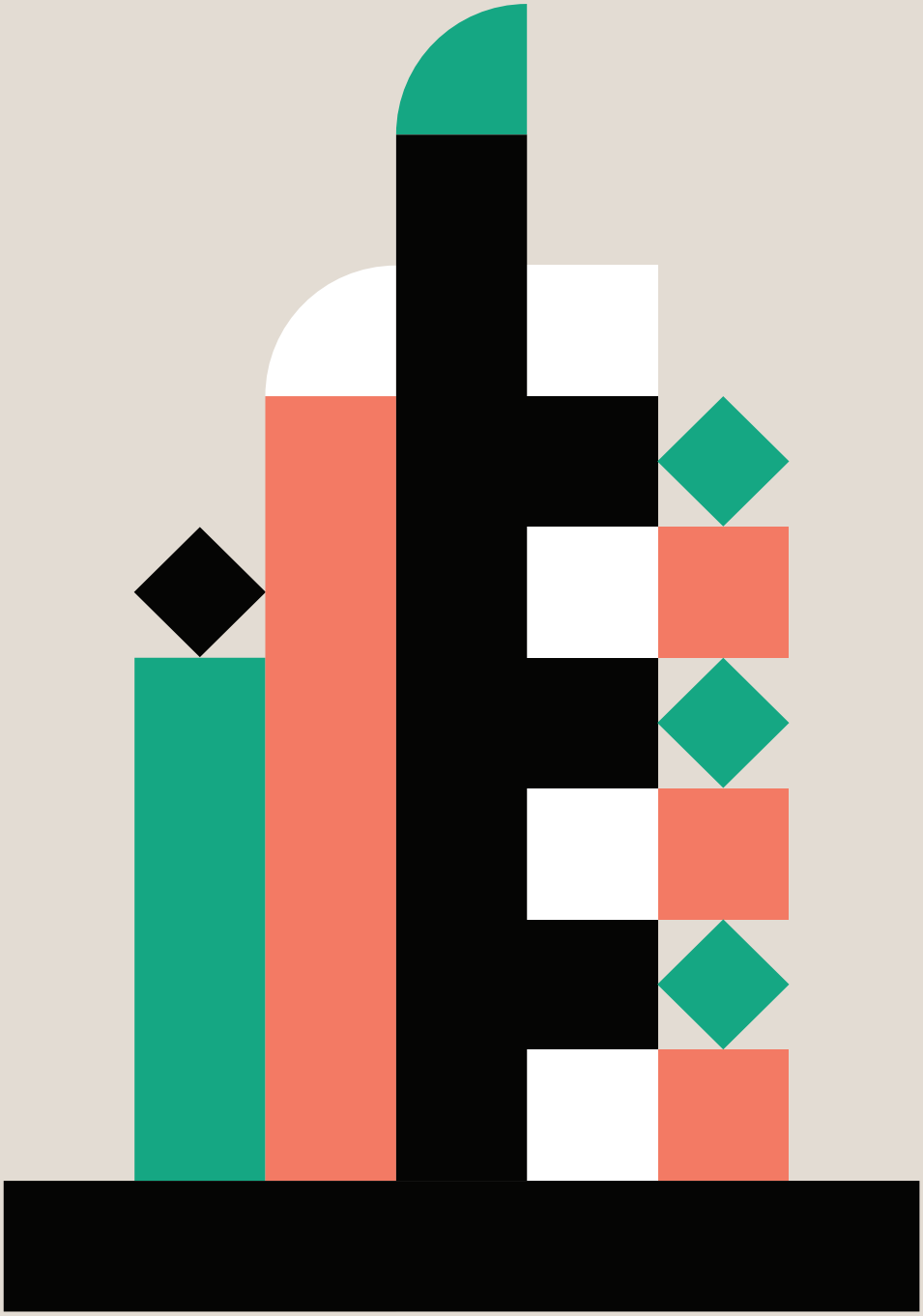
دائرة الثقافة والسياحة
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
AND TOURISM

Hotel Establishment

SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES

Practical Guide to Implementing Sustainable Practices



FOREWORD

The guidelines have been developed to provide best practice recommendations for sustainability initiatives in key sustainability areas. These are recommendations and the industry is responsible for assessing the feasibility of adopting each initiative and making progress to develop their individual sustainability strategy and policy.

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1. Introduction

The world is changing, and so are the needs of tourists and travellers. Sustainability has become a significant concern for many. According to Booking.com, in its Sustainable Travel report 2022[1], 71% of global travellers want to travel more sustainably. In addition, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNWTO) vision for the 2030 Agenda firmly positions the need for sustainable tourism. Harnessing tourism's contribution to sustainability will be instrumental in fulfilling this vision.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has joined the global move towards sustainability. Key examples include the UAE Strategy for Domestic Tourism, the UAE Circular Economy Policy and the UAE Net Zero 2050 initiative, as shown in Figure 1. There are many national and local sustainability strategies and initiatives driving the change towards the country's sustainable development.

World

UN World Tourism Organization Vision - 2030 Agenda

UN World Tourism Organisation aligned to 17 SDGs.

[1] Booking.com, "Sustainable Travel Report ". 2022 (www.globalnews.booking.com)

Some of those are:

Good Health and well-being

Quality Education

Affordable clean energy

Climate Action

Partnerships for the goals

1.8 B

of average annual growth of international tourist arrivals is expected in Middle East until 2030

5%

of average annual growth of international tourist arrivals is expected in Middle East until 2030

2020

tourist arrivals decreased by %74 while market recovered by %120 in 2021

United Arab Emirates

UAE Net Zero Initiative

Launched in 2020 with an aim to unify local and federal efforts to harness the UAE's tourism resources:
- Building capabilities, developing policies, plan and programme based partnerships.

UAE Circular Economy Policy

2021: UAE framework for determining the approach to achieving sustainable governance: Promotion of environmental, adoption of clean methods and reduction of environmental stress.

UAE Strategy for Domestic Tourism

2021: UAE sector entities to update their sustainability aproach: Investment AED600 Billion in clean and renewable energy sources expected by 2050.

Figure 1: World and UAE trends towards sustainability and eco-tourism

2. Sustainability in the Abu Dhabi Tourism Industry

As the UAE moves towards sustainability, it is imperative to establish and promote Abu Dhabi's leading position as a global destination in eco-tourism and sustainable tourism.

As the tourism industry's regulator, the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) is committed to provide a sustainable and responsible tourism industry tailored to the regional climate, culture, and available resources. The tourism industry is instrumental in supporting the evolution of Abu Dhabi into a world-class destination.

DCT Abu Dhabi has established a comprehensive sustainability framework for the tourism industry (Figure 2) based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is a long-term and forward-looking framework aiming to manage the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the tourism industry. It is built upon six destination principles for sustainable development. These have formed the basis for the development of the Sustainable Tourism Guidelines.

Sustainability Framework & Implementation Plan Abu Dhabi Tourism Sector

Principle	Initiative		
Trasparent Destination	Capacity Building	Sustainable Tourism Award	
Sustainable Destination	Sector Commitment	Sustainable Guidelines	Event Impact Management
Unique Destination	Eco-tourism Marketing	Local Experience App	
Safe, Accessible Destination	Experience for tourists with disabilities	Impproving Site Accessibility	Tourists Site Connectivity
Inclusive Destination	Stakeholder Engagement	Marketing for residents	
Adaptive, Diverse Destination	Low-Season Marketing	Climate Change Assessment	

Figure 2: DCT sustainability framework

As a result, the **Hotel Establishment Sustainability Guidelines** have been developed, which aim to enhance knowledge and encourage the implementation of sustainability practices and procedures into the day-to-day operational activities across the value chain. These guidelines are the foundation that will shape the future of the hotel sector and establish Abu Dhabi as a leader in sustainable tourism. The guidelines are aligned to the key sustainability areas that are related to the tourism industry.

3. Context and Objectives

The guidelines have been developed to help the sector stakeholder in defining their sustainability roadmaps. It outlines initiatives and best practices for the hotels and hotel apartments (collectively referred to as "Hotel Establishments" henceforth) and equips them with a goal-based sustainability approach. Definitions for hotels and hotel apartments are provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Definitions

Hotel	An establishment providing accommodation, meals, and other services for travellers and tourists. Hotels have been further classified into 5 groups, based on their DCT hotel classification start rating.
Hotel apartment	A hotel apartment is a serviced apartment complex that uses a hotel-style booking system. It is similar to renting an apartment, but with no fixed contracts and occupants can "check out" whenever they wish, subject to the applicable minimum length of stay imposed by the company. Hotel apartments have been further classified into three categories- Deluxe, Superior and Standard, based on DCT Abu Dhabi's hotel apartment classification.

The tourism industry has long supported the economic development of Abu Dhabi and its emergence as a world-class tourism destination. As of July 2022, there are more than 170 Hotel Establishments in Abu Dhabi, totalling to more than 33,000 rooms. As this number continues to grow, Hotel Establishments must adapt to key factors, such as customer-specific needs, global trends and market developments.

As per the 2022 Sustainable Travel report[2], 81% of global travellers confirm that sustainable travel is important to them while, 57% of travellers would prefer staying in an accommodation with a sustainability certification. Keeping in tune with these global perceptions of sustainability, it is recommended that Hotel Establishments use these guidelines to benefit from successful business practices and contribute to Abu Dhabi's vision of a sustainable tourist destination.

The Hotel Establishments Sustainability Guideline is a non-binding set of recommendations and initiatives aiming to improve responsible tourism development. The guideline is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria, and other leading industry initiatives to provide Hotel Establishments of Abu Dhabi with a roadmap to achieve a more sustainable and inclusive business, while providing tourists with an enriching local and authentic Abu Dhabi experience.

