



Hotel Presidente becomes certified as "Carbon Neutral"

July, 2008 (San Jose, Costa Rica)-Hotel Presidente, located on San Jose's Central Avenue, became the first hotel in the city to obtain a Carbon Neutral certification. This makes the Hotel part of a government initiative that seeks to make Costa Rica a carbon neutral country by 2021. The news comes just a month after the Costa Rica Tourism Institute announced it would promote this type of certification.

Hotel Presidente obtained its certification from the Carbonfund.org, a United States-based non-governmental organization (NGO) that is fighting climate change by neutralizing carbon footprints. Carbon Fund's motto is "Reduce what you can. Off set what you can't." The organization is renowned for its worldwide leadership in the environmental field. Some of its partners are major organizations and businesses such as Discovery Communications (parent of Discovery Channel), The Earth Institute at Columbia University (directed by economist Jeffrey Sachs), London School of Economics, Yale School of Management, Institute for Ecological Design at Carnegie Mellon University, Amtrak, Dell, Allstate and hundreds of other businesses, NGOs and institutions. Carbonfund.org helped create a program to create environmentally friendly practices at the hotel. Hotel Presidente is investing \$150,000 on this program. Carter explained that the Carbonfund.org was selected from various organizations on the advice of environmental groups and due to its international prestige. She also added that Hotel Presidente will join national initiatives to provide Carbon Neutral certifications in Costa Rica, once these are implemented.

To become certified, Hotel Presidente contacted the Carbonfund.org and worked to compile the carbon footprint data for the hotel. The carbon footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) produced by the hotel. The

Some of the environmentally friendly practices that Hotel Presidente is implementing are campaigns asking guests to conserve water and energy by creating temperature limits on the air conditioning system and installing instructions in each room to keep lights off whenever possible. To reduce waste, Hotel Presidente has made drinking straws optional at its News Café restaurant. Additionally, the hotel has introduced climactic design strategies such as installing skylights and air ducts to make better use of natural light and ventilation. The hotel has also eliminated refrigeration equipment that uses non-environmentally friendly chemicals. The hotel has implemented a recycling program that has served as a model for other businesses.

Katherine Carter, Hotel Presidente's operations manager said that the hotel is teaching its associates about environmental practices, helping them to reduce their own carbon footprint in their homes. The program will be soon extended to include vendors. "We



are conscious that we can't stand idly while the planet is being destroyed. It is each person's responsibility to do something and we are doing our part within the tourism industry," said Carter.

Hotel Presidente is a four star hotel located on Central Avenue in San Jose, Costa Rica. Among its corporate social responsibility programs, of special significance is its work with the Paniamor Foundation on the Costa Rica's Children project.