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		areas were identified in consultation with stakeholders in the destinations.			
R16	M	If the tour operator conducts its activities in or in areas adjacent to protected areas or "High Conservation Value Areas", it must carry out a simple but meaningful monitoring of the evolution of biological diversity. This includes the extent and quality of the habitats as well as the development of 1 - 3 indicator species. These indicator species should be selected in collaboration with nature conservation organisations or authorities, or scientific institutions.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Direct	Documentation about the monitoring and its results are available. Results have been taken into account in the planning of activities.

Note: Indicator species: Traditional regional animal and/or plant species on the basis of whose development the state of biodiversity can be derived.

R17	M	In destinations where the existing wastewater treatment plant does not work well or functions badly, the tour operator strongly exerts its influence in order to abolish deficiencies immediately.	Ecosystems, protection of species	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with the relevant authorities.
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Note: Not relevant for Germany. The tour operator should ask the hotelier about the situation regarding sewage and wastewater treatment plants. In addition, the local authorities can provide information.

R18	A	The tour operator motivates its contractual partners to make at least 30% of the outdoor area or the property in a nature-oriented way.	Ecosystems	Indirect	Share of the contractual partners with nature-oriented outdoor areas / properties (%)
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Note: For criteria see: <http://www.naturnahefirmengelaende.de/> (webpage available only in German)

R19	A	The tour operator motivates its contractual partners to sell or process certified saltwater / sea fish (MSC), certified fish from aquaculture (Naturland, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), EU organic farming logo etc.) or fish from the region which can be proven to have been fished or farmed in an environmentally-friendly manner.	Protection of species	Indirect	Share of the contractual parties who sell or process a minimum percentage of certified fish.
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Note: In the standard e.g. a fixed percentage can be specified, which is increased every three years. Or the criterion demands continuous improvement accompanied by the evidence that the business has increased its percentage use of certified fish annually.

R20	A	The tour operator obliges its contractual partners not to process or sell any products that originate from non-animal welfare farming or that are endangered species.	Protection of species	Direct	Written confirmation of the contractual partners is available.
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Note: Animal welfare refers to a form of animal husbandry which is based on respecting the natural living conditions of animals, and which takes the innate behaviour of animals into particular consideration. Hence it tries, in specific contrast to factory farming, to adapt to the species-specific needs of the animals. Apart from ethical reasons, consumers / tourists connect the issue of animal welfare with the issue of biodiversity, even if such a connection is not mandatory from a business perspective. The destination is therefore well advised to consider the aspect of animal welfare. Not all farmers who sell products, which respect animal welfare, are certified. And not everything that is legally allowed is appropriate to the species (e.g. turkey feed). Factory farming is the opposite of animal welfare, and has a significant negative impact on the environment. For example, the import of animal feed (e.g. soya) contributes significantly to the destruction of ecosystems. Groundwater and soil is contaminated by nitrates, humans form resistance to antibiotics.

The organic labels (German state label / EU Bio-Label) stand for organic production and respect for animal welfare. The relevant legislation provides for minimum standards in organic farming. The label of the Animal Welfare Society "FOR MORE ANIMAL PROTECTION" has been in existence since the beginning of 2013, whose requirements go beyond minimum legal standards (a 2-step certification). For more information: <http://www.tierschutzbund.de/produktlabels.html> (webpage available only in German)

R21	E	The tour operator motivates destinations and contractual partners to commit themselves to the protection of biodiversity in the region, and to make an appropriate contribution towards the financing of the protection measures.	Ecosystems, biodiversity	Indirect	Documentation of contacts. Share of the parties that support a project for the conservation of biological diversity (%).
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4.4.2 Recommendations for Voluntary or Optional Criteria

The following items should be offered as optional criteria and, if implemented, e.g. lead to advantages in the evaluation of tour operators.

R2 2	M	If no management plan has been established for a protected area although this is required by law, the tour operator exerts its influence on the responsible authorities to ensure that a management plan is developed and implemented.	All	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with the relevant authorities.
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Note: Management plans for protected areas are beneficial for the tour operator, as they offer legal certainty and thus planning predictability. The tour operator should properly inform their customers about what is allowed and what is not. The management plan provides for the protection of the natural capital.

R 23	M	The tour operator exerts its influence on the destinations to encourage them to evaluate the environmental and social carrying capacity limits of the destination, as determined by independent experts, and to take these limitations into account in the development of the tourism destination.	Overuse	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with the relevant authorities.
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R2 4	M	The tour operator motivates its destinations to evaluate the cumulative negative effects of tourism planning on the environment / biodiversity (e.g. by means of voluntary Strategic Environmental Impact Assessments).	All	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with the destinations. Strategic Environmental Assessments are available. Results are incorporated in tourism planning.
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Note: Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for formal plans are required by law of a certain size. The destination should have the statutory requirements; evaluate the potential cumulative negative effects in order to avoid this e.g. SEA for informal tourism planning.

