

# BLUE FLAG MARINA CRITERIA AND EXPLANATORY NOTES 2015



## INTRODUCTION

The Blue Flag Programme for marinas and beaches is run by the non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education). The Blue Flag programme was started in France in 1985. It has been operating in Europe since 1987 and in areas outside of Europe since 2001, when South Africa joined. Today, Blue Flag has become a truly global programme with an ever-increasing number of countries participating in the programme.

The Blue Flag programme promotes sustainable development in freshwater and marine areas. It challenges local authorities and beach operators to achieve high standards in water quality, environmental management, environmental education and safety. Over the years, the Blue Flag programme has become a highly respected and recognised eco-label working to bring together the tourism and environmental sectors at local, regional and national levels.

The explanatory notes given in this document make up the common and shared understanding of the Blue Flag marina criteria and the requirements for the implementation thereof. The explanatory notes provide details on the measurement and management of compliance with the Blue Flag criteria for marinas.

The criteria are categorised as either imperative or guideline. Most criteria are imperative, which means that the marina must comply with them in order to be awarded Blue Flag accreditation. If they are guideline criteria, it is preferable that they are complied with, but not mandatory. For some criteria, there are slight variations in different regions of the world.

It must be emphasized that the Blue Flag marina criteria in this document are the minimum requirement. A national programme can choose to have stricter criteria to what is outlined here.

These marina criteria and explanatory notes are to be used by all Blue Flag applicant marinas to understand the requirements that must be met before the marina can receive Blue Flag accreditation. For guidance purposes, this document should also prove valuable for the management of marinas already accredited with Blue Flag status.

The marina criteria and explanatory notes also serve as a guide for the National, Regional and International Blue Flag Juries when making decisions about a Blue Flag marina candidate.

If a marina that has Blue Flag accreditation does not comply with the Blue Flag criteria, the flag may be permanently or temporarily withdrawn from the marina. There are several degrees of non-compliance:

1. A **minor** non-compliance is where there is a problem with only one criterion of minor consequence to the health and safety of the marina user or to the environment. When minor compliance occurs and can be immediately rectified, the flag is not withdrawn and the non-compliance is only registered in the control visit report. If however, a minor compliance cannot be fixed immediately, the marina is given 10 days in which to comply fully with all criteria. The flag is withdrawn until all problems are rectified and it is noted on the Blue Flag homepage.
2. **Multiple non-compliances** relates to non-compliance of two to three criteria but of minor consequence to the health and safety of the marina user or to the environment. When multiple non-compliances occur, the marina is given 10 days in which to comply fully with all criteria, the flag is withdrawn until all the problems are rectified and the homepage is updated accordingly.
3. **Major** non-compliance is where the marina does not comply with one or several criteria, the result of which can have consequence to the health and safety of the marina user or to the environment, as well as the general perception of the marina and therefore the

Programme. When met with major non-compliance, the flag is withdrawn immediately and for the rest of the season. The site is registered as 'withdrawn' on the Blue Flag homepage, and the marina information board should clearly indicate that Blue Flag status has been withdrawn.

In all cases of non-compliance, the National Operator must immediately inform the local authority/marina operator about the observed areas of non-compliance. Information about the reason for a withdrawal of the flag must be posted clearly at the marina. The local authority/marina operator must inform the National Operator of re-compliance with the criteria and present the appropriate documentation needed. The flag can then be raised at the marina again. The National Operator should also consider a follow-up control visit to check that the marina does comply. In the event that the local authority/marina operator does not ensure and document re-compliance with the criteria within 10 days, the National Operator must ensure that the Blue Flag is withdrawn for the rest of the season at the marina.

In the event that conditions on the marina change and the flag has to be temporarily withdrawn, e.g. when climatic events cause damage to the marina or an emergency arises, the marina management must inform the National Operator that the flag has been temporarily withdrawn. and the international website must be changed accordingly.

Apart from updating the Blue Flag homepage of the status of the marina, the National Operator must inform the International Coordination about the non-compliance. If the non-compliance is noted at by an international controller, the National Operator has to give feedback to the International Coordination within 30 days.

The applicant for Blue Flag accreditation is the authority charged with responsibility for the marina. This may be a local municipality, private hotel, national park, or private marina operator. A marina may be eligible for Blue Flag accreditation if it is a designated bathing area and it has the necessary facilities and services to comply with the Blue Flag criteria.

FEE, and the National Operator in a country, reserves the right to refuse or withdraw Blue Flag accreditation from any marina where the local authority/marina operator is responsible for violations of national environmental regulations or otherwise acts in discord with the objectives and spirit of the Blue Flag programme. Blue Flag marinas are subject to announced and/or unannounced control visits by FEE International.

## **DEFINITION OF A BLUE FLAG MARINA**

A Blue Flag marina must be a marina with pontoons or piers for pleasure boats. It can be part of a larger harbour with other activities, if the Blue Flag marina is clearly separated from other harbour activities. The marina can be located in marine or inland waters. The marina must have the necessary facilities to comply with the Blue Flag criteria. The marina must appoint a person to be responsible for communications on all matters relating to the Blue Flag programme. The marina must be accessible for unannounced inspection by FEE.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION**

### **1. Information relating to local eco-systems and environmental phenomena must be available to marina users**

The aim of this criterion is to ensure that the marina users and boaters are well informed and educated about the eco-systems and sensitivity of the surrounding environment, and that they are motivated to learn about and experience this environment in a responsible way.

