

Green Hotel Management and Green Star Practice: A Case Study Of Best Western President Istanbul Hotel^a

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Abstract

Defined as environmentally-sensitive marketing, green marketing is applied as a green hotel by accommodation establishments, and as a result of this application, hotels are entitled to be awarded a green star certificate. While those international hotel establishments which have become a brand are carrying out important activities with respect to the green hotel practice, it might be stated that hotels in Turkey are at the beginning level concerning sensitivity to the environment. In the study, the literature on the subject was examined and it was focused on the green hotel practice in accommodation establishments. In the rest of the study, it was dealt with the legal regulations on green hotel practice and the green star practice in Turkey. Best Western President-Istanbul Hotel, one of two hotels with a green star in Turkey, was specified as a sample, and the applications of the sample hotel were studied.

Key words: *Green marketing, green hotel, green tourism, green star, Best Western President Istanbul Hotel*

1. Introduction

Considering the principle of "sensitivity to the environment", many tourism establishments have adopted the understanding of green marketing for reasons such as environmental pollution, impairment of the natural life, consumer trends, competitive pressure and the legal sanctions of states. As a matter of fact, Polat Renaissance Hotel-Istanbul ranked the first in the category of five-star hotels in the project of green hotels, held in Turkey with the cooperation of Environment-Friendly

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Forum, TUROB (Touristic Hotels and Investors Association) and Bureau Veritas within the 5th World Water Forum that was held this year. The project aims to explain how hotels can acquire a privilege against the developing environmentally-sensitive consumer preferences by saving water and energy and by supporting waste management. In this project, Polat Renaissance Hotel both achieved significant decrease in its costs by generating electricity with natural gas engine and by simultaneously generating steam and hot water with the exhaust gas heat of the engine and performed a good promotion by receiving the support of environmentally-sensitive consumers and the NGOs(1). It is clear that this development provided the hotel with prestige. Besides, it might also be observed that it increased its profitability upon a decrease in its costs in the medium term.

Although these activities, which are carried out on the basis of establishments, are of importance, the sectors included in the tourism industry on global scale such as transportation, accommodation and recreative activities have an important place in CO₂ gas release. In this context, the sectors and their effects on carbon dioxide gas release, one of the most important reasons for environmental pollution, are as follows:

In the table-1, the establishments in tourism comprise 5% of the sum of carbon dioxide release in the world. Of it, 75% consists of tourism transportation (air, land and other).

Table 1. Effect of global tourism emission on the basis of sectors (only CO₂ gas release)

SECTORS	CO2	%
Airways	522	40%
Highway	418	32%
Other	39	3%
Accomodation	274	21%
Activities	52	4%
Total	1307	
Total in World	26400	
Affect of Tourism	5%	

Source: ETC & UNWTO. 2009. *Tourism and Travel in the green economy – Delegates briefing papers* Retrieved December 22, 2009.

As it is also seen from these data, the accommodation sector ranks the second immediately after the transportation sector in carbon dioxide gas release. In order for tourism not to destroy its own resource, environmental sensitivity increases and accordingly, practices are accelerated in accommodation establishments. According to Foster et al. (2000:195), the reasons directing accommodation establishments to green marketing practices are listed as follows:

- There has been an increase in the interests of consumers in environmental issues;
- There has been an increase in the regulations on the environment;
- Hotel managers have been more interested in ethical issues;

- Hotels desire to ensure more customer satisfaction; and
- They desire to eliminate problems regarding physical appearance.

In the light of these reasons, it can be seen that there has been a clear increase in accommodation establishments' need of green marketing, just like other tourism establishments. Overall, it might be stated that the indispensability of environmental quality for the tourism sector causes accommodation establishments to adopt the principle of sensitivity to the environment and, in this context, to develop the understandings of green marketing. In accommodation establishments, environmentally-sensitive green marketing practices are primarily considered under the concepts of green hotel or eco-hotel. Although both concepts have the same meaning, the green hotel practice is used more commonly.

