

**LEADING HOTELS AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL  
FORGE THE WAY TO A DEEPER SHADE OF GREEN**

*First-Ever Luxury Eco Certification Granted to Washington D.C.'s Prestigious Hay-Adams Hotel*

NEW YORK, NY (December 14, 2009) – Nearly eight months after Sustainable Travel International (STI) announced the launch of its *Luxury Eco Certification Standard* (LECS), Leading Hotel, The Hay-Adams in Washington D.C. becomes the first hotel in the world to pass the comprehensive on-site inspection and receive this distinction. Designed to educate, as well as help luxury hotels create and implement a measurement framework in their move toward sustainability, LECS is the first and only voluntary, global certification program of its kind. Focusing on *Triple Bottom Line* (People, Planet and Profit), the comprehensive standard aligns with impending global accreditation through the Tourism Stewardship Council.



In an ongoing effort to encourage green practices and social responsibility among its portfolio of independently-owned hotels, The Leading Hotels of the World played a significant role in propelling the initiative. Building on Leading Hotels and STI's 2007 launch of Leading Green, a carbon management and offset program completely funded by Leading Hotels, LECS is now the second, groundbreaking global initiative to support responsible travel within the luxury hospitality industry.

With sustainable tourism on the rise, and consumer and corporate demand for green hotels growing, Leading Hotels spearheaded a new partnership between STI, the global non-profit leader in providing sustainable travel solutions for the tourism industry and consumers, and Leading Quality Assurance (LQA), a joint venture of Leading Hotels that specializes in providing quality assurance audits, benchmarking analysis and training services to the luxury hospitality industry. Together, they created a model for the innovative program, dubbed "100 Steps to Sustainability" with the areas of evaluation broken into five sections: policy and documentation; energy conservation; water conservation; recycling; and community. Beyond the obvious environmental benefits, the fusion of these five components will reduce long-term operating costs, and create customer and employee good will.



In order to become LECS certified, hotels must undergo a preliminary desk audit, complimented by an on-site, third-party assessment handled by LQA. The process of becoming a LECS eco-certified hotel is challenging and requires a serious commitment on behalf of the hotel applicant, and The Hay-Adams displayed a high level of dedication from day one (many other Leading Hotels are either currently in the documentation or inspection phase of the LECS process).

"We are extremely proud to be the first hotel to receive this certification," said Hans Bruland, general manager of The Hay-Adams who appointed Controller, Donna Pagano to oversee the initiative internally. "Until now, there hasn't been a globally-recognized program to suit the needs of a five-star luxury hotel operator. LECS has afforded us the opportunity to make real changes and significantly reduce our carbon footprint all while preserving the guest experience."

He continued, "The impact this program has made on the hotel from an operations and efficiency standpoint is massive; however, it is even more satisfying to hear the feedback from staff members who have begun to embrace sustainable practices into their personal lives as a result of our investment in this program."

Brian T. Mullis, President of Sustainable Travel International stated, "In our three years partnering with Leading Hotels we have watched them grow leaps and bounds in respect to deepening their understanding and commitment to responsible tourism. We developed LECS to fill a void in the market at the request of Leading Hotels and LQA. It is very exciting to witness The Hay-Adams' transformation into a LECS certified hotel, and I am truly confident that other luxury hotel brands will follow suit."

Hotels interested in pursuing LECS certification, can visit [www.leadingquality.com](http://www.leadingquality.com) or [www.ecocertification.org](http://www.ecocertification.org). For more information about Leading Green, visit [www.lhwgreen.com](http://www.lhwgreen.com).

### **About The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd.**

The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. is the prestigious luxury hospitality organization representing more than 450 of the world's finest hotels, resorts and spas, and is the operator of [www.lhw.com](http://www.lhw.com) and [www.lhwspas.com](http://www.lhwspas.com) – the online sources for your luxury lifestyle. As the largest international luxury hotel brand, the firm maintains offices in 22 major markets across the globe.

Since 1928, the company's reputation for excellence derives from the exacting levels of quality it demands of its members, each of which must pass a rigorous, anonymous inspection covering hundreds of meticulous criteria spanning from product to behavioral standards. This set of standards is the most stringent in the industry.

For reservations and information, visit [www.lhw.com](http://www.lhw.com) or telephone toll-free from the USA, Canada, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, (800) 223-6800.

### **About Sustainable Travel International**

Sustainable Travel International ([www.sustainabletravel.com](http://www.sustainabletravel.com)) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote sustainable development through responsible travel by providing programs that help travelers, businesses and destinations protect the environment, preserve cultural heritage and promote economic development.

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