The information about the coastal zone eco-system and nearby sensitive, natural areas and marine areas (including Marine Protected Areas) must be publicly displayed on the information board at the marina. Nearby sensitive areas are defined as areas within walking distance from the marina (a few kilometres) and nearby sensitive, natural marine areas are defined as coastal or inland areas easily reached by boat (within the distance frequently sailed by the users of the marina). The information should include both the information about the sensitive area and, in cases where it is possible to visit the sensitive area, a code of conduct for activities within the area should be included. Details must also be provided about sensitive marine areas to avoid when sailing or mooring.

It is particularly important for applicants with marinas located in natural settings to pay close attention to this criterion. If there are no particularly sensitive areas nearby, information about the general surrounding eco-systems should be posted.

Other general environmental information about the surrounding environment could also be appropriate and could demonstrate the environmental commitment of the marina.

Some sites at/near the Blue Flag marina may be very sensitive and require special management. In these cases, the marina operator is strongly encouraged to consult an appropriate conservation organisation for advice on how to manage these sites. Where areas require special management, at the time of application, the applicant must provide confirmation that this consultation has taken place and that a management plan will be implemented.

In exceptional cases, the sensitivity of certain natural areas may precludes them from being included in the information posted at the marina, due to the fact that such information could increase the number of visitors to the area and possibly endanger wildlife or impact on habitats.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

### **2. A code of conduct that reflects appropriate laws governing the use of the marina and surrounding areas must be displayed at the marina (i).**

A code of environmental conduct should cover the following issues:

- Use of the reception facilities for hazardous waste / oil waste, etc.
- Use of the garbage containers / litter bins / waste recycling facilities
- Respect for sensitive protected natural areas
- Avoidance of sensitive protected areas where sailing is prohibited
- Use of the boat-repairing and washing areas according to the prescriptions
- Prohibition of emptying litterbins, toilet tank waste, etc. into the marina, sea or along the coast
- Use of the toilet tank waste facilities

The code of conduct must be posted on the information board. In addition, the code of conduct can be distributed to boatowners (leaflet form) when possible, and could also be available on the marina website.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

### **3. Information about the Blue Flag marina programme and/or the Blue Flag marina criteria and other FEE eco-label must be displayed in the marina**

Information about the Blue Flag programme must be displayed on the information board. The correct Blue Flag logo must be used, in accordance with the FEE branding guidelines. The essence of each of the four categories of Blue Flag criteria must be explained. It is strongly recommended that the entire list of criteria is available at the marina for interested visitors. Furthermore, contact details of the international Blue Flag Coordination, the national Blue Flag operator and the local person responsible for the marina must be displayed. Visitors should be encouraged to contact the relevant authority if they come across any non-compliance with the Blue Flag marina criteria.

Blue Flag beaches and marinas must promote the Green Key programme as another eco-label FEE programme with a message such as: "Along with the Blue Flag, the Foundation for Environmental Education also develops another eco-label for accommodations: Green Key. Find more information at: [www.green-key.org](http://www.green-key.org)."

The information posted on the information board should also include the duration of the Blue Flag season and on what basis a marina can receive Blue Flag accreditation.

The following information about the Blue Flag programme could be useful when preparing the information to be posted at the information board:

#### **The Blue Flag programme:**

This marina has been awarded a Blue Flag. The Blue Flag is an environmental award given to marinas making a special effort to implement sound management with respect to the local environment and nature, and providing users with information on environmental issues. To attain the Blue Flag, the marina has to comply with a number of criteria concerning environmental information and education, environmental management, safety and service facilities, and water quality.

The Blue Flag is awarded by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non-governmental environmental organisation and is represented by national organisations in each of the participating countries in Europe, the Caribbean, New Zealand and South Africa. Along with the Blue Flag, FEE also develops another eco-label for accommodations: Green Key. Find more information at: [www.green-key.org](http://www.green-key.org)

- The Blue Flag is an environmental award for beaches and marinas
- The Blue Flag is concerned with four main areas:
  - 1) Environmental education and information
  - 2) Environmental management
  - 3) Safety and service facilities
  - 4) Water quality
- The Blue Flag is only awarded for one season at a time and the award is only valid as long as the criteria are fulfilled. When this is not the case, the persons responsible at local level must remove the Blue Flag
- The national FEE organisation conducts control visits to the Blue Flag sites during the season.

#### **You can help the programme by also taking action to protect the environment:**

- Follow instructions of the code of conduct at the marina

- Use environmentally-friendly products for paints, detergents, chemicals etc.
- Report any pollution or other violations of environmental regulations to the authorities
- Save water, electricity and fuel
- Encourage other sailors to take care of the environment

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

#### **4. The marina is responsible for offering at least three environmental education activities to the users and staff of the marina**

Environmental education activities promote the aims of the Blue Flag programme by:

- Increasing the awareness of, and care for, the aquatic environment by recreational users and inhabitants of the marina and adjacent areas.
- Providing training in environmental matters and best practice methods to marina personnel, suppliers to the marina and other tourist services operating in the area of the marina
- Encouraging the participation of local stakeholders in local ecosystem management
- Promoting sustainable recreation and tourism in the area
- Promoting sharing of ideas and efforts between the Blue Flag programme and other FEE programmes (YRE, LEAF, Eco-Schools and Green Key).

The planned activities for the coming season must be included in the application form, as well as information about the environmental education activities carried out during the previous Blue Flag season (if applicable).

There must be at least three different activities offered by the marina and carried out within the Blue Flag season. The activities should focus on the environment, environmental issues, Blue Flag issues or sustainability issues.

The education activities should be effective and relevant. It is recommended that the marina management should re-evaluate the activities implemented in previous seasons and work towards constantly improving them.

If specific environmental areas (including Marine Protected Areas) exist near a Blue Flag marina (e.g. mangroves, sea grass beds), it is strongly recommended that 1 or 2 environmental activities deal with these sensitive, natural areas.

