



TRAINING MANUAL

on the

CREATION and PROMOTION

of

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS



March 2022

Developed by **Barbara Fritz** · Sustainable Tourism Expert
Owner of **AGEG Tourism for Sustainability** www.ageg-tourism.de
and Ieva Zamaraite Junior Expert



for the

RESTART MED!

Revitalization of Sustainable Tourism Across Regions in the Mediterranean Project

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the RESART MED! partners, and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structures.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | 1 |
| ACRONYMS..... | 4 |
| LIST OF FIGURES | 4 |
| LIST OF TABLES | 5 |
| CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION | 6 |
| 1.1. The RESTART MED! Project..... | 8 |
| 1.2. The Concept & Approach of the Training Manual..... | 11 |
| 1.3. Tourism in the Mediterranean | 15 |
| CHAPTER 2 GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TRENDS | 22 |
| 2.1. International Trends | 22 |
| 2.2. Post-Covid Tourism Trends..... | 23 |
| CHAPTER 3 UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM | 27 |
| 3.1. The Principles of Sustainable Tourism..... | 28 |
| 3.2. The Policy Framework and Governance of Sustainable Tourism | 31 |
| 3.2.1. International Frameworks for Sustainable Tourism | 31 |
| 3.2.2. European Frameworks..... | 36 |
| 3.2.3. Mediterranean Frameworks..... | 40 |
| 3.3. Sustainable Tourism Certification Schemes | 41 |
| 3.4. Sustainable Tourism Types | 50 |
| 3.4.1. Sustainable Adventure Tourism | 50 |
| 3.4.2. Ecotourism..... | 55 |
| 3.4.3. Cultural Routes | 58 |
| 3.4.4. Slow Tourism | 61 |
| 3.4.5. Experiences..... | 65 |
| 3.4.6. Gamifying a Destination | 67 |
| CHAPTER 4 CREATION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS & DESTINATIONS | 70 |
| 4.1. How to create Sustainable Tourism Products | 71 |
| 4.2. How to create Sustainable Adventure Tourism..... | 79 |
| 4.3. How to create Ecotourism Products & Destinations | 81 |
| 4.4. How to create Cultural Routes | 84 |
| 4.5. How to create Slow Tourism Products & Packages | 85 |

| | | |
|---|--|------------|
| 4.6. | How to create Sustainable Tourism Experiences | 87 |
| 4.7. | How to gamify a Destination | 90 |
| CHAPTER 5 PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND DESTINATIONS | | 92 |
| 5.1. | The Mediterranean: A Sustainable Tourism Destination | 92 |
| 5.2. | Sustainable Tourism Markets & Target Groups..... | 99 |
| 5.3. | Principles of Commercialization | 102 |
| 5.4. | Marketing Tools & Marketing Channels | 104 |
| 5.5. | Innovative Marketing Practises | 122 |
| 5.5.1. | Gamification | 122 |
| 5.5.2. | Storytelling..... | 123 |
| 5.5.3. | Virtual Tours and Remote Tourism..... | 125 |
| 5.5.4. | Digital Word of Mouth & Value Co-Creation..... | 126 |
| 5.5.5. | Influencers and Digital Nomads..... | 127 |
| 5.5.6. | Online Trip Planner System | 129 |
| 5.5.7. | Search Engine Marketing..... | 130 |
| CHAPTER 6 INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES..... | | 133 |
| 6.1. | Sustainable Tourism Products | 134 |
| 6.1.1. | Nos. 1 – 3: Sustainable Destination Models..... | 137 |
| 6.1.2. | Nos. 4 – 8: Sustainable Tour Operator & Accommodation Models..... | 144 |
| 6.1.3. | Nos. 9 –12: Natural Parks and Protected Areas | 155 |
| 6.1.4. | Nos. 13 –17: Innovative Initiatives | 164 |
| 6.1.5. | Nos. 18 –21: Trail Models..... | 175 |
| 6.1.6. | Nos. 22 –25: Cultural Routes | 184 |
| 6.1.7. | Nos. 26 –30: Cultural, Natural and Culinary Experiences..... | 193 |
| 6.2. | Sustainable Marketing Practices | 204 |
| 6.2.1. | Nos. 31 –34: Using Sustainability as an Active Marketing Tool..... | 208 |
| 6.2.2. | Nos. 35 –38: Partnerships, Press and FAM trips..... | 217 |
| 6.2.3. | Nos. 39 – 40: Social Media Marketing | 226 |
| 6.2.4. | Nos. 41 -42: Virtual Tours and Gamification | 231 |
| 6.2.5. | Nos. 43 -44: Digital word of mouth, Influencers and Digital nomads | 236 |
| 6.2.6. | Nos. 45 -46: Storytelling and Creative marketing campaigns..... | 241 |
| 6.2.7. | Nos. 47 -48: Online Trip Planner System | 246 |
| 6.2.8. | Nos. 49 -53: Commercialization and Direct Bookings | 251 |
| CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS..... | | 262 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 7.1. Recommendations..... | 262 |
| ANNEX | 269 |
| ANNEX NO 1: Overview – Guiding documents..... | 270 |
| ANNEX NO 2: Assessment Template 1 | 291 |
| ANNEX NO 3: Customers Need Template 2 | 292 |
| ANNEX NO 4: Strategy & Concept Template 3..... | 293 |
| ANNEX NO 5: Sustainability Template 4 | 296 |
| ANNEX NO 6: Check the Package 5 | 298 |
| ANNEX NO 7: ST Package – General Checklist | 299 |
| ANNEX NO 8: ST Package – Transport..... | 300 |
| ANNEX NO 9: ST Package – Food | 301 |
| ANNEX NO 10: ST Package – Activities..... | 302 |
| ANNEX NO 11: ST Package – Accommodation | 303 |
| ANNEX NO 12: Steps Developing Experience..... | 304 |
| ANNEX NO 13: Checklist Pricing for Profit | 305 |
| ANNEX NO 14: Tips Online Strategy..... | 307 |
| ANNEX NO 15: Social Media Marketing Factsheet | 309 |
| ANNEX NO 16: List of Promotion Events..... | 310 |
| ANNEX NO 17: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Gamification | 312 |
| ANNEX NO 18: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Storytelling..... | 313 |
| ANNEX NO 19: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Virtual Tours and Remote Tourism..... | 314 |
| ANNEX NO 20 Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Digital Word..... | 315 |
| ANNEX NO 21: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Influencers and Digital Nomads..... | 316 |
| ANNEX NO 22: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Online Trip Planner System | 317 |
| ANNEX NO 23: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Search Engine Marketing..... | 318 |

ACRONYMS

- AT Adventure Tourism
- ATTA Adventure Travel Trade Association Tourism
- CAGR Compound Annual Growth Rate
- DAV Deutscher Alpen Verein (German Alpine Federation)
- DMO Destination Management or Destination Marketing Organization
- GSTC Global Sustainable Tourism Council
- MEDUSA Development and Promotion of Mediterranean Sustainable Adventure Tourism
- MEET Mediterranean Experience of Ecotourism
- NGO Non-Governmental Organization
- NTO National Tourism Organization
- SEM Search Engine Marketing
- SMM Social Media Marketing
- ST Sustainable Tourism
- UNWTO World Tourism Organization
- USP Unique Selling Point
- WWF Worldwide Fund for Nature

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: International Tourist Arrivals (ITA) in Mediterranean Countries (1995-2019) | 17 |
| Figure 2: International Tourist Arrivals in MED..... | 19 |
| Figure 3: Macro-economic trends in the Mediterranean; source: WWF 2015..... | 20 |
| Figure 4: Four scenarios post pandemic tourism..... | 26 |
| Figure 5: Carbon footprint of global tourism | 27 |
| Figure 6: Skeleton of sustainable tourism (adapted) | 29 |
| Figure 7: Adventure tourism chart..... | 51 |
| Figure 8: Trending motivations for adventure travel..... | 52 |
| Figure 9: Slow Tourism vs. environmental products..... | 61 |
| Figure 10: Gamification benefits for the tourism sector..... | 69 |
| Figure 11: Component of a tourism product | 70 |
| Figure 12: Conceptualization roadmap..... | 71 |
| Figure 13: Perception of adventure traveller..... | 80 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Figure 14: Ecotourism products components and relationships | 82 |
| Figure 15: Target markets | 99 |
| Figure 16: Marketing tools | 105 |
| Figure 17: Overview marketing channels..... | 116 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1: International certification schemes for sustainable tourism | 41 |
| Table 2: Regional, national and local certification schemes for sustainable tourism..... | 48 |
| Table 3: Slow tourism attributes | 63 |
| Table 4: Phases and steps for the conceptualization of a sustainable tourism product | 72 |
| Table 5: Adventure tourism classification..... | 79 |
| Table 6: Target group: individual travellers Table 7: Target group: specialist tour operators . | 100 |
| Table 8: Overview of sustainable tourism platforms | 120 |

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Mediterranean is **one of the world's leading tourist destinations**, but is still not well-known on the **international tourism market** as an established **sustainable tourism destination**.

Home to some of the world's **most ancient civilizations**, a hub for **trade and transport**, and a **unique hotspot for biodiversity**, the Mediterranean faces a multitude of **common challenges**, including climate change, pollution, youth unemployment and social inequality. Facing growing competition and a deterioration of the political and security situation, the destination has demonstrated **symptoms** of a slowdown, which makes the recovery of the sector an economic priority. This **slowdown** has been **dramatically reinforced** by the **COVID-19 crisis** and its economic impact and may also present an opportunity to transform the tourism model into a **sustainable and competitive one**, addressing current sectorial challenges such as the predominance of mass seaside tourism, dependency on the European market, and territorial imbalances.

New target groups with different interests (e.g., cultural and culinary experiences) need to be reached by innovative sustainable tourism product development and the unique features of the destination further explored, elaborated, and sharpened.

With the aim of **revitalizing the tourism economy** in the **Mediterranean** after the COVID-19 pandemic, **five countries** (1) Italy, (2) Spain, (3) Lebanon, (4) Jordan, and (5) Tunisia and **6 partners** (1) International Committee for the Development of Peoples; (2) Barcelona Official Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation; (3) Catalan Tourist Board; (4) American University of Beirut; (5) Jordan University of Science and Technology; and the (6) World Wildlife Fund (WWF) of North Africa have **joined forces** in the **RESTART MED!** project to **boost sustainability** in tourism and **economic recovery** by building on and learning from previous project experiences and practices.

To **capitalize on previous project experiences and practices**, a user-friendly **training manual** on sustainable tourism product development and marketing should be created.

Against this backdrop the **Catalan Tourist Board** commissioned **AGEG Tourism for Sustainability** to undertake its development. AGEG Tourism for Sustainability and its owner, tourism expert Barbara Fritz, have extensive experience in sustainable tourism development around the globe and in the development of tailor-made and practice-oriented capacity building materials and publications.

The **overall objective** is to create via this manual a **tool to “restart”** and enable **tourism stakeholders of the Mediterranean** to develop their tourism products and destinations in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to the positioning of the **Mediterranean** as a leading and **competitive sustainable tourism destination**.

The big challenge in the development of this manual is to address to the different levels of sustainable tourism development, tourism infrastructure, service and quality standards and governmental framework in the project destinations.

Therefore, the training manual is designed as a large toolbox in which each user can find technical information, a huge variety of practice examples, and comprehensive background information. Every user can select the topics, practice examples and technical information needed and can tailor its own individual training programme according to the individual needs of the destination and the related tourism stakeholder.

1.1. The RESTART MED! Project

RESTART MED! aims at revitalizing tourism in the Mediterranean after the COVID-19 pandemic by building on and learning from previous experiences and practices, using this time to boost sustainability, together with the economic recovery of this key industry.

The RESTART MED! Project is one of the projects that has been initiated and co-financed within the framework of the ENI CBC Med Programme.

WHAT DOES THE ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME STAND FOR?



ENI CBC Med – COOPERATING ACROSS BORDERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

ENI CBC Med – a hub for cooperation in the Mediterranean

Funded by the European Union, the programme acts to address common challenges faced by Mediterranean countries such as climate change, pollution, youth unemployment and social inequality.

The impetus for the 2014-2020 ENI CBC “Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme” is to address these challenges and improve the lives of men and women across the region. ENI CBC Med is the largest Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative implemented by the EU under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).

The Programme brings together the coastal territories of 14 EU and partner countries in view of fostering fair, equitable and sustainable development on both sides of the EU’s external borders.

Through calls for proposals, ENI CBC Med finances cooperation projects for a more competitive, innovative, inclusive and sustainable Mediterranean area.

Cross- border cooperation, an engine for development!

Cross-border cooperation (CBC) plays an essential role in the programme by operating for the benefit of both sides of the EU’s external borders and drawing on funding from both external and internal budgets of the European Union.

CBC is based on the principles of co-ownership, partnership, and common benefits: it contributes to the overall European Neighbourhood Instrument goal of progress towards an area of shared prosperity and good neighbourliness between EU Member States and partner countries. Within the period 2014-2020, the European Union invested more than €1 billion to support 16 ENI CBC programmes between EU Member States and neighbouring countries sharing a land border, a sea crossing, or a sea basin, from the Arctic to the Southern Mediterranean.

Revitalization of Sustainable Tourism Across Regions in the Mediterranean. RESTART MED! is a 2-year project aiming to stress the crucial role of the tourism sector in the Mediterranean by developing and promoting sustainable tourism products. Specifically, the project will compile, promote, scale-up, and add value to the results of previous sustainable tourism projects located in the Mediterranean. Restart Med! will approach the sector from a broad perspective and, therefore, will analyse areas such as adventure tourism, slow tourism, games and video games, gastronomy, cultural heritage, etc. Against this backdrop the project is taking the initiative to create a manual on the creation and promotion of sustainable tourism products to disseminate sustainable practices among the stakeholders of the Mediterranean region based on the outcome of the [MEDUSA](#), [CROSSDEV](#), [Med Pearls](#), [MED GAIMS](#), [EMbleMatiC](#), [DESTIMED](#) (details on [MEET platform](#)), [Wildsea](#) and [TOURISMED](#).

For the development of a very practice-oriented and user-friendly training manual, special attention will be paid to the outcomes and good practices of the four so-called standard projects.

WHAT ARE THE FOUR STANDARD PROJECTS?

- (1) MEDUSA
- (2) CROSSDEV
- (3) MED PEARLS
- (4) MED GAIMS

A short overview of these 4 standard programmes is provided below:







MEDUSA

1. PROJECT: **MEDUSA** - *Development and promotion of Mediterranean Sustainable Adventure Tourism (<https://www.enicbcmec.eu/projects/medusa>).*

Objective: The overall objective of the MEDUSA project is to develop a competitive form of **Adventure Tourism (AT)** in the Mediterranean which is based on environmental and economic sustainability values and that will create more business opportunities and new jobs for the local communities in lesser-known regions.

Partnership: **(1)** Barcelona Official Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation; **(2)** Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry; **(3)** Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association; **(4)** Rene Moawad Foundation; **(5)** Puglia Region; **(6)** The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature; **(7)** WWF Mediterranean North Africa.

Countries: **Spain, Jordan, Lebanon, Italy, Tunisia**



 **Med Pearls**

2. PROJECT: **Med Pearls- *The Mediterranean as an innovative, integral and unique destination for Slow Tourism initiatives***
(<https://www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/med-pearls>)

Objective: Med Pearls aims at internationally positioning the Mediterranean as a unique and integral destination to experience the Med lifestyle through **Slow Tourism (ST)**, inviting travellers to discover new destinations sustainably and responsibly while taking the time to have direct contact with local communities

Partnership: **(1)** Catalan Tourist Board; **(2)** Confederation of Egyptian European Business Associations; **(3)** Municipality of Thessaloniki
(4) APS MEDITERRANEAN PEARLS; **(5)** Palestine Information & Communications Technology Incubator; **(6)** Palestine Wildlife Society
(7) Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce – Alexandria Chamber

Countries: **Spain, Egypt, Greece, Jordan, Italy, Palestine**



 **MED GAIMS**

3. PROJECT: **MED GAIMS- *Gamification for memorable tourist experiences***
(<https://www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/med-gaims>).
(<https://medgaims.com>)

Objective: MED GAIMS project **develops games** in **physical** and **virtual format** to create experiences for tourists, giving a necessary competitive edge to the attractiveness of lesser-known sites in the Mediterranean.
Gamification is culturally sensitive!

(5) Partnership: **(1)** American University of Beirut; **(2)** i2CAT Private Foundation, Internet and Digital Innovation in Catalonia; **(3)** Directorate General of Antiquities; **(4)** Alghero Foundation Museums Events Tourism; **(5)** the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities – Department of Antiquities; **(6)** Jordan University of Science and Technology; **(7)** Local Business Public Entity Neàpolis.

Countries: **Lebanon, Spain, Italy, Jordan**



4. PROJECT: **CROSSDEV - Cultural Routes for Sustainable Social and economic Development in Mediterranean**
(<https://www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/crossdev>)

Objective: The CROSSDEV project addresses the creation of jobs and a decent standard of living in the Mediterranean for all, promoting dialogue and understanding for peaceful co-existence. The aim of the project is to turn **local culture** and **heritage** into assets for socio-economic local development and to increase tourism competitiveness and attractiveness of lesser-known destinations and rural areas through the creation of **cultural routes**.

Partnership: (1) International Committee for the Development of Peoples; (2) Culture Cooperative Society; (3) Jordan University of Science and Technology; (4) Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa; (5) The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan; (6) The Palestinian Heritage Trail; (7) Ministry of Culture (Italy).

Countries: **Jordan, Lebanon, Italy, Palestine**

1.2. The Concept & Approach of the Training Manual

WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE OF THE SUSTAINABLE TRAINING MANUAL?

The overall objective is to create via this manual a tool for “restarting tourism” to enable tourism stakeholders of the Mediterranean to develop and market their tourism products and destinations in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to the positioning of the Mediterranean as a leading and competitive sustainable tourism destination.

The manual aims to inspire and encourage public and private tourism destinations’ stakeholders in the MED destinations to adopt sustainable practices

The sustainable training manual capitalizes on the key outcomes in terms of sustainable tourism practices (tools, instruments, studies and good practices etc.), mainly taken from the 4 standard MED projects (MEDUSA, CROSSDEV, Med Pearls and MED GAIMS) and aims to inspire and encourage public and private tourism destinations’ stakeholders in the MED destinations to adopt sustainable practices. It is designed to serve as a training toolkit and guideline document.

HOW HAS THIS MANUAL BEEN ELABORATED?

The manual is the outcome of a complex research process into the latest “international state of the art publications” on sustainable tourism development and practices, and the publications and documents provided by the 4 standard Med projects, other Med projects, and project partners. Individual interviews with the projects coordinators of those projects helped the team to gather project-related information and to proceed in a more focused way.

Furthermore, good practices from the standard MED projects and elsewhere in the world were analysed, and the most suitable good practice examples were chosen for further elaboration. The manual has been elaborated in close cooperation and with the support of the contracting authority (the Catalan Tourism Agency) and the project coordinators of the 4 MED standard projects.

WHO IS THE TARGET GROUP FOR THIS MANUAL?

The manual primarily targets sustainable tourism trainers in the 5 project destinations: (1) Italy, (2) Spain, (3) Lebanon, (4) Jordan, and (5) Tunisia. But the manual is also designed as an inspiration and guideline document for:

- Destination management and marketing organizations
- Protected areas management organizations
- Community tourism projects and initiatives
- Tour operators
- All types of service providers in a destination
- Potential investors interested in sustainable tourism practices and interested in the development and marketing of innovative sustainable and market-oriented practices.

WHAT CAN BE FOUND IN THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANUAL?

The manual has 4 main thematic sections that can be used as theoretical content for training modules:

(1) Introductory Module (chapter 1)

This module gives a brief introduction to the RESTART MED! project approach and objectives and features a brief orientation regarding the four standard projects (MED GAIMS, CROSSDEV, MEDUSA and Med Pearls) and the ENI CBC MED programme. This module also introduces the concept and handling of the manual.

A section called **Tourism in the Mediterranean** gives a brief overview of the key facts of the Mediterranean as a tourism destination.

(2) Understanding Sustainable Tourism Development Module (chapter 2 and 3)

This module delivers the theoretical background to sustainable tourism development and provides a better understanding of principles, impact, and benefits of sustainable tourism

practices. It gives an overview of international trends in sustainable tourism development, including an overview of consumer trends regarding sustainability.

Additionally, this module introduces the policy framework of sustainable tourism on international level, European and regional level in the Mediterranean and highlights guiding standards, criteria, and publications.

The key section of this module presents different types of sustainable tourism, such as: (1) Sustainable adventure tourism; (2) ecotourism and tourism in protected areas; (3) slow tourism; (4) gamifying destinations; (5) cultural tourism and cultural routes (6) tourism experiences are featured and explained. Each concept will be further explained through practice examples.

Additionally, a brief and clear analysis of international and national certification schemes (Italy, Spain, Tunisia and Lebanon) will provide orientation and guidance on the field of application and the potential impact on companies and destinations.

(3) Module: Development of Sustainable Tourism Products and Destinations (chapter 4)

This module is **one the most relevant modules** of the training manual and shows the methodological approach for the design of sustainable tourism products and destinations.

Additionally, related practical tools and checklist are provided in the annex. To illustrate the theoretical content, a portfolio of well-selected and elaborated good practice examples from the Mediterranean Region and elsewhere in the world are indicated and presented in chapter 7.

(4) Module: Promotion, Marketing and Commercialization of Sustainable Tourism Products and Destinations (chapter 5)

This module concentrates on international trends, key principles and success stories of the promotion and commercialization of sustainable tourism destinations and products. Together with module 3, this module can be considered the most relevant module of the training manual.

Additionally, the most relevant sustainable tourism marketing channels such as promotion platforms and respective sustainable tourism fairs, conferences and market formats will be featured.

(5) Module: Conclusions and Recommendations (chapter 7)

This module summarizes (1) lessons learned from the case studies; (2) explains the existing and potential barriers that hinder the implementation of more sustainable tourism models, both at destination level and product level; and (3) provides a set of recommendations and recommended actions to encourage NTOs and DMOs, companies and service providers to move towards the implementation of sustainable practices within their destinations.

Additional practical information can be found as follows:

(6) Portfolio of Illustrated Good Practices for Product and Destination Development and Marketing (chapter 6)

Fostering sustainable tourism practices. This portfolio of well-selected, elaborated and illustrated good practice examples constitutes the practical core of the sustainable tourism manual.

A selection of good sustainable tourism practices features destination models, innovative sustainable tourism products and innovative sustainable tourism initiatives for tourism products and destinations. Additionally, a set of practice-oriented good practice promotion examples on how to successfully promote and commercialize sustainable tourism products and destinations will be selected and elaborated.

The focus lies on so-called soft adventure tourism activities, such as natural, adventure, cultural, slow, responsible, mountain tourism and sustainable destination models. The practices are selected based on the main assets and characteristics of the key destinations involved in the MED projects (Italy, Spain, Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon).

(7) Sustainability Tools and Checklists (annex).

Another key element of the manual will be a practical toolkit of practice-oriented checklists and templates supporting destinations’ stakeholders to create new innovative tourism products, develop their destinations in a more sustainable manner, and to assess existing tourism products in terms of their sustainability performance.

This toolbox will be organized in the annex and will comprise tools and instruments resulting from the MED projects.

HOW IS IT CONCEPTUALISED?

In each technical chapter you will be referred to relevant practice examples. This will be indicated as follows:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
|  | Check Practice Example No xx |
|---|-------------------------------------|

Besides the good practice examples, you will find background information, practical examples, checklists, practical tools, recommendations and tips. These will be indicated as follows:

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | Checklist & Practical Tool |
|---|---------------------------------------|

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Background Information & Facts |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
|  | Tip & Recommendation |
|---|---------------------------------|

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
|  | Consider & Remember |
|---|--------------------------------|

HOW CAN I USE THIS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANUAL?

Each user can select the topics, practice examples and technical information needed and thus tailor his/her own individual training programme.

WHERE DO I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION ON SPECIAL TOPICS?

In the Annex you will find a comprehensive overview of guiding documents, background literature and direct links to informative websites.

1.3. Tourism in the Mediterranean

THE MEDITERRANEAN – THE WORLD’S LEADING TOURISM DESTINATION.

Thanks to its unique combination of a mild climate, exceptional natural resources including **46,000 kilometres of coastline**; a rich history, culture and heritage; and its proximity to major source markets, the group of **29 countries** around the Mediterranean Sea is the world’s leading tourism destination in terms of both international and domestic tourists¹.

¹ UNWTO Tourism Trends Snapshot



Catalonia

The Mediterranean Basin, which extends across two million square kilometres and **34 countries**, east from Portugal to Jordan, and south from northern Italy to Cape Verde, is one of **34 biodiversity hotspots** identified around the globe, and one of Earth's most biologically rich yet threatened areas. In addition to its biological and geographic wonders, the region is a **treasure trove** of human history and culture and is home to some of the world's earliest civilizations².



In 2019, the Mediterranean region welcomed annually more than **400 million international tourist arrivals (ITAs)**, making it one of the most popular destinations in the world.

Tourism is a **major pillar** of **Mediterranean economies**, offering consistent employment (**11.5%** of total employment in 2014) and economic growth (15 % of regional GDP). In the Mediterranean basin, **tourism is vital for many countries**. If we take into account the economy of exclusively coastal areas, tourism represents over **70%** in terms of **Production Value** and Gross Value Added (GVA).³



With **75% growth** since 1995, the Mediterranean is expected to reach **626 million international tourist arrivals (ITA's)** by **2025** according to the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

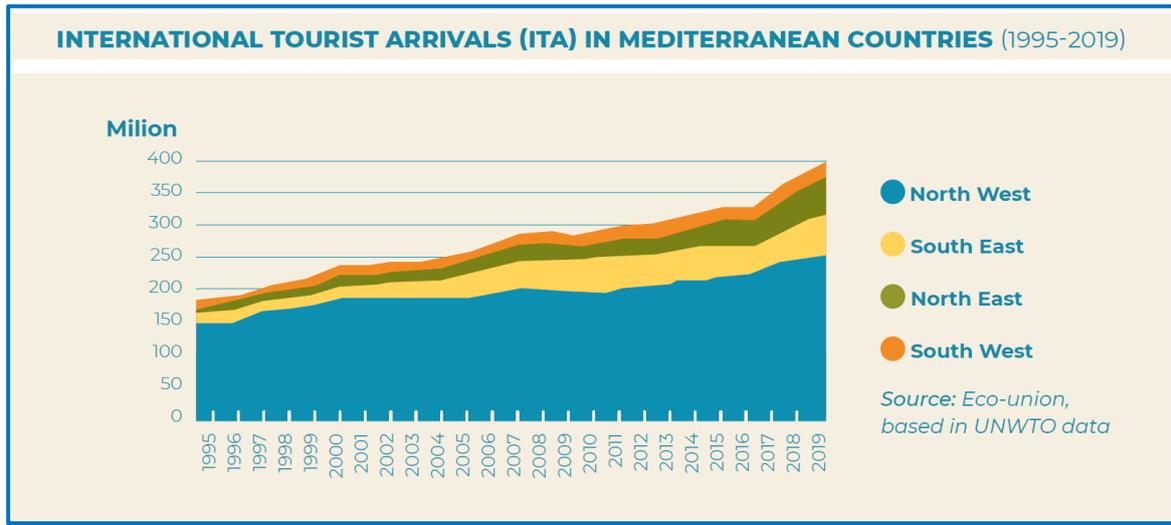
² Meet-manual-ecotourism

³ PLAN BLEU - UN Environment/MAP Regional Activity Centre – Paper 17 – Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean

The following chart illustrates tourism growth in the Mediterranean before the pandemic began.

Figure 1: International Tourist Arrivals (ITA) in Mediterranean Countries (1995-2019)

Source: Eco-union: The future of Mediterranean tourism in a (post) covid world. Eco-med briefing 01/21.



The **Mediterranean** has a **long tradition** of **trade, travel** and **cultural exchange**. The interaction of peoples and cultures from the lands surrounding the Mediterranean dates back thousands of years to the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Persia, Ancient Egypt, the state of Carthage and the Hellenistic kingdoms. The entire Mediterranean was once united under the rule of the Roman Empire in what was known as *Mare Nostrum*. In the Middle Ages, this ‘sea in the middle of lands’ witnessed the rise of other large states such as the Byzantine Empire, the Muslim Caliphates and the Ottoman Empire⁴.

THE TOURISM MODEL OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Mediterranean destinations have developed a strong tourism infrastructure and tourism offer with excellent connectivity by air and surface transport and high professionalism of services.

But most models of tourism in the Mediterranean area are based on mass tourism and take a fragmented view of the region as a sum of different markets. The so-called “**3 S tourism model**” (with S standing for **sea, sand** and **sun**), was a pre-dominant tourism model creating limited seasonal jobs and the Covid-19 crisis has further enforced the economic slowdown of local tourism industries in the destinations. **Uncontrolled spread of visitor flows** (“over-tourism”)

⁴ NWTO Tourism Trends Snapshot

resulting in growing pressure on natural resources and social impacts, along with a lack of knowledge about the competitiveness of sustainable tourism practices and innovative sustainable tourism, have all paved the way for a new and more sustainable tourism model for the Mediterranean.

A NEGATIVE LOOP BETWEEN MASS TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



Costa Brava in Catalonia

Source: eco-union; The future of Mediterranean Tourism in a(post) covid world.

The **Mediterranean Sea** hosts up to **9%** of the **world's marine biodiversity** of which around **30%** are **endemic species**. However, **51%** of **native marine fish species** are in **danger of extinction** and 4% are listed as under threat due to the loss of habitats from unsustainable exploitation of resources, pollution, climate change, eutrophication and invasive marine species. Yet **biodiversity is fundamental** to the **Mediterranean economy**, with benefits derived from ecosystem services estimated over €26 billion a year. Of these, more than **two-thirds** come from **tourism**.

The **negative environmental impacts** of **tourism** on the **coastal and maritime areas** originate mainly from the **construction and operations of built infrastructures** (resorts, residencies, ports and marinas, facilities, etc.) and from maritime or coastal recreational activities (nautical tourism, golf courses, water sports, etc.). These negative externalities consist of water and energy consumption, especially in water sensitive areas, where they lead to land change and artificialization of the coast, pollution, and **biodiversity loss**.

From the sustainable tourism expert's point of view, as a tourism destination, the Mediterranean is one of the most unique, authentic adventure, nature and culture destinations in the world and has much more to offer than "stand alone tourism" products.

As a tourism destination, the Mediterranean is one of the most unique and authentic adventure, nature, and culture destinations in the world.

THE PANDEMIC IMPACT ON THE MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM

All destinations around the globe were hit dramatically by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the UNWTO⁵, Europe was the second-hardest impacted region with a 66% decline in international tourist arrivals.

The following chart illustrates the development of tourist arrivals during the pandemic.

Figure 2: International Tourist Arrivals in MED

Source: Eco-union: The future of Mediterranean tourism in a (post) covid world. Eco-med briefing 01/21.



THE FUTURE OF MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM IN A POST-COVID WORLD

Mediterranean tourism, severely impacted by the travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is now at a crossroads. There is a **huge opportunity** for a paradigm shift in tourism - it can shift towards more sustainable tourism practices or, on the contrary, return to previous over-growth trends.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>According to the UNWTO, Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SME) and autonomous workers together make up about 80% of jobs in the tourism sector. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been 100 million jobs lost in tourism, and a gross economic loss estimated between US \$910 billion and \$1.2 trillion in exports.</p> |
|---|---|

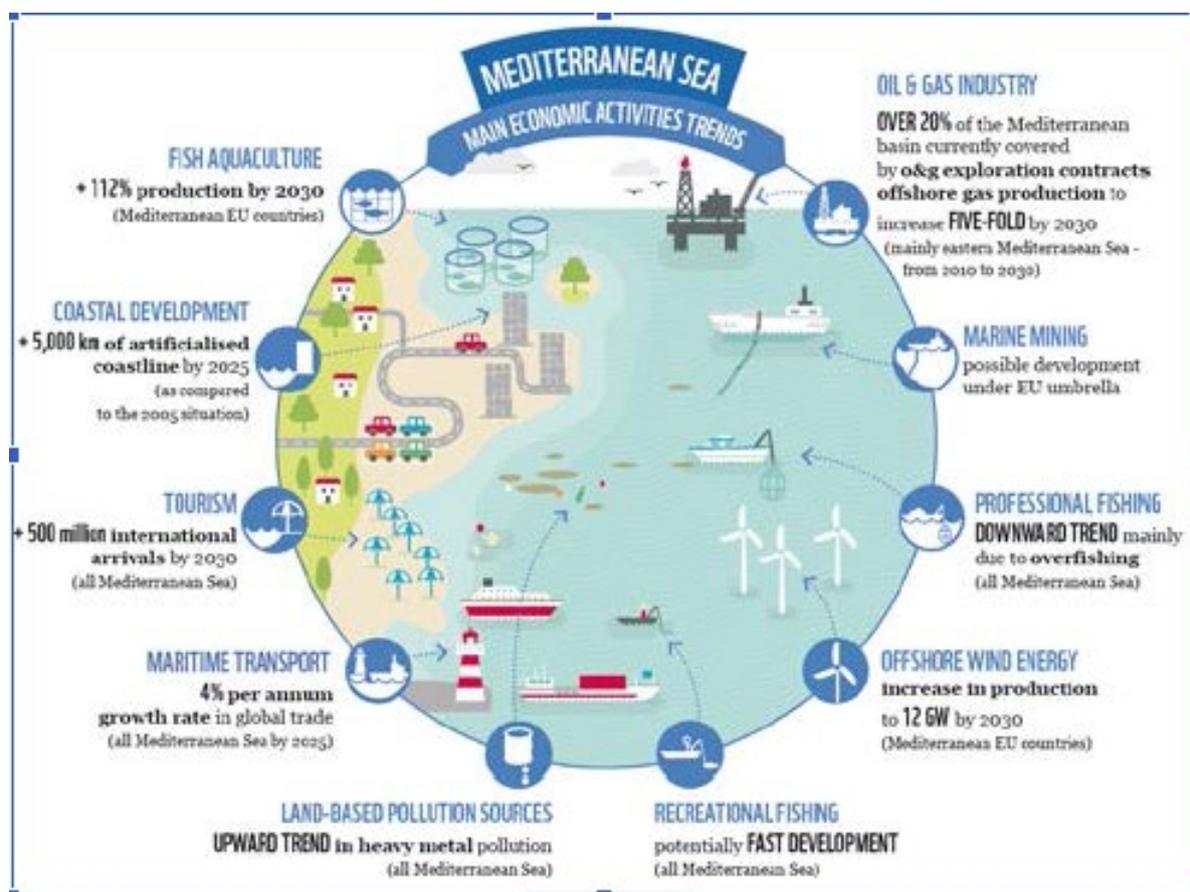
⁵ UNWTO, International Tourism and covid-19

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM: BACK TO MASS TOURISM OR FORWARD TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY?

Recover from the negative impacts of the pandemic unquestionably represents a serious challenge for the tourism sector. According to UNWTO, a return to the pre-pandemic level of 2019 is not expected until **3 to 4 years' time**, depending on the further development of the pandemic situation.

As it was already stated in the Plan Blue -Tourism⁶ the Mediterranean Sea needs a long-term vision for sustainable development to sustain the economy and the well-being of local communities. Sea related activities, including maritime transport, tourism, aquaculture, and many others, are predicted to expand substantially over the next 15 years. The figure below illustrates how this is creating growing competition for limited space and marine resources which will result in even greater pressure on an already stressed ecosystem:

Figure 3: Macro-economic trends in the Mediterranean; source: WWF 2015



However, there is also a chance to turn the negative impacts of the pandemic into a **huge opportunity** for the tourism in the **Mediterranean**, which could generate economic benefits for

⁶ Plan Blue -UN Environmental/Map Regional Activity Centre; paper 17- May 2017; Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean: State of Play and Strategic Directions

local communities, promote lesser-known regions, and conserve cultural and natural resources. What are needed are ambitious sustainable recovery plans and sustainable destination models and practices.

