

Criteria for Beaches



**BLUE FLAG
NEW ZEALAND**

blueflag.org.nz



New Zealand operator of Blue Flag



The Blue Flag is an internationally recognised and respected eco-label that is awarded annually to beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operators which have met strict criteria in four categories: Water Quality, Environmental Management, Environmental Education, and Safety & Services. The Blue Flag programme was founded in 1987 and is run internationally by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non-profit organisation based in Denmark. There are currently over 4,000 Blue Flags flying in 49 countries. New Zealand's National Operator of the Blue Flag programme is Keep New Zealand Beautiful (KNZB, a national environmental charity.

What makes the Blue Flag programme so unique and successful is its holistic nature. The standards were developed to ensure that Blue Flag beaches are not only clean and environmentally sustainable, but provide the facilities and services that tourists around the world look for. It is for this reason that the Blue Flag programme is embraced by the World Health Organization, the World Tourism Organization, and the United Nations Environmental Programme.

The Blue Flag criteria are organized into four main categories: Water Quality, Environmental Management, Environmental Education and Safety and Services. The criteria are further categorised as either imperative or guideline. Imperative criteria must be complied with in order for a beach to be awarded a Blue Flag. Guideline criteria are strongly encouraged, but are not mandatory.

We perform random and announced control visits to Blue Flag beaches during the swimming season in order to ensure that all criteria are being met. This is critical to ensure that all awarded beaches uphold the integrity of the programme.

Steps to the Blue Flag Award

1 CONTACT US - If you're thinking about getting your beach certified, contact us first - we have experience helping communities achieve the Blue Flag. As part of a national and international network of beach operators, we can draw from the knowledge and experience of beach operators around the world.

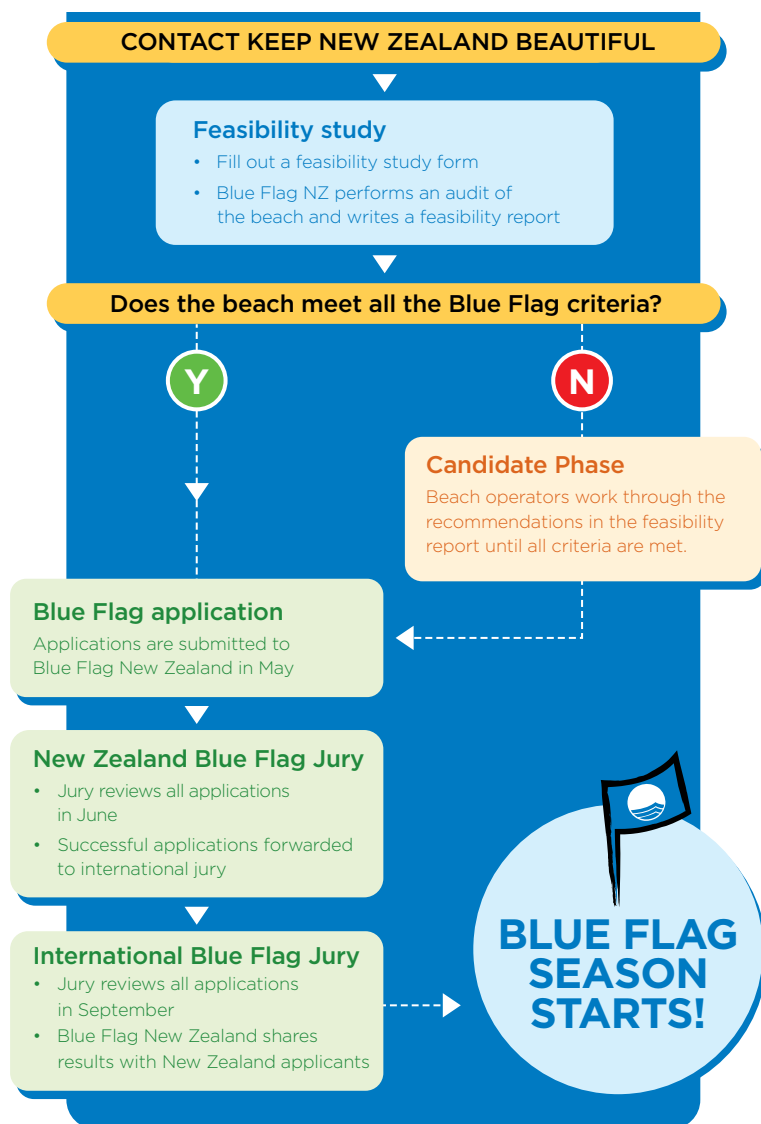
2 FEASIBILITY STUDY (OPTIONAL) - Before you apply for the Blue Flag award, we will conduct a feasibility study of your beach. In addition to reviewing water quality data and other documentation, we will meet with you to assess the beach and facilities. Following the site visit, we will prepare a feasibility study report outlining the steps required to meet all Blue Flag criteria. This report will provide a helpful framework to guide your initiatives.

3 CANDIDATE PHASE - If your council agrees to adopt the recommendations of the feasibility study and proceed with Blue Flag certification, your beach will enter the pilot phase and become a Blue Flag "candidate." As a candidate, you may promote your efforts to achieve the Blue Flag.

4 BLUE FLAG APPLICATION - Once the beach is in compliance with the Blue Flag criteria, you will be invited to submit an application. Applications are accepted each May and include four years of water quality data and other supporting documentation.

5 REGIONAL BLUE FLAG JURY - The jury is made up of independent experts in environmental education, water quality, environmental management, safety and tourism. The jury reviews all applications in May and forwards successful applications to an International FEE Jury for final approval.

6 INTERNATIONAL BLUE FLAG JURY - The International Jury reviews all applications in September. Once the jury announces its decision, KNZB shares the results with New



Zealand applicants. This information is embargoed from the media until the official announcement in October, when we issue a national press release to promote New Zealand's awardees and candidates.

7 BLUE FLAG SEASON BEGINS! - Once the beach is open for swimming, the Blue Flag can be raised! Many awardees have flag-raising celebrations, and we help promote these events. Beaches are monitored by KNZB throughout the season to ensure that they continue to meet all of the criteria. All of New Zealand's Blue Flag beaches and marinas are promoted on **BlueFlag.org.nz**.



Blue Flag Criteria for Beaches



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

- 1** Information about the Blue Flag programme and other FEE eco-label must be displayed. (p6)
- 2** Environmental education activities must be offered and promoted to beach users. (p7)
- 3** Information about bathing water quality must be displayed. (p8)
- 4** Information relating to local eco-systems environmental elements and cultural sites must be displayed. (p8)
- 5** A map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed. (p9)
- 6** A code of conduct that reflects appropriate laws and/or regulations governing the use of the beach and surrounding areas must be displayed. (p9)



WATER QUALITY

- 7** The beach must fully comply with the water quality sampling and frequency requirements. (p10)
- 8** The beach must fully comply with the standards and requirements for water quality analysis. (p12)
- 9** Industrial, waste-water or sewage-related discharges must not affect the beach area. (p13)
- 10** The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for the microbiological parameter *Escherichia coli* (faecal coli bacteria) and intestinal enterococci (streptococci). (p14)
- 11** The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for physical parameters. (p14)



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- 12 The local authority/beach operator should establish a beach management committee. (Guideline) (p15)
- 13 The local authority/beach operator must comply with all laws and/or regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach. (p15)
- 14 Sensitive areas must be managed accordingly. (p16)
- 15 The beach must be clean. (p16)
- 16 Algal vegetation or natural debris must be left on the beach. (p17)
- 17 Rubbish bins must be available at the beach in adequate numbers and they must be regularly maintained. (p17)
- 18 Facilities for the separation of recyclable waste materials must be available at the beach. (p18)
- 19 An adequate number of toilet or restroom facilities must be provided. (p18)
- 20 The toilet or restroom facilities must be kept clean. (p18)
- 21 The toilet or restroom facilities must have controlled sewage disposal. (p19)
- 22 There will be no unauthorised camping or driving and no dumping on the beach. (p19)
- 23 Access to the beach by dogs and other domestic animals must be strictly controlled. (p19)
- 24 All buildings and beach equipment must be properly maintained. (p20)
- 25 Marine and freshwater sensitive habitats in the vicinity of the beach must be monitored. (p20)
- 26 A sustainable means of transportation should be promoted in the beach area. (Guideline) (p20)



SAFETY AND SERVICES

- 27 Appropriate public safety control measures must be implemented. (p21)

- 28 First aid equipment must be available on the beach. (p22)
- 29 Emergency plans to cope with pollution risks must be in place. (p22)
- 30 There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents. (p23)
- 31 There must be safety measures in place to protect users of the beach and free access must be granted to the public. (p24)
- 32 A supply of drinking water should be available at the beach. (Guideline) (p25)
- 33 At least one Blue Flag beach in each district must have access and facilities provided for the physically disabled. (p25)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Dispensation cases. (p26)

APPENDIX B: Information about the Blue Flag programme must be displayed. [Criterion 1]. (p27)

APPENDIX C: Guidelines for Environmental Education Activities. [Criterion 2]. (p28)

APPENDIX D: Recommendations for presenting water quality information on Blue Flag beaches. Example of a coastal water beach: [Criterion 3]. (p29)

APPENDIX E: The 95th percentile. (p30)

APPENDIX F: Beach Litter Measuring System – a method of mapping the status of litter on a beach [Criterion 15]. (p30)

APPENDIX G: Reef Check system for coral reef monitoring [Criterion 25]. (p31)

APPENDIX H: Guidelines for events on Blue Flag beaches [Criterion 30]. (p33)

APPENDIX I: Guidance on ILS Safety Risk Assessment for Beaches [Criterion 27]. (p34)

APPENDIX J: Blue Flag Guidelines for further developments of your beach. (p36)

RESOURCES

Resources. (p43)



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

1 Information about the Blue Flag programme and other FEE eco-label must be displayed.

Imperative

Blue Flag Information Board

Information about the Blue Flag programme must be displayed on the Blue Flag information board. The correct Blue Flag logo must be used, in accordance with the FEE branding guidelines. The essence of each of the four categories of the Blue Flag criteria must be explained in this information. The length of the Blue Flag season must also be included.

The information could also be posted at other locations, e.g. at major access points, lifeguard stations, other beach facilities, or in parking areas. Tourist information offices should also have information about the Blue Flag programme.

Contact details for the local, national and international Blue Flag representatives must be posted as well.

In areas of international tourism, it is recommended that the information be provided in relevant languages.

In the event that the Blue Flag is temporarily withdrawn, a relevant notice must be posted at the beach informing the public as to the reasons why the flag was withdrawn.

Blue Flag beaches must promote the Green Key Programme as another eco-label run by FEE with a message such as: “Along with the Blue Flag, the Foundation for Environmental Education also develops another eco-label for various tourism enterprises: Green Key. Find more information at: www.greenkey.global”

Appendix B provides an example of how the Blue Flag information can be presented.

2 Environmental education activities must be offered and promoted to beach users.

Imperative

Environmental education activities promote the aims of the Blue Flag Programme by:

- increasing the awareness of, and care for, the local environment by recreational users and residents.
- training personnel and tourist service providers in environmental matters and best practices.
- encouraging the participation of local stakeholders in environmental management within the area.
- promoting sustainable recreation and tourism in the area.
- promoting the sharing of ideas and efforts between the Blue Flag Programme and other FEE Programmes (YRE, LEAF, Eco-Schools and Green Key).

The planned environmental education activities for the coming season must be included in the application documents, and so must a report on activities carried out during the previous Blue Flag season (if applicable).

