



Scandic wants to be challenged



Scandic Hotels has held a Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence since the first generation of the criteria for hotels was drawn up. They are now renewing their licences for the fourth time and are looking forward to their environmental work continuing to be challenged by the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. The constant ambition has been for competitors to follow in their footsteps, so that the hotel industry leads the way on sustainability and the environment.

With its environmental focus, Scandic has been a trailblazer for the hotel industry. They have also influenced their suppliers through an active procurement strategy. Scandic's longstanding focus is on extensive environmental measures, more efficient use of resources and training employees to get the organisation moving towards a sustainable future.

We have spoken to Magnus Ljungberg, Sustainability Director, and Sunita KC, Sustainability Analyst, at Scandic Hotels. "Sustainability is important to us, and it has been for a long time. Since the Nordic Swan Ecolabel takes a holistic approach to sustainability work, we considered

it a natural step to apply for a Nordic Swan Ecolabel licence when the first generation of the criteria came into force. We're now applying to renew our licences for the fourth time! We like to have long-term relationships with our business partners, as this enables strong partnerships that make a difference. The Nordic Swan Ecolabel is no exception," says Magnus.

Scandic sees opportunities rather than problems

Scandic likes the challenge of Nordic Swan Ecolabelling its hotels and recognises the strengths of the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. For example, the Nordic Swan Ecolabel sets requirements from a life cycle perspective, from raw material to waste, and takes a holistic approach to the environment.

"We also appreciate the high level of awareness that the Nordic Swan

Ecolabel enjoys in the market, which means that it really pays to have the label, despite the hard work of meeting all the tough requirements. The combination of tough requirements, high awareness and a holistic approach is unique and something that other labelling schemes do not have," says Sunita.

"You need to always be the toughest label in the market, and that's why we choose you. When the demands become tougher over time, this naturally also puts increased requirements on us. This is exactly how we want it, so we can be at the forefront of the market," Magnus continues.

What effect has the Nordic Swan Ecolabel had?

"Our consumption of water and energy fell drastically between 1996 and 2019. The same applies to carbon emissions.



CASE – SCANDIC

Water consumption has been cut by 27%, energy consumption by 34% and carbon emissions by 56%,” says Sunita.

Through its procurement policy, Scandic has also influenced other sectors that are relevant to the hotel industry. We call this the ‘Nordic Swan Ecolabel effect’. This means that Scandic sets tough requirements for its suppliers, who in turn need to comply with the Nordic Swan Ecolabel’s requirements if they want to continue to supply Scandic.

Examples of areas where Scandic sets requirements include the purchase of pillows, duvets, beds, TVs and chemicals. Textiles are also washed at Nordic Swan Ecolabelled laundries.

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Scandic has worked hard in recent times to meet the stricter Nordic Swan Ecolabel requirements for hotels in generation 5 of the criteria. Some areas have been more challenging than others.

“The water requirements and requirements for unsorted waste are challenging for some of our hotels, especially those located in more remote locations. But as I said, we want to be challenged by you. The fact that you’re tough on us is of great value to us,” says Magnus.

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Changes, large and small make a difference

At Scandic, all employees are vital cogs in the engine that drives the environmental work. They are trained and equipped to perform their duties with the least possible environmental impact. One example is that a room is not cleaned when the guest is staying for several days, unless the guest requests this.

Scandic also takes great care with the food served in the hotels, using a large proportion of organic ingredients. In addition, tea and coffee have been carefully selected to offer high quality and to meet the Nordic Swan Ecolabel’s requirements concerning cultivation conditions, the environment and fair trade labelling.

Reducing food waste is another important focus. Achieving this can be as simple as serving food on smaller plates, for example. These small changes make a difference, as Scandic knows, which is why guests are encouraged to turn off the lights when they leave their hotel room, sort their rubbish and use their towels more than once. The ballpoint pens, pads, whiteboard pens and flipcharts provided by the hotels are also ecolabelled.

The Nordic Swan Ecolabel travels south

Scandic is now taking the Nordic Swan Ecolabel south since besides its hotels in the Nordic region, Scandic also has hotels in Poland and Germany. So far, they have only used the Green Globe and the EU Ecolabel, but now they are introducing the Nordic Swan Ecolabel outside the Nordic region.

“We’ve decided that our hotels outside the Nordic region will also use the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. The Nordic region is considered to be the global leader on sustainability. This will safeguard our credibility outside the region, since the Nordic Swan Ecolabel is the recognised official ecolabel in the Nordics,” says Magnus.

ABOUT SCANDIC

- Nordic Swan Ecolabelling of their first hotel in 1999.
- In 2004, Scandic Sweden became the first hotel chain in the world to obtain the Nordic Swan Ecolabel for all its hotels.
- Today, Scandic Hotels is the Nordic region’s largest hotel chain, with around 280 hotels in six countries.
- Between 1996 and 2019, water consumption was reduced by 27%, energy consumption by 34% and carbon emissions by 56%.