

**Plastic Smart   
*GREENMark***

**Single Use Plastic Reduction Programme**

***for the Irish Tourism & Hospitality Sector***

***Supporting:*** *UNWTO Global Tourism Plastics Initiative, European Commission Single Use Plastics Directive, Repak Pledge on Packaging Waste and the IHF Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste*



**Objective: To minimise single-use plastics from the Tourism & Hospitality Sector in Ireland**

This micro certification programme is designed to place the Irish Tourism & Hospitality Sector at the forefront of the War Against Plastic and show that the sector is not alone concerned about its environmental responsibilities, but willing to take direct action to reduce its impact.

Single Use Plastics (SUPS) have been identified as one of the world’s most pressing environmental issues with millions of tons every year dumped into the seas and rivers and not alone killing sea life but enabling micro-plastics to enter the human food chain. This is not just a third-world issue but one that has direct impacts in every country in the world.

Many hotel and hospitality businesses around the world have already made commitments to minimising/eliminating SUP’s, such as Red Carnation Hotels, Marriott, Hilton, Soneva, Melia, etc. amongst the leading activist companies.

In 2002 Ireland was the first country in the world to introduce a charge for single use supermarket plastic bags and almost overnight saw a 95% reduction in their use.

In 2021 the EU Single use Plastics Directive was passed into law banning the sale of many SUP’s across Europe.

In 2024 a Deposit Return Scheme was launched for Drinks Containers – Plastic and Cans – which had an instant impact on increasing the recycling % for these containers – and helped to move companies away from these containers to more responsible ones, such as water cartons.

In 2024/25 it is expected that a levy will be charged on all takeaway beverage cups and a ban on providing them for consumption on-site. (The latte Levy) This will further grow the use of reusable beverage cups.

By the beginning of 2024 GHP has estimated that 90%+ of Irish Hotels have gone beyond their legal requirements and eliminated single use toiletries in guest bathrooms and now use large refillable containers for soap, shampoo, shower/bath gel, body lotion etc. Including most 5-star hotels.

Business’s offering Single Use Plastics are seen by travellers as being irresponsible and well behind the sustainability curve and is a very poor marketing message. The world has moved away from them and this programme is designed to support your business in taking additional steps to move even further – and stay ahead of regulations and societal changes.

The Plastic Smart GREENMark programme has 2 key objectives;

- To eliminate single use plastic containers in customer areas

- To work with suppliers & stakeholders to consistently reduce non-reusable/recyclable plastic containers and other plastic items and to standardise the composition of all containers to ensure that they can be easily recycled.

***The Plastic Smart Single-Use Plastic (SUP) targets for the sector focus on customer facing areas and specifically target the following;***

***Eliminate*** - Plastic Cotton Buds, Cutlery, Plates, Straws, Stirrers, Balloons and Sticks, Plastic Bottles, Takeaway Cups and Lids, Drinks Coasters, Takeaway Food Packaging, Plastic Bags.

***Minimise/Eliminate*** - Crisp packets, Sweet wrappers, Wet wipes, Sanitary items, In-room amenities and toiletries.

The Plastic Smart GREENMark is a programme that clearly sets out the specific initiative’s hotels must take to eliminate single-use plastics from consumer facing areas and supports the various national and international initiatives underway, including;

* United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) – Global Tourism Plastics Initiative
* European Commission (EU) – Single Use Plastics Directive
* Repak - Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste
* Irish Hotels Federation – Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated

**There are 4 key parts to this programme.**

***The Plastic Smart Pledge*** – Businesses sign up to the programme and commit to implementing it over a defined period – Major improvement is required within first 12 months.

***Achieving the Plastic Smart GREENMark standard***. The Plastic Smart GREENMark will be awarded to every business that has implemented the standard which focuses on removing/minimising or mitigating the targeted SUP’s from customer facing areas.

***Communicating the Actions***: Each business will create an easily accessible page on their website and will publish their actions, plans and targets and update their progress at least on an annual basis. *(This can be amalgamated into a business’s sustainability webpage where they already exist)*

***Continuing the work*** – Having achieved a major reduction in SUP’s in customer areas the business will work with their suppliers and their representative organisations and stakeholders to identify alternatives to other plastic use in customer areas and SUP’s delivered by suppliers and to standardise plastic containers to simplify separation and recycling.

The next stage of our programme will aim to minimise/eliminate all SUP’s from all areas of the business – our ***Plastic Free*** standard. This will be reviewed and published in due course – our immediate challenge is to drive businesses to achieve the ***Plastic Smart GREENMark*** standard.

**Programme Administration**

The ***Plastic Smart GREENMark*** will be administered by the Green Hospitality Programme

Membership will be managed online and all members are required to abide by the conditions and standards.

Members must complete an annual compliance statement through the online tool.

**Promotion**

All Plastic Smart GREENMark businesses will be listed in the Plastic Smart GREENMark register in the GreenTravel.ie website and on the Green Hospitality website. Where Plastic Smart GREENMark members are also listed as Responsible Businesses they will be identified on the GreenTravel.ie map and a Plastic Smart logo put on their listing page.

Each Plastic Smart GREENMark business will receive a Certificate and copy of the Plastic Smart GREENMark Logo to promote their commitment and achievement.