At least five different activities must be offered to the municipality or community - preferably during the Blue Flag season. The activities should focus on the environment, environmental issues, Blue Flag issues or sustainability issues. At least some of the activities should be carried out at the beach and have a direct focus on the beach environment.

The educational activities must be effective and relevant, and each year, the local authority must re-evaluate the activities that were implemented and work towards constantly improving them.

Where the planned environmental education activities are of interest to, and involve, the general public or beach users these activities must be publicised in good time to inform the public about the opportunities. Such activities must also be publicised on the Blue Flag information board, but could also be publicised in other areas in the beach area, in local centres, in newspapers and other media.

Blue Flag New Zealand encourages partnerships with local organisations, such as “Friends of” groups, environmental NGOs, conservation authorities, naturalist clubs or other community groups.

The environmental education activities must be clearly disseminated to the public. Preferably, the activities should be posted on the common information board. However, dissemination could include an updatable list posted at the kiosk or clubhouse, an SMS notification or other means of communication. Whatever the platform for dissemination is, it has to be stated on the information board where the user can find out more about the activities.

Furthermore, these environmental education activities must be offered for free. A small participatory fee is accepted if need be to cover costs such as lunches, water, etc. but no business benefits can be made of these environmental education activities.

Local authorities/beach operators are encouraged to implement and/or support sustainable development projects in which public participation is a key element, e.g. United Nation Sustainable Development Goals initiatives.

If specific sensitive natural areas (including Marine Protected Areas) exist near a Blue Flag beach (e.g. mangroves or sea grass beds), it is strongly recommended that some of the educational activities address these sensitive natural areas.

Examples of good educational activities can be obtained by contacting Keep New Zealand Beautiful.

Appendix C provides further background on the environmental education activities.



3 Information about bathing water quality must be displayed.

Imperative

Bathing water quality information must be displayed on the Blue Flag information board. It is recommended that a table or figure with easily identifiable symbols that correspond to the results be used. The information must also clearly explain how the water quality results relate to the imperative criteria for water quality, with specific reference to sampling frequency and the conditions under which Blue Flag status can be withdrawn.

The authority in charge of providing the bathing

water quality results must do so shortly after the analysis so that the data can be updated regularly. It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that the beach operator/ beach management receives the information no later than one month after the sampling date. The complete and detailed data must be made available by the local authority to anybody upon request.

Appendix D provides an example of how this information could be presented.

4 Information relating to local eco-systems, environmental elements and cultural sites must be displayed.

Imperative

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that beach users are well informed and educated about relevant environmental elements (including valuable cultural sites/communities), local ecosystems and any sensitive areas in the surrounding environment so that they are encouraged to learn about and experience the environment in a responsible way.

Information about coastal zone ecosystems, wetland areas, unique habitats or any sensitive

natural areas must be displayed at or close to the Blue Flag beach. The information must include details about the natural area and a code of conduct for visitors to the area. If the full information is not available on the Blue Flag information board, there must at least be a short notice on the board informing the public about the nearby sensitive area and where they can find further information.

Relevant environmental information could

furthermore be displayed at tourist sites, at the natural areas, or in tourist information offices. The information can be published in tourist brochures, local newspapers or pamphlets created specifically for this purpose. In areas that are visited by a high number of tourists, it is recommended that the information be

presented in more than one way, as listed above, and it should be presented in relevant languages.

In the case of sensitive underwater environments, specific information about these areas must be provided for divers and snorkelers.

5 A map of the beach indicating different facilities must be displayed. *Imperative*

A map is required so that visitors can see the boundaries of the Blue Flag zone and locate facilities and services. The map must be easy to read and orientated to the beach. Pictogrammes should preferably be used. The Blue Flag information board template includes a space for a map of the beach, so it is important to refer to the template before designing the map in order to ensure that the dimensions are correct.

The map must include:

- “You are here” pointers
- Lifeguards or lifesaving equipment
- The area patrolled (for beaches with lifeguards)
- First aid equipment
- Telephones
- Toilets (including toilets for disabled people)
- Drinking water

- Car and bicycle parking areas
- Authorised camping sites near the beach
- Recycling facilities
- Location of water sampling point(s)
- Access points and access for disabled persons
- Zoning (swimming, surfing, sailing, boating, etc.)
- Nearby public transport
- Footpaths
- Demarcation of Blue Flag area
- Location of other information boards
- Rivers and inflows
- Local landmarks (where applicable)
- Stormwater outlets
- Nearby sensitive natural areas, etc.
- Direction (North)
- Scale bar

6 A code of conduct that reflects appropriate laws and/or regulations governing the use of the beach and surrounding areas must be displayed. *Imperative*

The code of conduct must address the activities of beach users and their conduct on the beach. The beach code of conduct must be displayed on the Blue Flag information board. The information could furthermore be posted at other locations, e.g. at all major entrance points, near to the relevant activity (i.e. a ‘No Diving’ sign on a pier) or as information at the relevant sites. Internationally recognised symbols, e.g. pictogrammes must be used wherever possible.

The code of conduct must include rules about the presence of domestic animals, zoning

(when appropriate), fishing, litter management, the use of vehicles, camping, fires, etc.

Laws and/or regulations governing beach usage and management should be available to the public at the office of the local authority/ beach operator.

The period when the lifesaving equipment and/or lifeguards, and first aid are available must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards and at the lifeguard station. An explanation of the emergency flag system in use must also be provided.



WATER QUALITY

The Blue Flag Programme requires that beaches achieve excellent bathing water quality. The bathing water quality standards have been based on the most appropriate international and national standards and legislation.

Blue Flag is an international eco-label and it therefore has one minimum global standard for water quality. The standards described here for bathing water quality for beaches must be adopted unless stricter national standards are already in existence, e.g. testing for total coliform bacteria. In that case, the beach must comply with the more demanding national standards for bathing water quality.

7 The beach must fully comply with the water quality sampling and frequency requirements.

Imperative

A Blue Flag beach must have at least one sampling point which must be located where the concentration of bathers is highest. In addition, where there are potential sources of pollution, e.g. near streams, rivers or other inlets, storm water outlets, etc. additional sampling points must be established at these sites to provide evidence that such inflows do

not affect bathing water quality.

All sampling sites of the applicant beach must comply with the Blue Flag bathing water quality criteria.

Samples for microbiological and physical-chemical parameters must be taken.

Similarly, in the case of inland waters where the water is supplemented by outside sources during dry periods, the water quality of the outside source must meet the Blue Flag bathing water quality standards.

Only one sample value per day is to be recorded in the percentile calculation.

Samples should be taken 30 cm below the water surface except for the mineral oil samples that should be taken at surface level.

How often must a sample be taken?

For each sampling point, there must be no more than 31 days between any two water samples during the Blue Flag season. This includes the gap between the pre-season sample and the following in-season sample. The Blue Flag Programme does not accept applications from beaches, irrespective of the length of the Blue Flag season, where less than five samples have been taken. This means that a minimum of five samples must be taken, evenly spread out during the season. The first sample must be taken within 31 days before the official starting date of the Blue Flag season.

Only one sample value per day is to be recorded in the percentile calculation.

When sample results raise concern of a possible increase in levels of pollution, it is recommended to temporarily increase the sampling frequency in order to track any possible pollution incident.

In the event of short-term pollution, one additional sample is to be taken to confirm that the incident has ended. This sample is not part of the set of bathing water quality data. If necessary to replace a discarded sample, an additional sample is to be taken seven days after the end of the short-term pollution. Discounting of samples because of short-term pollution during the last assessment period is allowed for maximum 15% of the total number of samples provided for in the monitoring calendar established for that period, or one sample per bathing season, whichever is greater.

When calculating 15% of the total number of samples provided for that period, the result must be rounded up or down.

The rule is:

- Anything lower or equal to ,49 should be rounded down (for example: a result of 2,49 gives a possibility of discounting 2 samples).
- Anything higher or equal to ,50 should be rounded up (for example: a result of 2,50 gives a possibility of discounting 3 samples).

Both the original and the additional samples have to be sent as a dispensation case to the International Jury for the evaluation (see *Appendix A on dispensation cases*).

In case of an oil spill, abnormal weather or other extreme events which can have a serious adverse effect on the quality of the bathing water or the health of the bathers, the beach manager must temporarily take down the Blue Flag and clearly state the reason on the information board. It is recommended that the wording of this information is along the lines: "This beach has recently experienced abnormal weather/extreme event. Swimming is not recommended at this time due to the possibility of pollution/danger to the bathers."





8 The beach must fully comply with the standards and requirements for water quality analysis.

Imperative

An independent person, officially authorised and trained for the task, must collect the samples.

An independent laboratory must carry out the analysis of the bathing water samples. The laboratory must be nationally or internationally accredited to carry out microbiological and physical-chemical analyses. The testing method and data resulting from it must also be accredited.

In the event that the sampler or the laboratory is not independent, at the time of application a dispensation must be requested and details provided as to why this is required, e.g. in some cases beaches are considerable distances away from the services necessary to meet this requirement.

Methods of analysis:

In the interest of increased quality and comparability of the bathing water quality data used for the evaluation of candidates for the Blue Flag, FEE finds that methods of analysis that ensure a certain trueness, reproducibility, repeatability and comparability between methods should be used. FEE follows European (CEN) or International (ISO) standards in its recommendations regarding parameters and acceptable methods of analysis.

Water quality results must be provided to the National Operator as soon as they are made available but not later than one month after the sample has been taken.

A sampling calendar must be established prior

to the start of the bathing season. Sampling must take place no later than four days after the date specified in the sampling calendar unless there are exceptional circumstances preventing this. In such a case, the National Jury must submit the beach as a dispensation case to the International Jury (*see Appendix A for more information on dispensation cases*).

Sampling history:

The water quality results for the previous four seasons must accompany all applications. In order to be eligible for the Blue Flag, the beach must show - through these reports - that the bathing water quality standards were met in the previous seasons.

For new countries or new beaches, results from a minimum of 20 samples taken within the proposed Blue Flag season must be

available for Blue Flag accreditation to be considered. The sampling history may be taken in one Blue Flag season in order to be able to apply the following year. The applicant beach may also choose to take fewer samples and wait to apply when 20 samples have been collected (for example taking 10 samples in year 1, 10 more in year 2 and applying in year 3). Remember that a minimum of 5 samples has to be taken per Blue Flag season, and that the sampling frequency detailed in criterion 7 must be respected.

The water quality information of the current season must be posted on the Blue Flag information board, in accordance with Criterion 3.

See Appendix D for a recommendation for presenting water quality information on Blue Flag beaches.

9 Industrial, waste-water or sewage-related discharges must not affect the beach area.

Imperative

A bathing water profile must be compiled for every Blue Flag beach. A bathing water profile includes identification of potential sources of pollution, a description of the physical, geographical and hydrological characteristics of the bathing water, as well as an assessment of the potential for cyanobacteria and algae formation.

It is recommended that there should not be any industrial, urban wastewater or sewage-related discharges into the Blue Flag area or immediate buffer zone/surrounding area. If there are discharge points in the area of the beach, these must be documented at the time of application.

A bathing water profile includes identification of potential sources of pollution, a description of the physical, geographical and hydrological characteristics of the bathing water, as well as an assessment of the potential for cyanobacteria and algae formation.

Where combined sewage overflow discharges or other urban/industrial waste water discharges are identified within, or immediately adjacent to, the proposed award area, information to warn the public that there is an intermittent discharge which could, in the short term, impact the bathing water quality must be provided.

The collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater in the community must meet national/ international standards and comply with national/international legislation. Regardless of national/ international standards and legislation, this waste water or any other discharges must not negatively affect the environment or compromise the water quality standards of a Blue Flag beach.

Regarding industrial pollution, notification must be given about industrial facilities and plants in the vicinity of the beaches stating their likely influence on the environment. Moreover, the appropriate authorities must confirm in writing that the area is being monitored to ascertain the environmental impacts of nearby industrial facilities and confirm that the facilities do not pose a public health risk or environmental hazard.

10 The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for the microbiological parameter *Escherichia coli* (faecal coli bacteria) and intestinal enterococci (streptococci).

Imperative

The microbiological parameters to be monitored are given below:

Parameter	Coastal and transitional waters Limit values	Inland waters Limit values
<i>Escherichia coli</i> (Faecal Colibacteria)	250 cfu/100 ml	500 cfu/100 ml
Intestinal Enterococci (streptococci)	100 cfu/100 ml	200 cfu/100 ml

- cfu = colony forming units (of bacteria)

Accepted percentile:

For the evaluation of an applicant beach the Blue Flag Programme requires 95th percentile compliance with the above limit values. This is in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Directive (2006) as well as the recommendation of the World Health Organisation. The percentile has to be calculated for each parameter and also met for each parameter. For example, if the 95th percentile is below the limit values for *Escherichia coli* but not for Intestinal Enterococci then the

beach cannot be awarded with the Blue Flag.

Details on how to calculate the 95th percentile can be found in Appendix F.

As stated previously, discounting of a sample may be considered in case of extreme (weather) conditions. Should this be necessary, applicant beaches must be sent in as dispensation cases.

See Appendix A for further details on dispensation cases.

11 The beach must comply with the Blue Flag requirements for physical parameters.

Imperative



Water quality can also be affected by physical and chemical parameters such as oil and floatables:

- There must be no oil film visible on the surface of the water and no odour detected. Ashore and on land the beach must be monitored for oil and emergency plans should include the required action to take in case of such pollution.
- No floatables may be present such as tarry residues, wood, plastic articles, bottles, containers, glass or any other substances.

Immediate action should be taken if abnormal changes are detected. This includes abnormal changes in the colour, transparency and turbidity of the water. Should physical and chemical pollution be detected repeatedly, the Blue Flag must be taken down for the remainder of the season and the beach will not be eligible for the Blue Flag the following year, unless the applicant fulfils the conditions for applying as a dispensation case.

Other tests can be conducted, such as the pH value of the water (its value ranges from 6 to 9 in most bathing waters).



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

12 The local authority/beach operator should establish a beach management committee.

Guideline

The beach management committee should be charged with ensuring compliance with all environmental management criteria, including Coastal and Marine Protected Area requirements if appropriate. The committee should consist of all relevant stakeholders at the local level. Relevant stakeholders could be a local authority representative, hotel manager, beach manager, lifeguard, educational representative, local NGO, or other stakeholders such as community representatives, special user groups, Coastal and Marine Protected Area representatives, etc.

The beach management committee should co-operate with and support the local authority/beach operator and could institute environmental management systems and conduct environmental audits of the beach and its facilities.

Where appropriate, a beach management committee may operate over a number of Blue Flag beaches within a local authority or an area/region, i.e. there is no need for a separate beach management committee for each individual Blue Flag beach.

13 The local authority/beach operator must comply with all laws and/or regulations affecting the location and operation of the beach.

Imperative

The beach must comply with laws and/or regulations pertaining to issues related to coastal zone planning, environmental management, waste water management, environmental conservation, and others in order to receive and maintain Blue Flag status.

The applicant must ensure that the facilities and activities under its responsibility comply with these laws and/or regulations. The management of the beach location, facilities, beach operation and immediate surrounding area must comply with official development

plans and planning regulations. The legislation may include regulations for land-use zoning and planning, sewage/industrial waste effluent discharge, environmental health, conservation plans, operations licenses and permits, etc.

The location of facilities and use of the beach area and its vicinity must be subject to planning guidelines.

This includes environmental impact assessments. At the time of application for Blue Flag status, the applicant authority must provide written

evidence from the planning department that all buildings on the beach meet local building regulations.

Existing beach facilities, construction and other use of the beach and its vicinity must be in compliance with laws regulating the use of the coastal zone or freshwater areas, including environmental conservation regulations. The inland beach area including dunes, paths, and parking areas must be properly maintained according to coastal zone management principles.

14 Sensitive areas must be managed accordingly.

Imperative

Some sites at or near a Blue Flag beach may be very sensitive and require special management. In these cases, the beach operator must consult with an appropriate conservation organisation or expert for advice on how to manage these sites. Where areas require special management, at the time of application, the applicant must provide confirmation that this consultation has taken place and that a management plan will be implemented.

However, the sensitivity of certain areas may prevent them from being part of a Blue Flag beach or from having information posted at the beach directing people to the area. An increased

number of visitors could endanger wildlife and/or habitats, e.g. using land space for the construction of facilities, parking, paths, etc. As a general rule, Blue Flag accreditation is only given to sites that can demonstrate management of visitors and recreational use that prevents long-term irreversible damage to the local natural environment.

If a Blue Flag beach is in or near a Coastal and/or Marine Protected Area, it is necessary to consult with the Coastal and/or Marine Protected Area management in order to ensure compatible ecosystem conservation and biodiversity goals.

15 The beach must be clean.

Imperative

The beach and surrounding areas including paths, parking areas and access paths to the beach must be clean and maintained at all times. Litter should not be allowed to accumulate causing these areas to become unsightly or hazardous.

The beach must comply with national guidelines or legislation concerning litter and waste management. Beach cleaning may be mechanical or manual, depending on the size, appearance, and sensitivity of the beach and its surroundings. In high use areas, where possible, mechanical sieving and deep cleaning of the sand should be carried out to remove small size waste such as cigarette butts, etc.

During storm water flows, the outlets and surrounding areas must be kept clean.

Cleaning of the beach must be carried out with consideration for local flora and fauna, e.g. where turtles may have buried eggs in the sand. The use of insecticides or chemicals for cleaning the sand or surrounding environment is not allowed. Cleaning in Protected Areas as well as sensitive areas (sand dunes, etc.), must be done in accordance with the existing laws, regulations and advice from the relevant authority.

For information about the management of algal waste and seaweed, refer to criterion 16.

To determine the cleanliness level of the beach, it is recommended that a Beach Litter Measuring system, or similar system, be used. (See Appendix G for further details).

16 Algal vegetation or natural debris must be left on the beach.

Imperative

Algal vegetation is generally accepted as referring to seaweed. Seaweed and other vegetation/natural debris are natural components of both freshwater and marine ecosystems. These ecosystems must be considered as living and natural environments and not only as a recreational asset to be kept tidy. Thus, the management of seaweed or other vegetation/natural detritus on the shore should be sensitive to both visitor needs and biodiversity. Natural disposal by tides and waves at the beach is accepted, as long as it does not create a nuisance.

If the issue is recurrent on the beach, it is recommended that a seaweed management strategy is developed, as a part of the beach management plan.

Vegetation should not be allowed to accumulate to the point where it becomes a hazard. Only if it is absolutely necessary should vegetation be removed. This could include accumulation of seaweed in warm weather causing decay, in turn

producing odours which attracts flies and their larvae. Rotting seaweed could also be slippery and become a hazard for people walking on the shoreline. It could also reduce the beach access for recreational activities or accessibility for the disabled.

If vegetation is removed, then consideration must be given to disposing of it in an environmentally-friendly way, e.g. through composting or for fertilizer use. It is recommended that not 100% of the seaweed is removed, but that removal focuses on the areas where the accumulation creates problems.

Wherever possible, environmental specialists should be consulted regarding the management of algal vegetation on the beach.

In some areas seaweed is dried on the beach for later use as fertilizer or dune stabiliser. While this good practice should not be discouraged it is also necessary to ensure that it does not create a nuisance for beach users.

If vegetation accumulation is persistent on the beach, it is recommended that a seaweed management strategy is developed, as a part of the beach management plan.

17 Rubbish bins must be available at the beach in adequate numbers and they must be regularly maintained.

Imperative

Rubbish bins should be of a suitable design and appearance as well as being functional. If possible, bins should be made of environmentally friendly products like recycled plastics or wood. It is best to use bins with covers, otherwise they can attract wildlife and birds.

There must be enough bins to service the whole beach and they should all be regularly maintained, well secured, and spaced appropriately. During the peak tourist season, the spacing between bins and the frequency of emptying should be adjusted as necessary.

The collected waste should only be disposed of in licensed facilities that are approved by authorities

on the basis of environmental requirements. The duty of the community receiving the Blue Flag is to make sure that the waste is properly disposed.

In summary, when choosing and locating bins, the following factors should be considered:

- Bin capacity
- Environmentally friendly products
- Type and source of litter
- Volume of pedestrian traffic
- Frequency of service
- Local environment, e.g. winds, high tides
- Scavenging by wildlife and birds
- Accessibility, e.g. height, surface

18 Facilities for the separation of recyclable waste materials must be available at the beach.

Imperative

Should the community have a local recycling facility, containers must be made available at the beach for these materials, e.g. glass, cans, plastic, paper, etc. The receptacles should be properly designed and managed for the type of waste received, should be emptied regularly, and be well placed for accessibility.

The recycling facilities should accommodate the collection and separation of as many different types of materials as possible, three being the minimum.

On application, the local authority/beach operator must indicate whether the local authority has facilities for the recycling of waste. If no such facilities exist, the applicant must apply for a dispensation from this criterion.

Blue Flag encourages all local authorities/beach operators to promote recycling and waste separation at the beach, even if the community does not have a local recycling facility.



19 An adequate number of toilet or restroom facilities must be provided.

Imperative

The number of toilets/restrooms available at the beach must reflect the average number of beach visitors during the peak season, the length of the beach and the number and location of major access points.

The toilet or restroom facilities must be easy to locate through signage and through information on the map on the Blue Flag information board.

The presence of showers (on the beach or in the buildings), changing rooms and nappy changing facilities are furthermore encouraged. Restrooms/toilets may also be located in nearby shops, restaurants, cafeterias or other establishments open to the general public.

Facilities for disabled visitors should also be provided (see criterion 32).

Toilet or restrooms facilities must be equipped with washbasins, soap and clean towels (paper or cloth) or a hand-dryer.

Access to the toilet/restroom facilities must be safe.

Consideration should also be given to the design and maintenance of these facilities. They should be well integrated within the built and natural environment and they must be regularly maintained so as to present a well-maintained appearance and to prevent vandalism of buildings.

20 The toilet or restroom facilities must be kept clean.

Imperative

The toilet/restroom facilities must be kept clean at all times. The frequency of checking and cleaning the facilities must reflect the intensity of use. Beaches with a high number of daily visitors

must have their facilities checked and cleaned every day or several times a day.

The use of environmentally friendly cleaning materials, soap and towels is recommended.

21 The toilet or restroom facilities must have controlled sewage disposal.

Imperative

Sewage or effluent from the toilets must not enter the ground or the water untreated. In villages, communities, or in a municipality with sewage treatment facilities, the toilet facilities must be connected to the municipal sewer.

For facilities located outside areas serviced by

the municipal sewage system and/or at remotely located beaches, individual treatment and regularly emptied holding tanks that prevent untreated sewage, effluent or seepage from entering the ground or the water and which do not adversely affect the environment are acceptable.

