

# Painting the Canvas of Conservation

Heritage Aarah Sustainability Report - 2023 - 24



# REPORT AT A GLANCE

This report has been published for the financial year 2023-24, covering the period ending 31st March 2024. The publication date is 1st July 2024.

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Marhaba



**Badhiya Gunatilake**  
Chief Operating Officer

The past 12 months have tested our island nation and the world in myriad ways. As part of our commitment to responsible resort operation in Maldives, we have diligently maintained our properties with sustainability at the forefront of our operations.

Reflecting on our sector policies, we've refreshed our documentation, setting a clear trajectory for the years ahead. Sustainability has become a cornerstone of our approach, guiding us as we strive for continual improvement.

Our strategic efforts are crucial in painting the canvas of conservation for our natural environment. I'm pleased to announce that we have achieved the prestigious Green Globe Certification. This milestone underscores our enduring dedication to our stakeholders.

We take great pride in our accomplishments thus far, but our focus remains forward-looking. Research and development initiatives are underway to embrace green energy and implement best practices for a sustainable future.

As members of this remarkable team, I urge each of us to take ownership of our sustainability endeavors. Together, let's continue to paint the canvas of conservation for the environment we inhabit.



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Marhaba



**Upul Gedarakumbura**  
General Manager

Reflecting our commitment to sustainability, we have diligently maintained our properties, earning the prestigious Green Globe membership and certification with flying colors. We received commendations from our stakeholders, and together, we will continue to champion environmental conservation.



**Jayampathi Hemachandra**  
Sustainability, Champion /Chief Engineer



# OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT - 2023 - 24





# OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP



"Our sustainability journey at Aitken Spence Resorts Maldives is guided by our Sustainability Management Plan and Policy, focusing on energy, water, waste, biodiversity, and more.

These ensure our decisions align with group objectives, minimizing our environmental impact, and promote well-being for employees, guests, and nature. We prioritize conservation in the Maldivian ecosystem, measure progress, comply with laws, and foster a team-wide commitment to sustainability. The detailed Sustainability Management Plan and Policy can be viewed through the given link and QR code for more insight into our commitment."

All policies and procedures can be accessed via the QR code.



V03/March/2024



# REFLECTING ON OUR JOURNEY

**Water, Energy, Wet & Dry Waste Management**

**Solar Power Generation and Rainwater Harvesting**

**Wet Garbage Management**





## Water, Energy, Wet & Dry Waste Management

At Heritance Aarah, we remain dedicated to the conscientious management of water, energy, and waste. Scan the QR code or follow the link to gain insight into our tangible initiatives.

- [Managing Resources Sustainably at Heritance Aarah PDF](#)

Discover our initiatives through the thoughtfully curated Heritance Aarah Sustainability video, designed to offer a comprehensive understanding of our efforts.

- [Heritance Aarah Sustainability Video](#)



Scan the QR code to learn about our energy, water, and waste management initiatives.

While waste management has improved compared to the last fiscal year, there has been a slight increase in water and energy consumption due to a 6.70% rise in guest nights, from 78,313 in FY 2022-2023 to 83,562 in FY 2023-2024. This growth has contributed to higher usage of electricity and water, as well as increased waste generation during the current fiscal year.

	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024
Water Consumption / Guest Night	2.18	1.51	0.94	1.24	1.27
Energy Consumption / Guest Night	140.90	95.19	66.37	69.48	74.72
Wet Waste Consumption / Guest Night	4.96	4.07	2.57	2.89	2.70
Dry Waste Consumption / Guest Night	8.27	6.79	1.63	3.70	3.61



## Solar Power Generation and Rainwater Harvesting

"Our focus on clean energy has been a priority since the inception of the resort. We have installed 1,125 solar panels, covering an area of 1,920 square meters, which generate a substantial kilowatt peak (KWP) output, effectively meeting the resort's energy needs. Our commitment to progress doesn't end here; we are continuously exploring new initiatives to further expand our renewable energy production capabilities."

Solar power generation KWP	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024
	367,107	375,108	452,034	431,983	436,922
Rain water harvesting (m3)	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024
	-	1,985	1,090	570	410

## Wet Garbage Digester Machine



"We follow stringent waste management practices by segregating waste at its origin and transporting it to designated disposal areas for optimal solutions. Wet waste is processed through our Wet Garbage Digester Machine, which transforms it into valuable soil enhancements. During 2023-24, we converted 66,590 kg of wet garbage into 15,645 kg of eco-friendly soil additives.

