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## Green Globe Policy V1.7





## Green Globe Policy

# Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	3
GREEN GLOBE .....	3
INDUSTRY SECTORS .....	4
GREEN GLOBE POLICY – V1.7 .....	5
1. STRUCTURE OF THIS DOCUMENT .....	5
2. POLICY OBJECTIVES .....	5
3. SCOPE .....	5
4. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS .....	5
5. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS.....	5
6. CUSTOMER CERTIFICATION POLICY .....	7
6.1 General Conditions.....	7
6.2 Qualification .....	9
6.3 Scope of Audits.....	10
6.4 Certification System .....	11
6.5 Scope of Certificate .....	12
6.6 Condition of cancellation of Certificate.....	12
6.7 Consequences of the cancellation of Certificate .....	13
6.8 Conditions and terms of re-application for Certification.....	13
6.9 Using Logos.....	13
6.10 Resolution of Disagreements .....	14



## Green Globe Policy

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### Introduction

Green Globe is the premier worldwide certification and performance improvement program developed specifically for the travel and tourism industry. Green Globe assists organizations to improve their economic, social and environmental sustainability while being rewarded and recognized for it.

The Green Globe Standard provides organizations with a framework to conduct a comprehensive assessment of their environmental sustainability performance, through which they can monitor improvements and achieve certification.

Under the Green Globe Standard a selection of more than 380 compliance indicators is applied to 44 individual certification criteria. The applicable indicators vary by type of certification, geographical area as well as local factors.

The Green Globe Standard is reviewed twice per calendar year and is always updated to the highest international standard. To guarantee adherence to the highest international standards, a third-party independent auditor is appointed audit the clients on an annual basis.

### Green Globe

Green Globe provides certification, training & education, and marketing services in 83 countries worldwide. Based in Los Angeles, California and with partners in Europe, South America, South Africa, Middle East, the Caribbean and South East Asia, Green Globe provides certification for the sustainable operations and management of travel and tourism companies and their related supplier businesses. Green Globe also maintains a global network of independent auditors who provide third party inspection and validation.

Green Globe is active in harmonizing with other established sustainability certification programs around the world. The process of harmonization contributes to maintaining core criteria and at the same time address regional issues through the adoption of locally developed standards.

Green Globe participates in many of the world's leading travel and tourism expos and conferences, including World Travel Market – London, ITB – Berlin, IMEX- Frankfurt, Caribbean Marketplace among many others.

Green Globe Summits are held each year in key destinations to provide insight to the latest development in sustainability certification, provide training and education to auditors and discuss local issues confronting businesses and the communities they work in.



## Green Globe Policy

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### Industry Sectors

Green Globe provides certification standards for the following Industry categories:

- Hotels & Resorts
- Event Venues and Convention Centres
- Attractions
- Tourism Businesses
- Tour Operators and the Travel Industry (including Destination Management Companies and the Meeting & Incentive Industry)
- Meetings, Events, Tradeshows & Exhibitions
- Spas and Health Retreats
- Cruise Ships (River)
- Ground Transportation (Mass Transportation, Bus Companies, Limousine Services and Car Rental)



## Green Globe Policy

# Green Globe Policy – V1.7

## 1. Structure of this Document

This document is divided into six sections that define the purpose, scope, and validity of the Green Globe Policy; references to existing official documents; a glossary of definitions; and policies that describe its application to Green Globe customers.

## 2. Policy objectives

- To outline the general conditions of certification to all customers interested in the process of certification or are existing certified clients under the Green Globe Standard;
- Define the scope of the audit process; and,
- Define processes regarding the granting, maintaining, and cancellation of the Green Globe Certification.

## 3. Scope

The scope of the Green Globe Policy related to the activities and actions of the following parties:

- Green Globe: the Certification organization that makes the decision regarding certification of a client;
- Auditors: the inspection/verification organization selected for the execution of audits; and,
- Customers: businesses interested in the certification process and certification under the Green Globe Standard.

## 4. Reference Documents

Green Globe Standard – V1.7 2014 and related Industry Supplements  
Green Globe Standard – V1.7 2014 Auditor Guidelines  
Green Globe Guidelines for the use of Corporate and Certified Logos

## 5. Terms and Definitions

- **Appeals:** Recourse to someone or something in the authority, discretion or bias is entrusted to settle, resolve, repeal or amend an unfair question given by the lower.
- **Audit:** systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence and evaluating businesses and enterprises in the tourism industry to determine objectively the extent to meet the requirements.