To develop this document, 18 different guidelines from global leaders were assessed and benchmarked, including GSTC Criteria, Green Key, Green Globe, and UNWTO. Standards from Dubai Sustainable Tourism were also studied for more understanding on the Middle East region. These guidelines and standards were studied to understand the sustainability requirements within global tourism industry and evaluate gaps and opportunities for sustainability in the Abu Dhabi Tourism industry. A survey of different players, including Hotel Establishments, Cultural and Heritage Sites, F&B, Events, Leisure and Entertainment Attractions, and Travel Agencies and Tours Operators, was conducted in January 2022 by DCT to understand current sustainability practices implemented within their operations, as a baseline. The findings from the studies helped in understanding the gaps and opportunities of how these players can facilitate sustainability practices across Abu Dhabi as a tourism destination.

[2] Booking.com, "2022 – Sustainable Travel Report". (www.globalnews.booking.com)

To develop the Sustainability Guidelines, the following key steps were undertaken to understand the current state of sustainability in the tourism industry in Abu Dhabi. This is shown in Figure 3.

1.	**Benchmarking and Research**	Research was conducted on the selected sustainability policies, guidelines and certifications from around the world. Key sustainability conclusions and best practice were drawn from this exercise.
2.	**Sector Stakeholder Selection**	6 sector stakeholder categories for selection were developed based on the targeted sectors:hotel establishments, events, food and beverage establishments, culture and heritage sites, leisure and entertainment, travel and tour operators.
3.	**Survey Development**	A survey was developed to gain an understanding of the current state of sustainability in the hotel sector in the Abu Dhabi tourism industry.
4.	**Workshops & Survey Launch**	The selected hotel stakeholders were invited to participate in the workshop to fill in the survey.
5.	**Survey Analysis**	A total of 24 sector stakeholders participated in the survey. Results from the survey were analysed, and the main challenges and opportunities were concluded.
6.	**Guideline Development**	The conclusions from the benchmarking, survey and workshops were used as the foundation and 6 different sector-specific guidelines were developed.

Figure 3: Guideline development process

Key sustainability elements, challenges and opportunities related to sustainable growth and development were identified by surveying selected Hotel Establishments. The survey was structured around the key findings from the benchmarking exercise, a collection of guidelines was then benchmarked against the following criteria, voluntary versus mandatory guidelines, international and national guidelines, other applicable guidelines and certification schemes and key sustainability elements (e.g., energy management, water management, carbon emissions etc.).

The results of the survey show that 90% of the surveyed hotels in Abu Dhabi consider sustainability to be important (Figure 4). Nevertheless, the level of importance varied between 4-5 star hotels, which considered sustainability as high importance to their business model, compared to hotels with 1-3 star ratings, who rated sustainability as somewhat important.

Surveyed Hotel Establishments think that sustainability is important to their business operations

Surveyed Hotel Establishments have not implemented international sustainability programmes and certifications

Surveyed Hotel Establishments have sustainability roles and responsibilities assigned to dedicated departments

Figure 4: Key Survey Findings

Based on the data of the survey conducted for Hotel Establishments, the results indicate that there is a crucial need for solutions to support the establishments in their journey towards sustainability. The most important focus areas identified were environmental risk management, control carbon emissions, protecting and preserving biodiversity, prioritising the health and safety of guests and employees, adopting sustainable procurement, and enhancing energy, water, and waste management. The results highlight the challenges towards implementing sustainable practices that are related to sustainability awareness and expertise, sustainability monitoring, high utility bills, access to sustainable goods, and guest sustainability awareness. These findings can be considered as baseline aspects and initiatives that currently exist within the sector, which emphasises the need for the sector to improve on the sustainability performance of the tourism industry.

The focus areas, challenges, and opportunities gathered from the responses aided the development of the guideline (shown in Figure 5). The guideline aims to encourage Hotel Establishments to be more self-sustainable and emerge as a pioneer in Abu Dhabi's journey to become a sustainable destination.

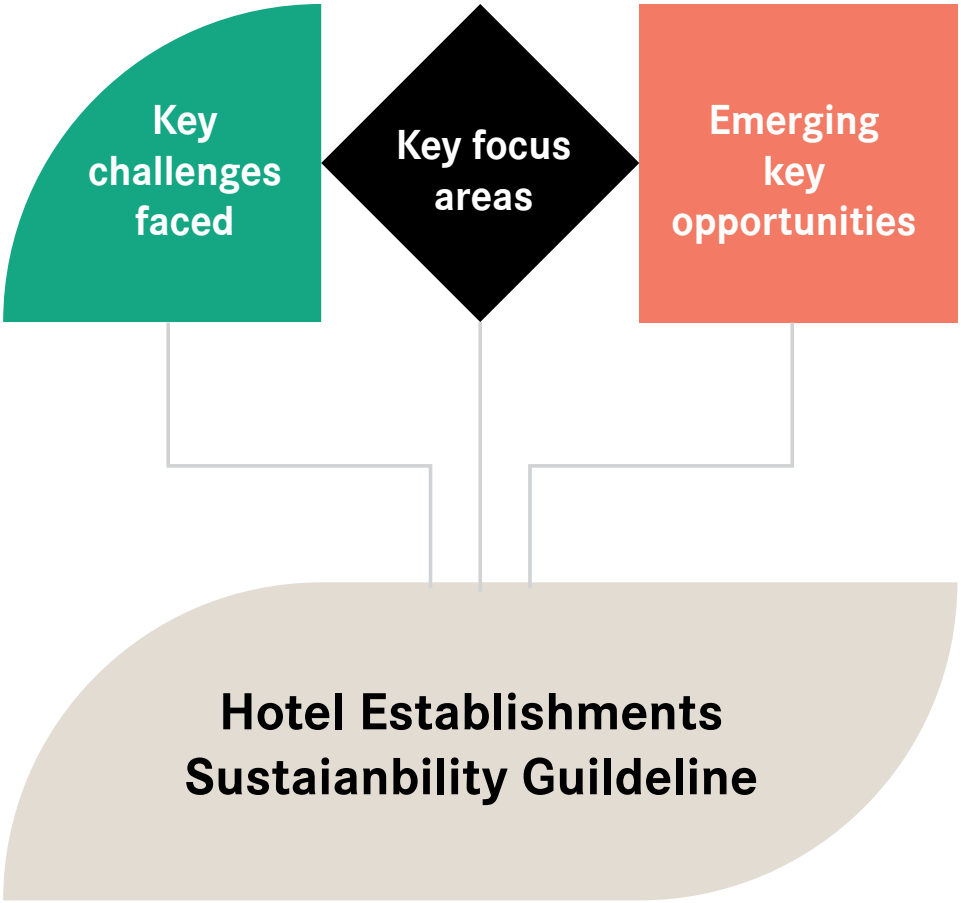


Figure 5: Survey Analysis

4. How to Use This Guideline?

This section of the guideline will provide clear steps on how to ensure a successful implementation of the sustainability strategy through the day-to-day operations to contribute towards sustainable development. A summary of the steps is presented in Figure 6, and it is recommended to follow steps 1-5 annually to ensure that the sustainability strategy remains relevant, robust, and aligned with the Hotel Establishment's current sustainability progress.

