

# The climate crisis: hospitality's new reality

**F**rom devastating wildfires to widespread flooding, the hospitality industry is increasingly on the front line of climate change. This is not a distant scenario but a pressing, daily reality. Hotels, restaurants, bars, and cafés are facing unprecedented challenges, and it is crucial that they take swift action to mitigate climate risks and safeguard their customers, staff, and local communities.

As the umbrella association for the European hospitality industry, HOTREC is fully committed to supporting the sector's competitive green transition with concrete initiatives by:

- **Building Climate Resilience & Achieving Net Zero:** In 2023, we launched *A Roadmap to Net Zero for European Hospitality*, offering clear guidelines and methodologies to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint and embrace greener operations. We also published *Guidelines on Climate Resilience*, equipping hospitality establishments with tools to prepare for and respond to climate-related disasters – ensuring that businesses are ready in the face of increasing climate volatility.
- **Promoting Sustainability & Circularity:** HOTREC is dedicated to promoting sustainable business models across the sector. In collaboration with private sector partners, we co-signed the *Rhodes Declaration*, a unified roadmap for embedding sustainability principles throughout the tourism industry. Circularity plays a pivotal role in this strategy, as we aim to reduce waste and promote resource-efficient practices.

- **Reducing Carbon Footprint:** In partnership with the EU, we are developing *Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR)* for the accommodation sector. This EU-funded initiative will standardise the way businesses calculate and compare their environmental impact, helping the sector substantiate sustainability claims while contributing to the EU's wider climate goals.

- **Global Commitments:** On the international stage, HOTREC is a signatory of the *Glasgow Declaration*, affirming our pledge to halve emissions by 2030. We are also active participants in the EU's *Transition Pathway for Tourism*, guiding the sector towards a sustainable future.

Reaching these ambitious goals requires the European Union's full support. The hospitality sector employs 10 million people across 2 million businesses in Europe, with 9 in 10 being micro-enterprises. Many of these small businesses lack the resources to independently navigate the complexities of the green transition.

HOTREC calls on EU policymakers to take decisive action by:

- **Cutting Red Tape:** EU legislation must encourage, not hinder, innovation. A streamlined regulatory environment will allow hospitality businesses to focus on sustainability initiatives rather than getting bogged down by cumbersome compliance processes and reporting obligations. Policies such as the Green Claims Directive, Packaging Waste Regulation, and Food Waste Reduction Targets must provide clear, achievable goals while

avoiding excessive regulatory burden that could stifle growth and innovation in the sector.

- **Supporting Infrastructure Investment:** Meeting sustainability targets will require substantial financial investment, particularly for infrastructure upgrades. EU funding and subsidies are critical to enable businesses, especially micro-enterprises, to adopt greener technologies, improve energy efficiency, and implement waste reduction systems. Without this support, many small businesses will struggle to meet their sustainability goals.

By enabling the right conditions for success, the EU can help ensure that the hospitality industry not only survives in the face of climate change but leads the way in creating a more sustainable and resilient future for Europe.

**Hotrec**  
Hospitality Europe

