

We are located in the café of the Hotel "Mona Lisa". The successful summer season in 2022 is finally over. I would like to ask you a few questions about the future of the hotel industry in the 3rd decade of the twenty-first century, especially in the field of ecology. To begin with, what is an eco-friendly hotel?

For me, an eco-friendly hotel is a facility in which the management of generated waste takes place in a closed cycle so in the place where the waste is generated, we also dispose of it and reuse the remaining raw materials. An ecological hotel means not only zero waste, but also a reduction in electricity, heat and water consumption. "Eco" must also be the crew of the hotel. And such a hotel should function in accordance with the principle of sustainable development.

What are the pro-ecological activities in the hotel?

The idea is that an integral part of the hotel's functioning should be the limitation, or preferably the exclusion of everything that has a large impact on the degradation of the natural environment. For example, generated catering waste is stored in refrigerators and then taken away for disposal. And you can apply innovative technology of catering waste utilization using devices which constantly dry waste at a high temperature of about 175 degrees Celsius. In this way, we recover a 90% reduced material that we can use as organic fertilizer or biomass. In addition, we reduce our costs associated with waste disposal. Another example of limiting waste is limiting the purchase of products in plastic packaging. In order to reduce electricity consumption in recent years, hoteliers have been investing in solutions using photovoltaics and heat pumps.

I think that the replacement of ordinary light bulbs with LED ones was done in all hotels, not only in Poland. The same applies to the insulation of buildings and the replacement of windows. In general, the rational use of energy should take place in accordance with the 5E principle - energy, economy, ecology, ergonomics and education.

What are the reasons why a hotel is considered a nuisance to the environment?

The hotels are visited by tourists who use not only accommodation and catering services, but also various attractions, including recreational, cosmetic and therapeutic services. All these services generate large amounts of different types of waste. For this reason alone, the hotel is a nuisance to the environment. Added to this is the high consumption of water, electricity, thermal energy. Often, hotels have indoor swimming pools, which require periodic discharge of water with the content of chemical compounds. Huge amounts of chemicals are used in hotels to maintain cleanliness or protection under DDD.

In which segments of hotel activity should pro-ecological activities be implemented?

In the operating costs of hotels, the largest item, next to personnel costs, are the costs of energy and water consumption, which are becoming more and more expensive. Pro-ecological activities should be implemented in all organizational units of the hotel, but the most can be saved in hotel gastronomy and accommodation activities.

Is there a noticeable change in the approach to ecology in coastal hotels?

Ecological awareness is increasing, there is no doubt about it, both among tourists and operators of the accommodation base, however, in the last 2 - 3 years, due to the lockdown and difficult economic situation, hotels simply cannot afford pro-ecological investments, but in the near or long term, we will not be able to shy from it.

Do hotels use the idea of "zero waste"?

The term "zero waste" was first used by Dr. Paul Palmer; it was firstly mentioned in the 70s of the last century in California. This system assumes the appropriate design of products so that they can be used many times without having to throw them away. And "zero waste" literally means no waste, creating no residue. So this is an approach to waste management as well as a lifestyle in which a person tries to generate as little waste as possible and thus does not pollute the environment.

This is not only an economic and visionary goal, but an ethical one that helps people emulate sustainable natural cycles in which all discarded materials are destined to become resources.

This approach is also about creating a circular economy that uses resources instead of creating waste and living according to this idea of "zero waste" boils down to the application of certain rules, the so-called 5R, in Polish language we could call it as: refuse, limit, use, recycle and compost.

What do hotel guests mainly pay attention to in terms of ecology in the hotel?

Guests are a cross-section of society and approach pro-ecological activities in a diverse way, depending on age, gender, country of origin, education. Many guests pay attention to water consumption, they segregate waste themselves, save electricity. Such attitudes are observed a lot.

It can be said that visitors from Germany are the most exemplary here in this ecological aspect.

And which of the hotels you know in Kołobrzeg and the surrounding area are such eco hotels?

I do not have sufficient knowledge in this area, so far, no one is boasting too much about it...

I heard about experiments being carried out in the "Shuum" Hotel, in the "Arka" Hotel, but... I have to say a few words about the "Mona Lisa", that it is our ambition, but I think it is also a realistic goal that the Hotel "Mona Lisa", located on the edge of the Eco East Park, in zone A, the most protected rehabilitation area in Kołobrzeg becomes not only a promoter, but also a leader in the pro-ecological hotel industry in Poland.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.