#### **Types of Activities**

There must be a mix of different types of educational activities carried out by the marina. The different types of activities can be divided into five categories:

Activities for Passive Participation: This could include exhibitions, demonstrations, films, presentations, slide shows, conferences, debates, presentations by international experts, etc.

Activities for Active Participation: This includes guided tours, educational games, theatre/plays, cleaning days, photography or drawing competitions, nature reconstruction projects, recycling projects, green technology projects, community coastal monitoring programmes, etc.

Training Activities: This could be training for boaters or marina staff, people in charge of children groups, contractors, specific national training programmes, etc.

Publishing and Media: The production of leaflets, stickers, interpretive signs, postcards, school and municipal newsletters, books, T-shirts, bags, posters, radio broadcasts, etc.

Blue Flag Environmental Information Centre: This is a place where specific information about Blue Flag and environmental education issues can be provided. Such a centre or place should offer both activities and exhibitions and provide environmental and nature information in order to

qualify as an environmental interpretation or education centre. Information about its location and activities is provided at the marina or in nearby tourist information offices.

**Target groups**

The activities should be addressed to a wide range of different target groups. These target groups could be visitors, boaters, workers, locals, other tourism employees, fishermen, local industries, etc.

The types, amounts and target groups of activities should match the situation. For example, in a major tourist destination, more than one activity per season should be available to the general public.

**Connection with existing programmes**

It is recommended that the marina work with other groups, NGO's, with local Blue Flag beaches or with participants of other FEE programmes, with experts and universities to help set up and implement the activities.

**Information about activities**

Information about the publicly accessible activities must be made available at the marina and preferably also in tourism newspapers or magazines or posted in tourism offices. The published information should include: what kind of activities, when and where are they going to take place, who they are for, etc.

**Not Acceptable**

Activities that are not acceptable for meeting this criterion are activities that:

- are done to meet other Blue Flag criteria such as the general cleaning of the marina, waste management, recycling, etc.
- focus only on tourism without a specific focus on sustainable tourism
- are otherwise done by the marina as part of the standard management of health, safety, or tourism.

**Examples**

Examples of good educational activities can be found downloaded from the Blue Flag international website ([www.blueflag.org](http://www.blueflag.org)).

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**5. The individual Blue Flag for boat owners is offered through the marina**

The management at the marina must offer the Individual Blue Flag for Boat Owners at the marina office. The individual Blue Flag is a small flag offered (given or purchased) to boat owners who commit themselves to an environmental code of conduct. Both national and foreign boat owners are eligible for the Individual Blue Flag.

The exact content of the environmental code of conduct varies from country to country, but they should, at least, contain the following:

- I will not throw garbage into the sea or along the coast
- I will not release waste water into the sea, in coastal waters or sensitive areas
- I am using a holding tank for the collection of toilet waste on board
- I will not release poisonous or toxic waste (oil, paint, used batteries, cleaning agents, etc.) into the sea. I will safely dispose of these wastes in containers provided in the marina/harbour.
- I will promote and use recycling facilities (glass, paper, etc.)
- I will use the most environmentally-friendly products (paints, anti-foulings, paint remover, detergents, chemicals etc.) available
- I will instantly report pollution or other violations of environmental regulations to the authorities
- I will not use illegal fishing practices and I will respect periods when fishing is prohibited

- I will protect animals and plants in the sea, including not disturbing breeding birds, seals or other marine mammals
- I will respect sensitive and natural protected areas
- I will avoid anchoring in sensitive areas
- I will avoid disturbing fishery or fishing gear
- I will be respectful and considerate to other people and the environment
- I will not buy or use objects made from protected/endangered species or from archaeological underwater findings
- I will encourage other sailors to take care of the environment

The code of conduct should require the name, signature and address of the boat owner and must also contain the name and address of the national office or the International Coordination. If the boat owner hands in the Code of Conduct to the marina management, they should send it to the national operator who will then send the flag to the boat owner. Alternatively, the boat owner can send it directly to either the national or International Coordination. All boat owners flying the Blue Flag will have their name and addresses registered at the national operator.

The marina must offer the environmental code of conduct at the marina office, clubhouse or shop. If there is no national version of the environmental code of conduct available, the international version should be presented. In addition, information about the Individual Blue Flag for Boat Owners must be displayed on the information board.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

### **6. A marina management committee should be established to be in charge of instituting environmental management systems and conducting regular environmental audits of the marina facility**

The marina management committee should consist of all the relevant stakeholders at the local level. Relevant stakeholders could include representatives from: the local authority, local tourism, sailing organizations, Marine Protected Area representant, educational representative, local environmental NGO, etc.

The marina management committee should cooperate with the marina manager to institute the environmental management system and to conduct regular environmental audits of the marina. The committee is furthermore jointly charged with ensuring compliance with other environmental management criteria.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

### **7. The marina must have an environmental policy and an environmental plan. The plan should include references to water management, waste and energy consumption, health and safety issues, and the use of environmentally-friendly products wherever possible**

This criterion encourages the marina to investigate the environmental loads entering the marina, to plan and perform the improvements of the environmental conditions at the marina, and finally, to document these improvements. The criterion therefore, not only aims to encourage marinas to get an overview of the environmental situation – but also to focus on the action that needs to be taken. Planning and improving the environmental conditions at the marina can - at the same time - have a positive effect on the economy of the marina.

The marinas participating in the Blue Flag programme are very different in size and capacity. See *Appendix A* for two suggestions on how to comply with this criterion

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

### **8. Sensitive area management.**

Some sites at/near the Blue Flag marina may be very sensitive and require special management. In these cases, the marina operator is strongly encouraged to consult an appropriate conservation organisation or expert for advice on how to manage these sites. Where areas require special management, at the time of application, the applicant must provide confirmation that this consultation has taken place and that a management plan will be implemented.

