



# ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE I Love Earth INITIATIVE: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

I Love Earth is a sustainable development Initiative that has emerged as a prominent program. Established by Travellers International Inc., who owns and operates Newport World Resorts, a leading integrated resort company where the following international hotel brands are located. I Love Earth is an environmental initiative creating a policy on proper sourcing of food items, recycling, and upcycling. A mixed-method approach including a qualitative interviews, survey, and data analysis to support the effectiveness and impact of ILE in promoting sustainable behaviors, reaching the stakeholders and their engagement levels, and its contribution to sustainable development goals. Findings will suggest a positive outcome through awareness, behavior change, and community engagement. Based on the findings and recommendation, is to continue to enhance the initiative and its impact ensuring a long-term commitment in sustainability. For greater impact, Newport World Resorts I Love Earth integrates every aspect of its accommodation, dining, entertainment, retail, and leisure facilities. The HEART framework, with the following meaning for Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Sourcing – choosing local partners to supports businesses practicing environmental sustainability; Environmental Impact – for energy, water food, air and waste, employing administration structures and measures planned to minimize the use of harmful materials, to lessen the production of waste and to enable recycling and resume of resources; Active Engagement, Benchmarking, Certification – recurrently pursue to expand NWR environmental performance by creating objectives and goals, monitoring the development, recognizing risks and opportunities and measuring the competitiveness through benchmarking and certification; Reform, Reduce, Recycle, Repurpose – NWR starts reforming the mindset to provide a spherical economy, and Transform by means of Teaching, Training, Technology – promoting participation and interconnect NWRs commitment by promoting sustainability strategy and inspiring to implement effective sustainability management practices, soliciting inputs from its employees, suppliers, customers, and board members in meeting sustainability goals. It serves as the foundation for ILE’s commitment. The council, comprised of senior executives and subject matter experts from Newport World Resorts and its hotels sets high standards for sustainability and keeps a close eye on results as it believes that “what gets measured gets done” (Newport World Resorts, 2023). Newport World Resorts has five international hotels, and these are the following: Hotel Okura, Sheraton Manila Hotel, Holiday Inn Express Manila, and Marriott Hotel Manila which all have been committed to sustainability. The alliance of the individual initiatives of the hotels created an environmental impact (Suarez, 2022).

*Keywords: IloveEarth; Sustainable Development; Assessment; Effectiveness; Impact Analysis; Sustainability*

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## 1. Introduction

Sustainability has become a crucial aspect in the tourism and leisure industry. The environmental impact has been increasingly bothersome, the need to focus on each area of the tourism, hospitality, and leisure which majority of the natural resources, energy, manpower must take into consideration. Newport World Resorts is in Newport City opposite Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Terminal 3. It is the first integrated resort in the Philippines, formerly Resorts World Manila rebranded last July 2022, which elevates the thrills of gaming, entertainment, dining, and retail. It is owned and operated by Travellers International Hotel Group, Inc. The following hotels are operated within the property namely: Marriot Hotel Manila, Sheraton Manila Hotel, Hotel Okura, Hilton Hotel, and Holiday Inn Express. I Love Earth (ILE) is Travellers International Hotel Group, Inc.'s integrated sustainability program for the entire Newport World Resorts development, including the above-mentioned hotels). Building on the existing sustainability programs of each brand, ILE taps into collaborative engagement as well as the personal commitment of every employee and stakeholder to make sustainability an integral part of our business and our daily lives. ILE is built around a program framework with measurable goals under each of the five HEART pillars. (<https://www.newportworldresorts.com/sustainability-policy>, n.d.)

The HEART framework has the following core principles: H – Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Sourcing, choosing local partners and support businesses that practice environmental sustainability. E – Environmental Impact (Energy, Water Food, Air and Waste), employing management systems and procedures designed to minimize the use of hazardous materials, energy and natural resources, to minimize the generation of waste and to enable recycling and resume of materials. A – Active Engagement, Benchmarking, Certification, to continually seek to improve the environmental performance by establishing objectives and targets, measuring progress, identifying risks and opportunities, and measuring the competitiveness through benchmarking and certification. Partnered with EarthCheck, the world's leading benchmarking and certification provider as NWR is committed to continues improvement measured by way of annual benchmarking assessments. R – Reform, Reduce, Recycle, Repurpose, starting by reforming the mindset to provide a circular economy. T – Transform through Teaching, Training, Technology. Promoting participation and communicate the commitment of promoting sustainability within the employees, by providing the necessary training and support to enable them to adopt effective sustainability management practices; and by soliciting input from our employees, suppliers, customers, and board members in meeting sustainability goals.

## 2. Literature Review

The effective sustainability initiatives covers analyzing the social, economic, and environmental impacts. The sustainable development goals impact and assessment tool, created and developed by Gothenburg Centre for sustainable development, offers a structured approach for self-assessment of impacts on the 17 SDGs. The tool encourages reflection and collaborative learning, aiding organizations in identifying both positive and negative impacts of their activities on sustainable development, (SDSN, 2020). The international institute for environment and development (IIED) emphasizes the importance of integrating evaluation processes into SDG implementation. Their series of briefings advocates for the use of evaluation to inform and enhance the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives, ensuring that progress is equitable, relevant, and sustainable.

