

Company: HOTEL PANAMONTE INN & SPA
Country: Panama
Project: Program TMF: Poverty reduction and environmental improvement.
An integral, sustainable development strategy.
Year: 2005

THE COMPANY

Hotel Panamonte is located in Boquete, Chiriqui Province, Panama. Ms. Inga Collins mother – the current owner, funded this hotel in 1946. The hotel was established in a house built in 1914, and keeps the beautiful architecture of the period.

The hotel also holds small-scale activities as such the production and/or commercialization of marmalade, and the sales of bakery products.

The Hotel Panamonte generates 21 direct jobs, which include the administration and a CPA. It also generates indirect jobs – through specialized projects offered additionally to complement the guests' relaxing experience; or through the products supply or services for the hotel and its quests.



SERVICES

The Hotel Panamonte provides:

- Accommodation in 19 units distributed in a two story nave and two additional aisles.
- Restaurant
- Bar in a salon with a fireplace
- Spa with massage tables and an aromatherapy room
- Laundry
- Ample grounds
- Greenhouse
- Herb garden for the restaurant
- Children's playground

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project was developed under the joint cooperation agreement CONEP-CEGESTI, within the frame of the project "*Environmental Management Instruments and Entrepreneurial Participation in Cleaner Production*", carried out by CONEP and financed by the Inter-American Development Bank IDB; and the "*Poverty reduction and environmental improvement: An integral, sustainable development strategy (TMF)*" carried out. By CEGESTI and financed by the Dutch Government Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Hotel Panamonte Inn & Spa decided – in mid-July 2004 – to participate as a beneficiary company in the program which aims, through CEGESTI's technical assistance, applying tourism sustainability, and the *cleaner production* methodology. Technical assistance would help participating companies in the development of a system based on Sustainability Tourism Certificate – STC- that is a program by the Costa Rican Tourist Institute (ICT by its



Spanish acronym), designed to categorized and differentiate tourist companies according to the degree their operations reach a sustainability model, regarding natural, cultural and social resources.

Its fundamental objective lies on changing the concept of sustainability into something real, practical and necessary in the context of tourist competitiveness in the region. This aims at improving the manner how natural and social resources are used. Also, active participation of the local communities is encouraged, and new support is granted for competitiveness in the tourist entrepreneurial sector.

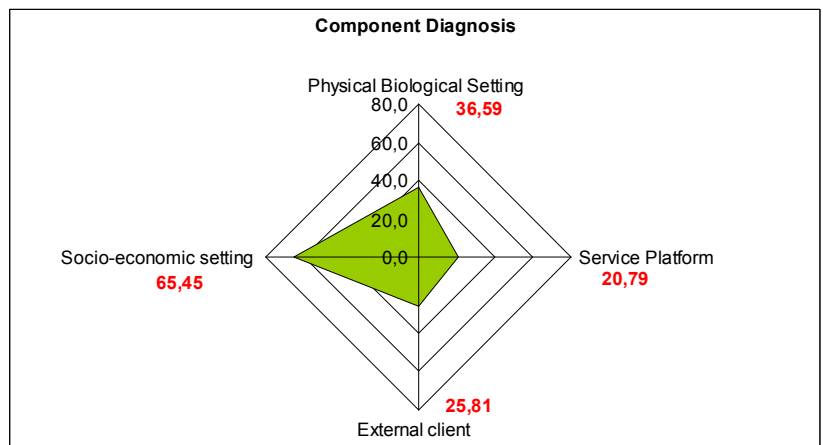
INITIAL STC ASSESSMENT

To assess the sustainability position of a tourist company, the ICT makes an analysis of the company with regards to four components:

- Physical biological setting
- Service platform
- External client setting
- Socio-economic

Each one of these components consists of different topics – which punctually analyze the company’s social, economic and environmental performance, hence its contribution to sustainable development.

The diagram shows the initial STC assessment results at the Hotel Panamonte Inn & Spa. As it may be seen, the biggest strength is found in the *Socioeconomic Component*, while the most opportunities to improve can be found in the topics of *External Client*, *Service Platform*, and *Physical and Biological Component*.



The main attained results:

Strategies, policies and plans

The company's strategic work frame was defined:

Company's Mission

We do our best to provide our clients with a home away from home. We offer lodging service in a naturally exuberant spot, a well known restaurant for its cuisine, and the most exclusive SPA services in the region; all of this with a personalized, polite and efficient service.

Sustainability Policy

Our objective is to achieve that our clients receive the highest satisfaction with the provided services while we generate profitability and development opportunities for our employees.

We are committed to sustainable development; so we develop actions to improve our environmental performance, create awareness about nature conservation and contribute to the community and to the indigenous population to have better development opportunities.

Service Platform: Cleaner Production Plan

The following table shows the score earned at the beginning and at the end of the technical assistance:

GENERAL DIAGNOSIS		Initial Assessment	Final Assessment
Service Platform	Policy formulation	13	67
	Water consumption	0	15
	Energy consumption	11	48
	Product/raw material consumption	43	68
	Waste management	17	44
	Training	33	22
Component score		21	48

The improvement in the earned score for this component was achieved through the following actions:

Water consumption

- Delay program in the washing of towels and bed linens.





- A measuring out program for detergent use was implemented.
- The use of detergents with less environmental impact and better performance was pioneered.
- A maintenance and revision program for the washing processes was implemented as to identify opportunities for water reutilization.

