Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

– Workshop 4: Sustainable Tourism –

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Topics of the Presentation:

• Sustainable tourism definition
• How to promote sustainable tourism?
• Who is responsible to do that?
• Sustainability in the business context
• What should we do?
• Tourism management policy instruments
• Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism (VIST)
• Voluntary initiatives for tourism businesses and organizations:
  a) Codes of conduct, charters
  b) Good practices
  c) Eco-labels, Prizes and Awards
  d) Environment Management Systems
  e) Indicators
  f) Benchmarking
Sustainable Tourism in the Azores
Sustainable Tourism in the Azores
One of Portugal’s 7 Natural Wonders
One of Portugal’s 7 Natural Wonders
Sustainable Tourism is...
Sustainable Tourism is also...
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

- Sustainable tourism, in its purest sense, is an industry which attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. It is responsible tourism that is both ecologically and culturally sensitive. Thus, sustainable tourism activities have minimal impact on the environment and culture of the host community.
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

- According to the World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism is tourism that leads 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.
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

- The **World Tourism Organization** defines sustainable tourism as tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. Rather than being a type of product, it is an ethos that underpins all tourism activities. As such, it is integral to all aspects of tourism development and management rather than being an add-on component.
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

- The objective of sustainable tourism is to retain the economic and social advantages of tourism development while reducing or mitigating any undesirable impacts on the natural, historic, cultural or social environment. This is achieved by balancing the needs of tourists with those of the destination.
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

• Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments.

• Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

Thus, sustainable tourism should:

- Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

- Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

- Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.
Sustainable Tourism Definition:

- Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

- Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them.
How to promote sustainable tourism?

Since the tourism product may be defined as a bundle or package of tangible and intangible components based on activity at a destination, two dimensions are particularly relevant:

- *territory* and *environment* (since the tourism businesses and organizations are based at the destination);

- *tourists* (since the consumers of the tourism product can have an important influence in the destination through the activities performed during the visit).
Who is responsible to do that?

All relevant stakeholders:

- National, regional and local authorities;
- Trade associations and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (such as ecologists);
- Tourism businesses;
- Media;
- Schools, universities;
- Scientists, research institutions;
- Residents;
- Visitors.

Which means, in summary:

- the public sector;
- the tourism sector;
- the residents;
- the tourists.
Figure 1: Competitiveness and sustainability

Source: OMT (1998)
Sustainability in the business context

Since the early 1990’s, the idea of sustainable development has been adopted by the tourism sector. Obtaining benefits is still relevant to the economic operations of the tourism companies and the individual tourism establishments, but it is recognized that these objectives must be compatible with other equally important social and environmental goals.

Viewing tourism as the world’s largest industry, the role and practices of the tourism businesses had to change in order to promote more sustainable developments at visited destinations.
Sustainability in the business context

Sustainability strategies in the business context: MAIN PHASES

1. governmental regulation and legal requirements;
2. clean production, to prevent and minimize the negative environmental impacts of the activity;
3. eco-efficiency schemes;
4. corporate social responsibility strategies.
What should we do?

As one of the world’s largest sectors of economic activity, it is inevitable that travel and tourism will be targeted for government action.

Reflecting the remarkable development of international debate on how to deal with sustainable development and concerns for global warming, legislation, taxes and incentives designed to promote more sustainable growth now affects most sectors of the travel and tourism industry.
What should we do?

Regardless the size of the operations, all businesses should find adequate opportunities to promote, implement and communicate sustainable tourism practices through voluntary initiatives for sustainable tourism (VIST).
## Tourism management policy instruments

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Tourism Businesses/ Organizations/Operators</th>
<th>Destinations</th>
<th>Tourists</th>
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| **Mandatory policy instruments** | • Specific legislation and regulations (environmental impact assessment)  
• Tourism permissions, special moratorium, quotas | • Specific legislation and regulations (territory planning and management)  
• Environmental impact assessment | • Specific legislation and regulations (codes of conduct in protected areas)  
• Tourism taxes |
| **Voluntary instruments** | • Codes of conduct  
• Good practices, self-commitments  
• Eco-labels, prizes, awards  
• Environmental Management Systems  
• Indicators  
• Benchmarking | • Codes of conduct  
• Good practices, self-commitments  
• Eco-labels, prizes, awards  
• Environmental Management Systems  
• Indicators  
• Local Agenda 21 | • Codes of conduct  
• Awareness raising: conferences, publications, campaigns |

