

An Environmental Audit of Aracari Resort

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Tourism impacts the economy, the natural and built environment, the immediate population, and even tourists – the very resource needed by the industry to remain viable. Regular assessment of the environmental performance of the industry is necessary to ascertain compliance with national standards and regulations. This is achieved with an environmental audit. To this end, an environmental audit was conducted at the Aracari Resort, almost a decade after it began operations. The Resort's operations should have minimal impact on public health and the environment, as evidenced by good sanitation, safety measure implementation, and adherence to the Public Health Legislation and Occupation Health & Safety Act. The methodology used included monitoring of water quality and use, noise, and energy; and direct observation of waste and safety management. The results showed that water quality parameters such as pH, temperature, phosphorus and ammonium were in compliance with the national effluent discharge guidelines; however, chlorides, chemical oxygen demand, and total suspended solids were not. Water metre readings revealed an average daily water consumption of 22.5m³ and an average weekly water consumption of 135m³. Noise produced from the Resort was in compliance with the daytime limits of 75 dB based on the national standard, but exceeded residential nighttime limits (from Friday to Sunday) of 60 dB. The average (55.6 kW), maximum (83.85 kW), and minimum (51.9 kW) power demands across a 7-day period were obtained from Fluke Monitoring System readings. Solid waste management was observed to be inadequate on days of planned events, with overflowing bins evident on the premises. Safety measures were implemented for food, chemical handling and storage, swimming pool safety, and fire safety, which were observed to be consistent with the standards. The facility's overall performance was satisfactory based on the evaluation criteria, and some environmental practices of Aracari Resort conformed to the Environmental Protection Agency requirements and other established guidelines. Areas identified for improved compliance and enhanced environmental management included the implementation of an environmental policy, regular monitoring of environmental parameters, and staff training on the terms and conditions of the Environmental Permit.

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