Additionally, waste cooking oil and lubricant oil are carefully collected and transferred to a renowned supplier for refining into various products and services. This initiative, launched in 2024, has not only enhanced our sustainability efforts but also generated revenue from waste oil at the property."



# SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION



"Sustainability is deeply embedded in our brand DNA. As a signatory to the UNWTO's Responsible Tourism - Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, sustainability is integral to how we operate and manage our resort.

We take pride in being the Maldives' first LEED Certified property and the first Green Rated Building, recognized by the Green Building Council of Sri Lanka.

In 2024, we reached another sustainability milestone by achieving the prestigious Green Globe Standard 1.7 with an impressive score of 87%.

This accolade underscores our unwavering dedication to sustainability stewardship and leadership in responsible tourism within one of the world's most pristine marine environments." Additionally, all Adaaran properties are certified with HACCP and ISO 22000:2018 food safety certifications, demonstrating our commitment to group quality standards.





# THE MALDIVIAN VILLAGE

The Maldivian Village is our very own sustainability initiative inspired by our Heritage branding,  
*"Where tradition is alive."*

"Since the opening of our live museum experience at Aarah in 2020, we have been dedicated to educating our guests about the rich tapestry of Maldivian culture. We invite them to immerse themselves in the local lifestyle, engaging in traditional activities that offer a true taste of the Maldives.

The Maldivian Village experience vividly illustrates how locals lived in the past, guiding visitors through the pivotal events that have shaped the unique Maldivian way of life. Today, it has become a hub where local schoolchildren and community members can connect with their heritage, ensuring that our culture remains vibrant and alive."

## "Sustainability Education:

Since 2020, over 2,036 guests and associates have immersed themselves in our Maldivian Village Live Museum, with more than 700 experiencing it during the 2023-24 fiscal year."



Click the icons to access the videos.



# SUSTAINABILITY

## Retrospect 2023-24



### Sustainability Education

**729+** Guest and Staff have experienced our very own Maldivian village live museum at Heritage Aarah property in the year 2023-24.



**9,913 Kg | \$ 20,319.07**

Tuna Fish and other locally harvested fish were purchased from the local fishing community during the year 2023-24



**6,000 | \$ 2,925.60**

Paper straws were used in the last financial year, which could have easily been plastic straws.



**337,992**

Single-use plastic bottles were able to stop coming into the islands with the installation of the bottled water plants.



**\$ 4,868.00 Local Purchase**

Kadjan, fruits, vegetables and bakery products are purchased to uplift The local community.



**66,590 Kg** of wet garbage is been converted in to **15,645 Kg** of eco-friendly fertilizer through our inhouse wet garbage composting machines during the year



**8,845 Bundles | \$ 6,405.85**

Forest Stewardship Council certified papers were used in the day-today operation.



**55 Engagement activities** were conducted at Heritage Aarah with the participation of 20 guests 313 local community and 1540 associates in the year 2023-24.



**Committed Island Management** harvested 510 kg of organic vegetables, 1,885 coconuts, and 11 bunches of bananas during this period, with a total value of **\$4,115.**



**18,500 | \$ 877.23**

**Paper Cups and Paper Plates** were used in last financial year, which could have easily been plastic cups and plates.



**10,000** numbers of **wooden key cards** were purchased from the local market with the investment of **\$ 5,552.80.**



**100,400 | \$ 19,076.00**

**Biodegradable bags** were used during this financial year, which could have easily been In-disposable bags.



**89,100 | \$ 5,600.52**

**Wooden cocktail stirrers** were used during this year, which could have easily been plastic stirrers.















## IN-HOUSE VEGETABLE GARDEN

If you have gone through our previous sustainability report for the financial years, you will be well aware of our in-house vegetable garden.

Our dedicated groundskeeping team and associates came up with the idea to maintain a garden during the lockdown period. We have continued working on our vegetable garden even with the hotel operation at its peak.

During this year, we were able to harvest a total of 515.68 Kg of vegetables, and 1,885 numbers of coconuts worth USD 4,115.