Energy Consumption

- An equipment preventive maintenance plan was established.
- More efficient energy systems were installed – and which include: changes in the type of lights used (incandescent for fluorescent) and automatic or motion detector switching-off systems.
- Energy indicators such as water consumption per guest, and gas consumption per guest and per dependant were designed.



Solid Waste Production



- The acquisition of containers has diminished by purchasing products wholesale or by using refillable containers.

- A recycling program has been started; so potential material is separated – such as glass bottles, aluminum cans and other containers.



- A composting with organic garden and kitchen residues was started.

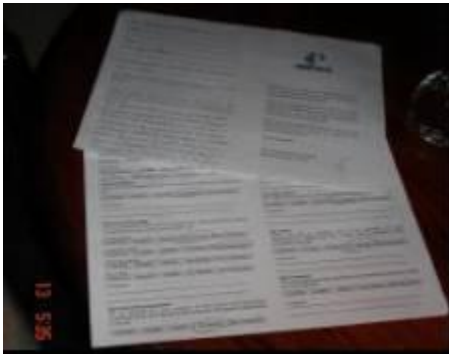


External Client

The following table shows the score earned at the beginning and at the end of the technical assistance:

GENERAL DIAGNOSIS		Initial Assessment	Final Assessment
External Client	Communication & participation	45	60
	Room conditions	0	43
	Handling of groups	43	71
	Response measurement	0	100
	Component score	26	64

The improvement in the earned score for this component was achieved through the following actions:



- The company keeps a form to measure clients' satisfaction – as feedback instrument. To this form questions have been added; they are related to the tourist sustainability program that is being implemented by the hotel.

- The company has started the implementation of products, such as available information for guests about the company (mission, sustainability policy, activities, information about the region, and additional tourist services) and about tourist aspects in general.



Physical Biological and Socio-economic Component

The following tables show the score earned at the beginning and at the end of the technical assistance:

GENERAL DIAGNOSIS		Initial Assessment	Final Assessment
Physical and Biological Component	Policies and Programs	67	33
	Emissions and waste products	8	13
	Green areas	43	80
	Natural areas	40	57
	Flora and fauna	50	75
Component score		37	47

GENERAL DIAGNOSIS		Initial Assessment	Final Assessment
Socioeconomic Component	Direct economic benefit	83	83
	Indirect economic benefit	86	94
	Contribution to cultural development	100	64
	Health contribution	25	50
	Infrastructure and safety	14	0
	Component score		65

The improvement in the earned score for this component was achieved through the following actions:



- The company keeps a large amount of information and it promotes its guests visit to natural areas and other attractions of touristy interest – in the region and the country as a whole. For example, it keeps detailed information about the Baru Volcano National Park – through a hotel sponsored pamphlet. Also, it keeps information about the Amistad Park and the *Quetzales* trail. It also provides information on tours, field trips and other activities in the area, such as visits to the thermal waters wells and white water rafting tours.
- The company has a permanent commercial and support relationship with local some micro-companies. In this sense, Mr. Sergio Arauz – who works at the front desk - stands out for the support he receives as he decided to develop a small tourist tours company in the locality.

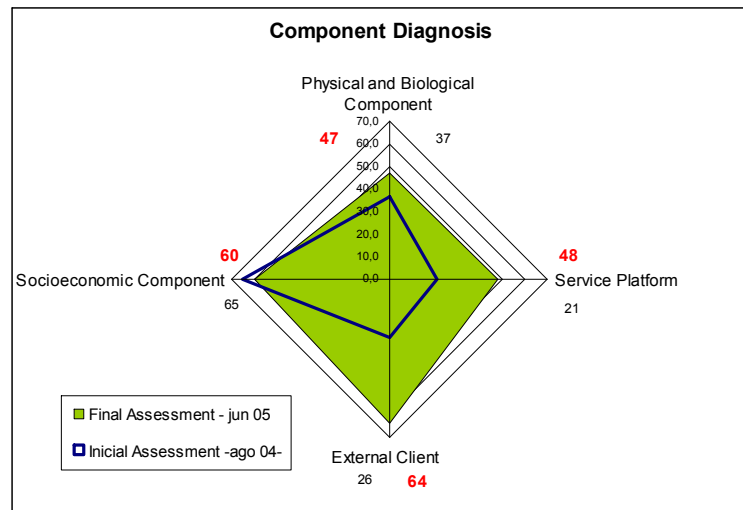
- The hotel sells locally produced crafts – some made by indigenous people. On the other hand, it promotes and informs about cultural and ethnic activities which will be developed in the community. These are examples of the hotel's interests in promoting the economy and the community's welfare where it operates.



FINAL ASSESSMENT

The final assessment shows significant improvements in the *Service Platform* (final score of 48%) and *external Client* (final score 64%) with net increases in scores of 27% and 38% accordingly. Additionally, the hotel had a improvement in the component Physical Biological Component, with a net increase of 10% (final score of 47%).

These results are the evidence that Hotel Panamonte Inn & Spa achieves to contribute more decisively to Sustainable Development in Panama – through the Cleaner Production Program as well as Tourist Sustainability.



ENTREPERNURIAL PHRASE

"The Cleaner Production Program and Integral Sustainable Development were excellent for the Hotel Panamonte, as well as for the Boquete region. Being that this region is lush with vegetation and of natural surroundings, this project comes as a good tool to the protection and care of our environment. Acquired knowledge with CEGESTI's support in the development of the project has been very useful for the tasks we carry out; the teachings are most valuable, and as a matter of fact very positive results have been attained with the implemented recommendations."

Doris Taylor
Manager Assistant