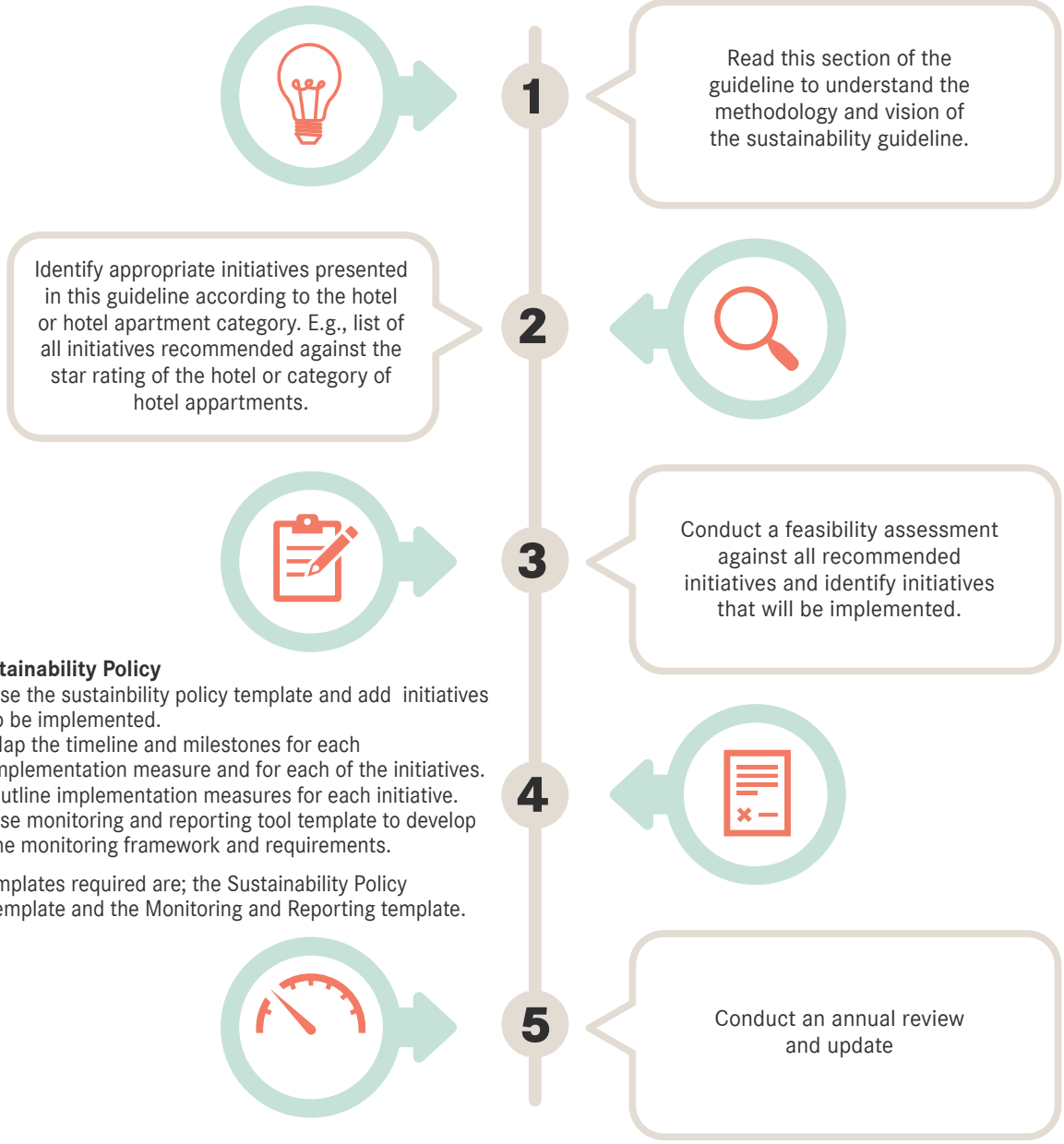


Figure 6: Steps to use the guideline

5. Sustainability Categories and Key Initiatives

There are five different sustainability categories, Energy and Environment, Sustainable and Local Procurement, Social and Culture, People and Risk and Resilience Management.

Table 2: Five different Sustainability Categories

Sustainability Category	Definition
A. Energy and Environment	Sustainable energy and environment management initiatives to provide solutions for sustainable energy, water and waste management, environment protection and carbon management.
B. Sustainable and Local Procurement	Sustainable procurement initiatives that give preference to local and environmentally friendly goods.
C. Social and Culture	Initiatives to promote social and cultural heritage of Abu Dhabi through the tourism industry.
D. People	Initiatives focussing on empowerment of employees in the tourism industry.
E. Resilience and Risk Management	Initiatives focussed on identifying and managing the risks associated with the Hotel Establishments in the tourism industry.

Key initiatives under each sustainability category

The key initiatives under each of the five sustainability categories presented in Figure 7 were comprehensively identified and developed, ensuring that they were aligned with Abu Dhabi's sustainability pillars and agenda. This guideline covers holistic sustainability development and specific measures for environmental and social pillars, whilst considering under each applicable category the key vision for Emiratisation, financial stability and growth and governance (including data collection, monitoring, and reporting). Initiatives have been carefully tailored based on the Hotel Establishment classification. This document provides guidance on implementing the suggested initiatives based on the classification and is designed to provide cost-effective solutions that can help induce a positive impact on the overall sustainability performance.

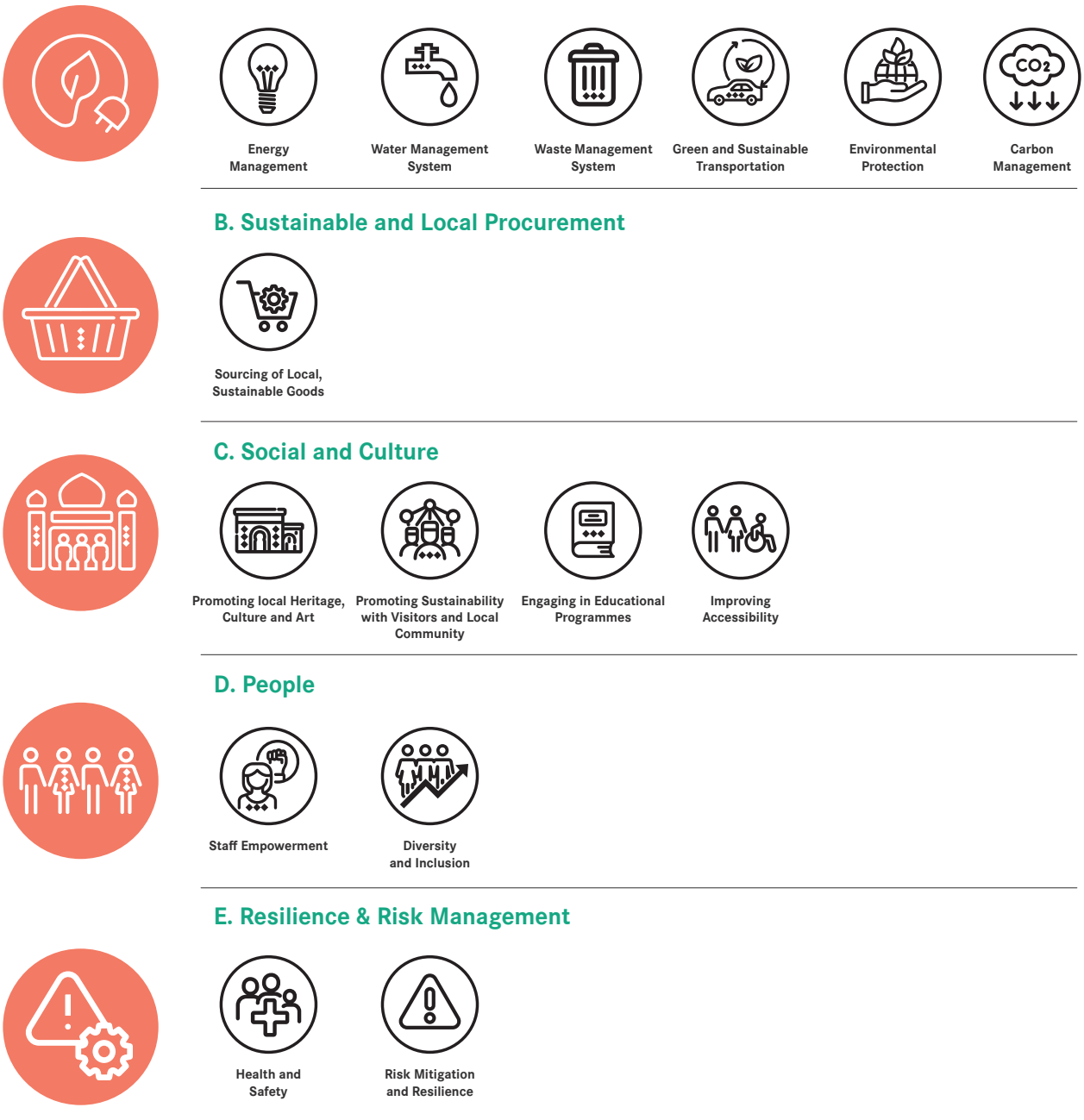


Figure 7 Sustainability initiatives

The following sections will provide further detail on the above-mentioned key sustainability measures and details the opportunities and benefits that result from the implementation of these practices. It should be highlighted, that some of the initiatives appear to be easier to implement for new establishments (e.g., installing Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (ESMA) 4 or 5 star-rated products), however these are applicable to Hotel Establishments that are installing new or replacing old products within the establishment as well.

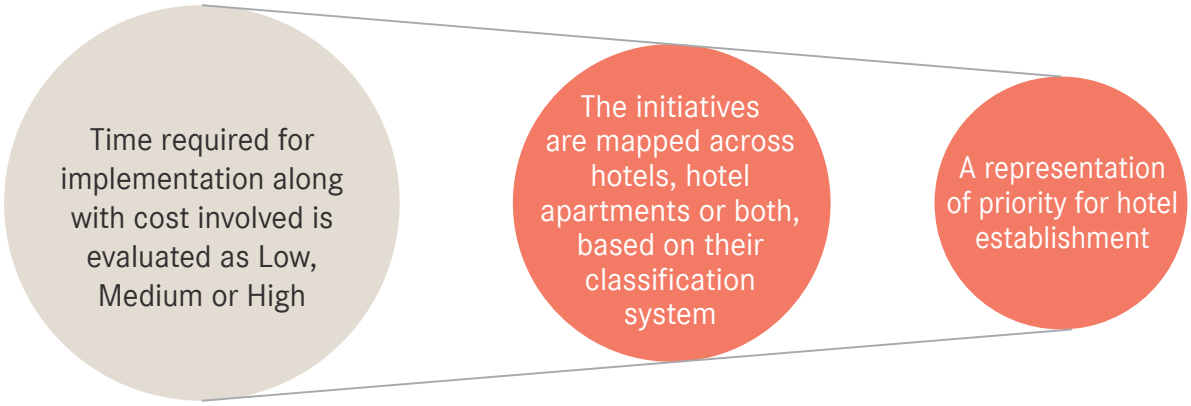
6. Estimation and Prioritisation Process

Estimation → **Categorisation** → **Prioritisation**

Estimate cost and effort of the initiative

Categorize initiatives for hotels and hotel apartments

1. Prioritise estimated initiatives for hotels and hotel apartments
   Low estimation → high priority for all hotel establishments
2. High estimation → Low priority for up to 3 star or Superior, Standard establishments but high priority for 5 star or Deluxe



✓ **Priority 1** ✓ **Priority 2**

Hotels

Time	Cost	5*	4*	3*	2*	1*
LOW	LOW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LOW	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	LOW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LOW	HIGH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	LOW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	HIGH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	HIGH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Hotel Apartments

Time	Cost	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
LOW	LOW	✓	✓	✓
LOW	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	LOW	✓	✓	✓
LOW	HIGH	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	LOW	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	HIGH	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	HIGH	✓	✓	✓

Figure 8: Initiative priority mapping for Hotel Establishment categories

To determine if an initiative is Priority 1 or Priority 2:

- **Estimation:** The cost and effort of each initiative was estimated as Low, Medium, and High.
- **Categorisation:** Assessment if the initiative is applicable to hotels or hotel apartments or both.
- **Prioritisation**: Priority matrix was developed based on cumulative score from Estimation stage and the classification of the hotel establishment as per DCT Abu Dhabi's classification system.