Various methodologies have been developed to assess the impact of sustainability initiatives. The Greenhouse Gas protocol's sustainable development methodology provides guidelines for evaluating the social, economic, and environmental impacts of projects. This includes assessment questionnaires covering identified impact categories, specific impacts, and indicators, facilitating a comprehensive evaluation of an initiative's contributions to sustainable development (GHG Protocol, 2020). The climate action transparency's sustainable development assessment guide offers a framework for assessing the sustainable development impacts of policies and actions. It emphasizes the importance of qualitative and quantitative assessments, stakeholder consultations, and the consideration of various impact categories to ensure a holistic evaluation (ICAT, 2020).

Evaluating sustainability initiatives presents several challenges, including the complexity of measuring long-term impacts and the need for reliable data. The world bank's independent evaluation group highlights the importance of building and improving monitoring and evaluation capacity worldwide to achieve the SDGs. They stress that effective evaluation goes beyond measurement, providing explanations for data trends and investigating whether progress is equitable and sustainable. (IEG). The international association of impact assessment underscores the significance of social impact assessment (SIA) processes involve analyzing, monitoring, and managing social impacts, ensuring that sustainability initiatives contribute positively to societal well-being (IAIA).

### 3. Methodology

This paper utilizes a quantitative method and approach to assess the effectiveness of the ILOvEarth program of Newport World Resorts using the ILE 2023 Goals using the following matrix (Improve, Solid, Strong, and the Goal for the Year) and the ILE 2023 Year End Report from the hotels around the property and aligned with the HEART framework

### 4. Findings

According to the study's findings, Newport World Resorts' ILOvEarth Program has been successful in encouraging and establishing sustainable practices in both staff and visitors. The program's impact can now be assessed comprehensively, identifying both program strengths and opportunities for improvement, thanks to the HEART framework. Maintaining and further investigating the program's efficacy over the coming years will need a continuation of the activities and initiatives surrounding its visibility, education, and integration into day-to-day operations.

#### 4.1 Tables and figures

The following analysis were based on the ILE 2023 Goals and the ILE 2023 Year End Report following the HEART framework:

Table 1. HEART Framework on H- Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Sourcing

Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Sourcing	2023 Goals	Year End Report	Interpretation
Source from local farmers – Cage free Eggs Usage	35%	35%	Strong
Source from local farmers – Chocolate Usage	40%	40%	Strong
Source from local farmers – Coffee Usage	20%	20%	Strong
80% Sustainable Seafood Procurement	25%	25%	Strong
Locally Sourced Fruits and Vegetables	100%	85%	Needs improvement
Locally Sourced Grains-Rice, Corn and Soybean	85%	80%	Strong

Table 1 shown above, represents the HEART framework on H-Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Sourcing. Under this framework, hotels and their outlets monitor the following key areas: Sourcing from local farmers eggs, chocolates, coffee, fruits and vegetables, grains-rice and soybean. Included also is the sustainable seafood procurement indicating the 2023 target goals and the year end report of the implementation of the sustainable initiatives. Achieving the target, one initiative reflects a need for improvement of the locally sourced fruits and vegetables. According to a study conducted that consumers often support local brands because they want to support local economy and find different items, they cannot find elsewhere (Moran, 2023).

Table 2. HEART Framework on E- Environmental Impact

<b>Environmental Impact</b>	<b>2023 Goals</b>	<b>Year End Report</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Energy Reduction on Utilities (thru energy conservation)	20%	20%	Strong
Reduction on Fossil-fuel Energy (thru solar power generation)	4.1 MW	4.1 MW	Strong
Water Conservation thru Wastewater Recirculation	2%	2%	Strong
Green Space – Edible Landscape	Design implementation installation of hardscape, transplanting of softscape, monitoring	Done	Done

Table 2 is the HEART framework on Environmental Impact, showing the initiatives on the following: Energy reduction on utilities thru energy conservation, reduction on fossil-fuel energy thru solar power generation, water conservation thru wastewater recirculation, and green space or edible landscape, following the achieved targets and result from the 2023 goals and the year end report. Energy derived from fossil fuels contributes significantly to global climate change, accounting for more than 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions and approximately 90% of all carbon dioxide emissions, an alternative energy from renewable sources must be utilized to decarbonize the energy sector (Osman, 2023). Environmental pollution and global warming threaten the world equilibrium and require a new and sustainable approach to the strategies implemented in the different productive systems, to improve the environmental sustainability of production systems requires the access to a scenario of energy sources as wide and varied as possible, promoting the use of alternative and renewable resources in a circular economy perspective (Picone, 2021).

Table 3. HEART Framework on A- Active Engagement, Benchmarking & Certification

<b>Active Engagement, Benchmarking &amp; Certification</b>	<b>2023 Goals</b>	<b>Year End Report</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Green Certification	Maintain Silver Certification	Achieved	Maintained

Table 3 shown above is the HEART framework on A – Active Engagement, Benchmarking & Certification, with its previous goal of acquired and maintained the silver certification. Earthcheck is a leading benchmarking, certification and environmental management program used by the travel and tourism industry, getting the certification is not an easy task (DNA, 2012).

