

Environmental Benchmarking and Certification Program Review

About the Program		Climate Action Australia Certification Program	Green Globe Premium	Green Globe Lite	Audubon Green Leaf Eco-Rating Program	Sustainable Tourism Eco-certification Program (STEP)	Eco Tourism Australia ECO Certification	Green Star Accreditation - AAA Tourism	ecoBiz
Benefits of Program	Demonstrated benefits of being certified:								
	Tracks performance over time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
	Highlights financial savings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
	Measures new business generated	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Compliance with the relevant laws and regulations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
	Member discounts for products/programs	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
	Access to new information (e.g. research)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Workshops/training in environmental sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Access	Access to program is via an online system	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓
Sector Coverage	A multi-sectoral program (i.e. covers a variety of sectors - accommodation, cruise, etc.)	✗	✓ 26 sectors	✓ 13 sectors	✗	✓ 4 sectors	✓ 3 sectors	✗	✗
	Has sector specific measures	✓	✓	✓	NA	✓	✓	NA	NA
Encouraging Improvement	How does the program:								
	i. Encourage or reward best practice	Businesses are awarded additional points for initiatives outside of the program's criteria.	Feedback provided highlighting best practice and recommendations on how it can be achieved.	Feedback provided highlighting best practice and recommendations on how it can be achieved.	The program is based on best practices. The more an operator does, the higher their rating is.	STEP encourages exemplary performance through scoring. The easier it is to implement certain criteria, the lower the score and vice versa.	Applicants receive additional points for extra initiatives.	By encouraging practices that are known to provide benefits to the environment.	Offers recognition through 'Partner Status' + potential for case studies or publicity
	ii. Encourage or reward continual improvement	With changes in technology and legislation, the criteria for the program also changes to reflect current best practice.	Through the Benchmarking process members are directed to where improvements can be made. It also quantifies improvements made over time.	Through the Benchmarking process members are directed to where improvements can be made. It also quantifies improvements made over time.	The program provides the property with a Recommendations Report that outlines where they can improve their environmental performance.	The criteria contained in STEP are reviewed on an on-going basis to reflect improved industry performance and standards. Members are encouraged to strive for a higher score.	The program is updated to reflect current best practice, legislation requirements and new technologies - all applicants need to fulfill this new criteria to maintain certification.	Guidance is given and operators can strive to achieve higher point scores.	Potential for EPA Licence fee discounts for ecoBiz Partners
	iii. Offer strategies for improvement	Best practice initiatives are shared so that other businesses have access to ideas that they too may be able to implement.	Online Self Assessment Checklist guides members on activities and strategies to make improvements and achieve the requirements of the Standard.	The qualitative nature of benchmarking provides an objective mechanism for an enterprise to assess relative environmental management improvement.	The program provides the property with a Recommendations Report that outlines where they can improve their environmental performance.	STEP is designed as an educational, measurement and management tool so that applicants can implement sustainability management systems and improve their approach.	Best practice initiatives are shared so that others may learn and develop their own initiatives.	Limited. We refer operators to organisations such as Green Globe or Eco Tourism Australia for more in depth analysis and assistance.	Publish a bi-monthly resource-efficiency bulletin

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Availability	Available to operators internationally	✗ Australia only	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ Australia only	✓	✗ Queensland only
	The standard is publicly available	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Constant access to the online system (or equivalent) to enter data and monitor progress	✓	✓	✓	NA	N/A	✓	✓	NA
Assistance	Technical assistance is provided for data entry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
What is Assessed	Effective sustainable management including their long-term sustainability management system , compliance with relevant international or local legislation, design and construction of buildings, interpretation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
	Social and economic benefits provided to the local community including initiatives relating to social and infrastructure community development, local employment and services, use of fair-trade and equitable suppliers)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
	Benefits to cultural heritage including contribution to the protection of local historical, archaeological, culturally, and spiritually important properties	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
	Environmental impacts , including measurement of energy, waste, water, CO2 emissions, use of harmful substances, practices to reduce pollution implemented, wildlife protection, support for biodiversity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Auditing	Does the program offer third party auditing?	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Benchmarking	Benchmarking of results against similar businesses	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗

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Secondary Assessment Criteria									
Carbon Emissions	Carbon footprint measurement	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
	Carbon footprint measurement consistent with the National Greenhouse Energy Reporting Scheme	✓	✓	✓	NA		NA	NA	✓
	Levels of carbon the program measures	Scope 1 & 2	Scope 1 & 2	Scope 1 & 2	NA	Scope 1 & 2	NA	NA	Scope 1 & 2
Review	The program itself is regularly reviewed by a third party	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Members	Percentage of the budget spent on marketing the program	17 members in Australia (note: program launched December 2008)	700 worldwide with 122 in Australia	48 worldwide with 44 in Australia (note: program launched September 2008)	100 worldwide, none in Australia	Several dozen worldwide, none in Australia (note: program launched in February 2007)	Over 1000 members in Australia with 700 products certified	352 worldwide with 348 in Australia	400 members in Queensland
Marketing	% of company budget spent on marketing	25%	5%	5%	30%	Less than 5%	25%	30% (of a limited budget)	Less than 5%
Price	Price and validity period of the program	Once only assessment fee is from \$295 + an annual fee from \$320 (both dependant on turnover)	AUD\$2,800 for 12 months	AUD\$850 for 12 months	US\$800 plus \$1/room annual fee, rating is valid for 3 years	Pricing varies depending on revenue, membership valid for 2 years	One-off Registration fee of \$90 + one-off Assessment fee from \$295 (dependant on turnover) + an Annual fee from \$335 (dependant on turnover)	\$225 for 12 months, with third part audit every 15 months (on average)	Free for 12 months
Compliance	Is the program based on the best international science to comply with the relevant international and national guidelines?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗ N/A as no carbon emissions measurement is required and assessment is based on actions	✗ internally developed
	ISO14064/14001 compliant	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	IPCC Guidelines for GHG Inventories	✓	✓	✓					
	Consistent with Australian National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Technical Guidelines	✓	✓	✓					

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Compliance	An operator's compliance is verified	Random audits are undertaken every year. Non-compliance may result in immediate removal of certification (if non-compliance is severe), however generally businesses are given a timeframe to address the issue.	At least every two years. Corrective actions are requested within the Audit report when referring to non-compliance. These must be completed in order to achieve or maintain certification	Program involves self-assessment	Every 3 years	STEP is initially based on a voluntary self-assessment process. Throughout the two-year certification period, both internal and external monitoring, are undertaken to ensure continued compliance with STEP principles.	Annual random audits are undertaken and serious issues of non-compliance make result in immediate removal of certification. In less serious cases, the operator is asked to provide evidence of change.	Compliance is verified every 15 months on average	NA
Confidentiality	Confidentiality of information is guaranteed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minimum Standards	Minimum standards/indicators/measures exist by which participants are assessed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Contact Details:									
	Company website	www.sustainabletourismaustralia.com/	www.greenglobe.ec3global.com	www.greenglobe.ec3global.com	http://greenleaf.auduboninternational.org	www.ecocertification.org	http://www.ecotourism.org.au/eco_certification.asp	www.aaatourism.com.au	www.epa.qld.gov.au/ecobiz/
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