

Research Summary Sustainable Tourism

By Elin Adenfelt, October 2004

Environmental Impacts of Tourism (UNEP)

Depletion of Natural Resources:

- **Water** (especially fresh water.)
- **Local Resources** (energy, food, raw material etc.)
- **Land Degradation** (Increased construction of tourism and recreational facilities has increased the pressure on important land resources include minerals, fossil fuels, fertile soil, forests, wetland and wildlife and on scenic landscapes.)

Pollution:

- **Air Pollution & Noise** (Emissions and noise from transport by air, road, and rail.)
- **Solid Waste & Littering**
- **Sewage**
- **Aesthetic Pollution** (E.g. often tourism fails to integrate its structures with the natural features and indigenous architectural of the destination.)

Physical Impacts:

Physical impacts of tourism development

- **Construction activities and infrastructure development** (Accommodation, water supplies, restaurants and recreation facilities can involve sand mining, beach and sand dune erosion, soil erosion and extensive paving. In addition, road and airport construction can lead to land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats and deterioration of scenery.)
- **Deforestation and intensified or unsustainable use of land** (Construction of ski resort accommodation and facilities frequently requires clearing forested land. Coastal wetlands are often drained and filled due to lack of more suitable sites for construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure.)
- **Marina development** (E.g. Development of marinas and breakwaters can cause changes in currents and coastlines.)

Physical impacts from tourist activities

- **Trampling** (Tourists using the same trail over and over again trample the vegetation and soil, eventually causing damage that can lead to loss of biodiversity and other impacts.)
- **Anchoring and other marine activities** (Anchoring, snorkelling, sport fishing and scuba diving, yachting, and cruising are some of the activities that can cause direct degradation of marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, and subsequent impacts on coastal protection and fisheries.)
- **Alteration of ecosystems by tourist activities** (E.g. wildlife viewing can bring about stress for the animals and alter their natural behaviour when tourists come too close.)

Socio-Cultural Impacts from Tourism

Negative Socio-Cultural Impacts

- **Change or loss of indigenous identity and values** (E.g. ‘Commodification’ ((when local cultures are turned into commodities when religious rituals, traditional ethnic rites and festivals are reduced and sanitized to conform to tourist expectations)), Standardization, Loss of authenticity, Adaptation of tourist demands.)
- **Culture Clashes** (E.g. Economic equality, irritation due to tourists behaviour, job level friction)
- **Physical influences causing social stress** (E.g. Resource use conflicts, Cultural deterioration, Conflicts with traditional land users.)
- **Ethical issues** (E.g. Crime generation, child labour, prostitution and sex tourism.)

Positive Socio-Cultural Impacts

- **Tourism as a force for peace**
- **Strengthening communities**
- **Facilities developed for tourism can benefit residents.**
- **Revaluation of cultural traditions**
- **Tourism encourages civic involvement and pride.**

Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) is tourism that results in increased net benefits for poor people. PPT is not a specific product or niche sector but an approach to tourism development and management. It enhances the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people, so that tourism's contribution to poverty reduction is increased and poor people are able to participate more effectively in product development. Links with many different types of 'the poor' need to be considered: staff, neighbouring communities, land-holders, producers of food, fuel and other suppliers, operators of micro tourism businesses, craft-makers, other users of tourism infrastructure (roads) and resources (water) etc. There are many types of pro poor tourism strategies, ranging from increasing local employment to building mechanisms for consultation. Any type of company can be involved in pro-poor tourism - a small lodge, an urban hotel, a tour operator, an infrastructure developer. The critical factor is not the type of company or the type of tourism, but that an increase in the net benefits that go to poor people can be demonstrated.

PPT strategies: Table 1 summarises PPT strategies

Table 1: Types of PPT strategies

Increase economic benefits	Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts	Enhance participation and partnership
1. Boost local employment, wages 2. Boost local enterprise opportunities 3. Create collective income sources – fees, revenue shares	1. Capacity building, training 2. Mitigate environmental impacts 3. Address competing use of natural resources 4. Improve social, cultural impacts 5. Increase local access to infrastructure and services	1. Create more supportive policy/planning framework 2. Increase participation of the poor in decision-making 3. Build pro-poor partnerships with private sector 4. Increase flows of information, communication

Key principles and strategies for pro-poor tourism:

Some underlying principles for pro-poor tourism

- Pro-poor strategies need to be complemented by the development of wider tourism infrastructure. A balanced approach is critical – if competitive products, transport systems or marketing do not exist, the industry will decline and so will any pro-poor strategy;
- Pro-poor principles apply to any tourism segment, though specific strategies will vary between, for example, mass tourism and wildlife tourism;
- Focus on expanding benefits, not just minimising costs to the poor; Draw on lessons from other sectors (such as small enterprise, good governance, and poverty analysis) and apply these to tourism;
- Involve businesses in development initiatives and be commercially realistic;
- Do not expect all the poor to benefit equally, particularly the poorest 20 per cent. Some will lose;
- Learn by doing – the effectiveness of pro-poor strategies is not proven, but we won't know what can be done to reduce poverty through tourism until more concerted efforts are made.

Combining national and local strategies

A range of strategies is needed to promote pro-poor tourism, at the local destination, national/policy level, and the international level.