The Association of Green Hotels (1993), which aims to provide establishments with the consciousness of the environment in international sense, has aimed "to gather hotels in all destinations we enjoy visiting in order for them to save water and energy, reduce the amount of their wastes and protect these destinations and to determine policies" (3). Since the understanding of green hotel management is not a practice that an establishment can perform by itself, it is of great importance to make consumers conscious of green travel. The Association of Green Hotels has a series of recommendations to help consumers become conscious of green travel (4):

- Warn the hotel not to change bed sheets and towels every day.
- Determine which family member uses which towel. In this way, everyone uses his/her own towel and contamination will be less.
- Try to spend less water while taking a shower or washing your hands and face.
- Turn off devices such as TV, light and radio while leaving the room.
- Support and join the recycling program of wastes at the hotel where you stay.
- Take a bag of your own with you for your dirty belongings, collect your belongings instead of submitting them to be washed and take them back to your house.
- Leave the bottles (such as shampoo and soap) in the room unless they are opened.
- Write down the user name on the beverages like water you have used in the room or on the other equipments you have used.
- Support those tourism establishments such as hotels, airlines and tour operators which support green programs, and use these institutions.
- If your hotel makes daily newspapers available and if you do not want to read them, either give them to someone else or leave them in the lobby. Ask whether your hotel has any recycling program regarding these newspapers.

- Warn the hotel in the events that the lights of places, such as fitness center, sauna, Jacuzzi or tennis court, are turned on.
- At some hotels, it is possible to make the checking out procedures electronically on the television in your room. If such a system is available at your hotel, use it.

2. The Relationship Between Tourism and Green Marketing in the Context of Sustainability

While it is easy to deplete natural sources for the sake of consumption, reproduction in order to protect and sustain nature is difficult. Utku (1999: 20) remarks that the solution depends on an understanding of the long lasting knowledge and experience about the relationship between nature and human beings, as well as on putting forward qualified opinions. "The concept of sustainable development", which was coined by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, constitutes the foundation of the green marketing that emerged in line with new notions (Eren ve Yılmaz; 2008). Green marketing which is known as "*development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" has given a different perspective to enterprises concerning the environment.

It is observed that the ever-growing greed for growth and profit that capitalist system brings along causes the depletion of natural sources and the disregard for nature. For this reason, despite the general conviction that the systematic approach to do the right thing and the economic success will not go hand in hand with each other; supporters of sustainability claim that compromise is possible (Grant, 2008; 64). Grant's comments on sustainability can be summarized as the adaption of a mindset for reasonable production and consumption. Grant also shares the vision of Eren and Yılmaz in that the basis of the green marketing lies on sustainability.

The notion of green marketing that was introduced to the marketing literature in the 1980s has been used interchangeably with ecological, environmental and environmentalist marketing, or sustainable marketing (Ay and Ecevit 2005:241). Polonsky (1994:2) defines green marketing as meeting the needs and wants of people in a way that gives the minimum damage to the environment. In this definition, it is underlined that the environment is the most important element that needs to be considered when the customers' demands are met. In 2000s, Clow and Baack (in Keleş C.,2007:15) define green marketing as the development and promotion of the products that conserve the environment. At this point, the definition, which is made by Polonsky, has been expanded by considering environment in product and promotion process of the marketing mix. Both definitions are made on the basis of the two different aspects of green marketing.

Polonsky explains green marketing in terms of consumer dimension, whereas Clow and Baack explain it in terms of product dimension. Still both definitions complete each other. Therefore, green marketing can be described as environment-oriented production, delivery and sustainability of products and services that are aimed for the consumer needs and requests. In 1998, in a survey

conducted by Polonsky(1998; 22), %78 of the biggest 50 firm managers of England stated that environmental issues played an important role in their work and %82 of them stated that it would be more significant in the future.