# AARAH THARUKAAREE DHANDU

	<b>Green Leaves</b> 84.55 Kg USD 178.26		<b>Green Chili, Capsicum</b> 83.9 Kg USD 220.68
	<b>Coconut</b> 1,885 Nos USD 2,858.85		<b>Tomato</b> 18 Kg USD 19.80
	<b>Radish</b> 98.20 Kg USD 126.93		<b>Banana</b> 5 Kg USD 214.06
	<b>Green &amp; Long Beans</b> 48.5 Kg USD 115.74		<b>Brinjal</b> 60.4 Kg USD 100.87
	<b>Ridge Gourd &amp; Snake Gourd</b> 115.13 Kg USD 274.55		<b>Gherkin</b> 2 Kg USD 5.28



# SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

We strive to foster eco-consciousness across all areas of our business and society, investing our knowledge, time, and resources in sustainable tourism as responsible corporate citizens. Here are a few of the projects we've hosted during the financial years:

## Biodiversity Day Awareness Program

On May 22nd, a Biodiversity Day awareness program was held at Raa Meedhu School, engaging 30 students and 2 associates. The event focused on educating students about the importance of biodiversity and the need for its protection in their local environment.

## Book Donation to Kinolhahu School

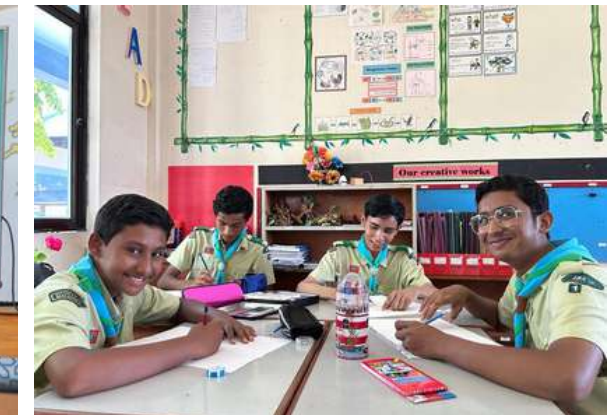
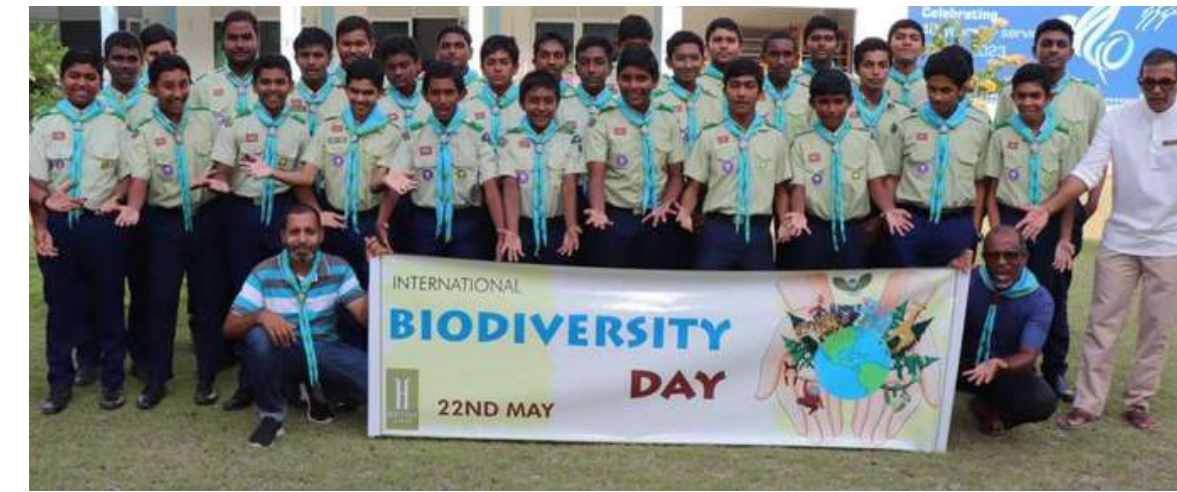
In August 2023, a book donation event was held at Kinolhahu School, benefiting 25 students. A total of \$200 worth of books were donated, with the participation of 5 associates from the organization.