A destination focus is ideal for practical measures to maximise benefits for the poor within a specific area (e.g. coastal zone, district/region, island, city, valley/mountain). Pro-active initiatives can bring government, communities, NGOs and business together to stimulate economic linkages, local participation and partnerships. However, practical action usually needs to be accompanied by a supportive policy framework.

National/policy-level interventions may be needed on issues ranging from planning and policy objectives, licensing and registration systems, tenure laws, tourism training, business incentives/regulation and infrastructural development. Development of pro-poor tourism requires a strong planning framework and governmental commitment. If this exists, small changes in rules can have a significant effect on implementation and impacts.

Economic Impacts of Tourism

Negative Economic Impacts of Tourism

There are many hidden costs to tourism, which can have unfavourable economic effects on the host community. Often rich countries are better able to profit from tourism than poor ones. Whereas the least developed countries have the most urgent need for income, employment and general rise of the standard of living by means of tourism, they are least able to realize these benefits. Among the reasons for this are large-scale transfer of tourism revenues out of the host country and exclusion of local businesses and products.

A study of tourism 'leakage' in Thailand estimated that 70% of all money spent by tourists ended up leaving Thailand (via foreign-owned tour operators, airlines, hotels, imported drinks and food, etc.). Estimates for other Third World countries range from 80% in the Caribbean to 40% in India.

Source: Sustainable Living

- **Leakage** The direct income for an area is the amount of tourist expenditure that remains locally after taxes, profits, and wages are paid outside the area and after imports are purchased; these subtracted amounts are called leakage. In most all-inclusive package tours, about 80% of travellers' expenditures go to the airlines, hotels and other international companies (who often have their headquarters in the travellers' home countries), and not to local businesses or workers. In addition, significant amounts of income actually retained at destination level can leave again through leakage.
- **Import leakage** This commonly occurs when tourists demand standards of equipment, food, and other products that the host country cannot supply. Especially in less-developed countries, food and drinks must often be imported, since local products are not up to the hotel's (i.e. tourist's) standards or the country simply doesn't have a supplying industry. Much of the income from tourism expenditures leaves the country again to pay for these imports.

The average import-related leakage for most developing countries today is between 40% and 50% of gross tourism earnings for small economies and between 10% and 20% for most advanced and diversified economies, according to UNCTAD.

- **Export leakage** Multinational corporations and large foreign businesses have a substantial share in the import leakage. Often, especially in poor developing destinations, they are the only ones that possess the necessary capital to invest in the construction of tourism infrastructure and facilities. As a consequence of this, an export leakage arises when overseas investors who finance the resorts and hotels take their profits back to their country of origin.
- **Enclave tourism** Local businesses often see their chances to earn income from tourists severely reduced by the creation of "all-inclusive" vacation packages. When tourists remain for their entire stay at the same cruise ship or resort, which provides everything they need and where they will make all their expenditures, not much opportunity is left for local people to profit from tourism.

The Organization of American States (OAS) carried out a survey of Jamaica's tourist industry that looked at the role of the all-inclusive compared to other types of accommodation. It found that 'All-inclusive hotels generate the largest amount of revenue but their impact on the economy is smaller per dollar of revenue than other accommodation sub sectors.'

It also concluded that all-inclusive imported more, and employed fewer people per dollar of revenue than other hotels. This information confirms the concern of those who have argued that all-inclusive have a smaller trickle-down effect on local economies. (Source: Tourism Concern)

The cruise ship industry provides another example of economic enclave tourism. Non-river cruises carried some 8.7 million international passengers in 1999. On many ships, especially in the Caribbean (the world's most popular cruise destination with 44.5% of cruise passengers), guests are encouraged to spend most of their time and money on board, and opportunities to spend in some ports are closely managed and restricted.

Other negative impacts

- **Infrastructure cost**
- **Increase in prices**
- **Economic dependence of the local community on tourism**
- **Seasonal character of jobs**

Other industry impacts affecting tourism

Economic crises, like the Asian crisis that hit Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia a few years ago, can be devastating to inbound tourism flows. The financial turmoil triggered a sharp fall in tourism flows to affected countries during 1997 and 1998. In the Philippines, the crisis and the temporary closure of Philippine Airlines affected inbound arrivals significantly as there was a decline of almost 3.3% in 1998.

How tourism can contribute to economic conservation

The main positive economic impacts of tourism relate to foreign exchange earnings, contributions to government revenues, and generation of employment and business opportunities. These are discussed briefly here; further information on economic contributions from tourism can be found at the [World Travel & Tourism Council's home page](#).

- **Foreign exchange earnings**
Tourism expenditures and the export and import of related goods and services generate income to the host economy and can stimulate the investment necessary to finance growth in other economic sectors. Some countries seek to accelerate this growth by requiring visitors to bring in a certain amount of foreign currency for each day of their stay and do not allow them to take it out of the country again at the end of the trip.
- **Contribution to government revenues**
Government revenues from the tourism sector can be categorized as direct and indirect contributions. **Direct** contributions are generated by taxes on incomes from tourism employment and tourism businesses, and by direct levies on tourists such as departure taxes. **Indirect** contributions are those originated from taxes and duties levied on goods and services supplied to tourists.
- **Employment generation**
The rapid expansion of international tourism has led to significant employment creation. For example, the hotel accommodation sector alone provided around 11.3 million jobs worldwide in 1995. Tourism can generate jobs directly through hotels, restaurants, nightclubs, taxis, and souvenir sales, and indirectly through the supply of goods and services needed by tourism-related businesses. According to the [WTO](#), tourism supports some 7% of the world's workers.
- **Stimulation of infrastructure investment**
Tourism can induce the local government to make infrastructure improvements such as better water and sewage systems, roads, electricity, telephone and public transport networks, all of which can improve the quality of life for residents as well as facilitate tourism.
- **Contribution to local economies**
Tourism can be a significant, even essential, part of the local economy. As the environment is a basic component of the tourism industry's assets, tourism revenues are often used to measure the economic value of protected areas.