In this respect, tourism businesses' realizing that green marketing provides a significant competition advantage in the current market, seeing that it minimizes the costs and understanding the importance of being a tourism business in terms of sustainability, they state that green marketing concept has become more extensive. While green marketing concept provides such advantages for businesses, businesses are necessary to take proper steps meeting the goals of green marketing. In this respect, the goals of green marketing are as follows. (Uydacı, 2002:112):

- Using the limited natural sources without creating new consumption field
- Focusing on the reducing the consumption of the energy by providing and protecting the natural balance
- Searching alternatives which can reduce the environmental pollution and obstruct the devastation of the environment itself
- Leaning in the encouraging the public to use the environment-friendly products, reducing the packaging and creating the awareness of recycling
- Sharing the responsibility and involving the stakeholders (consumers, suppliers, government and voluntary agencies) into the process in the terms of stability of the system

In order to reach these goals, firms should adapt all their marketing functions to green approach. But this adaptation, with the contemporarily changing profile of the consumers should not only compensate the goals, it should internalize the compensation. In other words, it is embracing the green not just painting it. With the green marketing techniques firms minimize their cost by saving from water, energy and contaminant management, also they benefit from the pricing functions. This situation provides stability and rivalry superiority in the current market (www.paradoks.org/erbaslar). With these kinds of advantages tourism firms heading towards to green hotel management which is a big part of the green marketing in the tourism sector. Thus, both it creates a positive effect on the purchasing behavior of the consumers and contributes the sustainable tourism.

3. Green Hotel Practice

Accommodation establishments have begun to behave more sensitively to reducing the negative effect of tourism on the environment, and they have begun to perform various applications to this end. As a matter of fact, practices such as waste management, saving water and energy, and protection of biodiversity are the evidence of the steps taken by hotels to become a green hotel.

Practices of hotel management for the protection of the nature and for sustainable tourism, referred to as green hotel management, help both energy saving by accommodation establishments and the reduction of wastes left in the nature. Green hotel practices are regarded as a vacancy, the importance of which is gradually increasing in the sector. Therefore, establishments are headed for

green hotel practices and carry on various activities in the name of eliminating the vacancy concerned.

There are various reasons that direct accommodation establishments to activities of green marketing and green hotel management. These reasons might include competitive pressure, attitudes of consumers and non-governmental organizations towards this issue and the policies of many states regarding the protection of the environment. The Association of Green Hotels, which occurred in the process when hotels made efforts to become a green hotel, expresses that this process can be realized not only with the efforts of establishments but also with consumers' sensitivity to this end.

One of the leading establishments regarding green marketing is Ibis Hotels, the leaders of economical hotel accommodation marketing. It is seen that the environmental responsibility of Ibis Hotels and the activities they carry out are directly proportional to their position in the economic market and that they consider the characteristics of consumers when suggesting new products or determining and planning their products (5). Therefore, the management of Ibis Hotel Management considers the environmental sensitivity of consumers and the activities they perform regarding this issue. Furthermore, it might also be stated that consumers take the activities of Ibis Hotels into consideration and that they support the activities and attach particular importance to them in their selection of hotels. Within the scope of this environmental sensitivity, Ibis Hotel published its own environmental strategy in 2002 (6). The strategy concerned is collected under four essential titles:

- Water saving
- Energy saving and the supporting of renewable energy
- Decomposition of wastes and ensuring that they are recycled
- Provision of training and information flow to enhance the environmental awareness of the guests arriving at the hotel and of the employees

In this context, Ibis Hotel became the first international economical hotel chain that obtained ISO 14001 certificate in July 2004 (7). Helen Roques, the director of the department of sustainable development in Accor group, states that "with 204 hotels with ISO 14001 certificate in 2007 and 244 hotels with ISO 14001 certificate in 2009, Ibis Hotel is the pioneer and apple of the eye among the hotels within the Accor group and that the expansion of the brand network of Ibis chain of Hotels, with 800 hotels in five continents, has been facilitated with these activities" (8). It is observed that Ibis strengthened its quality with its activities within the scope of the Earth Guest Program that was published in 2006 by the Accor group. When all these activities of Ibis Hotel are considered in detail, it can be understood how much interested it is in and how willing it is about sensitivity to the environment. Philippe Lanternier, the Director of Certificates of Safety, Health and Environment at Ibis Hotel Management, states that it is the Ibis Hotel Management which is the first international economical hotel chain that received ISO 14001 certificate (9). It is seen that the Ibis Hotel Management group has intensified its environmental projects regarding ISO 14001 quality certificate, water, energy and waste management, and training on environmental sensitivity.

