



Contact: Christine Hinz  
Phone: 212.315.2812  
Email: [christine@chcommunications.biz](mailto:christine@chcommunications.biz)

Tere Martinez  
Phone: 787-725-2110  
Email: [tmartinez@prcb.org](mailto:tmartinez@prcb.org)

## PUERTO RICO'S HOTELS SUPPORT ISLAND'S TROPICAL LUSHNESS

### -Green Practices for Green Meetings -

**SAN JUAN, November 12, 2008** – Meeting planners looking at ways to incorporate “green” practices in their group programs looking at Puerto Rico’s outstanding Green attributes. Many of Puerto Rico’s top meeting hotels and resorts have incorporated energy-saving and waste-reducing programs in the day-to-day management of their properties, and also have waste-reduction programs for meeting and convention groups.

Top meeting hotels in Puerto Rico that incorporate “green” initiatives include the Caribe Hilton; Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino; Courtyard by Marriott Miramar; Courtyard by Marriott Isla Verde Beach Resort; Doubletree by Hilton San Juan; Hampton Inn & Suites San Juan; Hilton Ponce Golf & Casino Resort; Holiday Inn Express (San Juan); Holiday Inn Mayaguez & Tropical Casino; Holiday Inn San Juan Hotel; El Convento; InterContinental Resort & Casino San Juan; Rio Mar Beach Resort & Spa; A Wyndham Grand Resort; San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino; and the Sheraton Old San Juan Hotel.

“As the world continues to work together to develop and implement strategies to conserve energy and reduce waste on the planet, Puerto Rico’s hoteliers are also actively partaking in the cause,” stated Ana María Viscasillas, president and CEO, Puerto Rico Convention Bureau. “From reducing energy use in guest rooms to incorporating recycling programs and reducing waste in food, beverage and other consumption with group programs, Puerto Rico’s tourism partners are playing a proactive role in preserving ‘Mother Nature’”

In a recent survey of Puerto Rico’s hotels and resorts, many of the properties implement “green” initiatives in their guest rooms; including linen re-use programs, energy efficient lighting, training staff to implement environmental practices and utilizing low-flow showerheads to reduce water usage. In addition, many large properties offer groups “green” services for their meetings,

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including recycling bins for used materials (paper, plastic, aluminum, etc.), as well as incorporating strategies to reduce waste in food and beverage service. Recycling waste, purchasing recycled products, donating durable goods and using environmentally responsible cleaning products are other strategies that many hotels are using to help the environment.

In addition to the chart outlining specific hotel “green” practices (see attached), following is a brief overview of other ways in which Puerto Rico’s top meeting properties are helping to reduce waste and conserve energy:

- The **Caribe Hilton Hotel**, the winner of the 2008 Green Hotel Award presented by the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association, employs an environmental sustainability manager. Recycling efforts at the property include paper, cartons, plastic, aluminum, alkaline batteries, metal clothes hangers, toner cartridges, cell phones and cooking oils. The property also uses LEED compliant vacuum cleaners, waters landscaping in early morning hours to prevent evaporation and has trash receptacles and benches in outdoor areas made of recycled, sustainable materials.
- In addition to frequent energy audits at the **Courtyard by Marriott Isla Verde** and the **InterContinental Resort & Casino San Juan**, the Inter-Continental has created an Energy Conservation Committee and has an Energy Manager on site to implement energy-saving “green initiatives” throughout the resort.
- At the **Doubletree by Hilton San Juan**, staff members are involved in community programs for the environment, including planting trees and beach clean-up events.
- The **Hampton Inn & Suites San Juan** utilizes HVAC sensors in its guestrooms to reduce energy waste, and also keeps all files on CDs to reduce paper waste.
- Practices at the **Hilton Ponce Golf & Casino Resort** include thermostat sensors in guest rooms to reduce energy waste, light sensors in other areas of the property, full-load laundry practices as well as solar-panel water heating.
- A natural water heating system is in place at the **Hotel El Convento**, providing significant energy savings for the property.
- At the **Holiday Inn San Juan**, LED fixtures are used in all public spaces while window treatments in guest rooms are kept closed during the day to keep rooms cool and cut down energy use. The property collects and treats rainwater for safe use in the children’s spray park and the recycles used vegetable oil from food preparation that is collected and used locally to produce bio-diesel fuel.