Environmental Work by First Choice's Competitor's

Thomas Cook

Thomas Cook Airlines – Young fleet and efficient fuel consumption

Caring for the environment is something that is very much taken for granted at the holiday airline Thomas Cook Airlines and its subsidiary SunExpress.

At the same time, a modern fleet is a prerequisite for economical and environmentally friendly flying. Thomas Cook Airlines operates one of the most modern fleets in Belgium, Germany and Great Britain and in the process relies exclusively on the latest generation of aircraft: Boeing 767-300, Boeing 757-200, Boeing 757-300, Boeing 737-800 (SunExpress) and Airbus A320. The entire fleet amounts to 87 aircraft (status August 2003). In the past, the holiday airline consistently invested in new aircraft and will continue to do so in the future.

All aircraft meet the requirements of the ICAO, Annex 16, Volume 1, Chapter 3 and are also included in the bonus list of the Federal Ministry of Transport for especially low-noise aircraft design. The quietest aircraft of the fleet is the new Boeing 757-330, which cumulatively falls below the required marginal values by 16 EPNdB. Details of the actual consumption and emission values of the individual aircraft designs may be obtained from each current environmental report of Deutsche Lufthansa AG.

Practiced environmental protection at Thomas Cook, however, is not only based on technical innovations. Hence, for many years now in daily flight operations waste on board has been separated in advance in order to facilitate the recycling on the ground. In the meantime, almost 50 percent of the remains of the board service are recycled and re-used. On some routes, such as to the Maldives, the catering-waste that is generated during a flight is taken back to the country of departure, where it is competently disposed of.

Knives, forks and spoons are made of metal. Plates, cups and glasses are made of recyclable robust plastic. This is for a reason: porcelain and glass would significantly increase the weight in the aircraft. And more weight means a higher fuel consumption and thus also more emission.

Iberostar environment strategy

Main target:

All they 16 hotels in Majorca following and consolidating the ISO 14.001 and the Eco Auditory Scheme and Programme for Eco Management - EMAS proposal for the European Union (EU).

ISO 14.001 and EMAS model and standars extended to the rest of IBEROSTAR hotels in Spain

Exportation of eco management and IBEROSTAR initiatives to the european and mediterranean IBEROSTAR Resorts

Particular targets:

- Improvement of the quality life inside the Iberostar hotels
- Offer to our customer best ecological resources to improve their stays
- Looking for a strong compromise between our sourrandings and IBEROSTAR
- All of them certified in 2001 following the ISO 14.001 and EMAS (UE) standards

Succesfull news to comment:

- Hotel Carolina Certificated in ISO 14.001 last december 2000 and EMAS (january 2001)
- Hotel & Apartaments Cala Millor Park Certificated in ISO 14.001 and EMAS in february 2001

Particular targets:

- Implantation and certifications in ISO 14.001 & EMAS 2001:
Royal Cristina, Royal Cupido Royal Playa de Palma
Iberostar Ciudad Blanca, Iberostar Alcudia park, Iberostar Playa de Muro Iberostar Dunas Park
Iberostar Carolina Aparthotel Club Cala Barca, Club Royal Beach, Magalluf Beach, Albufera
Playa, Albufera Park
- Implantation and certifications in ISO 14.001 & EMAS 2001:
IberostarVell Marí, Royal Andalus Park, Garnd Hotel Anthelia, Torviscas Playa, Bouganville
Playa, Fuerteventura Palace, Playa Gaviotas

Iberostar environment improvements and management

- Initial Eco management diagnosis of the hotels
- Eco management as a part of the global Iberostar hotel business
- Environment Programs for each hotel
- Anually "Eco Budget" to invest in each hotel
- "Enviroment Declaration" (Anually report in each hotel publishing to the customers, main Tour Operators, partners and local institutions giving information about our particular improvements in eco management)
- Eco news and Iberostar environment programmes in wwb pages: www.iberostar.com

- Segregate and collect all the inert rubbish (In course from last year)
- Chemical and "dangerous" products delivered to authorized collectors (in course from last year)
- Mesures to save water, electricity and limited natural resources and energies: gasoil and gas. New technologies applies to avoid expending unnecessaries quantities of limited resources. (In course from last year)
- Indicators to control main limited natural resources; water, electricity, gas, gasoil. (In course from last five years). Anual targets and manegement by objectives. (In course from last year)
- Gartens planted with typical plants from the mediterranean area. (In course from last four years)
- Quality water controls and wasting water controls subjects to the European levels. (In course from last years)
- "Approval of ecological IBEROSTAR criterions to buy products and food" asking for our providers colaboratorions . (It's in ocourse form last year)
- Introduction of ecological criterions to rebuild, renovate and build hotels.