Ambitious sustainable recovery plans and sustainable destination models and practises are needed to reshape the Mediterranean into a more sustainable tourism destination.

CHAPTER 2 GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TRENDS

This chapter briefly outlines general international trends in tourism and trends that can be observed on the destination and product development level as well as post-covid trends that can be observed on the consumer's side.

2.1. International Trends

GENERAL TREND GOES TOWARDS: DIGITALISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Two major trends appear for the future of the tourism sector: **Digitalization** and **sustainability**.

Regarding **sustainable tourism**, **national** and **regional tourism agencies**, on their part, can promote emerging destinations, less over-crowded spots or nature-based locations, in order to better distribute travel flows, reduce environmental pressures and generate jobs in less-travelled areas or hinterlands. They can also integrate local communities in the tourism planning and policy process; support sustainable activities based on biodiversity or cultural values; and guarantee social rights, adequate salaries and training programs for workers.

Tour operators and **travel agencies** can on their side, reduce the carbon and water footprint of their supply chain, avoid food waste, eliminate single-use plastics, prioritize low-carbon transports, partner with local providers, and provide appropriate training and salaries to their workforce.⁷

On the **digitalization of tourism**, storytelling tools allow for valuable, personalized experiences that can shun mass tourism and favour the protection of the environment. Contactless technologies, biometrics and Artificial Intelligence are part of this trend. Moreover, digitalization, as well as reskilling and up-skilling tourism workers, can create better jobs. Additionally, digitalization has the power to better inform decision-making by sharing real-time information and best practices widely available: notably, the compliance of enterprises to environmental and social sustainability.

THE TRENDS IN PRODUCT AND DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Being Local as the Ultimate Adventure

As adventure travellers become more experienced, they are increasingly seeking to experience destinations as temporary locals. Many technology platforms exist to facilitate these personal connections. Some are global in scope, such as Airbnb experiences or EatWith.com.

Experiences

There has also been a notable increase in travellers seeking experiences that allow them to unplug.

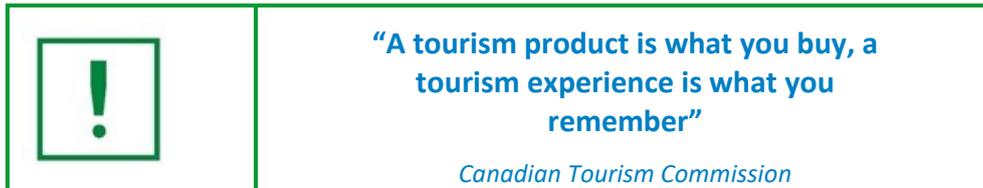
Today's demanding and discerning tourists don't want just to observe, they wish to experience places. This experiential tourism trend is relevant to off-season travellers who

⁷ Eco-union the future of Mediterranean Tourism in a (post) covid world.

choose this time of the year not only to lower costs but also to avoid crowds and increase chances for authentic interactions with locals.⁸

WHAT IS AN EXPERIENCE?

An ‘experience’ actively involves visitors so they can feel special and have the opportunity to engage with local culture and connect with a place and its people.



2.2. Post-Covid Tourism Trends

The corona crises have created a huge crisis on the international tourism market, but the pandemic has been called ‘the great equalizer,’ and in tourism perhaps there is some truth to that. In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, every destination in the world will be in the same position: working to restart tourism in a way that is safe, conscious of the new reality and new concerns of travellers but also delivers jobs to their communities.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

The coronavirus pandemic **demonstrated** the urgent need for a **sustainable leadership approach**—one that focuses on resiliency, resourcefulness, and efficiency. Now more than ever, destination managers, business owners and other sector leaders must demonstrate critical thinking skills and leadership approaches to survive the current crisis and prepare for recovery. Building a resilient and **healthy tourism industry** in a post-Covid-19 world will require coordination, planning and shared responsibility between many stakeholders: **destination managers, business owners, policy makers** and the **local community**.⁹

The need for **sustainable leadership**—focusing on **resiliency, resourcefulness, and efficiency**—is more urgent today than ever before. Designing new sustainability initiatives, economic relief plans and **marketing campaigns** will be an **opportunity** to increase **competitiveness** as well as long-term resilience.



⁸ MED GAIMS project (<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/med-gaims>)

⁹ Adventure Tourism Development Index ATDI 2020

While the pandemic is ongoing there are already strategies and initiatives to recover the tourism sector. On the political level:

Source: *MEDUSA project international benchmarking study on adventure tourism*

One planet vision for a responsible recovery of the tourism sector

“Sustainability as the new normal”: a vision for the future of tourism



- Builds on the **UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism** released by the Global Tourism Crisis Committee on 28 May 2020
- **Objective:** support tourism to **emerge stronger** and **more sustainable** from the COVID-19 crisis
- Vision recommends **six lines of action** to guide a responsible tourism recovery (1) public health (2) social inclusion (3) biodiversity conservation (4) climate action (5) circular economy and (6) governance and finance
- Vision invites governments **to integrate** such lines of action in COVID-19 recovery plans for tourism to rebuild better
- Encourages tourism businesses to **revisit operational processes** along the lines of action to **enhance competitiveness**
- To inspire governments and the private sector to recover better, they **invited stakeholders** which are leading by example to **share their initiatives** for a responsible recovery
- Website: <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sustainable-tourism/covid-19-responsible-recovery-tourism>



CONSUMER TRENDS TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY IN TRAVEL

Prior to 2020 and the start of the Covid-19 pandemic there was much evidence that consumers were becoming more aware of the diverse issues connected to sustainability in general.

The limitations that Covid-19 has placed on consumer choices has certainly applied to decision making on travel. According to the European Travel Commission, consumers in many of Europe’s key markets (particularly those in Asia and the Pacific and in Europe itself) have faced severe limits on how far they can travel, which borders they may cross for tourism and on which

transport routes are available. This has changed their travel horizons, mode of transport and the type of activities they might do when travelling.

The European Travel Commission conducted a survey in June 2020 with their European member NTOs who reported some early travel trends that indicated that travel choices were becoming more aligned with sustainable travel principles.

These trends included:

- **Greater concern around personal wellbeing**, air quality and humans' impact on the environment
- **A strong preference for travel domestically**, or to neighbouring countries with easy access by car
- **A desire to spend time in open spaces**, with fresh air, and private accommodation
- **A desire to avoid high-density accommodation and activities**, or mixing too closely with strangers (e.g., cruises or long-haul flying)
- **A preference for active holidays**, involving fitness activities or following hiking and cycling routes
- **A long-term increase in precautionary savings**, as well as falling consumption rates and increasing frugality among consumers
- **A desire for consumers to be seen** (through social media images) as safe and responsible, with travel plans scrutinized through the lens of what is safe, rather than what is popular
- **Further research also revealed a stronger awareness among travellers** of the impact of COVID-19 on small businesses and the livelihoods of local communities, leading to prioritised spending with SMEs in order to support the community

POSSIBLE GLOBAL TRENDS AND SCENARIOS

In a recent foresight study, four scenarios were explored relating to the evolution of Global Tourism in the coming 5-10 years, according to the national policies, business practices and citizens' behaviours. Each of the scenarios results in different evolutions of the tourism sector - Overgrowth, Collapse, Long Transition or Deep Transformation - providing diverse threats and/or opportunities for the tourism sector according to sustainability criteria and the length of the pandemic crisis. The quality of Policies, Strategies and Recovery Plans designed and implemented by the countries, as well as consumers' behaviours, industry evolution and local community engagement will therefore be critical for the future of global tourism¹⁰.

The following chart illustrates several possible scenarios:

¹⁰ eco-med briefing 01/21. eco-union (2021)

Figure 4: Four scenarios post pandemic tourism

Source: Eco-union: The future of Mediterranean tourism in a (post) covid world. Eco-med briefing 01/21.



CHAPTER 3 UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

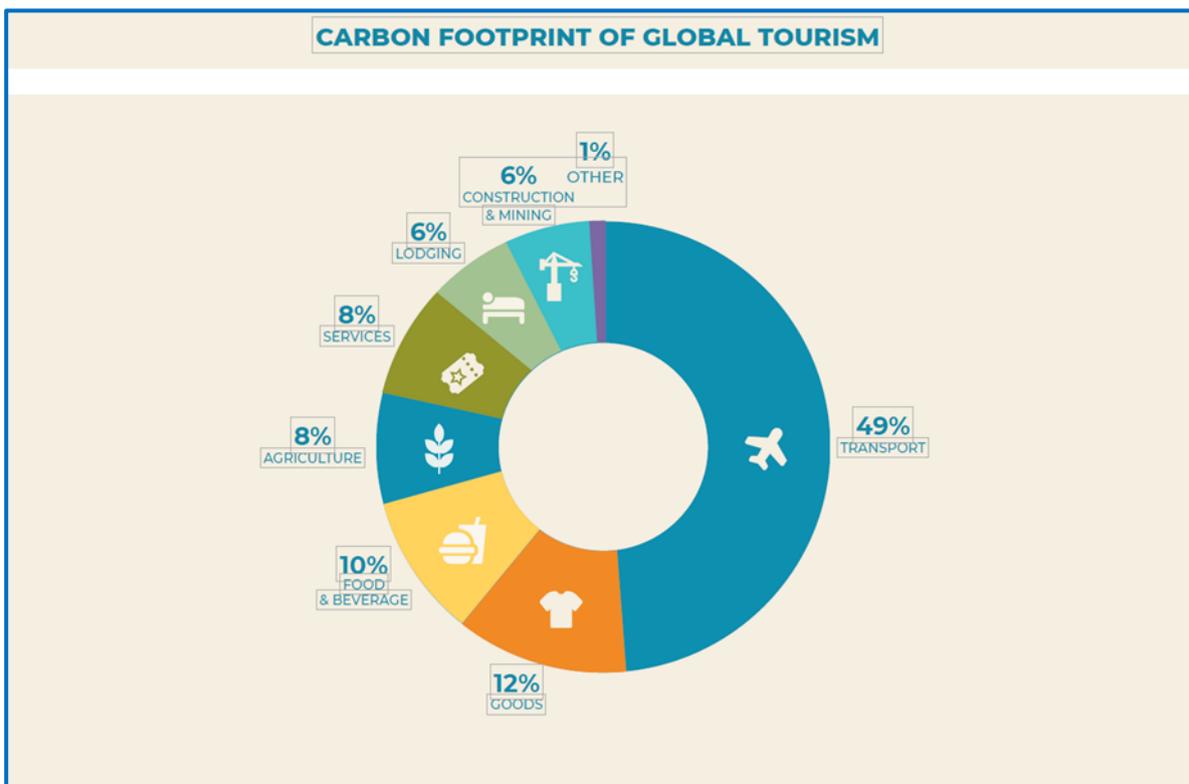
The Tourism sector was highly unsustainable before the pandemic started. According to an eco-union¹¹ publication, transport, including international travel, was the biggest emitting sector across the European Union, making up between 15 and 40% of countries' carbon emissions, with total transport emissions accounting for about 30% of all EU emissions. Maritime transportation represents nearly 4% of this figure.

On a global scale, carbon emissions from tourism are estimated as roughly 8% of total carbon emissions, mainly due to air transport, growing year after year.

The following chart illustrates the impact of global tourism (*source: eco-med briefing 01/21. eco-union (2021)*).

Figure 5: Carbon footprint of global tourism

Source: Eco-union: The future of Mediterranean tourism in a (post) covid world. Eco-med briefing 01/21.



But also, unsustainable tourism models like the so-called “**3 S tourism model**”, standing for sea, sand and sun, created only limited seasonal job and concentrated the tourism streams on the coastlines and creating over tourism in peak times and pressure on natural resources.

¹¹ eco-med briefing 01/21. eco-union (2021)

THESE ILLUSTRATE THE URGENT NEED FOR MORE SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM!

Environmental sustainability and specially climate-change can arguably be the most important aspect to take into account when we talk about the need to address the current way tourism is managed. Nonetheless, since sustainable tourism also takes into account cultural, economic and societal aspects of tourism, the following chapter illustrates the key principles of sustainable tourism. It does so by giving an overview of the frameworks of sustainable tourism on the International, European and the Mediterranean level.

Furthermore, an overview of sustainable certification schemes illustrates how certification schemes can contribute to a more sustainable performance in the tourism sector. The last section 3.4. introduces the main sustainable tourism types.

3.1. The Principles of Sustainable Tourism

The term sustainable tourism can be used in the broader context of sustainable tourism as an “umbrella” for different sustainable tourism types such as nature, rural, cultural and ecotourism.

What is sustainable tourism?

Expressed simply, UNWTO defines sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."

UNWTO further explains the concept of sustainable tourism as follows:¹²

Conceptual 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.

Thus, sustainable tourism should:

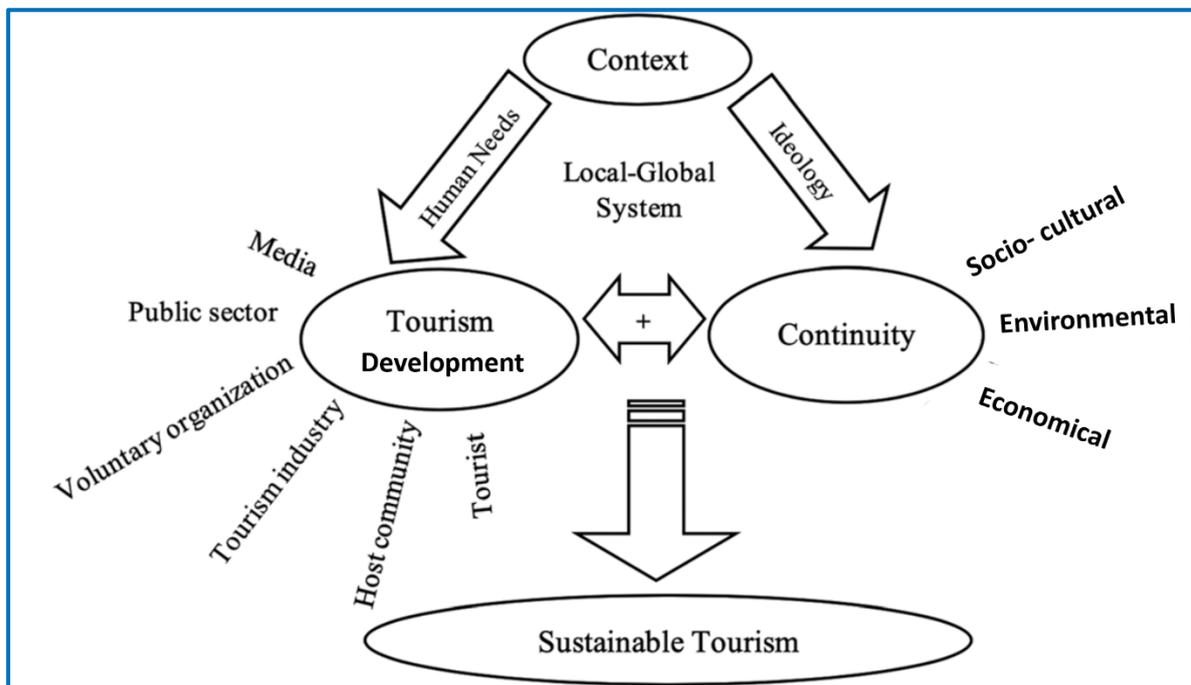
- (1) **Make optimal use of environmental resources** which constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
- (2) **Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities**, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

¹² <https://sdt.unwto.org/content/about-us-5>

- (3) **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 concept is very complex and includes numerous interactions as demonstrated in the following chart (Source: Adaptation from Zhang, S., & Chan, E. S. (2019) taking into account the UNWTO definition of sustainable tourism.)

Figure 6: Skeleton of sustainable tourism (adapted)



As authors S. Zhang and E. S. Chan (2019) discuss that sustainable tourism development should consider both, the **resources**, and **human needs**. Doing an adaptation of their approach, sustainable development wants to find a balance between the **development of tourism** on the one side, and environmental, socio-cultural and economic **stability** on the other side. However, each situation depends on the **context**, both global and local; for example, different societies will have different needs for development. The updated set of Sustainable Development Goals (view 3.2.1) also puts emphasis on continuity in relation to human development, in their regard human growth.

Since the idea of eternal growth in a finite planet is highly challenged (i.e. Kallis 2011)¹³, when talking about growth or tourism growth the reader should consider it as tourism development.

When considering tourism growth or development, a series of different actors are part of it. The figure above illustrates (on the left side) the stakeholders involved in tourism development.

Moreover, since tourism product are not a simply defined as material product, but rather an **experience which is co-created by “food, accommodation, transportation, entertainment, tour and commodities”**– a group of different sectors participate in tourism development. Furthermore, sustainable tourism depends not only on the continuity of our natural systems, but also on the continuity of entire social systems, thus besides environmental sustainability, importance also relies on economic sustainability and socio-cultural sustainability (Bansaal, 2005; Bramwell, 2015).

Finally, sustainable tourism may be interpreted as a resource-concerned tourism development ethic that considers all stakeholders' needs, such as those of the public sector, voluntary organizations, the media, the tourism industry, host communities, and tourists and that takes into account the continuity of the resources, particularly in the economic, environmental, social, and cultural aspects.

As illustrated, defining sustainable tourism can be challenging to pin down; nonetheless, three pillars are key: **environmental sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability and economic sustainability.**

To see how sustainable tourism materializes in practice, please check some **examples for good practices** in terms of the three sustainability pillars: environmental, social, and economic.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate strong environmental sustainability pillar.</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 9, 14, 26, 33</p> |
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate strong socio-cultural sustainability pillar.</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 23, 28, 34</p> |
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate strong economic sustainability pillar</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 13, 38, 51, 53</p> |

Furthermore, an example from adventure tourism below illustrates the concept of sustainability in adventure tourism.

Not every type of adventure tourism is really **sustainable** and brings **benefits** and economic growth to local communities without **harming the environment.**

This is further explained by the following two examples:

Source: MEDUSA project international benchmarking study on adventure tourism



1. EXAMPLE: Jeep Safari on Mallorca

- **Private jeep rental**, with international, not local partners
- Very few local guides
- Very limited to no involvement of local value chains
- No soft mobility: 4X4 jeeps
- Webpage: https://www.jeepsafari-mallorca.de/index_en.php

2. EXAMPLE: Peaks on the Balkans Trail



- Local tour operators involved in 3 countries
- About **30 local guides** trained and guiding
- At least **500 local businesses** (hosts, restaurants, local producers) benefitting from the Trail, **several abandoned mountain villages** revitalized
- **Soft mobility** (hiking, luggage transport by horses)
- For more details, view practice **No. 36**

3.2. The Policy Framework and Governance of Sustainable Tourism

This section outlines the global and regional institutional frameworks applicable to sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean¹⁴. In order to ensure consistency between Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean and existing international and regional frameworks, an overview of the main relevant international policies follows.

3.2.1. International Frameworks for Sustainable Tourism

(1) The UNWTO and UN Environment sustainable tourism principles

In their report “Making Tourism More Sustainable” published in 2005, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) identified twelve aims for sustainable tourism described below. It sets out a broad sustainable tourism agenda which is as much about delivering economic benefits to destinations and communities through competitive, viable tourism businesses and job creation, as about minimizing adverse impacts on natural and social ecosystems.

¹⁴ PLAN BLEU - UN Environment/MAP Regional Activity Centre – Paper 17 – Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean



UNWTO and UN Environment aim for sustainable tourism:

- (1) Economic viability: To ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to continue to prosper and deliver benefits in the long term.
- (2) Local prosperity: To maximize the contribution of tourism to the prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally.
- (3) Employment quality: To strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
- (4) Social equity: To seek widespread distribution of economic and social benefits from tourism throughout the recipient community, including improving opportunities, income and services available to the poor.
- (5) Visitor fulfilment: To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
- (6) Local control: To engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making about the management and future development of tourism in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders.
- (7) Community wellbeing: To maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.
- (8) Cultural richness: To respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctiveness of host communities.
- (9) Physical integrity: To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes, both urban and rural, and avoid the physical and visual degradation of the environment.
- (10) Biological diversity: To support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife, and minimize damage to them.
- (11) Resource efficiency: To minimize the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.
- (12) Environmental purity: To minimize the pollution of air, water and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors.¹⁵

(2) The Rio+20 Declaration

In 2012, renewed efforts to clarify environment and development interaction took place at the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UN CSD), and were expressed in The Future We Want Declaration, aimed at ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. It states (below) that well-managed tourism can contribute significantly to sustainable development, as it is inter-connected with other economic sectors, and demands:

- The support of sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building.
- The promotion of investments in sustainable tourism, especially for eco-tourism and cultural tourism SMEs.
- The drafting of guidelines and regulations for promoting and supporting sustainable tourism.

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Sustainable tourism in “<i>The Future We Want Declaration</i>”</p> <p>130. We emphasize that well-designed and managed tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, has close linkages to other sectors, and can create decent jobs and generate trade opportunities.</p> <p>131. We encourage the promotion of investment in sustainable tourism, including eco-tourism and cultural tourism, which may include creating small and medium sized enterprises and facilitating access to finance, including through microcredit initiatives for the poor, indigenous peoples and local communities.¹⁶</p> |
|--|--|

(3) The UNWTO 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP)

In 2014, UNWTO launched the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP) as part of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) endorsed at the Rio+20 summit. Its vision is “a tourism sector that has globally adopted sustainable consumption and production practices resulting in enhanced environmental and social outcomes and improved economic performance”. The objectives of the programme are presented below.

UNWTO and UN Environment 10 Years of Sustainable Programme: Objectives¹⁷

¹⁶ Source : UN CSD, 2012.

<http://icr.UN-WTO.org/en/content/rio20-future-we-want>

¹⁷Source : UNWTO and UN Environment, 2015

<http://sdt.UN-WTO.org/sustainable-tourism-10yfp>;

<http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/brochure10yfpstpenuupdated17oct2016.pdf>

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating SCP patterns in tourism related policies and frameworks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating SCP principles and objectives for sustainable development Monitoring policy implementation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration among stakeholders for the improvement of the tourism sector's SCP performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data sharing and exchange of information Fostering stakeholder collaboration and joint action Capacity building for stakeholders Establishing monitoring frameworks |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering the application of guidelines, instruments and technical solutions to prevent and mitigate tourism impacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing integrated tools for use at destinations and in tourism enterprises Research and action on priority issues of the tourism value chain Influencing consumer choice and behaviour |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing sustainable tourism investment and financing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting use of sustainable tourism investment and financing tools Enabling and mainstreaming sustainable tourism investment and finance |

(4) The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG'S)

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within this agenda, seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were defined. While all of them have an impact on the tourism sector, some SDGs are explicitly related to tourism (view below)¹⁸.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>SDGs related to tourism</p> <p>Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products: <p>Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 12.b: Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products: <p>Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target 14.7: By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.¹⁹ |
|---|--|

(5) The Glasgow Declaration – Climate Action in Tourism

¹⁸ <http://www.e-UN-WTO.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284417254>

¹⁹ Source: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – SDGs, 2015

The Glasgow Declaration is a catalyst for increased urgency about the need to accelerate climate action in tourism and to secure strong actions and commitment to support the global goals to halve emissions over the next decade and reach Net Zero emissions as soon as possible before 2050.

This declaration aims to lead and align climate action across tourism stakeholders, including government and institutional agencies; donors and financial institutions; international organizations; civil society; the private sector; and academia.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Check the full Glasgow Declaration here</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  </p> |
|---|--|

(6) The Barcelona Declaration “Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit”

The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 has built lasting legacies for cultural heritage through numerous key initiatives launched throughout the year. Among such legacies, the Barcelona Declaration “Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit” has **enabled closer collaboration between the tourism and cultural heritage sectors**²⁰.

According to European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism NECSTouR, the Barcelona Declaration "Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit" seeks to demonstrate what tourism and cultural heritage sectors can achieve by working more closely together, for the benefit of European citizens and cultural heritage as well as businesses, visitors and destinations. Moreover, it assumes the collective commitment of both sectors towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The declaration calls for the implementation of five key principles.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p style="text-align: center;">Key principles of the Barcelona Declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart and Inclusive Governance, inspired by the motto “What is good for residents is good for visitors” • Adding Value to the Sense of Place, which foregrounds local citizens as “Residents are part of the cultural / tourism experience and the best ambassadors of their territory and identity” • Using a Holistic Vision for Marketing and Preservation, which intends to help “Promote hidden cultural heritage while being prudent in promoting overexposed ones” • Balancing Place People and Business, which focuses on enabling “Better measure to better manage” |
|---|---|

²⁰ <https://www.europeanheritagedays.com>

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting People to People, highlighting “Citizens’ and visitors’ search for new and transformative experiences” |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Check the full Barcelona Declaration here</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> |
|---|--|

3.2.2. European Frameworks

At the European level, the leading legal and policy frameworks are the initiatives initiated and documents developed and published by the European Commission (EU).

According to the Plan Blue – Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean publication²¹, the most relevant steps that have been taken on European level are the following:

(1) The European Commission

In 2010, the Ministers of Tourism of EU countries adopted a declaration “Towards a socially responsible tourism model” (Madrid Declaration, 15 April 2010). In this declaration, some sustainability-related suggestions are proposed, as follows:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Madrid Declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstreaming tourism into Community policies and ensuring adequate coordination of the various policy initiatives which may impact tourism; • Facilitating access to holidays to groups with impaired mobility or those who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged; • Raising awareness about the importance of innovation, research and information and communication technologies for the competitiveness of the EU tourism industry; |
|---|--|

²¹ Plan Blue -UN Environmental/Map Regional Activity Centre; paper 17- May 2017; Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean: State of Play and Strategic Directions

- **Mainstreaming sustainability** into sectors related to tourism (transport, solid waste, water treatment, among others).
- For more information, check [here!](#)**

Another leading document that has been published by the EC is the “European Strategy for more growth and jobs in coastal and maritime tourism”. This document focused on the challenges to be addressed and proposed a strategy to enhance the sector’s sustainability and competitiveness.

This strategy focuses on the following:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Coastline of Puglia</i></p>  <p><i>Source: EU 2014</i> For more information check here!</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">European strategy in coastal and maritime tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing environmental pressures by promoting ecotourism, using the EMAS and Ecolabel indicators • Promoting implementation of the Protocol to the Barcelona Convention on Integrated Coastal Management and Maritime Spatial Planning and Green Infrastructure; • Promoting strategies on waste prevention, management and marine litter to support sustainable coastal and maritime tourism. • Promoting an innovative, sustainable and high-quality offer by: supporting new products, promoting attractiveness and accessibility of coastal and marine archaeology, maritime heritage, underwater tourism, eno-gastronomic activities; • Developing European Tourism Quality principles, aiming to increase consumer security and confidence in tourism services. • Insularity and remoteness - seeing opportunities in geographical constraints by: • Encouraging the diversification and integration of coastal and inland attractors, including through transnational thematic itineraries like cultural, religious or ancient trade routes. |
|--|---|

(2) The Tourism Sector in Europe

Published to coincide with the European Tourism Day in 2015, the “Tourism for Growth and Jobs Manifesto” highlights the key policy priorities for the tourism sector, including industry,

business and environmental associations, on topics ranging from skills and qualifications to the sustainability and competitiveness of Europe's tourism sector²².



Source: *Tourism for Growth and Jobs Manifesto, 2015*
For more information check [here!](#)

Tourism Growth and Jobs Manifesto

- **Strategic planning** for an environmentally sustainable tourism industry (including systems, technology and infrastructure) in order to contribute to climate protection and sustainable job creation;
- **Ensure EU financial support** for long and mid-term tourism initiatives on the European level covering the whole value chain;
- **Identify and support good practice** in capacity and destination management so (...) the quality of the visitors' experience is safeguarded;
- **Sustain employment** in the tourism sector and promote fair working conditions for all employees, including key sub-sectors where recruitment and retention remain a challenge.

(3) The European Initiative of Sustainable Tourism for Development ²³

In 2013, the Development and Cooperation Agency of the European Commission published a paper co-written with the UNWTO on "Sustainable Tourism for Development" aimed at enhancing the common understanding and commitment of the EU and development assistance agencies around the world in support of sustainable tourism. Five pillars and seventeen sub-pillars were defined covering key topics and issues to be promoted by sustainable tourism policies.²⁴

²³ Plan Blue -UN Environmental/Map Regional Activity Centre; paper 17- May 2017; Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean: State of Play and Strategic Directions

²⁴ Plan Blue -UN Environmental/Map Regional Activity Centre; paper 17- May 2017; Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean: State of Play and Strategic Directions

| | |
|--|---|
|  | <p>For more information, check the UNWTO Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook (2013) here</p> |
|  | |

(4) The European Charter for Protected Areas

Created to increase awareness and support for Europe’s protected areas and to improve the sustainable development and management of tourism in protected areas, taking account of the needs of the environment, local residents, local businesses and visitors²⁵.

| | |
|--|---|
|  <p>Box 1</p> <p>The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST)</p> <p>Created to increase awareness and support for Europe’s protected areas and to improve the sustainable development and management of tourism in protected areas, taking account of the needs of the environment, local residents, local businesses and visitors.</p> <p><small>Spain, Catalonia - Delta de l'Ebre © DestiMED project</small></p> | <p>The principles of the charter are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 To involve all those implicated by tourism in and around the protected area in its development and management. 2 To prepare and implement a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan for the protected area. 3 To protect and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage, for and through tourism, and to protect it from excessive tourism development. 4 To provide all visitors with a high-quality experience in all aspects of their visit. 5 To communicate effectively to visitors about the special qualities of the area. 6 To encourage specific tourism products which enable discovery and understanding of the area. 7 To increase knowledge of the protected area and sustainability issues amongst all those involved in tourism. 8 To ensure that tourism supports and does not reduce the quality of life of local residents. 9 To increase benefits from tourism to the local economy. 10 To monitor and influence visitor flows to reduce negative impacts. <p>For more information: www.european-charter.org/home</p> |
|--|---|

Source: *MEET Manual*²⁶
For information, check [here](#)

25 &

26 Meet manual - a guide to planning and promoting ecotourism activities

3.2.3. Mediterranean Frameworks

A GREEN AND BLUE RECOVERY FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN²⁷

The European Commission was already on track to establishing a **Green New Deal** path for the European Union before the coronavirus pandemic, with the aim of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. The recovery and stimulus measures include €225 billion (US\$190 billion) in recovery funds and €322 billion (US\$280 billion) for the 2021–2027 budget. Additionally, the European Commission has communicated its **Farm to Fork strategy**, which aims at reforming the food system sustainably. It includes clauses on the reduction of the use of fertilizers and pesticides, which are direct causes of water and marine pollution in the tourism sector. The European Parliament is also promoting an **Ocean Fund** aimed at making ships more energy efficient and supporting green infrastructure implementation in the maritime sector, to be enacted in the **2023 to 2030** period, providing up to **€2.5 billion** (\$2.7 billion) over the next five years.

AT THE MEDITERRANEAN LEVEL

At the Mediterranean level, the **Mediterranean Action Plan** (UNEP/MAP) of the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea, ratified by 22 Mediterranean riparian countries, endorsed in 2016 a **Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)**²⁸. This regional strategy integrates sustainable tourism as a strategic objective to be reached by 2025. However, the rather limited mandate of the Barcelona Convention towards environmental issues impedes significant progress on this cross-sectorial issue. A proposal to develop a **Regional Sustainable Tourism Framework** has not been advanced yet, although the tourism sector is included in the **Sustainable Consumption and Production Regional Action Plan** (SCP RAP) to be implemented by Southern Mediterranean country by 2026, with rather limited impact so far.

Among other regional initiatives targeting the tourism sector, the European Union (EU) has launched the **WestMed**²⁹ initiative to promote a more sustainable blue economy in Western Mediterranean countries. It integrates coastal and marine tourism, sharing Southern and Northern best practices such as the **Interreg Med Tourism project**. The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is operating the **Blue Economy platform**³⁰ and organizing on a regular basis a regional stakeholders conference to engage policy and decision makers as well as practitioners and researchers.

²⁷ eco-med briefing 01/21. eco-union (2021)

²⁸ UNEP/MAP (2016). Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-25

²⁹ www.westmed-initiative.eu.

³⁰ www.westmed-initiative.eu.

3.3.Sustainable Tourism Certification Schemes

Another valid instrument to enhance the sustainability performance of destinations, services or tourism related products are **Sustainable Tourism Certification** schemes. There are international sustainable tourism schemes applying the same set of criteria to all destinations worldwide as well as regional, national or local certification schemes that are tailored to the individual needs of destinations.

Certifications can be awarded by international organisations, governments or commercial entities which evaluate whether the company or individual guide is adhering to a particular standard or regulation.

