WORKSHEET 4.13

Say No More Than It Carries

Subchapter 4.13 · case in the book: Rotorua

If a client printed your certificate on its invitation tomorrow, and a guest wrote online that the certificate was worthless, would you know which of the two sentences came closer to what your certificate actually says? And what would you put in front of the journalist who rang afterwards?

This worksheet turns the tools of the subchapter into a form you can fill in. The texts come from the book; the empty columns are for your own property. Adapt it before use: an unadapted checklist is exactly what the book warns against.

Practical application: what to do in your property

Step (from the book)	Done?	What we found / owner
One approved sentence: Ngata wrote a single sentence naming system, scope, standard with edition and certifying body: “The evening takes place at a hotel whose management system for meetings and congresses is certified to ISO 20121:2024.” The proposal template now ends with it.		
Every place checked: Homepage, subpages, templates, banqueting folders, signatures and posters were read against the scope. The mark now appears only on an “Our System” page beside scope and policy; the logo pack no longer contains it; “Sustainable meetings and celebrations” was deleted.		
The review answered with what is true: The reply had four sentences: the participant was right about the tableware and heaters; the lodge evening lies outside the certified scope, but the homepage had not made that clear and has changed; hired tableware now goes to every lodge evening; and whether lodge evenings enter the system will be decided at the next management review.		
The bank and the reporter: Ngata called the bank and offered the approved sentence; the bank sent all recipients an insert with it and stopped using the mark. Hart gave the reporter the certificate, the scope page, the policy and a list of stage 2 findings with their status, two minor nonconformities, both closed, and the observation on the homepage, which he read out verbatim. He withheld the full report because of the names in it, and said so.		

These steps are the book’s method, not requirements of ISO 20121. Evidence can take whatever form suits the property; a separate document is needed only where an applicable requirement, or the property’s own system, makes it necessary.

Verification Pact: what is believed, tested against the standard

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
With the certificate, every event at the hotel is a certified green event	No. No event can be certified, only the system, and only within scope (A.2, guidance)	
A certified hotel is protected from accusations of greenwashing	No. No communication may mislead (7.4); the certificate covers only its scope	
The audit report must be published	No. Not required; the policy must be available (5.2), lessons recommended to be accessible (9.1 c)	
The certificate confirms high sustainability performance	No. It confirms conformity of the system; the standard does not score performance (introduction)	
What a client writes about the hotel is not the hotel's concern	Only partially true. 7.4 covers the hotel's own material given to clients; the body's terms govern references	
A certificate stands for three years without further audit	No. Surveillance at least once per calendar year; suspension without it (ISO/IEC 17021-1)	
Certified means certified under accreditation	No. Whether the body is accredited for ISO 20121 must be asked case by case (4.1)	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Speaking of a certified event when only the system is certified.		
Handing the mark to clients, who then decide where it appears.		
Placing the mark above the whole offer, so that the scope must be guessed.		
Answering criticism with the certificate instead of checking what is true.		
Hiding the report as confidential, or sending it unchecked with names in it.		
Filing the auditor's observations instead of passing them to marketing.		
Assuming that certified means accredited without saying which.		
Forgetting that a certificate stands only while annual surveillance continues.		

Operative synthesis

- **Does every statement name system, scope, standard and certifying body?: A shorter sentence becomes a larger claim**
- **Does the mark appear only where the certified system is meant?: A visitor cannot guess the scope**
- **Have we read our certification body’s terms on references and marks?: The body binds the hotel to them by contract**
- **Does no template speak of a certified event?: Only the system can be certified (A.2)**
- **Do we check criticism for its core before citing the certificate?: Answering with the certificate gives criticism a second reason**
- **Does the person who writes for the public read the audit report?: Observations on communication can become public**
- **Act on immediately. Write one approved sentence about the certification, check every place the certificate appears against the scope, and take the mark out of any logo pack.**
- **Plan for. Decide, once and in advance, what the hotel shows on request and who decides; send every finding and observation on communication to the person who writes for the public, with a date.**
- **Monitor going forward. Review the hotel’s claims, and those clients make about it, at each management review and after each surveillance audit.**

Action plan for our property

Action	Owner	Due	How we will know it worked

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 8b «The Lens», subchapter 4.13. Edizioni Effedore, 2026. Clause references are paraphrased; this sheet does not reproduce the text of ISO 20121, ISO 19011 or ISO/IEC 17021-1. It is not legal advice: the law that applies is that of the place where the property operates.