(SunExpress's Environmental policy can be found in the research folder)

TUI

TUI UK is the UK's largest holiday company and includes the leading UK brands of Thomson Holidays and Lunn Poly.

From their web site www.tui.com:

“As the world's largest tourism company, TUI is committed to reducing the external and internal impacts of its activities on the environment.”

“Within the context of a sustainable business policy, TUI AG gives a particularly high strategic priority to the integration of environmental quality standards – and their active implementation in all of the Group’s activities.

With the overall objective of continually improving its environmental performance, TUI AG Environmental Management cooperates with the environmental officers in each affiliated company. It has also been actively involved for many years in promoting in-depth stakeholder dialogue through the TUI Environmental Network (TEN!). TUI AG Environmental Management’s economic and environmental goals also make an important contribution to the development of shareholder value.

The main thrust of its work reflects the strategic and financial-market-oriented positioning of the TUI AG Holding. There is also a special focus on the main business activity of TUI AG, i.e. all of the links in the tourism value chain (travel agencies, tour operators, carriers, incoming agencies and hotels). The affiliated companies in the Logistics division have their own independent environmental departments which co-ordinate their technical activities with the head office department.”

TUI AG Environmental policy

In a period of progressive globalisation, the sustainable interaction of economic, environmental and social goals is vital for TUI AG’s corporate success as a globally active Group. The principles of sustainable development are therefore a major element in steering the actions of all of the companies within TUI AG.

In addition to economic and social aspects, conducting business in accordance with the principles of sustainability always involves a strong commitment to nature and environmental protection. Investments in environmental protection play a part in safeguarding the economic basis of our activities and giving the TUI Group a competitive edge honoured by its customers. Our membership of international organisations, and the high environmental protection standards already achieved in the tourism and logistics sectors, underline this commitment.

TUI AG is a founding member of econsense – Forum for Sustainable Development of German Industry, and has therefore made a voluntary commitment to promote the aims of environmental, economic and social sustainability. In addition to this agenda for sustainable development, numerous TUI AG subsidiaries have established their own environmental codes of practice, policies or corporate guidelines. This wide range of initiatives is incorporated within a Group-wide framework by TUI’s voluntary commitment.

Voluntary commitment of TUI AG as a member of econsens - Forum for Sustainable Development

- We commit ourselves to treat our resources in conformity with the sustained-yield principle and orient our actions on recognised national and international guidelines and agreements.
- We are prepared to apply our competences in the interest of sustainable management.
- By working out concrete and innovative solution strategies, we want to co-design the political decision-making process with regards to questions of sustainable development actively and in good time.
- Transparency and open dialogue are part of our comprehension of sustainable development. That is why we are nationally and internationally present as qualified and engaged contact persons for politics, the sciences, lobbies and the economy.

We support the economy's initiative and innovative power for a sustainable development. We want to expand our competences in the area of sustainable development and assist and accompany private households and public authorities as active partners on the way to increasing sustainability

WWF's Definitions of Responsible Tourism & Ecotourism

- **Responsible Tourism** satisfies tourists, maintains or enhances the destination environment, and benefits destination residents.
- **Ecotourism** should be seen as a sub-set of responsible tourism and can be described as tourism to natural areas that is both determined by, and benefits local communities and the environment.

Tourism Concern

Tourism Concern's Mission Statement:

To effect change in the tourism industry by campaigning for fair and ethically traded tourism.

Tourism Concern has a wide range of exciting and innovative projects. They work with communities in destination countries to reduce social and environmental problems connected to tourism and with the out-going tourism industry in the UK to find ways of improving tourism so that local benefits are increased.

FTO Federation of Tour Operators

FTO's Responsible tourism unit:

Millions of people travel to holiday resorts each year and these visitors can make a real difference to destinations – both good and bad. By following responsible tourism practices we can help protect the natural environment, traditions and culture – the things that make holidays special!!

We can improve the well being of local communities by spreading the benefit of each visit to those who really need it. Managing tourism in a responsible way can help ensure that there are great places for us all to visit – for generations to come.

Responsible tourism is about making a positive difference when we travel:

- Enjoying ourselves and taking responsibility for our actions - respecting local cultures and the natural environment
- Giving fair economic returns to local people – helping to spread the benefit of our visit to those who need it most
- Recognising that water and energy are precious resources that we need to use carefully.
- Protecting endangered wildlife and preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the places we visit for the future enjoyment of visitors and the people who live there.

Members of the Federation of Tour Operators are becoming increasingly aware of the socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts of their products and services. In 2003, they formed a Responsible Tourism Committee and are developing a series of initiatives to assist tour operators to integrate responsible tourism practices into their core business.

AITO the Association of Independent Tour Operators

AITO is an organisation representing around 160 of Britain's best specialist tour operators.

The members are independent companies, most of them owner-managed, specialising in particular destinations or types of holiday; this means that they are uniquely placed to provide personalised advice based on first hand experience. Every AITO member is passionate about its chosen destinations or activities and keen to share that enthusiasm with discerning holidaymakers.

AITO has long been in the lead as far as environmental initiatives are concerned.

