Green Activities Programme
Terms of Participation and Service

GA-TC-001

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Replaces	Green Activities Terms of Service dated 4 October 2024

1 Purpose and acceptance of the terms

These terms set out the conditions for participation in the Green Activities programme, applying for certification, the validity of the certificate and use of the Green Activities label. They specify the rights and obligations of applicants and certificate holders and the main elements of the service provided by Going Green Oy.

Green Activities is a sustainability programme and certification scheme operating in Finland for tourism activity providers. The scheme is owned and administered by Going Green Oy.

The applicant accepts these terms by submitting a Green Activities application and confirming acceptance of the terms in the online application tool. The person submitting the application confirms that they are authorised to bind the applicant legal entity to these terms. The certificate holder is bound by the version of the terms in force at the time, as introduced in accordance with these terms.

2 Key definitions

Term	Definition
Applicant	A legal entity applying for a Green Activities certificate.
Certificate holder	A legal entity that has been awarded a valid Green Activities certificate by the Green Activities jury.
Scope of certification	The applicant's tourism activity operations, including the sites and locations where tourism animals are kept, as defined in the certification decision.
Auditor	*An auditor approved by Suomen ympäristöopisto SYKLI Oy who acts independently in the assessment, assesses compliance with the criteria and submits a recommendation for a decision to the jury.*
Jury	The body that independently makes Green Activities certification decisions and awards certificates.
Independent oversight body	Suomen ympäristöopisto SYKLI Oy, which oversees the scheme and handles appeals against the jury's certification decisions within the agreed scope.
Criteria	The current Green Activities criteria and the supplementary criteria guide.
Programme fee	The fee invoiced annually by Going Green Oy for participation in the programme and programme services.

3 Scope of application and scope of certification

3.1 Certified operator and site

The Green Activities certificate is awarded to a specified legal entity and covers its tourism activity operations. The certificate is site-specific. A site means the location of a company's place of business. Operations other than tourism activities are excluded from the certificate. However, the applicant may not exclude an individual service, group of services or location where animals are kept from certification if it forms part of the applicant's tourism activity operations. The certificate does not cover other legal entities in the same group, partners, other places of business or subcontractors.

3.2 Sites and locations where animals are kept

The applicant must state in the application all locations where the animals it uses in tourism activities are kept, and all declared locations must meet the applicable criteria. The scope of certification is specified in the certification decision and the certificate.

3.3 Restrictions on tourism activity operations

Tourism activities using motorised vehicles may account for no more than 50 per cent of the company's range of tourism activities in each season. This percentage is calculated on the basis of the number of different tourism activities regularly offered on the company's website and through other sales channels. The auditor also assesses whether the calculation reflects the actual volume of operations and the company's marketing profile. Any material discrepancy is recorded for assessment by the jury.

A Green Activities certificate cannot be awarded to a company offering the following tourism activities:

- sightseeing flights
- jet ski rides
- activities based on feeding wild animals, such as wildlife photography from hides
- hunting activities
- paintball
- motorised activities conducted off marked routes on land
- animal-based tourism activities for which the Green Activities scheme has no separate applicable criteria

4 Applicable documents and their order of precedence

In addition to these terms, the applicant and certificate holder are subject to the following documents as in force at the relevant time:

- the Green Activities criteria and criteria guide
- the Green Activities label and logo branding guideline
- the conditions and limitations recorded in the certification decision
- general interpretations of the criteria published by Going Green Oy, from their effective date

The Green Activities governance model, operating principles and procedures manual guide the work of those involved in the scheme. They do not, in themselves, impose new obligations on applicants that are not set out in these terms, the criteria, the label guidelines or the certification decision.

If the documents conflict, the obligations of the applicant and certificate holder are determined first by these terms, then by the criteria and then by the label guidelines. The certification decision may

specify the scope of the certificate and deadlines for corrective actions, but it may not impose unpublished general requirements.

