

Marriott and Brazilian State of Amazonas Partner to Protect Rainforest

2008-04-08

Global Lodging Leader Announces Integrated Strategy to Address Climate Change

Marriott International, Inc. (NYSE:MAR) and the state of Amazonas today signed an agreement to support the first project of its kind to help protect 1.4 million acres of endangered rainforest. This innovative partnership between government and the private sector is one of the first in the world to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation. Marriott has committed \$2 million to fund an environmental management plan administered by the newly created Amazonas Sustainable Foundation. By year end, Marriott guests and group customers will also be able to offset the greenhouse gas emissions generated from their hotel stays by contributing to this rainforest fund. In addition to offering this carbon offset, Marriott is taking new steps to reduce the company's water, waste and energy consumption, green its supply chain, build greener hotels, and engage employees and guests to take action.

"At Marriott, we believe the future of business is green," says Arne Sorenson, Chief Financial Officer and co-chair of the company's Green Council. "Building on a 20-year track record of responsible energy consumption and waste reduction, we believe rainforest preservation is critical to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change."

"This is the first project on reducing emissions from deforestation in Brazil and one of the first in the world," said Amazonas Governor Eduardo Braga. "This agreement between the government of Amazonas and Marriott will make history because it demonstrates how rainforest preservation can be used as a climate strategy."

To reduce and offset its global environmental footprint, which it has calculated at 2.9 million metric tons of CO2 emissions annually*-or .030 metric tons (65.5 pounds) per available room -Marriott has developed a five- point strategy in collaboration with Conservation International, a global conservation organization. This includes:

Carbon Offsets ... Protecting the Rainforest - Help protect the 1.4 million acre (589,000 hectares) Juma Sustainable Development reserve, an area rich in biodiversity. The burning and clearing of tropical rainforests causes more carbon emissions than all the world's cars, trains, SUVs and trucks combined.

Under the agreement signed today, Marriott and its customers will contribute to a fund to be administered by the newly created Amazonas Sustainable Foundation, which, together with the State of Amazonas, will monitor and enforce the protection of the reserve. The project will support employment, education and healthcare for the reserve's approximately 500 residents. The Foundation is seeking certification of the conservation project by an independent accredited environmental auditing firm under the internationally recognized Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards.

Water, Waste and Energy - Further reduce fuel and water consumption by 25 percent per available room over the next 10 years, and install solar power at up to 40 hotels by 2017. Expand existing "reduce, reuse, recycle" programs already in place at 90 percent of hotels to consistently include guest and meeting rooms, beginning with pilot hotels across all brands in Boston, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Washington, D.C.

Supply Chain - Engage the company's top 40 vendors to supply price- neutral greener products across 12 categories of its \$10 billion supply chain. Some of the first products to be rolled out are annual purchases of 47 million BIC Ecolutions(TM) pens designed for Marriott, made from pre-consumer recycled plastic, more than 1 million gallons of low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) paint, and 1 million "room-ready" towels by Standard Textile, which saves 6 million gallons of water annually by eliminating the initial wash cycle. Other items under consideration include compostable key cards, recyclable carpet, and more responsibly packaged soaps and shampoos.

Green Buildings - Empower our hotel development partners to site, design and construct new hotels according to green standards by updating Marriott design guidelines in line with the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards by the end of 2009. The company expects to expand its portfolio of LEED-certified hotels, which already includes The Inn & Conference Center by Marriott at the University of Maryland, across all Marriott brands.

The company is pursuing LEED-Existing Building status for its headquarters building in Bethesda, Md., by the end of 2009. Recently, Marriott headquarters, along with its timeshare division based in Orlando, Fla., replaced more than 2.5 million pieces of Styrofoam and plastic utensils with those made of potato ("SpudWare(TM)"), sugar cane and cornstarch-all fully biodegradable within an average of 100 days.

Employee and Guest Engagement - Educate and inspire employees and guests to support the environment through their everyday actions at home, while at work and on travel. The company is introducing a "green meeting" program for its major meeting planners this May, and will offer its employees on business travel the Hertz Green Collection- including hybrid rental vehicles with SmartWay certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The company will expand its communications and education program to all employees worldwide, including its second annual Green Fair at its headquarters building on April 17.

"With thousands of hotels around the world, Marriott has the scale to make a strong positive contribution to the environment," says Glenn Prickett, Senior Vice President and Executive Director, Center for Environmental Leadership in Business, Conservation International. "By reducing its own environmental footprint and protecting forests, Marriott is

addressing the major drivers of climate change -- energy use and deforestation -- while also delivering compelling environmental and sustainable development benefits. We take pride in working with Marriott and other leading companies to identify meaningful ways to address climate change."

"We are all guests on this planet, and that's why an integrated green strategy is a business imperative," says Kathleen Matthews, Executive Vice President of Global Communications and Public Affairs and co-chair of Marriott's Green Council.

Marriott has been actively involved in energy conservation for more than 20 years, and over the last decade, replaced 450,000 light bulbs with fluorescent lighting, introduced linen reuse programs, and installed 400,000 low-flow showerheads and toilets at its hotels worldwide. The company has also helped communities around the world through environmental clean-up projects. These industry-leading efforts have been recognized by the EPA, which awarded Marriott with its 2008 Sustained Excellence award and placed the ENERGY STAR(R) label on more than 250 of its hotels (the most of any hotel company).

* Calculating Marriott's Carbon Footprint: To calculate its footprint, the company assessed the electricity and gas consumption in its guest rooms and public spaces at its nearly 1,000 managed hotels worldwide, headquarters building and regional offices. Employee travel was also included. The calculation will be certified by a recognized third party in the coming months.

For more details about this announcement, visit www.marriott.com/environment.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

The URL for this story is:

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article31957.html>

© 1998 - 2008 Nevistas and the author.

Brought to you by Hotel News Resource

Distribute your news on our Network

See what all the buzz is about at:

http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/Info-news_account_info.html