

Chapter Six: Sustainable Tourism

Unit One : Sustainability Policy

Section One

(A - Introduction)

Excel Travel is keen to contribute in a pollution free universe mission, and to share the role and the responsibility of maintaining & keeping this planet as healthy as it could be for all its inhabitants.

Our aim is to support a sustainable society and sustainable trade. Our sustainability policy must minimize all negative effects on the natural and social environment. We support all business partners towards more sustainability and create more sustainability awareness among our guests."

One of the urging facts to start our positive approaches towards Green Tourism, is that, as an example, the total Global Carbon Emissions by tourism transport of passengers has with 75 % the most significant impact. Accommodation is responsible for 21 % of the contribution. As global tourism is growing with about 5% per annum the emission by the tourism sector is expected to increase with 220 percent by 2035. This is especially due to the even stronger increase in air transport (320 %) due to strong growth of intercontinental tourism.

The return of the investment is not necessarily to be counted in short-term financial gains, only. It is humanly to think of leaving this planet as good as possible for more and more generations to come.

Our Vision is: We believe in "The right of every one to live healthy, and to run green business "

Our Mission is: "Investing in the Future of this universe" & the return of investment will be as important to us as our instant success.

Therefore, Excel Travel, started the strategic plan with the engagement process with **Travelife**; "A leading training, management and certification initiative for tourism companies committed to reaching sustainability through the three - stage certification program for tour operators and travel agents:

- (1) Travelife Engaged;
- (2) Travelife Partner;
- (3) Travelife Certified.

This aims for raising awareness among our staff & our suppliers and developing a culture of sustainable management and practices".

We are ambitious to achieve the certification of “Travelife Certified”, the third and highest level of the Travelife certification scheme by 2020, to have a real time steps towards achieving the vision of “Investing in The Future”.

Our aim is to strengthen our commitment to sustainability management and to turn it into consistent sustainable business practices in tourism, and from an industry ethical perspective, we believe sustainability statements should also be spread towards reaching all our partners.

(B)- Definition

Sustainable tourism: is the concept of visiting somewhere as a tourist and trying to make a positive impact on the environment, society, and economy.

Sustainable tourism meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to 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.”

Tourism can involve primary transportation to the general location, local transportation, accommodations, entertainment, recreation, nourishment and shopping. It can be related to travel for leisure, business and what is called VFR (visiting friends and relatives).

According to this definition it's alright to enjoy tourism and to benefit from it financially. Nevertheless, we should make sure that this will still be possible for future generations. If we damage the cultures and natural environments in tourist destinations, these destinations will lose the elements which are the base of their attractiveness

(c) - People, Planet, Profit- 3 P's:

“People” stands for the socio-cultural interests of the local population. To conserve the culture and the engagement of local people with tourism development in their destination. This involves labor conditions, attention to vulnerable groups in society, human rights, no discrimination, no child labor or sexual abuse etc.

“Planet” concerns the natural environment. To inflict minimal damage to the destination: flora, fauna, water, soil, and climate. To protect the environment by taking various measures.

“Profit” is about the economic interests. To do business in a responsible manner which also contributes to the prosperity of local people permanently.

(D)- World Directions:

There is now broad consensus that tourism development should be sustainable; however, the question of how to achieve this remains an object of debate.

Without travel there is no tourism, so the concept of sustainable tourism is tightly linked to a concept of sustainable mobility.

Two relevant considerations are tourism's reliance on fossil fuels and tourism's effect on climate change. 72 percent of tourism's CO₂ emissions come from transportation, 24 percent from accommodations, and 4 percent from local activities.

Aviation accounts for 55% of those transportation CO₂ emissions (or 40% of tourism's total). However, when considering the impact of all greenhouse gas emissions from tourism and that aviation emissions are made at high altitude where their effect on climate is amplified, aviation alone accounts for 75% of tourism's climate impact.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) considers an annual increase in aviation fuel efficiency of 2 percent per year through 2050 to be realistic. However, both Airbus and Boeing expect the passenger-kilometers of air transport to increase by about 5 percent yearly through at least 2020, overwhelming any efficiency gains.

By 2050, with other economic sectors having greatly reduced their CO₂ emissions, tourism is likely to be generating 40 percent of global carbon emissions. The main cause is an increase in the average distance travelled by tourists, which for many years has been increasing at a faster rate than the number of trips taken.

"Sustainable transportation is now established as the critical issue confronting a global tourism industry that is palpably unsustainable, and aviation lies at the heart of this issue (Gossling et al., 2010)."

Section Two - Sustainability in Practice – Strategic Plan

A- Challenges & Opportunities:

A1 - Reduce carbon footprint & decrease energy consumption by enhancing engines designing, in the shadow of the increasingly demand on means of transportation that is non-friendly; cars transportation – the increase that exceeds the enhancement ratios.

