

Beyond the Beach

Quick Reference Guide
for Competing in the
Sustainable Tourism Market

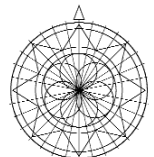


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Definitions

The following terms are defined for easier use of this reference guide. They are generalized to be appropriate for all of the standards presented.

Accreditation

Formal recognition to a certifying body or person to certify to a specific standard.

Accreditation Body

Authoritative body for a specific standard that gives formal recognition to a certifying body or individual to certify the standard.

Audit or Assessment

Formal check by a certifying body to determine conformity to a specific standard.

Baseline

The established existing level of performance of an operation at the beginning of the certification process.

Benchmarking

The process of comparing performances and processes within an industry to assess relative positions against a set of industry standards or against other industry operators recognized for best practices.

Best Practice

The highest quality, excellence, or superior practices in any given field or industry.

Certification

Written assurance from a certifying body of conformance to a specific standard.

Certifying Body

Organization given formal recognition to assess conformance to a specific standard.

Conformity Requirements

Specific requirements for which conformance to principles and criteria related to specific standards are measured.

Criteria

The standards, measures, or expectations used in making an evaluation and/or verification.

Ecotourism

The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.”

Inbound Operator

A tour operator in the destination country.

Nature Tourism

Ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas.

Responsible Tourism

Products and destinations that seek to reduce environmental and socio-cultural impact as well as deliberately including local economic interests in management decisions.

Requirement

Specific and measurable criteria used to determine conformance to a standard.

Sustainable Tourism

According to the World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism is “leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.”

Introduction

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world. It ranks in the top five export categories for 80 percent of all national economies and serves as the primary source of foreign exchange for nearly 40 percent of them. Seven percent of the global workforce is employed, either directly or indirectly, by the tourism sector. Over the past decade, tourism development has become a prominent component of the economic development strategies for many developing countries. National tourism development plans include creating employment opportunities, stimulating linkages with other sectors of the economy, increasing government tax revenues, and boosting foreign investment and exchange earnings.

Given the magnitude of the tourism industry, it is critical to promote travel and tourism initiatives that conserve natural and cultural assets and stimulate local economic growth. During the past decade, the concept of sustainable tourism has emerged as a means to promote national tourism development strategies while preserving local environments and cultures. Third party sustainable tourism certification programs and awards allow consumers to differentiate between sustainable tourism and conventional tourism operators. In turn, tourism wholesalers view certification, codes of conduct, or award schemes as a way to ensure that inbound operators adhere to sustainable tourism standards. By conforming with sustainable tourism best practices, operators can

obtain a competitive advantage leading to improved access to niche markets.

This guide is designed to give readers a brief overview of several certification schemes and awards that are well recognized among the numerous programs and awards that exist for the responsible tourism industry. This guide defines sustainable and responsible tourism as an approach to tourism that contributes to the local economy, strives to protect and conserve the natural environment, and helps preserve local culture. Ecotourism is treated as a subset of sustainable tourism where the emphasis is on visiting natural areas.

This is the third in a series of guides produced by Chemonics International Inc. that are dedicated to improving access to sustainability standards by increasing awareness and dialogue between producers, buyers, consumers, and other decision makers. It is a primer and reference for additional inquiry. We solicit and appreciate comments and recommendations.

Part I: Certification Programs

This section gives an overview of four major certification programs for sustainable tourism and ecotourism used most often in emerging market countries. These standards are often applied in conjunction with, or to complement, more mainstream environmental management systems (e.g., ISO 14001) that are used within the broader tourism industry. These four programs represent a cross section of national and international standards applied to the tourism sector. The intent of the authors is not to promote or espouse any specific standard but to familiarize readers with several of the certification schemes to promote a better understanding of the certification criteria increasingly delegated by the marketplace.

Blue Flag

History

The Blue Flag Campaign was created by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). Several French coastal municipalities were awarded the first Blue Flag award in 1985 for properly addressing criteria related to sewage treatment and bathing water quality. In 1987, the “European Year of the Environment,” the European Commission agreed to launch the Blue Flag Campaign as one of several environmental activities. Through cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the program expanded globally. Twenty-nine countries currently participate in the campaign with six additional countries undertaking pilot programs. Although the basic categories are the same for all countries, criteria differ from region to region.