For further understanding on cost and effort estimation of each initiative please refer to ***the Annexture document for the Hotel Establishments guidelines***.

The recommended sustainability initiatives are categorised into two categories, "Priority 1" and "Priority 2". It must be emphasised that the sustainability guidelines are not mandated and aim to present a framework on how the industries can progress on their sustainability journey. The two categories are defined as below:

✔	**Priority 1**	All establishments identified in orange should aim to target and implement the identified initiatives.
✔	**Priority 2**	Where the establishment has been identified in dark green, it is encouraged that the stakeholder investigates the feasibility of implementing the initiative to surpass expectations.
✖	**Not Applicable**	

All Hotel Establishments should aim to target and implement Priority 1 initiatives for their classification as indicated in ✔ .
Whereas for Hotel Establishments marked in ✔, Priority 2, the stakeholder is encouraged to investigate the feasibility of implementing the initiative to surpass expectations.
To calculate the estimations on time and cost, several assumptions were applied considering the uniqueness of Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Dhafra Area.

1. Average hotel size is 200 rooms, based on DCT Abu Dhabi's 2020 Annual Report that contains the total number of rooms as well as hotels (fraction was made to obtain this).
2. There is an average of 5 engineers on shift at the average hotel (this will affect the time significantly).
3. The total area of an average hotel is 31,000 sqm according to Emirates GBC[3].
4. The tariff rate of both water and electricity is based on Abu Dhabi Distribution Company (ADDC) and Al Ain Distribution Company (AADC).

[3] Emirates GBC, "EmiratesGBC Energy and Water Benchmarking for UAE Hotels", 2016, (www.emiratesgbc.org)

7. Sustainability Initiatives Prioritisation

A. Energy and Environment.

A.1 Energy Management

How can Hotel Establishments achieve energy and environmental sustainability?

Research has shown that up to 4%[4] of an average Hotel Establishment's operating costs are related to energy consumption. In the United Arab Emirates, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, for instance, account for up to 70%[5] of annual energy consumption for a typical -4star hotel, revealing how critical it is for owners and facility managers to properly maintain their equipment and have in place protocols for the monitoring of equipment and systems. There is a remarkable opportunity to substantially reduce the consumption of energy through the implementation of conservation measures and through energy efficiency initiatives.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1. Install efficient lighting solutions.	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
1.1 Install LED lights depending on the desired lux level. (A 9W LED is equivalent to a 45 W incandescent bulb output).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2 Install motion sensor and timers for lighting. For instance, in regularly occupied spaces (e.g., back of house "BOH"), install motion and daylight sensors to automatically adjust lighting levels to reflect the daylight levels and use of the space (e.g., if no one is utilising the space the lights will switch off).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Conduct energy efficiency awareness campaign.	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
2.1 Conduct an annual training for staff on energy efficiency (e.g., turning off lights in empty rooms, unplug electronic devices after usage, etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.2 Create guidebooks or leaflets on energy conservation using energy efficient measures, list of energy efficient appliance etc., either in digital format or by printing leaflets.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.3 Place reusable or permanent energy usage signage throughout the establishment such as guestrooms and BOH areas (e.g., turn off lights by the light switch, switch off computer after usage).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.4 Utilise digital tools (such as eTEACHER) to increase efficiency in energy management to highlight energy consumption reduction areas.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[4] Energy Star, "12.Facility Type: Hotels and Motels", 2007, (www.energystar.gov)
[5] Dubai Sustainable Tourism, "12 Steps Towards Sustainability", 2017 (www.dst.dubaitourism.ae)

3.	Enhance cooling efficiency.	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Install efficient chillers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Install temperature control of central cooling and ventilation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.3 Check thermostat temperature regularly. Thermostat should be maintained at 18-23 degrees. It is recommended that in “guest only" areas, the temperature is set within this range before the guests arrive and reset during housekeeping activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.4 Inspect ductwork and windows for leakage bi-annually.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.5 Install sensors to automatically shut down AC units when doors and windows are left open.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.6 Install digital management solution that monitors energy consumptions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Purchase efficient appliances and equipment, such as ESMA 5- and 4-star appliances.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Washing machine.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.2 Dryers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.3 AC split units.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.4 Home freezers/refrigerators (for guest rooms).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Purchase more efficient appliance in the market, based on their catalogue rating and hotel design specifications.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Large refrigerators/freezers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.2 Ovens.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.3 Large AC systems.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.4 Vacuum cleaners.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.5 Install smart kitchen hood for the F&B area.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.6 Introduce induction stove and cook-tops in the F&B kitchen as they are more energy efficient as compared to gas or electric ranges.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.7 Energy efficient or smart water pumps for pools.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	**Invest in renewable energy solutions. ****	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Install solar water heaters.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6.2 Install solar PV wherever possible like rooftops and garden area.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6.3 Purchase Clean Energy Certificates from Emirates Water and Electricity Company (EWEC).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]
* ESMA expands its energy efficiency programme, Hotel Establishments are advised to keep checking the updates for inclusion of more appliances.
** Renewable energy generation technologies (i.e., solar power) have been identified as a “Priority 2” for -5star hotels and Deluxe Hotel Apartments due to the relatively high capital cost, manual labour and space required associated with installing a solar PV array. All Hotel Establishments are encouraged to conduct a feasibility for renewable energy technologies.

Initiatives applicable only to Hotel Apartments

Sustainability Initiatives — Hotel Apartments

7.	Purchase more efficient appliances and equipment, such as ESMA 5- and 4-star appliances.	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	7.1 Washing machine for each guest room.	✓	✓	✓
	7.2 Dryers for each guest room.	✓	✓	✓
	7.3 Freezers for the F&B area, if applicable.	✓	✓	✓
	7.4 Refrigerators for each guest room.	✓	✓	✓
	7.5 Cooking stove/ ovens.	✓	✓	✓
	7.6 Microwave oven for each guest room.	✓	✓	✓
	7.7 Dishwashers for each guest room.	✓	✓	✓
	7.8 Vacuum cleaners.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]
* ESMA expands its energy efficiency programme, Hotel Establishments are advised to keep checking the updates for inclusion of more appliances.

Benefits:

- Installing efficient lighting systems including LED bulbs, daylight harvesting systems and motion sensors can save between 2,000 and 8,000 AED per month for an average 200 room hotel[6,7].
- Providing sustainability training aims to achieve energy efficiency, cost saving, improve reputation, and increase awareness.
- Installing cooling systems equipped with efficient chillers, temperature control systems coupled with regular ductwork inspection can result in savings of up to 8,000 AED per month.
- Using ESMA rated appliances can save a minimum of 2,000 AED and up to 7,000 AED per month for selected appliances.
- Solar heaters and Solar PV systems can have a payback period of 5 years post installation. These systems can cover a significant portion of the energy bill, depending on the size of the Solar array installation.
- Purchasing Renewable Energy Certificates can be obtained to develop the clean energy portfolio. This should be a consideration especially when renewable energy installation is not feasible, or when there are emissions that can be difficult to decarbonise and offset. It should be emphasised that this scheme operates as an auction and price points cannot be disclosed in these guidelines.

Local References:

- Estidama Pearl rating system: Estidama is a building design methodology for constructing and operating sustainable buildings. Under Estidama, energy management is a key factor to obtain the Pearl rating.
- Abu Dhabi Stock Exchange Guidance (ADX): ADX has developed guidance on the adoption of Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) among its listed companies and investors alike. Hotel Establishments can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting.
- Abu Dhabi Environment Vision 2030: Achieving sustainable energy management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi economy.

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[6] Based on AESG's research: four 25 AED %90 efficiency LED bulb per room in a -200room hotel with a 31,000 sqm area combined with motion and daylight sensors that can vary from 20 AED to 70 AED installations in each room.
[7] Based on AESG research: data from several online retailers and bulk suppliers to create market average.

Tips:

ESMA energy efficiency standards:

As part of the UAE Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technologies, ESMA (Emirates Standardisation and Metrology Authority (incorporated into the Ministry of Industry and Technology) issues the Energy Efficiency Labels for appliances). Hotel Establishments should ensure that all appliances have high ESMA star rating (5 or 4 stars).
The list of the approved appliances can be found here: https://moiat.gov.ae/en/

Clean Energy Certificates:

The Clean Energy Certificates programme is an innovative initiative that allows Abu Dhabi consumers to certify the source of their clean energy usage and empowers them in achieving their sustainability goals. EWEC owns and sells all Clean Energy Certificates for solar and nuclear generated electricity in Abu Dhabi, supporting the UAE's climate change goals as part of the UAE Energy Strategy 2050.