In or near a Marine Protected Area, it is necessary to consult with the MPA management in order to ensure compatible ecosystem conservation and biodiversity goals.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

### **9. Adequate and properly identified, segregated containers must be in place for the storage of hazardous wastes. The wastes have to be handled by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facility for hazardous wastes**

The facilities for hazardous waste must provide segregated, properly identified containers for the collection of all relevant hazardous waste (e.g. paints, solvents, boat scraping, antifouling agents, batteries, waste oil, flares, etc.) in segregated containers that are properly identified. It is obligatory to have segregated facilities for at least three (3) different types of hazardous waste.



The facilities for receiving hazardous waste must be functional. In locating and choosing storage facilities, consideration should be given to aesthetics as well. The capacity of the containers, the number of users of the marina and how frequently the containers are emptied, determine the number of containers placed in the marina.

The facilities for receiving hazardous waste must be clean and environmentally-safe, i.e. the containers must be suitable to contain the hazardous waste and the floor on which the containers stand must be concrete, a metal tray or of another solid material. The waste must be prevented from leaking, ignition, exploding, etc. They should be separated from other facilities and must not pose a danger to children. Wherever possible, the facilities should not be located close to the water. In the event of an accidental spillage, the area around the containers must be cleaned up immediately and rehabilitated as a matter of priority. The oil reception facilities should preferably include mobile oil reception facilities.

Licensed disposal facilities means facilities approved by authorities on the basis of environmental requirements. To ensure the correct collection, sorting, storage and disposal of the waste, the marina must comply with national/international waste management plans/standards (in Europe according to the EU Directive 2000/59/EC of 27 November 2000). The duty of the marina receiving Blue Flag accreditation is to ensure that the waste is properly disposed of. Licensed carriers must transport the hazardous waste to the licensed facility.

In the case of small and/or remote marinas (less than 150 berths) who find it impossible to deal with hazardous waste due to an inability to responsibly dispose of the waste, it is permissible to negotiate with another marina in the vicinity of their marina that has the facilities to recover and dispose of hazardous waste. If this neighbouring marina can deal with the hazardous waste of the small and remote marina, then it can accept the hazardous waste from the boating clients of the small and remote marina. However, this must be stipulated on the marina information board as well as in the marina's information package to all visiting boaters. A written agreement needs to be signed between the two marinas, however it remains the responsibility of the Blue Flag marina to ensure that the waste is properly managed.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**10. Adequate and well-managed litterbins and/or garbage containers must be placed. The wastes are handled by a licensed contractor and disposed of at a licensed facility**

All the land areas of the marina itself should appear clean with regularly emptied litter bins / garbage containers. Also restaurants, shops, green areas, etc. in the marina must be kept clean.

Litterbins and/or garbage containers should be functional and attractive. Consideration should be given to aesthetics as well as functionality. If possible, it is also recommended that litterbins should be made of environmentally-friendly products.

An adequate number of litterbins/garbage containers should be present, depending on the number of users of the marina, the capacity of the litterbins/garbage containers and how frequently they are emptied.

Licensed disposal facilities means facilities approved by authorities on the basis of environmental requirements. The duty of the marina receiving Blue Flag accreditation is to make sure that its waste is properly disposed of. Licensed carriers must transport the waste to the licensed facility.

To ensure the correct collection, sorting, storage and disposal of the hazardous waste, the marina must comply with national/international waste management plans/standards (in Europe according to the EU Directive 2000/59/EC of 27 November 2000).

The marina must ensure a cleaning of the area as often as needed (could be every day). In the case of severe pollution coming from outside, such pollution must immediately be removed according to the procedures in the emergency plan (criterion 18). In very severe cases, it can be necessary to withdraw the Blue Flag temporarily explaining the reasons for the withdrawal on the information board.

At the same time, it is important in the code of environmental conduct (criterion no. 2) to educate the marina users not to throw garbage, empty toilet tanks etc. into the marina or the sea.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**11. The marina must have facilities for receiving recyclable waste materials, such as bottles, cans, paper, plastic, organic material, etc.**

In the marina, emphasis should be placed on waste minimisation. Waste should be separated to the largest possible extent into different categories and recycled.

Separation could include glass, cans, paper, plastic, organic material, etc. The marina must have facilities for receiving at least three different kinds of recyclable waste materials. To facilitate use, the containers must be well labelled, and if appropriate, in different languages.

Information about how to separate the recyclable waste should be provided at the location of the recycling facility or at the information board.

The marina receiving Blue Flag accreditation has the duty to ensure that its recyclable waste is properly recycled. Licensed carriers must transport the waste to the recycling facility.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**12. Bilge water pumping facilities should be available at the marina**

The bilge water pumping facilities should be able to separate the oily bilge water or water extraction from oily residues.

The bilge water pumping facilities can be provided within the marina or in very close proximity to the marina. The facilities must be easily accessible for all potential users.

In the case of a small and/or remote marina (less than 150 berths), the possibility of sharing this facility with a neighbouring marina is permitted. In this case, the information must be very clear on the information board as well as to all clients of the marina. A written agreement needs to be signed between the two marinas, however it remains the responsibility of the Blue Flag marina to ensure that the bilge pumping facilities are properly managed.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

**13. Toilet tank waste reception facilities must be present in the marina**

The toilet tank waste reception facilities may consist of a permanent toilet pumping station, a mobile toilet pumping facility or a sludge pumping van.