5 Application and information provided by the applicant

The applicant must:

- complete the application carefully and provide accurate, up-to-date and sufficient information
- declare all tourism activities, locations where animals are kept and subcontractors providing tourism activities that fall within the scope of certification
- submit the requested documents and other evidence by the deadline
- ensure that all imperative criteria applicable to its operations are met and that the required percentage of applicable guideline criteria is achieved
- promptly report any material changes occurring while the application is being processed

The required percentage of guideline criteria is calculated solely on the basis of the guideline criteria applicable to the applicant's operations. For example, sled dog or tourism reindeer criteria are excluded from the calculation if the applicant does not carry out the relevant animal-based activities.

Submitting the application initiates the service and the obligation to pay, but does not guarantee that a certificate will be awarded. Providing inaccurate information, concealing material information or falsifying evidence may lead to rejection of the application or subsequent suspension or withdrawal of the certificate.

6 Selection of the auditor and the audit

6.1 Selection of the auditor

The applicant selects an auditor from the list of approved auditors maintained by Suomen ympäristöopisto SYKLI Oy. The same auditor may not carry out more than two consecutive audits without a particularly compelling reason, such as the availability of a qualified auditor. The auditor must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in relation to the operations being assessed. Any potential conflict of interest or other circumstance affecting impartiality must be reported promptly and, where necessary, the applicant must select another auditor from the list of approved auditors.

The auditor acts independently in performing the assessment. The applicant must not pressure the auditor, seek to influence the findings or offer any benefit intended to influence the outcome of the assessment.

6.2 Conducting the audit

The audit consists of a document review, an audit interview and an audit tour. The document review and audit interview may be conducted remotely. As a rule, the audit tour is conducted on site, but it may be omitted if all the following conditions are met:

- the company has no paid employees (for example, a sole entrepreneur working alone)
- the company has no animals used in tourism activities
- according to the safety document, the tourism activities offered by the company involve no significant physical safety risks
- the tourism activities are conducted indoors

When the above conditions are met, the audit may be conducted entirely remotely. In all other cases, the audit includes an on-site tour. The applicant must provide the access required for the assessment to premises, sites, locations where animals are kept, documents, information and personnel.

In addition to the auditor, a representative of the independent oversight body, an auditor trainer or a trainee auditor may participate in the audit, provided that the applicant is informed in advance. All participants are subject to confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements.

An additional audit or inspection visit may be conducted if the correction of a deficiency cannot be verified from the material submitted or if the nature of the operations so requires. The auditor records the findings, assesses the evidence of corrective actions and submits a certification recommendation to the jury. The auditor does not make the certification decision.

7 Certification decision and certificate validity

The Green Activities jury makes an independent certification decision on the basis of the auditor's findings, the audit report and other material. The jury may award or refuse a certificate, refer the matter back for further clarification, maintain the certificate, suspend it or withdraw it.

A certificate may be awarded when all imperative criteria applicable to the applicant are met, the percentage of applicable guideline criteria required for the certification period is achieved, the audit has been satisfactorily completed and any non-conformities have been addressed in a manner accepted by the jury.

The certificate is valid for two years from the date specified in the jury's decision, unless a shorter period of validity is specified in the decision for a justified reason. A full application is submitted every two years, and a simplified application is submitted in the intervening surveillance year.

The certificate is signed by the Green Activities Programme Director or the CEO of Going Green Oy as an administrative implementation of the jury's decision. The signatory may not alter the jury's decision.

8 Fees and cancellations

The applicant and certificate holder must pay the following in accordance with the current price list and agreed invoicing terms:

- the annual programme fee payable to Going Green Oy
- the fee for the audit and any additional audit
- the auditor's or inspector's necessary travel and accommodation expenses and daily allowances in accordance with the applicable terms
- the fee for inspection visits conducted during surveillance years at businesses with animals and, where applicable, their subcontractors

The participation period is 24 months, and Going Green Oy invoices it in two instalments at 12-month intervals. The audit fee is payable in audit years, and the auditor is entitled to invoice it before the audit. Inspection visits to businesses with animals are invoiced after the visit.