Table 4. HEART Framework on R- Reform, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose

<b>Reform, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose</b>	<b>2023 Goals</b>	<b>Year End Report</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Reduce: Food Waste – 35% of Food waste sent to the garbage room will be redirected from landfill to composting and the Orca.	35%	35.49%	Strong
Reduce: Remove all plastic water bottled from HIEX hotel guest rooms and VIP Grand Casino	90% glass bottles being used	0%	Needs Improvement
Reuse: Linen for life project – 30% of all discarded linen will be donated to NGO’s or charitable institutions	30%	37.42%	Strong
Recycle: Reuse your refuse project – 30% reduction on total items sent to the garbage room going to landfill	30%	75%	Strong

Table 4 represents the HEART framework R – Reform, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose. The following initiatives with indicator of the 2023 goals and the year end report are the following: under Reduce is Food Waste with a target of 35% with the year end result of 35.49%, Reduce is removing the plastic bottled water in one of the hotels in the property (HIEX) targeting a 90% glass bottled water to be used, with the low result. Reuse for the linen for life project with a 30% target and the year end result of 37.42%, under the recycle is the reuse your refuse project with a target of 30% resulting to 75% from the year end report. According to (Ruttledge, 2022) Circular economy is about making stuff last, not wasting stuff, and not packaging stiff in other stuff that will be used only once and thrown away, with the aim of reducing our wasted resources and emissions.

Table 5. HEART Framework on T- Transform through Teaching, Training & Technology

<b>Transform through Teaching, Training &amp; Technology</b>	<b>2023 Goals</b>	<b>Year End Report</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Training/ Learning sessions per month focusing on specific sustainability programs/ practices	60 sessions	73 Sessions	Strong
Volunteer hours in community	5,000	6,478.70	Strong
Sustainability & Advocacy programs by employees	80 and up	102	Strong
Reach at least 1,200 followers in FB/IG page	1,200 and up	1,512	Strong

Table 5 above represents the HEART framework on T- Transform thru Teaching, Training & Technology with the following initiatives on: Training/ Learning sessions per month focusing on specific sustainability programs/ practices with the target of 60 sessions aimed 73 session based from the year end report, Volunteer hours in community, Sustainability and Advocacy programs by employees with 5,000 hours resulting to 6,478.70 hours based from the year end report, reaching 1,200 followers in social media accounts with the result of 1,512 from the year end report. According to the study conducted by (Fishlock, 2023) effective approaches for teaching and learning sustainability programs and practices using project or problem-based learning,

while working in interdisciplinary teams, were found to be the most effective. Courses with community-oriented and constructive pedagogies were highly effective in developing the learner's knowledge of sustainable development.

## 5. Conclusions

The ILOvEarth program from Newport World Resorts has shown promise in promoting sustainability within the hospitality industry. This study, which makes use of the HEART framework, has shed light on the program's strengths and weaknesses. Going forward, maintaining the long-term viability of sustainability activities on the property will require constant assessment and modification.

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## Authors' Biographies



Dr. Kathleen Apilado is a distinguished academician and administrator who currently serve as the Dean of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Jose Rizal University. She holds a degree of Doctor in Hospitality Management from the Philippine Women's University and a master's degree in business administration from University of Perpetual Help Laguna, and Bachelor of Science in Hotel & Restaurant Management at Lyceum of the Philippines University in Manila

She has been involved in various research and collaborative projects in the areas of Culinary Heritage, Food Sustainability, Environmental initiatives in Tourism and Hospitality, Data Analytics in Hotel Industry. She is also an active officer of several professional and national organizations, including as the President of Philippine Association of Researchers in Tourism and Hospitality in Central Manila Chapter, Board of Director of Hospitality and Tourism Council of Deans, and Board of Trustee of Junior Tourism and Hospitality Management Association of the Philippines.

Dean Apilado is also recognized for her leadership skills and active collaboration with local government units and private sectors for cultural and tourism, and sustainable development goals initiatives, her passion to help and preserve the culture of artisan sea-salt and helping the salt farmers has reached top international hotels and restaurants, and international organizations such as Slow Food International based in Italy. Currently she is part of the Cultural Tourism researcher of Valenzuela City for the tourism inventory.



Kingson Sian was the former President and CEO of the first integrated resort in the Philippines for 16 years. He is also one of the tourism industry's sustainability champions. Because of his leadership he was awarded with the following:

- (1) STEVIES THOUGHT LEADER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2024
- (2) HSMA SUSTAINABILITY AWARD
- (3) EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR - ASIAN MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS
- (4) ACES GREEN INITIATIVE AWARD MALAYSIA 2023
- (5) HR EXCELLENCE AWARDS MOST PEOPLE FOCUSED CEO 2022

Mr Sian is one of the unsung heroes responsible for the growth of the BPO industry in the country because of his influence, a company located at Eastwood became home to one of the nation's first major call centers and BPO facilities.

He graduated from the University of the Philippines with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Economics and obtained his master's degree in business administration for Finance and Business Policy from the University of Chicago.