## Green Globe Policy

- **Annual Audit:** Audit for the purpose of assessing the progress in the resolution of non-compliance identified in previous audits, ongoing compliance with applicable standards and continuous improvement. The result of the audit is the decision of renewal of certification.
- **Certification Audit:** The process that determines the initial compliance of the client, their operations and management systems in meeting the Green Globe Standards. The result of the audit is the certification decision.
- **Diagnostic Audit:** The process that evaluates the current systems implemented within the client environment and its compliance with the Green Globe Standard. The output delivered to the customer is an analysis of the system including features that require monitoring to increase the chances of meeting the certification requirements. The result is not binding to the certification audit. A diagnosis audit is not required to apply for a certification. If the diagnosis audit is to include recommendations to assist in meeting the requirements of Certification, the diagnostic audit should not be completed by the same person that will be conducting the certification or annual audit.
- **Audit Research:** An unannounced and unscheduled process, responding to a complaint about a Green Globe Certified business. Its purpose is to monitor and evaluate compliance with the existing Standard.
- **Verification Audit:** The process that evaluates the level of compliance following a corrective action process. These are in response to minor or major non-conformance findings following a certification or annual audit.
- **Accreditation:** A process that qualifies, supports and gives license to bodies operating certification of companies, products, processes or services.
- **Certification:** A voluntary process that evaluates; monitors and provides written assurance that a business product, process, service or management system meets specific requirements. Often includes a logo or label "marketable" to those who meet or exceed the basic standards, or those who at least meet national and regional regulations, and typically fulfil other declared or negotiated standards established by the program.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Where in the course of one's work within an organization, there exists a clash between one's own interests and those of the organization.
- **Criteria or Criterion:** Individual factors that must be met to achieve certification.
- **Compliance Indicators:** A range of individual actions that are used to indicate compliance to a specific criterion.
- **Client:** Business or tourism organization applying for certification under the Green Globe Standards.
- **Client certificate:** Documentation indicating that a Business or company has obtained Green Globe Certification under the applicable Standard.
- **Bribery:** Action of a client to offer gifts or inducements to the audit team in order to try to influence the results of an audit.



## Green Globe Policy

- **Fairness:** A consistent procedure that does not favour one party at the expense of the other.
- **Complaint:** Issue raised by any party not satisfied with the timeliness or performance of service, and technical activities or procedures of the Certification or Audit organization.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** According to the World Tourism Organization, "conceived as that which leads to the management of all resources in such a way as to meet the economic, social and aesthetic, while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems." According to Agenda 21 for the Travel & Tourism Industry, "sustainable tourism products are products that operate in harmony with the local environment, community and culture, so these beneficiaries become permanent" (WTO, 2001; WTTC, 1995).

## 6. Customer Certification Policy

This policy sets out the conditions a client must meet to obtain and maintain Green Globe Certification based on its established norms.

### 6.1 General Conditions

1. Certification is available for all applicants that comply with the standards of Green Globe.
2. The certification process is conducted in an impartial and independent basis.
3. The customer must sign a service agreement with the audit/inspection agency for the implementation of the audit.
4. The initial and annual costs of certification that the company, business or organization has to cover are both:
  - Annual Green Globe Membership; and,
  - The initial and annual Audit services.
5. Green Globe membership does not constitute Certification under the Standard.
6. If a client is unable to gain certification within one year of application, their system access will be disabled and the client will need to reapply to initiate a new process.
7. Green Globe membership gives clients access to:
  - The Green Globe online assessment system for a year to undertake the certification process and measure performance. The customer is free to determine the deadline for certification for the period that the system is open
  - Updated Certification criteria.
  - Recognition as Green Globe members
  - Access to accredited Green Globe Consultants and Auditors to undertake certification
  - Marketing services provided by Green Globe Marketing



