



SIX SENSES RESORTS & SPAS,
THAILAND & GLOBAL
GLOBAL TOURISM BUSINESS AWARD
FINALIST 2007 & WINNER 2008

CASE STUDY

Six Senses with its brand name Soneva, a resort and spa management and development company established in 1995, is headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand. It has ten resorts and 16 spas worldwide and host approximately 400,000 guests per year. Its mission statement, 'To create innovative and enriching experiences in a sustainable environment', establishes environmental responsibility as a core value, and has led Six Senses to create its Social and Environmental Programme as a key operating standard across the company.

Based at head office, the Social and Environment Conscience Programme creates and directs initiatives implemented by a Social and Environmental Co-ordinator at each property.



For example, at Soneva Fushi and Soneva Gili, two small island properties located in the Maldives, motorised traffic is excluded on the islands, with 75% of the islands left undeveloped and forested and bike paths extensively wandering under the tree cover. Each guest and staff member is issued with a bicycle, and all services are delivered via bicycle or trolley.

Under an innovative and market-leading policy, all guests at Six Senses' resorts are now levied a 2% 'carbon tax' to neutralise the carbon emissions created through travel to the destination and while staying at the destination. Six Senses' staff are well cared for with a comprehensive staff incentive scheme, including sharing in a percentage of resort revenues. In addition, capacity-building training, including for environmental awareness, and the opportunity to work at Soneva resorts globally, are also offered to resort staff. At Soneva Fushi, the majority of the staff are local and live on site, with opportunities for career development and enhancement. Many Maldivians hold supervisory and senior guest relations positions.



CASE STUDY



Six Senses, in its vision for 2020, has made a commitment to be not only ‘carbon neutral’ across its operations globally, but to actually serve as a source of carbon neutral power for its local communities where its resorts are established by that date. At Soneva Fushi, Six Senses has committed to being ‘carbon neutral’ by 2010, investing US\$1 million in wind turbine energy, co-generation, and an innovative deep sea cold water system for the air conditioning needs of the property. It has created an extensive organic garden, and back-of-house tours of the garden describe in detail the company’s environmental initiatives to interested guests. It has eliminated plastic bottles from the island, and replaced them with recyclable glass, as part of its efforts to reduce the use of plastics.

Six Senses has undertaken a range of projects on the neighbouring Maldivian islands to maximise positive social and environmental outcomes. These include contributing to school construction and running costs; a US\$50,000 contribution to building a new pre-school for the local community; US\$30,000 for a waste management education programme and plan; US\$83,000 to Thalassaemia Prevention and US\$30,000 to a local disabled childrens’ fund. At the local resort level, Six Senses purchases local produce (primarily fish and other seafood) and is working together with the local community to repaint the women’s mosque and support the local hospital.

As a global leader in combating climate change, Six Senses has worked with Green Globe Company 21 Standard to develop benchmarking indicators for the Spa sector – the first dedicated eco-label for the spa industry. Evanson Phuket and Six Senses Spa led the way in 2006 by becoming the first benchmarked spa resort in Thailand and followed up the same year by becoming the first resort in Southeast Asia to achieve the highest level of sustainability operations in the spa sector.

In every aspect, from resort design and organic gardening to global climate impact, Six Senses is striving to develop its high-end resorts in a sustainable, innovative way. In hosting climate change and sustainability workshops, it is also sharing its best practice innovations across the industry.