Water becomes outstanding as a source, the importance of which is gradually increasing due to recent aridity. With its policy of saving water, Ibis saved a total of 38,100,100 liters of water at all its hotels in 2007 (10). This amount of saving equals the amount of water in 12 Olympic-size swimming pools.

Like regarding the use of water, the Technical Department of Ibis Hotel made various observations about the use of energy and determined new strategies within the scope of renewable energy. Solar energy panels were constructed for the generation of hot water and they were used at many hotels. In this way, 178 days of energy was saved in the annual consumption of energy. For instance, Ibis Sydney Olympic Park Hotel in Australia is one of the greatest solar heat energy systems in Australia. In this way, it saves energy as much as 40% of the energy used by other hotels in the region. Moreover, Ibis Porte de Clichy Centre in France constructed a 75-square-meter solar energy panel in 2004, thereby acquiring significant amount of saving and reducing its costs (11).

In addition, Ibis hotel management carries out various activities regarding waste management. Ibis declares that its wastes are taken by private licensed companies and brought to government-approved waste centers. The Technical Department of Ibis decomposes the wastes and collects them in separate containers. During room service, the wastes are categorized into batteries, paper and plastic. Today the amount of waste at Little Bourke Street Ibis Hotel in Australia has been reduced by 58%. In France, the waste management program of Ibis Hotel was published, and this program was developed by the French Environment & Energy Management Agency and was put into use in a hundred French companies (12). The French Ibis Hotel became a pioneer on this matter and reduced the amount of its wastes by 10% at the end of 2008. Likewise, thanks to the recycling centers constructed at Novotel and Ibis Hotels in Spain, an income of 46,000 Euros was earned and this money was donated to the Red Cross.

Ibis hotel management aims to create environmental sensitivity and promote sensitivity by telling both its employees and its guests its activities about environment. During the activities, information on who has what kind of a role and what should be done regarding the environment is provided. It is stressed that activities regarding the environment will be realized by the help of all stakeholders. For instance, some 36 employees of Novotel and Ibis Hotel in Mexico planted 700 pine trees in the burnt region located in Laguna de Sanchez, thereby contributing to this process. Furthermore, the employees at the headquarters of Gurgaon Ibis and Accor in India planted 300 fruit trees in the arid region in the city of Gurgaon and showed their sensitivity to the environment (13).

4. Green Star Practice and the Case of Best Western President Hotel In Istanbul

It is evident that environmental quality is of great importance for the tourism sector. As it has been previously expressed, the indispensability of environment for the tourism sector caused accommodation establishments to adopt the principle of sensitivity to the environment and, in this context, led to the development of the understanding of green marketing. The increasing sensitivity of tourism-related institutions, the NGOs, tourism establishments and consumers to the issue of

environment brought about some applications in Turkey within the scope of green marketing. The green star certificate system applied by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Turkey can be shown as an example to this. Considering international criteria and the experienced developments within the scope of green star practice, a scoring system was prepared. The criteria concerned are outlined as follows (14):

a) Establishments should have an environmental policy and an action plan.

b) There should be a special authorized person to apply the action plan at the establishment or besides an authorized person in charge of the application at the establishment, this service should be obtained from an expert or a specialized firm.

c) The establishment should provide the staff with training to promote environmental sensitivity and create environmental measures and an action plan.

d) There should be an environmentally-sensitive waste water plan.

e) Records should be kept indicating that the protective maintenance and repairs of all installments, equipments and devices used at the touristic accommodation establishment are performed periodically.

f) The establishment should collect and monitor data with respect to water consumption, energy consumption for heating and cooling, electricity consumption and general energy consumption (Energy consumption per indoor m² or per overnight stay, the preparation of monthly, three-month and annual reports and their preservation in files).

g) The chemical substances (in volume and/or weight) used in the establishment should be monitored and the data (Consumption per indoor m² or per overnight stay, the preparation of monthly, three-month and annual reports and their preservation in files) should be collected.