General information:

<http://www.bmub.bund.de/en/topics/strategy-legislation/environmental-assessments/general-information/>;

Integration of Ecosystems in SEAs

<http://www.proecoserv.org/news-a-highlights/94-sea-guideline.html>

R 25	M	The tour operator motivates its destinations to capture the initial position (baseline) of their biodiversity. Minimum: Recording of the protected areas and High Conservation Value Areas, as well as of the protected and endangered animal and plant species in these areas.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with the destination. Baseline Report is available. Expert(s) were involved in the creation and have signed the baseline report.
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Note: The DMO should not determine the initial position itself, but may, in turn, exercise its influence on the responsible authorities (nature conservation authority, management of the nature conservation area).

R 26	M	The tour operator motivates the destination to regularly measure the effects of tourism activities on biodiversity. The monitoring should at least encompass the impact on the habitats as well as the development of 1 - 3 indicator species.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Indirect	Proportion of destinations that have biodiversity monitoring or where biodiversity is taken into account within the framework of the tourism monitoring. Monitoring results from the destinations are available.
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R2 7	A	The tour operator motivates businesses and destinations to promote organic farming, and to achieve an above-average share of organic farmland.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with destinations.
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R2 8	A	The tour operator motivates businesses and destinations to support domestic varieties in agriculture. Tourists are informed about local / traditional plants and animal breeds, and their value for biodiversity.	Protection of species	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with destinations and businesses.
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R 29	A	The tour operator motivates the destination to identify itself as a GMO-free region.	Protection of species	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with destinations.
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R 30	A	The tour operator motivates coastal destinations to certify the local / regional fisheries with the MSC (Marine Stewardship Council).	Protection of biodiversity	Indirect	Documentation of contacts with destinations.
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R31	I	The tour operator informs its customers about the positive impact of products originating from organic agriculture and products with sustainability labels on biodiversity.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Information material, web page, other communication tools. Proportion of tourists who have been reached (%).
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R32	I	The tour operator offers its guests the possibility to actively participate in projects for the protection of nature / biodiversity in the holiday region e.g. in the form of activities to promote reforestation or rubbish collection. The financial support for projects in the holiday region is also recommended to the guests / tourists.	Ecosystems , protection of species	Direct	Information material, website, other communication tools. Proportion of tourists who have participated (%).
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R33	E	The tour operator regularly involves its staff in the projects of NGOs and/or conservation authorities, which aim to protect biodiversity (corporate volunteering). It also promotes the voluntary commitment of its employees to become involved in nature and biodiversity protection.	Ecosystems , biodiversity	Direct	Number / proportion of the staff involved. Evaluation of staff feedback.
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5 Recommendations for the Organisers of Competitions (Awards)

With regard to competitions in the field of sustainable tourism, it is less important to get as many businesses, tour operators or destinations as possible to participate, but more a case that outstanding innovations and exemplary solutions emanating from practical experience can be presented. For the organisers and the jury members, the outcome of this is the task of creating a very challenging but also actionable measure for evaluation. The present recommendations can - and should - be used in the assessment.

5.1 Objectives and Calls for Applications

The issue of biodiversity should be an integral component in all competitions for sustainable tourism. However, not all recommendations need to be taken into consideration. According to the target group and focus (e.g. avoiding loss of biodiversity), the appropriate biodiversity recommendations should be selected and integrated into the tender documents as an illustration of "what you can do as a tourism business, tour operator or destination".

5.2 Application Form / Documents

In the application form, candidates may provide documentary evidence that substantiates their innovations and strengths with the corresponding 'indicators' - and in addition with other measures and achievements that stand out.

5.3 Evaluation

In analysing the applications received, the jury may use the relevant recommendations as a 'Checklist', and allocate high scores e.g. for:

- Compliance with a particularly high number of recommendations
- Achieving a particularly high impact with regard to certain recommendations
- Innovative measures which are not included in the recommendations.

6 Checklists and Knowledge Pool for six Tourism Sectors

6.1 Target groups and Content(s)

Checklists on the theme of biodiversity in the tourism sector are developed for hotels, campsites, tour operators, travel agencies, restaurants and destinations (DMOs), which are linked to an online knowledge pool. This provides not only valuable background information, examples and practical tools for the tourism industry beyond the lifetime of the project, but also numerous networking opportunities. An essential component / element are sector-specific checklists based on the positive experience of the Biodiversity Check of the European Business and Biodiversity Campaign¹.

Access to the pool of knowledge is via DestiNet.eu², the international networking platform and database on sustainable tourism. The transmission of information is targeted and geared based on the needs and interests of the relevant target groups. Each theme of the checklists is linked to contents relating to the implementation and networking: publications and studies, useful contacts (a 'Who's Who'), labels and awards, standards, competitions featuring biodiversity criteria; guidelines, learning and training opportunities, positive and 'best practice' examples (e.g. winners of competitions, case studies); training courses, events, trade fairs; Marketplace / 'Green Travel Map of Germany' with certified and award-winning companies and travel offers that meet with the biodiversity criteria.