How can I purchase Clean Energy Certificates?
To track and verify clean energy consumption, please contact the EWEC Clean Energy Certificates team at: CleanEnergyCertificates@ewec.ae

Further Reading:
1. OneClick LCA information and Pricing
2. eTEACHER

A.2. Water Management System

Developing a water conservation plan and purchasing water-efficient appliances reduces both operating costs and overall environmental impacts. In the UAE, where water is scarce due to its geographical location, it is very important for the sector to conserve water wherever possible.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Incorporate regular maintenance and prevention inspections.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Inspect pipes, faucets drainage and other water fittings to ensure there is no water leakage.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Conduct water efficiency awareness campaign.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Train staff annually on water efficiency and management.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Create guidebooks, leaflets or booklets on efficient water management either in digital format or by printing eco-friendly paper.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.3 Post water conservation signages in bathroom facilities, laundry rooms, utility rooms, pools, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.4 Use digital tools (such as Estidama Water Consumption Calculator).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Install efficient and smart water fittings.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Install hand basin faucets with flow rate at 1.5-2 l/min or less.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Install showers faucets flow rates at 9.5 l/min or less.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.3 Install toilet with flush flow rate at 2-4 l/min and bidet flush flow rate at 9.5 l/min or less.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.	**Change Linens and towels conservatively.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Change bed linen as recommended or when the guests ask by placing a change card on the bed (see monitoring and reporting section)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.2 Change towels as recommended or request guests to put used towels in the laundry basket if they need them replaced (see monitoring and reporting section).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.3 Put a notice on the change cards with a friendly message for the guest on the positive impact of reducing change of linens and towels.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.4 Use unbleached and undyed fabric for bed linen and towels.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Provide sustainable water solutions.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Offer guests with the option to refill their water bottles through room service requests.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.2 Install portable water dispenser in guest rooms.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.3 Install water refill stations in the high-footfall areas of the establishment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.4 Post signages on water stations and water dispensers indicating that the water is safe for drinking and to use paper, glass, or biodegradable cups.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.5 Provide bottled water made of biodegradable content (e.g., bottles made of corn starch).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	**Ensure swimming pool water management and efficient drainage.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Pool covers to prevent water loss from evaporation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6.2 Filters for backwash waterflows in the pool.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	**Condensate/ harvest rainwater.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	7.1 Install condensate and/or rainwater collection systems.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8.	**Introduce smart and efficient irrigation system for lawns and gardens.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	8.1 Install drip irrigation/high-efficient devices (e.g., drippers, sprinklers, bubblers) system controlled by time sensors and leak detection. This can get enhanced further by installing a smart system that reacts to real time weather detection, automatic irrigation schedule etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8.2 Install subsurface irrigation system.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8.3 Utilise recycled water for irrigation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8.4 Practice xeriscaping: use soil additives and native/ adaptive trees, plants, shrubs, and artificial surfaces to conserve water.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]
*The recommended frequency of checks varies between hotel classification, please refer to the measuring and monitoring section for recommendations.
**This initiative is applicable only if the property has a pool.

Initiatives applicable only to Hotel Apartments

Sustainability Initiatives		Hotel Apartments		
9.	**Reduce consumption of water and spread awareness with the guests.**	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	9.1 Ensure signage at the washing, dryer and dishwasher in every room to run them only when they are full, to save consumption of water.	✓	✓	✓
10.	**Change Linens and towels conservatively.**	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	10.1 Change bed linen every third day or when the guests ask by placing bed linen card (whichever is earlier).	✓	✓	✓
	10.2 Change towels every third day or request guests to put used towels in the laundry basket if they need them replaced.	✓	✓	✓
	10.3 Put a notice on the change cards with a friendly message for the guest on the positive impact of reducing change of linens and towels.	✓	✓	✓
	10.4 Use unbleached and undyed fabric for bed linen and towels.	✓	✓	✓
11.	**Provide sustainable water solutions.**	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	11.1 Install portable water dispenser in guest rooms.	✓	✓	✓
	11.2 Post signages on water stations and water dispensers indicating that the water is safe for drinking and to use paper, glass or biodegradable cups.	✓	✓	✓
	11.3 Clean water tanks/ storage periodically.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Regular inspections and monitoring, installation of efficient water fixtures and fittings can save up 20% savings on water[8].
- Smart and drip irrigation system can offer savings of around 100 AED for every 1,000 sqm of irrigable land[9].
- Regular inspection reduces risks of scaling, corrosion, contamination, and other problems to your business which could rupture pipes, inhibit your water flow, or damage equipment that requires a certain water quality.

UAE and Abu Dhabi Regulations:

- Estidama Pearl rating system: Estidama is a building design methodology for constructing and operating sustainable buildings. Under Estidama, water management is a key factor to obtain the Pearl rating.
- ADX: If Hotel Establishments are listed on the ADX make sure that it follows ESG guidance. They can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for water management.

Local References:

- Abu Dhabi Environmental vision 2030: Achieving sustainable water management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi economy.
- ESMA EESL programme certified products: all water fixtures and water consuming appliances must be approved by ESMA in order to operate them in the UAE.
- A homeowner's guide to sustainable garden design and irrigation operation: Tarsheed

Further Reading:

1. Estidama Water Consumption Calculator – follow this link for further information and instructions on how to calculate indoor and outdoor water consumption and how to improve on water consumption.

[8] Based on AESG's research: Efficient/low flow appliances with efficiencies ranging from %10 to %20.
[9] Based on AESG's research: Calculation based on industry average irrigation rate of 20 L/sqm, system cost of around 600 AED with an efficiency of up to %60 and the latest (ADDC, www.addc.ae, 2020) utility price of water.

A.3. Waste Management System

Hotel Establishments are major contributors of generating waste, which in turn results in severe implications for the environment. To manage waste efficiently, implementing a robust waste management system would be beneficial for the environment and the industry.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Start by designing a waste management strategy, and establish a waste disposal hierarchy - reduce, reuse, and recycle (targeting paper, plastic, water).**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Encourage reduce, reuse, and recycling practice (targeting paper, plastic, water, etc.). Document records indicating production of waste by category, waste generated from construction/demolition, number of recycled products bought, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Conduct waste management awareness campaign.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Train staff annually on waste management and segregation, advantages of recycling and reuse, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Develop digital or reusable materials - (e.g., guidebooks and leaflets) on waste management explaining the importance of waste segregation, creative ideas of reusing waste, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.3 Put waste segregation signage on bins for recyclable materials, (glass, paper/cardboards, cans, plastic, organic, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Engage in minimising food waste**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Provide options of smaller plate size.								
	3.2 Ensure cooking to order only where feasible initially and target to increase the practice over time.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.3 Encourage pre-measured servings dishes such as dips, salads, desserts etc. to avoid over-use or over-consumption.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.4 Raise awareness on the implications of food waste by adding a message, key facts, or other relevant information printed on food menus packaged food, on digital or printed ads, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Place waste segregation bins across the building for different waste streams (e.g., glass, paper, cans, plastic organic).**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Place segregation bins throughout the establishment and in areas visible to the public.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.2 Place a bin for organic waste at the F&B area if applicable.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.3 Provide segregation bins in guest rooms.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Reduce and gradually eliminate the use of single-use**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Reduce use of plastic cups, cutlery, food containers for take away instead replace it with recyclable or multi-use ones.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	**Promote the use of refillable amenities.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Provide refillable water bottles at water refill stations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	6.2 Provide refillable soap, shampoos and sanitiser dispensers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	**Donate discarded furniture, linens, blankets, towels, toiletries and IT equipment to registered charities**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	7.1 Donate discarded furniture, linens, blankets, towels, toiletries and electronic equipment to registered charities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8.	**Engage in creative recycling Initiatives Category.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	8.1 Donate reusable cardboards and paper to kids' camps, art institutes, or art and craft workshops.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8.2 Use upcycled waste to design interior common areas (e.g., transforming waste into a decor item or furniture).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8.3 Co-ordinate with Tadweer on waste recycling and composting initiatives.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Initiatives applicable only to Hotel Apartments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Apartments		
9.	**Place waste segregation bins in each guest room.**	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	9.1 Place waste segregation bins in the kitchen area with signages and instructions on each type of bin.	✓	✓	✓
	9.2 Ensure proper collection of the waste item for recycling or disposal, as required.	✓	✓	✓
	9.3 If the guest is not segregating the waste, request them to cooperate.	✓	✓	✓
	9.4 Put a signage requesting guest to wash the plastic food containers once before putting them in the recycle bin	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]
[Note: For food & beverage operations, please refer to the Food & Beverage Sustainability Guidelines]
*Wet organic waste (can be composted): left over food, meat and bone, vegetable and fruit peels, coffee grounds, tea bags, eggshells, nutshells, paper towels
*Dry waste (recyclables): plastic, textiles, hazardous waste like batteries, glass, cardboard, paper

Benefits:

- Placing waste segregation bins will provide the option to recycle waste through the correct streams, which will lead to landfill diversion. Additionally, the waste can be sold for additional revenue or reused in a waste-to-value scheme.
- Installing water filling stations can save up to 6,000 AED per month for a typical 200 room hotel[10].
- Switching to refillable amenities such as shampoo and soap dispensers can offer savings of up to 92%[11].
- Proper waste removal helps improve air and water quality as well as reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Managing the waste smartly will help conserve natural resources including minerals, water, and wood.

[10] Based AESG's research: Wholesale bottled water prices at 0.3AED/L, latest utility prices of water by ADDC in 2020, average maintenance cost of fountain at 250AED/month, recommended daily consumption of water per person at 4L/day as well as the number of guests in a hotel taken as one per room.
[11] Based on AESG's research: Price of the bottled soap estimated at 131/L, the price of refill soap estimated at 10.6/L.