AITO's RT Achievement List:

Companies in the UK: Andante Travels, Explore Worldwide, Intravel, Rainbow Tours, Sunvil

The Sustainable Tourism Initiative (STI)

Tourism can bring real economic gains. But too often it leads to environmental damage and few benefits to local communities. The STI aims to create a step-change in the implementation of sustainable tourism practices by the UK outbound tourism industry and to build foundations for continual improvement and engagement. Over forty organisations are engaged in the initiative: tour operators including 90% of the outbound package tourist industry, NGOs and government. The STI has also established a partnership with the UNEP Tour Operators Initiative that embraces 25 tour operators in European and other countries. A comprehensive action plan has been developed and endorsed by stakeholders. This action plan focuses on work with destinations to ensure that tourism expenditure leads to sustainable livelihoods while systematic work with supply chain partners limits resource consumption, protects the natural environment and promotes the transfer of leading edge technology. Structured communication programmes will promote sustainable behaviour by tourists. A permanent charitable foundation is being established to sustain the initiative together with a dedicated industry-led unit which will play a key role in implementing the action plan. Short term funding is in place while long-term approaches to financing are being developed. The STI aroused a lot of interest at WSSD and has been registered as a **formal WSSD partnership**. The design phase of the initiative has been facilitated by the Sustainable Development Programme of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA). For further information please email Fanny Calder at the RIIA, fanny.calder@riia.org.

TOI Tour Operators Initiative

Exodus and First Choice are TOI members.

Introduction

Most tour operators recognise that a clean and safe environment is critical to their success. Fewer have the management tools or experience to design and conduct tours that minimise their negative environmental, social and economic impacts while optimising their benefits. To develop and implement these tools in their

own operations, and encourage other tour operators to do the same, a group of tour operators from different parts of the world have joined forces to create the **Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development**.

The Initiative is voluntary, non-profit, and open to all tour operators, regardless of their size and geographical location.

With this Initiative, tour operators are moving towards sustainable tourism by committing themselves to the concepts of sustainable development as the core of their business activity and to work together through common activities to promote and disseminate methods and practices compatible with sustainable development.

The Initiative has been developed by tour operators for tour operators with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Tourism Organization (WTO/OMT), who are also full members of the Initiative.

Under this international umbrella, tour operators who are members of the Initiative will be able to respond to international agendas while creating a platform to develop ideas and projects to address the environmental, social, economic and cultural aspects of sustainable development within the tourism sector.

In particular, the members of the Initiative have formed Working Groups in four key areas of action:

- Sustainability Reporting
- Cooperation with destinations
- Supply Chain Management
- Communication

(Discovery Initiative is also a TOI member. (See more about them below.))

GRI

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a multi-stakeholder process and independent institution whose mission is to develop and disseminate globally applicable Sustainability Reporting Guidelines.

Tour Operators Sector Supplement

The Global Reporting Initiative and the Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development - (an initiative supported and coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in August 2001. The objective of this partnership is to draft and release a supplement to the core 2002 *Sustainability Reporting Guidelines*, specific for the tour operators' sector.

The supplement provides performance indicators addressing the operations and activities specific to tour operators as they relate to internal management, supply chain management, customer awareness, and destination development.

(Pilot Version 1.0 of the Tour Operators' Sector Supplement can be found in the research folder)

The Travel Foundation

The Travel Foundation is helping the UK travel industry take effective action on sustainable tourism.

- It is an expert resource, helping to set priorities and establishing best practice.
- It delivers practical tools and guidelines - in a language for business.
- It helps co-ordinate industry action for maximum impact.

Examples of their work:

- The Travel Foundation has published a leaflet for customers and a training guide for agents to explain the issues and the ways they can help the Foundation in its work.



consumer leaflet

retail training guide

(Leaflets can be found in research folder)

- **SAVE Cyprus**
The Travel Foundation, along with the UK's leading tour operators, First Choice, Thomas Cook, MyTravel and Thomson/TUI UK have co-operated with the support of the UK government and Cypriot partners to create a "Discover The Real Cyprus" excursion which is making a real contribution to the livelihoods of rural Cypriot villagers.

(project summary can be found in research folder)

ABTA The Association of British Travel Agents

ABTA also have information on responsible tourism.

Eco-Certification systems and Eco-Labels

Eco-Labeling describes a scheme in which a product or service may be awarded an ecological label on the basis of its "acceptable" level of environmental impact. The acceptable level of environmental impact may be determined by consideration of a single environmental hurdle or after undertaking an assessment of its overall impacts (Synergy, 2000).

Eco-Certification and Eco-Labeling are two of the hottest topics within the travel and tourism industry today. Around the world, there are over 20 recognized, credible eco-labelling and certification programs offering labels or logos designed to signify environmental, socio-cultural, and/or economic business practices that are superior.

UK:



Green Tourism Business Scheme

Sectors Covered: B&Bs, self-catering accommodation, hotels, guesthouses, youth hostels, holiday parks, visitor attractions, and tourism companies

Web site: <http://www.green-business.co.uk/>

Description: Since 1998, the Green Tourism Business Scheme eco-label has offered bronze, silver and gold awards to travel and tourism providers who fulfil the most important criteria in all of its environmental categories.