*Source: Fullana and Ayuso (2002)*
Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

1. Voluntary initiatives for tourism businesses and organizations => will be object of this presentation

2. Voluntary initiatives for tourism destinations

3. Voluntary initiatives for tourists
Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

Voluntary initiatives play an increasing role in regulating tourism operations; they usually address environmental, economic and social issues, targeting tourism suppliers, such as accommodation, restaurants, sport and leisure facilities, tourist attractions, destinations, tour operators, (tourist) transport companies, tourist associations.
Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

They have two principal definitional elements:

- on the one hand, the initiator is not obliged by law to propose and run the initiative;

- and on the other, the target groups are not obliged to apply or join.
Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) stressed a number of reasons why voluntary instruments are attractive to tourism companies, governments, and other stakeholders involved, underlined the potential for more sustainable development and stressed the need for consolidation.

In 2002, the WTO published the study entitled “Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism”, a worldwide inventory and comparative analysis of 104 Eco-labels, Awards and Self-commitments.
Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

On the basis of this study, WTO will consider new activities in its programme of work to further contribute to greater transparency in the adoption and use of voluntary initiatives by tourism companies and destinations.

This, in turn, would give such initiatives more credibility in the eyes of the tourists and, eventually, lead to a more sustainable tourism industry.
Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

Working definition:

VIST are understood as the voluntary development and implementation of an ongoing project or tool to stimulate suppliers in tourism to improve their environmental and social performance above legal compliance.

VIST are complementing regulatory frameworks and foster continuous improvement.
VIST

Voluntary initiatives for tourism businesses and organizations

a) Codes of conducts, charters
b) Good practices
c) Eco-labels for good environmental/social performance of tourism products, Prizes and Awards for the recognition of excellent innovation
d) Environment Management Systems (such as the EU EMAS - *Eco-Management and Audit Scheme*)
e) Indicators
f) *Benchmarking*
VIST

Codes of conduct can be defined as self-commitments initiatives, committing their members and participants to voluntary steps for better social/environmental behavior and performance.
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Example: Código de conduta da NATUGA

• «A NATUGA é uma empresa de animação turística que organiza passeios guiados destinados a todos os que gostam de desfrutar do património natural e cultural. O nosso objectivo é proporcionar diferentes opções de actividades a pessoas com espírito jovem e aberto, independentemente da idade e da nacionalidade.»
VIST
VIST

O Código de Conduta é o documento que integra um conjunto de princípios que regem a actividade da NATUGA e um conjunto de regras de natureza ética e deontológica a observar por todos os colaboradores e participantes nas actividades da empresa.

**O Código de Conduta foi criado com os objectivos fundamentais de:**

a) partilhar os princípios que orientam a actividade da NATUGA e as regras de natureza ética e deontológica que devem orientar o comportamento de todos os seus colaboradores;

b) promover e incentivar a adopção dos princípios de actuação e das regras comportamentais definidos no que respeita às relações dos colaboradores entre si, com a NATUGA, clientes, fornecedores, outras empresas e autoridades públicas;

c) promover e incentivar a adopção dos princípios de actuação e regras comportamentais a adoptar por todos os participantes no decurso das actividades da NATUGA.

d) consolidar a nossa imagem de excelência, exigência, responsabilidade, rigor e simpatia.
VIST

