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International pioneer

Sonae Sierra, Centro Colombo and NorteShopping awarded environmental certification

- Sonae Sierra's certification under ISO Standard 14001:2004 is the first such certificate to be awarded internationally for a company in this sector
- Sonae Sierra has had its Environmental Management System recognised, which it began to develop in 1997
- Certification was awarded by LRQA, a prestigious Lloyd's Group company

Sonae Sierra has just had its Environmental Management System (EMS) certified in accordance with ISO Standard 14001:2004. This makes it the first shopping and leisure centre company to be awarded this environmental certificate.

As well as the company's own certification, Sonae Sierra has also had two of its shopping and leisure centres certified, the Centro Colombo in Lisbon and NorteShopping in Matosinhos. In fact, the company's Environmental Management System is already being applied to all of its centres.

Awarded by LRQA - Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance - a prestigious certification company and the only one in the world accredited to operate in all industrial sectors, this certification is the culmination of a long and committed process launched by Sonae Sierra to achieve the highest environmental management standards and ensure the most environmentally friendly practices.

ISO Standard 14001:2004 certification means that Sonae Sierra has achieved yet another target of its corporate responsibility policy. This provides clear competitive advantages, and of course improves environmental performance and enhances the market value of its shopping and leisure centres.

Certification brings with it added responsibility on the part of all Sonae Sierra employees, because environmental performance has to be constantly improved, and all of the requirements of ISO Standard 14001:2004 have to be scrupulously observed, if certification is to be maintained in future audits.

By the end of 2008, ISO Standard 14001:2004 certification will extend to all of Sonae Sierra's current shopping and leisure centres.



For Francisco Ferreira, member of Quercus National Board, “nowadays the constraints imposed by compliance with the Kyoto Protocol mean that efforts to save energy, and cut waste and water consumption are indispensable. Environmental certification is one fundamental step along this path to more sustainable development. With the services sector responsible for a significant share of this consumption in the urban environment, environmental monitoring in major shopping centres is an important component of the effort and transparency vis-à-vis the community.”

João Joanaz de Melo, an Environmental Engineering Professor at Universidade Nova de Lisboa, considers that “Sonae Sierra’s certification is ground-breaking, and an important sign of social responsibility. It represents a verifiable commitment to the improvement of environmental performance. This certification is not an end in itself, but a tool to effectively improve the environment (e.g. by decreasing water and energy consumption as well as pollutant emissions) and captivate all interested parties (visitors, tenants, employees, administration, suppliers).”.

A consistent policy

Naturally, Sonae Sierra’s Environmental Policy is based on the philosophy outlined by the Sonae Group, set forth many years ago by its Chairman, Mr Belmiro de Azevedo. His aim was to promote sustainable development and commit the company to environmental conservation as a decisive factor in the success of its business, and to consolidate the Sonae Group’s place in the community.

Realising that the group’s long-term success is intimately linked to a management model that includes environmental management as one of its corporate priorities, for the 21st century Sonae took up the gauntlet of becoming increasingly eco-efficient. That meant mobilising all employees, and the active involvement of customers and suppliers.

It is against that background that Sonae Sierra, the Centro Colombo and NorteShopping, having gradually perfected their Environmental Management System, have now been awarded certification in accordance with ISO Standard 14001:2004.

It is the culmination of a long journey. The first step was taken in 1997, when environmental diagnoses began for the shopping centres open at that time. In this way we identified the main environmental impacts of our business. This validated Sonae Sierra’s Environmental Policy, which was approved in 1998 and revised in 2004.

To live up to the values and guiding principles of our Environmental Policy, Sonae Sierra developed an Environmental Management System (EMS) based from the outset on ISO Standard 14001, with the aim of making constant eco-efficiency improvements to the company, and managing the main potentially negative impacts of our business in an environmentally correct way.



Green Centres

One of the many ways in which Sonae Sierra's environmental efforts can be seen is in the "green centre" concept. The first such centre was NorteShopping in Matosinhos, which has just received certification for its EMS.

The "green centre" concept means that right from the design phase, shopping and leisure centres developed by Sonae Sierra are fully capable of satisfying the company's Environmental Management System requirements. It optimises such major aspects as integration into the surroundings and the choice of building materials, taking into account not only local traditions but also the conditions in the vicinity. This results in thermal gains, for example. These and other aspects mean that, as soon as they begin operating, our centres are managed in an environmentally responsible way, in line with the Environmental Management System's environmental standards.

In practice, this strategy enables us to establish the best environmental practices in such fields as energy saving, water quality and consumption management, air-quality monitoring, selective waste separation and recycling, and others. This results in significant savings when developing and managing shopping centres.

For example, while energy consumption can be optimised via the intelligent Building Management System (BMS), water consumption is controlled using sophisticated timer systems for taps, and other types of equipment that enable significant savings. In addition to reducing the consumption of resources, Sonae Sierra is also committed to guaranteeing the quality of water provided to visitors to its centres. We do this via systematic analyses by duly accredited laboratories.

With regard to waste, centres managed by Sonae Sierra have the latest equipment, to enable them to separate the different types of waste, which can then be sent for recycling. Regarding liquid effluents, the installed pre-treatment systems mean that its quality can be improved before it is discharged into the municipal sewers.

Indoor air quality is assured by ventilation and air-conditioning systems which are subject to strict maintenance routines and regularly inspected to ensure they are running efficiently. All of these systems and elements are regularly assessed by external audits, enabling us to ascertain the efficiency of our procedures.

**Time line:**

1997	Centres undergo their first environmental audits
1998	Approval of the Environmental Policy
2000	Formal introduction of the Environmental Management System
2004	Publication of the 1 st Corporate Responsibility Report
2005	Certification of Sonae Sierra's, the Colombo Centre's and NorteShopping's EMSs under ISO Standard 14001:2004

Sonae Sierra, www.sonaesierra.com, is an international company specialised in shopping centres, with a passion for bringing innovation and emotion to the shopping and leisure centre industry. The company owns or co-owns 38 shopping centres in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece and Brazil, representing a gross lettable area (GLA) of more than 1,500,000 m². Sonae Sierra is currently developing 14 further projects in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece and Brazil, with a total GLA greater than 540,000 m².