The following overview of international certification schemes will give orientation and guidance on a national level:

Table 1: International certification schemes for sustainable tourism

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>INTERNATIONAL ADVENTURE TRAVEL GUIDE QUALIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE STANDARD (ATGS)– a voluntary guideline for industry. It can be used by governments, destination managers, and company owners when evaluating the quality and performance of their own guides and defining appropriate training programs. ATGS is not enforced or regulated by the ATTA or any other organization.</p> <p>Sustainability: -</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://learn.adventuretravel.biz/guide-standard</p> |
|  | <p>BIOSPHERE RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STANDARD - promotes Sustainable Development by measuring the contribution of tourism to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations and the indications of the Paris Agreement against Climate Change; for destinations, accommodations, and other tourism services.</p> <p>Sustainability: Economy, environment, social issues</p> <p>Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: www.biospheretourism.com</p> |
|  | <p>BLUE FLAG - is one of the world’s most recognised voluntary awards for beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating tourism operators.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, Social Issues</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: www.blueflag.global</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>CITTA SLOW – a label for small and medium-sized towns that aims to preserve the spirit of community and to transmit knowledge to the new generations to make them aware of their cultural heritage.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social Issues, cultural heritage, local economy</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: www.cittaslow.org</p> |
|  | <p>EARTH CHECK - certifies hotels, activities, attractions, restaurants, transport & mobility services and destinations.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social issues, economy, cultural heritage</p> <p>Global recognition: GSTC recognized standards</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: www.earthcheck.org</p> |
|  | <p>EMAS. Eco-Management and Audit Scheme - an environmental management tool created by the European Commission. It is based on a voluntary basis and applicable for all economic and service sectors worldwide.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index_en.htm</p> |
|  | <p>EU ECOLABEL - in the field of tourism, the official European Union label is awarded to accommodation establishments and campsites. The verification process and assignment of the certificate is performed by the national partner organisations, e.g., environmental ministries.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/</p> |
|  | <p>EUROPEAN ECOTOURISM LABELING STANDARD (EETLS) is a baseline quality standard developed for European Ecotourism.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment</p> <p>Global recognition: GSTC recognized</p> <p>Scope: Europe-wide</p> <p>Website: www.ecotourism-network.eu/en-ecotourism-standard/en-the-euro-eco-label-stand</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURIM IN PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS (ECST) - a voluntary instrument aiming to promote the development of sustainable tourism in protected natural areas of Europe, a tool for both the accredited areas and the participating public and private companies of the areas.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, Social</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: Europe-wide</p> <p>Website: www.europarc.org</p> |
|  | <p>EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABEL- a label for the cultural sites that are the milestones in the creation of today's Europe; sites that celebrate and symbolise European ideals, values, history, and integration.</p> <p>Sustainability: Cultural heritage</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: Europe-wide</p> <p>Website: https://culture.ec.europa.eu/cultural-heritage/initiatives-and-success-stories/european-heritage-label-sites</p> |
|  | <p>EUROPEAN WILDERNESS QUALTY STANDARD 2.0- a standard establishes minimum levels for identifying the areas of wilderness, and at the same time promoting them.</p> <p>Sustainability: Natural heritage, Environment, Biodiversity</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: Europe-wide</p> <p>Website: https://wilderness-society.org/european-wilderness-definition/european-wilderness-quality-standard-audit-system/</p> |
|  | <p>GREEN DESTINATIONS STANDARD - an assessment & reporting system to evaluate, monitor and improve the quality and the sustainability of all destination types, e.g., towns, cities, protected areas, ecotourism, regional and country destinations. Used in Awards programs by National Tourism Board Slovenia, Quality Coast, Sustainable Top 100, ITB Top 100 Awards, and for GSTC-Accredited GD Certification.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social issues, cultural heritage, economy</p> <p>Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://greendestinations.org/programs-and-services/awards-certification/</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>GREEN GLOBE - certifies businesses, conference centers, hotels, resorts and attractions. Sustainability: Economy, environment, cultural heritage, social issues Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard Scope: International Website: www.greenglobe.com</p> |
|  | <p>GREEN GROWTH 2050 STANDARD – solution for tourism and travel businesses to assess their overall sustainability and CSR performance. Sustainability: Economy, environment, cultural heritage, social issues Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard Scope: International Website: www.greengrowth2050.com</p> |
|  | <p>GREEN KEY - an eco-label awarded to leisure infrastructure, such as hotels, hostels, campsites, holiday parks, small accommodations, conference centres, restaurants, and attractions. Sustainability: Environment Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard for hotels Scope: International Website: www.greenkey.global</p> |
|  | <p>GREEN KEY GLOBAL- an environmental certification body. It offers sustainability programmes for the lodging industry. Sustainability: Environment Global recognition: GSTC recognised standard for hotels Scope: International Website: http://www.greenkeyglobal.com/</p> |
|  | <p>GREEN STEP SUSTAINABLE TOURISM - this standard is part of organization’s broader Sustainable Tourism 2030 initiative, which provides programs and services for destinations, tourism businesses, and accommodation providers. Sustainability: Management, social, economic, natural, cultural, and environmental Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard Scope: International Website: https://greensteptourism.com/</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>GREEN TOURISM ACTIVE - a sustainability assessment and certification organisation with a focus on sustainable travel and tourism partners and destinations.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, socio-economic, cultural, conservation</p> <p>Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://www.gt-active.org/</p> |
|  | <p>GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COUNCIL GSTC - GSTC is involved in Certification of businesses, Accreditation of certification bodies, and Recognition of standards.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social issues, cultural heritage, economy, businesses</p> <p>Global recognition: GSTC</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/accreditation-certification-recognition/</p> |
|  | <p>GOOD TRAVEL SEAL - the ecolabel based upon two pillars: (1) sustainability and (2) health & safety. This certification focuses on practical requirements that are easy to manage for smaller tourism businesses. The Virus-Aware certification as a free add-on provides an additional element of health and safety protection to a business.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social issues, health & safety</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://goodtravel.guide/good-travel-seal/</p> |
|  | <p>ISO 21101:2014 - a certification that certifies the quality of the system for managing the safety for service providers of adventure tourism activities.</p> <p>Sustainability: Safety</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:21101:ed-1:v1:en</p> |
|  | <p>IUCN GREEN LIST OF PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS – a certification for protected and conserved areas. Focus on effective management that goes in line with sustainable principles.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social, economic, cultural</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/our-work/iucn-green-list-protected-and-conserved-areas</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>MOUNTAIN IDEAL DESTINATION STANDARD - outlines what it means to be a sustainable mountain resort destination; it has been developed to address sustainability in mountain environments that include winter and summer activities.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, social issues, cultural heritage, economy Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard Scope: International Website: https://sustainabletravel.org/mountain-destination-standard/</p> |
|  | <p>STARLIGHT TOURIST DESTINATION – a certification system to recognise “locations with ideal conditions for observing the stars and where light pollution is controlled. This makes them logical destinations for tourism based on the appreciation of the sky as part of the natural world.”</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment Global recognition: - Scope: International Website: https://fundacionstarlight.org/</p> |
|  | <p>TRAVELIFE - the Travelife label uses different standards and verification procedures for accommodations and tour operators and travel agencies.</p> <p>Sustainability: Economy, social issues, environment, cultural heritage Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard Scope: International Website: www.travelife.org</p> |
|  | <p>TOURCERT – certification scheme for tourism companies (tour operators, hotels, and other companies) and destinations.</p> <p>Sustainability: Economy, environment, cultural heritage, social issues Global recognition: GSTC recognized standard for the industry Scope: Europe and Latin America Website: https://www.tourcert.org/en/</p> |
|  | <p>UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVE – a designation by UNESCO’s Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme since early 1970s; focus on the conservation of biological and cultural diversity as well as socioeconomic development.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, Social, Economy, Cultural Global recognition: - Scope: International Website: https://en.unesco.org/biosphere</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
|  <p>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</p> <p>UNESCO Global Geoparks</p> | <p>UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS LABEL – from International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, started in 2015. It focuses on raising awareness about biodiversity and promoting best practices for protection, education, and tourism from the perspective of sustainable development.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, Social, Economy, Cultural</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: www.europeangeoparks.org</p> |
|  <p>PATRIMONIO MUNDIAL · WORLD HERITAGE · PATRIMOINE MONDIAL</p> | <p>UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LIST – a list of the natural, cultural, and mixed heritage sites of outstanding universal value according to criteria defined by UNESCO.</p> <p>Sustainability: Cultural heritage, natural heritage</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://whc.unesco.org/</p> |
|  <p>UNWTO World Tourism Organization</p> | <p>UNWTO QUEST CERTIFICATION FOR DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS – a quality certification for DMOs that endorses and enhances excellence in the Organizations’ leadership, execution, and governance.</p> <p>Sustainability: Management</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://www.unwto.org/UNWTO-quest</p> |
|  <p>QualityCoast</p> | <p>QUALITY COAST – a label for more urban destinations with a seaside and beach.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment, Social, Economy, Cultural</p> <p>Global recognition: -</p> <p>Scope: International</p> <p>Website: https://greendestinations.org/programs-and-services/awards-certification/</p> |

International certification schemes and awards can significantly contribute to improving the sustainability performance of a destination or an entire business sector in a destination.

CHECK GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES FOR MORE INFORMATION!

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating the concept of international certification</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 1, 34</p> |
|---|--|

The following overview of regional, national and local certification schemes will provide orientation on what type of sustainable tourism certification is available in the project countries Italy, Spain, Tunisia and Lebanon:

Table 2: Regional, national and local certification schemes for sustainable tourism

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>LEGAMBIENTE TURISMO - the environmental association Legambiente works closely with Italian tourist destinations and coordinates the criteria with them. Includes certified hotels, campsites, guesthouses, restaurants, tour operators and agro-tourism farms. Sustainability: Economy, environment, social issues Global recognition: - Scope: Italy Website: www.legambienteturismo.it</p> |
|  | <p>BANDIERA ARANCIONE – a label awarded to small towns for their excellency in tourism, hospitality, and the environment. Sustainability: Environment, social issues, cultural heritage, economy Global recognition: - Scope: Italy Website: www.bandierearancioni.it</p> |
|  | <p>BORGHI AUTENTICI D'ITALIA – a label for Italian destinations that follow sustainable, fair, and local development model with respect to places, people, and local identities. Sustainability: Environment, social issues, cultural heritage, economy Global recognition: - Scope: Italy Website: www.borghiautenticiditalia.it</p> |
|  | <p>I BORGHI PIU BELLI D'ITALIA – a label that promotes small Italian towns with rich cultural heritage and matching tourism offer. Sustainability: Cultural heritage Global recognition: - Scope: Italy Website: https://borghipiubelliditalia.it</p> |
|  | <p>CATALAN COUNCIL FOR AGROECOLOGICAL PRODUCTION (CCPAE) – an eco-label that controls and certifies the manufacture, production, packaging, and marketing of agricultural and food products from Catalonia. Sustainability: - Global recognition: - Scope: Catalonia (Spain) Website: http://pae.gencat.cat/ca/index.html</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Environmental Quality Guarantee (DGCA) - is an eco-labelling system for official and private products and services, created by the Government of Catalonia in 1994. Currently over fifty Catalan tourism establishments have this label (hotels, campsites, rural tourism accommodations and youth facilities).</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment Global recognition: - Scope: Catalonia (Spain) Website: https://cutt.ly/1AjVSmn</p> |
|  | <p>THE PEACEFUL PLACES AND DARK SKIES ENVIRONMENTAL SEAL- a system, created by the Government of Catalonia, that recognises peaceful areas where visitors can enjoy the sounds of nature and appreciate the stargazing value of natural dark skies.</p> <p>Sustainability: Environment Global recognition: - Scope: Catalonia (Spain) Website: https://cutt.ly/9AjNOPN</p> |
|  | <p>Q de CALIDAD TURISTICA ESPANOLA - any tourist company can apply for the Q mark for Spanish Tourist Quality, a quality mark awarded by the Institute for Spanish Tourist Quality (ICTE). Also includes protected areas.</p> <p>Sustainability: - Global recognition: - Scope: Spain Website: https://www.calidadturistica.es</p> |
|  | <p>WILD TUNISIA – an ecolabel awarded to products and services that do not harm the environment, launched by WWF Tunisia in 2020. The beneficiaries of the ecolabel include producers of honey, essential oils, and providers of ecotourism services in and around Tunisia's protected areas and natural sites of high ecological value.</p> <p>Sustainability: - Global recognition: - Scope: Tunisia Website: https://www.wwf.tn/nos_projets/wild_tunisia/ ; https://wildtunisia.org/</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>TUNISIAN ECOLABEL – the Tunisian Ecolabel programme covers tourist accommodation services and textile products; it is being extended to other product ranges. Sustainability: Environment Global recognition: - Scope: Tunisia Website: http://www.citet.nat.tn/Portail/ecolabel.aspx</p> |
|  | <p>USEIL – Union of Sustainable and Ecotourism Institutions in Lebanon, an organization founded by a group of responsible tourism experts and ecotour operators. They provide trainings and certifications; currently a recognized accreditation is still missing, but that is foreseen in the plans of the organization. Sustainability: - Global recognition: - Scope: Lebanon Website: https://www.facebook.com/Union-of-Sustainable-and-Ecotourism-Institutions-in-Lebanon-USEIL-101870171516673/</p> |

National, regional or local certification schemes can directly focus on the individual and specific framework conditions in the destination and can remarkably improve the sustainable performance of the destination and service providers.

Certifications can furthermore help SME’s to distinguish themselves from competitors and to increase their credibility.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate the concept of national certifications</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 1, 2, 31, 32</p> |
|---|--|

3.4.Sustainable Tourism Types

This chapter features and illustrates the different types of sustainable tourism, such as: (1) Sustainable adventure tourism; (2) ecotourism and tourism in protected areas; (3) slow tourism; (4) gamifying destinations; (5) cultural tourism and cultural routes and (6) creative tourism experiences. Each type will be further explained through practice examples.

3.4.1. Sustainable Adventure Tourism

The overall objective of the MEDUSA project is to develop a competitive form of **Adventure Tourism (AT)** in the Mediterranean which is based on environmental and economic sustainability values, and which will create more business opportunities and new jobs for local communities.

Tourism is also growing faster than the global economy and other industries such as manufacturing, retail, and financial and business sectors³¹, and **Adventure Tourism** is one of the fastest growing sectors within the tourism sector, attracting high value customers, supporting local economies and encouraging sustainable practices.³²

DEFINITION OF ADVENTURE TRAVEL

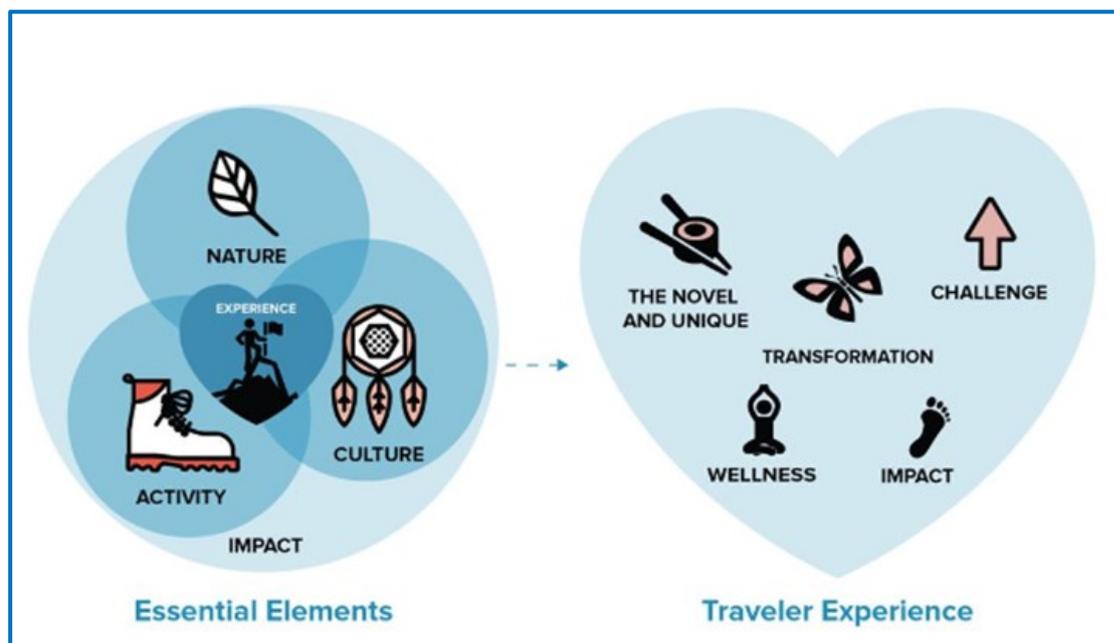
As defined by the **ATTA**, adventure travel describes trips that provide experiences (both mental and physical) to places which are novel or unique to the traveller; emphasize the natural environment; and provide challenges through experiences of culture, activities that promote physical health, and excitement/fun. (Source: North American Adventure Travellers).

Adventure tourism contains **essential** elements that make up the entire experience (nature, **activity**, and **culture**), which are used by the travel trade to understand whether a specific product can be classified as ‘**adventure travel**’. These elements come together to deliver specific types of experiences for travellers who are motivated by goals such as transformation, challenge and wellness.

The following chart illustrates the key elements of adventure tourism (Source: ATTA):

Figure 7: Adventure tourism chart

Source: MEDUSA project international benchmarking study on adventure tourism



³¹ WTTC TRAVEL & TOURISM GLOBAL ECONOMIC IMPACT & ISSUES 2018

³² UNWTO Global Report on Adventure Tourism

The left side of the chart above illustrates the **essential components** of an **adventure travel** trip: **nature, culture** and **activity**. From the **traveller's perspective** (on the right side of the graphic), research indicates that adventure travel is motivated by a variety of longings and desires that influence how **people consume** and emotionally process their trip. Travellers are seeking **mental** and **physical wellness**, novel and unique experiences, challenge—whether **physical** or **cultural**—and often, ultimately: transformation. Travellers are also keenly aware of their impact and have a desire to have a positive impact on the environment and communities.

According to the UNWTO³³, there are two main categories of adventure tourism:

- **Hard** adventure and
- **Soft** adventure

The easiest way to identify whether the tourism is hard or soft adventure is by its primary activity. Both hard and soft adventure are highly lucrative segments.

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Soft tourism activities are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit!</p> |
|--|--|

This is demonstrated in these two practical examples from the UNWTO:

The **cost** of just the **permit to reach the summit** Mt. Everest, a **hard adventure activity**, is estimated to be **USD 11,000** per person. When **all** of the other costs are added in, such as training, gear, airfare, tour guides, etc., the average total cost to summit Mt. Everest will be about **USD 48,000** per person.

Commercial adventure travel **tour operators** offering **soft adventure** activities to the same area charged an average of **USD 308** per day. With an average trip of **8.8 days**, the average **total cost** of a soft adventure trip was **USD 2710** per person, not including flights.

WHAT DOES THE SOFT ADVENTURE TOURIST LOOK FOR³⁴?

The following chart illustrates the trending Motivations for Adventure Travel (*Source: ATTA Snapshot -Trends Report-2021*).

Figure 8: Trending motivations for adventure travel

Source: MEDUSA project – business planning workshop

³³ UNWTO-AM report: Volume nine

³⁴ The guidelines for creating and narrating the slow adventure product

Trending Motivations for Adventure Travel



Source: *The guidelines for creating and narrating the slow adventure product, June 2018*

SILENCE – QUIET, SPACE AND TIME

- A **feeling of escapism** is a highly important motive for the slow adventurer and when it is achieved in nature, it prompts a strong sense of de-stressing in the individual.
- The **slow adventurer believes** in the **importance** of making time to spend in nature and this time is most often activity driven. Nature is already a significant element in the slow adventurer's life and in many cases, is in contrast to the tasks undertaken in their working lives. The opportunity to spend further time in nature is desirable. Seeking a work-life balance is important and nature is viewed as a re-energizer.
- Linked to this, **slow adventure** opens up opportunities for 'switching off the clock'. Mid-way through the crossing on a sea kayaking trip a whale broke the surface some distance in front of the group. It brought them into a new way of being here – they were now operating on 'whale time': the group was now guided by the whale.

COMMUNITIES AND BELONGING

- Self-time in nature and shared time with friends in nature are important motives. Slow adventurers enjoy being out in nature's elements and enjoy the associated exercise and fitness demands. A sense of connectedness and heritage is important, particularly in terms of place.
- The slow adventurer has regular experiences of nature's power and beauty. They have a willingness to share such experiences with others, and these help strengthen bonds.
- A sense of fun and freedom in the outdoors is important.
- Positive emotions such as joy, peacefulness and thankfulness are expressed in terms of the natural beauty of the landscape, and these emotions are intensified when experienced through adventure and activities in the outdoors. Mental and bodily strength are important

components for the slow adventurer and pain in the form of exhaustion or cold for example, may also be experienced at times.

UNCERTAINTY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Slow adventure clients, and consumer trends in general, point to a desire for bespoke experiences which can change according to opportunity and situation.
- Particular concerns for the slow adventurer include weather conditions, escape routes, lack of experience and in a more reflective way, self- exposure.

GETTING INVOLVED – LIVING AND LEARNING THE WILDERNESS DREAM

- They are internally motivated and open to experiences that are unique, educational and nature focused.
- Activity in the outdoors is driven by the slow adventurer’s love of nature and their willingness to learn new skills and knowledge.
- The slow adventurer finds wonder in the vastness of nature, one’s proximity to nature and the folklore that enriches the natural environment. They talk about little details in nature and enjoy eating or trying foraged or wild food.

SHARING THE MAGIC OF WILD PLACES

- Importantly, slow adventurer target groups are very likely to urge others such as family and friends to give it a go. Grasping a challenge or just escaping into the beauty of the landscape is actively encouraged.
- This is further supported by the enthusiastic embrace of social media platforms. This, if supported by entrepreneurs, is credible, free and effective marketing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VIEW OUR GOOD PRACTISE EXAMPLES!

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating the concept of sustainable adventure tourism:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 3, 8, 14, 18, 19, 21, 51, 52</p> |
|---|--|

3.4.2. Ecotourism

The Mediterranean Experience of [EcoTourism \(MEET\) Network](#) is a network of Mediterranean natural parks developing high-quality ecotourism experiences that benefit conservation and local communities.

The MEET Experiences are nature-based, cultural experiences which allow travellers to discover a new side of the Mediterranean.

As it is stated in the MEET Manual ³⁵ “Protected areas in the Mediterranean need a new model of tourism, one that is offered as an alternative to mass tourism”.



Samaria National Park, Crete Greece (MEET Network Member)



Penisola del Sinis - Isola di mal di ventre MPA, Italy

This new model should ensure that **tourism’s impact on nature** can be minimized, local cultures are respected, and economic benefits may be distributed among local communities.

By creating a new paradigm for the development of **ecotourism products**, protected areas can benefit from the shift from conventional to sustainable tourism using mechanisms to monitor and manage tourism-generated impacts.

Ecotourism could be this new model!

Ecotourism is widely regarded as a form of tourism that respects nature and culture, engages local people, brings significant economic benefits to local communities, and minimizes the disruptive effects associated with mass tourism.

Source: MEET manual; DestiMED Project in collaboration with the Meet Network

35 MEET manual; DestiMED Project in collaboration with the Meet Network

Ecotourism is widely regarded as a form of tourism that respects nature and culture, engages local people, brings significant economic benefits to local communities, and minimizes the disruptive effects associated with mass tourism.

The official definition of ecotourism is as follows:

What is ecotourism?

The International **Ecotourism Society** defines **ecotourism** as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people and involves interpretation and education (TIES 2015).

Principles of Ecotourism

Ecotourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. This means that those who implement, participate in and market ecotourism activities should adopt the following ecotourism principles:

- 1) Minimize physical, social, behavioural, and psychological impacts,
- 2) Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect.
- 3) Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts.
- 4) Provide direct financial benefits for conservation.
- 5) Generate financial benefits for both local people and private industry.
- 6) Deliver memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to host countries’ political, environmental, and social climates.
- 7) Design, construct and operate low-impact facilities.
- 8) Recognize the rights and spiritual beliefs of the Indigenous People in your community and work in partnership with them to create empowerment.



The term ecotourism is mainly used for destinations covered with protected areas, an **abundance of visible and touchable flora and fauna**, and a high level of biodiversity, and describes the activity in and around protected areas.

Countries in Middle and South America host famous ecotourism destinations. The pioneer and godfather of ecotourism is Costa Rica. The following chart illustrates what makes Costa Rica an ecotourism destination.

Costa Rica: “the” Ecotourism Destination



- **28 national parks**
- The country is covered with breath-taking plants and full of animals
- **25%** of Costa Rica’s land area is **protected**
- **Biodiversity:** 5% of the Earth’s biodiversity. Different vegetation like volcanoes; Pacific and Caribbean beaches; tropical dry, wet, and rain forests; and jungle landscapes.
- Nature and ecotourism are the number **1 tourism attraction** in Costa Rica
- The **National Parks** form part of the **national tourism offer**
- The country’s **marketing and image strategy** is based on nature and ecotourism
- **The majority** of international visitors to Costa Rica visit National Parks
- Total number of tourists in 2017: **2,959,869** – **visitors** to National Parks: **2,059,402** visitors (including residents).
- National Parks are highly accepted by the local community and frequently visited by local residents
- Sustainable business model in place
- <https://www.visitcostarica.com/en/costa-rica/things-to-do/ecotourism/national-parks>



Ecotourism products in protected areas have the opportunity to integrate local communities with a wide array of stakeholders including local travel agencies, local guides, farmers, artisans, hotel and restaurant owners, non-profit organizations, public sector agents, and protected area managers. If this integration is well executed, it creates strong incentives for local communities for nature conservation, by linking economic benefits to healthy, well-managed protected areas³⁶.



The **MEET approach** particularly considers **ecotourism** as taking place in and around areas which are protected, i.e., in any areas that can be identified as “a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term **conservation of nature** with associated **ecosystem services and cultural values**” (IUCN Definition 2008).

Source: ³⁶ MEET manual; DestiMED Project in collaboration with the Meet Network

3.4.3. Cultural Routes

There is a need to build up an area of peace and stability in the Mediterranean, reducing disparities, increasing opportunities for decent quality of life and jobs for all, and promoting dialogue and understanding for peaceful coexistence.

The CROSSDEV project seeks to increase tourism competitiveness and the attractiveness of lesser-known destinations and rural areas, enhancing the **Cultural Routes experiences** such as those of the **Council of Europe** (e.g., Phoenicians Route and IterVitis), Palestine (Palestinian Heritage Trail) and Jordan (Jordan Trail). To achieve this goal, a cross-border tourism framework shall be set-up to enhance sustainable tourism policies, promote tourism-related business and to develop **community-led action plans**.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Cultural routes are defined as new wide-ranging cultural assets connecting diverse and homogeneous elements of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and related to both contiguous and far apart territories so as to create a new knowledge system (ICOMOS, 2005).</p> |
|---|--|

Culture is one of the **driving forces** for the **growth of tourism**. As such, cultural tourism can bring many opportunities and benefits such as **deseasonalization** and a **diversification strategy** for a destination.

The safeguarding of cultural heritage and activities is the key to preserving the cultural identity of territories and to more effective sustainable development.

WHAT IS BEHIND THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL ROUTES?

The “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe” Programme was started by the Council of Europe in 1987 with the Declaration of Santiago de Compostela. The “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe” are an invitation to travel and to discover the rich and diversified European cultural heritage.

The aim was to create a network of people and places linked together thanks to a common history and heritage.

The Cultural Routes put into practice the values of the Council of Europe:

- Human rights
- Cultural diversity
- Intercultural dialogue
- Mutual exchanges across borders.



Routes of Olive Trees 2005



European Routes of Ceramics 2012

The Cultural Routes of Europe

(<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/by-theme>)

The **Cultural Routes** demonstrate, by means of a **journey through space and time**, how the heritage of the **different countries and cultures** of Europe contributes to a **shared and living cultural heritage**.

Over **45 Cultural Routes** provide different themes that illustrate European memory, history and heritage and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe.

HOW TO BE CERTIFIED AS A CULTURAL ROUTE OF EUROPE

To become part of the Cultural Route of Europe certain criteria need to be fulfilled to obtain the official certification. The certification is a guarantee of excellence. Once a year, the certification is awarded to **legally constituted networks** focusing on a **European theme** and implementing activities in at **least three Council of Europe member States**.

The certification **gives visibility** to **European initiatives** which bring to life Council of Europe values, such as **cultural diversity**, **intercultural dialogue** and mutual exchanges across borders.

Through the Cultural Routes programme, the **Council of Europe** offers a **model** for **transnational networks** working on the promotion of European heritage. The Cultural Routes bring together (to name only a few) heritage sites, universities, national, regional and local authorities and socio-economic actors such as SMEs and tour operators.³⁷



The Routes are **grass-roots European networks** with a legal status (in form of an association or a federation). These networks involve at least **three countries in Europe** and operate within **democratic structures** to ensure the transnational and participatory character of Cultural Routes.

³⁷(<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/by-theme>)

In this context, due attention needs to be paid to the criteria established by the Council of Europe for the certification of Cultural Routes:

- 1) Involve a **theme** that is representative of **European values** and common to at least three countries in Europe;
- 2) Be the subject of **transnational**, multidisciplinary scientific research;
- 3) Enhance **European memory**, history and heritage and contribute to interpretation of Europe's present-day diversity;
- 4) Support **cultural** and **educational exchanges** for young people;
- 5) Develop **exemplary** and **innovative projects** in the field of **cultural tourism** and sustainable cultural development;
- 6) Develop **tourist products** and **services** aimed at different groups.

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.



View **our practice examples** illustrating innovative, sustainable cultural routes development:

→ Practice examples No.: **22, 23, 48**

3.4.4. Slow Tourism

The Med Pearls Project aims at internationally positioning the Mediterranean as a unique and integral destination to experience the Med lifestyle through **Slow Tourism (ST)**, inviting travellers to discover new destinations sustainably and responsibly while taking time to have direct contact with local communities.

BUT WHAT IS BEHIND THE SLOW TOURISM CONCEPT?

Slow Tourism can be considered “an approach, an umbrella or a niche” within the sustainable tourist market. *Source: Med Pearls Manual*

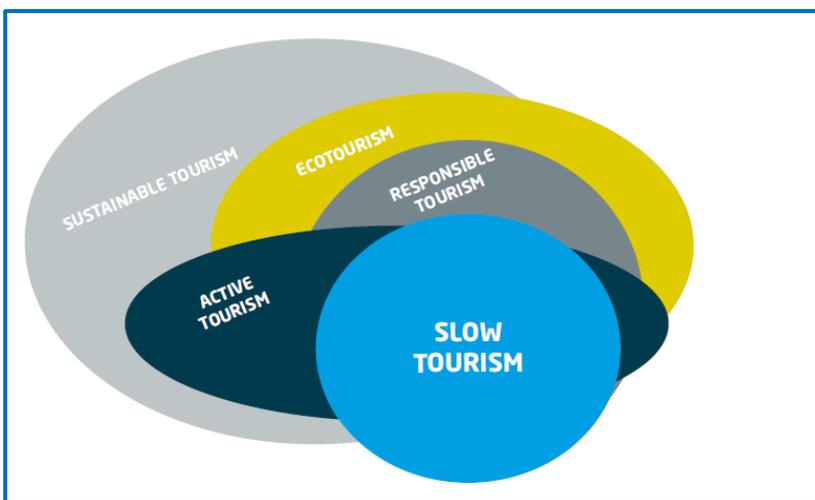


Figure 9: Slow Tourism vs. environmental products

Source: Med Pearls Manual

HOW CAN SLOW TOURISM BE DEFINED IN PRACTISE?



Photo by Patrick Schneider on Unsplash



Photo by Kalen Emsley on Unsplash

Slow Tourism

<https://www.cooltournal.net/slow-tourism>

What is Slow Tourism?

Slow tourism is, first of all, **a state of mind, a philosophy of life**. The slow traveller has a specific lifestyle while travelling. That differentiates him or her from the regular tourist.

Far from the hectic rhythm of mass tourism, the slow traveller moves and lives the travel experience differently.

Slow travellers take time to get immersed in **cultural** exchange with locals. With each trip, they enjoy a new experience, **living like locals**.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN AXES OF SLOW TOURISM?

In her book “slow travel and tourism”, Janet E. Dickinson describes **3 main axes** of slow tourism:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The first focus of slow tourism is the attempt to avoid fast means of transport. The slow traveller will try to move away from cars and flights. (2) The second axis of slow tourism is the carbon emissions during our travel and impact on the environment. The lower, the better. (3) The third and final point of slow tourism is the quality of the travelling experience. |
|---|---|

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE?

1. CHOOSING THE RIGHT MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Once again, in “slow tourism” there is the word “slow”. So, the goal is to **slow down** to take time to **enjoy more**. The slow traveller avoids flights, cars, and trains in favour of using a bike or simply walking. Walking is a healthy option of course, but it also gives you more opportunities to connect with local people.

Walking around a new city also allows you to **discover hidden spots** off the beaten track that touristic buses would usually take you to. Explore the destination on foot and you’ll see that you’ll have a totally different perspective.

2. BEING CONCERNED BY THE ENVIRONMENT

Choosing tourism options involving **low carbon-consumption** is a key point for slow tourism. The slow traveller doesn’t only connect with the environment and nature, but he/she also cares about it. That means as we’ve seen before avoiding, if you can, the means of transport with high-carbon emission.

3. CHOOSING THE QUALITY OF THE TRAVELLING EXPERIENCE OVER QUANTITY

Once more here, the idea is to **enjoy the destination** and make the most of it. Making the most of your stay in a country, is not about collecting a series of must-see buildings, running from a spot to another. Holidays are not about ticking all the boxes of a huge list of things you want to see or do.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Travellers are on holidays to chill, relax and enjoy; to feel the atmosphere of the city they are visiting. They observe how people live and connect with them, immersing themselves in the culture.</p> |
|---|---|

The Slow Tourism Attributes can be described as illustrated below (*Source Med Pearls Manual*):

Table 3: Slow tourism attributes

| Attributes of Slow Tourism | |
|----------------------------|---|
| ➤ | Change in the concept of travel and the use of time during the trip |
| ➤ | Alternative of mass Tourism |
| ➤ | Focus on local |
| ➤ | Focus on cultural |
| ➤ | Sustainable and natural environment concerns |
| ➤ | Change in the quality of the experience |
| ➤ | Authenticity |
| ➤ | Feasibility and new business development |

It can be stated that tourist experiences and products can only be called “Slow Tourism” if they satisfy the following six dimensions – both from the point of supply and demand. The six dimensions of Slow Tourism:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Time | Defined as “the time dimension of the business and territorial organization” of the activity (long-term planning, dedicated time to improve the business and the relationship with customers, and time availability of services) from the point of view of the supply, and the “right to regain laziness” of the customer, “freeing her/himself of the guilt”. |
| Slowness | Defined as “time, idleness, laziness” as opposed to “time is money”. This philosophy leads to using slow vehicles, slow agendas and “slow assimilation of changing landscapes”. |
| Otherness | Defined as the “sphere of relationships between individuals with different opinions, beliefs, knowledge and cultures” that create “fruitful opportunities of exchange between them”. Particularly the relationship between the guest and the local people, the tourism supply, and the guests themselves. |
| Authenticity | Defined as the “capability to create and offer an experience that is characterized, non-artificial and strongly connected with culture and local traditions”, as well as the opposite to “standardized/globalized products and services”. |
| Sustainability | Defined as the impact of the tourism activity on the local environment, economy, and society. |
| Emotion | Defined as the “capability to generate memorable moments that make the guest leave as a different person, marked by a true involving and gratifying experience”. |

WHAT ARE SLOW TRAVELLERS LOOKING FOR?

The slow traveller is looking above all for a quality experience. The slow traveller isn’t looking to collect a list of spots but rather ‘live’ the destination. He/she is in observation, **aware** of what’s going on around, the sounds, the smells, the sceneries, the people, and the **overall feeling**.



Slow travellers take their time to **chill** and **enjoy** the destination. They would sit in a local café and watch.

They would **exchange as much as they can with locals to immerse themselves in the culture**. They would ask them about their habits and customs and try to live like them - the so-called **living like locals' concept**:

LIVING LIKE LOCALS

Slow tourism is also a way to **connect** with locals, **exchange** with them and **learn** from them. The ultimate level of the travelling experience being to live like locals during their stay.

EAT LIKE LOCALS

Trying **local products** and **traditional meals**. This is a way to expand one's gastronomic knowledge and discover new local delicacies. As much they you can, they avoid the big touristy spots and head for smaller, more local restaurants. They watch where the locals go and go there, trying to eat like locals!

SHOP LIKE LOCALS

Going to **small markets** or **local merchants**. Exchange with locals. Buying local products. Why not trying to cook a typical local dish? Even an easy one could be fun. Visiting a local market can be an amazing experience if there is time to enjoy it. All the **smells**, the **colours**, the **sounds** and **tastes** of fresh fruits and veggies can be an amazing experience for the slow tourism tourist if they just slow down and take their time.

HAVE FUN LIKE LOCALS

Where do locals go when they want to go out a bit? What do they do? Chat on noisy terraces? Dance all night long? Why not try to learn new steps of local dances and dance with them? It could be an interesting and fun anecdote for the slow tourism tourist, couldn't it? This is another **opportunity to connect with locals** and learn from them³⁸.

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.



View **our practice examples** illustrating innovative, sustainable slow tourism practices.

→ Practice examples No.: **5, 7, 9, 26, 37, 38**

³⁸ <https://www.cooltournal.net/slow-tourism>

3.4.5. Experiences

As we already learnt in chapter 2.1. there has also been a notable increase in travellers seeking experiences that allow them to unplug.

Today's demanding and discerning tourists don't just want to observe, they wish to experience places. This experiential tourism trend is relevant to off-season travellers who choose this time of the year not only to lower costs but also to avoid crowds and increase chances for authentic interactions with locals.

But experiences are much more than travelling to authentic destinations, it's actually an innovative and creative **sustainable tourism concept**.

WHAT IS AN EXPERIENCE?

An 'experience' actively involves visitors so they can feel special and have the opportunity to engage with local culture and connect with a place and its people³⁹.



This can be done by:

- Connecting with local people
- Immersing themselves into local culture
- Enjoying local food and drink
- Exploring local geography and places of interest and natural highlights

The experiences concept is a valid format of **Experiential Tourism** to develop bookable tailor-made workshops to connect with local people (e.g., around the food topic), guided tours or packages just to name a few possibilities.

Experiential tourism is about three main elements: the people, the place, and the activity. Experiences should be **unique** and **individual** for each visitor, matching their interests, providing a sense of personal achievement, and creating their own lasting memories.