The toilet pumping facilities can be located within the marina or in very close proximity to the marina. The facilities must be easily accessible to boat owners.

The permanent toilet pumping facilities must be centrally located in the marina, easily accessible for all boats (including those boats requiring more space and depth).

The toilet tank waste reception facilities must comply with the national legislation.

In the case of a small and/or remote marina (less than 150 berths), the possibility of sharing this facility with a neighbouring marina is permitted. Additionally, a small and/or remote marina can also offer the services of a contractor to take care of this. In both cases, the information must be very clear on the information board as well as to all clients of the marina. A written agreement needs to be signed between the two marinas, or the Blue Flag marina and the contractor, however it remains the responsibility of the Blue Flag marina to ensure that the toilet tank reception facilities are properly managed.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**14. All buildings and equipment must be properly maintained and be in compliance with national legislation. The marina must be well integrated into the surrounding natural and built environment**

The marina (including all the buildings and equipment) must be well maintained and must comply with national and international legislation. The marina must have all the necessary permits to act as a marina.

If a new marina with more than 500 berths is to be constructed or an existing marina is to be extended by more than 250 berths, an Environmental Impact Assessment must be conducted.

Other buildings/facilities at the marina (including shops, restaurants, cranes, playgrounds etc.) must be clean, safe, properly maintained and in compliance with the legislation. No unauthorised pollution from buildings/facilities must enter the marina land, water or surroundings.

It is strongly recommended that the marina uses environmentally-friendly equipment and products in the buildings whenever possible. Green areas at the marina should also be properly maintained in an environmentally-friendly way (without the use of pesticides, etc.).

Consideration should be given to the general appearance of the marina. It must be well integrated within the surrounding natural and built environment, should give consideration to design standards and meet environmental and aesthetic requirements. It is not the intention that all Blue Flag marinas become identical; marinas should be encouraged to maintain their individual characteristics.

The Blue Flag must not fly during substantial building extensions and/or rebuilding at the marina.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**15. Adequate, clean and well sign-posted sanitary facilities, including washing facilities must be in place and provide drinking water. Sewage disposal is controlled and directed to a licensed sewage treatment**

The sanitary facilities must be in good condition, clean and well kept. The sanitary facility buildings must also be well maintained and in general accordance with national building legislation (see also criterion no. 12).

The sanitary facilities should include toilets, washbasins and showers. There should also be drinking water available. Other facilities could include washing machines.

The number of sanitary facilities available in the marina must be adequate for the number of marina visitors in the peak season. The marina management should discourage boat owners from using the boat toilet facilities during their stay in the marina.

The sanitary facilities must be easy accessible and located not too far away from any point in the marina (in general less than 200 metres from any boat at any berth). The location of the sanitary facilities must be easy to locate (using signs or on the map of the marina).

The sanitary facilities must be linked to a licensed sewage treatment system, and the system must be in compliance with the EU Urban Waste Water Directive. If the marina is very small and/or very remote, the National Jury can, in special cases, approve another safe way of disposing of the generated wastewater from the marina.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**16. If the marina has boat repairing and washing areas, no pollution must enter the sewage system, marina land and water or the natural surroundings**

A marina with boat repairing and washing areas must comply with all standards and regulations in national and international legislation.

The boat repairing and washing must take place in a specifically designated area at the marina.

There must ~~in~~ be collection filters (or equivalent systems) from boat repairing and washing areas to prevent hazardous substances from entering the sewage system and the marina land/water. The collection filters must be regularly emptied and the waste in the filters should be treated as hazardous waste.

Larger repairing activities (e.g. grinding, polishing or sandblasting which cause dust pollution) should take place under cover or indoors under controlled conditions. Collected waste must be handled as hazardous waste.

Serious noise pollution from boat repairing and washing must be avoided.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**17. Sustainable transportation should be promoted**

The marina should encourage the use of sustainable transportation to and from the marina.

If there are more than two kilometres to the nearest urban settlement, there should preferably be public transportation between the marina and urban settlement.

Sustainable transportation can also be promoted through the availability of bicycles for rent and the presence of pedestrian pathways.

Since this criterion is in accordance with Local Agenda 21 activities, the marina is encouraged to collaborate, or work with, local authorities and/or local Agenda 21 groups regarding compliance with this criterion.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

**18. Parking/driving is not permitted in the marina, unless in specific designated areas**

In general, parking and driving cars inside the marina should be avoided. The use of cars should, wherever possible, be replaced with sustainable transportation (public transportation, bicycles, etc.) – see criterion no. 16.

If parking and driving within the marina cannot be avoided, driving and parking must only take place in areas designated for this purpose. It is very important in the planning of these areas, to consider the safety and free passage of people walking in the marina.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **SAFETY AND SERVICES**

### **19. Adequate and well signposted lifesaving, first-aid equipment and fire-fighting equipment must be present. Equipment must be approved by national authorities**

When addressing good safety practices in marinas, it is valuable to distinguish between the different role-players and the different types of action to be taken:

- The Users (sailors) versus the Marina Management and Staff
- Prevention measures versus Rescue/Emergency measures

Accident prevention is paramount for safety. To help prevent accidents, the marina management and staff should ensure that the marina facilities are properly maintained, that national legislation is followed, and that staff and users are well informed and/or trained about safety issues. It is also recommended that an assessment of the marina be undertaken to study safety issues, e.g. the placement of boats in relation to the possible spread of fires, etc.

If an accident does occur, the marina should have the necessary technical means or equipment to deal with it.

#### Lifesaving equipment

The following general guidelines should be followed when considering water safety in a marina:

- A person who falls in the water should be able to get out of the water
- A person must be able to help or rescue a distressed person in the water without risking his or her own life.

