

Protected, practical, profitable

Sustainable tourism in protected areas – a starter's guide

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European Manual for protected area's and tourism

- ECEAT & Europark federation
- A starter manual
- Based on lessons learned in Latvia and other countries
- Checklist, best practices & case studies
- 120 pages
- Online library and toolbox
- Ready January 2012



2.4 Communicate

In partnership with communities and businesses

2.4a Introduction

Communication is vital to a healthy future for protected areas. The simple fact of the area being designated is the first step in a long process of telling others about its value. Once visitors know of this value, it is proven that they will take more care in how they visit.

Good understanding also leads to economic benefits. For example, recent research across German national parks showed that tourism in protected areas not only creates considerable income for adjacent communities, but also that **the more visitors understood that they were in a national park, the more money they spent.**

The proportion of visitors with high 'national park affinity' (that is, for whom the existence of the national park was the primary reason to come to the region) varied across Germany. But higher affinity tourists provided higher income.

One conclusion of the survey is that protected areas should invest in increasing visitor affinity so visitors will behave better and spend more. "In order to

increase the economic benefits accruing from national parks regional policy could aim at a qualitative upgrading of tourist services, increased marketing of the unique national park label and the promotion of a diverse regional supply base."

One key way of increasing "affinity," which can also be called understanding, is to help your visitors understand your area by communicating well with them. Here we examine the main principles for communicating sustainable tourism in protected areas, and then focus on six key methods which you will need to do it effectively.

We take you from communications action plan development and branding through to printed publications like newspapers and guides and outdoor interpretation including interpretive panels. Then we look at electronic media and finally external media like press and advertising. In each case, we'll analyse real case studies showing practical examples of successful projects.

BELOW Visitors using an Interpretative panel to learn about the How Hill Nature Reserves, UK



Practical, profitable, protected. How to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas in central and eastern Europe 75

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2. BE SUSTAINABLE - **Balance protection and tourism**
3. WORK TOGETHER - **In partnership with communities and businesses**
4. PROVIDE EXPERIENCES - **From signposts to canoes**
5. COMMUNICATE **Sharing the value**
6. CREATE INCOME **Generating revenues from tourism**



1. THE CONCEPT - Why tourism?

Benefits (from protected areas point of view)

- Political and financial support
- Income for protecting nature
- Local economic opportunities
- Better infrastructure
- Local identity
- Better relationships between park and local communities



2. BE SUSTAINABLE

Balance protection and tourism

Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future.

It is envisaged that it will lead to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled whilst maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.

UN-WTO 1988



WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DU TOURISME
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DEL TURISMO
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ТУРИСТСКАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ
منظمة السياحة العالمية

Sustainable Tourism principles

12 Aims

(Report UN-WTO, Making Tourism More Sustainable, 2006)