Conformity Requirements

Participants are rated on their level of compliance with 29 criteria for beach certification and 22 criteria for marina certification. Criteria fall under the same four assessment categories for beaches and marinas. Certain criteria are imperatives, some are guidelines, and others are not applicable for certain regions. All imperative criteria must be fulfilled in addition to a certain number of guidelines for beaches and marinas to achieve certification. Boat operators are required to sign an environmental code of conduct to participate in the program.

The four assessment categories and illustrative imperatives and guidelines are:

1. Water quality: no industrial or sewage discharge; levels of effluent monitored; sewage treatment facilities; and standards of excellence for bathing water quality.
2. Environmental education and information: minimum of five environmental education activities offered; and display of information about bathing water quality and coastal zone ecosystems and natural sensitive areas.
3. Environmental management: compliance with zoning and environmental regulations; and establish beach management committee to implement environmental management system.
4. Safety and services: first aid equipment must be available on the beach; safe access to the beach; and map of beach facilities displayed.

Accreditation Body

The Foundation for Environmental Education

Auditing System

Each country with an ongoing Blue Flag Campaign has a nonprofit, non-governmental, or independent organization that serves as the national Blue Flag operator and is a member of the FEE. To achieve certification, beach operators must first submit an application to the national Blue Flag operator for a feasibility study to assess their capacity to meet imperative criteria. Selected beaches then enter a season long pilot phase to assess their ability to consistently meet required criteria. Following completion of the pilot study, a national or regional jury approves or denies the application. Approved applications are then forwarded to the international Blue Flag jury for final approval. The date of certification is stamped on the principal flag displayed on certified beaches. All beaches and marinas must achieve the appropriate level of compliance to criteria on an annual basis.

Labeling

Blue flag displayed on certified beaches, marinas and boats.

Resource

www.blueflag.org

Certificate for Sustainable Tourism

History

The Certificate for Sustainable Tourism (CST) was developed by the Sustainability Programs Department of the Costa Rica Tourist Board and the Costa Rica National Accreditation Commission. The hotel edition was released in 1997 and the edition for tour operators was published in 2001. The program seeks to improve the use of natural and social resources, encourage active participation of local communities, and support the competitiveness of the tourism sector. CST participants are scored on a six level sustainability scale across four assessment categories. Improved compliance by operators results in enhanced international and national publicity and promotion, personnel training, and priority participation at tourism fairs and events. Participation in the program is open to hotels, inns, bed and breakfasts, and other lodging facilities in Costa Rica. Although CST certifies only Costa Rican tourism operators, the program has been used as a model for other certification schemes.



Conformity Requirements

The four assessment categories are subdivided into general descriptions of positive or negative impacts that result from activities. Operators are rated to the sustainability index based upon their compliance with applicable questions under each descriptive category.

The four assessment categories and subcategories are:

1. Physical-biological environment: policies and programs; emissions and wastes; gardens and natural areas; and protection of flora and fauna.
2. Hotel facilities: formulation of policies; water consumption; energy consumption; general supply consumption; food and beverages; cleaning and cosmetic supplies; waste management; organic waste; inorganic waste; final destination of waste; and employee training.
3. Guest relations: communication and involvement; room maintenance; tour group management; and guest feedback.
4. Socioeconomic environment: direct and non-direct economic benefits for local communities; promotion of local culture; contribution to public health; and infrastructure and security.

(Continued on next page)

Accreditation Body

Costa Rican National Accreditation Commission

Auditing System

A multi-disciplinary technical committee conducts audits based upon the categorization questions for the general descriptions of each assessment category. Participating organizations are granted a two-year certification at the sustainability level designated by the percentage of compliance with the categorization questions. To maintain certification, operators are required to complete the entire process every two years. Operators may also request a re-evaluation six months after certification to assess improved practices and determine if a reclassification of their certification is appropriate.

Labeling

The CST logo may be used on marketing materials and posted at operator locations.

Resource

www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr/EN/home.shtml

Green Deal/Alianza Verde

History

The Asociación Alianza Verde (AAV) began implementing the Optimum Practice Code and Tourism Quality Certification program in 1999. Through donor support, the AAV initiated the Green Deal Certification Program in Petén, Guatemala, where it became the first program to certify tourism quality in Latin America and the Caribbean. The scheme promotes enterprises that have management categories dedicated to environmental quality and cultural preservation. All tourism-related businesses may apply for certification, making the program accessible to micro and small enterprises. The first tourism operators were certified to Green Deal in 2002. In March 2005, the Guatemalan Tourism Institute signed an accord establishing Green Deal as the country's official sustainable tourism certification program.