22 There must be no unauthorised camping or driving and no dumping on the beach.

Imperative

Unauthorised camping, driving and dumping must be prohibited on the beach. Information about these restrictions must be displayed at the beach (as part of the code of conduct, Criterion 6).

Vehicles (except for those used for the purpose of cleaning and safety, e.g. for moving lifeguard equipment, or emergency vehicles) must not be allowed on Blue Flag beaches. For cases, however, where vehicles cannot be entirely prohibited, this must be adequately justified and they must be properly managed. Areas for driving and parking as well as car-free zones must be designated and whenever the situation requires it, police or traffic guards must control the beach. If vehicles are allowed they must be prohibited from entering the high water zone at any time. The major part of the beach must be designated entirely vehicle-free. These sites must

submit their application with a dispensation case for this criterion.

Where there are no physical barriers preventing access to the beach by vehicles and where there are problems with unauthorised vehicles, camping or dumping, bylaws must be put in place to prohibit these activities. Information about these by-laws must be displayed. The use of the beach or its nearby areas as dumps for litter and other waste is not accepted.

In the case of special planned events that involve the use of vehicles on the beach a special management plan must be drawn up and applied to prevent damage to the ecosystem, as well as risks to beach users. *See Appendix H for guidelines on events on Blue Flag beaches.*

Parking for emergency vehicles must be provided in close proximity to the beach.

23 Access to the beach by dogs and other domestic animals must be strictly controlled.

Imperative

Dogs or pets, other than assistance dogs are not allowed on a Blue Flag beach or in the Blue Flag area if it is part of a larger beach. If presence of pets is permitted by the local and national legislation, animals are only allowed in the parking areas, walkways and promenades in the inland beach area and must be under control.

If the beach is patrolled by mounted police, measures must be taken to ensure that no faecal matter contaminates the beach.

Wherever possible stray animals must be managed and systems should be in place to remove stray animals from the beach. Measures must also be put in place to prevent access to the beach by stray animals. If stray animals are able to access the beach and cannot be controlled, it is recommended that the beach operator/ local authority erect signs informing the public about this fact. It is also recommended that information be displayed about what the public should do should stray animals be seen on the beach.

24 All buildings and beach equipment must be properly maintained.

Imperative

Consideration must be given to the appearance of buildings and structures at the beach. They should be well integrated within the natural and built environment, should adhere to construction standards and meet environmental and aesthetic requirements.

Equipment on the beach includes facilities or services not discussed in any other criteria, e.g. playgrounds and piers. Equipment must be regularly maintained and checked in order to ensure that it is safe to use. Consideration must be given to: the cleanliness of equipment, its condition, the environmental

effects of paint and other materials used for maintaining the equipment/buildings and any potential risk associated with its deterioration and malfunction. Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products should be used.

All construction work or hazardous structures must be fenced off to prevent access by the public. In the event that construction takes place during the Blue Flag season, all Blue Flag criteria must be met during the period of the construction. Also, the construction activities must not affect beach users.

25 Marine and freshwater sensitive habitats in the vicinity of the beach must be monitored.

Imperative

If there is a sensitive habitat (such as coral reef or sea grass beds) located within 500 metres from any part of a Blue Flag beach, a monitoring programme must be established to monitor the health of the habitat at least once a season.

An expert organisation or relevant authority

must be consulted regarding the monitoring and management of this sensitive area.

The “Reef Check” Coral Reef Monitoring Programme could be used. *See Appendix H for further details of the Reef Check monitoring system.*

26 A sustainable means of transportation should be promoted in the beach area.

Guideline

This criterion refers to all actions that:

- encourage public and collective transport.
- encourage bicycling, bike renting and facilities for bike parking.
- support plans to organise traffic and reduce the peak traffic periods.
- develop pedestrian access.

The Blue Flag Programme encourages the promotion of alternative means of transportation, e.g. beach shuttles, bicycle rental or free bicycles. Such initiatives should be given particular

attention in communities with high traffic densities in the beach area or where the beach is located in a sensitive area.

It is recommended that the local authority/beach operator implements a traffic management plan to reduce traffic volumes and the impact of traffic on land use and air pollution in the Blue Flag and surrounding areas.

It is also recommended that information about the availability of sustainable transportation be made available on the Blue Flag information board.



SAFETY AND SERVICES

27 **Appropriate public safety control measures must be implemented.**

Imperative

The beach operator must ensure that safety measures comply with the national legislation regarding beach safety.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that the beach operator undertakes a safety risk assessment for each designated bathing area. This safety risk assessment is to be carried out by the appropriate national authorities or where applicable by a Full Member organisation of the International Life Saving Federation (ILS), see Appendix I.

The public safety control measures recommended by the safety risk assessment should be implemented as a priority based on available resources.

Irrespective of the above, a Blue Flag beach with a high number of visitors must be guarded/patrolled by an adequate number of lifeguards placed at appropriate intervals as recommended in the risk assessment and according to the beach characteristics and use. The number of lifeguards must increase according to peak usage, and a minimum of two every 200m is

recommended for those beaches which have not undertaken a risk assessment.

Lifeguards must have appropriate national or international qualifications. Certificates must be checked prior to employment and must be made available to the National Operator upon request. Lifeguards must only be employed for life-guarding and not in combination with other duties such as water sports, rentals and services, cleaning etc.

Lifeguards must be easily recognisable. It is therefore recommended that lifeguards wear the internationally recognised red/yellow uniform. Lifeguards must be provided with appropriate lifesaving equipment.

Bathing areas patrolled by lifeguards must be clearly marked out. The area must be defined on the map, on the information board and/or physically on the beach with markers or flags. The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) recommends that flags and signs should be in accordance with ISO 20712. Additionally, Blue Flag international pictogrammes should be used.

On beaches, with low hazard risks and with few¹ users public rescue equipment can replace lifeguards, unless the national legislation or the safety risk assessment states otherwise.

Public rescue equipment could include: life buoys, hooks, lifejackets, life rafts, etc. The equipment must be regularly inspected and must fulfil national/international guidelines.

Where public rescue equipment is provided, it must be clearly positioned, visible and located at regular intervals allowing it to be reached quickly from any point on the beach. On beaches without lifeguards, maximum intervals of 100 metres between the equipment are recommended for those beaches which have not undertaken a risk assessment. Public rescue equipment must be accompanied by instructions for use and what to do in the event of a rescue. It is recommended that the location of equipment is identified by an emergency marker. The location of the lifesaving equipment/

lifeguard tower must be indicated on the beach map on the Blue Flag information boards.

The period when the public rescue equipment and/or lifeguards, and first aid are available must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards and at the lifeguard station. An explanation of the beach safety flag system in use must be provided.

The lifesaving equipment must include access to an emergency phone, unless the risk assessment states otherwise. The equipment must be regularly inspected and must fulfil national/international guidelines.

The beach operator must provide safety instructions which must be posted on the information board and other appropriate place(s) on the beach.

1. Few = Over a period of 4 weeks in the high season there are on average less than 50 beach users per day.

28 First aid equipment must be available on the beach.

Imperative

The first aid may be available by means of a) a lifeguard on site, and/or b) an attended first aid station with trained personnel, and/or c) equipment located in a shop or other beach facility at the beach, and/or d) directly available to the public on the beach. It is strongly recommended that busy beaches and family beaches have first-aid stations with staff in attendance. First-aid personnel must have appropriate qualifications.

First aid stations should have the following equipment a) adequate first aid stock (basic first aid supplies such as bandages, gloves,

disinfectant, plasters, etc.). b) cold water and preferably hot water. c) first aid bed. d) oxygen cylinder and mask e) immobilizing trauma board (e.g. immobilizing blocks or spider harness). f) other equipment (shark attack pack), etc.

First-aid stations or the location of first-aid equipment must be clearly sign-posted so that beach visitors may easily locate them (including on the map of the Blue Flag information board). See Criterion 5. In addition, the period during which first aid is available must be clearly informed.

29 Emergency plans to cope with pollution risks must be in place.

Imperative

The emergency plan must provide a clearly identified procedure, facilitating efficiency in the case of an emergency. An emergency could result from oil spills, hazardous/toxic waste spills entering the beach from the sea, discharge of storm water, hurricanes, algal blooms that could be dangerous, etc. An emergency in this context would be defined as an event which

leads to a large scale impact on the beach or bathing water.

In order to quickly address pollution at the local level in co-ordination with local authorities, the following should be included:

- identification of individuals to contact in case of pollution.

- involvement of all administration services and individuals necessary to intervene.
- procedure for the protection or evacuation of people if necessary.
- procedure of public warning and information.
- withdrawal of the Blue Flag.

The emergency plan must specify who should be contacted in the case of a pollution incident. A responsible local person must be designated for this position. It must also specify who does what in the case of an emergency, including pollution incidents.

The emergency plan must furthermore prove compliance with other national legislation in the area, e.g. a national oil spill contingency plan.

As long as the hazard persists, the public should be informed of the pollution or potential

danger by posting information at the beach, at all access points, in the media, tourist offices and through any other relevant means of communication. If the hazard is in the form of large scale polluted water then the public must be informed that bathing is not safe and the beach should be closed to swimming. A case of pollution constitutes an infringement of Blue Flag criteria. To ensure the integrity of the Blue Flag, the flag must be temporarily withdrawn and information posted on the Blue Flag information board at the beach.

Emergency phone numbers for the police, first aid, and other relevant emergency numbers along with the contact details for emergency services, in the event of an oil or toxic chemical spill must be posted at the beach preferably on the Blue Flag information board.

30 There must be management of different users and uses of the beach so as to prevent conflicts and accidents.

Imperative

Beaches that support multiple activities must have management plans to prevent accidents and conflicts. This must include zoning for swimmers, surfers, wind surfers and motor craft. At the same time, recreational use of the beach must be managed without negative impact on the natural environment, or the biodiversity of the beach and with consideration for aesthetic issues.

Swimmers should be protected from all sea craft (motor, sail or pedal). Where necessary, zoning through the use of buoys, beacons or signs must be in place. The same must be done for surfing areas. Distinctions should be made between motor, paddle or sail craft. The use of these various activities must be separated.

Powerboats and powered craft should operate at least 100-200 metres away from the swimming area. The exact distance is to be determined by the local regulatory authority. Furthermore, patrons who operate powered craft must be provided with guidelines regarding the use of their craft and the location of different zones.

The relevant authority or designated persons, for example lifeguards, must enforce the zoning

Consideration must also be given to potential noise impacts from some activities (motorised activities, stereos and kites).

of the different recreational areas in the water. Different activities on the beach must also be clearly marked and zoned.

Consideration must also be given to potential noise impact from various activities (motorised activities, stereos and kites) etc.

If special temporary events are to be held on the beach then these should take place outside of the main swimming areas. If special activity events prevent the beach from complying with any of the Blue Flag criteria, then the flag must be withdrawn for the duration of the event. When such an event takes place, users of the beach must be notified through public warnings at the beach and preferably in the local media prior to the event. *See Appendix I for guidelines for events on Blue Flag beaches.*

The beach itself must be managed in accordance

with an environmental plan that protects sensitive species and habitats at the beach. This can be achieved through zoning or other preventative actions. In some cases, it may be necessary to restrict, disperse or otherwise manage certain activities. Beaches with sensitive dune or other habitats must be managed in such a way as to protect these sensitive habitats, e.g. protective fences. Recreational activities must be managed to prevent environmental degradation, e.g. coastal erosion or damage to vegetation as well as to prevent birds and other wildlife, e.g. breeding seals, from being disturbed.