This trend provides the tourism industry with a **new type of visitor**. One who is an active participant in the experience and is seeking more than just a packaged tour, a hotel room or a scenic view.

³⁹The English National Park Experience Collection

Contemporary **travellers** increasingly **want to do more** than simply **‘see’** a place; it’s about what they did while they were there; they want to **live it, breathe it, touch it, become part of it**. Visitors want to learn how to do new things and to be immersed in cultural activities, interact with local people, and actively participate in local life wherever and whenever they can⁴⁰.

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

The example from the English National Parks illustrates the creative Experiences Concept in connection with protected areas:

The English National Park Experience Collection

<https://www.nationalparkexperiences.co.uk/> <https://nationalparks.uk/discoverengland>



- National Parks UK, the umbrella organisation for **15 National Parks**
- National Parks in England have been awarded £1 Million from Visit England to develop **bookable products** for the **National Parks**
- Joined-up product offering across **large geographies** or nationwide through a thematic approach
- A new travel trade-focused collection of **bookable Nature Park experiences** and quality accommodation.
- **Telling the stories of England’s unique landscapes**, nature and people.
- **Themes of experiences:** active, creative, food & drink, landscape, nature and history



⁴⁰The English National Park Experience Collection

For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, sustainable tourism experiences.</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 7, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 53</p> |
|---|---|

3.4.6. Gamifying a Destination

Today's demanding and discerning tourists don't just want to observe, they wish to experience places. This experiential tourism trend is relevant to off-season travellers who choose this time of the year not only to lower costs but also to avoid crowds and increase chances for authentic interactions with locals. That's why **MED GAIMS** project will develop games in physical and virtual format to create experiences for tourists, giving a necessary competitive edge to the attractiveness of less-known sites.

WHAT DOES 'GAMIFYING A DESTINATION' MEAN EXACTLY⁴¹?

Gamifying the visitor's experience enables an increase in visitors' interest in the place, the city, the country she/he is visiting. So, you can use several mechanisms inspired by **paper chases, board games, video games, escape games** and **alternate reality games** to improve the visitor's way of engaging in a touristic experience. For example, hiding a clue in a place to make visitors look around more carefully and see details is a way of gamifying their experience.

HOW DOES THIS CONCEPT WORK FOR DESTINATIONS?

Every destination struggles with the idea of conveying an authentic, complete, interesting yet comprehensible image of itself. Sometimes the tourism offer appears as too diversified, sometimes the lack of resources prevents the visitor from delving further into her/his discovery:

Imagine **gaming techniques** as **tools to connect places**, layers of **knowledge** and **people**. Thanks to the inherent intuitive nature of forever existing games, the destination is fully conveyed to the public at large!

DOES THIS WORK FOR ANY DESTINATION OR DOES IT DEPEND ON THE TOURISM OFFER?

It might exist as many ways of gamifying a visitor's experience as there are existing destinations! The level of gamification that can be chosen will choose depends on what or whom you are targeting.

⁴¹ <https://www.thinkdigital.travel/opinion/how-to-gamify-the-visitor-experience/>



MED GAIMS – Gastro Secrets



MED GAIMS - The Mill

Gamifying

You don't have to go for a **costly, cutting-edge technological** touristic experience to gamify a destination.

As long as your thinking process starts with your **existing material** and a **clear goal**, you can **sprinkle gaming mechanisms** on any destination.

Some might not even notice that you gamified the whole experience!

Source:

<https://www.thinkdigital.travel/opinion/how-to-gamify-the-visitor-experience/>

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GAMIFICATION FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR?

Professionally developed applying a tailor-made destination approach gamification can bring the following benefits to the tourism sector:

Figure 10: Gamification benefits for the tourism sector⁴²



GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating gamified destinations.</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 11, 15, 16, 17</p> |
|---|--|

⁴² <https://www.getplayoff.com/blog/gamification-tourism-territorial-marketing/>

CHAPTER 4 CREATION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS & DESTINATIONS

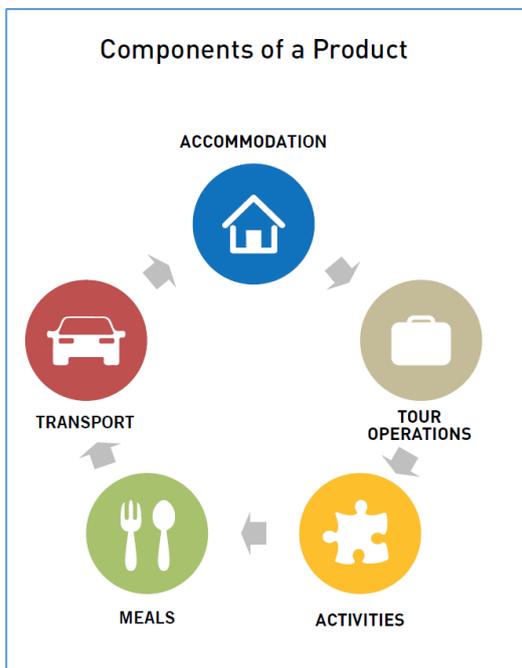
This chapter is one of **most relevant sections** in the training manual and shows the methodological approach to the design of sustainable tourism products, destinations and practices and provides practical tools and checklists. To illustrate the theoretical content a portfolio of well-selected and elaborated good practice examples from the Mediterranean Region and elsewhere in the world are related to each sustainable tourism product development approach.

WHAT IS A TOURISM PRODUCT? ⁴³

A product is anything offered to a market that might satisfy a want or need. Generally speaking, products can be divided into two broad categories of goods: tangible (e.g., computer) or intangible (e.g., services such as internet access).

A tourism product is composed of both tangible components (e.g., food) and intangible ones (e.g., a guided walk in a protected area). Each of its components is delivered individually, and together they're also delivered as a single, coherent experience for the traveller.

Figure 11: Component of a tourism product



Source: Meet Manual

As you consider a **tourism product** and its value, it's useful also to differentiate between the **product of tangible and intangible goods and services** customers purchase (e.g., tour, accommodation, meals, guided walks, and transportation) and the value delivered by the **experience** – both at the time of its delivery (e.g., during one-week holiday), and long after it's over (e.g., memories of the one-week holiday).

It's also important to note that in **tourism**, **customers purchase** the product before acquiring it. This feature will impact how the product is packaged, positioned and marketed to prospective customers.

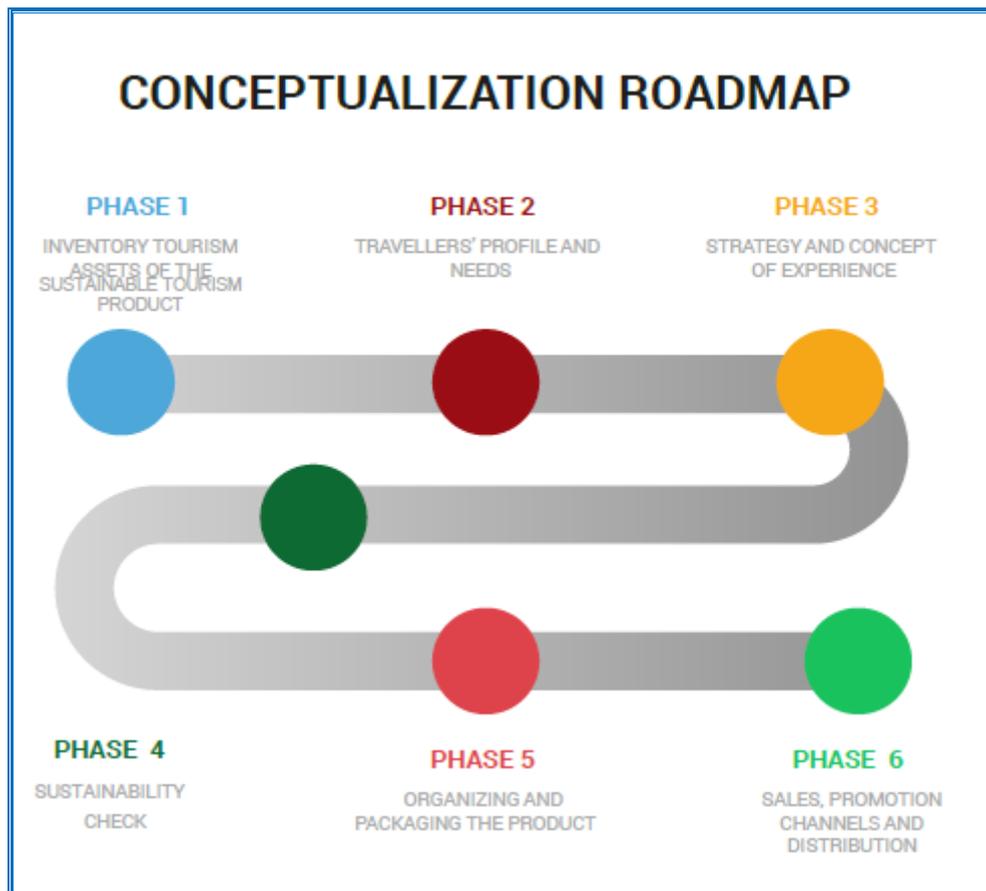
⁴³ Source: ⁴³ MEET manual; DestiMED Project in collaboration with the Meet Network

4.1. How to create Sustainable Tourism Products

For the conceptualization of a sustainable tourism product, 6 general phases/steps need to be considered. The following **conceptualization roadmap**⁴⁴ gives an overview of these phases:

Figure 12: Conceptualization roadmap

Source: MEDUSA Conceptualization Report



The conceptualization roadmap foresees the following 6 phases/ steps for the conceptualisation of a sustainable tourism product:

- **PHASE 1** – INVENTORY TOURISM ASSETS OF THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCT
- **PHASE 2** – TRAVELLERS' PROFILE AND NEEDS
- **PHASE 3** – STRATEGY AND CONCEPT OF PRODUCT OR DESTINATION EXPERIENCE
- **PHASE 4** – SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE CHECK
- **PHASE 5** – ORGANIZING AND PACKAGING THE PRODUCT
- **PHASE 6** – SALES, PROMOTION CHANNELS AND DISTRIBUTION

⁴⁴ MEDUSA CONCEPTUALIZATION REPORT

Each phase is organized into two action steps and finalized with a template which can be used to gather and process the relevant information.

The following chart gives an overview of the different phases and the steps needed.

Table 4: Phases and steps for the conceptualization of a sustainable tourism product

Source: MEDUSA Conceptualization Report

| | PHASE 1 | PHASE 2 | PHASE 3 | PHASE 4 | PHASE 5 | PHASE 6 |
|----------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| PHASE | INVENTORY TOURISM ASSETS ADVENTURE PRODUCT | TRAVELLERS' PROFILE AND NEEDS | STRATEGY AND CONCEPT OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE | CECK OF SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS | ORGANIZING AND PACKAGING THE PRODUCT | SALES AND PROMOTIONAL CHANNELS AND DISTRIBUTION |
| STEP | SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF DESTINATION /PILOTAREA | SEGMENTATION | VALUE PROPOSITION CONNECTED WITH COMMUNITY | CECK OF SUSTAINABLE IMPACT | DETAILING EXPERIENCES HEALTH SECURITY | POTENTIAL TRADE PARTNERS, INSTITUTIONS, FAIRS |
| | ATTRACTIONS INVENTORY OF ADVENTURE PRODUCT | NEEDS' EVALUATION | PLANNING AND FAIRING EXPERIENCES | | PRICE | BUILD RELATIONSHIP WITH TRADE PARTNERS |
| TEMPLATE | TEMPLATE 1 INVENTORY ASSET OF ADVENTURE PRODUCT | TEMPLATE 2 LIST OF TRAVELLERS' NEEDS | TEMPLATE 3 STRATEGY AND CONCEPT OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE | TEMPLATE 4 SUSTAINABILITY CHECK | TEMPLATE 5 CHECK THE PACKAGE | TEMPLATE 6 CHECK LIST TO TRADE IN OUTBOUND MARKET |



Please note that this is not a **rigid process**. The conceptualization roadmap serves more as a **guideline** and **rough orientation** for **sustainable product development**.

In the following we will have a look into phases 1 to 5 for the sustainable product development and the organisation and packaging of products. Phase 6 will be further explained in chapter 5.

PHASE 1 – INVENTORY TOURISM ASSETS OF THE ADVENTURE PRODUCT

Analysis and evaluation of sustainable tourism assets in order to identify the existing and potential opportunities presented by destinations and what makes them unique. The starting point is to have an idea about the type of sustainable tourism activity that will be turned into a sustainable tourism product. At the end of phase 1, essential trip elements and resources will be listed in order to match them with consumers' targets and needs.

Source: MEDUSA Conceptualization Report



STEP 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF DESTINATION/PILOT AREA

Before you start to develop your product/destinations it is crucial to first get familiar with the key features of your destination. Depending on your planned tourism product, analyse the key facts about your destination (only if you consider this relevant for your product development):

- Briefly **analyse** the **framework conditions** of the **destination**, the social, economic and cultural profile (administrative, political and territorial structure, demographic evolution, economic structure, employment and living conditions, local culture, gender equality);
- **Hard** and **soft infrastructure** related to tourism development;
- The **destination management system**, tourism strategies, protected areas, tourism models already applied in the destination;

STEP 2: INVENTORY OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ASSETS

The second step is to do a quick inventory of the assets of the destination depending on the type of sustainable tourism product (adventure tourism, ecotourism, slow tourism, experience etc.) you would like to develop. Therefore, the following resources need to be assessed:

- Existing and potential **sustainable tourism activities** (depending on the type of tourism product you would like to develop).
- **Natural attractions** and natural resources
- **Cultural and historical attractions**, living culture of the destinations and traditions
- **Existing tourism offer**: tourism products and services
- **Existing tourism infrastructure** such as accommodation, leisure installations etc.

- **State of conservation:** existing protected areas, nature parks etc. and their potential touristic use.
- **Organizational set-up:** Destination management and marketing organizations and related promotional activities
- Analyses of the key stakeholders of the destination

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please check Template 1: Example of an Inventory of Adventure Tourism Assets for the design of a mountain bike product.</p> <p>→ Assessment Template Annex No.:2</p> |
|---|---|

With the outcome of this inventory, you do the next steps, which are especially relevant for the set-up of new tourism products in your destination, such as:

- (1) Build a **pilot area** of high-quality products and identify potential regional partnerships to develop multi-day itinerary products.
- (2) **Create a common vision** and start contacting stakeholders and the community members; in order to discuss the long-term action plans that are needed for the development of adventure tourism.
- (3) **Create the first level of information** to use for communication activities.

PHASE 2 – TRAVELLERS’ PROFILES AND NEEDS

The objective of this phase is to have a checklist of traveller segments’ needs and the trip elements to satisfy them.

The question is: who is the target customer we are aiming to develop the product for?

Here empathy is needed to better understand the customer’s needs and behaviour.

Source: MEDUSA Conceptualization Report



STEP 1: SEGMENTATION

The first step is to clearly define the market you are aiming for. Depending on the activity you want to develop (e.g., biking, hiking etc.) and the sustainable tourism concept you would like to

apply (e.g., adventure tourism, slow tourism, ecotourism etc.), clear segmentation of the target group you would like to address needs to be done:

- **Customer segments:** families, seniors, couples. Millennials/Z generation, solo travel, women/men.
- **Level of knowledge and experience required:** for example, beginner, adventure tourism enthusiast, adventure grazers.
- **Origin:** national as residents/nearby areas, middle/long-distance visitors, international visitors.
- **Environmental sensitivity:** dedicated sustainable travellers and soft sustainable travellers.

STEP 2: NEEDS EVALUATION

The second step is to adapt the product to be adapted to the traveller's profiles and the traveller's needs. Therefore, it is crucial to understand:

- The motivation of the traveller **depending on the concept** you have chosen, e.g., sustainable adventure tourism tourist, ecotourism tourist etc.
- **Special needs** and **motivations** and **characteristics** depending on the cultural needs and peculiarities of the target market.

Additionally, there is a growing trend in tourism to create so called **Unique Experiences** (view chapter 2.1.) Therefore, the unique experiences' needs should be considered.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES' NEEDS

- Unique, authentic experiences e.g., living like a local
- Seeking status, very unique exclusive experience – individually tailored, no mass product
- Personalization of the experience
- Most popular activities: Hiking, cycling, safaris, culinary activities, wellness-focused activities, and custom itineraries



Please check **Template2**: Example of a **checklist** for the identification of the **target segment** for your sustainable tourism product.

→ Customer Needs Template **Annex No.:4**

PHASE 3 – STRATEGY AND CONCEPT OF PRODUCT OR DESTINATION EXPERIENCE

The objective of this phase now is to match customers’ needs with the travel experience. The approach is now to create a real product or destination experience by integrating the community and local tourism stakeholders into the tourism value chain to develop much more than tourism activities: a unique, authentic sustainable tourism product or destination.

At the end of this phase, you should have the skeleton of the travel experience incorporating innovative elements and value chain members.

Source: MEDUSA Conceptualization Report



STEP 1: VALUE PROPOSITION CONNECTED TO THE COMMUNITY

To develop a sustainable tourism product for a special market segment and target group it is essential to integrate innovative elements and create the value proposition with great attention and creativity.

The key to the successful development of an authentic product and destination experiences is connecting the value proposition to local communities.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared agenda that puts destination and community needs at its center. • Collaboration across sectors. |
|---|---|

This doesn’t mean “**just collaboration**” but creating meaningful connections and co-creating sustainable tourism products and destinations that **value places** to improve people’s lives.

This approach also boosts the possibility of involving visitors in the everyday life of the local communities. If the quality of the local community’s lives and the services provided for them are improved, it’s much easier to integrate tourists and let them participate.

Therefore, tourists can become the protagonists of their own trip experience. For this reason, direct cooperation with the community can work to reinvigorate the destination and improve the value proposition of the product.

GET INSPIRED BY PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, community-driven sustainable tourism product experiences:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 6, 13, 20, 23, 24, 27, 53</p> |
|---|--|

STEP 2: PLANNING AND PAIRING EXPERIENCES

This step involves the concept of pairing various experiences into an innovative tourism product and the mechanism of interaction of all trip elements and the identification and development of a suitable storytelling approach for the sustainable tourism product.

Planning travel experiences for a sustainable tourism product is like writing a script for a film: It is necessary to have a setting, a theme, and a plot; the script arranges events in a logical order and progressive intensity leading to the climax.

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Please check Template 3: STRATEGY AND CONCEPT OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE</p> <p>→ Strategy Template Annex No.:4</p> |
|--|--|

PHASE 4 – SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE CHECK

The next step is to assess the sustainability performance of your sustainable tourism product: the positive or negative impact it has on the destination.

If you want to develop a tourism product that is sustainable it is crucial to check whether the developed sustainable tourism product contributes to the conservation of the natural and cultural resources of the destination and if the community and local tourism stakeholders are benefitting from it.

Therefore, you can go ahead and do the sustainability performance check.

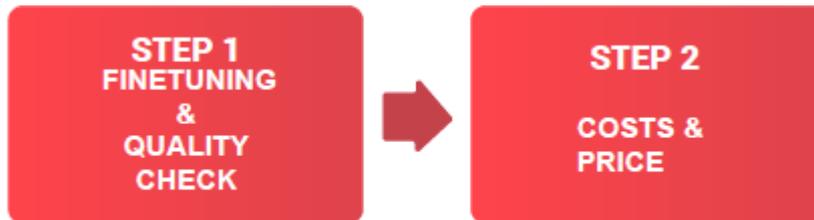
| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Please check Template 4: go through the checklist and try to tick off all items on the sustainability performance check to make sure that your product is sustainable.</p> <p>→ Sustainability Template Annex No.:5</p> |
|---|--|

PHASE 5 – ORGANIZING AND PACKAGING THE PRODUCT

The objective of this phase is packaging the product and preparing it for the market launch. This includes the following activities:

- **Finetuning** all product elements and activities and a final **quality check**
- Calculation of costs and appropriate pricing.

Source: *MEDUSA Conceptualization Report*



STEP 1: FINETUNING & QUALITY CHECK

The objective of this step is to finetune the activities and to check the availability of resources needed and to assure the quality of the provided services.

Therefore, the main elements of the sustainable tourism product need to be checked:

- 1) Define group sizes and profile.
- 2) Define seasonality.
- 3) Manage the arrival, transfer and departure of the guests and their luggage and equipment, in addition to internal transfers, for example: type of vehicle; driver; time, language, near/ long distance.
- 4) Equipment for adventure activities: rent e-bike/Bike/ horse-camel/board for water sports etc.
- 5) Local guide who fits the needs of travellers and/or customer service.
- 6) Agreement with local suppliers for authentic experiences. Select accommodation: per the recommendation tailored to traveller's profile.
- 7) Select catering following the recommendation tailored to traveller's profile.
- 8) Quality control: cleanliness, hospitality, visiting all suppliers monitoring the cleanliness protocol applied.
- 9) Check regulation and legal rules in the destination.
- 10) Check regulation and legal rules to travel from outbound markets
- 11) Risk assessment.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Check your safety and hygiene standards</p> <p>Stringent health and safety standards are important to permit re-opening and holding activities safely once again.</p> |
|---|---|

STEP 2: COSTS & PRICING

Solid pricing is key for a successful tourism product. Focus on good value for money.

The price should balance two kinds of costs:

- (1) Costs of services delivered “in-house”
- (2) Costs of service delivered through suppliers and profit margins.

The balance (price) should present good value for money for the traveller, comparing the competitive offer in the destination and the added value of the new sustainable tourism products.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Please check Template5: CHECK THE PACKAGE</p> <p>→ Package Template Annex No.:6</p> |
|---|--|

4.2. How to create Sustainable Adventure Tourism

Now the question is:

HOW CAN I DESIGN SUSTAINABLE ADVENTURE TOURISM PRODUCTS?

First, you have to go through phases 1-5 of the conceptualization roadmap and to gather the necessary baseline information. Remember that soft tourism products are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit.

The following table provides orientation on so-called soft and hard adventure tourism activities. Select one or a set of soft tourism activities and integrate it into the development steps.

Table 5: Adventure tourism classification

Source: ATTA

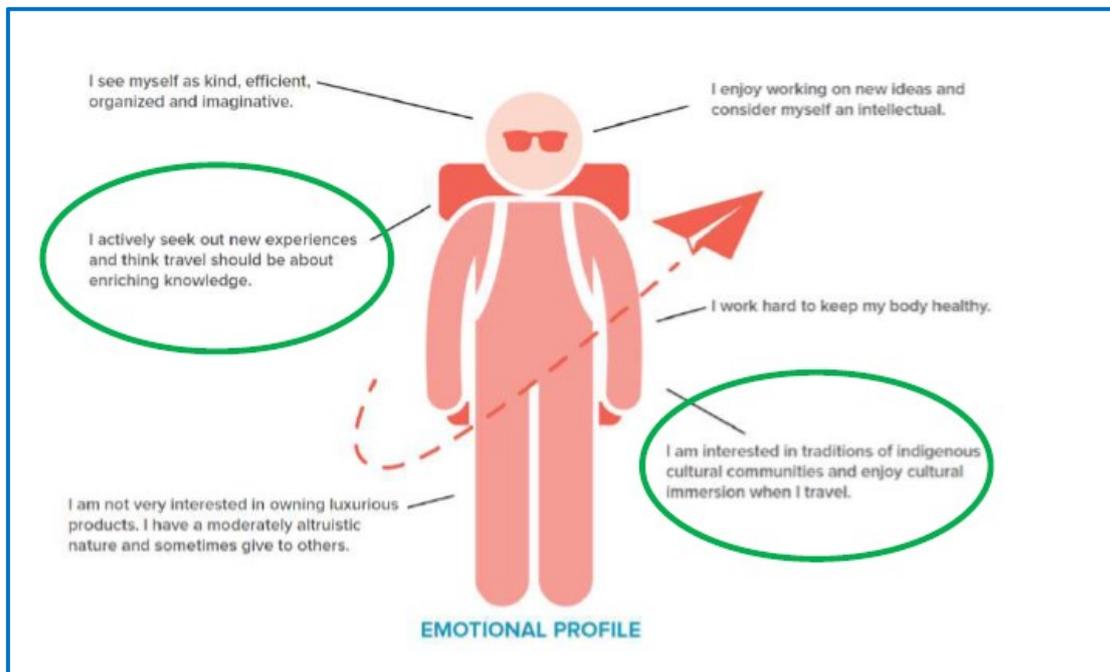
| ACTIVITY | TYPE |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Archaeological expedition | Soft |
| Attending local festival/fairs | Other |
| Backpacking | Soft |

| ACTIVITY | TYPE |
|--|-------|
| Birdwatching | Soft |
| Camping | Soft |
| Canoeing | Soft |
| Caving | Hard |
| Climbing (mountain/rock/ice) | Hard |
| Cruise | Other |
| Cultural activities | Other |
| Eco-tourism | Soft |
| Educational programs | Soft |
| Environmentally sustainable activities | Soft |
| Fishing/ fly-fishing | Soft |
| Getting to know locals | Other |
| Hiking | Soft |
| Horseback riding | Soft |
| Hunting | Soft |
| Kayaking/sea/whitewater | Soft |
| Learning a new language | Other |
| Orienteering | Soft |
| Rafting | Soft |
| Research expeditions | Soft |
| Safaris | Soft |
| Sailing | Soft |
| Scuba diving | Soft |
| Snorkelling | Soft |
| Skiing/snowboarding | Soft |
| Surfing | Soft |
| Trekking | Hard |
| Walking tours | Other |
| Visiting friends/family | Other |

The perception of what adventure travellers think of themselves is also important when designing a sustainable tourism product or tour package. According to ATTA trends 2016, travellers define themselves according to the graphic below:

Figure 13: Perception of adventure traveller

Source: MEDUSA project – business planning workshop



GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, sustainable adventure tourism product development:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 8, 18, 21, 30, 35, 36</p> |
|---|---|

4.3. How to create Ecotourism Products & Destinations

Now the question is:

HOW CAN I DESIGN SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM TOURISM PRODUCTS?

First you have to go through phases 1-5 of the conceptualization roadmap and to gather the necessary baseline information. Remember that soft tourism products are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit.

Because when developing an ecotourism product, it's important to conduct an assessment of the destination – not only the protected area, but the communities around it -- to understand its core natural, cultural, historical, culinary and other strengths.

Ecotourism products should aim to **highlight, promote, and preserve** the **features unique** to that destination. In addition, focusing on local strengths helps differentiate the ecotourism product from other offerings in the region.

The following chart indicates how infrastructure, tangible goods and services come together in the delivery of an eco-tourism product (Source: meet manual)

Figure 14: Ecotourism products components and relationships



Note that an **ecotourism product integrates** attractions and **facilities** together with human resources efforts to deliver services and facilitate activities.

Altogether, this process creates and delivers an **experience** which fulfils the needs and **expectations of travellers.**

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING A (MEET) ECOTOURISM PRODUCT⁴⁵



Catalonia



Jordan



Source: Meet Manual⁴⁶

- It is important to have **quality activities** and **services** featured in the product, otherwise you might lose credibility.
- Be **honest** and **critical**. Not every aspect or attraction of a destination makes for a successful tourism product. You must choose itinerary elements which best fit the market and traveller demands.
- Know your **target market segments**, and their differing travel styles (e.g., the difference between European and American travel styles).
- It is important to **manage clients' expectations**. You must deliver what you promise. When in doubt, under-promise and over-deliver.
- Make sure you are **sustainable throughout the supply chain** (accommodation, restaurants, transportation, etc.). MEET consumers and trade partners will all cast a critical eye over this aspect.
- When **determining a price** for your product, it's important to survey or benchmark similar products in the market. Understand also that the price will impact on how the product is perceived. In this respect, it's just as important to avoid underpricing a product as it is to avoid overpricing it.
- **Invest in high-quality visuals** (e.g., photographs, videos) and high-quality copy when describing and marketing your product.

⁴⁵ Meet manual a guide to plan and promote ecotourism

⁴⁶ Meet manual a guide to plan and promote ecotourism

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, sustainable ecotourism product/ ecojourney development:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 4, 10, 20, 24, 25, 29, 50</p> |
|---|--|

4.4. How to create Cultural Routes

Now the question is:

HOW CAN I DESIGN CULTURAL ROUTES?

First you have to go through phases 1-5 of the conceptualization roadmap and to gather the necessary baseline information. Remember that soft tourism products are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit.

Cultural Routes raise travellers' awareness of the value of **cultural resources** and **landscapes**. The responsible and sustainable use of the resources of the Cultural Routes is ensured through environment-friendly formats such as **biking** and **hiking** tours.

But there are also **innovative offers** such as **culinary tours** that promote a **slower form** of tourism. **Slow tourism** is a new trend in tourism development. It combines sustainable tourism (which means that economic, environmental and social aspects are essential) and responsible tourism. The idea of "slow" is linked to culture, cuisine, nature and society. The main aim is living in harmony with nature⁴⁷.

The development of a Cultural Route requests the following steps:

- (1) Defining a theme that is representative of European values and common to several countries in Europe;
- (2) Identifying heritage elements, which can involve tangible and intangible elements;
- (3) Creating a European network with legal status of at least three European countries;
- (4) Coordinating common activities in the main field of activities;
- (5) Creating common visibility to ensure recognizability and coherence of the route across Europe.

The following classification of cultural itineraries can be defined⁴⁸:

⁴⁷ Council of Europe - Route 4U, 2020

⁴⁸ BEST MED Sustainable Path and Cultural Routes Model – MED S&C Path

- The main motivation: pilgrimage, religious, spiritual; trekking, sport, adventure; culture and cultural encounters; commercial.
- Type of assets: natural landscape; history, artistic, cultural
- Historical background of the itinerary: historical roads Vs recently developed trails.
- Geographical scale: local, regional, national, transnational, transcontinental.
- Legal entity: recognised or not by public institutions.

In the step-by-step guide to the Cultural Routes of the CoE (2015), the following territorial shapes and main categories of Cultural Routes can be defined⁴⁹:

- **Territorial pattern routes:** this category includes Cultural Routes that involve different territories sharing the theme on which the route is founded, as in the case of the Iler Vitis Route or the Iron Route in the Pyrenees. A series of paths is generally established to propose exploration of the different parts of the route.
- **Linear pattern routes:** these are defined by historical infrastructure, such as land and maritime trade routes. These routes, which were used for travel over the centuries, are now used to create relationships between distant territories. The routes in fact structured villages, towns, castles and buildings, which were connected through the presence of the route.
- **Reticular pattern (archipelago) routes:** these routes are composed of individual items or aggregated goods, presenting different scales, and connected by a theme. In this case, routes are not characterized by territorial continuity, and they may be called “virtual routes”. Sometimes, depending on the theme of the route, linear routes overlap with archipelago pattern routes.

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, sustainable cultural routes development:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 22, 23, 24, 25, 48, 49</p> |
|---|--|

4.5. How to create Slow Tourism Products & Packages

Now the question is:

⁴⁹ BEST MED Sustainable Path and Cultural Routes Model – MED S&C Path

HOW CAN I DESIGN SOFT TOURISM PRODUCTS?

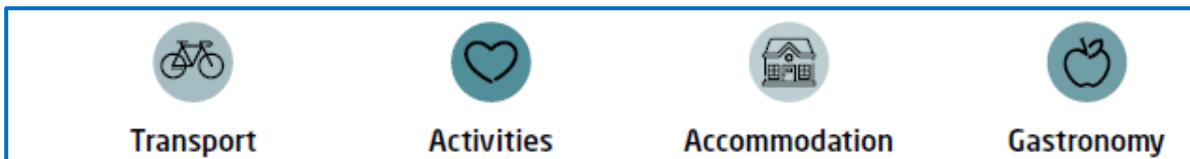
First you have to pass the phases 1-5 of the conceptualization roadmap and to gather the necessary baseline information. Remember that soft tourism products are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit.

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR A TOUR PACKAGE TO BE CONSIDERED SLOW?

Source. *Med Pearls Manual*

For a tour package to be considered Slow, it must meet a minimum of compulsory requirements. It is considered that a Slow Tourism package has to be coherent and balanced, so compliance with a minimum of 40% of requirements in each category is recommended. The more requirements the package meets, the closer to the “Slow Tourism philosophy” it will be. Each category details the minimum requirements to be met. The technical checklists are classified into different sections, which present the traits that would conform to a perfect Slow Tourism package.

These sections are transport, accommodation, activities and food. In addition, there is a section devoted to general aspects such as those related to the package itself or the DMC or Incoming Travel Agency offering the package.



There are a set of general criteria that need to be fulfilled

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Please check Checklist 1 → General Checklist Annex No.:7 |
|---|--|

There are a set of transport criteria that need to be fulfilled:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Please check Checklist 1 → Transport Checklist Annex No.:8 |
|---|--|

There are a set of food criteria that need to be fulfilled:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Please check Checklist 1 → Food Checklist Annex No.:9 |
|---|---|

There are a set of activities criteria that need to be fulfilled:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please check Checklist 1</p> <p>→ Activities Checklist Annex No.:10</p> |
|---|---|

There are a set of accommodation criteria that need to be fulfilled:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Please check Checklist 1</p> <p>→ Accommodation Checklist Annex No.:11</p> |
|---|--|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, sustainable soft tourism product development:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 5, 7, 9, 26, 28</p> |
|---|--|

4.6. How to create Sustainable Tourism Experiences

Now the question is:

HOW CAN I DESIGN SUSTAINABLE, AUTHENTIC TOURISM EXPERIENCES?

First you have to pass the phases 1-5 of the conceptualization roadmap and to gather the necessary baseline information. Remember that soft tourism products are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit.

The “Guide to Develop Experiences⁵⁰” defines successful experiences development as follows:

Authentic Visitor Experiences are an opportunity for tourism businesses to go beyond delivering traditional tourism products based on goods (e.g., rooms or food) and services. Visitors are looking for more than just a packaged sightseeing tour, or an attraction or location.

To give visitors something to remember and tell their friends about, experiences need to be at the heart of any **customer proposition**. This will help provide an enjoyable, memorable day out that not only meets expectations, but informs, entertains, educates and motivates by getting

⁵⁰ The Guide to Develop Experiences the English National Park Experience Collection

people participating in more hands-on activities and experiencing local lifestyles, customs, traditions and culture.

This can do this by giving visitors the opportunity to:

Learn – Provide visitors with an opportunity to challenge themselves to learn a traditional skill, new things to do, about who we are and how we live. E.g., in a workshop for the production of traditional goods and crafts.

Do – Provide visitors with an opportunity to do as well as watch by being an active hands-on participant in an activity.

Feel like a local - by being immersed in local places, culture, traditions and connecting with people who will tell and share stories, skills and the community way of life.

An **Authentic Experience** must inspire and delight by:

- Leaving a lasting memory
- Differentiating your product from its competition
- Displaying innovation
- Standing out as unique and/or special



Photo Med Pearls



Photo Med Pearls

What is a real experience?

When deciding where to go, visitors look at the **whole picture** – accommodation, eating out, shopping, and things to do.

Collaboration with other **like-minded** tourism **businesses** in established or **innovative ways** creates **opportunities** to devise your own authentic visitor experiences.

