WORKING MATERIAL 1.5 · CHAPTER 1 — THE VISION OF OWNERSHIP (SECTION A) · SETTING: FUNCHAL, MADEIRA, PORTUGAL

The Annual Sustainability Report

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 7a — GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0, subchapter 1.5 (book page 61)

GUIDING QUESTION

Many hotels collect their sustainability data once a year, in the weeks before the report is due. The figures are accurate, the report is published, and nothing in the hotel changes because of it. Criterion A4 asks for an annual report, but it also asks for data monitored to support continuous improvement. What is the difference between monitoring to publish and monitoring to manage?

1 · Verification Pact: market claims against the standard

Copied from the book. The last column is for your property: what holds here, and how you know it.

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
An annual report needs only annual data collection	No	A4.5 asks for monitoring at intervals appropriate to operations, to support continuous improvement as well as reporting	
Every hotel must report according to GRI	No	The guideline to A4.3 encourages larger establishments to align with GRI or CSRD; smaller hotels may simplify	
A report can describe projects and intentions	No	A4.2 asks for policy, goals, actions and performance, with quantitative data where available	
Without historical data, a hotel cannot report	No	The guideline to A4.2 states that the first report may establish a baseline	
A group-level report is enough	Only partially true	Group reporting is allowed, but individual property performance, including franchises, must be clearly distinguished	
Everything must be disclosed	No	Trade secrets and commercially sensitive information remain confidential	
The report must be published online	Only partially true	A4.4 allows online or offline channels, and the guideline asks for access on request	

2 · Common mistakes — a self-check

Tick each mistake you recognise in your own property, and note where it shows.

☐ Collecting sustainability data once a year, only to write the report.

☐ Letting the author of the report be the first person to see the data.

☐ Publishing projects and photographs instead of performance figures.

☐ Reporting annual totals without year-over-year comparison or a baseline.

☐ Assuming that every hotel must follow a large-company reporting framework.

☐ Hiding property performance inside a group total.

☐ Disclosing commercially sensitive information in the name of transparency.

☐ Offering stakeholders no channel to give feedback on sustainability practices.

3 · A Checklist for the Annual Sustainability Report

The book's checklist, with a column for your own answer.

Question	Why it matters	Our answer
At what interval do we collect each sustainability indicator, and who sees it first?	A4.5 asks for monitoring that supports continuous improvement, not only reporting	
Does our report show policy, goals, actions and performance, with figures?	A4.2 and its guideline define the report's substance	
Does it compare this year with last year, or establish a baseline?	The guideline to A4.2 asks for year-over-year comparisons or a first baseline	
Is its format proportional to our size, and is property performance distinguishable in any group report?	A4.3 and its guideline set format and property-level distinction	
Can anyone obtain it, online or on request?	A4.4 requires public accessibility through online or offline channels	
How do guests, staff, suppliers and the community give us feedback, and where is it reported?	A4.6 requires opportunities for stakeholder feedback	

4 · What would show this is working

Questions drawn from the subchapter's reading of the standard and its practical application. Indicator references point to the GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0; where the evidence lives is this book's practice, not a requirement of the standard.

Question	Where the evidence lives	Seen?
Are sustainability data collected at intervals appropriate to our operations (A4.5)?	Monthly indicator log; meter readings	☐
Does the annual report set out policy, goals, actions and performance (A4.2)?	Published annual sustainability report	☐
Does the report give quantitative data with year-over-year comparison, or a baseline in the first year?	Indicator table in the report	☐
Is the report publicly accessible, online or offline (A4.4)?	Website page; copies at reception	☐
Do guests, staff, suppliers and the community have channels to give feedback (A4.6)?	Survey question, suggestion box, supplier meeting notes	☐

> *What this sheet is not: the GSTC Hotel Standard does not prescribe this form. It is a working aid drawn from the book; the standard's criteria, indicators and guidelines govern the real case. Independent material; not affiliated with or endorsed by the GSTC. The standard's own text at www.gstc.org prevails.*