Conformity Requirements

Enterprises seeking certification must conform to three requirements: environment, quality, and social responsibility. Three assessment categories are subdivided into subcategories of mandatory and suggested standards. The categories and subcategories are:

Environment: plans in place to ensure the protection of local flora and fauna; use of “green” construction materials; conservation of water and energy; proper management of emissions and solid waste; and an environmental education program

Quality: quality control system that covers the services and job functions; effective plan to deal with emergencies; and a staff training program.

Social responsibility: protection of the communities’ cultural heritage and promotion of local economic development.

Accreditation Body

Green Deal Certification Commission managed by AAV

Auditing System

Categories are divided into mandatory and suggested standards. Auditors rank operators on a scale of 1-5 for each standard (corresponding to 20 percent increments), based on the level of performance. Operators must average a score of 61 percent in the mandatory standards to be certified. After the auditor has approved certification, the business is permitted the use of Green Deal's logo on their materials. Certification is valid for one year. Operators must renew their certification before it expires.

Labeling

The Green Deal logo may be used on marketing materials and posted at operator locations.

Resource

www.greendeal.org

Green Globe 21

History

The World Travel and Tourism Council developed Green Globe in 1993 based on Agenda 21 and the principles for sustainable development endorsed at the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. In 1994, it was launched as a membership and commitment-based program that has participants from every continent and over 50 countries. The scheme has since been restructured to include the Green Globe 21 standard, independent auditing and sector-specific benchmarking indicators. Depending on the type of operation, tourism operators are evaluated against one of four standards: Company Standard, Community/Destination Standard, International Ecotourism Standard, or Design and Construct Standard. These evaluations are made against standards that reflect performance indicators that most enterprises can achieve and benefit from without disrupting their primary business activities. The program includes three levels: Affiliate/Awareness, Benchmarking, and Certification. This allows operations to commit at levels that are presently feasible with the objective of progressing to higher levels.



Conformity Requirements

Depending on the standard and level of involvement, Green Globe 21 has developed a wide range of travel and tourism sector benchmarking indicators. Sector benchmarking indicators are the baseline for organizations at the benchmarking and certification level to obtain performance measurements in the nine Green Globe 21 Key Performance Areas (KPA). Organizations at these levels must complete an Environment and Social Sustainability Policy that addresses key sustainability issues within the appropriate standard.

The following table illustrates the nine KPA and sample benchmark indicators and objectives:

| Key Performance Areas | Illustrative Benchmark Indicator and Objective |
|--|---|
| Greenhouse gas emissions | Greenhouse gas reduction: Reduce emissions |
| Energy efficiency, conservation and management | Energy consumption: Minimize overall energy consumption |
| Management of freshwater resources | Potable water consumption: Minimize potable water consumption |
| Ecosystem conservation and management | Resource conservation: Reduce consumption of natural resources and the impact on ecosystem biodiversity |
| Management of social and cultural issues | Social commitment: Develop and maintain positive, productive and sustainable contributions to the local community |
| Land use planning and management | Indicator not yet developed |
| Air quality protection and noise control | Noise nuisance: Minimize noise disturbance from aircraft noise |
| Waste water management | Storm water management: High quality of surface water discharged off site |
| Waste minimization, reuse and recycling | Solid waste production: Reduce the amount of solid waste produced |

Accreditation Body

Green Globe Asia Pacific grants certification for all organizations operating in the Asia Pacific region. Green Globe Accreditation certifies organizations operating in other regions of the world following an independent third party assessment by an accredited conformity assessment provider.

Auditing System

Green Globe Asia Pacific or Green Globe Accreditation train and give accreditation to independent third party assessors. Operators must achieve benchmarked status before they can proceed to certification. Benchmarking indicators have been developed to measure the performance of operators for more than 25 sectors of the tourism industry. In the first year of benchmarking, the operator must perform above baseline in all but one KPA to acquire benchmarking status. Participants must also commit to continual improvements in KPA to achieve and maintain benchmarked and certified status in subsequent years.

Labeling

Operations can use a Green Globe logo without a checkmark only after they have received benchmarking status. Organizations that are certified may use the Green Globe logo with the checkmark.