h) The amount of waste (volume and/or weight) occurring in the establishment should be monitored and the data (Consumption per indoor m² or per overnight stay, the preparation of monthly, three-month and annual reports and their preservation in files) should be collected.

i) The following documents are updated and preserved in a file in the establishment that operates in an environmentally-sensitive way:

-An annual report prepared concerning all activities of the establishment in compliance with its environmental policy and action plan,

-Documents such as the invoice and report by the producing firm indicating that the installments, equipments and materials, used and elaborated in this form, are environmentally-sensitive, that their maintenance is performed regularly and that they are about the environmentally-sensitive activities performed in the establishment; an introductory brochure; the invoice and report by the firm that

performs maintenance; the document of the related institutions and organizations; engineering and architecture reports; the report of the related vocational institution and etc.,

-The training program and certificates of the employees regarding sensitivity to the environment as well as the documents distributed and declared to the staff and customers,

-Documents on the activities of cooperation and coordination with nongovernmental organizations and the related institutions and organizations about sensitivity to the environment.

Table. 2- Green Star Minimum Score Table

RESORT ESTABLISHMENTS		CITY ESTABLISHMENTS	
CATEGORY	Minimum Score	CATEGORY	Minimum Score
5 Star holiday Village	330	5 Star Hotel	250
5 Star Hotel	300	4 Star Hotel	200
4 Star holiday Village	280	3 Star Hotel	170
4 Star Hotel	230	1-2 Star hotel and other	140
3 Star Hotel	170		
1-2 Star hotel and other	140		

Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey (15)

The minimum scores determined by the Ministry as a result of evaluations are presented in Table 2. If an accommodation establishment wants to be awarded a green star, it has to get the minimum score in its category according to the table above. As it has also been stated in 2008 legislation of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in Turkey, from now on, accommodation establishments are able to get a green star certificate by fulfilling the stated criteria. Today there are two establishments, a city hotel and a holiday facility, which have fulfilled these criteria in our country. Calista Luxury Resort Hotel, a holiday facility, is the first institution in Turkey to be entitled to get the green star certificate in this field (16). The facility concerned has a Food Analysis Laboratory and is an example to other establishments in this field.

Best Western President-Istanbul Hotel is the first accommodation establishment in Istanbul and the second accommodation establishment in Turkey to be entitled to get the green star certificate. It is seen that BW President Istanbul, the first city hotel with a green star in Turkey, has a green hotel policy (17). The principles specified according to this policy can be itemized as follows:

- To adhere to legal regulations, the legislation on the environment and other liabilities;
- To hand a livable world down to the next generations for sustainable life and tourism;

- To follow scientific research and technological developments in new investments and projects, thereby preventing environmental pollution and continuously developing environmental performance;
- To use and conserve resources in the most efficient way;
- To reduce wastes at their source as much as possible or to separate the used packages and other reusable wastes from general garbage, to collect them under clean conditions and to ensure that they are recycled;
- To reduce the use of hazardous substances in the service processes and to use those substances which have less contaminating characteristics;
- To contribute to continuous development by creating environmental aims and objectives and to prepare activity reports by reviewing these objectives every year;
- To promote the environmental responsibility consciousness of all employees from top management to the lowest unit by providing all employees in the establishment with trainings about the environment;
- To inform those guests who stay in the establishment to this end and to ensure that they participate in activities of protection of the environment;
- To support the environmental activities of official and private institutions and to participate in environmental activities;
- To allocate adequate and appropriate sources in all these activities; and
- To work with those firms which produce environmentally-sensitive products and services.