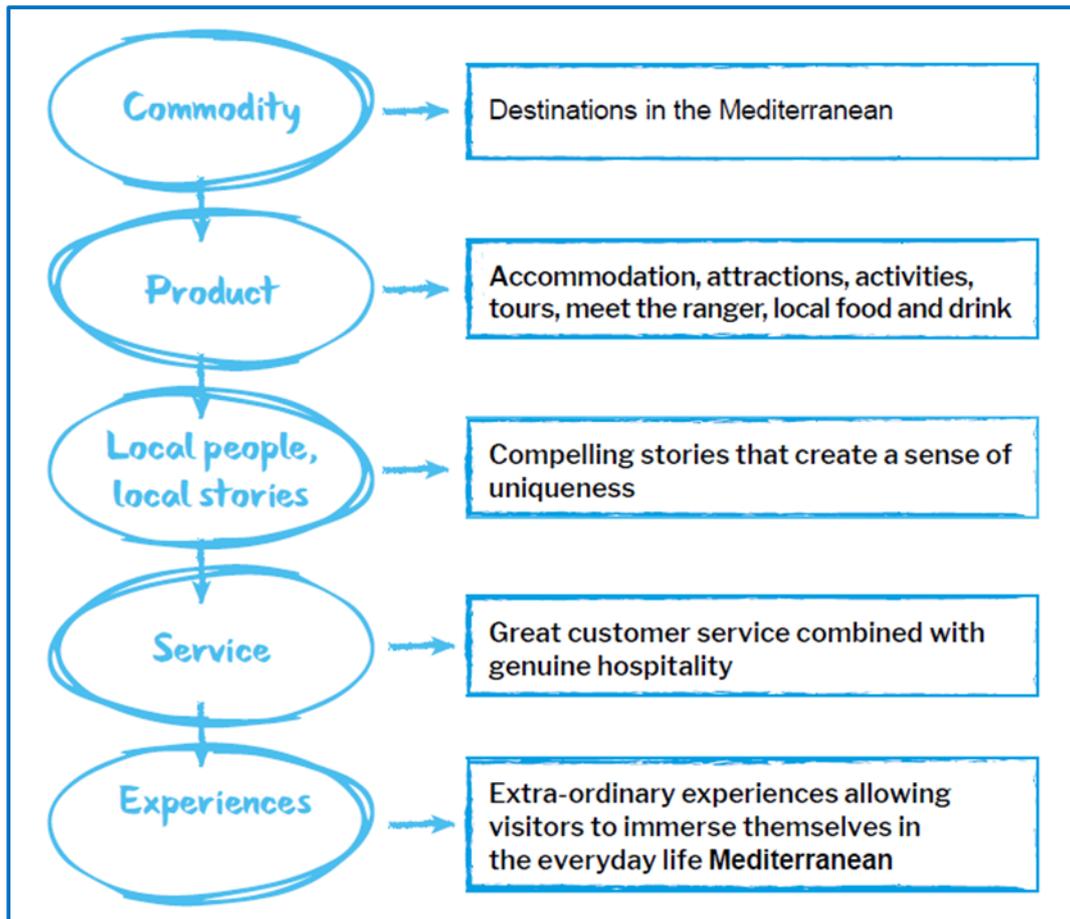
This means making sure your combined experiences can be **booked** easily in one place, so have an offer that will attract new visitors, bringing them back again and again.

This means you need to **have a clear understanding** of **guests' likes and interests** so you can tailor experiences that more effectively meet the needs of your target audiences.

Source The Guide to Develop Experiences the English National Park Experience Collection

This requires a focus on four **interlinked elements** including **product**, **local people** and **stories**, and **service**, as illustrated in the following chart:

Source *The Guide to Develop Experiences the English National Park Experience Collection*



HOW TO DEVELOP AN EXPERIENCE?

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please check Annex 12 : Some steps to think about when developing your Visitors Experience.</p> <p>Experience Checklist Annex No.:12</p> |
|---|---|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating innovative, sustainable tourism experiences development:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 7, 12, 24, 25, 26</p> |
|---|---|

4.7. How to gamify a Destination

Now the question is:

HOW CAN I DESIGN A GAMING PRODUCT FOR THE DESTINATION?

First you have to go through phases 1-5 of the conceptualization roadmap and to gather the necessary baseline information. Remember that soft tourism products are more sustainable and create a higher level of community benefit.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Gamification is culturally sensitive – we do not all have the same sense of what is humorous. That’s why it is crucial to carefully go through the product development steps and develop a tailor-made, culturally sensitive gamifying approach for your destination⁵¹.</p> |
|---|---|

WHAT IS NEEDED TO GAMIFY A DESTINATION?

Before gamifying, be certain you need it! Be aware of your goal, strength, weaknesses and available resources (culturally and humanly speaking), to be sure the best way to achieve your goal is by gamifying⁵².

- (1) The first thing needed is the **story** you want to **share** and how you **engage your target**. Everything comes from the narrative you are setting out. The gaming techniques you will pick, the medium you will elect to carry your story out, the technology you will use, and the communication campaign: everything comes from that storyline.
- (2) Then you need the **content**. This includes **edited content** (informative, heritage and nature-related, etc.) and **entered data** (statistics on flows, user data, etc.). The public is also the creator of content. The mass of this content becomes richer over time, and it’s important to identify the content that will be delivered and used.
- (3) With a **storyline** and **content**, you will have the big picture and can use gamification to increase audiences and retention!

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES?

The **main challenge** is to be **connected** with the **context**, the actual visitor use and the tourism infrastructure/offer the destination is dealing with. Playing with all the layers of the territory, making them readable and visible, may be a challenge for the game designer.

⁵¹ <https://www.thinkdigital.travel/opinion/how-to-gamify-the-visitor-experience/>

⁵² <https://www.thinkdigital.travel/opinion/how-to-gamify-the-visitor-experience/>

The **other challenge** is to market the experience you want to create and communicate from the beginning and to make sure there is sufficient budgetary funding granted for all phases of the technical and design development of your gamified experiences. Communication is key to generating interest and to getting the support of the targeted tourism stakeholders or local organisations.

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration, have a look at our practice examples.



View **our practice examples** illustrating innovative, sustainable gamifying tourism product development:

→ Practice examples No.: **11, 15, 16, 17**

CHAPTER 5 PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND DESTINATIONS

Marketing the sustainable tourism product or the sustainable tourism destination also requires careful consideration and decisions made in the early stage of development will be crucial to its future success and sustainability. But it's also very important to market the assets, to identify the USP – the unique characteristics in terms of authentic and sustainable tourism destinations in the Mediterranean, to use the right marketing tools and marketing channels and to hit the right target markets and target groups for your product. The following chapter is also one of the most relevant ones and concentrates on the successful promotion, marketing and commercialisation of the sustainable tourism products and destinations.

5.1. The Mediterranean: A Sustainable Tourism Destination

This section gives a short overview of the USP of the Mediterranean region as an upcoming sustainable tourism destination and highlights the USP of the participating MED countries/destinations from the sustainable tourism point of view (*source: MEDUSA Marketing Strategy.*)

HOW SHOULD THE MED DESTINATIONS BE PROMOTED AND POSITIONED ON THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MARKET?

It's not only the marketing of your sustainable tourism product, which is important for its success, what is crucial is to include and flag the sustainable tourism highlights and assets in your marketing and promotion activities.

As we already learned in chapter 3.4.5, today's demanding and discerning tourists don't want just to observe, they wish to experience places by (1) Connecting with local people; (2) Immersing themselves in local culture; (3) Enjoying local food and drink; and (4) Exploring local geography and places of interest and natural highlights.

This **Experiential Tourism** is about three main elements: the **people**, the **place**, and the **activity**.

Therefore, it is crucial to focus on the marketing of the authentic and unique features of the landscapes, the cultural values, and the living traditions of the people in the destinations.

Contemporary **travellers** increasingly **want to do more** than simply 'see' a place; it's about what they did while they were there. They want to **live it, breathe it, touch it, become part of it**.

In the following the key characteristics and assets from the sustainable tourism point of view of the MED destinations are presented (*Source Marketing Strategy MEDUSA project*).

CATALONIA



Credits: Catalunya.com



Credits: Catalunya.com



Credits: Catalunya.com

Catalonia is a **diverse region** on the Spanish mainland. From the high alpine Pyrenees to extensive green forests in the low mountain ranges and agriculturally-used plains to its wild and rocky coast, sandy beaches, and **580 km** of coastline. Full of culture, traditions and culinary experiences.

- **Pyrenees, high mountain landscapes** up to 3000m, unspoilt nature, remoteness, and charming mountain villages.
- **Costa Brava.** Beside large sandy beaches and tourist resorts lies still untouched nature: numerous hidden rocky bays, mountains, cliffs, peninsulas, pine and cork oak forests, and romantic fishing villages.
- **Living traditions:** festivals and traditions, some of them declared Immaterial Heritage by **UNESCO**, **traditional agriculture** of wine, olive oil, almonds, and culinary traditions, preserved **medieval villages**, **old monasteries**, and ancient archaeological sites.
- **Unspoilt nature** in the Ebro Delta – **one of the largest wetlands** on the **Mediterranean Coast**.
- **Protected areas: 18 natural parks** and **more than 30% of the region is protected**, more than half of these are mountainous landscapes, there is one volcanic landscape, wetlands, a river delta and marine protected areas, with **5,000 different** species and more than **200 lakes**.
- **ST infrastructure: 9,000 km** of signposted hiking trails, **6,400 km** of mountain bike trails, **2,400** rural accommodation businesses and thematic routes (culinary routes, routes with history, pilgrim routes).
- **Green ways** – a network of accessible paths along abandoned railway lines designed for open-air recreational purposes and aimed at non-motorized vehicle users.
- **Vies Braves:** network of marine and open water routes used for sporting, leisure, and educational activities - 30 different routes all along the Catalan coast.



Credits: Catalunya.com



Credits: Catalunya.com



Credits: Catalunya.com

PUGLIA



Credits: Pugliaventura.com



*Credits:
Agenziapugliapromozione.it*



Credits: Pugliawallpapers.com

The Apulia region, “La Puglia”, is a region of extraordinary colours and beautiful **diversity** of **nature, culture, history**, and breath-taking landscapes. It’s bordered by two seas, the Ionian and Adriatic, with **800 km** of **coastline**.

- The Apulia region has a very strong soft (ST) infrastructure system: **9** official walking routes (many ancient Mediterranean routes), **6 cycling routes**, and **12 routes of wine and tastes**.
- **Authentic culinary offerings:** 188 didactic Masserie farms, 10,000 local restaurants of which 2,000 have an excellence certificate, 1,000 farmhouses, 400 products with controlled and guaranteed origin, 10 enogastronomic museums, 31 cities of olive oil, 900 olive oil mills, and 15 wine cities.
- Gargano peninsula in the north – the only mountain range above 1,000m with **coves** and sandy beaches on the coast and **forest** and **ancient villages with winding alleys** and white houses inland.
- **Remote canyons**, crypts, sea caves and shallow beaches with luscious vegetation in *Magna Grecia*.
- **Local architecture, traditions, and products:** *Trullis* (traditional drystone huts) enclosed by **vineyards** and **olive groves**, underground oil mills, and pottery and fishing villages, where traditions and customs are still upheld today.
- Salento, the green peninsula with **clay cliffs and caves**, sandy beaches, one of the **clearest seas in the Mediterranean**, and charming **fishing villages**.
- **Rich cultural heritage:** 4 UNESCO cultural heritage sites and cultural influences from the whole Mediterranean basin and beyond, ancient pilgrimage routes etc.
- **Protected areas and natural diversity:** Apulia region is part of Natura **2000 Network EU**, with **2** national parks, **3** marine protected areas, **16** national reserves, **18** regional protected areas.



Credit: gsr-urlaub



Credit: wetheitalians



Credit: tourismopeschici

LEBANON



Credits: MEDUSA project



Credits: Lebanontours.info



Credits: Lebanontrail.org

The mix of **Mediterranean coast**, rugged **mountain peaks**, ancient **cedar forest** and its **diverse cultural** and **culinary experiences** makes Lebanon an insider's tip.

- **Diverse landscapes:** (1) Lebanon mountain range (up to 3088m, carved by narrow and deep gorges, crossed by dense forests, protected in seven different nature reserves), (2) Anti-Lebanon mountain range (steep slopes, sparsely populated and developed).
- **225 km coastline** in the north with mountainous and rocky coast and in the south preserved sandy beaches (Tyre Nature Park), in between big cities and many privatized and built-up beaches.
- **Beqaa valley** (fertile soil, **traditional agriculture** – tomatoes, olives, grapes etc., scattered with farms and small villages, **wineries**, Roman temples).
- **Hiking trail infrastructure:** **470 km-long Lebanon mountain trail**, and many hiking trails scattered all over the country.
- **15 nature reserves**, most of them in the Lebanon mountain range, covering forest, one coastal nature reserve, and one island nature reserve.
- **Rich cultural heritage:** ancient cities, with architecture going back to the Romans, Phoenicians, Ottomans, and French, as well as post-independence developments.
- **Culinary experiences:** Lebanese food is considered one of the most popular Middle Eastern cuisines – **the sophistication** and **finesse** of **European cuisine** with the exotic aromas of **Middle Eastern spices**.
- **Traditional handicrafts**, still practised today - glass blowing, ceramics, jewellery, delicately embroidered textiles, and garments woven with gold and silver thread.



Credit: Lebanontrail.org



Credit: middle East eye



Credit: Lebanontrail.org

JORDAN



Credits: Jordantrail.org



Credits: Barbara Fritz



Credits: Wildjordan.com

Inspiring desert landscapes, world heritage sites, a well-managed network of protected areas and its cultural diversity make Jordan a sustainable adventure tourism destination.

- **Diverse landscapes:** Impressive desert landscapes with oasis, forests, mountains, and coastline.
- In the west, a **highland area of arable land** and Mediterranean **evergreen forest** that drops into the Jordan Rift Valley, which contains the lush riverbeds of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. The mountainous region in the northwest is cloaked in **forest**, while further south and east the vegetation becomes **scrubbier and steppe**.
- 26 km of rather built-up and unfruitful coastline on the Gulf of Aqaba, but a very **rich underwater ecosystem** with 500 species of coral and over 1,200 species of fish.
- **Strong system of protected areas with ecotourism infrastructure: 13 protected areas**, one **wetland** reserve conserving a unique **oasis**, many small **forest** nature reserves with **mountainous** terrain, one **canyon** reserve with freshwater streams, the biggest nature reserve (Dana) sweeps down in a series of **mountain ridges** from a **1,500m** high plateau to the **desert plains**, and the **Wadi Rum** desert wilderness with huge mountains and **broad sandy wadis**.
- **650 km Jordan Trail** from north to south across 52 villages, 730 km Jordan Bike Trail crossing the country, **RSCN hiking trails** in the nature parks (mostly guided), and Jordan Eco Park.
- **Rich cultural heritage:** Many **religious sites** (e.g., Mount Nebo, Sea of Galilee), Medieval Arab architecture, and Petra the ancient city of the Nabataeans.
- **Local products and living traditions:** Bedouin tribes, traditional handcrafts with new designs – silver crafts, pottery, textiles, and culinary experiences.



Credit: Wildjordan.com



Credit: Lonelyplanet.com



Credits: Visitpetra.jo

TUNISIA



Credits: Discovertunisia.com



Credits: Discovertunisia.com



Credits: Discovertunisia.com

Cultural heritage, arts and crafts and incredible extremes of landscape – forested coastlines, Saharan sand seas, the Atlas Mountains, 1300 km of coastline and protected areas.

- Diverse natural beauty.
- North/north-eastern part, **Atlas Mountain** range up to 1,544m, mostly covered by **forest** protruding into the sea, **fertile plains** along the coast.
- In the south, northern reaches of the **Sahara Desert**.
- 1,300 km of coastline, in the north occupied by **industrial zones** and big cities, **fishing ports**, **vast swamps** on Gabes Gulf; and in the south little developed with **desert foothills**.
- Broadening coastal plain “The Sahel” in central eastern Tunisia is among the world’s premier areas for **olive cultivation**, and other **agriculture** like pomegranates, wine, and dates.
- Matmata – **Berberian culture** and heritage with troglodyte **homes dug into the rocks** and hidden passageways.
- There might be hiking trails and climbing sites but **rarely with signage** and **official information** available offline and online.
- **Rich cultural heritage:** Roman or Phoenician buildings or ruins (e.g., City of Dougga, Makthar), influence of Islamic architecture.
- **Living** traditions, traditional oriental cuisine, local handicrafts (pottery, carpets, traditional handicrafts).
- **17 National parks, 27 nature reserves.**



Credits: Discovertunisia.com



Credits: Discovertunisia.com



Credits: Discovertunisia.com

- Those core characteristics create an essential cornerstone for the successful marketing and definition the USP of the MED destinations.
- Adding the core characteristics of the 5 destinations, the following could summarize the unique potential for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Mediterranean region.

The **Unique Selling Proposition (USP)** of the 5 MED Destinations:

A unique combination of

- cultural diversity and natural beauty,
- spectacular landscapes,
- different climate zones,
- authentic traditions,
- unique cultural landscapes and practices, and
- historical sites,
- connected through the history, shared values, the Mediterranean art of living and
- the warm hospitality of the people,

all in all, makes the 5 MED destinations a **treasure chest** among tourism destinations.

5.2.Sustainable Tourism Markets & Target Groups

When you have developed your tourism product and unique selling proposition (USP), you will need to check if your tourism product “fits” in today’s competitive tourism market and can become a viable sustainable product or destination.

CHECK IF YOUR PRODUCT FITS THE COMPETITIVE INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MARKET!

The first step is to define your target markets and the cultural and business requirements of the target markets.

Based on the outcomes of the market research of the Med Pearls and the MEDUSA project the key target markets for the sustainable tourism products originated in the Mediterranean Region are the following international target markets:

Figure 15: Target markets



The German-speaking market (Germany, Austria, and Switzerland) especially is a very interesting target market for the product authentic culture, nature, and adventure tourism.

Generally, the target group can be divided into two groups of origin: (1) individual nature and culturally interested visitors that mainly love to hike, trek and explore; and (2) specialist tour operators offering different types of authentic nature and culture experiences. Once standards, services and tourism infrastructure have been improved in some destinations, the target group

can certainly be enlarged, for example, to include families with children wanting to explore the “Mediterranean Sustainable Tourism Treasures” (Source Marketing Strategy MEDUSA Project).

Table 6: Target group: individual travellers Table 7: Target group: specialist tour operators

| Individual Ecotourists; Hikers & Trekkers & Adventurers | Specialist International Tour Operators |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in: • Adventure; natural hot spots • The outdoors, hiking, biking, and trekking • Culture, living traditions • Local authentic experiences and encounters with the local community • Biodiversity of flora and fauna | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist tour operators (eg. (Forum Anders Reisen), offering higher priced packages and interested in: • Sustainability, culture, authenticity, nature and hiking • Adventure • Mountain hiking & trekking • Cultural and natural experiences |

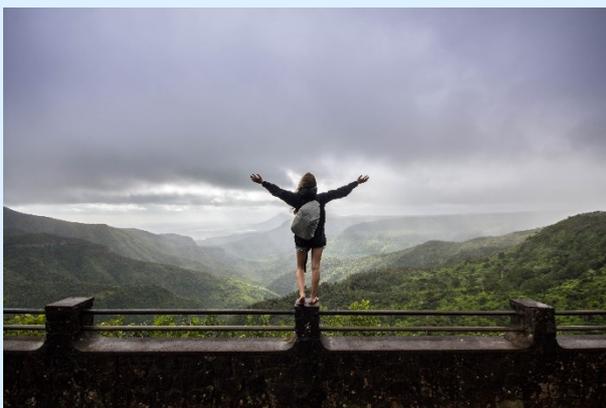
It’s important to keep an eye on changing trends in the tourism industry and to see which trend resonates both for your business and for your type of customers, i.e., customers are becoming more concerned about sustainability and the environment.

Therefore, it’s crucial to take a close look at the potential target group of the sustainable traveller, to better understand his/her needs, motivation and interests.

WHO ARE THE KEY TARGET CONSUMERS FOR SLOW TRAVEL AND SUSTAINABLE ADVENTURE⁵³?

While it naturally involves generalisations, as well as trying to predict future behaviours, needs and motivations, slow adventure customers are considered likely to share many or all the following traits, reflective of current consumer trends:

⁵³ The guidelines for creating and narrating the slow adventure product



Photos from Unsplash

- Being **open-minded** and well-educated.
- Having **above-average income**, and wanting 'quality and value', not cheap.
- **Decisions** increasingly likely to be **made by females**.
- A **need for elements of privacy**: as an antidote to sharing actions and photos through smartphones.
- But with a desire to acquire and, crucially, **share social capital**.
- Aspiring nomads who seek **greater elements of simplicity** in increasingly complicated lives.
- A willingness to pursue **more ethical travel** that directly supports local businesses.
- **Travelling with 'empathy'** – with respect, responsibility, compassion and understanding for others.
- A **desire to 'get lost'** and find themselves.
- A **move towards a collaborative ethic**: more about 'access' than 'ownership'.
- **Yearning** for a sense of mastery – learning to be competent **outdoor folk**.

Source: The guidelines for creating and narrating the slow adventure product

Although there are obvious difficulties associated with generalizing across different countries, two key customer typologies could be identified:

MILLENNIALS

First, there are 'millennials': tech-savvy bloggers, who are willing, addicted even, to sharing personal information, photos and feelings. Plugged into technology since they were very young

children, they are the epitome of the modern consumer, with a whole range of goods and services that are specifically packaged to attract them. The packaging of slow adventures is a great example.

They are perhaps epitomised by the hipster sub-culture – in the UK at least. Associated with affluent, middle-class millennials who live in gentrifying urban areas, they are characterised by more progressive political views, a desire for all things organic and artisanal and by perceived alternative lifestyles.

BABY-BOOMERS

Second, there are ‘baby boomers’: older, affluent consumers with a passion for trying something new and with more time to indulge in slower experiences. But they are also demanding consumers and often switched on: 64% of internet users aged 50- 64 in the US are on Facebook (Pew Research Centre, 2015).

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For more inspiration have a look on our practise examples.

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate destinations with specific target groups for adventure and slow travel:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 32, 43</p> |
|--|--|

5.3.Principles of Commercialization

This paragraph gives practical guidelines on how to commercialize sustainable tourism products and destinations. **One factor is good pricing.**

PRICING FOR PROFITABILITY⁵⁴

There are a number of factors that influence your final selling price of your tourism product:

- How much are people willing to pay for your product?
- How much do your competitors charge?
- How much does your product or service cost you to deliver (operating costs)?
- How much do you need to pay others who are selling on your behalf (commissions)?
- How much profit do you want to make?
- How will seasonality affect your pricing structure?
- How could you add value to your product without affecting your profit?

⁵⁴ <https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business>



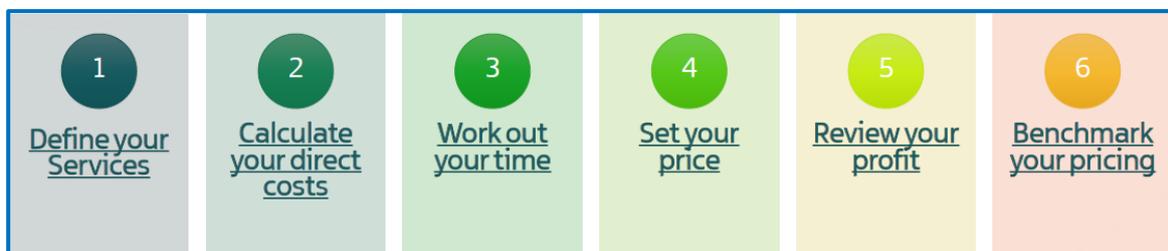
The Golden Rule for Pricing

The golden rule to pricing is to make sure that people want to buy your product and that distributors want to sell it. It is essential that **you strike the right pricing balance.**

You need to understand all of the different elements that make up your final price. You also need to be consistent with what price you are offering and to who when bookings are made.

The following chart gives an overview of the 6 steps for pricing for profit.

Source: MEDUSA project business planning workshop



Get more information on pricing for profit.



Please have a look on the Checklist: **Pricing for Profit Tips.**
Annex No. 13: Pricing for Profit

PRICING TO KEEP COMPETITIVE⁵⁵

- **Discounted Prices** – You might want to discount to attract immediate business. This could be in the off season or last minute. Don't imagine that this will give you a competitive edge because your competitors can easily do the same and will probably be keeping an eye on your prices as you should also do with theirs. Discounting can often de-value your product if not used sparingly and carefully.
- **Adding Value** – The concept of this is to increase the value of your product to make it more attractive and give a competitive edge. This may be offering an extra such as a complimentary upgrade, a bottle of champagne, free parking, early check in etc. It also could be bundling your product with others to offer an enhanced experience that is the right fit for your shared target market.
- **Bundling Your Target Market** – To effectively offer you customers a bundled experience you need to have an in-depth knowledge of what experiences your target market want; that is complimentary to your own offer and then find other tourism products in your region that would strengthen your offer.

⁵⁵ <https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business/>

Be careful to choose carefully so that your bundle partners have the same high standards as you and are people you want to work with. Once you have identified the potential partner for your bundle you will need to consider the terms of your agreement, the price, how you will jointly promote the experience and the details of the operation.

Here you find a bit further information.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Check the 20 key strategies to increase revenues for online travel Agencies here</p> <p>Check the 5 revenue models for travel start-ups here.</p> <p><i>Source MEDUSA business & marketing plan</i></p> |
|---|---|

5.4. Marketing Tools & Marketing Channels

One of the biggest decisions that have to be taken is to decide which marketing tools will be selected to present your product or destination to the market and the to define your route to market, or the sales channels you will use to sell your product. Digital marketing becomes more and more an essential element of the marketing mix.

This section gives on overview of marketing channels and introduces a selection of marketing tools.

5.4.1. Marketing Tools

This chapter is one of the key chapters and describes the appropriate set of effective marketing tools to promote the Sustainable Tourism Products and Destinations from the Mediterranean.

For the marketing tools, the “less is more” principle applies. Better to concentrate on a few marketing tools and do this well, instead of trying to produce complex promotion materials and lose valuable time and resources for promotion.

The chart illustrates the set of the most important marketing tools:

Figure 16: Marketing tools



(1) SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING⁵⁶

Digital marketing becomes more and more an essential element of the marketing mix. The Social Media Marketing is a branch of online marketing applied to social networks. This practice increases the brand's visibility and engages directly with the potential consumer through visuals, competitions and giveaways, as well as valuable insights and information, or sharing updates and the latest news on the following platforms:

- Instagram
- Facebook,
- YouTube,
- Twitter,
- Pinterest,
- Snapchat,
- Tik Tok is growing rapidly and is particularly recommended for those who want to reach users under the age of 30.

⁵⁶ <https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business/>

Social Media Marketing (SMM) is mainly based on: Creation of a space of discussion, where to interact with visitors

- Opportunity to share contents (videos, pictures, memories, etc)
- Challenges and competitions to attract the attention of the users

SMM promote value co-creation by allowing users to actively contribute to constructing the narrative of the brand (storytelling strategy). A well-managed SMM could represent great support for the Search Engine Marketing (SEM), by increasing the popularity of the main website.

Have a look at the 10 **Tips to Develop or Improve your Social Media Strategy before you get started**⁵⁷.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please have a look on the Checklist: 10 Tips for your Social Media Strategy.</p> <p>→ Annex No. 13: Tips online marketing strategy</p> |
|---|---|

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The **first step** to implement the SMM is to **perform an audit** and to gather some important information, such as:

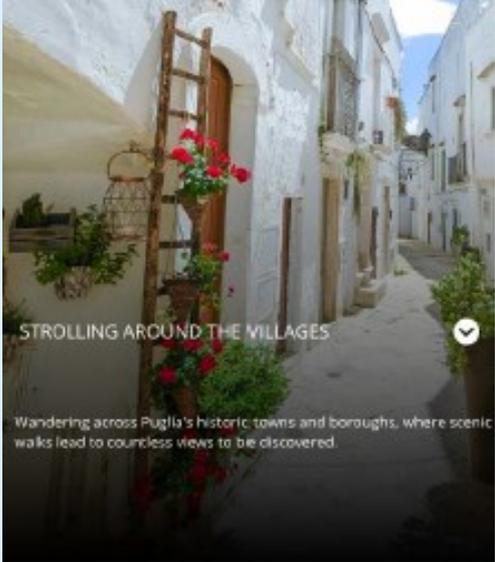
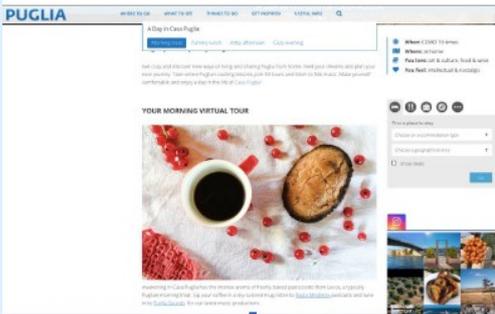
- (1) Which social networks bring more value?
- (2) What kind of content do competitors post?
- (3) What is the best style in which to communicate?
- (4) What types of content are posted by our company on different channels? How frequently?
- (5) How would the SMM strategy be monitored?
- (6) Once the SMM is launched:
- (7) Consider creating and always sharing videos, photos and multimedia with high technical quality, in order to guarantee a good experience for the users.
- (8) Be consistent with the message spread among the different platforms
- (9) Engage users with games, competitions, and campaigns.
- (10) Use hashtags to stimulate online word-of-mouth and promote the role of brand ambassador among users.
- (11) Consider managing paid partnerships with influencers and digital nomads
- (12) Boost the shared content with paid promotions and ads
- (13) Budget: Boost the shared content with paid promotions and ads

⁵⁷ <https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business/>

For more information, please check the Social Media Marketing factsheet:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please check Innovative Marketing Factsheet:</p> <p>→ Annex No. 14: Social Media Marketing Factsheet</p> |
|---|---|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Puglia -Engaging online promotion (https://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/cam/27/en/Historic-villages)</p> <p>Puglia: a region in southern Italy with an extended coastline, UNESCO sites and fascinating cultural and natural attractions. The authenticity and contact with the local culture is a boosted element within the overall tourist offering and marketing.</p> <p>The engaging online promotion reflects a strategy that uses culture as a basic element of development and management of the destination.</p> <p>The main practice used is storytelling, emphasising the authenticity of the places and their inhabitants.</p> <p>Among the various sections of the website, particularly engaging for users is the section called “A Day in Casa Puglia”</p> |
|  | <p>(https://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/espe/212/en/A-Day-in-Casa-Puglia).</p> |

Snapshots from the website of the campaign

For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate the use of storytelling in marketing:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 41, 45, 46</p> |
|---|--|

(2) DIGITAL PLATFORM

To compete effectively you will need a digital platform or website to act as a **shop window** to **your product/product range/destination**. Having a website gives you the opportunity to brand your business online and gives you full control over the website content and style.

Developing the specification for your website and deciding on the level of investment required will be one of the most difficult decisions you will face. Creating a website can be expensive, especially if you need to employ the assistance of a web designer.



Remember that a **professional website** is your shop window to the traveler and presents a **key element** for the **success** of your business!

The cost and need for a website should be considered in the planning and development stages of your business. If you are employing a web designer, don't forget to check his references - other similar projects the web developer has worked on.

HOW CAN YOU PLAN AND DEVELOP A SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL PORTAL?

The following is a list of suggestions can help you get the best value service⁵⁸:

- 1) A website with an attractive and professional finish
- 2) A site that is simple to use and has strong images and calls to action e.g., Book now
- 3) Ask for a Content Management System (CMS) so that you can update content after the designer has gone
- 4) The site should have a responsive design and display properly across various devices including mobiles, tablets and desktop computers
- 5) Discuss the integration and need for a booking engine and availability calendar
- 6) Be sure of costs of hosting your website and using a domain name
- 7) Keep your content fresh and engaging
- 8) Full contact details, booking details and conditions
- 9) Online booking system and payment system.

⁵⁸ <https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business>

SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD PHOTOGRAPHY



Source: Photo by [長久](#) on [Unsplash](#)

CHECKLIST:

TOP 10 TIPS FOR TAKING PHOTOS

- Makes sure camera settings are correct
- Clean lens
- Think about your photo - the angle, camera height and position of the camera
- Shoot through something
- Think outside the box
- Use natural light where possible
- Frame the photo and find something unique to brand
- Try tilting also as the camera doesn't have to be straight
- Don't over edit!!!
- Get passionate about your business and products you are selling and use your creativity!

Source: <https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business/>



Find more information get inspired by the getting the most from your **photography toolkit** developed by Northern Ireland Tourism - [here](#)

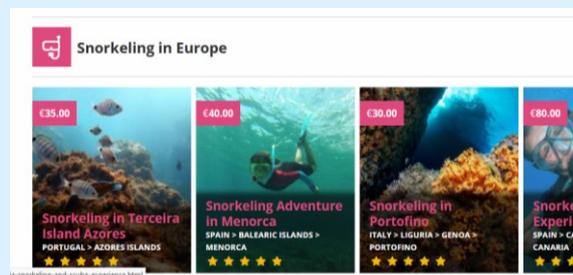
GET INSPIRED BY GOOD PRACTISE EXAMPLES!

Practice Example 1: Wildsea Europe (<https://www.wildsea.eu>)

Best practice example for a webplatform promoting marine ecotourism experiences in Europe



- Developed within the framework of the EU Cosme Programme
- Promoting destinations, marine activities, marine wildlife, science and conservation
- Promoting tourism packages offered by local tour operators including pricing, and information and contact info-
- Run by and managed by one of the project partners **Travelecoology**
- **Pro:** excellent marketing platform for local tour operators and thematic travel packages (marine ecotourism experiences)
- **Con:** Constant maintenance and support and input needed



For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.



View **our practice examples** presenting **creative** and well-designed **digital platforms**.

Practice examples No. **31, 32, 52**

(3) NEWSLETTER AND EMAIL MARKETING

Newsletter and email marketing are a very classic tool for customer care, that perfectly works for destinations, accommodations businesses and tour operators to inform about happenings, news from the destinations and to inspire travellers. Set aside 2 hours a week to develop content for brief weekly news from the destination. Use great picture and less text – and be creative and innovative!

The most credible advertising or endorsements come from people we know, so it makes sense to help your past guests become Ambassadors for your brand. You may try to cultivate return clients by:

DIRECT MAIL: Sending out personalized mail such as Christmas cards or birthday cards or physical photos of past guests (of their experience on a trip with you) on the one-year anniversary of their trip.

Example: A vineyard in the Douro Valley which hosts agritourists (who participate in the harvest) sends out a bottle of wine from that harvest to past guests on the one-year anniversary of the trip.

Email nurturing is an important tool to keep in touch with you clients and to generate interest from potential new clients.

Email nurturing can help sustainable tourism businesses:

- Increase conversions
- Increase the number of travelers that are likely to buy
- Eliminate travelers who are unlikely to buy

HOW TO COLLECT EMAIL ADDRESSES⁵⁹?

- (1) The first step to traveler (lead) nurturing is to collect the contact information of the lead: the email address. The Can-Spam Act requires email marketers to obtain a person's permission to send them commercial (promotional) emails, in fact it requires their affirmative consent.
- (2) Avoid obtaining illegal email addresses by refraining from purchasing email lists or getting emails from an online directory.
- (3) To ensure you have the affirmative consent of the lead to use their email, it is recommended that you always ask their explicit permission. In the long term, this will help your business because it means the folks receiving your email are genuinely interested in your content. Marketers must also give their audience an opportunity to unsubscribe from any email subscription.
- (4) **Checkboxes** to subscribe to newsletters or promotional emails should be unchecked, allowing the lead to check them.
- (5) **Landing Pages:** Most tourism businesses will use landing pages with gated content to obtain email addresses. A landing page is a website page that a lead lands on, or arrives on, after clicking a link elsewhere, whether that's on your site, another web page or in an email. A landing page typically contains an offer that can be downloaded in exchange for information from the lead — including their email address. This is called gated content. Gated content is a piece of content that is behind what's referred to as a gate or a wall, which is usually a form that the lead has to fill out (e.g., Fill out this form to download our new Tuscany itinerary!).