## Green Globe Policy

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8. Maintenance of Green Globe Certification is subject to the execution of annual audits and the renewal of the certificate is valid for one year.
9. The number of criteria of the Green Globe Standard depends on the type of customer or business, geographical area and local factors. The application of criteria is decided by the system administrator in consultation with Green Globe.
10. To obtain Green Globe Certification, customers must:
  - Have paid their Green Globe membership;
  - Undergo evaluation through a certification audit, which must be executed by an accredited audit organization;
  - Auditing should be on the desktop and in the field;
  - Meet the minimum criteria required in the rating system within the Green Globe Standard; and,
  - Comply with the administrative processes established by the Green Globe or audit organization concerned
11. To maintain Green Globe Certification, customers must:
  - Continue to implement the rating system
  - Be evaluated annually and respond to improvements stipulated in the section on grading system.
  - Comply with the administrative processes dictated by Green Globe and the respective audit organization.
12. Every client certification must be audited annually. The initial certification audit must be conducted onsite with the subsequent annual audits alternating between desktop and onsite audits.
13. The annual re-certification audit must occur within two (2) months of the expiration of the current Certification certificate.
14. Green Globe may request certain large clients or clients located in high-risk areas to conduct all annual audit onsite.
15. Clients are not allowed to change the scope of a site audit
16. Accredited auditors cannot participate in technical assistance activities or pre-audit clients that have been audited or will be audited by them.
17. The client can notify the audit organization or Green Globe of non-acceptance of an assigned auditor if they believe a conflict of interest exists.
18. Updates and/or modifications of the Green Globe Standard will be advised to clients immediately after approval by Green Globe.
19. The transition period for implementing a new standard by certified clients is six (6) months starting from the notification of the change by Green Globe. For new customers, the new Standard will be implemented immediately.
20. The amendment and inclusion of a new criterion in the rules will be applied at the time that Green Globe formalizes the amendment and inclusion of new criteria. In cases of modification and inclusion of a high-impact modification to the Standard, Green Globe will determine the timing of its applicability.



## Green Globe Policy

21. Green Globe is allowed to provide counselling, advice or recommendations to the company that is certified, provided there is a strict, verifiable and credible separation of functions.
22. A company cannot be subject to constraint by the certifying the use of certain consulting services for Green Globe certification.
23. Unless otherwise required by law, the audit team and those responsible for managing the audit program should not disclose the contents of client documents, any other information obtained during the audit or the audit report or to any other third party without explicit approval of the audited client. If disclosure of the contents of a document or audit report is necessary, the client shall be informed as soon as possible.
24. Any issues not covered by this policy will be reviewed and decided by Green Globe.

### 6.2 Qualification

1. General Compliance: The audit team rates the performance of a client in respect of each of the criteria of the standard.
  - To be fully certified under the Green Globe Standard, businesses must comply with each of the 44 core criteria by achieving a compliance score of over 50% for the related indicators.
  - To maintain certification, customers must continue to comply with the rating system and presenting progress annually in accordance with previous results of audits.
  - Not have failed any mandatory Compliance Indicator.
2. Mandatory criteria and Compliance Indicators:
  - A mandatory indicator requires full compliance or compulsory for a client to be certified or maintain certification. Partial compliance is not enough.
  - This mandatory indicator is clearly identified as such.
  - A client that does not comply with a mandatory criterion will not be certified, or will have their existing certification cancelled, regardless of whether they meet the other requirements of certification. As a major non-conformance, clients will have three (3) months to rectify this breach via a corrective action plan. Once rectified, the client will undergo a verification audit to ensure the breach has been corrected. If so, the client may be certified or have their certification reinstated. If certification is cancelled for this reason, you cannot schedule a new certification audit within three (3) months after the cancellation date of this release.
  - A new client that does not comply with a mandatory Compliance Indicator will not be certified regardless of whether they meet the other requirements of certification. As a minor non-conformance, clients will have six (6) months to rectify this breach via a corrective action plan. Once rectified, the client will



## Green Globe Policy

- undergo a verification audit to ensure the breach has been corrected. If so, the client may be certified.
- Existing clients that do not comply with a mandatory Compliance Indicator will not be re-certified regardless of whether they meet the other requirements of certification. As a minor non-conformance, clients will also have six (6) months to rectify this breach, after which time they will either be re-certified or have their certification cancelled depending on the results of the verification audit. If certification is cancelled for this reason, clients cannot schedule a new certification audit within three (3) months after the cancellation date of the certificate.
- Compliance level of each criterion: If the client or business fails to implement any of the practices defined by the criteria described in the standard Green Globe certification, this will result in the allocation of non-conformity, which is determined based on each individual criterion.
  - Allocation of scores: Each criterion is assigned a score as appropriate its implementation, namely:
    - Full compliance of the Compliance Indicator is assigned a point
    - Non-compliance with the Compliance Indicator is assigned zero points
  - Final calculation of percentage for each criterion: The final percentage is calculated as follows, according to the number of Compliance Indicators applicable to the business or client. i.e. only applicable items (Fully Complies or Does not Complies) are included in the calculation; all Not Applicable items are excluded from all the figures below.