Europe:



Sectors Covered: accommodations, visitor attractions, and tourism operators

Web site: http://www.yourvisit.info/index_gb.html

Description: VISIT is the joint European initiative for the promotion of eco-labels and sustainable tourism development. VISIT has a dual meaning. As an invitation to consumers, "Your VISIT makes the difference - the choice is yours!" and as an invitation to tourism providers to use VISIT as platform for "Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainability in Tourism".

International:



Blue Flag (First Choice work with them)

Sectors Covered: beaches and marinas

Web site: <http://www.blueflag.org/>

Description: Since 1987, Blue Flag has symbolized high environmental standards for water quality, beach cleanliness and waste disposal, providing up-to-date information for visitors, environmental education and a commitment to preserving coastal ecosystems.



Green Globe 21

Sectors Covered: communities, accommodations, visitor attractions, tourism operators, and their administrative offices

Web site: <http://www.greenglobe21.com/>

Description: Green Globe 21 is the worldwide benchmarking and certification program that facilitates sustainable travel and tourism for consumers, companies and communities. It is based on Agenda 21 and principles for Sustainable Development endorsed by 182 governments at the United Nations Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992. There are four Green Globe 21 Standards.

The Best Examples of Sustainable/Responsible Tourism

The World Legacy Awards

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL (CI) and NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER magazine (TRAVELER) seek to recognize leading examples in the tourism industry that are helping to protect our planet's natural and cultural heritage. The World Legacy Awards honour businesses, organizations and places that have made a significant contribution to promoting the principles of sustainable tourism including the conservation of nature, economic benefit to local peoples and respect for cultural diversity.

Award Categories

The 2004 World Legacy Awards (individually an "Award") will be presented in four categories: Nature Travel, Heritage Tourism, General Purpose Hotels and Resorts, Destination Stewardship

Award Criteria

Entrants will be evaluated based on their project's or destination's contribution to nature conservation and cultural heritage; generation of local economic benefit; tourist benefit in terms of both satisfaction and knowledge gained, and promotion of sustainable-tourism principles through education and awareness-building.

Award Winners

The **Nature Travel Award** is presented to a tourism business, organization or attraction that contributes to the conservation of natural areas and biodiversity. Applicants may include ecolodges, ecotourism operators and community-managed conservation areas or private reserves.

AL Maha Desert Resort *Dubai*

A luxury nature lodge patterned on a Bedouin camp, Al Maha Desert Resort in Dubai promotes desert conservation in a peaceful, recently prosperous region that has had little infrastructure for environmental protection. Guests can explore the desert on camels, observing some of the 33 mammal and reptile species indigenous to the Arabian peninsula, including the endangered Arabian oryx, and enjoying excellent desert bird watching. With the government's support, Al Maha developed the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve, an 87-square-mile protected area that is to be designated a national park this year. Al Maha has thus protected indigenous wildlife from fast-spreading urban development.

For further information, visit www.al-maha.com

The **Destination Stewardship** Award is given to destinations of any size, from single villages to an entire country, that contribute to the overall natural and cultural heritage of a destination. Applicants may include governments, citizen groups, associations and other community organizations that help preserve, protect, and positively impact an entire areas natural and cultural heritage.

Gunung Rinjani *Indonesia*

Gunung Rinjani, one of Indonesia's sacred sites, is a forested volcano perfect for trekking to awe-inspiring waterfalls, crater valleys, and panoramic ocean views. Tourism businesses, mountain villages, and the local national park partnered to create the Rinjani Trek Management Board, which gives locals a voice in tourist management and revenue uses. Twice a month, park staff and local residents join in a clean-up patrol to remove garbage from the mountainside. Almost 200 villagers work as trek guides and porters, while local women produce handicrafts for direct sale to travelers.

For further information, visit www.lomboksumbawa.com.

The **Heritage Tourism** Award is given to tourism businesses, organizations or attractions that contribute to cultural heritage and diversity. Applicants may include community-based tourism projects, tourist operations that help to preserve historic/archaeological sites and landscapes and tourism-supported programs that revive or enrich cultural traditions.

Anangu Tours *Australia*

Anangu Tours, an Aboriginal-owned company, invites you into the shadow of Uluru (Ayer's Rock), deep in Australia's Outback, to discover traditional Aboriginal values. Locals design tours and lead them in their own language, using an interpreter. You'll stroll through the bush at sunset, hear Aboriginal creation stories, and visit caves holding ancestral paintings. Tours introduce visitors to tjukurpa, the traditional law involving ecological, economic, and religious rules for living. Anangu Tours has used its profits to help the community establish the first Aboriginal Secondary College. The tours have strengthened cultural pride and kindled a renewed interest in traditional skills among local youth.

For further information, visit www.anangutours.com.au.

The General Purpose **Hotels and Resorts** award is presented to a lodge, hotel or resort that contributes to the conservation of natural areas and biodiversity through sustainable practices in the accommodations sector. Recycling, energy conservation and management, local terrestrial and marine biodiversity and habitat conservation, and water and waste management are among the many aspects of an exemplary hotel or resort.

Casuarina Beach Club *Barbados*

Casuarina Beach Club offers guests a rarely-experienced Caribbean setting-a nine-acre wooded garden in a highly developed tourist area. You can enjoy reef diving, local poetry readings, and the vast Casuarina art collection, which features Barbados sculpture, paintings, and quilts. Recycling receptacles in every corner

attest to the resort's strict environmental guidelines, which include water recycling and composting. Barbados residents are encouraged to be part of the scene and may even invite you to join them in a cricket match.