Local References:

- Estidama Pearl rating system: Estidama is a building design methodology for constructing and operating sustainable buildings. Under Estidama, waste management is a key factor that Hotel Establishments can develop in order to obtain the Pearl rating.
- ADX: Hotel Establishments can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for waste management.
- AD Environment Vision 2030: Achieving sustainable waste management will support the sustainable development of the Abu Dhabi economy.
- All Hotels and Hotel Apartments must comply to the Technical Guideline on Municipal Solid Waste Management Design for Hotels (WM 1219) issued as part of the ADQCC's Abu Dhabi Emirate Guideline for Infrastructure Services Standards 3rd Edition-2022.
- All Hotels and Hotel Apartments must be registered on the Abu Dhabi Waste Management Centre – Tadweer's Bolisati (e-manifestation) System and comply to their requirements.
- All Hotels and Hotel Apartments must arrange to collect 'Used Cooking Oil' and deliver it using Bolisati system only to Recycling facility licensed by Tadweer.
- All Hotels and Hotel Apartments should designate an Environmental Co-ordinator, who shall be responsible for the implementation of the Waste Management System.

A.4. Green and Sustainable Transportation

Transport remains one of the biggest emitters of carbon dioxide emissions in the UAE. For the hotel sector, managing transport emissions is crucial, as transportation provides guests accessibility, for example reaching their destination, city tours, sourcing of daily supplies etc. Below are some of the key areas where the sector can become more sustainable.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Promote alternative use of transport.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Promote the use of public transport and provide guests with a map of public transport and directions on how to use it to get to the hotel / hotel apartment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 Utilise electric buggies like, golf carts, bicycles, electric scooters, within the premise.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Promote individual use of green and sustainable transportation.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Provide guests with a list of rides hailing apps that provide cleaner options.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Use electronic vehicles for shuttle services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Promote employee carpooling and use of public transport.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Encourage employees and staff to carpool and use public transportation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Install EV chargers in parking area.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Install EV chargers in parking area.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Partner with green and sustainable transport providers.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Identify limousine partners that provide electric and hybrid cars as a part of their fleet.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	**Purchase or lease electric/hybrid vehicles as part of your fleet , where appropriate.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Purchase or lease electric/hybrid vehicles as part of the fleet operations where appropriate.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Purchasing a six-car fleet of hybrid vehicles can save a hotel up to 4,000 AED per month on fuel costs[12].
- Promoting the use of public transport, employee carpooling and individual use of green transportation will significantly reduce the carbon footprint across Scope 1 and Scope 3 (as transportation accounts for 49% of tourism industry's emissions according to the World Travel & Tourism Council)[13].
- Sustainable public transportation is also 10 times safer per mile than driving a personal vehicle into the city. Moreover, commuters can reduce their chance of being involved in a crash by more than 90% by hopping aboard public transit[14].

Local References:

- ADX: Use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for sustainable transportation.
- AD Environment Vision 2030: Achieving sustainable transport management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi economy.
- Abu Dhabi sustainable transport mobility strategy.

[12] Based on AESG's research : Average fuel cost in Abu Dhabi in the last 3 months is 3.7AED/L – to account for volatility – As well as average miles per gallon or MPG value for cars in the industry (24.2 mpg), average energy consumption per range figures of EVs at 0.2 kWh/km, ADDC's EV tariff of 0.3AED/kWh as well as an average of one 12km trip per day based on Moovit Transport Index, www.moovit.com)
[13] World Travel & Tourism Council, "A Net Zero Roadmap for Travel and Tourism", 2021, (www.wttc.org)
[14] Environment.Co, "8 Main Benefits of Sustainable Transportation", 2020 (www.Environment.co)

A.5. Environmental Protection

Environmental conservation is a primary goal of the UAE's sustainable development policies, which include expanding green spaces, enhancing water resources, upgrading and safeguarding the marine environment from pollution, maintaining fisheries and livestock, and establishing biodiversity-protection methods. Protecting the local environment and native ecosystems is critical for the tourism industry in Abu Dhabi, given the large number of vulnerable plants, animal species and habitats[15], for example According to Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) experts, Abu Dhabi contains 34 different types of hard corals and is home to 436 native plant species[16]. The industry should ensure the protection of the local environment across all their operations and value chain.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Ensure protection of local flora and fauna.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Ensure that no pollution or spillage in the local environment occurs during the retrofit activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 If there is a private natural area like beach, garden or desert, ensure that it is clean, and no plastic or other type of waste is left behind to protect the environment or animals.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.3 If there is a private beach, contact EAD for support to protect Abu Dhabi's endangered coral reefs.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.4 Promote use of sunscreen that are chemical free and are environment-friendly..	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[15] Earth's Endangered Creatures, Endangered species (www.earthsendangered.com)[13] World Travel & Tourism Council, "A Net Zero Roadmap for Travel and Tourism", 2021, (www.wttc.org)
[16] Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, Discover our biodiversity (www.ead.ae)

2.	**Environmental Protection awareness campaign.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Train staff on Environmental Protection on how to reduce environmental pollution, mobilising people for beach clean-up, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Provide information and training materials (e.g., guidebook and leaflets on flora and fauna protection, planting native trees of UAE, etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.3 Organise activities like beach clean-up, mangrove plantation etc by mobilising guests, students and local community.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.4 Create awareness leaflets and signage on littering and tampering, endangered species protection notice, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Plant native trees and plants at the site and surrounding area, or on the rooftop to promote biodiversity.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Plant native trees and plants (such as Ghaf Tree and White Saxaul) in the surrounding area to promote biodiversity.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Develop a climate resilience action plan, which outlines measures to adapt to climate change issues.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Can be conducted through a third-party, or alternatively LEED has an established Climate Change Action Plan template.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

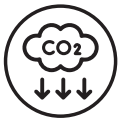
[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Ensuring the protection of flora and fauna can enhance local biodiversity and species. This is a long-term investment on the environment to keep it resilient and attract more guests in the future.
- Planting trees has a direct effect of reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide, since each individual tree directly sequesters carbon from the atmosphere through photosynthesis.
- A balanced ecosystem improves rainfall and helps slow down climate change, as large forests have the tendency of influencing the weather patterns and creating their own microclimates.

Further Reading:

1. Abu Dhabi's native plant species.
2. There are several more laws relating to environmental protection that Hotel Establishments are expected to comply with, read UAE legislation on environmental protection.



A.6 Carbon Management

The global hotel industry accounts for around 1% of global carbon emissions[17] and this is set to increase. Tourism, like other industries, has a responsibility to manage its impact on the planet. Reducing the sector's carbon footprint contributes towards mitigating the devastating effects of climate change, which has a positive cascade effect on public health and the environment. Abu Dhabi's arid climate makes it vulnerable to extreme weather changes such as increases in temperature, which in turn leads to a reduction in the number of visitors travelling to Abu Dhabi. Carbon management has significant importance and investing in carbon management results in innovative and more environmental-friendly solutions that will protect the environment.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Calculate footprint through monitoring operations and outlining the emissions related to each operation.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 This can be done through digital tools (such as one Click LCA, IES).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Identify carbon hotspots in the operations.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Identify emissions related to visitor arrivals, departures and pickups or sourcing of materials for day-to-day operations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Develop a pathway to Net-Zero.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Identify carbon reduction measures.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Set carbon reduction targets.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.3 Offset residual emissions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

[17] Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, Our Work / climate action (www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org)

Benefits:

- Calculating carbon footprint through digital tools can help identify GHG hotspots, thus enabling carbon emission reduction and reporting.
- With the rise of eco-tourism, a carbon conscious Hotel Establishments would attract more guests.
- Benefit from the establishment of long-term partnerships with local and government bodies that are working towards a net zero economy.

Local References:

- UAE Net Zero 2050: The UAE has pledged to have net zero emissions by the year 2050. Hotel Establishments can be aligned with this strategy by aiming to reduce their emissions.
- Whilst there are no laws mandating carbon reporting at the date of writing these guidelines, it is expected that there will be requirements in the future. Therefore, we recommend that Hotel Establishments should establish procedures to report their carbon emissions.

Further Reading:

1. GHG protocol – for further information and definitions of GHG Scope emissions and classifications and methods of calculation.

B. Sustainable and Local Procurement

B.1 Sourcing of Local, Sustainable Goods

How can Hotel Establishments procure sustainably?

Sustainability should not be considered solely within the company itself, but must go beyond its boundaries, throughout the entire supply and value chain in which it operates and collaborates. Research has shown that customers are having increased consideration of the products they consume, including environmental and social sustainability[18]. The industry within Abu Dhabi can respond to this by applying the key procurement initiatives outlined below.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Design a sustainable procurement plan and policy to support sustainable purchases.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Create a requirements checklist for identifying sustainable suppliers (within the sustainable procurement strategy) and partners with contractors that meet the sustainability criteria for radical maintenance work or infrastructural changes.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Encourage sustainable packaging with partners/ suppliers.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Encourage suppliers to collect the packaging in the next visit and reuse it.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 If possible, purchase products with less disposable packaging and opt to purchase products that are packaged more sustainably (reusable/recyclable cardboard/multi-use) packaging or recycled packaging). E.g., do not buy products with heavy outer plastic/single-use packaging.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Purchase eco-friendly products that do not contain a high amount of hazardous chemicals.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Partner with vendors to provide eco-friendly cleaning products (e.g., soaps, floor cleaners, etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Partner with local suppliers (Without allowing it to affect the quality and variety of food choices and offerings).**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Purchase groceries, food items and other goods from local supplier.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[18] Deloitte, "Shifting sands: How consumer behaviour is embracing sustainability" (Available: www2.deloitte.com [accessed: 2022/08/22])

5.	**Encourage procurement of sustainable food products, wherever possible (without allowing it to affect the quality and variety of food choices and offerings).**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Do not purchase meat and other food products made from endangered and protected species.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.2 Encourage purchase of food products that have nationally recognised eco-label or green certification if options are available.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	**Source environmentally preferable options including products that contain recycled materials (pre- and post-consumer content), contain renewable materials or are compostable/ biodegradable.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Source multi-use, compostable or recyclable products, such as napkins, food containers and other packaging.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Decisions to purchase locally sourced products yield multiple benefits, such as supporting local businesses, reduced emissions from product transport and reduced damage during transportation.
- Purchasing environmentally preferable options would reduce carbon emissions, waste, and encourage sustainable behaviour.
- Introduction of seasonal menus made from local harvest can save on transport cost and create partnerships with local farmers.
- Sourcing fresher produce will ensure higher quality products.
- Growing local varieties of food preserves local genetic diversity.