Princípios de Actuação da NATUGA

- **Clientes:** tratar os clientes com profissionalismo, respeito, lealdade e simpatia; proporcionar aos clientes produtos e serviços de excelência; facultar aos clientes as informações necessárias a uma tomada de decisão esclarecida e assegurar o cumprimento escrupuloso das condições acordadas.
- **Fornecedores:** escolher os fornecedores com base em critérios claros e imparciais; tratar os fornecedores com respeito, honrando os compromissos com eles assumidos.
- **Concorrência:** respeitar as regras e critérios de mercado promovendo a sã e leal concorrência; relacionar-se com os concorrentes de forma cordial e promover o respeito mútuo.
- **Autoridades públicas:** respeitar e zelar pelo cumprimento escrupuloso das normas legais e regulamentares aplicáveis à actividade da NATUGA; prestar às autoridades públicas a colaboração necessária ao exercício das suas actividades, nomeadamente através da disponibilização atempada da informação que tenha sido solicitada.
- **Ambiente e biodiversidade:** adoptar as melhores práticas ambientais, promovendo uma gestão eco eficiente, minimizando os impactos ambientais decorrentes da nossa actividade e utilizando de forma racional os recursos naturais; promover, divulgar e estimular junto dos colaboradores, fornecedores, clientes e da comunidade em geral a adopção de boas práticas ambientais e de conservação da natureza.
- **Comunidade:** promover e participar em iniciativas que visem estimular a consciência social de todos e que tenham por objectivo a promoção da responsabilidade social das empresas, e em especial naquelas que contribuam para um desenvolvimento sustentável.

**Fonte:** http://www.natuga.net/codigo-conduta
VIST

**Good practices involve:**

- To improve the environmental management of the organization or establishment;
- To reduce the major environmental impacts through a better management (namely installing devices to reduce energy consumption and water consumption, or to better management of waste);
- In general, they not demand significant investments for implementation;
- They are very flexible practices;
- They have in mind to change the attitudes of the collaborators, meaning the need for staff training.
In the case of the accommodation sector, the success of the implementation of these good practices implies the involvement of the customers.

Therefore, they require an efficient communication to be fully understood and adopted: letters, panels, newsletters, brochures, interactive TV, etc.
Por exemplo, pode poupar valiosos recursos de reduzir a quantidade de químicos que se utiliza na lavagens.

Simplemente usando a toalha mais que uma vez.
Se estiver disposto a utilizar as suas toalhas novamente, por favor deixe-as penduradas.
Se as quiser mudadas, deixe-as no chão.

Nós preocupamo-nos, porque as pequenas coisas fazem a diferença.

Ajude a salvar o Planeta

Please:
Do NOT Change my Towels.
I have hung my towels on the rack as a way of saying "I will use these towels again." Please do not replace my used towels with clean ones.

Our Planet thanks YOU!

© Go Green Towel Green
http://gogreenandtravelgreen.com
Example: Initiative of the UNWTO Hotel Energy Solutions (HES)
VIST

Eco-labels create and guarantee a choice to the consumer (“better than”):

- Many individual tourism products raise and guarantee the environmental/social qualities of the overall tourism experience. Eco-labels certify such qualities. The certified products altogether give a considerable choice to the consumer and show a significantly high standard.
VIST

- The clients of the certified product estimate the Eco-label as a sign of a “plus” within the overall quality.

- It may became an additional argument for individual or/and joint marketing activities of the certified products to raise their image and to attract new consumer groups.
VIST

Example: Diploma Chave Verde (*The Green Key*)

- O Diploma Chave Verde é um prémio que distingue as unidades hoteleiras que se destacam pela gestão e educação ambientais.
- Em 2010, o galardão foi entregue a 23 alojamentos do continente e ilhas. «Agora que está prestes a conhecer os hotéis mais ecológicos de Portugal talvez seja boa ideia pedir uns dias de férias ao chefe e partir para as férias mais verdes da sua vida!»