### Calculation:

MCI: Number of 'applicable' Mandatory Compliance Indicators.

TCI: Total number of 'applicable' Compliance Indicators.

Pass Score: If  $MCI > (TCI/2)$  then Pass Score = MCI otherwise Pass Score =  $TCI/2$ .

Client Score: Total number of Compliance Indicators with a score of "Fully Complies".

If the Client Score  $>$  Pass Score and all mandatory Compliance Indicators are met, then the Client Complies with the Criterion.

### 6.3 Scope of Audits

- Is determined as audit coverage to all property and services provided by the business or customer, the area of influence, all employees affected by the impact exerted as a result of their activity or service and any service provided by their suppliers.



## Green Globe Policy

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2. Annual Audit: Audit for the purpose of assessing the progress in the resolution of non-compliance identified in previous audits, ongoing compliance with applicable standards and continuous improvement. The result of the audit is the decision of renewal of certification.
3. Certification Audit: The process that determines the initial compliance of the client, their operations and management systems in meeting the Green Globe Standards. The result of the audit is the certification decision.
4. Diagnostic Audit: The process that evaluates the current systems implemented within the client environment and its compliance with the Green Globe Standard. The output delivered to the customer is an analysis of the system including features that require monitoring to increase the chances of meeting the certification requirements. The result is not binding to the certification audit. A diagnosis audit is not required to apply for a certification. If the diagnosis audit is to include recommendations to assist in meeting the requirements of Certification, the diagnostic audit should not be completed by the same person that will be conducting the certification or annual audit.
5. Audit Research: An unannounced and unscheduled process, responding to a complaint about a Green Globe business. Its purpose is to monitor and evaluate compliance with the existing Standard.
6. Verification Audit: The process that evaluates the level of compliance following a corrective action process. These are in response to minor or major non-conformance findings following a certification or annual audit.

### 6.4 Certification System

1. The customer must pay the annual membership to access the Certification system. A login code will be assigned as soon as payment is received.
2. Clients must confirm with Green Globe that they have received their login details and that they can access the online certification system.
3. Clients will have twelve (12) months to complete certification.
4. The annual re-certification audit must be completed within two (2) months of the expiration of the current Certification certificate.
5. At least one (1) month prior to the scheduled audit, the client's Environmental Officer must ensure all the documentation and evidence of practices carried out as required in the Green Globe Standard has been uploaded into the certification system.
6. Verification audits can be done on the desktop, provided that the customer can correct the findings through documentation on the recommendation of the auditor.



## Green Globe Policy

### 6.5 Scope of Certificate

The following elements determine the contents of and policies regarding the Green Globe certificate:

1. The certificate includes the client membership number issued by the Green Globe administrator.
2. The certificate indicates that the company or client has met the standards of Green Globe.
3. The certificate includes the name of the company or client.
4. The certificate cannot include company names that have not been evaluated by the standards of Green Globe.
5. The certificate indicates the date of expiry of the Green Globe certification.
6. Clients may apply at any time to change the scope of the Green Globe certification in order to increase or decrease the properties and services or area of influence, applying the following rules:
  - The inclusion of new areas, infrastructure and/or property, is subject to a certification audit process
  - The reduction of areas, infrastructure and/or property should be reported promptly by the client to the audit organization or Green Globe for their respective amendments and allocation of evaluation criteria by the system administrator.
  - The reduction in scope may be allowed provided that the areas, infrastructure and/or property do not represent nonconformities in the previous audit.

