

SUSTAINABILITY



KNAI BANG CHATT



A SUSTAINABLE KNAI BANG CHATT – ECO-VISIBILITY CHARTER

At Knai Bang Chatt we take sustainability seriously. All aspects of our operations fall under the over-arching mantra of “how can we lessen our impact” or better still, “how can we actually make our impact positive instead of negative”? To make these lofty aspirations a reality, sustainability had to become a core part of the business.

The first step was the establishment of the ‘Sustainability Department’ with a full-time Sustainability Manager and a ‘Green Team’ made up of all heads of department. The Green Team meets monthly to make decisions on sustainability related matters. In 2016 we were the first in Cambodia to become certified under an international standard for sustainability in the tourism sector under ‘Green Growth 2050’ (GG2050).

This certification holds several benefits for us - it provides a framework for action and guidance in developing best practices in sustainability and in doing so blazes a trail that other businesses can then follow on the journey toward a greener economic landscape. GG2050 keeps us up-to-date on industry best practice and technological advances, and, due to the 3rd-party verification process of certification (annual auditing), it offers assurances to our valued guests that staying at Knai Bang Chatt creates positive impact. This standard has 500+ performance indicators based around the thematic areas of: Sustainability Management, Legal Compliance, Labour Practices, Health and Safety, Human Rights, Sustainable Design & Construction, Sustainable Operations, Anti-Bribery and anti-Corruption Policy, Environmental Stewardship (resource conservation, pollution reduction, biodiversity conservation), and Social and Community Development. We have currently achieved a “Platinum” level rating with a score of 90.1% conformance with the GG2050 standard. Knai Bang Chatt remains the only resort in Cambodia to achieve international level sustainability certification.

Parallel to this we have several initiatives in place to further the reach of our positive impact. These stem directly from our innovative approaches to creating unique guest experiences and re-framing the perspective of what constitutes a problem. Is it a problem or is it an opportunity?

THE EVOLUTION OF GREEN KNAI BANG CHATT

With this perspective in mind, the formulation of our Waste Management Strategy was a very catalytic process. It produced a range of engaging, educational and ethical avenues for action, allowing us to synergize the goals of ethically dealing with our waste (recycling, upcycling, re-connecting people with chemical-free food and nature, composting) and providing us with a clear vision of how to most responsibly move forward with our improvements (increased on-site processing of organic wastes, reducing landfill wastes and going plastic free).

RECYCLING AT KNAI BANG CHATT

All plastic bottles, cardboard, aluminum / steel cans and cardboard are recycled

Used cooking oil is donated to an 'Naga Earth' that processes it into low Green House Gas emission bio-fuel

We clean our sea shore every day and recycle or send to landfill the rubbish collected. This constitutes a frightening 8% of our total waste!

Our recycling is sold to local recycling agents monthly – 60% of the proceeds from this go directly to our 2 Green Officers as reward for their incredible work and the remaining 40% goes to the heart of our business, our staff. This helps to fund staff birthdays, staff parties and other 'giving back' activities.

UPCYCLING AT KNAI BANG CHATT

Because there is no recycling for glass in Cambodia we do it ourselves – we upcycle it. Our Green Officers turn as many glass bottles as we can into drinking glasses. This prevents even more sand from being mined to make new glasses, prevents more glass lying around in landfills for the rest of ever, and saves energy expensive recycling processes. Glass bottles that we don't have the capacity to upcycle are donated to community groups and social enterprises to be used in eco-building and eco-brick production. Come and visit our workshop at KBC's Sustainability Resource Center and learn how we do it!





ZERO WASTE POLICY AT KNAI BANG CHATT

Achieving zero waste in southern Cambodia is a hefty target so KBC has set a transitional policy target to reduce landfill waste to 5% of total waste by 2020. With a broad range of strategies in place to achieve this (recycling, upcycling, composting, single-use plastic free) we are well on the way to realizing this target. We know this because we perform waste benchmarking every single day. This involves weighing and recording all categories of waste (14!) and entering this data into our system. By doing this we can analyze our waste stream dynamics and check how we are performing in relation to our goals and targets.

PLASTIC FREE KNAI BANG CHATT

A key part of reducing landfill waste is simple – don't use it. At Knai Bang Chatt we have already eliminated plastics from our 'front-of-house' operations. Eliminating it completely from the back of house is more difficult but a good start is eliminating single-use plastics. This involves close collaboration between our team and seeking out new progressive suppliers. This initiative has real impact. For example, by providing free drinking water in the rooms in sterilized re-fillable glass bottles we removed 72 plastic water bottles from our operations on a daily basis (assuming full room occupancy)! That is 504 a week, 2160 a month and 26,280 a year. By ceasing to sell plastic water bottles in all our outlets in October 2018 we have removed even more plastic bottles per day from our plastic footprint. Over and over again when people say "but what difference can I make?". We say, "well, quite a lot actually". Just some of the other solutions we've found for plastic problems:

- Straws = paper straws or cassava-based bio-plastic (compostable) straws (and even then only on request)
- Plastic bags/bin-liners = cassava-based bio-plastic bags (compostable)/cloth bags in rooms/guest areas
- Tooth brushes/amenities = bamboo tooth brushes/amenities
- Take-away containers = recyclable/bio-degradable take-away containers made from recycled paper (compostable)
- Plastic mini-bar bottles = room service drinks and cocktails

KNAI BANG CHATT EARTH-TO-PLATE INITIATIVE

In analyzing our waste stream dynamics we found we generate a LOT of organic waste – 63% of our total wastes to be precise. At Knai Bang Chatt we are always looking to maximize synergy and multi-functionality. Come 2017 we had a Sustainability Manager on board with a background in permaculture, organics and agro-ecology. We now had the know-how to turn this ‘problem’ into an incredible ‘resource’ from which a string of positive benefits and impacts could flow. Once we re-framed our perception of ‘waste’ this is what we realized our waste could do:

- Assist in producing 60% of the fruit and vegetables that our food outlets use;
- Serve delicious, nutrient-dense produce that is still-photosynthesising (fresh) to our guests – creating a unique culinary experience;
- Produce safe food for our guests – by gaining partial food autonomy (i.e. directly controlling the production practices) we know it is 100% organic;
- (re)connect people with food, food systems and nature;
- Eliminate the carbon foot-print from 60% of our fruit and vegetable usage through our syntropic agricultural practices and zero food-miles – our veggies grow up in sight of the kitchen;
- Increased environmental protection and conservation (carbon sequestration in the soil, zero chemicals, vastly reduced leaching of nutrients, water conserving technology, biodiversity enhancing production practices). Agriculture accounts for a quarter of global GHG emissions – with the use of incorporation of large quantities of biochar into our composts and soil, we ensure that our farm is a net sink for carbon, rather than a net emissions point.
- Promote and raise awareness about sustainable and organic tropical horticultural production;
- Develop training and educational materials to pass on our knowledge through tours, internships, volunteerism, workshops and trainings

Our tropical farming system uses ecosystem biomimicry as its guiding ideology. Applying this ecological wisdom allows us to garner natural processes to upcycle 100% of our organic wastes into valuable inputs for our organic gardens through a combination of composting, bokashi and vermiculture.

Essentially our Sustainable Resource Center (SRC) is an enormous hive of microbial activity where natural biology busily breaks down organic matter into bio-available nutrients and humic substances (organic compounds).

Since the beginning of this initiative in March 2018 we have produced over 10 tonnes of compost, bokashi and vermicast and over 400 liters of worm wee concentrate. This has aided us in producing 2186kg's* of vegetables and fruits that goes direct from the soil to our guests plates, still photosynthesising. (*as of Feb 2019). So while most think that the gardens is where the action is at, the composting area is the real engine-room of the gardens. All guests and visitors are welcome to come and meet the plants that make your meals or find out how we produce such vast quantities of compost.





ZERO WASTE POLICY AT KNAI BANG CHATT

- Other endeavors to be greener
- We produce approx. 30% of our own electricity from solar panels
- We drastically reduced electricity consumption by converting 99% of our lights to power saving led lights
- We converted 97% of our toilets to water efficient toilets (2.6L/flush)
- All staff trained by professional environmental trainers on the impacts of pollution and how to be part of the solution
- All cleaning products used at KBC are ecologically formulated and are metered by dispensers
- We source what we can locally (we happen to be very lucky with our backyard – Kampot pepper, Kep salt, Kep fish, Kampot coffee, Kep palm sugar, Kep fish sauce etc)
- Collaboration with suppliers to ensure our values and ethics reverberate up the supply chain
- FSC certified paper products
- We participate in clean-up days with community
- We have street bins in place that we maintain to keep our neighborhood clean and tidy
- We have Corporate Social Responsibility programs in place to ensure we give back and that the community grows with us

We are very proud to be the first hotel / resort in Cambodia to be internationally certified sustainable and to make positive impact. However, setting the example and blazing the trail toward the greener business environment that Cambodia so desperately needs is challenging on many levels. Our 2.5% eco-fee supports our sustainability program and assists us in pursuing a greener path. In return we share with others what we have learnt so that these standards may become the norm.

FURTHER INFO

For any more information or for updates on the sustainability related trainings and workshops we run (Urban composting, Sustainable Tropical Horticulture and much more), or to book yourself a “Sustainability Tour” please contact: Knai Bang Chatt’s Sustainability Manager, **Ehren Garner** on **+855 (0)78 333 687** or **sustainability@knaibangchatt.com**.

He will probably be knee-deep in micro-organisms or photosynthesis but, unfortunately enough for him, technological advances mean that he will be reachable at all times.

Knai Bang Chatt’s back of house Sustainability Tour you will be guided by one of the resorts executives through the history of the resort and its heritage buildings. You will then be immersed in the behind-the-scenes elements and initiatives that have been implemented and achieved in order for the property to receive gold standard certification under the Green Growth 2050 standard. The tour will end in the organic gardens of the resort which is the latest development in the sustainable future program of this unique barefoot luxury resort.





Direct to Sustainability

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