Local References:

- ADX: Hotel Establishments can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for sustainable procurement.
- Supporting suppliers who are committed to the development of UAE Nationals.

C. Social and Culture

C.1 Promoting Local Heritage, Culture, and Art

How can Hotel Establishments procure sustainably?

Being the cultural heart of the UAE, Abu Dhabi is rich in history. Some historical settlements can be traced back as far as over 8,000 years. Rapid urbanisation and modernisation have had considerable impact on the culture and heritage of Middle East. This has resulted in the need to place higher significance on celebrating and promoting the local heritage, culture and art. Highlighting the best that the region has to offer will not only create an authentic experience for the guest but also bring benefits for the local community.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Celebrate and support national events and holidays at the property.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Plan celebrations for UAE National Day, Ramadan and Eid.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Play local music, serve local food and drinks, and put-up local decorations and arts, to promote local artists and artisans.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Put up local decorations and crafts in regularly occupied area (e.g., F&B area, lobby, waiting area, etc.). Play local music throughout the establishment and serve complimentary local snacks to guests.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Raise awareness and promote heritage sites in Abu Dhabi.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Offer printed guides made from eco-friendly paper or digital guides with information about the heritage sites.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Support community-based tourism or a local cohort (of art, craft, locally grown food, etc.) and promote it as a tourist destination.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Organise tours to local communities (such as local farms, house of artisans, fishermen hamlet along the Dhow Harbour etc.) in partnership with local guides.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Contribute to the restoration of heritage sites where applicable.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Hotel Establishments located near a historical property or heritage sites can contribute to restoration and preservation initiatives, if possible.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	5.2 Hotel Establishments can promote traditional architecture by incorporating traditional-style areas and buildings within the establishment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Raising awareness of the value and importance of the cultural heritage of Abu Dhabi contributes towards a sustainable future by maintaining and preserving the rich cultural heritage.
- Promoting local culture and heritage strengthens the relationship between the visitors and local people and community.

Local References:

- UAE law on the preservation of cultural heritage.
- Green Business Network (coordinated by Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi).

C.2 Promoting Sustainability with Visitors and Local Community

As more travellers seek unique and local experiences, it will be important to provide the guests with an experience which is at the heart of these efforts through engagement with local communities, local artists, etc. It is important that Hotel Establishments engage with the local community and guests to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge covering sustainability initiatives. The engagement would provide guests an authentic and local experience of Abu Dhabi. The local community would also get an opportunity to showcase and share the rich culture and heritage to the world while also contributing towards the well-being of people and the planet.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Partner with non-profit associations to organise events for raising money for local causes and charities.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Obtain the required licence from a competent authority like Ministry of Community Development to organise a fund-raising event.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Host events or workshops for visitors about the sustainable solutions in Abu Dhabi.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Organise events or workshops related to sustainability (e.g., responsible waste management, climate change, community well-being, etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Display the sustainable initiatives and raise awareness.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Place QR code scans or slides on guest-room TV sets or exhibition or photo gallery in the lobby displaying implemented initiatives (e.g., beach clean-up, trip to local farm where food is sourced for the hotel, native tree plantation).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Raise awareness of visitors on their environmental and social impact.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Raise awareness through campaigns, reusable leaflets and signage for waste disposal, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Collaborate with local performing artists and artisans.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Collaborate with local artists and artisans to showcase their crafts or a local musician to play music for the guests.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

6.	**Align with local Initiatives Category and NPOs to design programmes to engage guests and locals on sustainability.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Align with the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment to design programmes on climate change.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6.2 Align with guidelines and seek support from Emirates Environmental Group for engaging guests on sustainability initiatives.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	**Conduct a survey with guests to understand their satisfaction and expectations of the hotel establishment's sustainability initiatives.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	7.1Conduct surveys with guests to understand their satisfaction and expectations the on sustainability initiatives by the establishment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8.	**Ensure integration of international programmes and certifications to attract tourists that prefer sustainable lodging options.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	8.1 ISO140001 Environmental Management System, Green Key, Green Globe, Earth Check, ISO 20121 Sustainable Events, ISO 50001 Energy Management System.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9.	**Co-develop, and co-design products inspired by local crafts in collaboration with local artisans and artists.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	9.1 Hire local artists and craftsmen to decorate and design furniture.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	9.2 Promote and sell local souvenirs by partnering with local artists and artisans. Consider having an outlet at the establishment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]
[Note: For events organisation, please refer to the Event Sustainability Guidelines]

Benefits:

- Research[19] shows that people look for more sustainable options. Informing the community, local guides, artists, artisans about the sustainable initiatives will therefore lead to mutual benefits, whilst building the reputation of the hotel.
- Creating partnerships with local artists and artisans will give them exposure and generate revenue while contributing to the community well-being.
- Collecting guest feedback would allow Hotel Establishments to undergo continuous improvements and encourage recommendations and revisits to the hotel.

[19] Booking.com, "2022 – Sustainable Travel Report". (www.globalnews.booking.com)

C.3 Engaging in Educational Programmes

Education is one of the key factors for raising awareness on sustainability especially amongst the younger generation. In the past decade, sustainability has been integrated into most school curriculums to motivate the younger generation to make environmental-friendly decisions and take action to curb the impact of climate change. The education sector offers unique opportunities for the Hotel Establishments to engage in educational programmes and workshops for students by collaborating with schools and educational institutes.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Educate students on the hotels and hospitality sector in partnership with educational institutions as an extracurricular activity.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Partner with educational institutions to organise lectures and programmes for students to educate them on the hotels and hospitality sector.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Collaborate with schools to plan a visit for students to the Hotel Establishment to participate in various activities.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Organise activities for students such as tree planting or gardening within the premises, cooking classes using locally sourced ingredients, beach clean-ups, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 When organising an event or conference on sustainability, consider providing free access for students, if possible.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Educating young students on local culture and heritage, as well as the tourism industry, helps encourage them to join the hotel sector.
- Organising various initiatives for local art, craft, food, and cuisine etc would enrich their knowledge on intangible heritage of Abu Dhabi.
- It promotes a healthy lifestyle and assists in addressing many health issues that students are going through.
- Environmental learning prepares students for future careers and prepares them with the required skills to become professionals in the tourism sector.

C.4 Improving Accessibility

Despite the global population of People of Determination, the lack of awareness and information is one of the major obstacles visitors face whether they are a Person of Determination or a companion or family member. Universal access is a key factor in social sustainability to ensure the needs of People of Determination are addressed and fulfilled.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Ensure provision of lactation room for nursing mothers and gender-neutral baby changing stations.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Provide nursing mothers with a private lactation room. Baby-changing stations should be gender-neutral.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Organise staff training on accessibility provisions for guests bi- annually.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Train staff on how to support/ provide assistance, to a person of determination.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Provide behavioural and etiquette training (e.g., how to communicate with a person of determination.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Ensure provisions for People of Determination in the F&B outlet at the hotel establishment.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 If buffet and self-service is the only option available at F&B area, ensure that staff are available to assist people of determination.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Cater dietary requirements upon request for people of determination or people with allergies and certain diseases (e.g., celiac disease.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.3 Provide large print menus or menus in braille upon request.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Improve provisions for People of Determination.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Provide ramps for easier access on entrance, (or wherever required at any elevated spot).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.2 Ensure information in raised text/ number and braille on door plates, elevators, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.3 Place People of determination priority signage and ensure that one of the elevators provides priority or is designed for people of determination with wider entrance and low door closing speed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.4 In accessible bathrooms, provide a fixed horizontal and vertical grab rail beside the toilet to assist in standing/sitting and install a pull-cord alarm.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.5 Ensure accessible parking spaces are close to the main entrance and marked with people of determination priority sign.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.6 Ensure visible and accessible signage and directions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.7 Ensure at least one hotel pick-up and drop-off vehicle with wide entrance and low-rise accessible seats.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Providing guests with better accessibility, hotels would build a distinguished brand and encourage customer loyalty.
- Guests would choose Hotel Establishments with better accessibility facilities for their stay.
- Provisions for people of determination, as well as staff training on the matter would create independence for people of determination.
- Enables people with disabilities to move around independently and access day to day services through the event and hence improve their trust in the business.

Local References:

- Follow all the mandatory guidelines outlined in the DCT hotel classification manual.
- Hotel Establishments must also comply with Abu Dhabi building code and the requirements set out in chapter 11 on building accessibility (and appendix E).
- UAE national policy for empowering people of determination.
- UAE people of determination protection from abuse policy.

D. People

D.1 Staff Empowerment

How can hotels engage with their people and generate social value?