Types of information that work well as gated content include:

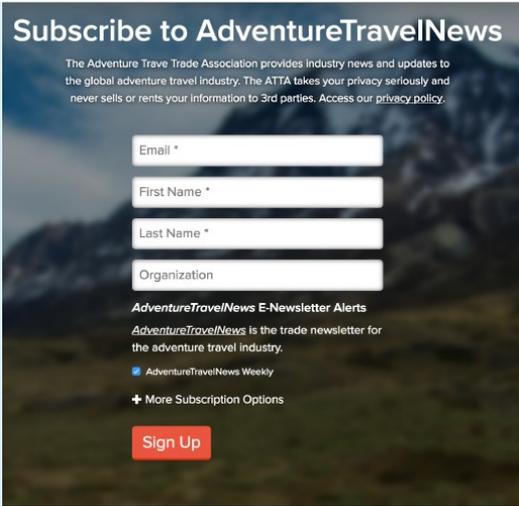
⁵⁹ Atta Cost efficient Offline Marketing

- Detailed trip itineraries
- Packing lists
- E-books and guides about a destination

On the landing page, you can also request other types of information that will help the email marketer identify the lead, segment them, and effectively target them with marketing messages. Types of information that can be requested include:

- When are you traveling?
- Who are you traveling with?
- What is your reason for wanting to visit (country/place)?

GET INSPIRED BY GOOD PRACTISE EXAMPLES!

| | |
|--|---|
|  <p><i>Sign up form on AdventureTravelNews.com</i></p> | <h3>Newsletter Sign-Ups</h3> <p>Newsletter Sign-Ups: A newsletter is a regular email sent out by a company.</p> <p>Tourism travel businesses will typically have newsletter sign-up forms on their websites.</p> <p>The most popular types of content to be included in newsletters are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New stories about the company - new hires, new trips, new destinations etc. – Promotional offers – Giveaways or competitions (Win a trip!) |
|--|---|

For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate how landing pages are used to obtain email addresses.</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 35, 44, 45, 52</p> |
|---|--|

(4) VIDEO CLIPS & IMAGE TRAILER

Videos can be an easy to digest and engaging way of interacting with visitors and potential visitors. Video is versatile so it makes it easy to share across multiple platforms expanding your potential audience. There are several types of videos.

WHAT TYPE OF VIDEO IS GOING TO WORK BEST FOR YOUR MESSAGE?

- Face to camera
- Tips and advice / how to
- Customer testimonials
- Your experience / product
- Event
- User generated content
- Voiceover

When creating your video there are some things you might want to consider such as light, background, audio, positioning and different angles check out our top tips of mobile video production for guidance. There are a various apps you can use to put your video together such as **iMovie** or for the purposes of this we used **Filmora Go**.

HOW TO CREATE AND PROMOTE INNOVATIVE VIDEOS?

- Put your video on You Tube to reach a great audience - YouTube is the world's second largest search engine and third most visited site after Google and Facebook.
- An innovate video concept for destinations is presenting authenticity through impressive local actors so-called testimonials, standing for the spirit and authenticity of their destinations, presenting their individual stories as part of a digital marketing campaign.
- A simple but very efficient tool could an image trailer video or a picture trailer product with great destination images and enriched with promotional slides and underlined with music. Such a trailer based on pictures is easy to produce and could perfectly serve as start-up promotion material for a new product or the new image of a destination.

GET INSPIRED BY GOOD PRACTISE EXAMPLES!

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Check this example for an image trailer of an ecologically run authentic accommodation business in Italy here</p> <p>Check an example for an innovative destination image trailer of Destination Dahar here</p> <p>Check an example for an example of a sustainable product video for the Destination Dahar here</p> |
|---|---|

(5) PRODUCT FLYER & POSTCARDS & BROCHURES⁶⁰

Although marketing is increasingly paperless, there are some marketing materials like flyers and postcards that will probably be used for many years to come. When you use printed materials, make them delightful and memorable.

⁶⁰ ATTA Cost-Effective-Marketing Tactics

HOW CAN YOU PRODUCE MEMORABLE AND COST-EFFICIENT PRINTED MATERIALS?

Flyer. To introduce a new tourism product and new sustainable tourism destination, it is recommended to develop a simple but well-designed flyer that could be easily distributed to all promotion events, fairs or in the local tourist information offices.

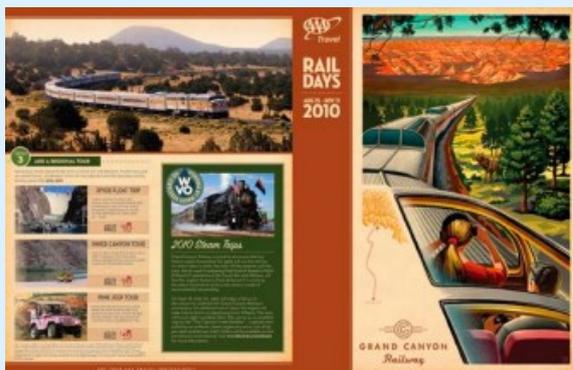
- A simple format could be easily translated into different languages without generating major costs and it's easy to be maintained and updated once the project is finished.
- Small print runs can be done cost effectively with digital printing and make sure you distribute them in a smart way.
- For example, if you use flyers, consider placing them in relevant businesses that your target audience may frequent. Example: Norway partnered with Whole Foods to promote salmon fishing by placing flyers at the fish counter.

Brochures. An eye-catching brochure can be a terrific tool for nurturing your leads. This is the piece of collateral that prospective clients will take away after a meeting and as such it should clearly state your differentiators. To keep costs at a minimum when producing a brochure, it is important to stay cognizant of content, design, and materials.

GET INSPIRED BY GOOD PRACTISE EXAMPLES!



G Adventures Brochure



AAA Brochure

Source: ATTA Cost-Effective-Marketing Tactics

Create Memorable Marketing Materials

- **Content:**
- Keep objectives **top of mind** in the content development process.
- **What** do you want to **communicate** and what do you want the client to do after they read the brochure?
- **Ensure** the next step is obvious with a clear **call to action**.
- **Clearly state** what makes you **different** from **competitors**.
- Consider using **easy to read**, relevant **graphics** like **infographics**.



Turku Treasure Map



Restaurant brochure

Source: ATTA Cost-Effective-Marketing Tactics

Create Memorable Marketing Materials

Design:

- Know your target market and ensure that images selected resonate with their aspirations.
- Consider a format beyond the typical trifold or booklet, such as of a paper airplane or accordion fold.
- Make the brochure worth keeping - if the design is truly beautiful or eye catching, your clients are more likely to hang on to it.
- Instead of hiring a designer, consider using an online tool like www.canva.com to design a brochure. They have many free templates and an easy-to-use interface.

Materials

- High quality paper can be expensive, but it also creates a strong first impression for your brand.

5.4.2. Marketing Channels

This chapter describes the most effective “channels” for reaching the desired target groups and to introduce the sustainable tourism products and destination of the Mediterranean to the international travel market.

Figure 17: Overview marketing channels



(1) EVENTS

Participation in international fairs and special promotion formats is essential to introduce the MED destinations and their flagship products to the international travel market. Due to limited budget resources, it is suggested to use existing promotion channels for example of the National Promotion Authorities or regional Destination Marketing Organisations.

- **ITB 2023** is the key event for market introduction for both (1) the B2B market and the (2) B2C market.
- **FAM trips.** Individually designed fam trips should showcase several cross-border itineraries once they are created.
- **Press trips.** Individually designed press trips showcasing the authenticity of the destination. Those press trips could be organized e.g., for the German speaking market. An important element to be included in those press trips are encounters with the local community, so-called testimonials (view 2.2.)
- **Forum for Sustainable Tourism**

Alternatively, to several fam trips it is suggested to concentrate on the organisation of one B2B event where selected incoming tour operators from the destinations, a selected group of specialist tourism journalists and the local key tourism stakeholders from all levels will meet and exchange ideas and start to initiate innovative business cooperation.

WHO COULD BE INVITED TO CREATE A DIRECT MARKET LINK?

Forum Anders Reisen (FAR) <https://forumandersreisen.de> is “the” umbrella association and sustainable travel portal for the German travel sector, and the perfect target group for the German-speaking tourism market in terms of specialist tour operators. It counts more than 130 sustainability certified members.

A very efficient format for incorporating the sustainable travel industry into the tourism market is by incorporating them directly into the product development.

HOW COULD THAT BE DONE?

Though the organisation of a tailor-made trip for selected FAR members, combined with a press trip for specialist magazines, newspapers, and magazines from the German-speaking market. Once both groups are in the country, a sustainable adventure tourism forum for the Mediterranean could be organized in one of the MED destinations for them to mingle and discuss the market needs, present the potential of Sustainable Tourism destinations of the Mediterranean, and start active cooperation.

Additionally, you can use fairs and promotion events for the successful marketing of your products and destinations.



Please check: The list of selected international and regional promotion events, where sustainable tourism products and destinations from the Mediterranean can be promoted.

List of **Promotion Events: Annex No.15**

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

The success story of Albania

Until 2016 Albania was still a niche market for hikers and trekkers and not really known on the German travel market.



- On behalf of GIZ Albania AGEG TSC organized in cooperation with several GIZ programmes:
- A tailor made- trip for FAR members
- A press trip with a very select group of press and media
- The first sustainable travel forum in a historical site on the south coast of Albania

Outcome:

- Press coverage over 2 years
- Albania linked to the sustainable travel market and offered by FAR members
- Revitalization of remote villages in coastline and mountain areas through innovative sustainable tourism practices



For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate event marketing and press work.</p> |
| <p>Practice examples No.: 34, 35, 36, 37</p> | |

(2) PARTNERSHIPS & ALLIANCES

Collaborative Marketing and Strategic Partnerships and Alliances are a very efficient instrument to multiply your marketing activities.

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

- **Join a business network.** Joining a local chamber of commerce, local business associations and networks or other professional organization is a way to connect with business leaders and discover partnership opportunities that you may not have anticipated.
- **Join local Tourism Associations.** If you aren't a member of your local tourism associations, you may consider joining. If there is not an association that fits your particular business in the place you live – consider creating one.
- **Find the right partners.** Identifying partners who can help promote your brand to their audience will take your message further:

Similar Destinations or Products. A partnership with a destination or product that has the same audience as you but may not be direct competition.

Creating Thematic Trips: A partnership with an affinity group can also open up new markets. For example, you may create a special tour for the local mountain bike club or boy scout club. You may consider partnering with a yoga studio to create a yoga/adventure retreat. The benefit of these types of partnerships is not only that they may create a recurring scheduled departure for your company, but they might also allow you to send promotional material to their membership over the course of the year.

- **Partner with other Tour Operators.** Start identifying potential trade partners. Sometimes, the best partnerships in travel and tourism are just around the corner. Attract more visitors by banding together to promote your destination. For example:
 - Make bookings on behalf of each other with a low commission rate
 - Elevate offerings by pairing two complementary experiences
 - Save money on expenses — like sharing the cost of a shuttle service
 - Give and receive mentorship from being in the same industry
 - Boost your brand's reputation through co-marketing and association

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!



View **our practice examples** that illustrate you can benefit from sustainable tourism partnerships.

Practice examples No.: **37, 38**

(3) PROMOTION PLATFORMS

There are different types of promotion platforms for sustainable tourism products and destinations.

Meta Sites -such as Trivago, Hotel Tonight, Secret Escapes, Wego, TripAdvisor and Google Hotel Finder, basically are price comparison sites and they will crawl other OTA websites and present your properties price on 5 or 6 channels to a customer so they can see which OTA is displaying

the best price. If you want your own brand website to be presented to the customer, you need to pay. This payment is on a Pay Per Click basis and you pay that Meta Site whether a booking is actually made or not.

Sustainable Tourism Platforms. The following table illustrates selected marketing and promotion platforms that could be used to promote sustainable tourism products, destinations and experiences from the Mediterranean (*Source: MEDUSA Handbook of Marketing Practises*).

Table 8: Overview of sustainable tourism platforms

| Platform | Webpage | Description |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Ecoclub | https://ecoclub.com/ | Eco travel professional network and portal to promote destinations and new initiatives on the sustainable travel market. Members can post free of charge |
| Travindy | https://www.travindy.com/ | Sustainable tourism news, opinion, resources, and consulting |
| The culture trip | https://theculturetrip.com | Eco-friendly inspiration for conscious exploration of our planet. Platform where storytelling content could be promoted. |
| Lonely planet | https://www.lonelyplanet.com/ https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/best-in-travel-2022 | Individual travel platform, focused on sustainability, adventure and experiences. Advertisement. |
| Good Travel Guide | https://goodtravel.guide/ | The Good Travel Guide is a trademark of Green Destinations and is a platform promoting certified destinations and green travel products. |
| Responsible Travel | https://www.responsibletravel.com | Platform for Sustainable adventure, nature, and experiences-based holidays. |
| Ecobnb | https://ecobnb.com | An innovative web platform designed for travellers to find and book eco-friendly accommodation and destinations. |
| Adventure travel | https://www.adventure.travel | Adventure travel platform, mainly for members of the ATTA |
| Adventure compass | https://adventurecompass.com/ | Adventure Compass is introducing the new way to experience the world. At Adventure Compass you will find unique adventure tours, adventure tour operators, knowledgeable local |

| Platform | Webpage | Description |
|---|---|---|
| | | guides, and unique destinations at incredible value. |
| Airbnb | airbnb.com | Booking platform to promote bookable authentic experiences |
| WWF Travel | www.wwftravel.it | Platform for conservation travel focused on WWF values. Nature tours, wildlife watching experiences. |
| Cyclando | https://cyclando.com/en/ | Booking platform for cycling holidays in Europe |
| Intrepid | https://www.intrepidtravel.com/eu | Booking platform for adventure holidays all over the world, with responsible travel principles |
| G Adventures | https://www.gadventures.com/ | Booking platform for sustainable adventure travel; provides small groups and independent travelers the opportunity to connect with nature and local cultures. |
| Travel Massive | https://www.travelmassive.com/ | Travel Massive is a global movement to connect people in the travel industry locally, bringing together leading travel brands, bloggers, startups, and travel insiders. It is a community to learn and to share with other travel insiders. |
| Global Sustainable Tourism Council | https://www.gstcouncil.org/ | Managing the GSTC Criteria, global standards for sustainable travel and tourism and promotes members and its special initiatives. Membership could be valuable for NTAs or DMO's of the partner destinations. |

(4) SPECIALISED MAGAZINES & MEDIA

Specialized magazines and media are an important tool to figure out market trends, segmentation, relations and contacts and to position your product on the right target market.

5.5. Innovative Marketing Practises

Besides well-known and established marketing practices, a variety of **innovative marketing practices** have emerged in recent years. Especially since the Covid-19 crisis, innovative practices have been used by destinations and tourism businesses to create and keep the relationship with potential and existent customers and promote their destinations and products.

In this chapter, we will introduce the **following innovative marketing practices** that have been identified and presented in the framework of Med Pearls project (*source: Research study 'Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations'*):

| |
|---|
| (1) Gamification |
| (2) Storytelling |
| (3) Virtual Tours & Remote Tourism |
| (4) Digital Word of Mouth & Value Co-Creation |
| (5) Influencers & Digital Nomads |
| (6) Online Trip Planner System |
| (7) Search Engine Marketing |

5.5.1. Gamification

As already shown in the chapter 3.5.6, **games in various formats** (physical and virtual ones) are interactive tools to create experiences for tourists at the destinations. However, it is also a great technique to attract potential customers; gamification for promotion has become especially relevant since the Covid-19 crisis.

'Gamification is the **use of game design elements** in contexts other than the game' (Deterding et al., 2011); in this context used to achieve such goals as to entertain, motivate, engage, and sell.

Gamification is a **great** tool to get **potential customers** interested in your destination or product – gamification can be done in different ways from remote tours and augmented reality games to quizzes that, for example, can be placed on destination's website to capture as well as keep and direct attention of potential visitors who are browsing your website. Moreover, **another benefit** is the data collection that **gamification allows** – destination or company can collect behavioural and profiling data of its users to be later used in one's marketing development.

HOW TO USE GAMIFICATION FOR MARKETING?

- (1) **Identify your users.** It is important to think who your users are, what are their motivations and interests.
- (2) **Consult with professionals in the field.** Gamification will often need an external support, such as hiring a specialist company.

- (3) **Plan your budget.** Due to needed programming work, the cost of gamification practice would range from medium to high.
- (4) **Think of the game design.** It has to be fun, engaging and delivering the message you want to communicate and/or directing users to take certain actions. Your game should also be aesthetically engaging.
- (5) **Plan the time.** Development time depends on the game, it might be relatively short, but if you want to use the game for a specific marketing campaign, plan it well in advance.

For more information, please check the Gamification factsheet:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Please check Innovative Marketing Factsheet:</p> <p>→ Annex no. 17: Innovative Marketing Factsheet - Gamification</p> |
|---|--|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>View our practice examples of destinations that use gamification for marketing:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 41, 42</p> |
|---|---|

5.5.2. Storytelling

Storytelling is especially important since consumers no longer want to hear promotional messages; they want to hear authentic stories to experience and learn about the destination even from home.

‘Telling a story serves to transmit the **DNA of a brand**: its essence and values’ (Open Calabria, 2021).

A well-used **storytelling** would **immerse potential visitors** in the destination, would facilitate the meeting and connecting with local communities and culture as well as experiencing the natural wonders.

HOW TO USE STORYTELLING FOR MARKETING?

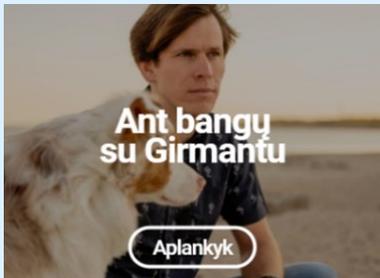
- (1) **Identify the story.** It is important to think what the story type and topic could be based on one’s audience or goals. Think of your USP and/or special experiences you offer, for example, unique services of the destination (unique stays, guided tours etc.).

- (2) **Choose your character/narrator.** You should have credible characters in your story, preferably locals from the destination, such as expert local guides, local hosts. Stories could also be centered around local charismatic people and, for example, their surprising professional or personal journeys. For example, think of local unique accommodations (e.g., Trullis, troglodytes). Who are hosts of these places? What is a story of your local hiking or birdwatching guides - why did they start this path? Lastly, your visitors can also be characters of the story.
- (3) **Think of the means to tell your story.** Using high-quality visuals is the key. These can be photos (of landscapes, local food, culture, people), videos (interviews with travelers or locals, videos of the assets of the destination or the product), data-driven content (illustrative charts and graphs). Virtual reality or games can also be used.
- (4) **Plan your budget.** The cost can range from low to high, depending on the activity.

For more information, please check the Storytelling factsheet:

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Please check Innovative Marketing Factsheet:</p> <p>→ Annex no. 18: Innovative Marketing Factsheet - Storytelling</p> |
|--|--|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

| | |
|---|---|
| <div>  <p>Drevinė bitininkystė su Romu</p> <p>Aplankyk</p> </div> <div>  <p>Ant bangu su Girmantu</p> <p>Aplankyk</p> </div> <p><i>Snapshots from the website of the campaign</i></p> | <p>Lithuania Travel: Have you been at our place?</p> <p>https://www.lithuania.travel/lt/news/o-pas-mus-ar-buvai</p> <p>Marketing campaign ‘Have you been at our place?’, launched in 2021 by official Lithuanian tourism development agency. The aim was to attract domestic tourists to lesser-known destinations.</p> <p>Video stories were created to feature unique experiences (e.g., forest bathing, visit to the art deco museum-apartment). Local voices were used in videos – hosts of experiences share how and why they started their business and present their unique experience.</p> |
|---|---|

For more inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.



View **our practice examples** that illustrate the use of storytelling in marketing:

→ Practice examples No.: **40, 41, 45, 46**

5.5.3. Virtual Tours and Remote Tourism

The use of **virtual travel experiences** peaked during the first year of Covid-19 crisis when the travel was restricted. However, it can be a **useful tool** not only in times of travel restrictions; it allows potential customers to get acquainted remotely with the destination, which can be useful for visitors as an **inspirational tool** as well as a tool for planning their trip. Virtual tours can also provide a chance to preview some of the attractions, such as museums or cultural heritage sites as well as natural protected areas.

Virtual experience can consist of a **simple 360-degree image** (also compatible with social media platforms) or **more complex experiences**, e.g., live broadcasted tours of the destination organized by local actors onsite.

HOW TO USE VIRTUAL TOURS AND REMOTE TOURISM?

- (1) **Define the need and the content.** It can be a great tool, however, first define the need for it and make sure it is in line with your marketing strategy. Think about the content/stories/sites that would benefit most from this tool.
- (2) **Identify the technology to use.** There is a variety of options, including VR, augmented reality etc.
- (3) **Plan your budget.** Costs for this practice will range from medium to high, depending on the technology used.
- (4) **Develop the tool.** With the support of the specialized agency.
- (5) **Promote the tool.** Use your website, social media, and other channels.

For more information, please check the Virtual Tours and Remote Tourism factsheet:



Please check **Innovative Marketing Factsheet**:

→ **Annex no. 19:** Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Virtual tours and Remote Tourism

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

There are numerous applications available to experience virtual travel (with the use of VR viewer). The most famous apps are part of Oculus - Oculus Go, Oculus Quest and Oculus Rift S (the most advanced one, requires integration with a PC). Please see an example below:

| | |
|--|--|
|  <p><i>National Geographic VR</i></p> | <p>National Geographic VR https://www.oculus.com/experiences/quest/2046607608728563/?locale=en_GB</p> <p>National Geographic VR app allows users to have numerous virtual travel experiences around the world, such as visits to Antarctica or Machu Picchu in Peru. It is available for Oculus Go in the 360 version and Oculus Quest in the VR version.</p> |
|--|--|

For more inspiration, have a look at our practise example.

| | |
|--|---|
|  | <p>View our practice example illustrating successful virtual tours and remote tourism use for marketing:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 42</p> |
|--|---|

5.5.4. Digital Word of Mouth & Value Co-Creation

Digital or **electronic word** of mouth is one of the **key marketing tools** for the consumer acquisition. It is like a quality badge for the destination, services, and products since it provides direct feedback from previous customers. This practice can also be used by destinations and businesses to understand aspects of the product that visitors like the most as well as to see what are the aspects that need to be improved.

"Electronic word of mouth communication (eWOM) is any **positive or negative statement** made by **potential, actual or former customers** about a product or a company which is made available to multiples of people and/or institutions and is spread on the internet."
 (Cheung and Thadani, 2015: 329)

HOW TO USE DIGITAL WORD OF MOUTH AND VALUE CO-CREATION?

- (1) **Define the form.** For example, one can use meta-sites, such as TripAdvisor or collect clients' reviews directly on their website; engage influencers; define and promote one's hashtags; add user generated content (e.g., a blog article) directly to the main website.
- (2) **Actively collect reviews.** For example, tour operators can ask their guides and tour leaders to remind clients to leave a review after the tour and/or send a kind follow up email after

the tour with an inquiry. Indicate to your customers how you would like to receive their review (on social media, TripAdvisor etc.).

- (3) Encourage value co-creation.** Ask travelers, influencers to share content (videos, photos, blog posts) on their social media channels, blogs etc.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>It is important to engage with your clients who provide their feedback. Thank your clients for their reviews and take time to respond to negative reviews.</p> |
|---|---|

For more information, please check the Digital Word of Mouth & Value Co-Creation factsheet:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please check Innovative Marketing Factsheet:</p> <p>→ Annex No. 20: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Digital Word of Mouth & Value Co-Creation</p> |
|---|---|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>View our practice examples illustrating the use of digital word of mouth & value co-creation:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 43, 44</p> |
|---|---|

5.5.5. Influencers and Digital Nomads

Both **digital nomads** and **influencers** could be used to **promote destinations** or **services** or **tourism products**, and it can be especially useful for emerging and unknown tourist destinations.

“Digital nomads” are travel enthusiasts who embrace distance work as a choice of lifestyle, use technology to earn a living, work from anywhere in the world, and can influence specific communities.

“Influencers” are people who influence the public opinion and have a wide network of followers on their social media channels.

Influencers can be classified according to their **audience size** – for example, the ANA (Association of National Advertisers, 2018) in their survey defined the categories based on the

number of followers: micro-influencers (up to 25,000 followers), macro-influencers: (up to 100,000). mega-influencers (up to 500,000) and celebrity (over 500,000).



Due to a growing number of remote work possibilities that emerged in the context of Covid-19 pandemics, the number of **digital nomads** is likely to increase.

HOW TO USE INFLUENCERS AND DIGITAL NOMADS?

- (1) **Plan your campaign.** Identify what exactly you want to achieve and promote with the influencers or digital nomads. Think of the content and format you would like to have produced by influencers and digital nomads.
- (2) **Plan your budget.** The more famous the influencer (and the more followers he or she has), the higher the cost. However, digital nomads can be less expensive. Also, the cost may vary across different platforms. For example, according to Regiondo, Facebook influencers charge about \$25 per 1000 followers while Instagram ones come cheaper at \$10. Also, you should consider the cost of providing your services on a discounted price or for free.
- (3) **Identify influencers or digital nomads.** Consider your target groups' needs. Besides the number of followers, consider what message influencers and digital nomads communicate with their personal brand (for example, are they environmentally conscious etc.). You can search for influencers on social media – look for specific location and relevant hashtags, including #sponsored and #promotion. You can also use specialized platforms, for example [Influence.co](https://www.influence.co) for influencers and [digital nomad forums](#) to identify digital nomads.
- (4) **Invite influencers and digital nomads.** Both influencers and digital nomads (for example, bloggers, YouTubers, travel journalists, photographers) can be invited to the destination. Agree on the content and format that they would produce during/after the trip.
- (5) **Share content.** Share produced content of influencers and digital nomads on your channels, ask them to use tags and hashtags of your destination or company.

For more information, please check the Influencers and Digital Nomads factsheet:



Please check **Innovative Marketing Factsheet:**

→ **Annex No. 21:** Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Influencers and Digital Nomads

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For inspiration, have a look at our practise example.



View **our practice example** that illustrates the proactive use of Influencers and digital nomads for marketing:

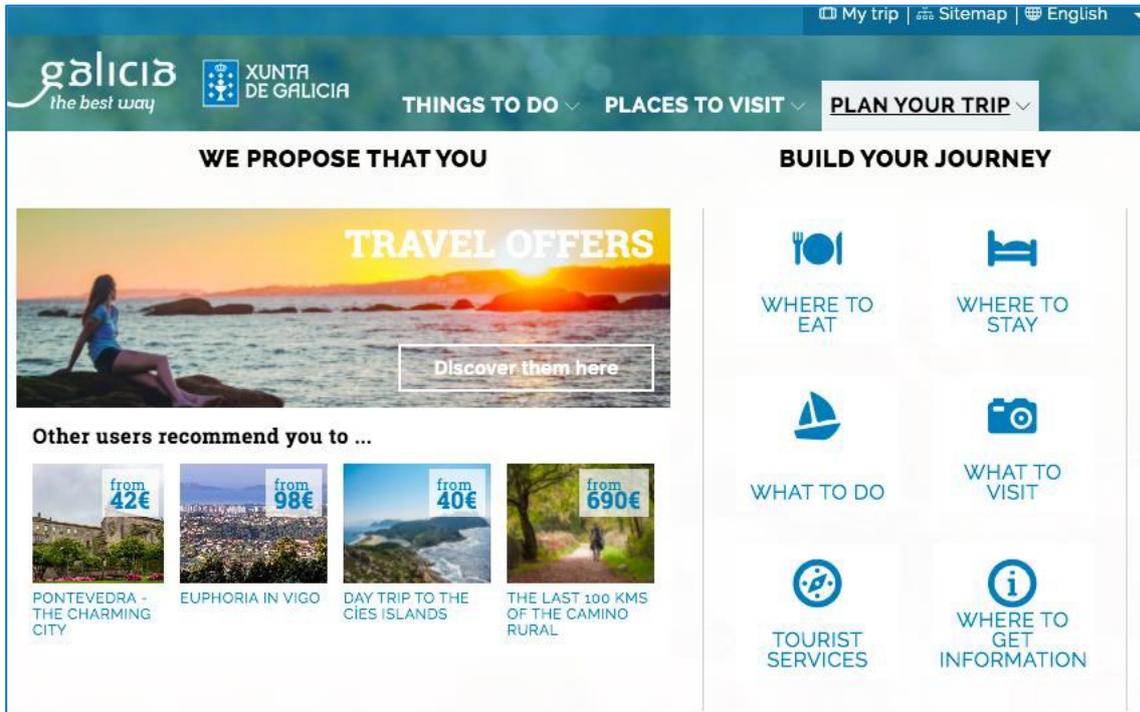
→ Practice examples No.: **43**

5.5.6. Online Trip Planner System

Online travel planner systems (OTPSs) serve as both a promotional tool for destinations and a trip planning tool for visitors.

Online travel planner systems (OTPSs) allow users to select a range of services and to create **tailor made trips**.

To use this tool, users first have to create their personal account on a website of a DMO or DMC. Then, while browsing through the website, the user can add services, places to visit and other parts of the planned trip directly to one's personal account. For example, like on a Galicia's tourism website (www.turismo.gal) here:



Besides providing travellers with a trip planning service, it also helps DMOs and DMCs to directly **commercialise their offer** and to **monitor the interaction of users** with their online pages.

HOW TO USE ONLINE TRIP PLANNER SYSTEM?

(1) Plan your budget. The cost of this tool is medium; expenses are mainly related to the creation and maintenance of this online system.

- (2) **Create purchasing opportunities.** Make sure to have attractive bookable offers on the website (of experiences, accommodation etc.).
- (3) **Use reminders.** It is recommended to have automatic email system associated to the user's personal account that contacts the user, for example, after a prolonged period of absence from the platform.

For more information, please check the Online Trip Planner System factsheet:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Please check Innovative Marketing Factsheet:</p> <p>→ Annex No. 22: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Online Trip Planner System</p> |
|---|--|

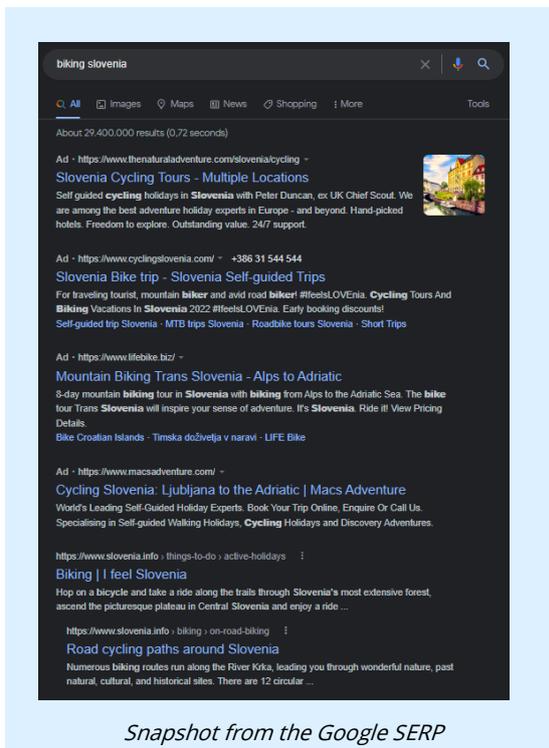
GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>View our practice examples that illustrate the destinations that use Online Travel Planner System:</p> <p>→ Practice examples No.: 47, 48</p> |
|---|--|

5.5.7. Search Engine Marketing

Search engines are vital for contemporary users to search for products. However, there is a fierce competition among websites to appear among the top results of the search engines. To have great traffic results to one's website, certain search engine marketing (SEM) techniques have to be applied. The main SEM tools are:



Snapshot from the Google SERP

Search engine advertising (SEA) - a paid promotion of a product, service, or company on a specific search engine.

In the provided snapshot, when searching for 'biking Slovenia' on Google, the **first four results** that appear are examples of paid promotion – SEA (letters 'Ad' indicate that).

Search engine optimisation (SEO) - a non-paid optimisation technique; websites that are identified as the most relevant for a given search query (organic results) are displayed in the first positions of a search engine results page (SERP).

In this example, the first **organic result** is from the official Slovenia's tourism website (the bottom result on the example).

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SEO?

- (1) Optimize your content.** Make sure your website is attractive, engaging, and accessible (including users with visual, auditory, or motor disabilities).
- (2) Blogging is a good technique to improve SEO.** Talk about your products, achievements (awards, certifications etc.), press trips and other news. Also, use catchy titles and key words oriented to your target groups.
- (3) Analyze and improve.** Use tools to monitor the popularity of search queries, analyze the content of the webpage etc. For example, check Google SEO tools (find an overview [here](#)).
- (4) Plan your budget.** Although the SEO is free, you might want to consider hiring professionals who can optimize your website

For more information, please check the Search Engine Marketing factsheet:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Please check Innovative Marketing Factsheet:</p> <p>→ Annex no. 23: Innovative Marketing Factsheet – Search Engine Marketing</p> |
|---|---|

GET INSPIRATION FROM GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES!

For inspiration, have a look at our practise examples.



View **our practice examples** of destinations and DMCs that have effective and optimized websites:

→ Practice examples No.: **31, 32, 35, 39, 43, 44**

CHAPTER 6 INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES

We have researched and selected a collection of **good sustainable tourism practices** on the destination, small tour operator and DMC level. A large part of the research and selection of practices was done through revision of already existing studies and materials from the four standard projects (MED GAIMS, CROSSDEV, Med Pearls and MEDUSA).

Selected practices represent destination from all around the world, with the biggest group coming from the Mediterranean region, including the five countries of RESTART MED!.

This chapter is organized into two parts. In the first part, 6.1. Sustainable Tourism Products, we present a selection of 30 best sustainable tourism practices with a focus on sustainability implementation and product creation; and in the second part 6.2. Sustainable Marketing Practices, we present the selection of the best marketing practices for sustainable destinations and tour operators, DMCs to promote their touristic products.

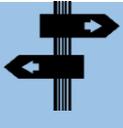
The information on the structure of each part is explained further.

6.1.Sustainable Tourism Products

This part includes a collection of **30 sustainable tourism best practices** featuring sustainable destinations and small tour operators, DMC, and their products.

To structure the researched practices, we have identified the following **main categories** (in blue). The main categories highlight the main characteristics of each practice, while the subsequent **additional categories** (in green) highlight further characteristics of each practice.

Main categories:

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Sustainability Model (e.g., Destination Development and Marketing Model, Sustainable Tour Operators and Accommodations model) |
|  | Natural Parks and Protected Areas (National Parks, Geoparks, Nature Reserves etc.) |
|  | Innovative Initiatives (Innovative products and services, gamified destinations) |
|  | Trail Models (Hiking /Trekking/Cycling) |
|  | Cultural Routes (Cultural heritage sites, local cultural experiences) |
|  | Experiences (Special cultural, natural, culinary experiences) |

Additional categories:

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
|  | Revitalisation of Villages |
|  | Mountain Tourism |
|  | Desert Experience |

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Coastal Tourism |
|  | Water Activities (e.g., Kayaking, Canyoning) |
|  | Cycling/ Mountain Biking |
|  | City Experience |
|  | Local Products |
|  | Slow Tourism |
|  | Ecotourism |
|  | Gamified experience (Analogue games, digital and phygital games) |
|  | Certification Schemes |

To visualize the characteristics, category, and key features of each practice a set of icons will be applied to each. View the following **example**:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Categories</p>  | <p>This example features a practice that stands for (1) Natural parkas and Protected Areas and features good practice on (2) revitalisation of villages and (3) mountain tourism.</p> |
|--|--|

Furthermore, the sustainability performance of each practice is **briefly assessed** by a so-called Sustainability Check (selected set of sustainability criteria, based on the GSTC destination criteria). The main, outstanding sustainability practices will be highlighted in a short **sustainability check**. **Additionally**, key challenges and weaknesses will also be featured in the sustainability check.

