

# Green Key boost for US ecotourism

Relax News

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European [hotel](#) chain Accor has announced that it is to pilot its US portfolio in the Green Key program, giving travelers more information on hotels' green credentials.

Under the terms of the trial, announced last week, Accor will submit 20 properties for Green Key accreditation from across its US brands which include [Motel 6](#), Sofitel and Studio 6. The properties will then be audited for sustainability in their operations and practices. In October 2009, Accor was ranked number one for sustainability among the world's 10 largest [hotel groups](#) by sustainability consultancy Two Tomorrows.

The Green Key Eco-rating program is the first program of its kind to rank, certify and inspect hotels based on their commitment to "green" practices.

Environmentally-conscious travelers can visit the Green Key Global website to check out Green-certified [destinations](#) before booking. Green Key has also partnered with online booking engine Travelocity to identify Green Key-accredited hotels in its listings.

Establishments must complete an audit that focuses on areas such as energy conservation, waste management, air quality and land use before being considered for the scheme. There are currently over 1,200 Green Key members in [North America](#). The EU "eco-label" Flower, a similar green certification program developed by the European Union, has been extended to hotels and campsites with mixed results.

Sustainability is playing an ever-increasing role in the hospitality industry. A 2008 Deloitte survey reported that 95% of business travelers believe the hotel industry should be undertaking "green" initiatives, and 40 percent said they would pay more to stay at a green hotel. Since then, green hotel offerings have boomed - Starwood Worldwide's Element chain, for instance, has aggressively expanded since its 2008 launch and now has six "eco-conscious" hotels open with another four in the pipeline.

<http://www.greenkeyglobal.com>

<http://www.eco-label.com/>

<http://www.accor-na.com/>