![Chave Verde](image1)

*Fonte: http://aeiou.caras.pt/chave-verde-conheca-os-hoteis-mais-ecologicos=f23297*
Diploma Chave Verde

Para as empresas, por sua vez, podem ajudar a identificar pontos críticos, a implementar soluções ambientais mais eficientes e a garantir uma forma de divulgação pública do seu comportamento ambiental.
VIST

Environmental Management Systems

The most commonly adopted are:

- ISO 14001
- EMAS
VIST

ISO 14001

- The ISO 14000 family includes most notably the ISO 14001 standard, which represents the core set of standards used by organizations for designing and implementing an effective environmental management system.
- Other standards included in this series are ISO 14004, which gives additional guidelines for a good environmental management system, and more specialized standards dealing with specific aspects of environmental management.
- The major objective of the ISO 14000 series of norms is "to promote more effective and efficient environmental management in organizations and to provide useful and usable tools - ones that are cost effective, system-based, flexible and reflect the best organizations and the best organizational practices available for gathering, interpreting and communicating environmentally relevant information".
VIST

EMAS

- The EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is a management tool for companies and other organizations to evaluate, report and improve their environmental performance. The scheme has been available for participation by companies since 1995 and was originally restricted to companies in industrial sectors.

- Since 2001 EMAS has been open to all economic sectors including public and private services.

What are the Steps to EMAS Registration?

- (1) Environmental review
- (2) Environmental policy
- (3) Environmental programme
- (4) Environmental management system
- (5) Environmental audit
- (6) Environmental statement
- (7) Registration by Competent Body and use of EMAS logo
VIST

What are Benefits of EMAS Registration?

- (a) Cost reductions: better management of resources (e.g. energy and resources efficiency)
- (b) Risk minimization: possibilities to reduce associated risk levels by assessing operational procedures
- (c) Regulatory compliance: greater awareness and knowledge of regulatory requirements
- (d) Regulatory relief: regulators may choose to relax regulatory requirements
- (e) Improved relations with internal stakeholders: employee involvement and training under EMAS can lead to improved employee morale
- (f) Improved relations with external stakeholders: EMAS registration of a site in close proximity to residents can enhance credibility and transparency
- (g) Competitive advantage: EMAS registration can lead to improved market access and increased market share.
VIST

What are Costs of EMAS Registration?

Costs vary with the size and the sector of the organization

- Fixed costs: assumed to be unrelated to staff numbers (e.g. registration fees, IT costs)
- External costs: incurred by employing external consultancy to support EMAS implementation (e.g. employee training)
- Internal costs: incurred by organization staff to implement, administer and report on EMAS (e.g. internal audit).
VIST

Indicators:

• Indicators can be used by tourism companies or individual tourism establishments to feed their strategic planning process and to monitor the impact and performance of their operation.

• The publication of social/environmental reports is one instrument that the accommodation sector can use to communicate to all relevant stakeholders the goals established, the practices implemented and the results obtained.

• There are different types of indicators, each of different utility to decision-makers.
VIST

**Benchmarking:**

- “*Benchmarking* is a continuous search for, and application of, significantly better practices that lead to superior competitive performance.” (Watson, 1993).

- In summary, *benchmarking* can be defined as a systematic procedure of comparative measurement with the objective to achieve continuous improvement. The great success of benchmarking in recent years is probably related to its inherent characteristic of being a knowledge-sharing and motivational process. It encourages managers and their staff to think in terms of performance measures and practices to increase profitability.
VIST

**Benchmarking:**

- *Benchmarking* is about learning how to improve business activity, processes and management.

- *Benchmarking* is a management approach to identify *Who is best?* and *What makes them so successful?* It has experienced increased popularity, both by manufacturing and service companies. In management science, *benchmarking* is usually positioned as being an extension of an existing total quality program, and as being a way in which to establish new, more relevant and efficient standards of performance.
VIST

Benchmarking: An Example

• The ‘Environmental Benchmarking Tool’ was developed by the International Hotels Environment Initiative and the World Wildlife Fund in the UK (www.benchmarkhotel.com). Hotels can use benchmarkhotel.com to monitor their energy management, fresh water consumption, waste management, waste water quality, purchasing programs, community relations and bio-diversity improvements.

VIST

*Benchmarking: An Example (cont.)*

- For example, the management can compare their environmental performance with that of hotels with similar facilities in three major climate zones and design a program to reduce their costs and environmental impact. The can be entered directly into the database system where all individual hotel information remains confidential.
Bibliography:

- EMAS http://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index_en.htm