A2 - Improving business performance through sustainable tourism and marketing Tourism industry's environmental credentials. Ex: Aviation improves the technical designs of Aircrafts engines & operational practices and continues to implement measures of greenhouse gas emissions reaching 70 % enhanced aircrafts than those 40 years ago, but again the demand had eaten up the progress.

A3 - Developing partnerships and setting framework within the sustainability set up norms that could minimize the environmental impact of industry.

A4 - Minimizing resource use and the production of waste.

A5 - Assisting the Tourism Industry to advocate “Green House Tourism” and promote ways that Tourism business can reduce such dangers through; encouraging recognized carbon offset programs, educating tourists & operators and visitors of the touristic places, and making more choices towards sustainability.

A6 - Promoting more environment friendly alternatives and offer discounted packages or added value features to them; (like introducing Trains, buses, bicycles) to /and within tourist places.

A7 - This is an integral part of the basic responsibility towards the inhabitants of the planet and other nations on earth.

A8 - The major opportunity is in the increasing awareness of tourists and their high demand to visit pollution-free and high-quality places.

A9 - This opens the room to function in an environmentally responsible manner may attract additional patronage.

Unit Two – Strategic / Action Plan:

1.1 The plan basically encourages business to adopt more sustainable practices in order to reduce their environmental impact and achieve cost savings.

1.2 Today travel and tourism have become a significant part of the global economy contributing for more than 10 % of the global GDP, employing more than 200 million people worldwide.

1.3 For many developing countries, tourism provides an important source of income and contributes to social and economic developments.

1.4 Tourism also supports intercultural understanding and can support wider economic investment and developments by improving the general image and recognition of a country or destination.

1.5 Tourism could however also lead to negative impacts. It can put pressure on tourist destinations; socio-cultural, environmental and economical.

1.6 Profit is realized on short term, but how durable are the destinations in the long run is the real concern. If the ecosystem is damaged the tourist attractions can lose out.

1- Sustainability Management
2- Internal Management
3- Supply Chain Management
4- Energy Reduction Policy
5- Transport
6- Accommodation
7- Excursion
8- Destinations
9- Customer Communication

Henceforth, the axis that will be approached with an action plan are:

Unit Three – Action Plan & Project Start up

1- Sustainability Management:

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status
a- Committee Forming	Sustainability Manager	9 th Jul	Done
b- Committee's awareness Workshop	Sustainability Manager	15 th August	
c- Teams involvement & workshops for employees.	Committee members	Sep – Oct – Nov	
d- Announcing our mission & our Sustainability Practices on web site	Marketing Director	10/7	Done

2- Internal Management:

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status
a- Interim Meetings	Sustainability manager	Every other month	9 th Jul
b- Reports about implementation	Committee members	During the bi-monthly meetings	
c- Assignment of Team leaders monitoring smooth implementation	Committee members	14 th Jul to give the names	
d- Paper work Finalization	Sustainability Manager	8 th Jul	
e- Workshop Team Leaders	Committee Heads	SEP – OCT - NOV	

3- Supply Chain management:

3.1 Reduction of disposable & Consumable goods

The level of sustainability of our services and products is directly related to the sustainability level of our providers, suppliers and partners. Henceforth, this urges the need to stimulate their sustainability performance.

Excel Travel, will evaluate the criteria of suppliers sustainability yearly and has already set the bottom line, in the vendor evaluation list.

3.1.1 Internal practices are also important and Excel is encouraging employees to try to avoid as much as possible unnecessary disposable products, such as individual packaging materials, plastic, aluminum foil, gift wrapping, office paper, straws, etc.

3.1.2 This is to be handed to employees as a guide including and nit restricted on the below alternatives to disposable goods:

- I. Bring your own bag (BYOB) instead of plastic bags;
- II. Ceramic or reusable dishware/drinkware/cutlery instead of plastic/ styrofoam products;
- III. Linen instead of paper table cloth;
- IV. Rechargeable batteries instead of single-use ones.
- V. Electronic communications instead of prints.
- VI. Reusable water bottles instead of plastic ones.

3.1.3 Activity:

The company will organize, a «Plastic free month» asking everyone to commit to live one month without plastic.

3.2 Policy for sustainable purchasing

In purchasing products and services, preference is given to products that have been produced with respect for people and the environment, as well as to service providers who have implemented a sustainability policy.

3.3 Preference indicates that (sustainable) alternatives will have to be investigated and compared with regular products on quality, performance, price and availability.

3.3.1 The final decisions should be transparent, documented and discussed, especially for key products, such as paper or energy.

3.3.2 In case of non-application, will have to documents why choose the sustainable alternative.

3.4 Sustainable purchasing policy model:

3.4.1 Our company gives preference to more sustainable products & services. When selecting our providers, we apply the following procedure:

- I. Preference are given to products with a recognized environmental or sustainability certificate or proved sustainability qualities.
- II. And products which have been locally produced.
- III. Buying from local suppliers when possible.
- IV. Preferring to work with suppliers and service providers who have a sustainability reputation.