The required lifesaving equipment in the marina must (at least) include the presence of lifebuoys and ladders. Other types of lifesaving equipment could include boat-hooks, rescue boats, rescue stations, etc. at/near the marina. The lifesaving equipment must be approved by the national lifesaving body or comply with national or international standards. The equipment must be available in adequate numbers, easy to identify (well signposted) and easily accessible from all over the marina (not more than 200 meters from any point). The placement of equipment must be in compliance with national legislation. It must be available 24 hours a day throughout the Blue Flag season and the location of lifesaving equipment must be indicated on the marina map.

A guideline recommendation is for a ladder and public lifesaving equipment to be placed (at least) every 25-50 meters from any water-front point in the marina. Equipment should be available on each pier. The equipment should furthermore be painted for visibility (red, orange and with reflectors).

#### Fire-fighting equipment

The fire-fighting equipment in the marina must (at least) include the presence of fire extinguishers, but could also include water hoses, fire carpets, etc. The fire-fighting equipment must be approved by the national fire fighting association/organisation/authority or comply with national or international standards.

The equipment must be available in adequate numbers, easy to identify (well signposted) and easily accessible from all over the marina (not more than 200 meters from any point). The placement of equipment must also be in compliance with national legislation. It must be available 24 hours a day throughout the Blue Flag season. The location of fire-fighting equipment must be indicated on the marina map.

Fire extinguishers must also be present at fuelling stations, near hazardous waste storage facilities and at locations where high temperature work is being done.

A guideline recommendation is to have handheld fire extinguishers placed every 25-50 meters and with at least one per pier. On piers longer than 100 meters, there should be a fixed water supply (fire hydrant) at the beginning of the pier. When deciding on the size and type of extinguishers and their placement, consideration should be given to the size of the boats and the distance of the marina from an emergency fire department or fire brigade.

### First Aid

First-aid equipment must be present at the marina and can be located in the marina office or at other facilities (shops, restaurants, etc.). The first-aid equipment does not necessarily need to be available 24 hours a day, but must be available at reasonable times (e.g. the opening hours of the marina office). The content of a first-aid equipment box must comply with national legislation or meet the standards set by a national or international lifesaving association. In exceptional cases, the first-aid equipment can be located in a place very near to the marina (less than 200 metres away). The contents of the first-aid box must be regularly checked and items must be replaced if necessary. The availability and location of the first-aid equipment must be very clearly signposted on the information board and on the marina map.

### Other

It is recommended that the entrance/exit to the marina be clearly marked with signs for sailors.

It is recommended that the marina be well lit at night.

For dry docks and storage areas, it is recommended that the boats be placed so that emergency vehicles can move between the rows, and fire fighting equipment should be placed throughout the area. Local fire experts should be contacted for advice.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **20. Emergency plans in case of pollution, fire or other accidents must be produced**

If an accident or emergency does occur, the marina should have the necessary organisational means or emergency plans in place to deal with it.

The marina must have an emergency plan available that states what to do in case of pollution, fire or other possible accidents affecting the safety of the marina (e.g. safety at fuelling stations, near cranes, etc.). The staff at the marina must be informed about the emergency plan.

The emergency plan for the marina can be specific for the marina, but can also be part of a larger harbour, municipal or regional emergency plan. Relevant authorities (local authorities, fire-fighting brigade, Red Cross, etc) must approve the emergency plan.

The emergency plan should at least include the following:

- Identification of the people to contact in case of an accident
- Involvement of administration services and people necessary to intervene
- Procedures for the protection or evacuation of people at or near the marina
- Procedure of public warning and information.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **21. Safety precautions and information must be posted at the marina**

Accident prevention is paramount for safety. In most cases, accidents that occur could have been prevented by the people involved. Thus, safety information and education for the marina users is very important.

General information about safety precautions must be posted at an easily accessible site at the marina, and on the information board. The safety precautions should include (at least) the following:

- Information about the correct storage of hazardous and flammable waste
- Directions for filling gasoline/petrol tanks at the fuelling station
- Signs for safety hazards (e.g. unprotected piers)
- Prohibition of open fire or fireworks at the marina (unless there is a designated area or permission from the marina)

- Directions for the safe use of electrical outlets at the marina
- No swimming in the marina
- Information about the location of eventual public telephone, lifesaving, fire-fighting and first-aid equipment
- Information about how to use the above-mentioned equipment
- Details on how to warn other people about an unsafe situation
- Information about who to contact for further information about safety at the marina
- Information about relevant emergency telephone numbers (police, fire department, ambulance, marina manager)

Other information could include:

- Guidance that children should wear lifejackets in the marina
- Information about first-aid and lifesaving courses
- Guidance about the consumption of alcohol at the marina
- Information about how to prevent fire on individual boats

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **22. Electricity and water is available at the berths, installations must be approved according to national legislation**

Electricity and water must be available for the boats. The facilities must be available no more than 25 metres from the berths (except for boats not using electricity). There must be clear information about the conditions for using electricity and water and preferably also accompanied by information about energy and water saving.

All installations must be safe and approved by national and/or international legislation.

Public light must be available at marinas especially for safety reasons.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **23. Facilities for disabled people should be in place**

The facilities for disabled people in a marina should (at least) include:

- Access for disabled people to and around the marina (including the piers)
- Special car parking facilities for disabled people
- Access to sanitary facilities for disabled people

Other facilities for disabled people in a marina could be:

- Boating facilities for disabled people
- Access to marina offices, shops and restaurants in the marina
- Access to marina activities

All access and facilities for disabled people must comply with all national and international regulations/standards. Toilets should be designed for wheelchair and other disabled users.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
	All regions

## **24. A Map indicating the location of the different facilities must be posted at the marina**

A map of the marina area indicating all the required and other facilities must be posted on the information board.