Fees are not refunded if a certificate is not awarded for reasons attributable to the applicant or deficiencies in its conformity, if the applicant discontinues the process or if the certificate holder relinquishes the certificate during the invoicing period.

If the applicant does not wish to continue after the first certification year, notice must be given no later than one month before the certification expires.

Fees charged for audit or assessment work do not depend on the outcome of the certification decision.

If an agreed audit or inspection visit is cancelled or postponed for a reason attributable to the applicant, the applicant is liable for the reasonable costs arising from the cancellation. The applicant must promptly report any impediment.

9 Obligations of the certificate holder

9.1 Maintaining conformity

Throughout the validity of the certificate, the certificate holder must meet all imperative criteria applicable to its operations and scope of certification, as well as the minimum percentage of guideline criteria required for the certification period. The criteria apply in accordance with their content and the implementation dates specified in them.

The certificate holder must also:

- implement the required corrective actions within the specified deadline
- submit the monitoring information requested annually by Going Green Oy through the online application tool
- promptly notify info@goinggreen.fi of changes to contact details
- keep information concerning the scope of certification up to date
- monitor customer feedback concerning certification requirements and retain the necessary records of its handling
- comply with the terms governing use of the certificate and the Green Activities label
- assist in investigating a substantiated complaint, report or oversight matter

9.2 Reporting non-conformities and changes

The certificate holder must notify Going Green Oy without undue delay of:

- failure to meet an imperative criterion
- falling below the minimum percentage of guideline criteria
- any other non-conformity that may affect the conditions for the certificate to remain valid
- any material change in operations, services, animal numbers, locations where animals are kept, subcontracting, ownership or organisation
- any action by an authority or serious incident relating to animal welfare, customer or employee safety, environmental damage or any other matter material to the credibility of certification

A serious non-conformity must be reported immediately. Any other non-conformity or material change must be reported no later than five working days after it is identified. The notification must describe the matter, its estimated impact on compliance with certification requirements and the corrective actions taken or planned.

Reporting a non-conformity does not in itself lead to suspension or withdrawal of the certificate. Its impact is assessed on the basis of the severity, extent, duration and recurrence of the non-conformity and the corrective actions taken. Failure to report may be treated as a separate breach of these terms.

10 Subcontracting

The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that its subcontractors meet the requirements for subcontracting set out in the criteria and these terms. Information and agreements concerning subcontractors must be made available for review during audits and oversight activities to the extent necessary to assess compliance with the requirements.

A certificate holder using animal-based tourism activities must include in its subcontracting agreements an obligation to comply with the applicable Green Activities imperative animal welfare criteria.

11 Oversight and inspection visits

During the validity of the certificate, the certificate holder must allow oversight measures in accordance with these terms. Going Green Oy may request documents and explanations and arrange an announced or unannounced inspection visit where necessary to assess compliance with the criteria, a report, a complaint, a material change or another justified need for oversight.

Businesses providing animal-based tourism activities receive one unannounced inspection visit during each certificate validity period. All locations where tourism animals owned by the company are kept fall within the scope of oversight. For sled dog operations, the inspection visit takes place in a different season from the main audit; for tourism reindeer operations, it may take place during the same season. Inspection visits are conducted in non-audit years in accordance with the transitional provisions for introducing the scheme.

The certificate holder must provide the inspector with access to the premises, locations where animals are kept, documents and information necessary for the assessment, and appoint a person responsible for the inspection. A record of the inspection is prepared. The jury decides on any consequences for the certificate.

If animal-based tourism activities provided by subcontractors account for at least 20 per cent of the certificate holder's total turnover from tourism activity operations, oversight includes a random sample of 20 per cent of those subcontractor companies, with a minimum of one company. An inspection visit to a subcontractor company forms part of oversight of the certificate holder's subcontracting chain. It does not constitute certification of the subcontractor or entitle the subcontractor to use the Green Activities label.