3.4.2 When purchasing key products, we apply the following sustainable purchasing procedure:

- I. Figure out how much of the purchases meet the five R's: Reduce, Repair, Repurpose, Reuse, Recycle.
- II. Investigate possible sustainable alternatives.
- III. Compare these alternatives on price, quality and availability.
- IV. Commit ourselves to buy the most sustainable alternative in relation to above factors.
- V. The result of this evaluation is documented.

3.5 Key products include, but are not limited to: paper, electric devises, cars, electricity, heating, furniture, cleaning materials and building materials.

3.6 Alternatives of tourism key products:

Buy gifts and giveaways from social enterprises or charities;

Make sure not to promote souvenirs which threatened flora and fauna, as indicated in the CITES treaty.

4 - When buying office paper, pay attention to the different types of sustainability labels:

1. Recycled paper;
2. Paper from sustainable managed forests;
3. Paper from environmentally friendly factories.

5- Preference you should be given to recycled paper first; then FSC labelled ones, and last, paper made by a sustainable factory.

6- Apply paper saving practices in printing to integrate with the implementation:

- I. Think twice before printing. Ask yourself, first, if it's really necessary.
- II. Set your printer by default to double-sided printing.
- III. Print on A5 instead of A4 sized paper.
- IV. Reuse single printed paper for notes or draft prints.
- V. Make virtual test prints instead of paper ones. Use PDF format which clearly shows the result when it's printed.
- VI. Reduce margins and use eco font size if not contradicting with the company's branded font (e.g. Calibri, 11pt);
- VII. Install centralized printers instead individual ones, to have a better control on paper consumption.
- VIII. Set your printer by default to black and white printing;
- IX. Set printers to automatically switch to standby after 10 minutes to save energy; Use Eco font letter format, which saves up to 50% of toner.
- X. Refill the printer cartridges.
- XI. Use vegetable-based ink.
- XII. Make sure that all new printers bought are environmentally- friendly.
- XIII. Store your files and correspondence electronically.
- XIV. Ask your suppliers to send their invoices by email.
- XV. Use Skype, Whatsapp and other platforms for internal communication.

7- Chemical cleaners can be harmful to the environment in many ways. They may be poisonous to plants and animals, damage the atmosphere or be corrosive to the environment.

7.1 A wide range of cleaning chemicals can be replaced with low impact alternatives, that have cost savings and environmental benefits. All businesses are able to source or make some low impact materials. As there are hardly any cleaning materials that are completely harmless (both for environment and health), it is important to always follow dosage instructions.

7.2 Sustainable cleaning materials policy model:

We use the most sustainable (production, use and disposal) cleaning materials:

- I. Giving preference to hygienic articles with ecolabels (e.g. handkerchiefs, toilet paper, kitchen rolls, etc);
- II. Giving preference to waste bags of recycled material and/or bags that can be composted;
- III. Using naturally decomposable cleaning materials;
- IV. Using washing-up liquids that do not contain NTA (Nitrilotriacetate) or chloride;

- V. Minimizing/excluding use of chemicals and/or disposable cleaning cloths;
- VI. Replacing chemical cleaners with low/no impact ones (e.g. vinegar);
- VII. Avoiding products with chlorine, ethylene/ethyl, butyl/alkyl, benzene, phenol and formaldehyde. »

8- Make sure you print your brochures on recycled and chlorine free paper, which comes from sustainable managed forests.

4- Energy Reduction Practices:

The company defines a clear energy reduction targets and set timeframes for implementation.

An average travel company can reduce up to 40% of its energy use, without any loss of comfort.

4.1 Tips for saving energy on heating & ventilation:

1. Inform your staff on efficient use of heating and ventilation.
2. Switch the heating/cooling system off at nights and on weekends.
3. Reduce temperatures when heating. Reducing the temperature of 1 degree reduces your energy bill by approx. 7%;
4. Optimise the heating system and, where possible, install electronic thermostat valves.
5. Program the individual heating periods and temperatures optimally. For example, a temperature for daytime, nighttime, weekends, holidays etc.

4.2 Tips for saving energy on lighting:

6. Try to maximize the use of daylight, for example by making sure all windows are clear. Daylight is free, and not even the most efficient LED lighting fixtures are capable of competing with this.
7. Replace conventional light bulbs by energy saving ones, such as compact fluorescent lights and LED lights, that uses up to 80% less energy (and which also compensates the higher purchasing prices).
8. The company will optimize illumination of shop windows with timers and light sensors. Close it down at night.
9. Do not use light absorbing light covers.
10. Use dimmers for lights.
11. Install timers or movement sensors for lighting in the stairway or bathrooms, and pre-set them with the shortest times possible.