Resource

www.greenglobe21.com

Part II: Sustainable Tourism and Ecotourism Awards

This section highlights four international tourism awards. Influential media or travel providers often organize these awards, which highlight best practices in sustainable tourism and ecotourism around the world. Awards acknowledge destination or product performance and familiarizes travelers with sustainable tourism opportunities promoted by the greater tourism industry. They also serve as a marketing tools for tourism operators who traditionally lack the resources required for large-scale marketing.

Sustainable Tourism Awards

History

The Sustainable Tourism Awards were established in 2001 by Smithsonian magazine and Tourism Cares for Tomorrow, a nonprofit organization that encourages and promotes model tourism projects around the world. Nominees must demonstrate excellence in preservation or conservation, a clear connection with sustainable tourism, and explain how the award will help their sustainable tourism project advance its mission.

Categories

Sustainable Tourism Award for Preservation - Awarded on an annual basis to an individual, company or institution that supports the preservation or restoration of historic or culturally significant entities. Recipients must demonstrate a clear connection between their activities and sustainable tourism.

Sustainable Tourism Award for Conservation - Awarded on an annual basis to an individual, company or institution in honor of work that enhances or conserves the physical environment. Recipients must demonstrate that a clear connection exists between their work and sustainable tourism.

Award Criteria

Applicants undergo reference checks and each application is evaluated based upon the applicant's objective, budget and program efficacy. These criteria are used as the baseline for further evaluation of stated results in a letter from the local tourism authority.

Applicants are then presented to a panel of experts (the judges list is available on the Web site) who choose finalists and then post results on the Smithsonian Web site. The final winner is chosen by the public through online voting.

What do the Winners Receive?

Awardees receive a cash prize of \$20,000 and an all expenses paid trip to the United States Tour Operators Association Annual Conference to accept the award.

Resource

www.sustainabletourismawards.com

Condé Nast Traveler Ecotourism Award

History

Condé Nast Travelers has been awarding an Ecotourism Award since 1994. The roots of the award can be traced to an article that Condé Nast published about the travel industry's effects on the planet, from both an environmental and humanitarian perspective, and the need to promote sustainable travel.

Categories

Lodge/resort, tour operator, and destination.

Selection Criteria

Leading members of the tourism and ecotourism community make up a panel of judges (including the chief executive officer of Radisson Seven Seas Cruises and the president of the International Ecotourism Society) that screens and reviews applicants. The judges rate each finalist in three categories: nature preservation, local contribution, and guest experience. The editor-in-chief of the magazine approves the winners.

What do the Winners Receive?

Benefits received by the winners vary from year to year. Recent winners have received a certificate of achievement and logos that can be used on marketing materials

Resource

www.concierge.com/cntraveler/ecotourism

National Geographic World Legacy Award

History

Conservation International (CI) and National Geographic Traveler Magazine (TRAVELER) seek to recognize leading examples in the tourism industry that are helping to protect the planet's natural and cultural heritage. The World Legacy Awards honor businesses, organizations, and sites that have made a significant contribution to promoting the principles of sustainable tourism, including conserving nature, giving economic benefits to local people, and respecting cultural diversity.

Categories

Nature Travel - Tourism businesses, organizations, lodgings, or attractions that are making positive contributions to the conservation of natural areas and to biodiversity.

Heritage Tourism - Tourism businesses, organizations, lodgings, or attractions that make positive contributions to cultural heritage and diversity.

General Purpose Hotels and Resorts - Tourist accommodations, from independent facilities to global chains, that have a well-rounded program for helping to protect the cultural and natural assets of the communities they serve.

Destination Stewardship - Destinations of any size, from a single village to an entire country (but comprising more than one business or attraction), that demonstrate exemplary protection of their natural and cultural environment.

Award Criteria

Entrants are evaluated based on their project's or destination's contribution to conserving nature and protecting cultural heritage; generating local economic benefit; providing benefits to tourists in terms of both satisfaction and knowledge gained; and promoting sustainable tourism principles through education and awareness building.

What do the Winners Receive?