Inspection visits in non-audit years to businesses providing animal-based tourism activities will be carried out from 2027 onwards. The detailed schedule is determined on the basis of the certification decision and Going Green Oy's oversight plan.

12 Use of the certificate and the Green Activities label

The certificate holder may use the Green Activities certificate and label only while the certificate is valid, within the confirmed scope of certification and in the manner specified in the Green Activities label and logo guidelines.

In its communications, the certificate holder must clearly distinguish services included in the scope of certification from services it resells or procures from subcontractors that are not covered by certification. The certificate or label must not be used in a way that falsely presents a subcontractor, partner, another group company or a service outside the scope of certification as certified.

The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that claims concerning certification are accurate, up to date and verifiable. References to certification must not exaggerate the scope of the certificate or imply that the certificate has been issued by an authority or is accredited.

The right to use the label is suspended immediately upon suspension of the certificate and ends when the certificate is withdrawn, terminated or expires. In such cases, the holder must stop marketing that refers to certification and remove the label from electronic channels under its control without undue delay, and from its premises and other communications within a reasonable period specified by Going Green Oy.

13 Complaints reports and appeals

13.1 Complaints and reports

A complaint or report concerning the Green Activities scheme, a certificate holder, use of the label, an audit or the operation of the scheme may be submitted to Going Green Oy or through the scheme's published reporting channel. A report may concern, for example, the treatment of animals or employees, safety, environmental impacts, misuse of the label or another possible breach of certification requirements.

Going Green Oy investigates matters concerning a certified operator and use of the label. Where necessary, the auditor assesses the evidence concerning compliance with the criteria, and the jury decides on any consequences for the certificate. A matter concerning Going Green Oy's operations, the independence of the scheme or oversight is referred to the independent oversight body where necessary.

13.2 Appeals against certification decisions

The applicant or certificate holder may appeal in writing against a certification decision made by the jury within 30 days of receiving the decision. The appeal must identify the decision, the change sought, the grounds for the request and any additional evidence.

Suomen ympäristöopisto SYKLI Oy handles the appeal as the independent oversight body. It may uphold the decision, set it aside and refer the matter back to the jury for reconsideration, or require further assessment. Sykli does not itself award Green Activities certificates. An appeal does not suspend implementation of the decision unless Sykli orders otherwise for a justified reason.

14 Suspension withdrawal and voluntary relinquishment of the certificate

14.1 Suspension and withdrawal

The jury may suspend the certificate for a specified period or withdraw it if:

- the certification requirements are no longer met
- a serious or recurring non-conformity is not corrected within the specified deadline
- the certificate holder provides materially inaccurate information, conceals material information or falsifies evidence
- the certificate holder obstructs an audit, inspection visit or other justified oversight activity
- the certificate or Green Activities label is used in a materially misleading manner
- the certificate holder fails to fulfil a material reporting obligation
- the programme fee or another overdue certification-related payment remains unpaid despite a payment reminder
- the certificate holder otherwise acts in a manner that seriously jeopardises the credibility of certification

Before a decision is made, the certificate holder is given an opportunity to be heard, unless an immediate temporary restriction is necessary to safeguard animal welfare, safety, consumer protection or the credibility of certification. During suspension, the certificate and label must not be referred to as valid.

14.2 Voluntary relinquishment

The certificate holder may relinquish the certificate by notifying Going Green Oy in writing. The certificate and the right to use the label end on the date stated in the notification or, if no date is stated, when Going Green Oy receives the notification. Relinquishment does not remove payment or other obligations incurred before termination, and the programme fee paid will not be refunded.