6.2 Benefits for the selected tourism sectors

The checklists can be used by the respective target groups themselves, and are the first step towards integrating the environmental aspect of biodiversity into a business-based or municipal environmental or sustainability management. They provide the businesses and destinations with a quick overview of the impact of their products and services on biodiversity, as well as information on existing standards and legal requirements. The checklists include proposals for targets and measures for the prevention and reduction of negative impact

¹ <http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/>

² See: <http://destinet.eu/>

7 Glossary

Biodiversity:

The diversity of life, the diversity within and between species, genetic diversity as well as the diversity of ecosystems.

Biodiversity Hotspot:

Regions with a high level of biodiversity and a high proportion of endemic (i.e. only occurring in the region concerned) plant and animal species which are under particular threat, and which must therefore be protected as a matter of priority. To be considered a biodiversity hotspot, a region must house at least 1,500 endemic plant species (= 0.5 percent of all plant species on earth), and have lost about 70 percent of its original area.

Biodiversity Management:

Corporate biodiversity management involves the systematic design of processes, products and projects in order to ensure the company's success, whilst at the same time preserving biodiversity. Biodiversity management systematically analyses the effects of business activities on biodiversity, as well as the formal and social framework conditions. From this, targeted measures for the sustainable development of businesses and society can be taken.

Biodiversity Action Plan:

In accordance to Biodiversity Action Plans at national level, which aim to halt the loss of biodiversity, businesses can contribute to the preservation of biological diversity through the development and implementation of a Biodiversity Action Plan. The company develops a vision and determines the impacts and dependence of business activity on biodiversity. Via the implementation of measures, the monitoring of the results and impact and transparent and reporting, the company pursues a holistic approach towards the protection of biodiversity.

Organic farming → Ecological farming:

Collective term for forms of farming, which observe strict standards for organic farming. The common goal is full or at least extensive avoidance of the use of commercial fertilisers and synthetically produced pesticides. Furthermore, the unity of plant and livestock production, i.e. a closed nutrient cycle, is sought. The legal basis for organic farming in the EU is the (EC) No 889/2008 on Organic Farming.

Biotope:

Habitat of a biocoenosis with uniform characteristics, which may be clearly delimited from its environment to a greater or lesser extent.

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora):

An agreement on the protection of endangered species of the IUCN (World Conservation Union) on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Animals, which entered into force in 1975.

German Mitigation Compensation Scheme→ Impact Regulation:

The impact regulation for nature conservation aims to ensure the capabilities of the natural environment and the landscape. There is an obligation to plan and implement interventions in such a way as to ensure that adverse negative effects are avoided, or those unavoidable impacts are at least limited within certain reasonable limits and compensated for.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):

An integral part of the administrative procedures for the eligibility of projects (§ 2 EIA Act): it includes the identification, description and evaluation of a project's impact on humans, animals and plants, soil, water, air, climate and landscape, including the various interactions, and their effects on cultural and other material goods.

Protected Species→Species Conservation:

A collective term for the measures to protect all wild flora and fauna.

Protected Area:

A geographically defined area, which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives.

High Conservation Value Area:

Natural area of outstanding significance or of special importance due to its great ecological, socio-economic, richness of species or landscape value.

Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs):

Natural or altered ecosystems which, in addition to a cultural value, have great significance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, and which are protected by indigenous groups and local communities on a voluntary basis.

Invasive Species:

Alien species, which have adverse effects on other species, communities or habitats.

IUCN Red List:

Directories of extinct, lost and endangered animal, plant and fungus species, plant communities and biotopes and biotope complexes. These are scientific expert reports in which the endangered status is shown for a specific reference area. They evaluate the level of risk on the basis of population size and population trends.

Marine Stewardship Council (MSC):

Created in 1997 by the environmental organisation WWF and the food company Unilever in order to provide a solution for the global problem of overfishing. The MSC label features fish and seafood from MSC-certified sustainable fisheries.

Mitigation Hierarchy (also Avoidance Hierarchy): Framework directive, which encourages businesses to measure and manage environmental impacts in all the various stages of a project. Components of the mitigation hierarchy are: prevention, mitigation, restoration and compensation.

Sustainable use:

The use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to a long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.

No Net Loss:

The loss of biodiversity resulting from interventions is offset through specific measures, or even a gain in biodiversity is achieved. The avoidance hierarchy serves as an orientation framework for the company to help them achieve a No Net Loss or even a net gain (Positive Net Gain) situation with respect to biodiversity.

Ecosystem:

A dynamic complex of communities of plants animal and microorganism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

Ecosystem Services:

Direct and indirect ecosystem services which contribute to human wellbeing.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA):

Complements the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), but is already carried out at the planning level, because important, environmentally- significant decisions are often already made within the framework of plans and programmes. The central element of the SEA is the Environmental Report.

Environmental Management System:

Part of an organisation's management system that serves to develop and realise its environmental policy, and to implement and manage its environmental aspects.

Avoidance hierarchy → See Mitigation Hierarchy