**Cost**

There is an initial €250 setup charge followed by an annual cost of €95

Green Hospitality, GREENMark and GreenTravel.ie listed members will be charged the initial €250 with no subsequent annual cost.

All payments must be made online – send us your application form and we will provide the link to you.

**Other Resources**

***Supplier Listing***

Green Hospitality will work with members and others to identify suppliers who can provide alternative products or services that will assist members in achieving the Plastic Smart GREENMark standard.

Information on these will be found in the Green Hospitality [website.](http://www.greenhospitality.ie)

***Clean the World***

The Clean the World (CTW) programme collects single-use bedroom toiletries (Soaps, Shampoos, Body Washes, Lotions, Conditioners) from hotels and upcycles them into hygiene packs for disadvantaged communities.

By implementing CTW a hotel can satisfy the Plastic Smart standard for these SUP’s, as they will be reused as opposed to going directly to the residual waste stream. More information can be found here [Clean the World.](https://cleantheworld.org/)

***Let’s Reduce Plastic***

Travel Without Plastic (TWP) is a UK based organisation committed to assisting tourism and hospitality businesses across the world in the War against Plastic. They have created **Let’s Reduce Single-Use: The Plastics Toolkit for Hotels**, to help hotels around the world reduce plastic, protect the environment and even save money.

<https://www.travelwithoutplastic.com/>

***Additional Resources*** – where identified these will be published in the Green Hospitality website.

**Supporting International & National Single Use Plastics Initiatives**

The Plastic Smart GREENMark supports the following national and international initiatives and incorporates their challenges and targets.

**UNWTO – Global Tourism Plastics Initiative**

The Global Tourism Plastics Initiative aims to articulate, support and scale-up action by tourism stakeholders and is building a global alliance to fight plastic pollution.

The Initiative requires tourism organizations to make a set of concrete and actionable commitments by 2025:

* Eliminate problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging and items by 2025;
* Take action to move from single-use to reuse models or reusable alternatives by 2025;
* Engage the value chain to move towards 100% of plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable, or compostable;
* Take action to increase the amount of recycled content across all plastic packaging and items used;
* Commit to collaborate and invest to increase the recycling and composting rates for plastics;
* Report publicly and annually on progress made towards these targets.

***More information, and to join the initiative, can be*** [***found here….***](https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/global-tourism-plastics-initiative)

**EU Directive on Single Use Plastics**

The single-use plastics directive builds on the EU's existing waste legislation but goes further by setting stricter rules for those types of products and packaging which are among the top ten most frequently found items polluting European beaches. The new rules ban the use of certain throwaway plastic products for which alternatives exist. In addition, specific measures are introduced to reduce the use of the most frequently littered plastic products.

Single-use plastic products are made wholly or partly of plastic and are typically intended to be used just once or for a short period of time before they are thrown away. One of the main purposes of this directive is to reduce the amount of plastic waste which we create. Under the new rules, single-use plastic plates, cutlery, straws, balloon sticks and cotton buds were banned from 3 July 2021.

Member states have agreed to achieve a 90% collection target for plastic bottles by 2029, and plastic bottles will have to contain at least 25% of recycled content by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

***More information can be*** [***found here….***](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/05/21/council-adopts-ban-on-single-use-plastics/)

**REPAK - Irelands Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste**

Repak’s Plastic Packaging Recycling Strategy 2018—2030 sets out a clear path of actions for Repak Members. A key action by Members is to commit to a Plastic Pledge which will make a significant contribution towards meeting Ireland’s packaging recycling targets as set by the Circular Economy Package (CEP).

The Plastic Pledge was launched in September 2018

***The Plastic Pledge has five key objectives:***

1. Prioritise the prevention of plastic packaging waste by minimising avoidable single use packaging and promoting packaging reuse where possible.

2. Support Ireland to deliver the Circular Economy Package plastic recycling targets of 50% of all plastics by 2025 and 55% of all plastic packaging by 2030, as set by the European Commission.

3. Reduce complexity within the plastic packaging supply chain by simplifying polymer usage and eliminating non-recyclable components in all plastic packaging by 2030.

4. Help to build a circular economy for used plastic packaging in Ireland and Europe by increasing the use of plastic packaging with a recycled content.

5. Ensure our approach to plastic packaging reduction is aligned to Ireland‘s goal of a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030 as set out in Ireland’s food waste charter.

***More information can be*** [***found here….***](https://repak.ie/irelands-plastic-pledge/)

**Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) - Irelands Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste**

In 2019 the IHF promoted the REPAK Pledge to its Obligated Members and encouraged non-Obligated members to sign up to the IHF Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste.

***More information can be [found here….](https://www.ihf.ie/sustainability/plastic-pledge)***

**APPLICATION FORM**

We wish to join the Plastic Smart GREENMark programme.  
You can also Join and pay online through [www.greenhospitality.ie](http://www.greenhospitality.ie)

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| --- | --- |
| **Company Name** |  |
| **Type of Business** |  |
| **Is your business already listed on GreenTravel.ie and your fees up-to-date?** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Email** |  |
| **Telephone** |  |
| **Contact Name** |  |
| **Position** |  |
| **Personal Email address** |  |
| **Signature**  **Date** |  |

**Please complete this form and send it to Green Hospitality, Eastgate Village, Little Island, Cork. T45A363 or email it to** [**info@greenhospitality.ie**](mailto:info@greenhospitality.ie)