15 Obligations of Going Green Oy

Going Green Oy:

- arranges for applications to be processed consistently and without undue delay
- guides applicants in selecting an auditor from the list of approved auditors maintained by Suomen ympäristöopisto SYKLI Oy and handles the administrative arrangements for consideration by the jury
- ensures that administrative preparation does not alter the auditor's findings or direct the jury's decision
- handles application, audit and decision material confidentially in accordance with the applicable obligations
- maintains public information on valid certifications and their material scope
- informs participants of material changes to the criteria and terms before they take effect
- corrects non-conformities it identifies within the scheme and cooperates with the independent oversight body

16 Confidentiality personal data and public information

Application documents, audit reports, business information, personal data and other non-public information are handled confidentially. Information is disclosed only to parties involved in handling the matter, to the independent oversight body to the extent required for its duties, or where required by law or an order issued by an authority.

Going Green Oy may publish and disclose to partner programmes the certificate holder's name, location, scope of certification, certificate validity period and other information necessary to verify the status of the certificate. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that information submitted for publication is accurate.

Personal data and certification records are retained in accordance with Going Green Oy's privacy notice, document management procedures and applicable legal and contractual obligations. Termination of certification does not require the immediate deletion of information needed to ensure the traceability of decisions, handle complaints or legal claims, or fulfil another justified obligation.

17 Responsibilities and limitation of liability

The Green Activities certificate indicates that the certificate holder's operations have been assessed against the Green Activities requirements applicable within the scope of certification and that the holder has an ongoing obligation to maintain conformity. The certificate is not a guarantee that the operations are free from deficiencies and does not release the certificate holder from its statutory, contractual or other responsibilities.

The certificate holder is responsible for its own operations, the safety of its services, the welfare of the animals it owns, the accuracy of the information it provides and the legality of its marketing. Going Green Oy is not liable for damage caused by the certificate holder to a customer or third party.

Going Green Oy is liable for its own breach of contract in accordance with applicable law. Going Green Oy is not liable for indirect damage unless the damage is caused intentionally or through gross negligence, or unless mandatory legislation provides otherwise.

18 Changes to the terms criteria and scope of certification

Going Green Oy may amend these terms and the criteria to develop the scheme, respond to regulation or oversight findings, or for another justified reason. Participants are notified of material changes a reasonable time before they take effect. The transition period for a significant change to the criteria is normally 6–12 months. A shorter transition period may be specified if required by law, safety, animal welfare or another compelling reason.

A technical correction, clarification or change that does not reduce a participant's rights or materially increase its obligations may be introduced on the announced date without separate acceptance. If a material amendment to the terms adversely affects the essential content of a participation period already paid for, the participant is given a reasonable opportunity to terminate participation before the amendment is applied, unless the amendment arises from mandatory regulation or an immediate safety or animal welfare need.

The certificate holder must obtain prior approval for any change that extends the scope of certification to new tourism activities, sites or locations where animals are kept. Going Green Oy assesses the need for further assessment, the auditor assesses compliance with the requirements and the jury confirms any material change in scope.

19 Duration and termination of the agreement

The participation agreement is concluded when the applicant submits the application and accepts these terms. The agreement remains in force until further notice, until the applicant discontinues the application process, the certificate holder relinquishes the certificate, participation is terminated in accordance with these terms or the parties otherwise agree in writing to terminate it.

The validity of the certificate and the duration of the programme participation agreement are separate matters. Termination of the certificate does not remove payment obligations, confidentiality obligations, obligations to cease using the label or other obligations incurred before termination that continue by their nature.

20 Governing law and disputes

These terms are governed by Finnish law. Disputes concerning the agreement will primarily be resolved through negotiation. If no settlement is reached, the contractual dispute will be heard by the district court for Going Green Oy's registered domicile. However, appeals against certification decisions made by the jury are primarily handled as described in section 13.2.

21 Transitional provisions

The transition period for the new scheme is 1 October 2026–1 December 2027.

During the transition period, a company may be awarded its first certificate under the new criteria for one year on the basis of a surveillance year application without an audit, provided that all the following conditions are met:

- the company holds a valid Green Activities certification
- it has been audited at least twice before the new criteria were introduced
- at least one audit was conducted between 1 October 2024 and 31 September 2026

After the transition period, the normal two-year certification cycle and audit requirement apply.