### 6.6 Condition of cancellation of Certificate

1. The following conditions determine the cancellation of a client's Green Globe certificate:
  - Green Globe can take the decision to revoke certification if:
  - The customer does not comply with any mandatory requirement set forth in this Green Globe Policy.
  - The customer does not cover the annual fee to remain in the certification system.
  - The client does not adopt policy changes and modifications within the period.
  - The client is hampering the implementation of an audit as justified by the audit organization or Green Globe.
  - The client performs fraud or intent of coercing an auditor or Green Globe with the aim of trying to influence the outcome of the audit.
  - The client misuse of the Green Globe logo or seal.
  - An annual audit or certification is executed after the expiration date of the certificate each year due to delays by the client.



## Green Globe Policy

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- The client voluntarily decides not to continue with the Green Globe certification
- 2. The cancellation of the certificate is valid from the date that Green Globe communicates to the client.
- 3. The approval of an extension to the due date of the certificate will be evaluated on each individual case, based on the situation and the period of extension requested. The following circumstances may be reasons for extension:
  - Force majeure such as natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, etc.).
  - War or other acts of violence proved.
  - Political or regulatory circumstances beyond the control of the client.
  - Unforeseen situations inability of members of an audit team.
- 4. Where there is change of ownership, Green Globe will evaluate the case as the situation dictates.

### 6.7 Consequences of the cancellation of Certificate

When a client receives a statement from Green Globe on the termination of its certification, the client is not allowed to continue to use the Green Globe logo/seal and the corporate logo/seal on any promotional material either physical or electronic.

### 6.8 Conditions and terms of re-application for Certification

The following conditions determine the cancellation of a client's Green Globe certificate:

1. If a customer chooses to cancel and then reapply for certification, the customer must again undergo a certification audit.
2. For those customers whose certification has been cancelled for failure to comply with certification conditions, they may apply for a new certification audit at the time that the customer has and has resolved the documented nonconformities.
3. For those customers who have demonstrated intent, bad intention or unethical actions that pose a negative impact to the process of certification, credibility and have been cancelled, may not reapply for certification until a year after the date of communication of cancellation.
4. For customers that have been cancelled by the expiration of their certificate, they may apply immediately for a new certification audit process.

### 6.9 Using Logos

The following conditions determine the use of the Green Globe logos:

1. The trademarks and logos of Green Globe can only be used under license.
2. The use of trademarks and logos of Green Globe is attached in "Green Globe Guidelines for use of Corporate and Certified logos"
3. The Green Globe Certified logo may only be used by companies or businesses that have passed the certification standards of Green Globe.



## Green Globe Policy

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4. The Green Globe Certified logo can be used by partner companies or members in accordance with the attached terms contained in the "Green Globe Guidelines for use of Corporate and Certified logos".
5. The Green Globe logos are proprietary graphic units whose original form should never be altered.
6. Green Globe reserves the right to cancel or amend the authorization of the use of the logos of your property to clients or business partners certified.
7. Green Globe may request that companies, organizations or any other third parties modify or remove any application of the logos that do not conform to its guidelines or that may jeopardize its rights of use.
8. Unauthorized use of the mark or marks of Green Globe is strictly prohibited.
9. Green Globe reserves the right to take legal action against anyone who reproduces or copies the labels or marks without written permission.

### 6.10 Resolution of Disagreements

1. The customer is entitled to resort to the procedures established by Green Globe and the audit organization on the implementation of complaints and appeals.
2. In the case of complaints by third parties against certified clients Green Globe or the audit organization will assess the case and decide whether to conduct an audit of research. The complaint must be in writing, stating the name of the complainant and the objective evidence of the alleged breach of the terms of certification. The research and decision on compliance must be completed within sixty (60) days. In the case of verbal complaints, Green Globe committee decides on the appropriate course of action.
3. Information provided to those who filed the complaint on the outcome of the grievance must be supplied on a confidential basis to the customer. This may also include notification that the complaint was investigated and dismissed for any reason whatsoever.
4. Complaints, appeals and disputes should be resolved within sixty (60) working days from receipt of the document certification and audit agency, without undue delays.
5. All grievances filed which are not conducted through the official forms will not be subjected to resolution by the committee.
6. Any disagreement received over thirty (30) working days after the audit or certification services have been concluded will not be subjected to resolution by Green Globe or the audit agency.
7. Appeals and complaints will be dealt with by at least two persons of the Resolution Committee who have not participated in any aspect of the audit process or the decision on certification.