Securing a workforce for the future has long been a challenge for the tourism industry. Research has shown that lack of career progression is one of the main reasons people leave the industry, and although training and development cannot always combat this directly, investment in employees and a robust training and development strategy can go a long way.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Conduct annual trainings for employees for their personal and professional development.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Conduct online and/or in-person courses. (e.g., time management courses, etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Provide career path and milestones for employee professional development and promotion.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Set in place a structured review and development programme including bi-annual "performance reviews" where development goals and objectives are set and performance is reviewed against KPIs (e.g., receiving no complaints about housekeeping, 100% room cleaning rate etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Conduct a human rights awareness training for employees.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Schedule human rights awareness training on bi-annual basis and record the number of hours.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Develop a policy for anti-harassment and discrimination and conduct trainings to promote a healthy working environment to increase efficiency, employee well-being, and work quality.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Schedule anti-harassment and discrimination training on bi-annual basis and record the number of hours.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Provide employee reporting channel to raise issues related to sustainability and develop a process to resolve these issues.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Place an anonymous feedback box or a platform in the establishment's intranet.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	**Incentivise employees to perform on sustainability (by setting it as a KPI for employees) via appropriate tools like staff award system.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Provide incentives for preferring public transport commute, waste segregation, reduction in water consumption, being energy efficient (e.g., turning off lights), etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Employee engagement initiatives and programmes will contribute towards the improvement of staff performance, reduction of absenteeism and will increase the hotel's ability to attract and retain talented employees.
- Developing an anti-harassment and anti-discriminatory policy will establish a safe working space for employees.
- Empowerment helps create a positive, open environment that leads to maximum productivity.
- Improves employee branding, so they act as brand ambassadors and present the company in the best light possible.
- Flattens the company's hierarchy which eliminates micro-managing and excess management layers, improving communication and increasing transparency in the workforce.

Local References:

- All UAE employment laws

D.2 Diversity and Inclusion

Hiring personnel of various nationalities, genders and religions allows the company to gain new perspectives. According to research, tourists conform to different regional and cultural backgrounds, and diversity of staff composition can lead to better problem solving, higher occupancy and increased profits[20]. Employees at all levels need diversity training to address their own bias and to learn to work side by side with people who are different from themselves.

Initiatives applicable to hotel establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Have a representative workforce of women, different nationalities, and people of determination via hiring and retaining policies that encourage diversity.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Work towards a gender-neutral workforce across all levels, do not discriminate in the hiring process against race or people of determination and reflect this in policies.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Encourage Emiratisation strategy and train local population, especially women to join the hospitality industry.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 When marketing for jobs, include in the job description "we encourage Emiratis, especially females, to apply for all jobs that we have advertised for".	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Ensure equal pay for equal work.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Through an equality policy stipulate that regardless of gender, nationality, or ability, we will pay all employees equally for equal work and roles.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 When hiring and promoting employees, ensure inclusion of women and people of determination in senior leadership and management.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

[20] McKinsey & Company, "Diversity wins: How inclusion matters", 2020, (www.mckinsey.com)

Benefits:

- A diverse and gender balanced workforce enables the hotel establishment to have a wider talent pool with varied perspectives which improves productivity, company image and overall management.
- According to survey research, 66% of organisations believe that diversity enhances innovation[21].
- According to research, diverse teams make decisions 60% faster than non-diverse teams, and that teams marked by age, gender, and geographic diversity make the right decision 87% of the time, compared to 58% for all-male teams[22].

Local References:

- Emiratisation programmes and initiatives in Abu Dhabi, including:
  - "Training for Work" initiative, launched by Human Resources Authority, aims at developing job seekers' skills by providing training opportunities in government entities and companies.
  - Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation - The Ministry aims at providing more than 15,000 suitable jobs for Emiratis in the private sector by the end of 2018.
  - "Absher", an initiative supervised by the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and implemented by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, aims to encourage Emiratis to work in the private sector.
  - Khebraty programme attracts Emirati students, who wish to explore the tourism sector and are able to work for 20 hours per week in a tourism company.
- Federal Decree-Law No. (2) of 2015 regarding Combating Discrimination and Hatred and its amendments.
- Law on equal wages for women and men

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[21] EW Group, "The benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace", (www.theewgroup.com)
[22] EW Group, "The benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace", (www.theewgroup.com)

E. Resilience and Risk Management

E.1 Health and Safety

How can hotels mitigate risks and become more resilient?

Health and safety are an important consideration for any workplace, as it is a very high priority to keep both workers and guests safe. To run an effective hotel business, it's important to have a hotel health and safety checklist based on the below mentioned initiatives, to perform checks quickly and efficiently. The DCT health risk matrix and Abu Dhabi Occupational Safety and Health System (OSHAD) Framework is mandatory for all Hotel Establishments. For example, the Hotel Classification guidelines mandate every hotel to have access to a doctor and/or emergency service 24 hours a day. These suggested initiatives are in addition to the mandates and go above and beyond to drive Hotel Establishments towards having a strong and sustainable health and safety system.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Employee engagement and workshop to improve physical and mental health of employees.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Organise health and well-being events/retreats.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 Promote annual health check-ups for all employees.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Provide medical assistance.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Align with OSHAD COP4 and provide medical rooms, first aid kits and assistance like CPR (e.g., at least one staff should be trained in CPR).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	**Develop a future pandemic/epidemic action plan.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Develop a future pandemic/epidemic action plan that can be easily tailored to the instructions from Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Apply appropriate measures (such as sensors, or a third-party) to periodically check noise, water, and air quality for guests and employee safety.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Refer to the initiative and ensure a quarterly (water) and annual (air and noise) quality check.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	**Enforce Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) and formaldehyde content limits , wherever applicable.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	5.1 Purchase products with low VOC content that are used for paint/coatings, adhesives/sealants, cleaners and fragrances. Products must be stored in containment areas and disposed correctly.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

6.	**Reduce health risks associated with volatile petrochemicals present in dry-cleaning agents for laundry.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	6.1 Substitute petrochemical dry-cleaning agents with eco-friendly options.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	**Provide mental health counselling for employees.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	7.1 To ensure a safe and healthy workspace, provide employees with channels to reach out for individual counselling services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Providing health and safety support would reduce cost associated with accidents.
- Providing physical and mental health support to employees improve employee well-being and business efficiency, hence improving business efficiency.
- Demonstrating commitment to sustainability and corporate social responsibility which includes health and safety dedication will attract investors to the company.
- Having a robust health and safety plan keeps all staff aware of current legal requirements which improves the company's regulatory compliance and lowers the risk of being fined.

Local References:

- UAE laws on Health and safety at the workplace
- Electronic Public Health Pest Control Services- DCT Abu Dhabi and Tadweer directs all tourism and Hotel Establishment to use Pest Control E-contract systems to ensure effective and safe public health.

E.2 Risk Mitigation and Resilience

Risk management ensures that a business is prepared for any potential threats and events, this covers health and safety, as well as any global events (e.g., COVID19-). Resilience refers to the development, preparedness and mitigation measures considered for scenarios such as climate change, pandemics, health and wellbeing and sustainable growth. It is important to provide benefits and empower the employee/staff across multiple financial and non-financial dimensions to create value and manage the risks and opportunities associated with economic, environmental, and social developments.

Initiatives applicable to Hotel Establishments

	Sustainability Initiatives	Hotel Categories					Hotel Apartments		
1.	**Develop an ethics and anti-corruption policy.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	1.1 Develop a policy on ethics and anti-corruption and make sure employees are informed.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	**Identify risk and have management and escalation procedures, covering at least people, assets, community, and environment.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	2.1 Conduct annual risk management policies reviews, involve stakeholders and where applicable utilise a third-party to conduct an assessment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3.	**Develop a risk register for the four categories (people, assets, community, and environment.) and a system to monitor performance on regular basis.**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	3.1 Conduct an impact assessment on all four categories (hire a third-party if applicable) and develop a monitoring framework after involving all stakeholders.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	**Invest in artificial intelligence, financial and climate related models to better predict the future**	5 star	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	Deluxe	Superior	Standard
	4.1 Hire a third-party assessment consultant to perform software analysis to highlight any potential future impacts. Regularly review.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]
[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

Benefits:

- Having an ethics and anti-corruption policy will lead to better staff engagement and enhanced reputation.
- A risk management strategy will help identify risks that are not apparent and protect the business from unforeseen liabilities.
- According to McKinsey's survey about the pandemic's impact on corporate resilience, a better risk governance model is key for efficient and effective decision making and crisis management[23].
- It ensures an early-warning system is in place so action can be taken quickly and confidently, which is an extra line of defence during a crisis.
- Resilience reduces stress within the organisation and this in turn improves job satisfaction and productivity.

[23] McKinsey & Company, "From risk management to strategic resilience",2022, (www.mckinsey.com)

8. Conclusion

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a roadmap and approach for the Hotel Establishments to contribute towards making tourism in Abu Dhabi more sustainable. By becoming a sustainable tourism destination, Abu Dhabi will maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to all visitors and tourists. In conjunction with raising tourist awareness about sustainability issues, tourists will also get an authentic local experience of Abu Dhabi. Sustainable practices also create a positive impact on guests and increase their likelihood of returning. Going green leads to better loyalty, word-of-mouth marketing and higher customer satisfaction.

Sustainable tourism can collectively be achieved through applying the recommendations and sustainability initiatives outlined in these guidelines. Hotel Establishments should use these guidelines and develop their own sustainability journey/roadmap towards the vision of making Abu Dhabi a sustainable destination. Moving forward, the Hotel Establishment sector should refer to the Monitoring and Measuring templates provided in annexure B with this guideline for supporting metrics and KPIs for suggested initiatives. The template would help monitor initiatives, analyse the gaps, and track progress towards the set targets to achieve sustainable excellence.