



ANPA

Italian Environment Protection Agency

EU ECO-LABEL AWARD SCHEME



EU Eco-Label

Short paper
for
the definition of product group
Tourist Accommodation

7th of December 2001

1. Introduction

Tourist accommodation is the first product group for awarding the European Eco-label to a service. The consideration of a service as an Eco-label product group has been made possible by the new Regulation 1980/2000 which states that “products” are to include both “goods and services” (art.1.1). The feasibility study FEMATOUR (feasibility and market study for a European Eco-label for tourist accommodations), conducted by the CREM and CH2MHILL and finished in August 2000, recognises the complexity of this product group which is composed by two basic elements: the tourist structure which offers the service and the service itself. For this reason this product group has a complexity which previous Eco-label product groups have not shown. The project carried out by ANPA in collaboration with the Greek Competent Body, ASAOS, aims to develop ecological criteria for the European Eco-label defining the contents of the product group tourist accommodation.

2. Product group definition

The product group “tourist accommodation” has been defined according to the Commission Decision 99/35/EC implementing the Council Directive 95/57/EC on the collection of statistical data in tourism. The Commission Decision defines tourist accommodation as “*any facility that regularly or occasionally provides overnight accommodation for tourists*”. The Commission Decision defines the different types of tourist accommodations and identifies some services which they provide. From an analysis of the document it is clear that tourist accommodation implies the consideration of two elements: structure and service. STRUCTURE, as can be inferred from the Commission Decision, stands for the disposition of the space and the facilities given to the guest. Structure determines the type of accommodation (hotels, youth hostels, B&B, farmhouses, campsites...).

The structure alone, however, does not make the “tourist accommodation”. Always from the analysis of the Commission Decision, it can be said that accommodation implies the supply of services.

SERVICES represent the opportunities offered to the guest. They are the activities which give life to the structures.

The EC Regulation 1980/2000 is addressed to services which have a life cycle that consists in three phases: “purchase of the goods necessary to provide the service”, “provision and use of the service” and “management of waste”. The services offered by tourist accommodation structures are varied and each type of service has its environmental impacts. Deciding which services to include in the product group means to decide the sources of the environmental impacts that will be considered.

Finding the starting point to define the product group “tourist accommodation” is complex and it can stem from one of the above stated fundamental elements, the structure and the service, which brings to two different approaches: the “structure oriented approach” in which the focus point is the structure, the “service oriented approach” where the focus point is the service.

Thus, the “service oriented approach” focuses on the main accommodation service common to all different types of structures (for the services present in tourist accommodation: sleeping, common activities, recreational... cfr.table 1), while the “structure oriented approach” focuses on all the services provided by a particular kind of accommodation (ex. hotels, campsites, hostels, B&B, etc.).

These two approaches have been described in the first activity report. Regarding the service oriented approach, the service “sleeping” was pointed out as the main service common to all tourist accommodation structures (see table 1).

Table 1. Consideration of tourist service by structure and by service

		Accommodation(structure)					
		Hotels	Camp sites (only bungalows)	Youth hotels	Alpine shelters	Agri- tourism	Bed & Breakfast
Service use phase	Sleeping	X	x	x	x	x	x
	Food service	X					
	Common services	X					
	Recreational activities	X					
	Transport activities	X					
	Communication	X					

Source: ANPA, 2000

Paragraph 4.4.1 of the first activity report points out some pro and contras of the two approaches.

The two different approaches were presented during the first AHWG meeting held in Rome last 26 November. Results coming from the discussion were that **it is necessary to consider both approaches in the product group definition** as the core of tourist accommodation lies in the union of the two aspects (structure and service). Therefore the product group definition should be based on the integration of the two approaches.

The discussion focussed mainly on the activities which the service “sleeping” would include.

It is also important to remind that the European Eco-label is addressed to product and services and not to producers or productive sites such as for example the hotel structure.

These considerations have brought to the concept of **lodging as product group**.

Lodging in tourist accommodation is a service which is connected to the structure of accommodation. The definition of lodging for the European Eco-label product group which considers the Commission Decision and the AHWG discussion is:

“the provision of sheltered overnight stay structured in rooms, with all their contents, including at least a bed fit for use, offered as main service to tourists behind a fee”.

This definition points out the five dimensions in which the lodging concept can be identified:

1. provision of a room;
2. provision of a bed;
3. being the main service of the accommodation;
4. application of a fee for the service;
5. being addressed to tourists.

These dimensions and their compliance with Regulation requirements are explained below.

Provision of a room and a bed fit for use

The first two dimensions relate to structure requirements and mainly identify the concept of lodging as service used by tourists. It is in the provision of a room and a bed which is the core of the service that the consumer may use and to which also lie most environmental impacts. Therefore it is there that the improvements resulting from the adoption of Eco-label criteria could be greatest (requirement of Reg.1980/2000 art.1). In addition, as emerged from the AHWG discussion, the provision of the room and the bed constitutes the main income for the internal market from tourist overnight stay. Thus the inclusion of the “room and bed” dimension further complies with art. 2.2.a of Regulation 1980/2000.

Lodging as the main purpose of the accommodation

The third dimension relates to the purpose of the tourist accommodation. There are some structures where the provision of lodging is secondary to other purposes. These are referred to by the Commission Decision as “specialised establishments” (beauty farms, conference centres, public means of transport). In order to comply with the Regulation requirements on the matters of purpose, use and consumer perception (Reg. 1980/2000 art.1.1) such structures should be excluded from consideration.