For further information, visit www.casuarina.com.

Another Good Example:

Discovery Initiatives : - Small group and tailor made nature travel specialists

www.discoveryinitiatives.com: Our mission is to offer inspirational small group and tailor made travel programmes, which combine our high standard of service and expertise with some of the world's leading conservation organisations. Therefore during your stay, you will gain a privileged, behind the scenes insight into local cultures and wildlife around the world.

At present, we are unique in the travel business, as we offer fair trading partnerships with the agencies and local communities we visit. Hence, your journey provides the economic, ethical and environmental incentives to conserve such areas for future generations.

Communicating our message:

Discovery Initiatives is very conscious of the need to communicate its unique message to clients, others in the nature travel business and the wider community. We do so in a number of ways:

Before setting up tours

Wherever possible to visit new destinations, meet potential stakeholders, discuss the relevant issues and conflicts with local hosts and discuss involvement in the tours. Ensure expectations are not over inflated at this point.

Before the Visit

a) Literature and websites

Preferring living trees to paper-based travel brochures which are quickly discarded after use, we have placed greater marketing, selling and promotional emphasis on our website, reducing our need to print vast quantities of conventional and rapidly out of date brochures each year.

b) Itineraries

Our comprehensive and well-researched itineraries give details of the environmental and social consequences of the tour and how they contribute to a better experience for visitors and hosts.

c) Dossier

Comprehensive trip dossiers explain the regions visited, the host partner's role, projects, local language and culture. Discovery Initiatives also has two codes of conduct, our Own Code of Conduct and our Clients Code of Conduct for the trip – both are included as part of the dossier.

d) Leaflets

A leaflet is enclosed with every flight ticket we issue explaining why Discovery Initiatives pays a Climate Care levy on their behalf.

During the Visit

a) Tour Leaders

We employ recognised wildlife experts and conservationists as tour leaders to involve and enthuse our clients about wildlife, wilderness, and relevant environmental and social issues on the tour, as well of course as looking after their welfare.

E.g. The leader of our Norway Orca programme is Tiu Simila, the leading expert on orcas and their unique carousel feeding technique in Norway. See Team Leaders

b) Researchers and local experts

We employ expert local guides, researchers and local personnel to add local knowledge and insight. We also include visits, meetings and discussions with local hosts, dignitaries and relevant personnel wherever possible.

E.g. In India our Riding tour spends one day with the M.R. Morarka-GDC Rural Research Foundation's project in Rajasthan, visiting farming projects, meeting and hearing the views of local farmers and women.

c) The Good and the Bad

We aim to balance the experience of enjoying the best of what a region has to offer with an insight into some of the issues and stark realities that exist.

E.g. Our Orangutan Study and Support tour visiting Tanjung Puting National Park spends one day visiting areas of deforestation and also seeing at first hand the damage caused by gold mining in the vicinity of the Park.

After the Visit

a) Membership

By making our clients members of our host conservation agencies we seek to accomplish both short and long-term benefits. We increase the revenue and membership of the agencies and keep our clients up-dated with ongoing issues. In addition we also hope to encourage a long-term involvement.

b) Newsletter and website

We continually through our literature, website and newsletters reinforce the 'sustainable' approach to travel which we see not simply as an optional extra but as a total, corporate, social commitment to the 'resource' travel uses as its stock in trade – wilderness and wildlife.

c) Lectures, talks and presentations

Once a year we invite high profile speakers to give a fund-raising lecture in aid of one of our partnering agencies. To date speakers have included Ian Redmond, Jane Goodall, Birute Galdikas and Dr Lu Zhi.

d) Stakeholders communication

Whenever necessary, required or requested to provide feedback on tours and quality issues to hosts and relevant personnel, discuss new arrangements and expertise issues for forthcoming visits and cooperate on new ideas or projects with them.

LEADERSHIP

Role Model

Discovery Initiatives continues to pioneer a new approach to nature travel and wildlife tour operations through:

- promotion of sustainable tourism
- support of conservation efforts
- financial contribution to wildlife and development agencies and conservation initiatives
- raising awareness about conservation issues
- ensuring that the financial benefits of our tour programmes stay in the host country

The message is that 'doing better business is better for business.' We are at the forefront of demonstrating that responsible nature travel is both essential and profitable – We believe we have shown that you can have both profit and principles. In addition we hope to show local communities that their local environment can be an important and sustainable resource.

Eg Against a backdrop of uncertainty in the industry this year, 2002, Discovery Initiatives will :

- grow by over 35%.
- Give a minimum of 6% of revenue to conservation partners
- Make ourselves 'Carbon Neutral'

We are innovative and environmentally unique through:

a) Partnership

We develop close and effective partnerships and collaborations with local conservation agencies and enterprises in each area we visit.

E.g. Our Namibian wildlife safari is hosted by the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC). The IRDNC escorts the safari through the community conservancies, meeting the communities face to face and discussing the issues they face.

b) Financial Contribution

A direct financial contribution is made from each tour to communities and/or projects visited as part of any programme. The level of contribution depends on the services and expertise rendered to our groups.