4.3 Tips for saving energy of technical equipment:

1. When purchasing computers and printers, look for energy labels and compare energy usage.
2. Avoid leaving devices on stand-by during breaks. Better to switch them off completely.
3. Switch off the screen when you don't need it. Screens can be set to automatically go on stand-by after not being used for approx. 20 minutes.
4. Printers can be switched off at night. Its best to use a timer that can be set for a certain time.
5. Use plug boxes with on/off switches. It enables you to switch off several appliances simultaneously. Many appliances such as screens, modems, scanners and printers still use about 2 to 3 Watts in their 'Off' setting, so it makes sense to switch them off completely.
6. Pre-set all equipment to energy-saving mode, it can save about 40W.
7. Switch on coffee machines only when necessary.
8. Buy a fridge without freezer.
9. If you have a freezer, defrost it regularly.
10. Don't put warm meals/drinks in the fridge.
11. Put the fridge in a cool spot (without air conditioning, as fridges produce net warm).
12. Use a water boiler to boil water. It uses less energy than a (gas/electric) cooker and you can fill it just with the required amount of water (you can fill it by using cups).
13. Keep your coffee in a thermos instead of in electric heating devices.
14. Hang the below instructions in your departments and make sure they are applied:

- Use a plugbox or automatic system with an on/off switch to switch-off all «silent users» simultaneously.
- Instruct staff to switch-off all equipment (e.g. computer monitors) when they leave their desk;
- Open windows instead of switching on the aircon;
- Assign a person to do round check after office hours or during lunch breaks (can be the last person to leave).
- Set a time (e.g. every night at 8pm) when all Equipements are shut down;
- Make sure equipments are unplugged at the end of a workday and sockets are switched off (e.g. chargers consume energy even when no devices are plugged in)

15. The company is sticking tags next to the equipment you wish to have switched off;

16-Head of Departments are to conduct a meeting to instruct your employees on the switch-off policy.

17-The company will remind staff of the policy on a regular basis (via the intranet or other means).

18- Activate the energy-saving mode on all your devices.

4.4 Tips for saving energy with ... emails!

Emails and internet use also make a CO2 footprint. Emails leave a CO2 footprint which is an estimated of 6 grams.

Paper mailings are estimated at 14 grams. Here are some things to consider:

- The length of emails determines the use of energy, so keep it «short & sweet».
- Where possible delete the conversation from previous mails (when clicking on «reply»).
- Sending attachments consumes energy. The more bites the more energy is needed.
- Only send cc's when really relevant/necessary.
- Be mindful of logo's and sender details (always max. 72 dpi.).
- Consider if electronic bulk-mailings have an effective «Response quote» and keep your mailing list up-to-date.
- Shift to sustainable suppliers. Green hosting that uses renewable energy.

5- Recycling Office Waste:

5.1 70% of office waste can be recycled. This reduces the demand on raw materials and CO2 emissions.

- Paper and cardboard
- Glass
- Chemical waste such as batteries.
- Plastic and synthetic materials.

5.2 Excel Travel deals with APE (Association For Protection of Environment), to provide the waste recycling centers associated to it.

5.3 For metals, wood products and building materials.

Tips for re-use and recycling:

6.1 Paper and cardboard

The 'waste' of a travel company is dominated by paper and cardboard – up to 90%. Obviously, all this material can be collected and re-used. For example, do you have a paper bin in the office? Paper can also be re-used by filling the copier drawers with used paper in order to print on the empty side of the sheet.

6.2 Synthetic waste

Plastic waste such as cups and cartons of drinks can be thrown in a special recycle box for plastics.. Usually the most effective way is to put these boxes in a central location (kitchen, restaurant) where staff can easily bring their plastic waste.

6.3 Organic waste

In restaurants, a separate collection of organic waste is obvious, but also in smaller kitchens it is relevant. Separate collection and composting of organic waste is more cost effective than disposing and burning waste.

6.4 Deposit for bottles

Usually travel agencies don't use much glass and bottles. Bottles with deposits should be returned to the suppliers, and all other glass can be collected in a central location (e.g. kitchen), in a crate which is emptied at a glass recycling bin regularly.

5- Sustainability in Transport:

5.1 As a matter of fact, transport cause the largest environmental damaging impact 75 % the most significant impact

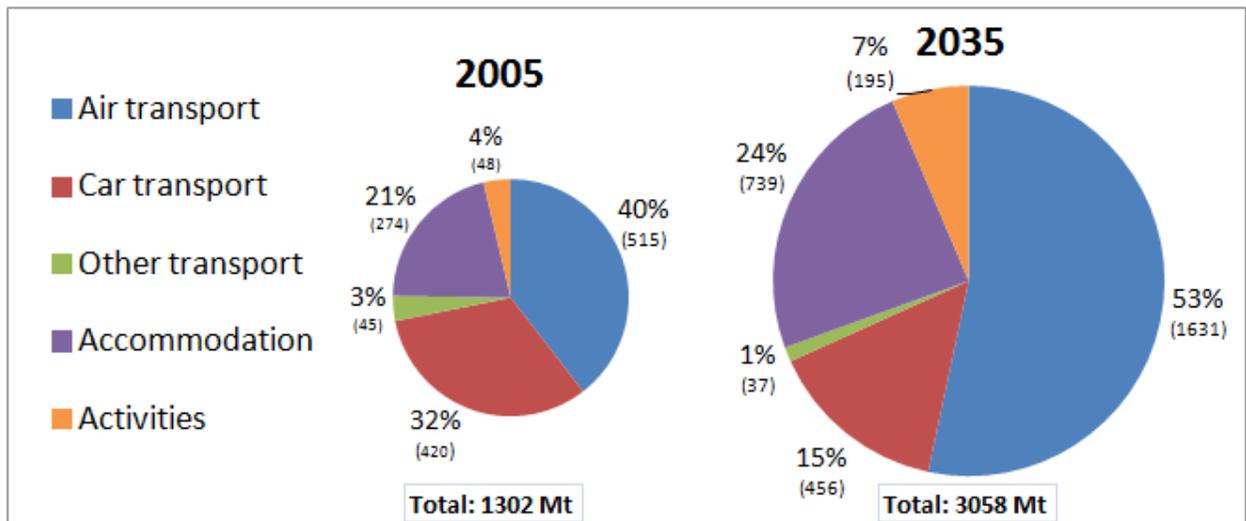
5.2 In our business, particularly, we are exposed to the idea of Motorized holiday transport, which is mostly based on fossil fuels. Airplanes use kerosene, and cars and coaches run on petrol, gasoline or gas.

5.3 Unfortunately, the use of electric cars and coaches is still inadequate. Burning fossil fuels contributes to climate change by the emission of carbon dioxide and other so called "greenhouse gases" like methane.

5.4 Climate change leads to an increase of average temperature, melting of glaciers and polar ice and sea level rise. It has a direct impact on the tourism industry.

5.5 Moreover, the availability of fossil fuels is limited. The International Energy Agency predicts that around the year 2020 the global oil production will decrease. This shortage will lead to (much) higher fuel prices.

Source: UNWTO 2006



5.6 It is important for Tour Operators to know that to compare the various means of transport is complex, however for all vehicles counts: the longer the distance, the higher the energy consumption and CO₂ emission. In general, the environmental impact (air pollution and CO₂ emissions) per mode of transport can be ordered (ascending) as follows:

1. Coach
2. International train
3. High-speed train
4. Car with 4 passengers
5. Car with 4 passengers plus caravan
7. Charter/low-cost carrier
7. Car with 2 passengers
8. Scheduled flight economy class
9. Car with 2 passengers plus caravan

This is the recommendation that we will have to think about while planning the tours and packages with all the regard to the possibility and comfort as an important hygienic factor.

5.7 Tour operators are required to abide to this by informing clients about the option to use less carbon means, adding the informative folder we designed with the travel documents.

5.8 Offering options with less environmental impact, as well as considering the distance between the accommodations and the beaches or the local nightlife. Ideal for both tourists and the environment is when they are within walking distances or using local transportation.

6 - Sustainability in Accommodation

6.0 There are many known standards certificates in this matter. Sustainability certificates are focused on the environment (ecolabels).

In Europe Green Key for accommodations and Blue Flag for beaches and marinas are very well known.

Only in Europe there are about 60 certificates. Not all are of good quality as their criteria might be relatively weak or they do not work with independent on-site auditors. In 2004 an umbrella organization for the 'top-10' of European sustainability certificates was established under the name VISIT (Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainability in Tourism).

The European Union has its own ecolabel for hotels and campsites, the European Flower. This label is also given for many other product groups, such as office paper and cleaning materials.

The rest of the regions we need to ensure our adequate data about the eco standards. (read Travelife Sustainability System for Hotels)

6.1 The company is promoting more sustainable holiday products / packages based on the recognized criteria, mentioned (including sustainable transport, sustainable accommodations and sustainable activities)

6.2 Usually, the accommodation type is a key element in the tourists' holiday selection; hotels, apartments, cottages, campsites.

6.3 It is required that we evaluate our suppliers and vendors and put in consideration while rating them, their sustainable practices in terms of Social-cultural & environmental effect, energy consumption, water consumption, waste, nature and landscape, and their sustainability certification.

6.4 Employees will have to get the training course on that, upon recruitment.

6.5 Basic/standard sustainability clause(s) are (directly or indirectly) included in all contracts with accommodation providers. (e.g. child labour, anti-corruption and bribery, waste management and protection of biodiversity).

6.6 The business does not contract directly or indirectly accommodations which are involved in compulsory labour or which employ children to complete work which is normally undertaken by adults. There are special working times and conditions for children (< 14 years) working within the business, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and/or the ILO convention 138. This condition is mentioned in the contract or the vendors form to be replied back by the vendor before work commencement.

7 - Sustainable Excursions

7.1 Excursions and local entertainment often have a large impact on the flow of traffic and its diversity, and consequently the inhabitants and local population of the destination.

