

## **ECOLABELS, ECOCERTIFICATION AND ECOTOURISM**

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### **Abstract**

In recent years, ecolabelling has proliferated in virtually all economic sectors of society, including the tourism industry. Ecolabels are intended to provide reliable information to consumers about the environmental impact of products or services in the expectation that this information will influence their purchasing decisions. The idea is that to win consumers with positive environmental values to their products and services, providers will ensure that these products and services meet the standards necessary to qualify for the use of ecolabels in their marketing, thus having a positive impact on the preservation of the environment. However, given the proliferation of ecolabels and the variability of ecocertification programs, nomenclatures and standards, the field is immensely complex. It can be difficult for researchers, let alone consumers, to determine precisely what the use of a given label means or warrants. Some recent reports put the number of international ecolabels near 340 with almost 40 dealing specifically with tourism related products and services. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the use of ecolabels and ecocertification programs in tourism products and to identify gaps in our knowledge about ecolabels and ecocertification programs specifically geared to the growing area of ecotourism.

**Keywords** Ecolabels, Ecocertification, Green travel, Ecotourism