Some particularly sensitive sites may require careful planning and management. In such cases, evidence must be provided to show that recognised local conservation organisations or groups have been approached and that a management plan has been drawn up.

Besides the use of physical separation of the different users, zoning must be clearly indicated on the map on the Blue Flag information board and information could also be given at access and entry points (see Criterion 5).

31 There must be safety measures in place to protect users of the beach and free access must be granted to the public.

Imperative

The public must have access to Blue Flag beaches without being a client of a certain hotel or beach club. Access to the beach should be free.

Access to the beach must be safe. Beaches that are physically challenging must have facilities for safe access, e.g. secured steps with handrails. Similarly, there must be designated pedestrian crossings on busy roads in the vicinity of the beach.

Beach promenades and steps onto the beach must be complete and in good condition. The car park surface must be in good order. Parking places reserved for the use of disabled persons must be available and must be clearly marked. See Criterion 21 for information related to parking on the beach. Other access paths must also be safe, with regulations for cars and bicycles. Bicycle paths should be encouraged whenever relevant.

Where promenade edges are higher than 2 metres above the beach, warning signs and/or a barrier must be in place to prevent accidents. This is especially important where the beach surface is rocky. Consult criteria 33 regarding access for people with physical disabilities.

Beach promenades and steps onto the beach must be complete and in good condition.



Visitors to the beach should be safe while on the beach. Information about safety must be readily available. The times of availability of lifesaving services and first aid must be clearly marked on the Blue Flag information boards or at the lifeguard station. In addition, an explanation of the emergency flag system, if in use, must be provided.

32 A supply of drinking water should be available at the beach.

Guideline

There should be a potable water source at the beach, e.g. from a fountain, pipe, tap, etc. This source can be in the restroom/toilet block or on the beachfront, and it must be protected from contamination by animals.



33 At least one Blue Flag beach in each district must have access and facilities provided for the physically disabled.

Imperative



It is strongly recommended that all Blue Flag beaches have facilities that allow access by the physically disabled granting them access to the beach, surrounding buildings, and the restroom facilities. It is a

Blue Flag requirement that at least one beach in every municipality must provide these facilities. It is a Blue Flag recommendation that at this beach, if possible, there is access to the water for the physically disabled.

Access to the beach must be facilitated by access ramps designed for users with various disabilities. It is recommended that the ramp design and material fit the natural environment and wherever possible, environmentally friendly

materials are used, i.e. recycled composite plastics.

Facilities must be designed for wheelchair and other disabled users and should comply with the ISO Standard Code for Access. The beach must comply with national regulations regarding access and facilities for people with disabilities. In addition, parking areas must have reserved spaces for disabled parking. If access ramps cannot be provided due to the topography, e.g. at steep cliffs, the local authority must apply for a dispensation for this criterion.

If none of the Blue Flag beaches in a local authority can provide access and facilities for the disabled, a request for a dispensation for this criterion must be documented in the application.

When the Blue Flag is raised at a beach or marina, it is a celebration of a community's commitment to meet the strict Blue Flag standards, protecting our coastal ecosystems and helping foster a culture of environmental stewardship. For beachgoers, the Blue Flag is a symbol of excellence. When tourists and residents see a Blue Flag, they know a beach or marina is meeting the same high standards as any other Blue Flag beach or marina around the world.



For more information about the Blue Flag program and how to apply for the award:

Website: BlueFlag.org.nz
Email: education@knzb.org.nz
Phone: 09.264.1434

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Dispensation cases

All imperative criteria have to be complied with in order to obtain the Blue Flag. In the event of discussions arising out of the National Jury processes and if an applicant has failed to fulfil some of the imperative criteria, the National Jury could forward a beach to the International Jury as a dispensation case. In the case of an application requiring a dispensation, the National Jury must forward the case to the International Jury with the necessary background documentation and an explanation as to what imperative criteria have not been fulfilled and giving reasons as to why a dispensation is requested.

Dispensation cases may arise when a beach has exceeded the required limit values of bathing water quality criteria because of a known, documented incident during the bathing season. Dispensation cases argued on the basis of incidents considered unusual but not atypical of the site are not considered.

Most frequently request for dispensation is caused by exceptional/extreme weather conditions impacting on compliance with the water quality criteria. A National Jury can in such cases give a dispensation to omit a sample if the national authority's controlling bathing water quality regulations officially approve such a dispensation. Furthermore, an official statement from national weather authorities stating that the weather was exceptional must accompany the request for dispensation.

For EU-member countries: if the request for dispensation of omission of a sample has been approved by the European Commission, and written proof of the European Commissions' approval is provided to the International Coordination, then the case is not considered as a dispensation case.

If a case of high pollution levels can be attributed by way of documentary evidence to other issues, such as an accident or another unavoidable incident, it is also possible to forward to the National Jury such a candidate as a dispensation case. The documentation must show that the problem has been rectified and that the pollution was undoubtedly linked to the incident in question.

A beach can apply for dispensation when:

- facilities are under construction at the time of the application but will be finished by the start of the season.
- owing to extreme weather conditions, the imperative criteria on the beach are not met, e.g. signage or walkways, access to the beach has been damaged, etc. However, these must be rectified by the start of the season.
- a beach is not accessible to the physically disabled yet it is the only beach in a local authority to run the Blue Flag Programme. The beach must present a plan on how and when the beach can fulfil the criterion as a central part of the dispensation application.
- the location of the beach is such that the distance from services renders it unable to meet an imperative criterion, e.g. an accredited laboratory.

Appendix B

Information about the Blue Flag Programme must be displayed. [Criterion 1]

THE BLUE FLAG PROGRAMME

This beach has been given Blue Flag accreditation. The Blue Flag is an environmental award, given to communities that make a special effort to manage their coastal/inland water environment and beaches with respect for the local environment and nature. To attain the Blue Flag, the community and its beach operators have to fulfil a number of criteria covering water quality, environmental information and education, safety, service and facilities.

This effort by the local community and its beach operators ensures that you and your family can expect to visit clean and safe environments at selected bathing sites. And it makes sure that the local community maintains a basis for sound development.

Facts about the Blue Flag:

The Blue Flag is awarded by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non-governmental environmental organisation which is represented by national organisations in each of the participating countries.

The Blue Flag is an environmental award for beaches, sustainable boating tourism operators and marinas. Only local authorities or private beach operators can apply for a Blue Flag for beaches. The criteria for Blue Flag beaches cover four main areas: a) Water quality, b) Environmental information and education, c) Environmental management, and d) Safety and services.

The criteria of the Programme are developed over time, so that participating beach operators have to keep working on solving relevant environmental problems to get the Blue Flag. Blue Flag accreditation is only given for one season at a time and the award is only valid as long as the criteria are fulfilled. When this is not the case, the responsible persons at the local level are obligated to take the Blue Flag down.

The national FEE member organisation monitors the Blue Flag sites during the season.

You can help the Programme by also taking actions to protect the environment:

- Use the litter-bins on the beach - and recycle waste if possible
- Use public transport, walk or rent a bike to get to the beach
- Obey the beach code of conduct
- Enjoy the nature of the beach and its surroundings, and treat it with respect

Choose a holiday destination that cares for its environment - and an environmentally friendly hotel too, if possible. Along with the Blue Flag, the Foundation for Environmental Education also develops another eco-label for touristic enterprises: Green Key. Find more information at: www.green-key.org

Local, National and International Blue Flag responsible parties:

Name and address of the local responsible person, national Blue Flag operator and the International Co-ordination must be posted.

Text to accompany the names and addresses could be the following: "These are the names and addresses of the local, national and international Blue Flag contacts. It will assist the Programme, if you could report on how these beaches comply with the Blue Flag standards. In this way you can help ensure that the Blue Flag standard continues to be met."

Appendix C

Guidelines for Environmental Education Activities. [Criterion 2]

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

There must be a mixture of different types of environmental educational activities for different user groups, Some activities must be carried out at the beach and have a direct focus on the beach or coastal environment. The different types of activities can be divided into five categories:

Activities for Passive Participation: This could include exhibitions, films, presentations, slide shows, conferences, debates, presentations by international experts, etc.

Activities for Active Participation: This includes guided tours, educational games, theatre/plays, cleaning days, coast observation days, diving/snorkeling orientation sessions, beach inspections, photography or drawing contests, nature conservation projects, green technology projects, “Adopt a Beach” programmes, community coastal monitoring programmes, etc.

Training Activities: This could be training for teachers, beach or marina staff, persons in charge of children groups, lifeguards, cleaners, law enforcement officers, specific national training programmes, etc.

Publishing and Media: The production of leaflets, stickers, interpretive signs, postcards, school and municipal newsletters, books, T-shirts, bags, posters, radio broadcasts, etc.

Blue Flag Environmental Information Centre: It is strongly recommended that Blue Flag beaches provide an Environmental Information Centre (station, kiosk), where specific information about Blue Flag and environmental education issues can be provided. Such a centre must offer both activities and exhibitions and provide environmental and nature information in order to qualify as an environmental interpretation or education centre. Information about its location and activities must be provided at the beach or in nearby tourist information offices. The centre should be open to and have activities and information for the general public, not only local school children.

TARGET GROUPS

The activities should target a wide range of different groups. It is important that the beach operator, together with other operators in the area, organise a programme to educate and raise awareness within the many different interest groups that influence the use of the local environment. These interest groups could be visitors, locals, tourism employees, fishermen, local industries, etc.

The types, number and target groups of activities should match the situation. For example, in a major tourist destination, more than one activity per season should be available to the general public.

CONNECTION WITH EXISTING PROGRAMMES

The activities can be part of already existing environmental education programmes, implemented either on-site or in the local community (Local Agenda 21 activities, Eco-Schools activities, etc). It is also recommended that the beach operator work together with local NGOs in setting up educational activities.

INFORMATION ABOUT ACTIVITIES

Information about the publicly accessible activities must be made available at the beach and preferably also in local tourism newspapers or magazines or posted in local tourism offices. The published information should include: the kind of activities, when and where are they going to take place, who they are for, etc.

NOT ACCEPTABLE

Activities that are not acceptable for meeting this criterion are:

- Activities held to meet other Blue Flag criteria such as the general cleaning of the beach, waste management, recycling, and posted environmental information otherwise required on the information board (i.e. information on surrounding sensitive environments), etc.
- Activities focusing only on tourism without a specific focus on sustainable tourism
- Activities otherwise implemented by the local authority or beach operator as part of the standard management of health, safety, transportation or tourism

Appendix D

Recommendations for presenting water quality information on Blue Flag beaches. Example of a coastal water beach: [Criterion 3]

Beach: _____

Local authority: _____

Contact person: _____

Telephone no: _____

Date											
Escherichiacoli / Faecal coliform											
☺ < 250cfu/100ml											
☹ >250cfu/100 ml											
Intestinal Enterococci / Faecal streptococci											
☺ <100/100 ml											
☹ >100/100 ml											

BLUE FLAG AND BATHING WATER QUALITY

This beach has met the Blue Flag water quality standards. The bathing water is continuously monitored for the different types of bacteria shown in the tables. The bathing water is tested at least every 31 days. In the table you can see when the water has been analysed and how many bacteria were found.

A small number of bacteria tells you that the water is very clean - a high number of bacteria tells you that the water may be polluted and could contain bacteria from sewage.

WHAT DO THE RESULTS MEAN?