The partners are in the process of scaling up the World Legacy Award program for the next awards cycle. In previous years, the winners have received the following benefits:

- Permitted to use CI, TRAVELER, and World Legacy Awards logo in marketing materials
- Highlighted in TRAVELER magazine, CI's Ecotravel Center Web site, TRAVELER's web site, and in global press releases from the media relations departments of CI and TRAVELER
- Featured in a special award publication and/or award educational video that is distributed globally
- Honored at an award ceremony at the National Geographic Society's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Resource

<http://www.wlaward.org>

Tourism for Tomorrow

History

The Tourism for Tomorrow Awards was the first industry recognition program established in 1989 by the Federation of Tour Operators to encourage environmental stewardship by all sectors of the tourism industry. British Airways took over management of the Awards in 1992, tailoring them to encompass all aspects of sustainable tourism, with the explicit aim of leading the industry in this field. The program has been a pioneer in successfully raising awareness of the sustainability agenda for the tourism industry and in promoting best practices across the sector. The World Travel and Tourism Council has managed the Awards since 2004.

Categories

Destination Award
Conservation Award
Investor in People Award
Global Tourism Business Award

Criteria

There are three stages in the judging process:

Stage 1: Selection of finalists

A selection committee of 12 experts reviews all applications that pass the initial screening. The committee selects a short list of up to three applications for each category.

Stage 2: Onsite verification

A Tourism for Tomorrow representative conducts onsite inspections of each finalist. Following a successful inspection, Tourism for Tomorrow compiles and announces a list of finalists and develops a short brochure outlining each initiative.

Stage 3: Judging panel

A panel consisting of high profile leaders in the field of sustainable travel select a winner for each category.

(Tourism for Tomorrow, Continued from page 23)

What do the Winners Receive?

The winning entry for each category is invited to an awards ceremony held during the Global Travel and Tourism Summit. Winners are also allowed to use the Tourism for Tomorrow logo on marketing materials.

Resource

www.tourismfortomorrow.com

Part III: Responsible Tourism Guidelines

This section outlines several responsible tourism codes of conduct promoted by two prominent regional travel associations. Their members — travel agencies, hotel chains, airlines — play significant roles in the tourism value chain. Although these codes are less binding and more general than the certification programs and awards criteria they present another example of how consumers and tourism wholesalers evaluate and select sustainable tourism operators.

Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation/ Pacific Asia Travel Association Code for Sustainable Tourism

Conserve the natural environment, ecosystems, and biodiversity

- **CONTRIBUTE** to the conservation of any habitat of flora and fauna affected by tourism.
- **ENCOURAGE** relevant authorities to identify areas worthy of conservation and determine the level of development, if any, which would be compatible in, or adjacent to, those areas.
- **INCLUDE** enhancement and corrective actions at tourism sites to conserve wildlife and natural ecosystems.

Respect and support local traditions, cultures, and communities

- **ENSURE** that community attitudes, local customs and cultural values, and the role of women and children, are understood in the planning and implementation of all tourism related projects.
- **PROVIDE** opportunities for the wider community to take part in discussions on tourism planning issues where these affect the tourism industry and the community.
- **ENCOURAGE** relevant authorities to identify cultural heritage worthy of conservation and to determine the level of development, if any, that would be compatible in or adjacent to those areas.
- **CONTRIBUTE** to the identity and pride of local communities by providing quality tourism products and services sensitive to those communities.

Maintain environmental management systems

- **ENSURE** that environmental assessment is an integral step in planning for a tourism project.
- **ENCOURAGE** regular environmental audits of practices throughout the tourism industry and to promote desirable changes to those practices.
- **ESTABLISH** detailed environmental policies and indicators, and/or guidelines for the various sectors of the tourism industry.
- **INCORPORATE** environmentally sensitive design and construction solutions in any building or landscaping for tourism purposes.

Conserve energy and reduce waste and pollutants

- **FOSTER** environmentally responsible practices for: reducing pollutants and greenhouse gases, conserving water and protecting water quality, managing waste and energy efficiently, controlling noise levels, and promoting the use of recyclable and biodegradable materials.

Encourage a tourism commitment to environments and cultures

- **ENCOURAGE** those involved in tourism to comply with local, regional, and national planning policies and to participate in the planning process.
- **FOSTER**, in both management and staff of all tourism projects and activities, an awareness of environmental and cultural values.
- **ENCOURAGE** all those who provide services to tourism enterprises to participate through environmentally and socially responsible actions.
- **SUPPORT** environmental and cultural awareness through tourism marketing.