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- The **Rio Mar Beach Resort & Spa: A Wyndham Grand Resort** participates in the *Green for Wyndham* program, and in addition to many other green initiatives, recycles all cartons and paper.
- The **San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino** participates in the *Marriott Green Meetings Program*, offering meeting planners a discount that gets donated to a carbon emissions off-set program.

**Puerto Rico Convention Center – The “Green District”**

The Puerto Rico Convention Center is currently working with the U.S. Green Building Council to obtain LEED: ‘Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design’ certification. By investing \$250,000 to reduce the use of electricity and water within the District, the Puerto Rico Convention Center and other developments within the 113-acre District will decrease the use of water by 30 percent and the use of electricity by 50 percent, for an on-going savings of \$450,000 per year upon completion.

In addition, the 500-room Sheraton Puerto Rico Convention Center Hotel & Casino, serving as the headquarter hotel to the Puerto Rico Convention Center, will be the first building to built in the Caribbean under the guidelines of the U.S Green Building Council. The property is also seeking the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification as part of the District’s policy to adhere to “green” building guidelines with all the elements located within the District.

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**Editor’s Note:**

The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau (PRCB) is a non-profit organization established in 1962 to drive meetings, conventions, trade shows and incentive groups to Puerto Rico. With offices in San Juan, Chicago, New York, Miami, and Washington DC, the Bureau strengthens Puerto Rico’s competitive position in the Americas and abroad by increasing awareness of the Island’s outstanding meeting facilities and services, and produces approximately \$118 million to the local economy. The PRCB is the official marketing and sales agent for the new Puerto Rico Convention Center (PRCC) opened November 2005. For more information on the new Convention Center visit [www.prconvention.com](http://www.prconvention.com). The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, representing the capital city of San Juan, is a proud member of Best Cities Global Alliance, the first convention bureau alliance that represents the highest standards of service in the meetings and convention industry. For more information, visit [www.bestcities.net](http://www.bestcities.net). The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau has also been awarded accreditation from the Destination Marketing Association International as an elite destination marketing organization. DMAI is the world’s largest association of CVBs, representing more than 600 destination management organizations in more than 25 countries. The Bureau can be reached electronically through the Internet at [info@meetpuertorico.org](mailto:info@meetpuertorico.org) or at its website [www.meetpuertorico.com](http://www.meetpuertorico.com).

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## Green Meetings in Puerto Rico

	Linen Re-Use	Low-Flow Showerhead	Energy Efficient Lighting	Energy Star appliances	Ceiling fans/Open windows	Staff Training	Recycling Bins for Meetings	Reuseable items for F&B Service	Beverage Service in Pitchers	Reduced Rates of double-sided copying	Meeting Rooms with Natural Light	Purchase Recycled materials	Actively reduce paper use	Donate durable goods	Use environmentally safe cleaning products
Caribe Hilton	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino	*		*	*		*			*		*	*	*	*	*
Courtyard by Marriott Miramar	*	*	*	*		*		*	*				*	*	*
Courtyard By Marriott Isla Verde	*	*	*			*					*	*	*		*
Doubletree by Hilton San Juan	*	*	*	*	*		*		*		*	*	*	*	*
Hampton Inn & Suites San Juan			*			*							*	*	*
Hilton Ponce Golf & Casino Resort	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*
Holiday Inn Express (San Juan)	*		*			*					*		*		
Holiday Inn Mayaguez & Tropical Casino			*	*		*					*		*	*	*
Holiday Inn San Juan	*	*	*		*	*		*	*		*		*	*	*
Hotel El Convento	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					*	*	*	
InterContinental Resort & Casino San Juan	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*		*	*	*
Rio Mar Beach Resort & Spa: A Wyndham Grand Resort	*	*	*	*		*	*		*		*	*	*	*	
San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sheraton Old San Juan	*		*	*		*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*