The following facilities must be indicated on the map:

- Reception facilities for hazardous waste and oil waste
- Garbage containers
- Facilities for recyclable waste



- Toilet tank pumping/reception facilities (if present)
- Bilge water pumping/reception facilities (if present)
- Lifesaving equipment
- Fire-fighting equipment
- First-aid equipment
- Public telephone (if applicable)
- Sanitary facilities (toilets, showers, washing facilities, drinking facilities, etc.)
- Fuelling station (if present)
- Boat repairing and washing areas (if present)
- Marina office / club house
- Facilities for disabled people (if present)
- Designated parking areas (if present)
- Boat places reserved for guest boats (if present)
- Nearby public transportation (if very close to the marina)
- You are Here indicators
- Direction signs, e.g. North

Other facilities (like shops, restaurants, etc.) can also be indicated on the map.

The different facilities should preferably be indicated on the map as easily understood pictograms.

The cartographic co-ordinates of the marina should be located in a clearly visible place.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

## **WATER QUALITY**

### **25. The water in the marina must be visually clean without any evidence of pollution, e.g. oil, litter, sewage or other evidence of pollution**

In order for the marina to comply with high environmental standards, it is very important that the marina and marina water are visually clean. The marina water should not contain oil spots, litter (bottles, cans, plastic, etc.), sewage or other noticeable signs of pollution. What about unnatural odours or smells coming from the water?

Natural occurrences like decaying of algae, spawning of mussels, etc. might give the appearance of pollution in the water without this actually being the case. In such cases, information about the natural occurrences should be provided at the information board.

IMPERATIVE CRITERION	GUIDELINE CRITERION
All regions	

**APPENDIX A: Tools for establishing environmental plans****[Criterion 7]**

The marinas participating in the Blue Flag programme are very different in size and capacity. The compliance with criterion 7 can therefore take place in two ways: either a) through the planning and performance/implementation as requested in an “environmental logbook” system, or b) through implementing a proper environmental management system.

**a) “Environmental logbook” system**

In the “environmental logbook” system, the environmental goals for a Blue Flag marina are listed. The marina management can choose the most relevant and important goals for the marina, but does not need to restrict itself to these. It is recommended that these goals are discussed with the national operator. What is essential is continual improvement. The marina is therefore required to set new and higher goals each year, though the marina can choose to work with goals relating to previously set goals.

In the application form for the coming season the marina must provide information about the goals that the marina intends to fulfil. In the same application form, the marina should also report on goals achieved in the previous season by sending a status copy of the environmental logbook. The marina can change a goal during the season, but there should be a good reason for this and it needs to be noted in the environmental logbook. The marina is strongly advised to contact the national operator before changing a goal. In exceptional cases, if the marina has not fulfilled a goal and they can give a reasonable explanation for it, the National Jury might choose to give a dispensation. There is no stipulation that the marina has to fulfil the goal during the Blue Flag season; often it is preferable to carry out improvements ahead of the season.

Here are some suggestions from FEE for relevant goals:

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>FURTHER INFORMATION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Electricity</b>	
1a	Replace energy consuming light bulbs	Put in place energy-saving bulbs
1b	Management of lighting in marina	Put in place automatic light switches.
1c	Change old equipment and installations	Refrigerator, freezer, washing machine, etc.
1d	Sunlight collector Collection of solar energy.	Heating the water
1e	Limit on electricity on the jetty to 4 ampere	Visitors cannot then use el-heaters
1f	General investigation of the electric insulation at the marina	

<b>2</b>	<b>Water</b>	
2a	Install water saving equipment, e.g. showers,	
2b	Install water saving taps	
2c	Replace toilets, shower, taps, etc	Toilets with less flush water and/or toilets with two types of flush (3 / 6 litres)
2d	Inspection of the installation	Waste pipe, water pipe, etc.
2e	Push buttons on taps and showers	
2f	Information about water saving	
2g	Install an environmental facility for receiving toilet waste	

<b>3</b>	<b>Buy and use of environmentally-friendly products</b>	
3a	Buy environmentally-friendly paint	
3b	Buy environmentally-friendly soap for cleaning and washing	

<b>4</b>	<b>Waste</b>	
4a	Production of "recycling bags"	For boat owners taking short trips and returning to the marina, the marina can offer garbage bags to collect their waste while at sea.
4b	Litter management and disposal	Separation of organic waste (for compost) and inorganic/toxic waste. Establish additional containers for sorting household waste
4c	Establish compost bins	

The environmental logbook looks like this:

**Environmental logbook of a Blue Flag Marina**

Name of Marina:	Park Marina
Name of responsible person:	Brian Jones
Year:	2004

Activity	Date	Goal	Description	Persons involved	Documentation
Goal	15-01-04	1a	Changing to energy saving bulbs everywhere in the marina.	Brian Jones Peter Smith	
Goal	15-01-04	2a	Change to water saving showers.	Brian Jones Peter Smith	
Action	15-05-04	1a	The bulbs in the office, toilet and in the club were changed. The bulbs outside will be changed during the season.	Brian Jones	Copy of bills and photos.
Action	30-05-04	2a	The showers were changed and at the same time we changed to water saving taps (2b).	Brian Jones	Copy of bills and photos.
Action	25-06-04	1a	The bulbs outside were changed.	Brian Jones	Copy of bills and photos.