Educate and inform others about local environments and cultures

- **SUPPORT** the inclusion of environmental and cultural values in tourism education, training, and planning.
- **ENHANCE** the appreciation and understanding by tourists of natural environments and cultural sensitivities through the provision of accurate information and appropriate interpretation.
- **ENCOURAGE** and support research on the environmental and cultural impacts of tourism.

Cooperate with others to sustain environments and cultures

- **COOPERATE** with other individuals and organizations to advance environmental improvements and sustainable development practices, including establishing indicators and monitoring.
- **COMPLY** with all international conventions and national, state, and local laws that safeguard natural environments and cultural sensitivities.

Resource

www.apec.org/apec/apec_groups/working_groups/tourism.html

African Travel Association/Fes Declaration for Responsible Travel

1. Through direct partnership, there should be concerted efforts to stimulate, educate, and involve local communities in ecotourism products that will affect their lives. Involving local communities must include consistent ethical practices that will give full respect to their unique cultural, religious, linguistic, and personal integrity.
2. That all ground operators — tour operators, travel agents and group organizers — are encouraged to include community-based tourism projects in their proposed programs.
3. All tourism institutions participating in the cultural heritage and ecotourism sector should compile and make public some form of a stated environmental policy for their organization, with specific conditions for implementing and updating it.
4. All tourism institutions participating within the areas of cultural heritage and ecotourism should strive to achieve, in the immediate future, products of an equivalent quality to recognized and certified international standards, and that those standards are regularly controlled for the maintenance of the unique products and services demanded by ecotourism clients.
5. All tourism institutions participating in the cultural heritage and ecotourism sector should take intentional and substantial steps toward the quality training of all staff and personnel for the specific needs of cultural heritage and ecotourism clients. There should be a clearly defined relationship of the tourism industry with youth employment and educational awareness programs with an emphasis on cultural and environmental issues.
6. All tourism institutions participating in the cultural heritage and ecotourism sector should implement specific educational programs about the diversity and quality of ecologically oriented products for field guides and management personnel regarding products acquisition and ongoing management policy.

7. All tourism institutions participating in the cultural heritage and ecotourism sector should make significant efforts to stimulate public awareness for, and to take direct actions to implement, sustainable conservation programs for water and other natural resources, including the protection of flora and fauna in the environment of their tourism product.
8. The tourism industry must recognize the significant inter-relational role of cultural heritage and ecotourism within the broader aspects of a host nation's full social, political, and economic systems.
9. That there must be both a consistency of purpose and of commitment for strategic links between the World Tourism Organization, the nations of Africa, and the international travel industry to achieve the goals outlined in this document, and to deal with the delicate balance between commercialization and conservation of Africa's heritage and environment.
10. That the African Travel Association (ATA) should reactivate their Environment Committee, and further deputize this group to identify, propose, and implement reasonable measures to move ATA into the responsible travel mainstream in a leadership capacity, including concrete actions such as screening conference venues, to ensure that host facilities comply with cultural heritage and ecotourism standards.

Resource

www.africa-ata.org

Part IV: Connecting Consumers

Increasingly, consumers are beginning to drive the responsible tourism market. Well-informed consumers consult published guidelines for recommendations on responsible travel and how to identify agencies and operators committed to the triple bottom line approach of environment stewardship, preservation of local culture, and equitable benefits to the local economy. This section includes two sets of guidelines geared toward such consumers.

Partners in Responsible Tourism

Questions to Ask for Evaluating Responsible Tour Operators

What is the mission statement of your company?

Do you provide the following pre-departure information?

- Codes of conduct or other guidelines appropriate for the destination and culture (including guidance on endangered species, antiquities, and other souvenirs to avoid purchasing, and local laws)
- Background on culture, environment, history, politics, economic conditions, social values, and religious customs (provided in reading lists, books, articles, language lessons, videos)
- Health issues (food, first aid, altitude)
- Clothing and equipment (anticipating adverse weather or unexpected activity)
- Passport, visa, immigration information
- Insurance (trip cancellation, emergency evacuation, sickness coverage)

Do you use field specialists, including qualified trained local guides?

- What is the ratio of group members per guide?
- Are field guidebooks and binoculars available on the tour?

Do the guide's qualifications include?

- Language skills, level of education
- Safety training (first aid, personal safety)
- Knowledge of the destination (cultural/natural)

How do you minimize the impact of your activity related to?