Finally, at the end of the second page of each factsheet, a small box will summarize the **key learnings**, observations, take-aways etc. of each presented practice, like in the following example:



NOTE

- Great example of a successful branded local ecotourism network
- Establishing the Code of conduct for local businesses and training them in sustainability
- Offering unique experiences, such as farm, wild food experience, dining in a farmyard and other
- Putting in place incentives for visitors to use bikes and public transport.

6.1.1. Nos. 1 – 3: Sustainable Destination Models

Practice No. 1

CATALUNYA

Destination: Catalonia

Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.catalunya.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | The Catalan Tourist Board (CTB), set up by the Government of Catalonia. It is a part of the Ministry of Business and Labour. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public and private collaboration |
| | INITIATED IN: | CTB setup in 2010 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest Languages: CAT, ESP, GER, ENG, FRA, RUS |

Categories

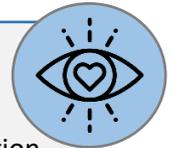


Season



Key attractions

- Breathtaking, diverse landscapes
- Great offer of **certified establishments**
- Ecotourism, cultural and culinary destination
- **Recognized Accessible Destination**



DESCRIPTION:

Catalonia is a well-known destination on the Spanish mainland with protected natural areas accounting for 30% of its territory. Its **diverse landscapes** range from the high alpine **Pyrenees** to extensive green forests in the low mountain ranges and agriculturally used plains and to its **528 km of coastline** with both wild and rocky coast and sandy beaches.

Catalonia is a **great example** of a destination in which **principles of sustainable and responsible tourism** are fully integrated in its tourism offer. A range of **certified tourism establishments** and tour operators are scattered around the region offering travellers truly sustainable ecotourism and adventure tourism as well as cultural and culinary experiences. To **feature** the best local sustainability practices and businesses, in 2013 Catalonia included “**Responsible Tourism**” as a category in the **Catalonia Tourism Awards**.

Moreover, Catalonia is a **pioneer of accessible tourism** and has developed a specialised offer and website for this target group – [Tourism for all](#).

- **Tourist nights:** According to [Eurostat](#) data on Tourism Statistics at regional level, Catalonia was the fourth region in Europe with the highest number of tourist nights in 2019.

- **Internationally [certified destinations and businesses](#)** are widely found around the region: 8 destinations have obtained the Biosphere Responsible Tourism certification, 22 tourism establishments (e.g., hotels, campsites, a natural park, beaches) participate in the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), and another 24 with the EU Ecolabel programme.
- **Local certification schemes** are also in place, created by the Government of Catalonia: over 50 establishments have the Environmental Quality Guarantee ecolabel; 3 destinations have been awarded the **Peaceful Places and Dark Sky Environmental Seal**, an indicator for visitors looking to enjoy the sounds of nature and stargazing.
- **Accessible tourism offer:** There are 25 accessible destinations, including more than 150 km of greenway and accessible tracks, several specialized centres in adventure activities and outstanding museums, such as la Pedrera by Antonio Gaudí, the Maritime Museum in Barcelona and the National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC).
- **Services & products:** More than 100 active and nature tourism activities – hiking, water activities, cycling, ecotourism, snow, and adventure. A good example of consolidating the available offer is provided [here](#).
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Representation at major tourism fairs; Press, Fam and Blog [trips](#); specialized [workshops](#) of which the biggest one, Buy Catalunya, brings together around 200 Catalan enterprises and 150 tour operators working in 25 international markets.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Sustainable strategy in place since 2010, Responsible Tourism Awards since 2013 | X | | | |
| Local tourism stakeholders supporting sustainability are actively featured | | X | | |
| Great offer of local gastronomy. Strong local wine culture with more than 300 wine cellars in the region | | | X | |
| A third of the territory is protected areas | | | | X |
| Soft mobility options for visitors to enjoy the region –cycling offer, 9000 km of signposted hiking paths | | | | X |
| Preservation of natural areas and promotion of dark skies via local, Peaceful places and Dark Sky Environmental Seal. | X | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Risk of overtourism during high seasons. | | | | |



NOTE

- **The model of the top visited destination** that builds on **sustainability**
- Strong focus on **international and local certifications** and ecolabels for destinations in the region as well as tourism establishments
- Promotion of the best practices via Responsible Tourism award
- **Effective promotional activities** creating numerous opportunities for Catalan tourism enterprises to connect to international markets

Practice No. 2

GREEN STAR HOTEL PROGRAM

Destination: Green Star Hotels

Country: Egypt

Website: <https://www.greenstarhotel.org/>



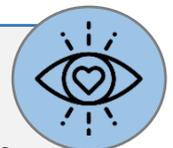
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Not-for-profit programme, sponsored by Egyptian Hotel association, endorsed by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Egyptian Hotel Association, certification fees. It was developed as a public private project between the key stakeholders from the German and Egyptian tourism market, the Egyptian tourism authorities and the German International Cooperation. |
| | INITIATED IN: | Initiative started in 2007; achieved 'GSTC Recognized' status in 2015 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Newsletter Languages: ENG |

Categories



Key attractions

- National certification scheme
- **GSTC recognition**
- Quality hotels with concrete green actions



Season



Green Star Hotel is a **national certification** and **capacity building program** developed under the patronage of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism to support Egypt's **hotels and resorts** interested in improving their **environmental performance** and **social standards**. The Initiative was founded in 2007 with a participative approach, bringing together the national tourism sectors and national actors as well as international experts, organizations, and international travel market. Firstly, it was started with a pilot destination of El Gouna, and in 2012 it was decided that the Green Star Hotel Initiative will be implemented on the national scale.

The programme was **designed to combat the negative effects** of the rising visitor numbers and steady expansion of tourism destinations in Egypt and is a **great example** on how to move the whole tourism sector towards **sustainability**. The hotel sector is the key tourism sector in Egypt, thus the effect of developing sustainability in this key sector has important results. This programme has significantly **increased the competitiveness** of the participating hotels by raising their operational efficiency, while **reducing operating costs and negative environmental impacts** (e.g., through energy and water saving and waste reduction measures). Furthermore, the programme gives participants an increased competitive **advantage through its**

marketing, which follows the global trend towards more sustainability in the tourism industry. Marketing advantages are especially widespread due to the fact that it is a [GSTC Recognized Standard](#), meaning it is aligned with the GSTC Industry Criteria for Hotels and Accommodations.

- **Facts & Figures:** Currently 76 hotels (18,552 rooms) are certified in 15 destinations around the country.
- **Star rating system** is in place. Depending on the level of compliance, the hotels can receive three-, four- or five-star rating.
- **11 aspects of hotel operations are evaluated:** (1) Design, architecture and surroundings, (2) Guest information, (3) Environmental management, (4) Housekeeping/Guest rooms, (5) Sustainable Management, (6) Training and Instructions, (7) Energy, (8) Water, (9) Waste, (10) Food and Beverage/Kitchen, (11) Gardening and Beach area.
- **Capacity building:** Training is an important part of the Green Star Hotel program. For this purpose, a very practical and user-friendly **manual ‘How to Become a Green Star Hotel’** is in place. Criteria are illustrated with the **best practice examples** and **practical tips**, for example, an indication where the hotel can purchase quality proof solar equipment or suggestions for natural packaging solutions.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Comprehensive national system to move the key tourism sector towards sustainability | X | | | |
| Environmental awareness raising through various tools in Green Star hotels – e.g., information on water and energy preservation | X | | | X |
| Fragile coral reef preservation via awareness raising tools for Green Star hotel staff and visitors, such as code of conduct for visitors | X | | | X |
| Engagement of local producers such as farmers and artisans in the supply chain | | X | X | |
| Sustainable resource management throughout the participating hotels | | | | X |
| Design and surroundings of hotels are taken into account promoting green spaces in hotel areas | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: The communication could be strengthened to share the practices and promote it to other hotels.



NOTE

- **Good practice example** of a national certification scheme recognized by GSTC
- An example to move the whole tourism sector towards sustainability
- The **capacity building** example – a user-friendly manual that directly provides hotels with guidelines on how to implement the criteria through practical tips
- Various benefits for hotels – e.g., increased visibility, reduced operational costs

Practice No. 3

THE AZORES

Destination: The Azores

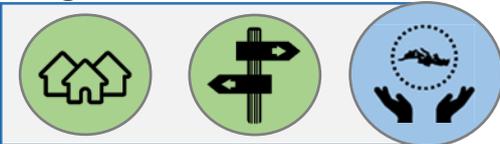
Country: Portugal

Website: <https://www.visitazores.com/en>

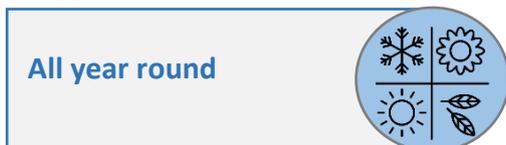


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | The Destination is managed by Azores DMO and Regional directorate for Tourism. Awarded with international sustainability certifications |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, EU Regional Development Fund |
| | INITIATED IN: | DMO 2018 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter Languages: ENG, PT, ESP, FRA, DEU, ITA |

Categories

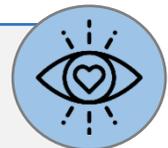


Season



Key attractions

- Unspoiled nature
- Different landscapes, sea, mountains
- Hiking and biking **trails network**
- A great variety of **sustainable adventure tourism services**



DESCRIPTION:

The destination of the Azores is an archipelago of **9 volcanic islands**, located in the North Atlantic Ocean. The destination is known for its **unspoiled nature** such as **lush green** forests and **wildlife** as well as for its **efforts in sustainability**. The Azores are the **first archipelago in the world** to achieve **international certification as a sustainable destination** by an entity accredited by the Global Council for Sustainable Tourism.

The **USP** of the **Azores** is **sustainable adventure tourism offer** that includes a broad range of sustainable land and sea activities to their visitors. These range from hiking, biking, canyoning and caving to surfing, bird and whale watching, geotourism and horseback riding.

It is also a **great example** of a destination **committed to sustainability**. To preserve its natural and cultural assets, the Azores DMO was founded in 2018 as the entity responsible for the sustainable management of the destination. They have a dedicated website [Azores Towards Sustainability](#) communicating the destination’s sustainability efforts and programmes, such as The Azores **Sustainability Charter**, the initiative to reinforce the sustainable development of all the territory and to include all the stakeholders.

- **Facts and Figures:** In 2018, there were around **840,000 arrivals** and **2.56 million nights** spent in Azores.

- **Awards:** The Azores have a 2019 “Earth Check” Silver certification; winners in the Best of Europe awards category in the 2019 **Sustainable TOP 100 Destination Awards** and the Best of Nature awards category in the 2020 Sustainable TOP 100 Destination Awards at ITB Berlin; awarded as “**European Destination for Adventure Tourism for 2021**” at the World Travel Awards.
- **Hiking and biking** pages on the official website provide detailed information on trails, grand trail routes, level of difficulty etc., and maps and leaflets. One can also choose a suitable trail based on its difficulty, length or the island one wants to explore. Also, a list of local tour providers including their contact details is provided next to each activity.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic tourists from the mainland Portugal as well as international tourists, especially from Western and Northern Europe (France, Spain, UK, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavian countries) and North America (Canada and the USA).
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking on the official [website](#) through a link to sustainable specialized tour operators for each country; promotion in international tourism fairs, such as ITB Berlin.
- The Azores has been **featured in popular travel and other media** (e.g. [National Geographic](#), [Lonely Planet](#), [Bloomberg](#)) where it is presented as an attractive adventure tourism destination.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Azores DMO responsible for the sustainable destination management | X | | | |
| Sustainability Charter of the Azores | | X | | |
| Local tourism providers (B&B, family run accommodation, tour guides, operators) are main beneficiaries | | X | X | |
| Preservation of the traditional Pico Island Vineyard Culture (UNESCO WHS) | | | | X |
| Protected Areas comprise 25% of land | | | | X |
| Low impact tourism activities promoted (hiking) | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: The constant growth of tourist numbers poses a risk to the Azores of becoming a mass tourism destination and thus endangering its natural assets, which are its main attraction.



NOTE

- **Management policy** for tourism sustainability and responsible institutions are in place
- **Good practice example** – the Azores Sustainability Charter for the adoption of the principles of sustainable development
- Success factor: marketing & development are focused on the image of the **authentic sustainable adventure** tourism destination
- Local tourism providers offering different outdoors activities are promoted
- Extensive hiking and biking **trail network** provide options suitable for different levels, from beginners to experienced and direct booking information

6.1.2. Nos. 4 – 8: Sustainable Tour Operator & Accommodation Models

Practice No. 4

KAYAKING COSTA BRAVA

Destination: Costa Brava, Catalonia

Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.kayakingcostabrava.com>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Private company promoting sea kayaking |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | Company founded in 1993 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, RSS feed Languages: ENG, CAT, ESP, FRA |

Categories



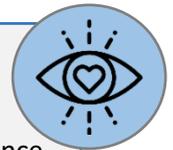
Season

Spring, Summer,
Autumn



Key attractions

- Exclusively sea-kayaking experiences
- **Scenic landscapes** in Costa Brava
- Unique astronomical phenomena experience
- Beach cleanup activities with kayaks



DESCRIPTION:

Kayaking Costa Brava is a responsible company that **focuses exclusively on sea kayaking** and operates along the Costa Brava, **the northeast Catalan Mediterranean Coast**, which is one of the busiest areas in Catalonia. The company offers guided excursions, **special experiences**, and educational and **environmental activities** as well as rental of the equipment.

What **distinguishes** Kayaking Costa Brava from similar companies is their **commitment to protecting the natural environment** they are operating in. Already nearly a decade ago they implemented a couple of ISO standards that contribute to the following of **Sustainable Development Goals** and in 2015, were awarded the Tourist Quality Commitment Seal by Spanish certification body SICTED.

The **USP** of the Kayaking Costa Brava is the **unique experiences** in the scenic natural areas and the **premium quality service** with qualified and **trained guides**. 5 [special experiences](#) are offered by this tour company, including:

- [Sunrise at the Cova d'en Gispert](#) – an opportunity to observe an **extraordinary astronomical phenomenon**, happening twice a year when the sun rises in total alignment with the cave. An early morning activity (5:30

AM to 9 AM) for tourists with experience. Two guides-instructors, equipment and snack included, for a price of 55€/person.

- **Another special experience** option is a [Cap de Creus \(two days\)](#) tour a wild and remote natural experience through the **most untouched part** of the coastline of the Nature Reserve of Cap de Creus. It includes an overnight stay and a guided walking tour. The price for the tour with two guides/instructors and the equipment is 160€/person.
- **Environmental, free of charge activity.** Every season, Kayaking Costa Brava organizes [Cleaning the Coast with Kayaks](#). The volunteers can join in **picking up rubbish** from the beaches while kayaking along the coasts. The equipment and guides are provided by the company. This activity is organized together with the town or city councils.
- **Social activity:** Company supports open-water swimming races with materials, personnel, and their experience. This is also an opportunity to join them as a volunteer for a day.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic and international tourists, adventure tourists looking for activities outdoors.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking on the website; on [TripAdvisor](#) Kayaking Costa Brava is appraised for its excellent service by most of the clients.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Cleaning the Coast with Kayaks initiative in partnership with town and city councils, involving visitors | X | X | | X |
| Adhering to ISO and SICTED standards, staff are qualified by local nature reserves | X | | | X |
| Supporting the wider community – open-water swimming races | | X | | |
| Promoting soft mobility in water activities | | | | X |
| Low impact tourism activity, responsible company respecting nature protection | | | | X |
| Small group activity (min. 6 and max. 12 tourists) | X | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: COVID 19 impact – suspension of guided outings. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good practice example of a company that adheres to **quality standards**
- The company organizes **concrete actions** to **preserve the environment** where it operates (beach clean-ups with groups of volunteers)
- The special asset is the offer of exclusive small group ‘Special experiences’
- Unique experience of observing astronomical phenomena from the kayak twice a year

APULIA SLOW TRAVEL

Destination: Apulia

Country: Italy

Website: <https://www.apuliaslowtravel.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Small private tour company |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2015 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Twitter, RSS Feed Languages: ENG, ITA, DEU |

Categories



Season

Spring, Summer,
Autumn



Key attractions

- Local **cultural** Apulia experience
- **Food experiences**, including Slow Food
- Authentic luxury accommodations
- **Tailor-made tours**, allowing for travelers plenty of free time



DESCRIPTION:

Apulia Slow Travel is a **small tour company**, run by locals from the region, offering tailor-made tours to small groups and solo travellers to explore the rich culture and gastronomy of the southern east region of Apulia in Italy.

The **USP** of Apulia Slow Travel are the **tailor-made** and well researched experiences **from a local perspective** that allow visitors to connect with the visited region. This small local business is a **great example** of a tour company that designs its tours based on **slow travel principles**: clients have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the region by engaging in a variety of handpicked **local cultural, natural and food** experiences, by staying in **authentic local accommodation** (e.g., the local architectural and cultural heritage gem of Trulli) and by having enough **free time** during the tours. Some **examples of the tours** via which you can experience Apulia in a slow way include the following:

- **One week tour:** Included is a **visit to a traditional oil farm** and olive oil tasting, **cultural visits** to quaint towns and villages. **3 full days free of activities** are provided, as well as additional free afternoons or evenings, allowing time for travelers **to not feel rushed**.

- **Slow Food tour:** A one-week tour in which the itinerary includes **cultural tours** exploring the local history and architecture; it is especially marked by **immersion** into authentic Slow Food places in the region with **lunches and dinners** planned in different **restaurants in the Slow Food Movement**. 3 full days are foreseen as being free of activities.
- **A range of additional experiences** can be booked individually as extras for the private tours. For example, wine tasting in a Trulli winery, a cooking class, or a bike tour along the ancient rural road of Via Triviana.
- **Accommodation options** picked out by Apulia Slow Travel are located either in the countryside in a luxury [Trulli Masseria](#) (a type of the accommodation that reflects the authentic local architecture), or in a [boutique hotel](#) in a picturesque town.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic and international higher end travelers looking for slow, personalized, and authentic travel experiences. There is a special focus on solo travelers and couples, but also small or medium-sized groups.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking with a company ('Ask for Quotation' function available under each tour); [featured](#) on the official Apulia tourism website 'Viaggiare in Puglia'; a **successful profile** on the TripAdvisor platform- the company has a **5 star rating** based on 71 reviews (in Feb. 2022). Reviewers recommend the company for those planning long stays in Apulia and looking for authentic experience and attention to customers' needs, for solo and couple travelers.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Services and products mostly based in the rural areas | | X | | |
| Local food producers are engaged in the tourism value chain | | X | | |
| Tours are organized to show the authentic part of Apulia region | | | X | |
| Promotion of the local gastronomic heritage | | X | X | |
| One tour is based on Slow Food Movement restaurants | | X | X | |
| Accommodation in the local architecture style buildings, e.g., Trulli Masseria | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Slow mobility is underused, most of the tours have a personal driver. Also, no mention of taking part in sustainability certifications or programmes.



NOTE

- Strategy of designing **tailor made tours** based on immersion in the local culture of the region
- **Good practice example** – Slow Food Tour focused on exclusively Slow Food restaurants
- Tours designed to provide **enough free time** for travellers
- Accommodation is part of the authentic experience, thus the high-end luxury, but traditional accommodation is picked out

Practice No. 6

CASA LEONARDO

Destination: La Vall Fosca, Catalonia

Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.casaleonardo.net/en/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Private accommodation, a family run business |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | Originally founded in 1913, reopened in 2001 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Google + Languages: ENG, DEU, FRA, ESP, CAT, Basque |

Categories

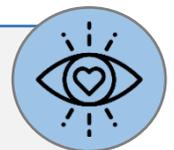


Season



Key attraction

- Authentic charm of the **historical hotel**
- Unspoiled nature
- A great offer of **ecotourism activities**
- Local Catalan gastronomic offer



DESCRIPTION:

Casa Leonardo is a four-star, **superior country-house hotel** located at the gateway to Vall Fosca ("The Dark Valley"), at the heart of the Lleida Pyrenees, in the north of the Pallars Jussà region of Catalonia. It is a **family-run business** that dates back to the beginning of the 20th century. Casa Leonardo has **retained the old character** of the facilities, where authentic features, equipment and furniture create a charming atmosphere.

Casa Leonardo is **an example of an environmentally and socially responsible hotel** that has taken concrete actions to preserve the environment, and promote soft mobility and local cultural and gastronomic heritage. In 2013 at the Catalonia Tourism Awards Casa Leonardo was awarded the **Responsible Tourism Award** in the Best Small Place to Stay category, recognizing its long-lasting commitment to sustainable management, support for environmentally sustainable transport (slow travel), and accessibility of facilities.

Its **USP** is not only its **authentic character**, which offers a boutique accommodation and local culinary experience, but also that it offers a variety of **ecotourism activities** in the surrounding natural areas. Some **examples** of the ecotourism activities and packages promoted/sold by Casa Leonardo are:

- **El Cinque Llac 5-day hiking route.** This self-guided route through the highest Catalan Pyrenean foothills; it was **set up and is run by small-scale local hostelries**. Casa Leonardo serves as a stay at the end of the fourth

stage. The offer can be booked through the central booking agency; the contact is provided on the page. (To learn more about this hiking trail, please check Trail Model section, Practice no. 20).

- **Casa Leonardo's Flower:** the hotel has designed the **four circular hiking routes around the house** for guests. They offer a **one-day walking package** (75€/person/day) and a **four-day walking package** (300€/person/day), **including** half boards in a double room, Maps & Tracks, free GPS, packed lunches, and late check-out.
- **Mushroom Getaway in the Catalan Pyrennes:** A weekend experience on learning about/collecting the seasonal mushrooms the surrounding forests (285€/person/day). **The package includes:** 2 half boards in a double room, 2 packed lunches, dossier with information on the area and the species, **2 guided walks with a biologist**, 2 workshops, and post-trip guidance on identifying mushrooms and travel insurance.
- **Sustainability:** Casa Leonardo has been awarded with the **EU's Ecolabel** and the Guaranteed Environmental Quality Distinction by the Catalan Government. It engages in such practices as sustainable resource management (energy, water, waste), promotion of ecotourism, use of locally manufactured craft product (soaps, bedspreads), preservation of local architecture, offer of organic local cuisine.
- **Visitor information on sustainability** provided on the website, soft mobility is promoted. Besides an offer of hiking and cycling activities, Casa Leonardo offers a **5% discount** on the price of its rooms for all travelers who **arrive at the hotel on foot, horseback, by bike or public transport**.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic tourists and international higher-end slow tourists, ecotourists, and adventure tourists. Families, couples and small groups, elderly (promotion of accessible tourism).
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Promotion by Catalan Tourist Board; direct booking is available and encouraged; other booking websites are also used (Booking.com, AirBnB, hotels.com, cataloniahotels.com). **5-star rating** on [TripAdvisor](#) based on 294 reviews (Feb. 2022).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Sustainability certifications and awards, sustainable resource management | X | | | X |
| Engagement of local craft producers in the tourism value chain (e.g., purchase local soaps) | | X | X | |
| Scheme for visitors to support sustainability and local community – Sustainability challenge | X | X | | |
| Preservation of traditional typical hostelry | | | X | X |
| A great offer of local Catalan gastronomy | | | X | |
| Low impact tourism activities, soft mobility | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Monitoring the impact on the surrounding natural sites during peak seasons.



NOTE

- **Success factor:** a holistic offer of not only boutique accommodation, but also a variety of packaged ecotourism experiences.
- Collaboration with other local rural businesses (e.g., in creating and promoting El Cinque Llac hiking route).
- Hiking trail network with options for different levels, including accessible tour options.

Practice No. 7

KM ZERO TOURS

Destination: Chianti region, Tuscany

Country: Italy

Website: <https://www.kmzerotours.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | A small boutique travel company |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private business |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2014 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, TripAdvisor, Brochures Languages: ENG |

Categories

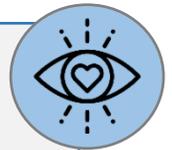


Season



Key attractions

- Authentic cultural experience of Tuscany
- Various **gastronomic** experiences
- Picturesque Tuscan landscapes and villas
- Immersion in the local culture
- Direct **contact with local people**



DESCRIPTION:

KM Zero Tours is a **small boutique travel company** managed by an Italian couple and based in the Chianti region, in Tuscany. They offer a variety of **immersive travel experiences**, inviting visitors to discover the authentic local **cultural and culinary** heritage.

It is a **great example** of a travel company that is operating based on **slow and sustainable** travel principles. The tours are designed to be local, by immersing themselves in the local lifestyle and the culture of the Chianti region - as the owners of the company note, their company name 'KM Zero' means bringing visitors and local producers together. The **USP** of KM Zero Tours is exactly these unique opportunities for visitors to have **direct contact with locals** (e.g., local chefs, restaurateurs, food producers), to have authentic cultural and gastronomic experiences and to enjoy **high-quality and fresh products**. KM Zero Tours offer a variety of high-quality experiences, including:

- **Fall in (Love with) Tuscany Experiences:** two options for travelers to be a part of either an annual **Grape harvest** (from late August until early October) or **Olive harvest** (from mid-October until the end of November) celebration. A one-week programme packed with unique **culinary experiences** (e.g., grape and

olive oil, pizza night & workshop with a local baker, truffle hunt and cooking with a local family, visit to a dairy farm and cheese tasting, cooking classes with talented chefs and more), **local crafts** (pottery, crystal, wood-turning) workshops, 'foodie gentle hike'. The all-inclusive price for the package is €1,150/person. Possibility to customize itineraries.

- **The Living Kitchen:** A one-week tour with full **immersion in the local culinary landscape**, including 7 **culinary workshops**, each with a different theme and with a different chef, fresh pasta **cooking class** at pecorino cheese farm, a **four-course cooking class with a local Slow Food chef**, a four-course cooking class and sunset dinner with Live Opera concert.
- Also, an offer of **14 exceptional one-day tours:** for example, Tuscan hands on cooking class, truffle experience with local family, a day with pottery workshop, goat cheese farm and organic wine tasting.
- **Authentic Accommodation** - KM Zero Tours work with typical villas of the Chianti area that are run by locals, blend in the environment, and offer amazing views of surrounding nature and landscapes.
- **Sustainability:** Awarded Travelife Partner certificate for completing Travelife Partner sustainability management, reporting and compliance obligations for tour operators and travel agencies.
- **Target groups:** International travelers, interested in tailor-made travel, culinary experiences, and Italian cuisine. Individual travelers and small groups.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking with KM Zero tours – inquiry on the website, by email, or by phone. A **5 star rating** on [TripAdvisor](#), based on 146 reviews (Feb 2022).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Travelife Certified tour operator | X | | | |
| Seasonality addressed, special experiences designed in October and November | X | X | | |
| Main beneficiaries are local stakeholders – high local added value | | X | | |
| Tours based on 100% engagement of local farmers, producers and artisans | | X | X | |
| Promotion of local products, crafts and mostly the culinary heritage | | X | X | |
| Visitor engagement in the traditional lifestyle, accommodation in the traditional villas | | | X | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: To keep the authentic relationship between locals and travellers in the busiest periods.



NOTE

- Example of designing **authentic local cultural and culinary experiences** for international tourists
- **Success factor:** contact with local producers, chefs and families and quality culinary experiences based on local heritage and traditions
- Tailor-made tours that can be customized upon clients wishes
- Example of creating direct benefits for a wide network in a local community

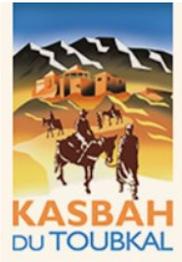
Practice No. 8

KASBASH DU TOUBKAL

Destination: Kasbah du Toubkal

Country: Morocco

Website: <https://kasbahtoubkal.com/en/>



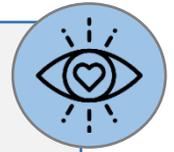
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Privately owned ecolodge by the British company Discover Ltd. (two British nationals, Mike and Chris McHugo, and the local Hajj Maurice) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | The ecolodge opened in 1995 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook Languages: ENG, FRA, DEU, ESP, NL, Arabic |

Categories

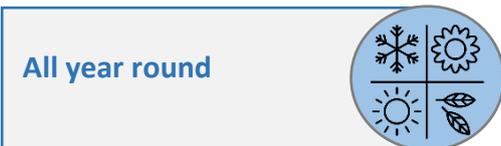


Key attractions

- Unspoiled nature
- Cultural experience
- Mountain trekking with comforts



Season



DESCRIPTION:

Kasbah du Toubkal ecolodge is located in the **Toubkal National Park**, below the highest mountain in North Africa (in the High Atlas Massif). It is just 60 km from the city of Marrakech and is a place of **natural beauty and peace**. The Kasbah has panoramic views of the mountains and valleys and offers eco-friendly accommodation for those who want to experience the High Atlas Massif. Kasbah du Toubkal offers **standard and more luxury rooms**, there is a **restaurant** serving traditional, mostly vegetarian cuisine from fresh local ingredients.

Its **USP** is that rather than just being a hotel, it is branded as a place **reflecting the local Berber hospitality** (all the employees are local Berbers) combined with all **the modern comforts**. Also, besides accommodation, one can **book different trip packages**, including yoga and mindfulness retreats and **trekking trips** of different lengths. Daily guided walks are organized, and guests can relax in Kasbah’s own traditional hammam. Kasbah du Toubkal is also a **great example** since it is one of the **“National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World”**, which is a collection of lodges that help to protect some of the planet’s most treasured locations. These National Geographic handpicked places have a strong **commitment to sustainable practices** and to protecting natural and cultural heritage.

- The ecolodge has received many **awards** - for excellence (the Condé Nast Johansens Award for Excellence in 2012, TripAdvisor Certificate for Excellence in 2014-2018) as well as sustainability (“Best in the Mountain Environment” in Responsible Tourism awards in 2004, The Green Key Morocco for the protection of the environment in 2012). More information - <https://kasbahtoubkal.com/en/awards.html>.
- **Sustainability:** 5% of turnover is channeled to **support local initiatives** via the “Village Association program”. The most cited lodge-sponsored community project is **“Education for All”**, an initiative that helps the girls from remote High Atlas Mountain villages to continue their education via sponsorship of their lodging while living away from home.
- Kasbah du Toubkal was built from the ruins of the old Kasbah – originally the summer home of a local feudal chief - using local resources, craftsmen, and **ancestral Berber techniques**.
- **Target groups:** The place is for those seeking a high-end experience. Offered activities are for all age groups, and ideal for family holidays, school groups, or groups looking for nature and adventure.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking; [featured on the Earth Changers](#) website - they curate a collection of positive impact tourism options that contribute to the community or conservation issues; the initiative has been [featured](#) in different international media (e.g., Conde Nast Traveller, The Sunday Times Travel, The New York Times).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Awarded for sustainability (Responsible tourism, the Green key Morocco, National Geographic unique lodges of the world) | X | | | |
| Revival of mountain villages | | X | | |
| Only local employment | | X | | |
| Support for the local community - 5% of turnover is channelled to the “Village association program” | | X | | |
| Visitor engagement in the traditional Berber lifestyle | | | X | |
| Kasbah du Toubkal was built using local resources and ancestral Berber techniques | | | X | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Although the lodge is not licensed to sell alcohol because of local customs, further communication regarding cultural values and etiquette is missing (for example, on appropriate clothing).



NOTE

- Good practice example - **authentic** Berber hospitality experience,
- Only local employment
- The authentic Berber house style is kept while providing the needed modern comforts
- **Various services and activities** offered - not only accommodation, but also a restaurant run by local chefs, trip (trekking) packages, daily guided tours, yoga

6.1.3. Nos. 9 –12: Natural Parks and Protected Areas

AJLOUN FOREST RESERVE

Destination: Ajloun Forest Reserve

Country: Jordan

Website: <http://wildjordan.com/eco-tourism-section/ajloun-forest-reserve>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Wild Jordan, a registered trademark of The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), that is dedicated to creation of viable nature-based businesses. RSCN is a non-governmental organization working on conservation of Jordan’s natural environment. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Wild Jordan’s revenue contributes to the sustainability of RSCN’s protected areas and supports the socio-economic development of local communities. |
| | INITIATED IN: | Reserve established in 1987 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram Languages: ENG |

Categories



Season



Key attractions

- Unspoilt nature and biodiversity
- **A collection of hiking trails in Reserve**
- Culinary and craft experiences with locals
- Accommodation in ecolodges



DESCRIPTION:

Ajloun Forest Reserve is located in the **north-western part of Jordan** in the Ajloun highlands and covers 13 Km2. It is dominated by open woodlands of e.g., Evergreen Oak, Pine, Wild Pistachio trees. Further species of flora and fauna can be found here.

This practice example **showcases** the development of **low impact on environment** and **high impact on community** experiences in the protected area, aiming to extend the duration of visitors’ stay and to generate income for nature conservation and local communities. The **USP** of the Reserve is that it offers a **slow and ecotourism experience** for travellers to immerse themselves into the surrounding nature and culture through different soft and cultural activities – (easy) hiking, cooking classes, local cuisine and immersion in the landscapes by staying in the ecolodges. Some examples of the **activities** that can be found in the Ajloun Forest Reserve include:

- **A collection of trails**, including: **Roe Deer trail** – a guided or self-guided 2km circular trail through the forest. **Soap House Trail** –leading through the woodlands, climbs up to 1100 m and finishes at the Soap house where local women produce soaps following traditional processes. **Orjan village trail** - a guided hike through wooded valleys allowing visitors to discover the local rural lifestyle of the region, accompanied by a traditional meal. **Rockrose trail** – a guided 8 km hike in small groups, providing an opportunity to observe diverse flowers and vegetation, depending on the season, plus offering beautiful views of the West Bank, Syria, and the Jordanian countryside, and the wine and olive press from the Byzantine and Roman eras.
- **Local experiences**: For example, olive harvesting in **local olive tree farms**, organic farm experience, the farm **cooking experience** with a local chef who guides visitors through the process of preparing Jordanian dishes (Sajiyeh or Gallayeh) made from local organic ingredients; The Biscuit House Experience where visitors will be guided to make their own (kusmat) bread, a traditional northern Jordanian delicacy.
- **Accommodation**: A collection of **ecolodges**, some of which operate all year round, are working with the Ajloun Forest Reserve. Ecolodges are immersed in the natural surroundings, plus use solar panels for energy purposes.
- **Awards**: Since 2018 Ajloun Forest Reserve is in [the Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas](#) by the IUCN; in 2018 the protected area was awarded as one of the Top 100 sustainable destinations in the world.
- **Target groups**: Domestic and international travelers, although the domestic group is prevailing.
- **Marketing & distribution channels**: The marketing is done via Wild Jordan webpage, and also through the official [website](#) of Jordan Tourism Board. Ecolodges can be booked via Booking.com.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Institutional structure for nature conservation | X | | | X |
| Sustainability awards and IUCN recognition as the best practice | X | | | X |
| Jobs generated in rural areas | | X | | |
| Local farmers and producers are engaged in the tourism value chain (through experiences) | | X | | |
| Local gastronomy is promoted | | X | X | |
| Low impact activities and soft mobility promoted (hiking, rural and culinary experiences) | | X | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Lack of direct booking options for promotion of different experiences and accommodation.



NOTE

- Good practice example - **development of diverse ecotourism activities** in the Forest Reserve.
- Rural traditions used to design **exclusive experiences**.
- The revenues generated support the sustainability of the protected area and the local communities.
- A variety of **hiking trails** designed around the reserve.