7.2 Excel Travel avails itself to maintain and respect the culture, safety and resources of the original inhabitants of the excursion destinations, by developing a code of conduct, that is always updated and communicated with clients.

7.3 Excel Travel believes that such sensitive excursions or activities, which are integrated into packages or offered through local partners, should be supported by receiving and implementing documented guidelines and/or codes of conduct in order to minimize negative visitor impact and maximize enjoyment.

7.4 Excel Travel communicates with concerned entities to know and get the guidelines developed with the collaboration and consent of relevant NGOs and the affected community. The guidelines include directions on what and how to communicate with costumers including the requirement to communicate related customer codes of conduct

7.5 Where available preference is given to excursions who operate on the basis of acknowledged and controlled sustainability standards

7.6 We will conduct our Training and distribute Manuals and other guidance towards more sustainable management yearly to Tour Operators.

7.7 Codes of conduct

In order to define and agree on proper behavior during certain types of sensitive activities codes of conducts have been developed.

The best is if they are endorsed by credible organizations such as UN bodies or specialized NGOs.

Our codes focus on the activity provider or on the behavior of the participants.

We have an important role in the distribution of these codes in order to create awareness and support proper behavior, at least with our communication and bulletins that can has to be delivered to bookers.

Of course, it would be best if the implementation of these codes is externally monitored. But Excel Travel is committed to take the responsibility towards the Green Tourism and contribute in the mission, by being updated and by adopting the mission of clients' awareness.

7.8.1 Towards more sustainable excursions

Where available you can give preference to excursions that operate on the basis of acknowledged sustainability standards. Also, in areas with highly sensitive excursions, relevant guidelines and codes of conduct can be distributed to excursion providers. Moreover, in contracts with local excursion providers, both you and your local partner agency can include some basic sustainability clauses to avoid negative excursion impacts, but the ground rule must be that a company offers no products and/or services that can harm people and the natural environment.

Hereunder is the basic information, quoted from Travelife Basic Training that will be delivered to relevant JDs and for Tour Operators' awareness and bulletins' suggested contents for Bookers:

7.9 Sun, Sea, Snorkeling and Diving

- i. Activities on the beach and in the ocean are rather sustainable. Nevertheless, also some 'Sun & Sea' activities can cause problems.
- ii. The rubbish on the beach, especially plastics, is extremely dangerous for animals that are enticed to eat it.
- iii. In addition it results in very unattractive beaches for the tourists and it could attract rats that can spread the rubbish even more and disturb the ecosystem.
- iv. Riding motorbikes on the beach and in sand dunes damages these vulnerable ecosystems.
- v. The erosion caused by the motor vehicles damages these natural barriers against high water levels.
- vi. Recreational facilities in coastal areas can disturb the behavior of birds that nest on the ground and in some places, it also disturbs the nesting of sea turtles.
- vii. Similarly, a number of problems can occur offshore.
- viii. Snorkeling, diving and boating can damage corals. For example, due to people 7.1.9 Touching corals, boat codling with coral reefs or anchoring in it. Coral is very vulnerable and grows slowly. Also, people collecting the corals and shells can endanger certain animal species.
- ix. Last, feeding fish disturbs their normal behavior and can cause aggressive behavior.

7.10 Walking, hiking & biking

- I. 7.2.1 Even poor mountain areas trekking has become an important activity with considerable contributions to the economy.
- II. 7.2.2 Environmental effects

- III. In principle walking, hiking and mountain biking are environmentally friendly activities. In most protected areas these activities take place on prepared routes.
- IV. 7.2.3 The waste that is left behind causes severe pollution which is the role of Tour Operators to make sure the awareness of the visitors are raised concerning such point.

7.11 Wildlife excursions

- I. 7.3.1 Jeep safaris in Africa and also the observation of whales or crocodiles from boats, or tours where tourists cross the jungle searching for wildlife, is preferred by many clients. In many developing countries these activities form an important source of income and therefore an important reason to protect threatened species.
- II. 7.3.2 An important negative impact of wildlife tourism is disturbance of animals. Animals may flee, some species return after a while but other species leave the area permanently.
- III. 7.3.3 The first encounters with tourists are most influential. Eventually the animals can get used to the visitors and adapt their behavior.
- IV. 7.3.4 The most common means of transport for safaris are jeeps and other motorized vehicles.
- V. 7.3.5 Apart from disturbance caused by noise, these vehicles cause damage to the flora and fauna of the area. Paved or unpaved roads create barriers within habitats, motorboats used for observing whales create noise and disturbance under water.
- VI. 7.3.6 The sensitive marine mammals can become seriously stressed and disoriented.
- VII. 7.3.7 During the wildlife excursions, overnight stays often take place in natural areas. 7.3.8 Collecting wood for cooking and the fireplaces may affect the ecological balance. 7.3.9 Obviously, rubbish cannot be left behind. If sanitary facilities are lacking the 7.3.10 human excrements can pollute the ground- and surface water.
- VIII. Operators are required to regard all above and aware the clients and use the destination bulletin, as and when these packages are booked:(Travelife Training
 - Corporate Social Responsibility for Tour operators and Travel agents).