- Transportation
- Environmentally appropriate lodging
- Sanitation and sewage disposal, solid waste management
- Reducing, recycling, reusing efforts related to noise, air emissions, water and energy conservation, fuel sources
- Wildlife viewing tips that minimize impact on wildlife behavior

Do you support the local economy by?

- Using locally-owned hotels, transportation, hiring local people
- Ensuring a percentage of tour operators' earnings remain in the local community
- Encouraging sale of locally-produced souvenirs, made from renewable resources

(Continued on next page)

In what ways are you involved with the local community?

- Input from local people in planning, setting conditions for travelers
- Interaction between travelers and local people
- Company support for appropriate local projects
- Encouragement of travelers' support for local projects (such as conservation, schools, clinics, libraries, cultural art revitalization) through financial donation, equipment donation, or volunteering time

How do you encourage responsibility in the tourism industry?

- Contributions toward research
- Membership in tourism organizations
- Advertising/marketing that does not promote cultural stereotyping

What are your provisions for client protection?

- Do you put our funds in an escrow account until we travel?
- What is the liability insurance coverage carried by your company?

[To the questioner: Do you feel that the tour operator responded readily to your questions? Does their printed material reflect their answers?]

Lonely Planet's Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism

Lonely Planet criteria encourage travelers to adhere to the following guidelines:

Be informed

Read up on the countries you intend to visit so that you arrive with an understanding of their political, economic, and cultural diversity.

Conserve resources and protect the environment

Be considerate when using water, electricity and fuel. Instead of hiring a car, think about walking, cycling or using public transport. Minimize your contribution to pollution — use biodegradable products and take your expendables home, especially used batteries. Ask your hotel or hostel if it has a green policy or recycles and minimizes waste and pollution. Some international hotels and luxury lodges are members of the Green Hotels Association (www.greenhotels.com) so if you're planning on living it up you can make sure it doesn't cost the earth.

Respect local culture and traditions

Do not cause offense by gesture or dress, whether you are at the beach or in a place of worship. Learn a few words of the local language. Be sensitive when taking photos, particularly of people.

Benefit local communities

Make sure that what you spend contributes to the local economy. Stay in locally run hotels, B&Bs or guesthouses; eat from street stalls and family-run restaurants; shop in markets; drink the local beer (not the imported stuff); use public transport; and hire local or indigenous guides. Also, be aware and fair when bargaining.

Resource

www.lonelyplanet.com/journeys/earthday/ethical.htm

Part V: Resources

This section provides contacts and Web sites for organizations that are involved in sustainable tourism worldwide. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of resources.

Resources

Chemonics International Inc.

1133 20th St., NW
Washington, DC 20036
USA
Contact: David Gibson
Telephone: 202-955-7457
E-mail: dgibson@chemonics.com

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES)

733 15th St., NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005
USA
Telephone: 202-347-9203
Fax: 202-387-7915
Web address: www.ecotourism.org
E-mail: ecomail@ecotourism.org

Business Enterprises for Sustainable Travel (BEST)

c/o Rainforest Alliance
665 Broadway, Suite 500
New York, NY 10012
USA
Telephone: 212-677-1900, 888-693-2784
E-mail: canopy@ra.org

Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas

c/o Rainforest Alliance
665 Broadway, Suite 500
New York, NY 10012
USA
Telephone: 212-677-1900, 888-693-2784
E-mail: canopy@ra.org

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Sustainable Travel International

3250 O'Neal Circle, Suite H-11
Boulder, CO 80301
USA
Telephone: 720-273-2975
Web site: www.sustainabletravelinternational.org
E-mail: info@sustainabletravel.com

Ecoclub.com

International Ecotourism Club
Web site: www.ecoclub.com
E-mail: a@ecoclub.com

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Travel and Tourism Associations

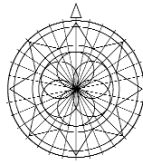
World Tourism Organization.....www.world-tourism.org
World Travel and Tourism Councilwww.wttc.org
Pacific Asia Travel Associationwww.pata.org
African Travel and Tourism Association
(Incorporating the Indian Ocean Islands).....www.atta.co.uk
Africa Travel Associationwww.africa-ata.org
Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourismwww.cha-cast.com
Ecotourism Australiawww.ecotourism.org.au

Notes

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