Faecal coliform /E.coli	Faecal streptococci / Intestinal enterococci
☺ Below 250 <i>Excellent bathing water</i>	☺ Below 100
☹ Above 250	☹ Above 100 <i>Is allowed a few times during the season</i>

Appendix E

The 95th percentile

The 95th percentile is a calculation method used to obtain the average amount of pollution. In terms of Bathing Water sampling results, the value shows the results that are less than or equal to the limit values 95% of the time. The standards refer to values that would be exceeded less than 5% of the time.

The 95th percentile is derived through the following calculation (based on the explanation in the EU Bathing Water Directive 2006):

1. Take the log₁₀ value of all bacterial enumerations in the data sequence to be evaluated. Zero values cannot be used and should be replaced by a value of 1 (or the minimum value allowed)
2. Calculate the mean of the log₁₀ values (μ)
3. Calculate the standard deviation of the log₁₀ values (σ)
4. The upper 95 percentile is derived from the following equation: $\text{antilog}(\mu + 1,65 \sigma)$
5. The resulting value must be within the limit values as stated above

A calculating spreadsheet is available on the Blue Flag Podio Library.

Appendix F

Beach Litter Measuring System – a method of mapping the status of litter on a beach [Criterion 15]

In order to determine the cleanliness on the beach, the Beach Litter Measuring System could be used by the beach manager or the National Coordinator when conducting beach monitoring visits.

The system differentiates between bulky litter (>10cm) and fine litter (<10 cm). It takes a closer look at the amount of litter in defined representative areas on the beach. According to the amount of litter, beaches are classified into different cleanliness levels (A+ to D). The method combines taking pictures and making counts.

At a Blue Flag Beach, the cleanliness level should be A+ or A.

Step by step guidance how to define your beach's cleanliness level:

Bulky Litter

1. Define an area of 100m² (10m x 10m) for your bulky litter count and photo (Choose the dirtiest 100m² that you can find on the beach)
2. Count the units of bulky litter (>10cm) within the area
3. Take a picture of the area (to keep as proof)
4. Determine the cleanliness level with help of the beach litter indicator (see below)

Fine Litter

1. Define an area of 1m² for your fine litter count and photo (choose the dirtiest area within the 100m²)
2. Count units of fine litter (<10cm) within the area
3. Take a picture of the area (to keep as proof)
4. Determine the cleanliness level with help of the beach litter indicator (see below)

Beach Litter Indicator

Number of litter units per area	Cleanliness level
0	A+ Very Clean
1-3	A Clean
4-10	B Moderately Clean
11-25	C Dirty
> 25	D Very Dirty

General

1. Keep a record of your measurements (date, time, location, circumstances, weather conditions, cleanliness level(s) for bulky litter, cleanliness level(s) for fine litter, other comments)
2. Repeat these steps at different locations along the beach if possible
3. Repeat the measurement at different times during a season and different times of the day if possible

It is important to keep in mind that starting to use this system might require a bit of time in the beginning.

Once you get some exercise or training, it will be a quick, easy and helpful tool.

For a more detailed version of the beach litter indicator or a description of the system, please visit the Blue Flag website or contact the Blue Flag International Head Office.

1 The Beach Litter Measuring System was developed by the Keep Holland Tidy Foundation and the Royal Dutch Touring Club.

Appendix G

“Reef Check” system for coral reef monitoring [Criterion 25]

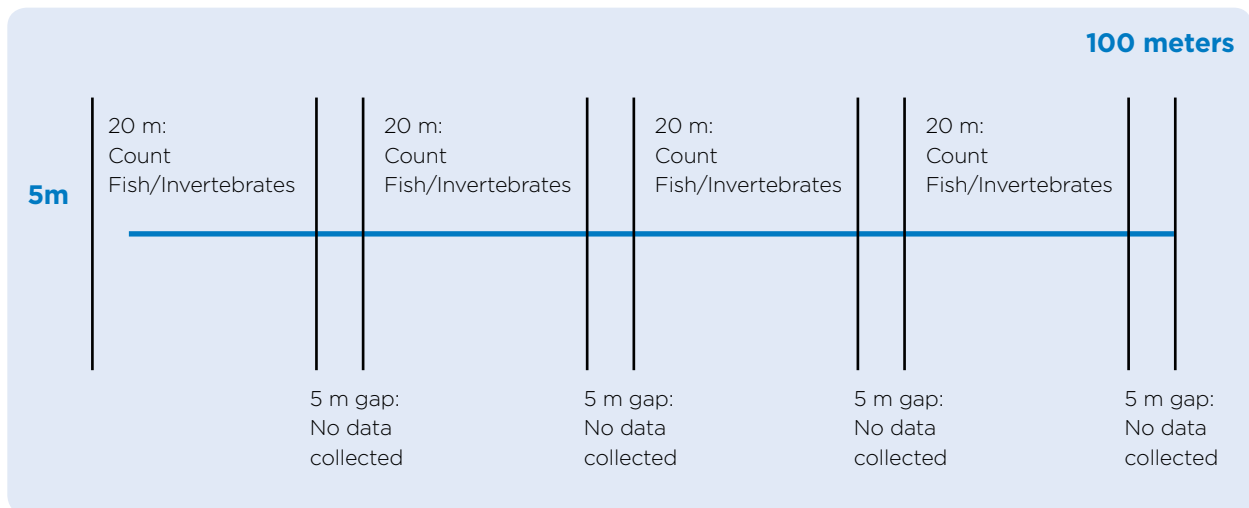
Below is a very brief description of the content of the “Reef Check” monitoring programme. For full information about the “Reef Check” system and information about national/international support, please consult <http://www.reefcheck.org>.

“Reef Check” is designed for use by volunteer non-scientist snorkelers or scuba divers. A local “Reef Check” team should be established with a scientist and a group of snorkelers and divers trained to carry out the analyses. The team members must be skilled at identifying the indicator organisms and substrate categories. It is strongly recommended that the team attend a “Reef Check” training session. If there are already “Reef Check” teams established at the national or local level, these teams can be approached for support.

In order to carry out the monitoring, the following equipment is necessary: a copy of the instruction manual, indicator organism ID cards/books, GPS, transect lines, underwater paper and water proof pencils/markers, buoys, plumb line and safety gear.

If possible, the monitoring should take place at two depths: shallow water (2-6 metre depth) and mid-reef (6 - 12 metre depth). Reefs in many areas are however not suitable for monitoring at more than one depth.

A 100 metre transect should be established (preferably parallel to the shore). The transect must be divided into 4 x 20 metre observation areas divided by 4 x 5 metre gaps. For re-survey, it is important to document or permanently mark the transect start/end points.



The “Reef Check” coral reef monitoring program consists of four types of data collection methods:

1. Site description (environmental conditions and ratings of human impacts)
2. Fish counts
3. Invertebrate counts
4. Substrate type measurements

The site description includes information about: location (overall and exact location), survey time, nearby population, weather conditions, rating of human impacts on the coral reef and the possible protection of the coral reef. The substrate survey includes the record of the substrate at points with 0.5 meter intervals along the 4m x 20m transect. The substrate must be classified in one of the following categories: hard coral, soft coral, recently killed coral, nutrient indicator algae, sponge, rock, rubble, sand, silt/clay or other substrate. In the “Reef Check” manual there is more information about how to conduct the substrate survey and classify the substrate.

The level of coral bleaching, presence of coral disease, presence of litter and coral damage must be noted.

Each region has different indicator fish and invertebrate species that should be counted along the 4m x 20m transect. In the “Reef Check” website and manual, there is more information about the fish and invertebrate species to include in the counting and information about how to conduct the counts. Finally, it is recommended to supplement the survey with photo and/or video documentation.

Appendix H

Guidelines for events on Blue Flag beaches [Criterion 30]

Should events be planned for Blue Flag beaches, it is recommended that the beach operator attempt to achieve a win-win situation in both hosting the event and maintaining Blue Flag status. Events on Blue Flag beaches are not incompatible with the management of the Blue Flag Programme. However, the event should not compromise Blue Flag standards. The Blue Flag should not be lowered simply because an event is planned on the beach.

The decision to allow events to take place on beaches is ultimately the decision of the beach operator managing that facility and would, as such, be guided by local by-laws and other legislation. Should the beach operator be concerned about potential impacts on Blue Flag standards, early contact and discussion with the National Operator is recommended. It is reiterated that it is the responsibility of the beach operator to ensure that Blue Flag standards are met.

If necessary, additional resources, e.g. cleaning staff, portable toilets, etc should be brought in to ensure that the standards do not drop.

Wherever possible, the Blue Flag area should be zoned (including the use of buoys - where appropriate - in the water) so that a designated Blue Flag swimming area is still retained and the beach can still fly the flag. It is not recommended that the whole beach be dedicated to the event.

Wherever possible, every attempt should be made to ensure that all the Blue Flag standards are still met on the beach during the event.

In terms of the criteria of Blue Flag, compliance with all environmental and building legislation also applies to any events and/or the construction of facilities on the beach. This includes the possibility of undertaking Environmental Impact Assessments or producing environmental reports on the impact of the event on the natural surroundings. In this case, permission from the relevant environmental authorities in the region would be necessary.

The public must be given advance warning of any events planned for Blue Flag beaches. This could be in the form of posters or other information at the beach, through announcements in the local media, or on local authority/beach operator websites if appropriate. A notice indicating details of the event, duration of the event, where more information can be obtained, where complaints can be made, etc. must be posted at the beach.

In the case of an activity that takes place on the beach after hours, i.e. for those beaches that withdraw the flag at the end of the day when criteria are no longer met, the beach operator must ensure that the beach and the facilities are cleaned and returned to order, before the flag is due to be raised the next morning, even if this means the cleaning teams must work through the night. So, if the flag is normally raised at 08h00 in the morning, the facilities must meet Blue Flag standards by 08h00 in the morning.

It is recommended that the local authority/beach operator consider a fee to be levied on the organisers of events hosted on Blue Flag beaches and that this income be used to make improvements to the beach or within the local area.

Appendix I

Guidance on ILS Safety Risk Assessment for Beaches [Criterion 27]

INTRODUCTION

The International Lifesaving Federation (ILS) is the world authority in the global effort to prevent drowning and works with national life saving organisations to improve drowning prevention, water safety, water rescue, lifesaving, lifeguarding and lifesaving sport. FEE and ILS have therefore entered a Memorandum of Understanding where FEE recognises ILS as being the world authority in the global effort to prevent drowning.

FEE encourages National Operators and local authorities to work with ILS national organisations when possible.

ILS will undertake risk assessments all over the world and take care that information boards according to ISO 20712 are placed at as many beaches as possible. When this is not possible, an independent risk assessment may be conducted. Below are guidelines produced by ILS.

BACKGROUND

Risk management can be defined as a logical and systematic approach of identifying, analysing, assessing, countering, monitoring and communicating risks associated with any activity or process.

In its Guidelines for safe recreational water environments (Vol.1) the World Health Organization states: 'Assessment of hazard and risk inform the development of policies for controlling and managing risks to health and well-being in water recreation. The assessment of a beach or water should take into account several key considerations including:

- the presence and nature of natural or artificial hazards
- the severity of the hazards as related to health outcomes
- the availability and applicability of remedial actions
- the frequency and density of use
- the level of development.

PRINCIPLES

The purpose of hazard and risk assessment is to assess the probability that certain events will take place and assess the potential adverse impact these events may have on people, property or the environment or other adverse outcomes.

ILS sees the implementation of risk assessments for all aquatic locations as a key element of the strategies to reduce injury and loss of life or other adverse impacts on the aquatic environment.