7.12 Golf

- I. 7.4.1 Golf is a long-term economic activity due to its relatively high investment.
- II. 7.4.2 However, a golf course has strong spatial impacts and affects the natural and/or agricultural environment.
- III. 7.4.3 By constructing a golf course the endemic vegetation can be replaced by exotic species and natural water cycles can be disturbed.
- IV. 7.4.4 Furthermore, the local landscape is not always taken into consideration resulting in poor integration of the golf course in its environment.
- V. 7.4.5 Watering golf courses can be very problematic.
- VI. 7.4.6 The greens need much moisture in order to maintain their green appearance, but many courses are located in hot and dry areas with a lack of

water during summer. 7.4.7 Often, this gives rise to conflicts between the golf course and local inhabitants.

- VII. 7.4.8 Many golf courses use chemical fertilizers and chemical pesticides to protect against insects and diseases, like algae which cause death of other organisms, adversely affecting the ecosystem in the surrounding areas.
- VIII. The above are the basic information the tour operator has to know and communicate with the bookers.

7.13 Motorized sports

- I. 7.5.1 Motorized sports are part of many holidays' types. Varying from winter sports to beach holidays one can find snow scooters, jet skiing, riding on quads and off-road motorbikes etc.
- II. 7.5.2 These light and small vehicles often have two-stroke engines which are lighter and more powerful than four-stroke engines. However, as two-stroke engines emit part of their fuels without combustion they cause more CO₂ and NO_x emissions than four-stroke engines do.
- III. 7.5.3 For certain types of sport such as jet skiing the fuel consumption and CO₂ emission is extremely high. Large amounts of toxic pollutants (e.g. benzene) end up in the water and in the atmosphere. This is both dangerous for marine life as well as for the tourists who enjoy the water. Moreover, the toxic pollutants enter the food chain and the food products which are used for human consumption.
- IV. 7.5.4 Fish and marine mammals can be hit by jet skis. Because the jet ski has little depth and it has no twin screw, it can move in very shallow water where it causes waves which damage the shores and ecosystems.
- V. 7.5.5 Moreover jet skis produce a lot of noise, harmful to the jet skier but also very disturbing for the other tourists and marine life. Especially water birds can be seriously disturbed by the waves and the noise of jet skis.
- VI. 7.5.6 Quads are off-road bikes on 4 wheels. This gives them more stability and easier handling than motorbikes. Because of the big wheels and small size these vehicles are easy to maneuver on all types of terrain.
- VII. 7.5.7 The fuel consumption and CO₂ emission are higher than with off -road

7.14 Attractions

Socio-cultural effects

- I. 7.6.1 Tourist excursions and visits to local attractions provide tourists and the local population with an opportunity to meet each other in a positive way.
- II. 7.6.2 Generally tourists enjoy meeting local people as long as they do not feel exploited.
- III. 7.6.3 Excursions to authentic little villages can also stimulate employment for young villagers so they do not have to migrate elsewhere.
- IV. 7.6.4 Tourism can also strengthen the position of the visited ethnic group in relation to the majority.
- V. 7.6.5 Contacts with tourists can also have negative socio-cultural impacts for the host regions.

- VI. 7.6.6 Local people can imitate the excessive consumptive behavior of tourists or begging, often by children, can increase.
- VII. 7.6.7 Furthermore, cultural expressions such as art, dance and music, are sometimes commercialized and over-assimilated in 'authentic' souvenirs and shows.
- VIII. Some daytrips are notorious for bringing little economic benefit to the visited area. For example, when vehicles and guides are hired in the base town, and the passengers use packed lunch, thus spending little money in the destination.
- IX. It is important to prepare visitors when visiting culturally sensitive places such as religious monuments unprepared, in order to avoid improper behavior.
- X. This can avoid negative feelings towards tourists and more mutual understanding between tourists and the local population.

7.15 Animal attractions

7.15.1 Animals are often part of the tourist activities: dancing bears, bull fighting or animal riding...etc

7.15.2 These activities can involve physical abuse and can also result in death of the animal (bulls don't leave the arena alive).

7.15.3 Animal fighting usually concern fights between two animals of the same breed (dog fighting, coq fighting) and fights between different breeds (e.g. dog vs. bear). Many animals die as a result of these fights.

7.15.4 Animal racing can also have this consequence. Tourists should strongly reject these types of 'entertainment'.

7.15.5 Animal abuse can also take place in rather unexpected circumstances.

7.15.6 Innocent tourist attractions such as donkey rides, horse & carriage rides or a camel trip can camouflage serious maltreatment of the animals by overloading, or extremely long working days with no water and high temperatures.

7.15.7 Tourists who do not wish to support this should be aware of these circumstances, the appearance of the animals and the conditions they have to work in, to avoid Animals' Abuse.