Economic viability

Local prosperity

Employment quality

Biological diversity

Visitor fulfilment

Environmental purity

Community wellbeing

Cultural richness

Physical integrity

Social equity

Resource efficiency

Local control

2. BE SUSTAINABLE

Balance protection and tourism

The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria

37 Criteria

- Management
- Environment
- Social
- Cultural



www.sustainabletourismcriteria.org

2. BE SUSTAINABLE

Balance protection and tourism

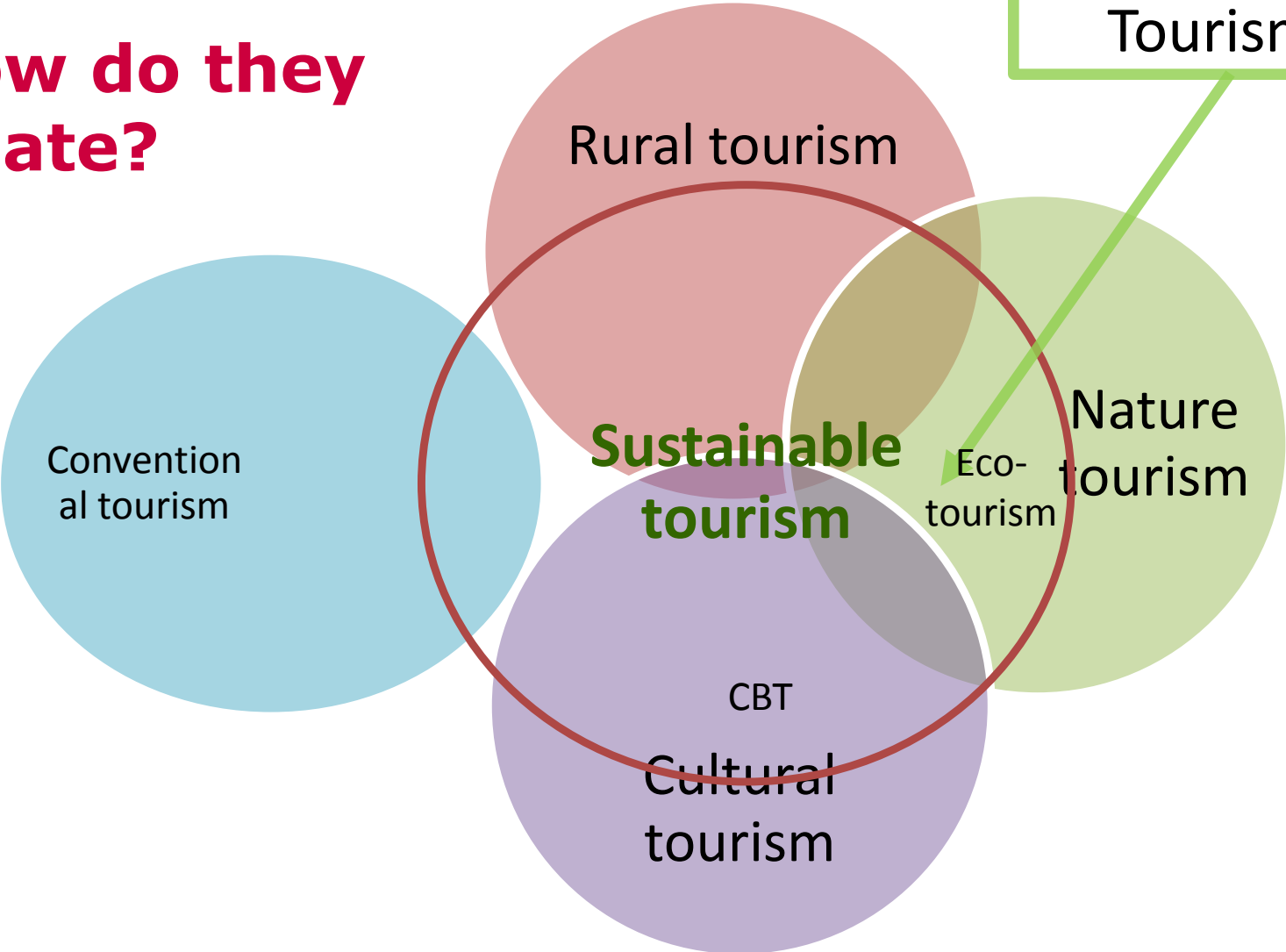
Ecotourism

UN definition (2002)

- Takes place in natural areas
- Sustainable (environment, cultural, social)
- Respect for local communities
- Interpretation of visitors

Selling something as ecotourism which is just “nature tourism” can therefore be considered as “false claims” or “green washing”.

How do they relate?



National Park
Tourism

Rural tourism

Conventional
tourism

**Sustainable
tourism**

Eco-
tourism

Nature
tourism

CBT
Cultural
tourism

Sustainable Tourism Instruments

Legal instruments

Regulation (legal standards)

Land use planning and control of developments

Economic instruments

Taxes and fees (economic instruments)

Voluntary (business) instruments

Guidelines and code of conducts

Sustainability management system

Eco-labels

Supporting instruments

Marketing

Training

2. BE SUSTAINABLE

Balance protection and tourism

Visitor management strategies

Zoning

Honeypots

Roads and paths

Tourist routes

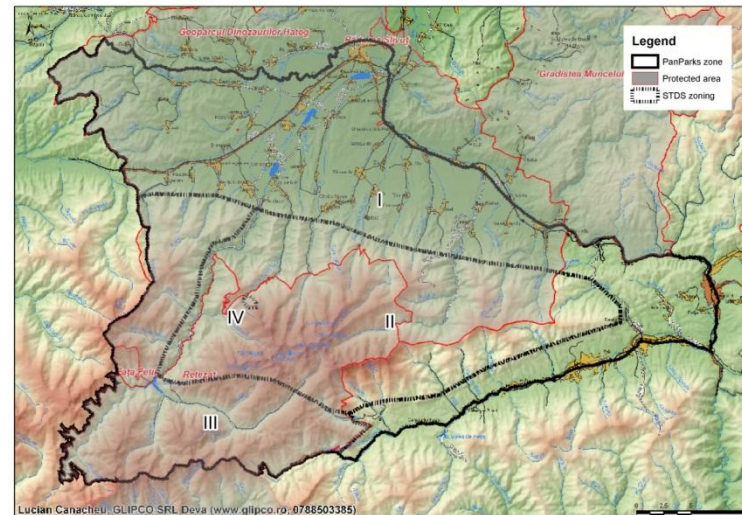
Entrance fees

Restrictions

Information

Permits

Codes of conduct



2. BE SUSTAINABLE

Balance protection and tourism

European initiatives

- The “European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas”, 40 + charter parks
- Pan-Parks, larger wilderness areas, 11 PAN Parks
- Natura 2000, EU regulation, 1.000+



CERTIFIED PARTNER of



3. WORK TOGETHER

In partnership with communities, businesses and NGO's

- 1. Stakeholder forum**
- 2. Training**
- 3. Common branding and standards**



3. WORK TOGETHER

In partnership with communities, businesses and NGO's

Stakeholder forum

Formal or informal group of parties having an interest in the protected area with the aim to balance all interest and avoid (open) conflicts.