A generic framework and the main elements of the risk management process identified are:

- Communication and consultation
- Establishing the context
- Risk identification
- Risk analysis
- Risk evaluation
- Development of a risk control measures plan
- Monitor and review

This framework is consistent with the international standard ISO 31000 – Risk Management – Guidelines on principles and implementation of risk management.

The basic rationale for conducting a risk assessment is:

1. Identify the hazards of a particular location and assess the risks of possible human interaction with the hazard.
2. Provide the basis for a risk management plan
3. Improve safety and reduce the risk of death or injury at the location
4. Ensure the best use of resources and encourage effective management and cost effective operations
5. Reduce the potential for litigation stemming from accident and management practices
6. Provide guidance for the development of policy, procedure and practices.

A **hazard** is a source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause a loss.

The term **risk** is used to describe the probability that a given exposure to a hazard will lead to an adverse outcome.

The job of accurately analysing the potential personal risk to the public at a coastal and beach location is complex. The determination and evaluation of potential risks is made more complicated in coastal regions due to the continually changing nature of the environment. Coastal regions are dynamic environments where the presence and level of a potential danger varies with numerous factors such as time, water conditions, weather and human interaction.

In order to effectively assess hazards and their associated risks, the assessor must understand all the contributing factors that come together to create the danger, for example the beach topography, the prevailing weather and wave climates, and the number of people who use the beach and their chosen activities.

Consideration is required to counter (control) and manage the risks to ensure visitors can enjoy the safest aquatic recreation possible. Solutions may include any one or combination of the following “hierarchy of controls”.

1. Removal of risk; hazards, people or both, where possible (Elimination).
2. Remove access to the location at which the hazard may present a risk (Isolation).
3. Share the risk with another party or parties for example through contracts, partnerships or insurance (Transfer).
4. Install a barrier such as a fence or vegetation (Engineering control).
5. Management (Administrative) controls that may include:
 - a. Community education programmes to raise awareness of potential hazards.
 - b. International standard signage to ISP 20712 which will enable visitors to make informed decisions on whether they wish to proceed into an area or undertake a particular activity.
 - c. Supervision through the deployment of appropriately trained personnel such as lifeguards.
 - d. Implementation of appropriate emergency management systems.
 - e. Use and appropriate positioning of public rescue equipment such as life buoys/rings.
 - f. Zoning, such as use of marker buoys and flags to define areas in which non-compatible activities should be conducted such as power boats, swimming and sailing
6. Retain and management of the risk (Residual risk).

REFERENCES

International Life Saving Federation (ILS), 2007, ILS Beach Risk Assessment Policy

International Life Saving Federation of Europe (ILSE), 2007, ILSE Risk Assessment Guidelines

International Life Saving Federation of Europe (ILSE), 2010, ILSE Designated Bathing Area Risk Assessment Report

International Standards Organisation (ISO), 2008, ISO 20712 Water Safety Signs and Beach Safety Flags (Parts 1, 2 & 3).

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), 2007, *A guide to coastal public rescue equipment*

World Health Organisation (WHO), 2003, *Guidelines for safe recreational waters Volume 1 - Coastal and fresh waters*

Appendix J

Blue Flag Guidelines for further developments of your beach

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Information about the Blue Flag Programme and the other FEE eco-labels must be displayed. **The staff on the beach must be educated about Blue Flag and be able to provide information about it to the beach users.**

Twice a year there is a meeting with the staff about BF measurements/environment/sustainability.

This is preferably done before and after the Blue Flag season, but for those beaches with year long seasons, meetings can be held every six months.

The discussions can be verified by reports of minutes of management meetings.

Every employee knows about BF, can communicate about BF with the guests

There is an internal system in the beach management so that new staff are informed about the Blue Flag Programme, and that, especially for new employees, there is training about what Blue Flag criteria means in their job. Part-time staff employed in high-season are also informed about Blue Flag.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The water consumption in the sanitary facilities and showers must be controlled.

1. There is a maximum flow of 9 litre/minute out of showers
2. There is a maximum flow of 6 litre/minute out of the taps.
3. There is a maximum flow of 6 litres per toilet flush.

The beach uses water-saving measures in taps, showers and toilets. The flow of water taps for washbasins is up to 6 litres per minute. The flow of showers is up to 9 litres per minute. For the

flushing of all toilets not more than 6 litres of water are used.

The beach management should also influence the water consumption of private companies or businesses on the beach, such as restaurants, which could then implement the Green Key criteria and obtain the Green Key certification.

Exceptions:

When toilets have a grey water system or have a stop button, a maximum of 9 litres per flush is sufficient.

In addition to the reduction of water consumption, the beach takes additional measures. These could include the use of pressure or sensor faucets, a system to stop the water flow easily, payment system (coins, Sep key), use of greywater, a water recycling system, etc.

There must be an environmental policy and an environmental plan for the beach. The plan should include references to water management, waste and energy consumption, health and safety issues as well as the use of environmentally friendly products wherever possible. All employees must be informed and educated about these issues.

► **same as for marinas and boats**

The beach, including the lifeguard station and private businesses, registers its annual consumption data of energy, water, waste, and (optionally) cleaning products. These data are converted into indices. An excel sheet is used for this purpose.

The records must show the following information:

- quantities of gas, electricity, water,
- all charges for gas, electricity, water,
- cost per unit consumption of gas, electricity, water

There is an energy audit every 5 years

The beach management has commissioned a further study of the energy performance of the recommended measures. The measures are included in the sustainability programme (guideline 2).

Only environmentally friendly cleaning products (which are certified with an ecolabel) must be used for the cleaning of the facilities on the beach.

Sanitary and interior cleaning products must have an accredited environmental label, or must be products which are not included in the blacklist (see attachment 1: Green Key blacklist).

Sanitary and interior cleaners must have an eco-label for example. European Ecolabel, Nordic Swan and Blue Angel)

When outsourcing the cleaning operations, the existing contract should be reviewed with the above terms to be included in the next contract review and definitely within one year after the initial assessment for the Blue Flag

Exception:

Specific cleaners that are regulated by laws for health and safety, hygiene and / or food safety (HACCP) either periodically or in case of an emergency are not covered by this criterion.

For daily cleaning activities only fibre cloth products are used.

Only environmentally friendly toiletries, paper towels and toilet papers must be provided in the sanitary facilities on the beach. Soap and other personal care products must be provided in dispensers with a dosing system.

Paper towels and toilet paper must be made of non-chlorine bleached paper or must have an eco-label.

Only energy efficient lighting must be used. Sensors which regulate the use of the light should be installed wherever considered as being useful.

All lighting is energy efficient (PSL, TL, SL, LED etc). Not later than one year after the inspection of the beach, energy efficient lighting is used in and around (outdoors) the buildings. For bulbs not meeting the criterion the beach provides a substitution plan.

Energy-efficient lighting has a minimum light output of 40 lumen / watt. PL, TL, SL and LED lighting satisfy this condition. Halogen lighting and traditional lightbulbs are not to be used on the beach anymore.

If there is no suitable alternative a beach may get a dispensation for this point. The beach operator must demonstrate that it can not be technically realized or that the required investment has a payback period of > 5 years.

In and around the buildings on the beach there is a substantial use of lighting sensors to prevent unnecessary illumination.

► **Explanation:** Lighting Sensors can turn lights on / off based on for example the presence of people (motion sensor) or too little light (light sensor). In this manner unnecessary operation of lamps is prevented.

The energy supply on the beach should be based on renewable sources.

The beach uses renewable energy sources.

► **Explanation:** This includes renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and water; through solar, windmills, photovoltaic solar cells (electricity generation) or similar renewable energy, tyleno hose for heating (tap) water etc.

100% of the total amount of electricity is generated sustainably.

► **Explanation:** Sustainably generated electricity refers to electricity generated from renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and water. There are various names used: green energy, green electricity or natural electricity.

Green gas: The total amount of purchased gas is generated sustainably from biomass. Explanation: Green gas is gas produced from biomass. This “biogas” is brought into the natural gas thus reducing the use of existing fossil natural gas resources. If you purchase green gas then this is accompanied by a certificate of origin.

The beach and beach equipment/facilities should aim at being climate neutral.

The beach management carries out a CO₂-study for its activities (eg. to set a fixed CO₂ footprint) to investigate if it can be carbon neutral.

Explanation: Working with CO₂ emission certificates is always the culmination of activities. Save first, then see whether the beach itself can generate renewable energy. The third step is to neutralize CO₂ emissions by purchasing CO₂ certificates for the remaining CO₂ emissions.

Artificially-made green areas and gardens on the beach must be maintained sustainably.

Chemical pesticides and fertilizers cannot be used more than once a year, unless there is no organic or natural equivalent.

As no chemical pesticides or fertilizers should be used on the establishment's premises, an alternative could be to use gas flames or mechanical herbicides. By using gas flames the best effect is achieved if the plants are not burned down to the ground but rather just scorched.

Flowers and gardens must be watered in the early morning or after sunset

This criterion aims to reduce the water consumption, especially when tap water is used for watering. It is the best way to avoid evaporation and have the best impact on the roots of plants.

Rainwater is collected and used for watering flowers and gardens

This criterion also aims to reduce tap water consumption. An alternative water system to store and use rainwater limits the use of fresh water for watering.

When planting new green areas endemic or native species are used.

Endemic species use less water than non-endemic and their use preserves the biodiversity of the surroundings.

When making a plan for new green areas think of the following components:

- a. introduction (including business data.)
- b. a global inventory of paved surfaces, plant and tree species on and around the beach and a description of present landscape elements;
- c. a description of how current and future natural areas on and around the beach are handled (e.g., in terms of pruning, lawn mowing, weed control etc.);
- d. a management plan for nature on and around the beach. This plan looks at the desired future development.
- e. summary measures and costs of the plan
- f. + appendices outline

Artificially-made beaches must be created and maintained sustainably.

A beach which has been artificially created must be managed in a sustainable way.

Ecological evaluations must be undertaken in order to ensure a positive impact.

For example, the ecological impact of the sand brought to create the beach must be minimised as much as possible.

The facilities on the beach must be made of environmentally friendly materials. Local suppliers should be preferably used when equipping the beach with new buildings, infrastructure or furniture.

Encompasses buildings, furniture, infrastructure etc.

Also: Environmental friendly painting

For painting works less environmentally harmful paints that have an eco-label are used. Explanation: When painting the buildings on the beach use only environmentally friendly interior and exterior paint. The paints have a label such as Ecolabel, EU ecolabel or similar.

During new construction, reconstruction or renovation of the beach, the business will take into account the environment and sustainability of materials used.

Explanation:

- The purchased wood that is used for building is durable, certified wood that has been approved by national authorities. For example TPAC (Timber Procurement Assessment Committee) approved .
- The Energy Performance Coefficient (EPC) is at least 5% lower than required in national legislation.
- Other measures could be: buffering rainwater, water conservation, protection of biodiversity, promotion of environmentally friendly mobility or reduction of emissions and pollution by equipment used for building or by innovations in the use of the building.

Based on the sustainable procurement policy, the beach management makes demands on its suppliers. The beach management asks suppliers for a signed declaration of delivery of sustainable products and services.

Explanation: A sustainability declaration is a document describing the requirements of the beach management from suppliers and in which the supplier declares to be committed to this effect.

CSR

The beach management has a CSR policy, covering the areas of Human Rights, Labour Equity Environmental Education and Anti-Corruption.

There is a declaration of CSR policy by the beach management

The beach management has a CSR policy statement in which it defines its objectives on sustainability and corporate social responsibility. The statement must be prominently displayed.

► Explanation:

A CSR policy is a statement of the senior management of the beach, indicating that sustainability and CSR are an integral part of business.