In line with these policies, Best Western President Istanbul Hotel created a Committee of Environment, consisting of all department managers at the hotel and an environmental engineer, for the first time at the beginning of 2009. This Committee specified the activities to be performed with an annual plan. The activity report concerned included the activities performed for a green star:

- Before all, the employees were informed about the activities to be performed. Within this scope, the employees (there are over 200 employees) are provided with trainings at specific periods.
- The Committee of Environment held regular monthly meetings and exchanged ideas.
- Within the framework of the plan, a renewal activity amounting to over 3 million dollars was performed also with the support of the management.
- Cooperation was made with the Tema Foundation (The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and for the Protection of Natural Habitats) in the process of becoming a green hotel, and some 2,000 saplings were planted in order to green a burnt forest region again in Tekirdağ.
- The garbage is categorized into plastic, cardboard and glass, given to a private institution, with which Fatih Municipality works, and recycled. Moreover, some amount of glass is collected monthly using a glass collection bank placed outside the hotel and it is given to this private institution again. Some money is received in return for this and this money is transferred to needy people. In this way, the understanding of environmentalism involves the social responsibility project, too.
- Properties such as worn-out beds, bed sheets, tables and chairs, which do not comply with BW hotel standards, are given to hospitals.

- Regarding the use of energy, the expenditures of energy have been kept monthly since 2006. In this way, whether there is any increase in the use of energy and, if available, its causes have been investigated.
- It is planned to ensure that the emergency lights on the floors will be fed with wind energy as of 2010 within the scope of the renewable energy project.
- The infrastructure of the solar energy system was constructed in 2009, and it is planned to complete this project in 2010. Besides, joint activities are performed with Schneider Electric and Philips, and it is intended to ensure that the electrical equipments are energy-saving and long-lasting.
- All light bulbs at the hotel were replaced with energy-saving light bulbs.
- The fluorescent lamps at the hotel (deleterious since they contain mercury vapor) were collected and given to a private institution again.
- There are battery collection boxes on each floor of the hotel and in other shared areas. These batteries are collected and given to a firm, with which Fatih Municipality has a contract.
- There are recycling boxes in the rooms, in all department offices and in all general areas of use.
- Furthermore, there is a system in the rooms that ensures the use of maximum six liters of reservoir each time so that water is saved in the lavatories.
- There are water-saving apparatuses in all taps at the hotel.
- There are recycling boxes, informative forms and warnings in each room. In addition, bed sheets and pillows are changed upon request.
- The shampoos, soaps and similar materials in the rooms are bought in compliance with recycling.
- The plastic laundry bags were replaced with paper bags.
- Each lavatory contains warnings regarding all activities performed.
- Various institutions and organizations (ISKI [Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration], Municipalities, Banks and etc.) are consulted and informed about their involvement in this process, and joint activities are carried out.
- Moreover, with the votes of hotel customers in 2009, BW President Istanbul ranked among top 10 in the world in the category of the cleanest hotel and achieved great success.

Of 14 BW Hotels in Istanbul, Best Western President-Istanbul Hotel was the only hotel which completely fulfilled the Best Western standards and got full score out of 1,000 points in this field in 2009. It is observed that sensitivity to the environment continued after the receipt of a green star. It is understood that Best Western President-Istanbul Hotel will carry on materializing the planned projects and making new policies for environmental protection practices by keeping up with change. With this purpose, the hotel is planning to carry out the followings in 2010:

- Regarding water saving, the project of rain water collection will be materialized as of March 2010.
- Another project planned in 2010 is to provide the tradesmen in the surrounding with trainings about environmentalist practices. It is planned to provide them with information on the activities performed and to enable them to be included in this process.

- Another project is to place a coin bank at the reception so that the coins, which the guests arriving at the hotel have in their pockets but will not be able to use after they return to their own country, will be collected in this bank and a source will be created to be spent for environmental activities.
- It provided the guests with seedlings during Emitt 2010 Fair.

The values of saving obtained as a result of all these activities are available on the hotel's website and they are updated every month. Those employees at the hotel who are in charge of conducting the green star project of the hotel state that the management and the hotel owners extend great support for them during all these activities and say that they got a green star certificate because they completely fulfilled the criteria and that all departments worked in integrity and with sacrifice so as to realize this.