Fee applied to the lodging

There are instances where lodging is provided for free: in private accommodation for friends and relatives, for example, or instances where payment cannot be directly related to the lodging. Those cases should not be included in product group definition in that they do not fulfil the requirement of representing “a significant volume of sales and trade in the internal market” as required by Reg. 1980/2000 art. 2.2.a.

Lodging be addressed to tourists

It is obvious that the service provided by tourist accommodation is mainly addressed to tourist. The Commission Decision defines the tourist as a visitor who stays at least one night in a collective or private accommodation of the place/country visited. This place is other than his/her usual environment, the stay does not last more than 12 months and the main purpose of the visit is not the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

3. Product group description

According to the Commission Decision 35/99/EC, the types of tourist accommodation which would be included in the product group by considering the provision of lodging as the fulcrum of tourist accommodation are the following:

Collective Accommodation:

- Hotels (including motels, beach hotels, tourist resorts and all those accommodation giving hotel services)
- Similar Establishments (boarding houses, tourist residence, bed & breakfast, farmhouse)
- Other types of collective accommodation (campsites with bungalows, holiday houses, youth hostels, group accommodation in general)

Private accommodations

- Rented rooms in family houses
- Dwellings rented from private individuals or professional agencies
- Other types of private accommodations

In the heterogeneity of these structures the standard for criteria development is given by considering in each structure its main service: lodging.

It is of course important to define which **services would be included in lodging.**

In this respect, the most relevant services related to the provision of the “room” and the “bed fit for use” will be considered. This includes first of all consumer use of all that is inside the room, the use of sanitary

facilities, the activities related to reception and information, and the cleaning of all facilities related to the provision of the sheltered overnight stay. Breakfast will be included as part of the lodging service, all other food service such as restaurant service will be excluded.

As regards to restaurant service it is important to point out that Eco-label does not include food products as possible product groups, so that in this area of activity only management activities could be considered. That information on Eco-label criteria were easily available for the consumer would be a requirement itself of the Eco-label.

All services will be considered in the three phases of their life cycle: purchase of the goods to provide the service, use of the service, management of waste.

Referring to the classification reported in table 1, **the services which are included in the product group definition** are all those related to the following:

- “sleeping” (use of room, cleaning of room and private sanitary facilities)
- “reception service”
- “food services” including breakfast excluding restaurant service
- “common services” such as common sanitary facilities
- “communication” which includes all that takes place in the back office

The accommodation structures considered would be all those complying with the definition of lodging, as reported in table 2.

Then the identification of the product group would be renamed as: “**LODGING IN TOURIST ACCOMMODATION**”, with lodging defined as above and including the above listed services

Considering what other institutions have said about product group definition for tourist accommodation, it can be also reminded that:

- some Competent Bodies have expressed their opinion in favour of considering hotels as product group, or hostels, or farmhouses, as of Fematour conclusions;
- hotels certainly have a wide distribution and a great part of the market, however the definition of lodging and the inclusion in the product group of all those structures which comply with that definition allows to consider a wider market share and, moreover, a share which is geographically more widely distributed and reaches a greater number of Small and Medium Enterprises;
- as far as hostels and farmhouses are concerned, their distribution is growing fast but for now it is certainly minimal compared to other accommodations and the effort of developing European Eco-label criteria may not be worth it;
- EEC was in favour of considering more accommodation structures following a wider approach;
- referring to the new product group definition it is important to point out that the exclusion of food service (restaurant service) and recreational services is due to the fact that these services are not the main purpose of the product group for the consumer and furthermore in consideration to the fact that they can be provided outside the tourist accommodation also from other specific tourist facilities (restaurants, sport centre, etc.). The award of the European Eco-label to these services when offered inside tourist accommodation could lead to the discrimination of those services which are provided outside tourist accommodation.

In the following table 2, the compliance of different types of tourist accommodations, defined in accordance with the Commission Decision 35/99/EC, to the five points of the definition of lodging is reported.

Table 2. Tourist Accommodations as classified by Commission Decision linked to the concept of LODGING

Accommodation type	Rooms	Bed	Specific lodging fee	Main activity	Tourist as final consumer
HOTELS					
Hotels	x	x	x	x	x
Motels	x	x	x	x	x
Apt. Hotels	x	x	x	x	x
Roadside inns	x	x	x	x	x
Beach hotels	x	x	x	x	x
Residential clubs	x	x	x	x	x
SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS					
Boarding houses	x	x	x	x	x
Tourist residence	x	x	x	x	x
B&B	x	x	x	x	x
Farmhouse	x	x	x	?	x
OTHER COLLECTIVE ACCOMMODATION					
Holiday houses (without hotel services)	x	x	x	x	x
Camp sites (for tents, trailers and caravans)	some	x	x	x	x
Marinas	no	no	?	?	x
Youth hostels	x	x	x	x	x
Tourist dormitories	x	x	x	x	x
Group accommodation	x	x	x	x	x
Holiday homes for elderly, employees, workers, students.	x	x	x	x	x
Mountain refuges	x	some	x	x	x
SPECIALISED ESTAB.					
Health establishments.	x	x	x	no	x
Work and holiday camps (scout, archeological, ecological, mountain)	some	some	x	x	x
Public means of transport	x	x	x	no	x
Conference centres	no	no	no	no	x

Accommodation type	rooms	bed	Specific lodging fee	Main activity	Tourist as final consumer
PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION					
Rented rooms in family houses	x	x	x	?	x
Dwellings rented from private individuals or professional agencies	x	x	x	?	x
OTHER TYPES OF PRIVATE ACCOMM.					
Secondary residence (incl. time-sharing)	x	x	no	?	x
Accomm. Provided without charge to friends and relatives	x	x	no	no	x