The statement pays at least attention to:

- general CSR objectives / sustainability outline policy concern for people / planet / profit and structural part of business objectives,
- implementation activities which should be in accordance with company policies and procedures established,
- general rules regarding the implementation of the sustainability policy of the company with regard to the fulfillment of legal requirements, staff training and recording / monitoring of the environmental performance of the company.

The beach develops a CSR programme for the next three years

The sustainability programme covers three years and shows which environmental sustainability actions will take place to reduce the consumption of gas, water, electricity and waste (prevention) in that period. The policy also includes activities and measures in the area of procurement, transport management, community involvement, etc. Take the international Blue Flag criteria as a guide.

Every employee can provide input to CSR

The beach management has the policy that all staff members can provide input to CSR/ Sustainability. For example there is a “suggestion-box” where the staff can submit their ideas about increasing sustainability on the beach.

The beach management takes at least two measures during the certification period to promote community involvement and social responsibility.

Social / community involvement

The beach management takes at least two measures to encourage sustainable relationships in the immediate environment and to fulfill its commitment to perform better in the social field.

For example, the beach management:

- promotes good relations with local residents / stakeholders and works on a long-term relationship with them (offers free facilities, organises free events, provides an annual offering to compensate for any inconvenience)
- stimulates the local economy
- works with other local organizations such as local associations, environmental organisations
- is actively involved in a charity or conservation organisation
- provides free communication platforms for charity
- distributes sustainable gifts and / or sale items
- sponsors social / community organisations; directly or indirectly, materially or immaterially, or is committed to a social purpose and put here for demonstrable in
- participates actively in charity work

BLACK LIST GREEN KEY CLEANING PRODUCTS.

Blacklist for cleaning products in the Green Key Programme

The Blacklist is prepared by the consultant organisation, Ecoconso.

This list covers multi-purpose and sanitation products (typical cleaning products). For cleaning in any other specific area that needs special products, one must check for compliance with national legislation.

Surfactants:

Surfactants that are not readily biodegradable under aerobic conditions

Surfactants that are not biodegradable under anaerobic conditions and that are classified with H400/R50 (Very toxic to aquatic life), Alkylphenoethoxylates (APEOs), onylphenoethoxylates (NPEOs) and derivatives. Quaternary ammonium compounds that are not readily biodegradable.

Sequestering or anti-scaling agents:

EDTA (ethylenediamine tetraacetate) and its salts, phosphates

Acids:

Phosphoric acid, hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid

Bases:

Ammonium hydroxide

Solvents:

Detergents containing more than 6% by weight of VOCs with a boiling point lower than 150°C

Chlorine:

Reactive chloro-compounds (such as sodium hypochloride)

Conservators:

Formaldehyde

Antimicrobial or disinfecting ingredients added for other purposes than preservation.

Bioaccumulable preservatives classified as H410, H411, R50/53 or R51/53. Preservatives are not regarded as bioaccumulable if $BCF < 100$ (bioconcentration factor) or $\log K_{ow} < 3$ (log octanol/water partition coefficient)

RESOURCES

Ministry of Environment

Regional Office	Website	Phone Number	Email
Wellington - Head Office	www.mfe.govt.nz	0800 499 700	info@mfe.govt.nz
Auckland	www.mfe.govt.nz	09 985 4800	info@mfe.govt.nz

Department of Conservation regions

Head Office (Conservation House Wellington)	www.doc.govt.nz	04 471 0726	enquiries@doc.govt.nz
---------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------	-------------	------------------------------------------------------------------

North Island

Regional Office	Phone Number	Email
Auckland Office	09 307 9279	auckland@doc.govt.nz
Bay of Islands Office	09 407 0300	bayofislandsbooking@doc.govt.nz
Chatham Island Office	03 305 0098	chathamislands@doc.govt.nz
Dawson Falls Visitors Centre	027 443 0248	egmontvc@doc.govt.nz
Egmont National Park Visitors Centre	06 756 0990	egmontvc@doc.govt.nz
Gisborne Office	06 869 0460	gisborne@doc.govt.nz
Hamilton Office	07 858 1000	waikato@doc.govt.nz
Hauraki Office	07 867 9180	thames@doc.govt.nz
Kaitaia Office	09 408 6014	kaitaia@doc.govt.nz
Kauaeranga Visitor Centre	07 867 9080	kauaerangavc@doc.govt.nz
Kauri Coast Office	09 439 3450	dargaville@doc.govt.nz
Masterton Office	06 377 0700	masterton@doc.govt.nz
Murupara Office	07 366 1080	opotiki@doc.govt.nz
Napier Office	06 834 3111	napier@doc.govt.nz
New Plymouth Office	06 759 0350	newplymouth@doc.govt.nz
North Head Office	09 445 9142	aucklandnorthhead@doc.govt.nz
Ohakune Visitors Centre	06 385 8427	ohakune@i-SITE.org
Opotiki Office	07 315 1001	opotiki@doc.govt.nz
Palmerston North Office	06 350 9700	manawatu@doc.govt.nz
Rotorua Office	07 349 7400	rotorua@doc.govt.nz
Russell Office	09 403 9006	bayofislandsbooking@doc.govt.nz
Taupo Office	07 376 0072	taupo@doc.govt.nz
Tauranga Office	07 578 7677	taurangainfo@doc.govt.nz
Te Kuiti Office	07 878 1050	tekuiti@doc.govt.nz
Te Urewera Visitor Centre	06 837 3803	teureweravc@doc.govt.nz
Tongariro National Park Visitors Centre	07 892 3729	tongarirovc@doc.govt.nz
Turangi Office	07 384 7106	turangi@doc.govt.nz

Warkworth Office	09 425 7812	warkworth@doc.govt.nz
Wellington Office	04 470 8412	wellington@doc.govt.nz
Whakatane Office	07 307 2770	opotiki@doc.govt.nz
Whanganui Office	06 349 2100	whanganui@doc.govt.nz
Whangarei Office	09 470 3300	whangarei@doc.govt.nz

South Island

Regional Office	Phone Number	Email
Alexandra Office	03 440 2040	alexandra@doc.govt.nz
Arthur Pass National Park Visitor Centre	03 318 9211	arthurspassvc@doc.govt.nz
Christchurch Office	03 371 3700	christchurch@doc.govt.nz
Dunedin Office	03 477 0677	dunedinoffice@doc.govt.nz
Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre	03 249 7924	fiordlandvc@doc.govt.nz
Geraldine Office	03 693 1010	geraldine@doc.govt.nz
Greymouth Office	03 768 0427	greymouth@doc.govt.nz
Haast Visitor Centre	03 750 0809	haastvc@doc.govt.nz
Hokitika Office	03 756 9100	hokitika@doc.govt.nz
Invercargill Office	03 211 2400	invercargill@doc.govt.nz
Kaikoura Visitor Centre	03 319 5641	info@kaikoura.co.nz
Motueka Office	03 528 1810	motueka@doc.govt.nz
Mt Cook Office	03 435 1819	aorakimtcook@doc.govt.nz
Nelson Office	03 546 9335	nelson@doc.govt.nz
Nelson Lakes Visitor Centre	03 521 1806	nelsonlakesvc@doc.govt.nz
Paparoa National Park Visitor Centre	03 731 1895	paparoavc@doc.govt.nz
Picton Office	03 520 3002	picton@doc.govt.nz
Queenstown Office	03 442 7933	queenstown@doc.govt.nz
Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre	03 219 0009	stewartisland@doc.govt.nz
Rangiora Office	03 313 0820	waimakariri@doc.govt.nz
Renwick Office	03 572 9100	renwick@doc.govt.nz
Sockburn Office	03 341 9100	mahaanui@doc.govt.nz
Takaka Office	03 525 8026	takaka@doc.govt.nz
Twizel Office	03 435 0802	twizel@doc.govt.nz
Wanaka - Mount Aspiring National Park Visitor Centre	03 443 7660	mtaspiringvc@doc.govt.nz
Westland Tai Poutini National Park Visitor Centre	03 752 0360	westlandnpvc@doc.govt.nz
Westport Office	03 788 8008	paparoavc@doc.govt.nz

Local Government Councils

For contact details of council profiles by region please visit www.localcouncils.govt.nz

Work Safe New Zealand

Website

www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/

Ministry for Primary Industries

Regional Office	Website	Phone Number	Email
Wellington	www.mpi.govt.nz	0800 00 83 33	info@mfe.govt.nz

Surf Life Saving New Zealand

Regional Office	Website	Phone Number	Email
Wellington National Office	www.surflifesaving.org.nz	04 560 0383	communications@surflifesaving.org.nz
Auckland	www.lifesaving.org.nz	09 303 0663	northern@surflifesaving.org.nz
Mt Maunganui	www.lifesaving.org.nz	07 574 2061	
Canterbury	www.lifesaving.org.nz	03 388 4999	

Coastguard New Zealand

Regional Office	Website	Phone Number	Email
National	www.coastguard.nz	09 489 1510	info@coastguard.co.nz
Auckland	www.coastguard.nz	09 303 4303 or 0508 RESCUE (737 283)	admin@coastguard.org.nz
Northern Region	www.coastguard.nz		admin@coastguard.org.nz
Eastern Region	www.coastguard.nz	07 579 4631	cersupport@coastguard.co.nz
Central Region	www.coastguard.nz	06 348 7200	rebecca.watson@coastguard.co.nz
Southern Region	www.coastguard.nz	03 348 7003	cheryl.moffat@nzcoastguard.org.nz

Public Health Units

Regional Office	District Covers	Website	Phone Number
Northland District Health Board	Northland	www.northlanddhb.org.nz	09 430 4100
Auckland Regional Public Health	Auckland	www.arphs.govt.nz	09 623 4600
Waikato District Health	Waikato, Ruapehu (Northern part)		07 838 2569
Toi Te Ora - Public Health	Whakatane, Tauranga, Rotorua, Taupo, Kawerau, Western Bay, and Opotiki districts	www.ttophs.govt.nz	0800 221 555
Tairāwhiti District Health	Gisborne, Tairāwhiti	www.tdh.org.nz	06 869 1311
Hawke's Bay District Health	Hawke's Bay	www.hawkesbay.health.nz	06 834 1815
Taranaki District Health	Taranaki	www.tdhb.org.nz	06 753 7798
Mid Central District Health	Manawatu, Whanganui, Ruapehu(Southern part)	www.midcentraldhb.govt.nz	Manawatu 06 350 9110 Whanganui 06 348 1775
Regional Public Health	Wellington, Hutt Valley, Wairarapa	www.rph.org.nz	04 570 9002
Nelson Marlborough Public Health	Nelson-Marlborough		Nelson 03 546 1537 Blenheim 03 520 9914
Community & Public Health	Canterbury, Chatham Islands, Mid Canterbury, South Canterbury, West Coast	www.cph.co.nz	Canterbury, Chatham Islands 03 364 1777 Mid Canterbury 03 307 6902 South Canterbury 03 687 2600 West Coast 03 768 1160
Public Health South	Otago, Southland	www.southerndhb.govt.nz	03 476 9800

Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

Blue Flag is a highly respected and recognised international eco-label. Blue Flags are awarded to beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operators that meet strict criteria for Water Quality, Environmental Education, Environmental Management, and Safety & Services.



**BLUE FLAG
NEW ZEALAND**

blueflag.org.nz



New Zealand Operator of Blue Flag
PO Box 58932, Botany, Auckland 2163
p: 09 264 1434 w: www.blueflag.org.nz
e: education@knzb.org.nz