

# IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF SMES IN THE ACCOMMODATION SECTOR

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The accommodation sector is at the hub of the tourism industry and it is one sector of the tourism industry in which activities such as construction of buildings and landscaping, cooking and disposal of waste, use of water and energy tend to affect the environment adversely if not properly managed. Within this context, it is crucial to engage this sector in better environmental practices.

Accommodation includes a wide variety of establishments, such as hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts (B&B), camping grounds, holiday apartments, and second homes. Globally, accommodation is responsible for an estimated 21% of tourism generated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Environmental management has become an important issue for big hotel chains, with a number of hotels adopting sound environmental management practices in response to the growing concerns for sustainable tourism products.

However, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) of the accommodation sector do not always have access to the required knowledge to adopt sustainable management plans due to the lack of training and awareness, legislative support, financial resources and sector-/industry-specific support and solutions.

## OBJECTIVES

In response to these needs UNEP, in partnership with the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME), is implementing the project "Capacity building for environmental management of SMEs in the accommodations sector" aiming to provide the necessary information and knowledge for the accommodation sector to improve the environmental performance of SMEs.

This project builds on the requirement to improve the sustainability decision making of SME managers/owners in the hotel sector.



## ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

To achieve the project's objective, an assessment of the current capacities and needs of SMEs in the accommodation sector was carried in the pilot countries Madagascar and Vietnam.

An e-tool for environmental management was developed based on the needs identified in the pilot countries. It is a practical "ready to be used" instrument that allows managers of SMEs hotels to understand, develop and implement environmental management practices. It has been designed to guide hotel operators in understanding the operational aspects of sound resources management and in finding daily management practices that influence their behaviour in relation to these principles.

To optimise the uptake of the e-tool, capacity building seminars are being organized in each of the pilot destinations to train SMEs hotel owners/managers in using the e-tool. The aim is also to create a group of trained experts that will be able to develop national or regional training for environmental management in SMEs.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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