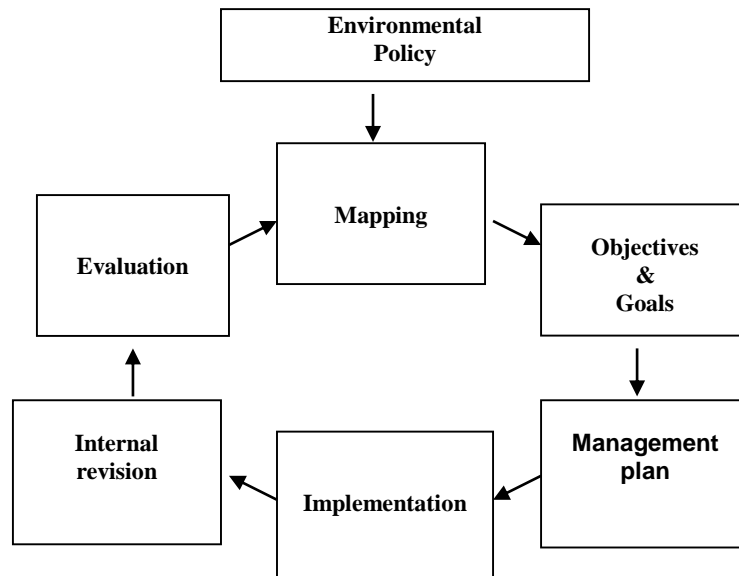
Goals obtained	01-12-04	1a 2a	Obtained Obtained		
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Further remarks
We expect to see savings on the water consumption in 2004.

**b) Environmental management system**

If a marina chooses to ensure the compliance through an environmental management system, it can either be certified through the official systems (ISO 14001 or EMAS certification system), or the marina can choose a parallel environmental management system as described here. It is always possible, and advisable, to contact the national operator for more information about environmental management systems.

The environmental management system is a process that can be repeated. The circle looks as follows:



*The Environmental Policy* deals with how the marina can reduce the environmental loads from its activities and should be a good example of how to inspire the users and other stakeholders to make an active effort in protecting the environment. The marina must itself prioritise the work and goals in correspondence with activities and wishes. There are, however, some recommended areas (water, waste and energy consumption, health and safety issues, and the use of environmentally sound products) which should be addressed.

*Mapping* is an important starting point for the further planning and evaluation of the environmental work. The actual environmental load of the marina must be known. It can be beneficial or useful to distinguish between the environmental loads from the marina and from the boats (including guest boats) entering the marina.

In the evaluation of the environmental loads, it is important to be systematic and transparent to be able to easily recognise the achievements from previous years. The number of environmental factors at the marina is limited and most users can point out the most important factors. The following steps can be used in the overview mapping process:

- Develop an overview of the marina and its immediate surroundings, and imagine an invisible border around the marina
- Try to determine the environmental loads (in the form of energy, water, materials, waste, etc) entering the designated area of the marina.
- Make a physical examination of the marina where all observed environmental conditions are noted (Which environmental loads are present? Where can the influences be observed? What is the reason for the influences?)

With a well-documented overview of the environmental conditions at the marina, the individual conditions can be dealt with. It is important to identify the most important environmental loads of the marina and determine a reasonable level of detail. It can be a good idea to use pre-defined schemes in the evaluation of the marina to ensure that all relevant issues are included, to be systematic and to see the changes/improvements over the years. It can be useful to have two different schemes, one for the marina (basic running of the marina) and one for the users (sailors).

When the management plan is produced for the first time, wherever possible, the most important environmental improvements over the past years should be included (energy saving

or water saving arrangements, etc.). The information about these improvements can give an indication for new areas of improvements.

*Objectives and goals:* When information about the environmental loads has been ascertained, it is time to consider the handling of the loads and to determine objectives for each of the environmental conditions. In other words, decisions need to be taken about whether to change the observed conditions. This should be followed by decisions regarding the objective, goals for the acceptable discharge, waste handling, energy consumption, etc. When deciding on objectives and goals it is important to take into account the overall environmental policy of the marina.

*The management plan:* With the environmental policy and the objectives in place, it is time to decide on the areas (with definite priorities) for the coming year. Efforts must be prioritised, because it is often not possible to start on all areas at the same time. During this process, the importance as well as the level of impacts involved and the size of the environmental loads must be taken into consideration. In prioritising, the following issues must be considered:

- Effect (What is the effect to be expected from the effort?)
- Economy (What does it cost? Which savings can be expected? Are there external ways of financing the implementation?)
- Environmental awareness (What effects do the efforts have?)
- Occupational health (Are there advantages for the occupational health?)

Having decided what to do, it is now time to decide how to do it (specification) within a certain timeframe. It can be helpful to draw up a formal scheme of work.

*The implementation* of the management plan can require a change in behaviour of the users and the management of the marina, a change in the code of conduct and the production of new instructions. It is important to inform everybody about the management plan and what is required of everyone.

*The revision/audit* is a means of checking whether the management plans have been fulfilled. An internal revision/audit should therefore involve:

- Check that objectives are achieved
- Check whether the expected effects are obtained
- Investigate the reason and extent of any discrepancies
- Note any unforeseen effects
- Write down observations in the internal revision/audit

*The evaluation* should be published once a year as a tool in the environmental management process, but also in order to promote the improvements externally. The evaluation could contain the following:

- Description of the main environmental loads
- Prior environmental improvements (first year: previously taken initiatives, second year: follow-up to the management plan)
- Environmental policy and objectives
- Environmental management plan

*Continuing the process:* After having been through the process the first year, the effect can be evaluated and the process starts again (at a higher level than the previous year). The most important environmental loads are again determined. The management plan must be reviewed and the observed effects compared with the expected effects. The environmental policy should also be evaluated in order to consider if changes are needed. Then the objectives and the management plan for the next year are decided. The work can include issues as yet unresolved from the previous year.