- Local businesses
- Local government
- NGO's



Success factors of a stakeholder forum

- Full participation by the local authority(s),
- Links with regional and national tourist boards
- Strong participation of the local tourism industry
- Support from within the wider community.
- Internal communication through regular newsletters, a shared website
- A small working team, committed to quality.
- The driving force of one key individual is often the key to success
- Secure funding

3. WORK TOGETHER

In partnership with communities, businesses and NGO's

Offer training

- Nature guiding
- Wildlife identification
- Hosting
- Understanding landscape
- Local history
- Local culture
- Conservation management
- Traditional skills

Hospitality Training in Dutch National Parks

Entrepreneurs and staff are trained

- Cultural and natural history and resources
- Available trails, routes, tourist facilities and infrastructure
- Offer for special interest and target groups and specific target groups (children, elderly, physically challenged)
- Participants receive a certificate that they can use



3. WORK TOGETHER

In partnership with communities, businesses and NGO's

Develop common branding and standards

- Accommodation and restaurants
- local produce and souvenirs

Follow set of criteria and guidelines

- Local products label
- A green label
- Hospitality / quality label
- National Park / protected area label



3. WORK TOGETHER

In partnership with communities, businesses and NGO's

Harz NP in Germany partners should:

Cross information and promotion

- In the brochure and on the Internet
- During booking inquiries
- Distribute National Park information material
- Trained staff to inform about the National Park

Sustainability

- Local products
- Environmental management
- Local style interior



4. PROVIDE EXPERIENCES

From signposts to canoes

- Attractions and activities - kayaking, animal viewing, mushroom gathering, etc.
- Visitor infrastructure - visitor center, signposting, outdoor displays, resting areas
- Tourism products - packages and routes
- Special events - folklore festivals, sport events



Canopy Walkway - Drenthe province, The Netherlands

- Developed by the Dutch National Forest Service in partnership with a private company
- Attracted over a million visitors in first 10 years of operations (1996-2005)
- Had to be expanded to accommodate increasing amounts of visitors
- Challenge: find place and permits for a restaurant

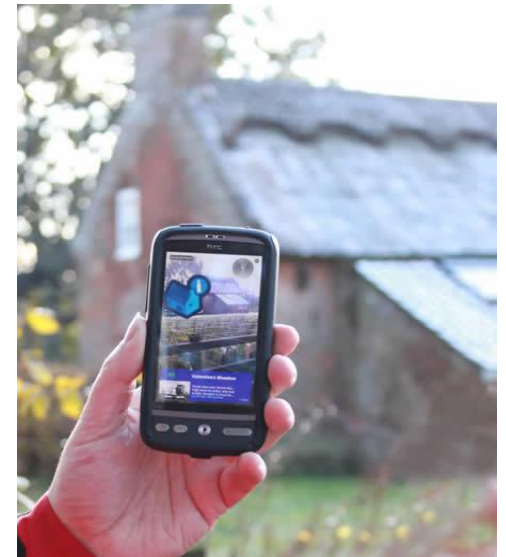


5. Communicate - Sharing the value

- Publications
- Outdoor interpretation panels
- Electronic media

Social Media - Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Electronic Interpretation



5. Communicate - Sharing the value

Developing a strategic communications action plan

What do you need to communicate?

What do you want to achieve?

Who is your target group?

How can you best communicate with them?

What is your message?

How can you check that what you are doing works?

6. CREATE INCOME

Generating revenues from tourism

Entrance fees

- Park as a whole or specific sections

User fees

- Equipment, campsite, mountain hut, fishing permit

Donations

- Friends off...
- Sponsorship



6. CREATE INCOME

Generating revenues from tourism

Operation of commercial activities

- Operation by park

Professional knowledge, management, flexibility

- Concession

“contracts between protected areas and businesses or individuals for operating facilities or offering services”

Clear defined conditions and transparency needed

Holiday homes of the Dutch National Forest Service

- Old farms, houses and mansions (cultural heritage)
- Finances heritage conservation + profit
- Creates local employment (maintenance and service)
- 54 of holiday homes, 300 and 1300 Euros/week
- Easy to use on-line reservation system

www.buitenlevenvakantiewoningen.nl



Thanks for your attention!



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