

Environmentally-Sensitive Hospitality Enterprises: A case study in a Green-Star certified Hotel in Turkey

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Degradation of the ecological balance is one of the important and popular issues in the world in recent times. This fact, raised from the unconscious use of use of natural resources by the human beings, has revealed itself in the form of climate change, threatening or disappearance of certain plants and animal species, natural resource depletion and air, water and soil pollution. In order to eliminate this disadvantage, the tendency towards the sustainable use of all resources at international, national and local scales is on the increase today. The alternative tourism and ecotourism, as sustainable and nature-based tourism types, have become the popular tourism kinds in the tourism industry whose basic products are based on the natural resources for the sustainable use of the resources.

As well as the practises of environmental protection and improvement of environmental awareness, encouragement and promotion of positive contributions of tourism enterprises to the environment are some of the subjects which have gained great importance in recent years. For this purpose, a certain standard practices for the tourism enterprises in all countries had been developed and has continued to be improved. The environmental sensitivity of tourism enterprises in Turkey had been tried to develop in 1990s through the Eco-Friendly Tourism Enterprise Certificate (a green pine symbol), but it has not seen enough interest. For his reason, environmental awareness campaign was reviewed in 2008 and brand new Environmentally Sensitive Accommodation Enterprise Certificate (a Green-Star Symbol) practise was started. The main purposes of Environmentally Sensitive Accommodation Enterprise (ESAE) are the

protection of environment, improvement of environmental consciousness and encouragement of environmentally-sensitive hospitality enterprise constructions and operational management. ESAE practices include water saving, energy efficiency, reducing the amount of environmentally hazardous substances and waste, promoting the use of renewable energy resources, environmentally-sensitive planning starting from the stage of investment, environmental compliance, ecological architecture, raising awareness about environmental sensitivity and provision of education.

This study aims to draw attention to Green-Star Symbol provision by evaluating the conceptual framework of ESAE Certificate and demonstrate the contribution of ESAE practices to the sustainability through a case study. Semi-Structured interview questions and analysis of secondary data related to the hospitality enterprises as qualitative research methods will be employed within the scope of research.

Keywords: Environment, Hospitality, Turkey, Green-Star.