Within the framework of the policies concerned, we can define BW President Istanbul as an environmentally-sensitive accommodation establishment that is conscious of its social responsibilities. Followings are the amounts of recycling obtained by the hotel thanks to its policies and activities:

Table.3 – Amounts of Saving at the Hotel

Source	Amounts of Saving
Power	313095 KW
Water	13374 TON
Natural gas	20693 m ³
Powder	1709 Kg
Paper & Cartoon	6100 Kg
Plastic	3280 Kg
Glass	1440 Kg
Battery	120 Kg
Used oil	950 Kg

Source: BW President Istanbul Hotel (18)

With the values of saving provided in the table above,

- The cutting of some 103 trees and the release of 219 tons of CO₂ gas into the atmosphere were prevented;
- Some 45,920 kWh of energy was saved;
- Some 144 liters of petroleum was saved;
- The contamination of some 26,000 m² of soil was prevented;
- The contamination of some 3.32 liters of water due to mercury was prevented; and
- The contamination of some 950 m³ of drinking water was prevented.

However, the hotel authorities also emphasize that being a city hotel creates some disadvantages to the realization of environmental projects. Because city hotels are surrounded by a city due to their locations, they are exposed to variables in which they cannot intervene. For instance, there are exogenous factors they cannot control such as air pollution, noise pollution and traffic. Thus, the environment-friendly city hotels are as if they were islands surrounded on four

sides with environmental problems within the respective life course of the city. Therefore, its external stakeholders also need to be included in, and support, the above-mentioned process.

5. Conclusion

Without protecting the nature, we cannot speak of sustainable tourism. Establishments now have to carry out activities which attach more importance to environmental sensitivity. As it has been stated previously, tourism establishments have become advocates and implementers of green tourism due to factors such as state pressure and competitive pressure and because green marketing practices increase profitability and reduce costs. When we consider the understanding and policies of green marketing in international sense, we are able to see the activities performed by many chain hotel establishments.

Hotels' adoption of the understanding of green marketing will both result in a reduction in their costs and, therefore, help them gain more profit and take steps to protect the environment, regarded as the most important source of tourism, and to make it sustainable. It is unavoidable that accommodation establishments act with the understanding of green hotel management when expressing their sensitivity to the environment.

Green hotel practices, which best express sensitivity to the environment, primarily require serious investments. The reason why hotels hesitate to become a green hotel is generally the consideration of short-term profit and the high cost of investments. Taking steps towards green marketing might be more difficult for city hotels due to the problems resulting from urbanization.

In order to make the understanding of green hotel management widespread and to apply it, first of all, hotel owners and managers have to attach more importance to environmental sensitivity, determine long-term policies and be willing to plan this with all its stakeholders. The fact that local governments and central law-making governments make legal regulations and practices, which will force hotels, for environmentally-sensitive practices will have an effect of accelerating the development of environmental sensitivity and consciousness. It should be borne in mind that consumers' sensitivity when choosing environmentally-sensitive establishments while participating in tourism and while staying is one of the most important elements to contribute to the development of green hotel management. Thus, becoming conscious of the environment in the dimensions of both supply and demand is unavoidable for green hotel management. The application of environmentally-sensitive green hotel management activities conducted by Ibis hotel management in those countries where economic level and consumers' consciousness of the environment are high is also supportive of this prediction.

It is known that there are also individual and organizational efforts for the green hotel practice in Turkey. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism did not remain insensitive to global developments and it prepared the legal ground for green star practice and put it into practice in order to encourage green hotel management. Hotel establishments have various activities that enhance sensitivity to the environment. In Turkey, only two hotels have the green star certificate granted by

the Ministry within the scope of green star practice. The practices of Best Western President-Istanbul Hotel, one of the hotels concerned, are a good example of the applicability of green star practice. The supporting of hotels with a green star by the Ministry and other parties through promotions will both have a positive effect on an increase in touristic demand and enhance the interest of other hotels in obtaining a green star with the motive of competition. There is no doubt that the support to be extended to the green star practice by the central government and local governments will also help the green hotel practice become widespread.

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Face to face interviews

Mehmet MARANGOZ (Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University-Biga İİBF,Çanakkale)
Michael J.POLONSKY (Deakin University, Australia)
Emine Girgin (Environment Engineer) and Erdoğan ISIKLAR (Technic service manager) from BW President Istanbul Hotel

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