## Learning Scholarship – The Butler Program

In December 2023, the 6th True Art of Service – The Butler Program was conducted, involving 15 associates and 1 student from the Raa Atoll. As part of this CSR initiative, a training scholarship valued at \$2,000 was awarded to a school leaver from the Raa Atoll.

## Children's Day Celebration

On May 10th, associates from Heritance Aarah visited Meedhu Pre School to celebrate Children's Day. The event involved 30 students and 10 associates, where the associates provided cakes and cookies to the children as part of the celebration.







# BIODIVERSITY SURVEY

Heritage Aarah Biodiversity Survey





The last fiscal year has been a rewarding one for Heritance Aarah, and as the L&D business partner of the organization, we are proud to have successfully completed some exciting trainings and projects.

During the fiscal year 2023/24, we achieved an increase in per person training hours at Heritance Aarah, rising from 24 to 34 hours, reflecting a 10-hour improvement compared to the previous year.

Highlights include achieving the world-renowned Green Globe sustainability certification, conducting comprehensive audits and documentation, and rolling out the HO3 Heritance Aarah Service Culture Training drive. We also implemented the sector Learning Menu, completed the 7S+ Industrial Housekeeping Certification training and audits, and hosted signature programs like the Butler Development Program and the Tea Master's Competition.

**Your ideas count:**

We welcome your suggestions to help us enhance our sustainability objectives and social responsibilities. Please leave your comments through our guest review system or e-mail us at [talentmle@aitkenspence.com](mailto:talentmle@aitkenspence.com).

**Tharaka Appuhamy - General Manager**  
Talent Management & Quality Assurance (Sustainability)  
Aitken Spence Resorts - Maldives



# LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

The Resort is committed to creating an environment for associates to achieve their career aspirations while nurturing a team of competent, motivated professionals. Companywide learning and development and quality assurance are conducted at a corporate level. For more details, please refer to the following Talent Development Reports.



**Talent Management Reports**

- FY – 2018/19
- FY - 2019/20
- FY - 2020/21
- FY - 2021/22
- FY – 2022/23



**Sustainability Reports**

- FY – 2018/19
- FY - 2019/20
- FY - 2020/21
- FY - 2021/22
- FY – 2022/23

You can scan the above QR code to download the talent development reports, and the previous Years Sustainability Reports.



**Aitken Spence Resorts** entered Maldives, bringing significant investment, renowned Sri Lankan hospitality, and sustainability strategies. As part of the UNWTO's Responsible Tourism initiative, sustainability is ingrained in our ethos, guiding how we operate and manage our resort operations.

2016: Began our sustainability journey with the Travelife Gold certification, becoming the first international chain to pledge our sustainability policy underwater.

2016: Initiated structured sustainability policies with effective management, auditing, and documentation, published annually in sustainability reports.

2017: Launched a Sustainability and UN Celebration Days Activity Calendar to engage associates in sustainability and social activities.

2017: Introduced Talent Development reports to highlight our initiatives in developing talent.

2017: Started Adaaran Kurimagu, a Management Training program for young Maldivians as part of our CSR efforts.

2019: Launched our plastic-free islands initiative by installing a water bottle plant at Meedhupparu, now producing 900,000 glass bottles annually across all properties.

2019: Built and opened the Maldives' first LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) resort at Heritance Aarah, setting a new standard for sustainable resort development in the region.

2019: Introduced paper straws, cups, plates, and biodegradable bags to further support the plastic-free initiative.

2000: Launched the Coral Replantation project to help save the ocean's ecosystems.

2021: Began measuring sustainable practices under the Sustainability Retrospect column, focusing on social, economic, and environmental aspects.

2021: Launched the Maldivian Village live museum experience at Heritance Aarah to preserve and showcase Maldivian heritage.

2022: Conducted the "We Love Trees" Campaign to document flora and fauna across all resorts, emphasizing environmental conservation.

2023: Invested in a Wet Garbage Digester Machine to enhance waste management and repurpose waste as soil enhancements.

2024: Achieved Green Globe Certification for the entire sector, marking a significant milestone in our sustainability journey.

As we continue our path towards greater sustainability, we recognize that our actions today shape the future of our planet. We are proud of our collective efforts and invite you to join us by watching the following video. Simply scan the QR code or click the video link to view the Video



Key Milestones In Maldives





"The future depends on what we do in the present."  
Mahatma Gandhi

