program description public GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0

1. Why does this certification program exist?

The certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 sets out, in a structured catalogue of criteria, the requirements in the areas of ecology, economy and social responsibility that must be met for the sustainable management of a catering establishment, and how evidence of compliance with these requirements is to be provided.

Successful certification under the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 demonstrates that, at the time of the audit, a company meets the minimum requirements defined in the certification program and that compliance has been verified by an independent certification body on the basis of evidence.

The certificate thus confirms the company's conformity with the requirements set out in the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 on the basis of a structured conformity assessment procedure and states:

> "With the grant of this certificate, the certified company has provided evidence that it is managed sustainably in environmental, economic and social terms in accordance with the requirements of the GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 standard."

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2. Who is the certification program aimed at?

The certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 is aimed at companies in the catering and communal catering sectors that fall under the Classification of Economic Activities (WZ 2008), in particular Section 56 'Catering'[1] , as well as the corresponding European classification system in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1893/2006 (NACE Rev. 2), Section I, Division 56 'Food service activities'[2] . These include, in particular, restaurants, chain restaurant concepts, catering companies and institutional catering facilities such as canteens, university canteens and staff restaurants. The scope of the certification program thus covers all forms of out-of-home catering in institutional and commercial contexts. Excluded from the scope are snack bars, cafés, and ice cream parlors, as well as pubs, night-clubs, bars, and other food and beverage establishments where alcohol is the primary focus. The certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 applies to both independently run companies and centrally managed companies within corporate groups.

The programme's geographical scope is global. The only countries excluded are those in which regulatory, political or security-related restrictions exist that make it impossible to carry out a certification process in accordance with the rules.

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[1] Federal Statistical Office (Destatis): Classification of Economic Activities, 2008 edition (WZ 2008), Section 56 'Catering'

[2] Regulation (EC) No 1893/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the statistical classification of economic activities NACE Rev. 2, Section I, Division 56 'Food and beverage service activities'

3. What aspects are assessed in the certification program?

The criteria catalogue of the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 comprehensively covers the three pillars of sustainability: ecology, social responsibility and economy. The catalogue is divided into the following ten core areas.

- Energy
- Water
- Waste
- Biodiversity & cultural heritage
- Procurement
- Local sourcing & mobility
- Social responsibility
- Quality management & sustainable development
- Management & Communication
- Economic Responsibility

The list of core areas does not follow any external guidelines or standard structures but has been developed based on practical relevance for food service establishments.

The assessment system of the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 assigns a score of between 10 and 60 points to each criterion. The score is based on the relative impact of the respective criterion on the relevant sustainability pillar. These scores are determined on the basis of a systematic assessment carried out by an internal panel of experts at GreenSign Institut GmbH.

The maximum possible scores for the three pillars of sustainability reflect a distribution of 60% ecology, 20% economy and 20% social aspects. From the perspective of the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0, this also reflects the political and societal perception of sustainability, with a significantly stronger focus on ecology.

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4. How are audits carried out against the certification program?

Certification is carried out by an independent certification body, which possesses the qualifications and competencies required by the certification program, through a structured audit process:

1. Certification requires a contractual basis between the certification body and the company. This contractual basis is established through a certification application submitted by the company, the assessment of the application with regard to scope and risk, and the acceptance of the certification application by the certification body.

2. Once the certification application has been accepted, the company is obliged to complete the criteria checklist for the GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 certification program and to provide the necessary verification documents (self-disclosure).
3. Once the self-disclosure has been submitted, the certification body verifies the information provided. The verification is carried out by a lead auditor, who arranges an on-site visit, prepares the audit, checks the evidence and documents their findings.
4. On site, the lead auditor verifies the company's information using the verification methodologies defined in the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0, confirms criteria that have been met, rejects criteria that cannot be verified, and documents all findings.
5. Once the audit has been completed, an independent review is carried out by a second auditor who has not been involved previously (the dual-control principle) to check the completeness, traceability and accuracy of the verification documentation.
6. Once the review has been completed, the results are evaluated in accordance with the evaluation system defined in the certification program. Based on this valuation, the certification body makes the certification decision through a committee or its management.

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5. When does a company receive a certificate?

A company receives the certificate if, as part of the certification process, it provides evidence that the requirements of the certification program **GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0** have been met.

When verifying a self-disclosure against the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0, the certification body must systematically classify all non-conformities.

If there is a major non-conformity, no certificate can be granted. Major non-conformities (disqualifying criteria) are

- scoring less than 50% of the total possible points under the GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 certification program

If no major non-conformities (disqualifying criteria) are identified, a certificate is granted. Other non-conformities (non-disqualifying criteria) are recorded in the audit report and do not influence the certification decision. Non-conformities (non-disqualifying criteria) are:

- scoring less than 100 per cent of the total possible points under the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0

6. When is a company permitted to display the certificate?

A company may use the certification and the corresponding certification symbols, such as the GreenSign Gastro logo, provided that a valid certificate is in place and the company continues to meet the requirements of the certification program.

During the certification period, the certification body must require the company to report immediately any operational changes that may affect the certification decision.

The certification body must also ensure that reports from third parties regarding possible non-conformities at certified companies can be received, documented and investigated in accordance with a defined procedure.

Use of the certification is subject to compliance with the relevant terms of use.

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7. When can a certificate be revoked?

A certificate must be revoked during its period of validity if

- it is established during a scheduled surveillance audit that key requirements of the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 are no longer being met
- an unscheduled monitoring visit is carried out following a report by a third party, and it is established during this visit that key requirements of the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 are no longer being met
- an unscheduled monitoring visit is carried out following a report by the company, and it is established during this monitoring visit that the relevant requirements of the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 are no longer being met.

Apart from the withdrawal of the certificate and, consequently, the withdrawal of the rights to use the certificate and the corresponding logos, the certification program GreenSign Gastro v. 2.0 does not provide for the suspension or restriction of a certificate.