WORKSHEET 4.9

Say Only What Was Audited

Subchapter 4.9 · case in the book: Seville

When the certificate lands on your desk tomorrow, who in your hotel will first read the sentence that describes the scope, and who will first open the file with the mark? And which of the two may appear on your website, your proposals and your menus?

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
Scope first: Herrera compared the scope on the certificate with the scope in the system manual. They matched word for word; had they differed, the hotel would have clarified it with the body before publishing anything.		
The conditions, read in full: Both read the body's four pages together: where the mark may stand, with which details, where not, and what happens on suspension or withdrawal.		
One approved sentence: They wrote a sentence naming standard, scope, site and body, approved by both of them (Volume 8a, 2.9). Every reference to the certificate now uses it.		
Every surface mapped: Website, proposals, menus, brochures and posts were listed, each marked as inside or outside the scope and as aimed at consumers or business clients. "Sustainable hotel", "certified conference", "green event" and "accredited" were struck.		

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
The auditor certified us	No. Persons other than the auditors must decide (ISO/IEC 17021-1, 9.5.1.1)	
We can advertise the stage 2 result	Only partially true. A certificate exists only after the decision; audit reports are interim results	
Our conferences are certified to ISO 20121	No. Only the system can conform, never the event (ISO 20121, A.2, guidance)	
A certificate covers the whole hotel	No. It covers the scope the organisation determined (4.3; A.2)	

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
An ISO 20121 certificate confirms high sustainability performance	No. The standard is not a scoring method; it confirms conformity of a system	
Once certified, the mark may be used anywhere	No. The body sets conditions; no communication may mislead (7.4)	
Without a certificate a hotel may not say it works to the standard	No. Self-declaration and client confirmation are also routes (clause 1; A.24)	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Starting with the mark, and reading the scope too late.		
Calling the hotel certified when a system for a described part is.		
Turning the certificate into a property: “sustainable” is a claim about performance.		
Calling events certified, when no event can be.		
Putting the mark on menus, where guests read it as a statement about the dish.		
Transferring an accreditation from one standard to another.		
Announcing the auditor’s recommendation before the decision.		
Using the same wording for consumers and business clients without asking which rules apply.		

Operative synthesis

- **Does the scope on the certificate match the scope in our manual?: A mismatch must be clarified with the body before anything is published**
- **Has someone read the body’s conditions before using the mark?: They are part of the contract the hotel signed**
- **Does every reference use one approved sentence?: A sentence that renders the scope cannot mislead about it**
- **Does a reference appear only beside services within the scope?: Conformity applies only to the parts the system covers**
- **Have we excluded any wording that calls an event certified?: Only the system can conform, never the event**
- **Have we recorded the decision date and the expiry date?: Surveillance and recertification run from them**
- **Act on immediately. Say nothing until the body has decided, then read the scope before opening the mark, and compare it with the manual.**

- **Plan for. Approve one sentence naming standard, scope, site and body, map every surface where it may appear, and strike every claim about the hotel, its performance, its events or an accreditation that cannot be shown.**
- **Monitor going forward. Enter the decision date, the latest date for the first surveillance audit and the expiry date in the management calendar, and review all wording whenever the scope changes.**

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 4.9. 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.