E.g. Each client joining our Orangutan Study and Support Tour to Tanjung Puting National park contributes US\$1000 per person to the Orangutan Foundation based in Camp Leakey. \$50,000 is raised each year from 5 set departures of 10 travellers. This makes a significant contribution to the effective welfare of this park, this against a background of significant internal and external pressures threatening to degrade the environment. This funding is particularly important following the virtual collapse of the park's management structure.

c) Advocacy

We have long recognised the importance of delivering a strong and positive conservation message. Our membership affiliations, websites and newsletters provide a voice for those interested in responsible travel.

E.g. We host an annual lecture at the RGS to highlight the work of one of the key figures connected with our programmes (speakers have included Jane Goodall, Valmik Thapar, Birute Galdikas and Ian Redmond). We produce a quarterly newsletter to both inform and update clients and potential clients of conservation issues as well as seeking to market our programmes. Additionally, we link in to the communications issued by our partner organisations.

d) Supply chain pressure

The use of supply chain pressure on all our ground representatives and agents that we work with ensures good environmental stewardship in its own organisations and practices.

E.g. We are currently working on launching a campaign called Tour Operators for Tigers which aims to set minimum codes of conduct for operators, accommodation, services and visitors in park in India, together with advocacy for more responsible travel and visitor experiences and initiatives in these wilderness areas. Details to be confirmed.

e) Membership

In order to promote continuity of involvement in the work of our conservation partners, wherever possible we include first year membership of relevant organisations as part of the package.

E.g. Our Norwegian and Hawaii whale-watching trips include membership of the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society and our Galapagos charters include membership of the Galapagos Conservation Trust.

f) Flight pollution and global warming issues

In 1999 Discovery Initiatives were the first tour operator in the UK to ensure that all DI travellers would be 'carbon neutral' through requiring them to pay a levy to Climate Care on each flight sold.

E.g. We pay on average £15 per ticket to Climate Care, a carbon sequestration company that uses the monies to offset the CO2 released into the upper atmosphere by aircraft emissions.

g) Local Involvement

Wherever possible we use locally owned, small scale and environmentally sound accommodation and services in host destinations.

E.g. Our newly launched Caribbean destinations offer small, locally owned and characterful hotels and guest houses never featured in mainstream Caribbean brochures.

h) Support of Local Projects

Wherever possible we help fund and become involved in local projects and support.

E.g. In 1999, Discovery Initiatives wrote and print the first ever English language guidebook to Lake Hovsgol National Park in Mongolia.

Lessons for other operators

- Discovery Initiatives has shown that not only can we invest our revenue into conservation and community initiatives but we can also run a profitable and expanding business.
- Eco-tourism gives a better travel experience. Not only are our tours informative and interesting but they are also enjoyable and fun. Our clients are asked for their views on the trip on their return. Overwhelmingly our clients comments are positive and our level of repeat business is very high. Clients frequently say the trip is a venture they will never forget and intend to do more.
- The business of showing we care about our destinations and hosts and are responsible is increasingly marketable and a valuable asset to us as a company.

Initiatives

The following is a list of some of the sustainable tourism initiatives and campaigns with which we are involved :

- DI is an active member of the Sustainable Tourism Initiative, part of the UK government's commitment to implementation and good practice in the industry.

- DI is one of the few UK tour operators to be a member of the UNEP's Tour Operators Initiative (TOI).
Catalyst for Change

The travel and tourism industry finds it difficult to achieve an element of sustainability for four key reasons: demand, inertia, marketing and cost. Discovery Initiatives is seeking to overcome these difficulties in the following ways:

- Demand

Quite simply too few people demand or expect better holidays that enhance the local environment and community welfare and until this happens little will change. Real change will only happen on the basis of heightened awareness of the real costs to the environment and local communities of each holiday. As part of its marketing and tour design strategy Discovery Initiatives seeks to create demand through example and practice. DI offers travel that is more responsible and sustainable than the majority of holidays on offer today.

- Inertia

Other operators seem to believe that it is easier to continue to sell what they have sold in the past rather than have to seek to change. We are always on the lookout for new areas which require our approach. We spend a great deal of time and effort on our tour research including familiarisation with destinations, partnerships with host conservation organisations and local hosts, tour leadership and on communication with relevant parties.

- Marketing

Conventional wisdom suggested that 'green' holidays had limited appeal. Over the last year, DI has been involved in mainstream tv travel programmes (The Holiday Programme and Wish You Were Here). In both cases the productions were well received and stimulated a great deal of interest. The Holiday Programme feature has actually been repeated in at least one revised format suggesting a recognition by the producers of the value of this type of holiday.

- Cost

We believe that operators have a duty to sustain the industry for the long term and cannot go on ignoring the costs to the environment. DI recognises that the type of travel that we advocate tends to be more expensive. However, we believe that there are steps that any responsible company can start to make. E.g. All Discovery Initiatives tours are 'carbon neutral'. We also spread the financial benefits as equitably as possible with our hosts and try wherever possible to benefit local initiatives and communities, directly and indirectly.

(Much more reading on website (in folder) and also in green futures nr 38.)

Tourism campaigns

Tearfund has been campaigning for tourism to bring a greater contribution towards development, particularly in developing countries where our partners work. They have focused on tour operators and on tourists – helping both parties to take their responsibility more seriously.