7.15.8 Visitors can be at risk from animal attacks in situations where a supplier allows close contact to occur between tourists and wildlife.

7.15.9 Therefore, when wildlife species are displayed, we ensure that it is done in compliance with (inter)national legislation and accepted standards.

7.15.10 By encouraging good practice concerning the care of all animals, their welfare can be substantially improved in the destination at large.

8 – Destinations:

8.1 Excel will influence and favor destinations with good-quality local labor or where training programs are in place to increase the number of local people employed in tourism, whilst avoiding destinations where unacceptable labor conditions or working practices such as forced labor or child labor are common or where there is an unacceptable level of human rights abuse.

8.2 We are giving preference to destinations that support financially sustainable practices and have an open and accountable tax system will help to maximize the local economic benefits of tourism.

8.3 At the same time stopping (or threatening to stop) tours to destinations with high levels of corruption and financial mismanagement will provide incentives for eliminating corruption in a destination.

8.4 Excel Travel will conduct Post-holiday questionnaire to know the real time circumstances facing clients.

Evaluated Environmental Issues:

- Availability of fresh water, infrastructure and consumption
- Energy availability, infrastructure and consumption
- Transport infrastructure
- Wastewater treatment systems
- Hazardous and solid waste disposal systems
- Air and water quality
- Land-use and biodiversity conservation strategies
- Compliance (or non-compliance) with relevant international declarations, conventions, and treaties
- National, sub-national, regional and local environmental regulations
- Activities to conserve and/or restore the habitats of endangered species
- Activities to fight trade in threatened flora/fauna and archaeological/cultural heritage

Evaluated Planning issues

- Proper and long-term zoning policy identifying and securing residential areas, recreation zones, open areas, public areas, private areas, proper and sufficient beach access etc. for the local population
- Respect of local architecture, culture and scale by defining rules for construction (e.g. limitation of floor levels for building)
- Clear long term vision of the type of tourism to be developed and the foreseen tourist target group
- Protection of historic or authentic buildings or parts of villages and cities against uncontrolled development

Evaluated Social and Human Rights Issues

- Compliance with International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions on child and forced labor
- Freedom of association
- Non-discrimination
- Programs to combat sexual exploitation of children
- Programs to combat and mitigate the social impacts of HIV/AIDS
- Citizen participation in planning process
- Allocation of revenues generated from tourism to local communities, and levels of equity in the distribution of income
- Compliance with international declarations, conventions and treaties on human rights
- Policies and general conditions of indigenous (land) rights
- Structures/procedures for dialogue and engagement with indigenous people about ongoing or planned projects

8.5 Gifts /Souvenirs and charity

- 8.5.1 Another way to stimulate sustainability is by donations to sustainable developing projects or programs.
- 8.5.2 These gifts can be in cash or in kind, for example by making your staff available.
- 8.5.3 These kinds of activities often involve social and economic assistance to weak members of a local community, or the support of nature conservation projects in a destination.
- 8.5.4 By communicating these acts of charity to your customers they will become motivated to make a contribution themselves.
- 8.5.5 The company and its direct service providers do not promote souvenirs which contain threatened flora and fauna species as indicated in the CITES treaty and the IUCN 'Red List'; historic and archaeological artefacts (except as permitted by law).

9 - Customer Communication

By using words like 'authentic', "traditional" and "natural" you move away from moral obligation and will be able to relate to the "True greens" as well as the more hedonistic target groups. For a growing majority of holidaymakers, knowing that they did no harm or even contributed to sustainability will increase the quality of their experience. Research shows that most customers are willing to pay a premium (5-10%) for that. However, depending on the type of product, you might not want to lose your more hedonistic target groups that are less inclined to pay a premium. In that case and provided that it is well communicated, sustainability provides you with a competitive advantage as it increases the perceived value of your products.

9.1 We will communicate Sustainability through different channels: e.g. publicity, brochures, websites, travel documents, magazines, in-flight videos, welcome meetings upon arrival, enquiries after their return etc. In order to be effective, the tone and content of the communication should not only be in line with the target groups and media used.

9.2 We will inform Clients about different transport alternatives and their environmental effects, such as carbon emissions, Certified accommodations and excursions should be clearly indicated in order to attract positive attention.

9.3 Secure storage and handling of private personal and financial data is essential. In most countries' regulations are in place in order to ensure the privacy and financial safety of customers.

9.4 We inform customers regarding sexual exploitation of children with a standard text on the website, in brochures and in other publications.

9.5 Travel documents should provide customers with destination-specific information regarding sustainability as well as health & safety aspects, such as for example:

- Local culture-related behavioral practices.
- Information about local (public) transport means.
- Illegal souvenirs, including in- and export of historic and religious artefacts.
- Local restaurants, food and shops.
- (non) sustainable food and fish species.
- Policies regarding sexual exploitation of children.
- Health & safety risks and precautions.
- Emergency procedures and contact persons.