SOOMAA NATIONAL PARK

Destination: Soomaa National Park

Country: Estonia

Website: <https://www.soomaa.com/>

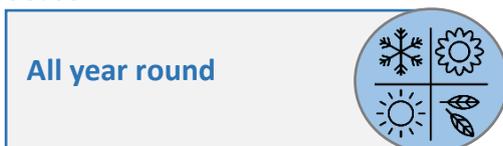


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Karuskose Ltd is an ecotour operator in Soomaa National Park, operating under the brand Soomaa.com, recognized with Estonian Ecotourism Quality Label |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | The team of Soomaa.com operates since 1994 (Soomaa National Park was founded in 1993) |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram Languages: EE, ENG |

Categories

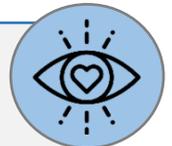


Season



Key attractions

- **Wilderness** experience
- Unspoiled nature
- Canoeing trips
- **Walks on the bogs**



DESCRIPTION:

Soomaa national park, situated in the Southwest of Estonia, is the **largest wilderness area** in the country and thus is called its Wilderness capital. It contains large peat-bogs, thick forests and many rivers. Soomaa.com is an **ecotour operator**, organizing wilderness tours in Soomaa national park since its start. Besides tours, they make daily transfers from Pärnu, the biggest city nearby; provide information on the closest accommodation.

The **USP** of this practice is the offer of **innovative tours** that comprise, for example, **night safaris on canoe** and **walks on the bogs** and in the forests, but also such traditional lifestyle tours as mushroom and berry picking. All the tours can be **booked on the website** and one can choose self-guided, guided or tailor-made tours. It is also a great example how diverse products can be tailored to **all the seasons**, and what is innovative about Sooma is that they also use the so called **“fifth” season** (the flood season) to attract visitors and to offer them unique nature experiences (canoeing or walking through the flooded surroundings).

- **Tours** are designed to experience the wilderness both **by day and by night**. The Wilderness Day trip offers a canoe tour combined with a **unique experience of Bog Shoeing** - this is an **innovative product** where in the guided tours over the bogs, snowshoes are being used. They allow people to walk over the fragile bog vegetation without causing damage to it and without sinking into the bog. This innovation helped to **diversify the product** offered by the park. In winter tourists can engage in another unique experience - kick sledding, in summer and autumn - mushroom and berry picking. Wilderness Night trips offer 4-hour night safaris, canoeing and walking through the riverside forest, observing beavers and other wildlife.
- **Sustainability:** The philosophy of Soomaa.com team is **ecotourism**, promoting local economic development and supporting the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. Its founder Aivar Ruukel is also a founding member of different associations - the Estonian Ecotourism Association, the Estonian Rural Tourism Association and the Friends of Soomaa.
- **Awards:** Estonian Ecotourism Quality Label in 2000, Estonian Tourism Quality Programme award in 2010 and other. More information - [here](#).
- There are approx. 50,000 **visitors** in the Soomaa National Park every year.
- **Target groups:** Offered trips are suitable for individuals and groups of all ages, private hikers, and families. Most tourists visiting the Soomaa National Park are domestic.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** direct booking; Soomaa.com works with other tour operators around Estonia, the list of them is provided on their [website](#); information on Soomaa.com tours is provided on the [official tourism website](#) of Estonia

|  | SUSTAINABILITY CHECK | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
| National sustainability awards in place (Estonian ecotourism quality label) | X | | | |
| Tours available throughout all seasons | X | | | |
| All the entrepreneurs are local people | | X | | |
| Visitor engagement in traditional lifestyle (mushroom and berry picking, fifth season activities) | | | X | |
| Activities with low impact on environment | | | | X |
| Adhering to and communicating the environmental protection rules (e.g. no bog shoeing during the birds nesting times) | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Although tours are offered and promoted for all seasons, the higher concentration of visitors during the summer season remains a challenge. | | | | |

|  | NOTE |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact on environment activities related to the assets of the natural park • A diverse range of activities, both by day and by night, guided, self-guided, tailor-made. Innovative activity of Bog Shoeing in place • User-friendly online booking system in place • Ecotourism awards strengthen the authenticity of the product |

GEOCACHING NATIONAL TRUST

Destination: National Trust conservation sites

Country: United Kingdom

Website: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lists/top-10-places-to-go-geocaching>



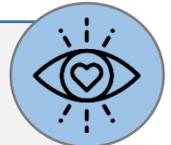
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | National Trust, NGO with 5.6 million members |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Funds of the organisation (through members etc. See below) |
| | INITIATED IN: | 1895 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, Print media Language: ENG |

Categories



Key attractions

- **Treasure hunt** for the digital generation
- Finding hidden places
- Playfully exploring nature



Season

All year round



DESCRIPTION:

The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, usually abbreviated to National Trust, is a non-profit organisation which looks after places of **historic interest** and **natural beauty** in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. With **5.6 million members**, the National Trust is Europe's **largest cultural and conservation organisation**. The National Trust offers more than 135 gardens and parks as well as hundreds of coast and countryside historical places and many cafes and shops for the public. To attract families, they have started using the geocaching concept.

What is geocaching? Geocaching is a treasure hunt for the digital generation. Track the co-ordinates on a smartphone app or GPS to find hidden boxes, known as 'caches'. Geocaching is a **modern scavenger hunt** in which players hide small or large "treasures". The geocoordinates of these treasures - called caches or geocaches - are published on the Internet in a database so other treasure hunters can use a GPS device or a smartphone to search for a cache. In the simplest case, a cache consists of a can with a slip of paper or a notebook, the so-called logbook, in which the successful finder can register.

National Trust has created an **innovative product**: the top 10 places to go geocaching within the properties of the National Trust.

- Among them are, for example, Clumber Park in Nottinghamshire with over 20 caches to find while watching wildlife and exploring the park.
- In Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire there is a three-mile-long **geocaching trail for beginners**. The GPS receiver with pre-loaded co-ordinates can be borrowed from the Cycle Hire building at Wicken Fen.
- The biggest cluster of geocaches are at Mount Stewart in Northern Island with over 40 caches for **exploring new trails**. The caches range from the simple classic to **challenging themed puzzles** relating to features, stories and people of the demesne.
- **Accommodation:** An incredible variety of all types of historical buildings are listed and categorized on the [holiday section of the webpage](#) and can also be directly booked.
- **Budget & Financing of National Trust:** around **£438 million** in 2018/19. Financed mainly through the contributions of its **5,6 million members**, unpaid work by its **66,000 volunteers**, donations, legacies and gifts. The income from admission fees, souvenir shops, restaurants and from rentals also flows into the budget.
- **Visitor numbers:** 27.4 million visitors to properties of the National Trust within the pay barriers and millions more to open access places.
- **Target groups:** Domestic and international individual travellers and families (geocaching).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Seasonality and spread of visitation is addressed | X | | | |
| Revival of rural places - jobs are generated in rural areas | | X | | |
| Communication and promotion of cultural values and cultural heritage | | X | X | |
| Low-impact tourism infrastructure applied - no new buildings constructed for tourism | | | | X |
| Authenticity of the destinations strongly promoted | | | | X |
| Tourism activities of the practice generate the least possible impact on the environment (geocaching) | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: No soft mobility concept in place.



NOTE

- Great example of an **innovative, sustainable tourism practice**, generating little impact on the environment
- With **5.6 million members**, the National Trust is **Europe's largest** cultural and conservation organization.
- A **tourism** model conserving the cultural authenticity and the beauty of nature and generates income for the rural population.
- Putting in place **incentives** for visitors to use bikes and public transport.

THE ENGLISH NATIONAL PARK EXPERIENCE COLLECTION



Destination: National Parks in England

Country: England

Website: <https://www.nationalparkexperiences.co.uk/>

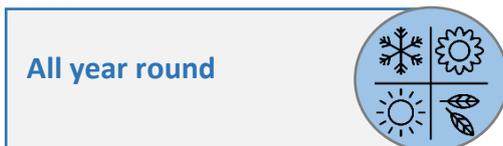


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | England's National Parks |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Funded by Visit England's Discover England Fund |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Print media Languages: ENG, DEU |

Categories

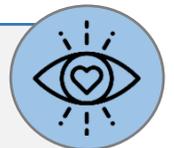


Season



Key attractions

- Innovative National Park product
- Cultural and natural experience
- Wild landscape
- Wildlife
- Living local traditions



DESCRIPTION:

England's National Parks are treasured for their tranquillity, traditions, heritage, and unique natural habitats. Geographically dotted around England, the parks provide free access to England's open countryside. They are a deep part of the fabric of **England's national identity**. Making up **10% of England's** total land with an abundance of native **wildlife-rich habitats**.

Funded by Visit England's Discover England Fund, this is the first time **England's National Parks** have worked together to develop **their offer** to the international travel trade. Jointly they have created an innovative selection and wide range of bookable of **National Park Experiences and accommodation** available in 9 of England's National Parks. The Collection is designed to be flexible; enabling the creation of new itineraries or refreshment of existing, for an addition to a city break through to the development of a **grand multi-park tour!** **With the slogan "Discover our National Parks"** a new travel trade-focused collection of bookable experiences and quality accommodation, **telling the stories** of England's finest landscapes and their people, has been set up.

USP bookable experiences in National Parks, professionally designed for individual travellers and the international travel trade.

- **About the Discover England Fund:** 2015, the Government announced a £40 million Discover England Fund; aims to deliver world-class bookable tourism products joined up across geographies and/or themes; including integrated transport solutions to provide an end-to-end customer experience.
- **Experiences:** On the [webpage](#) of the English National Park Collection, 86 innovative, bookable cultural, natural, experiences offered by local stakeholders, are presented. The experiences are frequently updated.
- **Accommodation:** 82 selected authentic high-quality local accommodation choices, in or surrounding the national parks, are listed and described on the webpage. Including all relevant information such as prices, level of comfort, services etc. (<https://www.nationalparkexperiences.co.uk/accommodation>).
- **Toolkits:** Like a “National Park Experiences Framework” or a guide to developing experiences have been created to guide local stakeholders on how to create and promote memorable tourism experiences.
- **Target groups:** Individual travellers interested in nature and cultural experiences. B2B and B2C. Domestic market, Europe, and German-speaking countries.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Supported and promoted by Visit Britain/Visit England. Downloadable [brochure](#); inspiring promotion video, news blog including events and highlights, media information.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| High level of community participation in the design and offering of experiences | X | X | X | |
| Promotion of local food, products, and housing | | X | X | |
| Strong institutional structure for coordinating and marketing | X | | X | |
| Visitor engagement with local artisans and the traditional local lifestyle | | X | X | |
| Support for nature conservation via income from tourism | | | | X |
| Authenticity of the destination is promoted | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Risk of overtourism in peak seasons. | | | | |



NOTE

- Very **innovative approach** to promote England National Parks
- **Strong involvement** of local tourism stakeholders and actors through innovative experiences concept
- Combination of natural and cultural **experiences**
- Good example of how protected areas can become a **sustainable competitive tourism product**

6.1.4. Nos. 13 –17: Innovative Initiatives

LEBONPICNIC

Destination: France

Country: France

Website: <https://lebonpicnic.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Small private company, works in partnership with local DMOs, trade associations and local cycling organizations |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2016 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram Languages: FRA |

Categories



Season



Key attractions

- Authentic **culinary experience**
- Innovation for cycling tourism
- Flexibility to enjoy the slow travel
- Contact with the local food producers



DESCRIPTION:

LEBONPICNIC is an **online marketplace**, currently operating in **eight destinations across rural France**, that connects **cyclists** with **local artisan food makers** (e.g., bakers, pastry chefs, local restaurants, charcutiers etc.). As the name of the company says, it offers a service ordering local quality picnics – the clients (which are mostly cycle tourists) choose a local food producer that is on their itinerary, order their picnic, and pick it up the next day.

The **USP** of this initiative is providing a **convenient tool** for cyclists to enjoy the destination they are exploring through its **authentic food**. LEBONPICNIC adds to the **slow travel** experience since the travellers have the **flexibility** to enjoy the picnics on their way together with their family and friends and at the same time benefit from the local **cultural and culinary experience**.

LEBONPICNIC is a **good example** of an **innovation** that helps to **promote** the gastronomic heritage and **support local producers** that would often have difficulty accessing online marketing tools, as well as shortening supply chains.

- **Sustainability:** By signing the Charter, picnic providers **guarantee** that their picnic is 100% artisan or farm-made, and that fresh, seasonal, and local products are used wherever possible. As for LEBONPICNIC

packaging, it is recyclable or biodegradable, and/or compostable. Also, the system of pre-ordering allows the local producers to plan better and thus to avoid food waste.

- **Awards:** in December 2018 LEBONPICNIC won the “Palme du Tourisme Durable” **sustainable tourism** award in the **Start-up category**. The initiative stood out for its innovation, sustainability, and potential to scale the service.
- **Facts and Figures:** A network of **42 artisans** now operates across eight destinations, mostly in the north-western part of France. Since its inception, the initiative has been growing - by the end of 2019 over **1700 online sales** were delivered - the number of picnics ordered **increased by 60%**, compared to the first year of activity. Most of the orders (73%) were for groups of over 10 people, and it was noted that **25% of clients** ordered **more than once** and in different locations.
- **Target groups:** currently targeted at groups of cyclists in France. However, it has potential to also target other groups of slow travellers, e.g., hikers.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Marketing through the websites of **partner DMOs** that provide content on the LEBONPICNIC brand as well as direct links to the reservation system. For example, the [LEBONPICNIC page](#) on the DMO of Landes (destination on the coast of southwest France).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Sustainable tourism award – “Palme du Tourisme Durable” | X | | | |
| The main beneficiaries are local food producers and makers | | X | | |
| Engaging local farmers, food makers and food artisans in the tourism value chain by directly connecting them to the travellers | | X | | |
| Promotion of local regional gastronomic heritage and products | | X | X | |
| Soft mobility – target groups are cyclists | | | | X |
| The tool helps people plan better for reducing food waste; packaging is biodegradable or recyclable. | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Challenge in finding the qualified food makers that would be along the cycling routes, convenient for cyclists to stop by. Weakness in reliance on single use packaging.



NOTE

- Practice showcases the **innovative digital start-up** which provides an online marketing tool solution to connect cyclists and rural authentic food producers that often lack the online presence
- Awarded sustainable tourism initiative
- It is a model of cooperation between local DMOs and innovative businesses as well as associations of travellers.
- Great variety of artisan food products, 100% artisan or farm-made

SOFT MOBILITY SAMOCARD

Destination: Werfenweng

Country: Austria

Website: <https://www.werfenweng.eu/EN/>



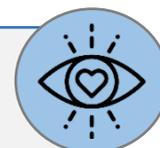
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Werfenweng tourism authority |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, EU funds (Alpine Pearls) |
| | INITIATED IN: | 1994 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram Languages: ENG, DEU |

Categories



Key attractions

- **Soft mobility destination**
- Nature experience
- Variety of leisure experiences



Season

All year round



DESCRIPTION:

Werfenweng is an **Alpine village** in Austria, located in the Salzburger Land, surrounded by beautiful mountains. This destination promotes green mobility through its innovative product called “samo-card”.

The **samo-card** is an **innovative** and **exemplary practice** to effectively promote **green and soft mobility** that leads to a **car-free** and **noise-free** destination. It offers a variety of mobility services; Samo-card holders can move around the destination by choosing one of **100 eco-friendly vehicles** or using the local transport - electric buses or night taxis. These services are available **all year round**, and there are extra services for summer and winter. In **summer**, tourists can move around with **e-bikes**, can join a tour-bus that shows them the most popular places in the area, or Wengsee amusement park, or go **hiking** in one of the suggested routes. In **winter**, the samo-card includes **cross-country-skiing** (free-equipment rental and entrance to ski tracks), horse sleigh rides, guided **snowshoe hiking tours** and a free hike with alpacas.

Moreover, it is a **good practice example** to benefit the local businesses since tourists who **directly book** accommodation through the website of Werfenweng and thus stay at the partner network accommodation, get **significant discounts** on the card [price](#).

- The Samo-card product has helped Werfenweng to **increase visitor numbers** more than 35%.
- Werfenweng was one of the partners participating in the European Commission project for sustainable transport in tourism (April 2012-December 2014). The project was called STARTER, the brochure of the project is [here](#).
- **Target groups:** mostly families with children, also individual travel, group travel. Domestic and international markets (especially Germany).
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Werfenweng is a member of the “Alpine Pearls” network that represents the villages that promote green mobility and sustainability in the Alpine countries. The destination is featured on their [website](#) with the link for booking accommodation in Werfenweng.
- **Awards:** Werfenweng was among the Sustainable Top 100 Destinations in [2016](#) and [2017](#), awards issued by Green Destinations.
- Werfenweng is mentioned in **Lonely Planet** articles featuring Tops of sustainable destinations - [eight destinations for an eco-friendly escape](#), [the 10 best sustainable trips for families](#).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Inclusion of inhabitants and hosts in planning (the idea of a holiday without a car came from inclusive discussions) | X | X | | |
| Samo-card services available in all seasons | X | | | |
| Recognized as a top sustainable destination | X | | | |
| More local jobs created (public transport services, management of e-vehicles) | | X | | |
| Less impact on environment (less noise and pollution) | | | | X |
| Exemplary destination and scheme for soft mobility | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Constantly growing visitor numbers may require more infrastructure.



NOTE

- Setting a vision for a **noise-free** and **car-free destination** with the local community
- Soft mobility as a USP for marketing the destination
- **Replacing individual** cars with public transport and electric cars
- Introducing the user-friendly tool, the “**Samo-card**” that tourists receive upon arrival at the destination
- Offering additional attractive soft mobility activities both in summer (e.g., e-bikes) and in winter (e.g., guided snowshoe hikes)

PLAY ALGHERO: ANGELICA AND THE KING OF THE ALGIROIDS



Destination: Alghero, Sardinia

Country: Italy

Website: <https://playalghero.it/#giochi>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Play Alghero brand and its system of games was created within the European project MED GAIMS GAMification for Memorable tourist experienceS. Alghero Foundation Museums Events Tourism is one of the project partners. The team behind the game are graphic and game designers Elisa Meloni and Alexandro Meloni. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | The European Union within the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, project co-financing – 10%. |
| | INITIATED IN: | MED GAIMS project started in 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, MED GAIMS Facebook, Instagram, Twitter Languages of the Play Alghero website: ITA Game Languages: ENG, ITA |

Categories

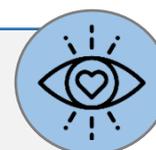


Season



Key attractions

- Beautiful cartoon design
- **Learning about local flora and fauna**
- Discovering the **historic center** and museums
- Augmented reality treasure hunt in the city



DESCRIPTION:

Angelica and the King of the Algiroids (in Italian – Angelica e il Re degli Algiroidi) is one of the games that was developed under the **Play Alghero brand**, created within the European project MED GAIMS GAMification for Memorable tourist experienceS. Angelica and the King of the Algiroids is a **digital game** that includes the point and click interaction and **augmented reality** treasure hunt. The story of the game revolves around a **young character, Angelica**, who has to find her aunt’s lizard Baba which escaped the house. Going around the Alghero city and collecting the clues with augmented reality function, the tourist helps the character of Angelica to find the king of Algiroids and to discover why the lizard Baba escaped.

This game is a good **example** of a **gamified experience** since it provides a **new, interesting way** to discover historic Alghero city and its museums as well as to learn about the local flora and fauna. The design of the game is very attractive and uses **a style of cartoons** and impressionist paintings that speaks well to the target group (children and adolescents of 6-15 years old).

The game provides a more in-depth experience of Alghero by offering to:

- **Discovering cultural heritage:** The game leads the player to look for the clues through the main heritage spots in the historic centre of Alghero as well as the City Archaeological Museum and the Coral Museum.
- **Learning about the local flora and fauna:** Deep research on local flora and fauna was done by developers. Thus, the game provides knowledge on the **Porto Conte Regional Natural Park** flora and fauna, especially on the small reptiles and amphibians that are the protagonists of the game. Throughout the game the player collects lizards and once they are found, the player is provided with an inventory card with information on the species.
- **Devices** to be used for the game are - mobile devices and tablets. Since the game contains an augmented reality framework, the devices should be quite modern.
- **Target groups:** families that are visiting Alghero and children and adolescents of 6-15 years old.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Promotes learning experience on the heritage sites of the destination | | | X | |
| Engages visitors to visit the local museums | | X | X | |
| Engages visitors to learn about the local natural area and its flora and fauna | | | | X |
| Reliance on soft mobility – walking through the city | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: The treasure hunt goes through the historic centre of the city and thus there is a risk of / could cause overcrowding during the peak seasons. | | | | |



NOTE

- An example of a gamified experience for families with children of age 6-15 years old that allows to discover the city in the unusual way.
- The game has a **learning component** – the players get to know the cultural sites, visit museums, and learn about the local flora and fauna.
- Beautiful cartoon design of the game is inviting as well as the augmented reality filters showing the city in the impressionist style.

THE MILL

Destination: Mseilha Castle, North of Lebanon

Country: Lebanon

Website: <https://www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/med-gaims>

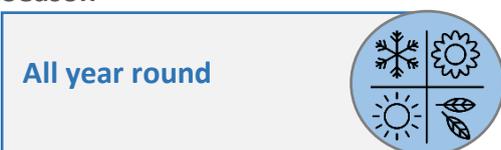


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Created within the European project MED GAIMS Gamification for Memorable tourist experienceS. American University of Beirut (lead beneficiary) and Directorate General of Antiquities are the project partners in Lebanon. The team behind the game: Daniel Asmar, Yaay Sal, Fadi Abi Chahine, Moheb Chanhsaz & Anis Chaaya, Samar Karam & Rita Lichaa. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | The European Union within the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, project co-financing – 10%. |
| | INITIATED IN: | MED GAIMS project started in 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | MED GAIMS Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter Languages of the game: ENG, Arabic |

Categories

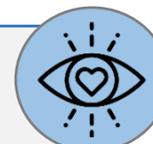


Season



Key attractions

- Learning experience
- **Cultural heritage**
- Includes both digital and physical components
- Experience of the functioning of water mills



DESCRIPTION:

The Mill is **the game** developed in the framework of the European project MED GAIMS Gamification for Memorable tourist experienceS. The game has **digital and physical components** (a phy-gital game), and it takes place in the **Mseilha castle** located near the city of Batroun and the Jawz River, in the North of Lebanon. The story of the game revolves around exploring the **mechanics** of the functioning of the **water mills** that are important historic food processing tools in Lebanese culture.

The Mill is a great **example** of a **gamified experience** since it has both entertaining and an **educational** element with the purpose of educating the visitor about the operation of the historic water powered mills of Lebanon. The game facilitates learning about the local **cultural heritage site** and Lebanese culture through the aid of a digital tool, but also by engaging the visitor in the physical site, thus adding to the overall visitor experience of the cultural site.

The [components](#) of the gamified experience:

- **The digital part:** the player is greeted by the protagonist, a Lebanese character Abou Imad, who is dressed in a typical head garment from the 16th century. The protagonist asks the player to set up different mechanical components of the mill and to turn on the three mills at the site (the first produces flour, the second, groats and the last one, olive oil). The player goes through different stages of the game, starting from diverting river water towards the mill by building a dam and finishing by pressing the olive oil.
- The digital component of the game is implemented on both **Android and iOS** and is played on phone or tablet.
- To create the **immersive experiences**, a beautiful graphic design is used as well as the sounds of the water and the sound of mill operations.
- **The physical part** (foreseen): the actual mill operates each time the player wins a component of the game (the digital game is linked via Bluetooth to the controller that turns on the pump that circulates the water).
- **Target groups:** cultural curious tourists visiting the Mseilha castle, designed for the ages 7+. The game is a one player game.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Tool to engage and attract more visitors and thus to support the cultural site | X | | X | |
| The game is based in the historical site located in the rural area (Mseilha fort situated north of the Village of Hamat) | | X | | |
| The game celebrates and educates people about an important part of Lebanese culture regarding historic food processing tools | | | X | |
| Existing mill infrastructure is used and promoted, while adding the digital component | | | X | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Guidelines on visitor behaviour onsite could be useful in the case of busy periods if large groups of visitors want to operate the mill (physically) at the same time. | | | | |



NOTE

- An example of an **educational gamified experience**
- Entertainment element provided in the context of cultural sites visits
- An example of a phy-gital game
- Tool to provide a learning experience on important historic traditions

GASTROSECRETS. THE KEEPERS OF THE RECIPE BOOK



Destination: Vilanova I la Geltrú, Catalonia

Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.agencyofsecrets.com/en/>

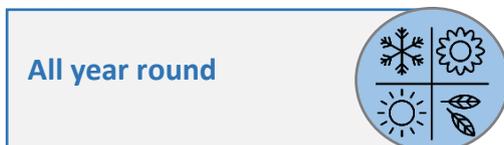


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Created within the European project MED GAIMS GAMification for Memorable tourist experience. i2CAT Private Foundation, Internet and Digital Innovation in Catalonia and Local Business Public Entity Neàpolis are the project partners in Spain. This game is developed by a local tour operator, Turismo Vivencial, which won one of the MED GAIMS hackathons. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | The European Union within the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, project co-financing – 10%. |
| | INITIATED IN: | MED GAIMS project started in 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | MED GAIMS Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter Languages: CAT, ESP, ENG |

Categories



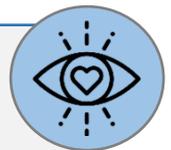
Season



All year round

Key attractions

- City experience
- **Gastronomic gamified experience**
- Contact with local authentic restaurants
- Learning historic Catalan recipes



DESCRIPTION:

Gastrosecrets is one of the games from the **Agency of Secrets** games series, developed in the framework of the European project MED GAIMS GAMification for Memorable tourist experiences. It is an **analogue street game** that, like other games from the series, takes place in the city of Vilanova I la Geltrú, and is focused on discovery of the city's historical gastronomic landscape.

The **USP** of this practice is that it provides a **gamified experience** of exploring the gastronomy of the Vilanova I la Geltrú and directly **connects** visitors **to the restaurants of the city** since players have to actually **walk into** the restaurants during the game.

Moreover, as their **reward** at the end of the game, tourists receive the QR code that provides the link to six **videos** in which the **chefs** of the participant restaurants provide the players with historical authentic **Catalan recipes** and show them how to prepare these recipes.

The structure of the game includes:

- **Mechanics of the game:** Moving around the city and solving enigmas on the way. One part of the game requires visitors to enter the restaurants to collect the information needed to solve the enigmas.
- **The objective:** The story takes place in the 19th century and is conveyed through the character of Victor Balaguer. Users have to find the 'Lost Recipe Book' from the 19th century by solving enigmas.
- **Learning experience:** Learning the historical recipes of the place. Moreover, the game tool, booklet, includes information on the history of the city in the 19th century, for example, on local fishing traditions.
- **Time of Play:** More than 2 hours.
- **Target groups:** Suitable for all ages 7+, and can be played in groups, couples or individually. Designed to attract local, national, and international travellers.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Involvement of the local restaurateur community in the planning of the game | X | | | |
| The main beneficiaries of the game are local gastronomy businesses | | X | | |
| Promotion of local gastronomy of Vilanova I la Geltrú | | X | X | |
| Celebrating and promoting the intangible heritage of the place – its historical recipes | | | X | |
| Using the existent tourism infrastructure | | | | X |
| Activity using slow mobility – walking around the city | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Risk of overtourism in peak seasons, in the city center and in the restaurants. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Good practice example** of a gamified experience in the city centre to explore the local gastronomy
- Making visitors discover authentic restaurants of the city
- It is a **learning experience** since visitors learn the local recipes and the history
- Reward of the game – videos of recipes by local chefs, extends the travel experience also when visitors come back home

6.1.5. Nos. 18 –21: Trail Models

JORDAN TRAIL

Destination: Connecting the North to the South of Jordan

Country: Jordan

Website: <https://jordantrail.org/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Jordan Trail Association (JTA) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Grant from USAID, contributions from the private sector, support from the Jordan Tourism Board, funds collected from JTA organized hiking events |
| | INITIATED IN: | Jordan Trail Association was formed in 2015 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Newsletter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Twitter Language: ENG |

Categories

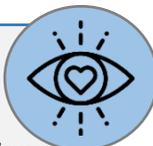


Season



Key attractions

- Fascinating desert landscapes
- Cultural experience
- Long distance, **cross-country desert trekking**
- Huge variety of climates and terrains



DESCRIPTION:

The Jordan Trail extends from the town of Um Qais and the green hills in the north to the **sandy deserts** and the **shores of the Red Sea** in the south, ending at the city of Aqaba.

It is a long-distance hiking trail, stretching **more than 650 km**. The trail is divided into **eight separate sections** and to trek it all one needs **40 days**. Each section is divided into smaller stages and each stage can be done in one day. For each stage, information on its length, difficulty, way marking, transportation, things to see, and accommodation is provided on the website.

It is an **exemplary practice** because it shows the **authentic Jordan**, helps local economic development as it leads hikers across **52 villages and towns**, and provides well-organized, professional information around the trail and its related infrastructure for hikers.

Local enthusiasts, hikers, Bedouin tribes, and other people and organizations helped the Jordan Trail Association to develop the trail. They way-marked trail sections from Um Qais to Ajloun, built relationships with service providers along the trail (homestays and local guides), and advertised the trail globally and locally. The development of the trail is ongoing. Strategic partners and sponsors support the **financial project activities** around the trail.

- **Accommodation:** Contact details of the ecolodges, hotels, home stays, and camp sites are given. Wild camping spots are also recommended. There is a list of local service providers: guides, escorts, and local services. Direct booking of **specific stages** is possible through the webpage booking link. Some accommodation is on **Bedouin camp sites**, providing an **authentic experience**.
- **Maps and GPXs** data exist as [downloadable files](#) and elevation profiles are available.
- **Hiking events** (1 weekend, regional, annual hiking events) are organized by the Jordan Trail Association (<https://jordantail.org/events/>) and create additional income that is re-invested in trail infrastructure.
- **Tips** on **cultural customs** are in place and Covid-19 and trail guidelines for trail users' safety and trail protection are provided.
- **Target groups:** Individual travellers from international markets.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** A list of tour operators organizing groups to travel the Jordan Trail on the website (<https://jordantail.org/join-a-group/>). Featured in the **National Geographic Travel** "Best of the World 2018" for the best destinations to visit as well as other media - The Telegraph (UK), Lonely Planet, Conde Nast Traveller.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| High level of local involvement in the development of the trail (local enthusiasts, hikers, Bedouin tribes) | X | X | | |
| Tourists spread out beyond the main tourism spots to 52 villages across the country | X | X | | |
| Revival of rural locations - jobs generated in 52 villages (local accommodation, local guides) | | X | | |
| Advice on cultural customs is communicated | | X | X | |
| Visitors' engagement in the local Bedouin lifestyle helps to preserve their traditions | | X | X | |
| Promotion of soft mobility | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Lack of municipal facilities for trash collection and recycling. Widely promoted wild camping might also cause environmental damage. | | | | |



NOTE

- Involvement of **local stakeholders and communities** in the development of the trail. E.g., Bedouins planning of **accommodation** in their **camp sites**
- It is planned for the trail to go through **remote rural areas** to help local economic development, as well as to offer an authentic experience of Jordan
- **Partnership** with the Jordan Tourism Board to help market the trail in the international media
- **Different hikes**, organised by the Jordan Trail Association (JTA), generate income to maintain the trail
- **Well-presented information** on local accommodation and services (guides, escorts etc.) support travellers and helps to create income for the local communities

LEBANON MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Destination: Lebanon Mountain Trail

Country: Lebanon

Website: <https://www.lebanontrail.org/#!/home>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Started by ECODIT, a US company with a sister company in Lebanon. Currently, the Lebanon Mountain Trail Association (LMTA) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Funds from EU through the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform; Projects, Donations, membership fees |
| | INITIATED IN: | The trail was established in 2006-2008. The Lebanon Mountain Trail Association was established in 2007 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram Language: ENG |

Categories

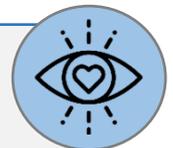


Season



Key attractions

- Diverse mountain landscapes
- Local rural experience
- Long distance, cross-country trekking



DESCRIPTION:

The Lebanon Mountain Trail stretches from the north to the south for **470 km, passing through more than 76 villages**. It crosses 5 natural areas, such as the well-known Al-Shouf Cedar Nature Reserve and the Qadisha Valley, as well as less-travelled ones - Wadi Jahannam and the mountains of Akkar. The altitude along the trail ranges from 570 meters to 2,073 meters above sea level.

The trail is divided into **27 sections** and each section can be hiked in one day. One can hike the whole trail or a specific section. Most of the trail is way marked, however, not all of it. The Lebanon Mountain Trail Association provides maps that one can purchase on their website. Also, practical information for each LMT section is available on the website - details on the length and elevation gain, information on accommodation, local tour operators for organizing one's trip, and local guides. The **USP** of the trail is the combination of an experience of traveling through **diverse mountainous landscapes**, as well as getting a glimpse of **rural Lebanon** by staying at **local guesthouses**, meeting local people, and eating local dishes.

- The **idea behind the trail**: Establishment of a national trail, a symbol of togetherness for the country as it unites Lebanon and its people, linking one village to another. Job creation and additional income and creation of a vehicle for **responsible tourism** in Lebanon.
- **Membership system**: \$100 yearly fee or \$750 fee for lifetime membership. Members get discounts for services along the trail (accommodation, food, equipment shopping etc.) Also, one can help to maintain the trail by sponsoring 1km for \$1k and becoming a “Trail Keeper”.
- **Marketing & distribution channels**: The trail has been featured in different travel and other media - National Geographic, Lonely Planet, the Guardian. The LMT is also a member of the ATTA, SDG, World’s Trails Network. The LMT has **ambassadors** in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, the UK, UAE, Kuwait. Ambassadors are featured on the Instagram account.
- To promote the trail, the LMTA **organizes trekking events** - a 10-Day Fall Trek in October and a Thru-Walk trip in April, crossing the whole trail in one month. These tours can be **booked on the website** and the price **includes the full package**.
- **Target groups**: hikers need to be in good physical condition to do the LMT. Targeted to individual travellers, both domestic and international markets (as well as Lebanese expats).
- **220 hikers** (55% locals and 45% foreign) took part in the **Thru-Walk in 2019 (20 different nationalities)** **\$100K** was injected **into the rural economy** during this [event](#).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Community-based organizations, local tour operators, municipalities involved in planning | X | X | | |
| Facilitation of opening guesthouses, training guides in rural areas | | X | | |
| Hikers engaged in the traditional lifestyle when staying at local guesthouses | | X | X | |
| Local gastronomy promoted (local meals provided in the guesthouses) | | | X | |
| Communication on environmental issues (water awareness on LMT, zero waste policy in Thru-hike) | | | | X |
| No new infrastructure built for the trail | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Unregulated development (paved roads appear instead of dirt roads, way marking disappears). Littering.



NOTE

- The greatest local benefits to the rural communities via development of guesthouses and training of local guides
- Promotion is done in various ways. The **Ambassadors program** helps to **promote** the trail **internationally** with **low investment**
- Organized hikes once a year also help to promote the trail and boost the local economy
- **Membership system** used to collect funds and provide discounts to visitors

EL CINQUÈ LLAC

Destination: Pyrenees, Catalonia

Country: Spain

Website: <http://www.elcinquellac.com/en/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET UP: | Marques de Pastor association- association of rural tourism establishments |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Marques de Pastor association |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2012 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram Languages: ES, EN, IT, GER |

Categories

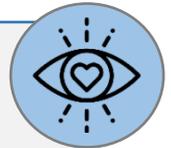


Season



Key attractions

- Unspoiled nature
- Cultural experience
- Long distance hiking
- **Model for “bottom-up” initiatives**



DESCRIPTION:

The Fifth Lake “Cinquè Llac” is a **circular 5-day hiking trail in the Pyrenees**, just **200 km** from Barcelona, which begins and ends in La Pobla de Segur. It runs through the mountains of the Pyrenees of Lleida, in Catalonia. The route includes the counties of Pallars Jussà, Pallars Sobirà and Alta Ribagorça. It is a mid-mountain route, accessible to all kinds of hiking enthusiasts, at the foot of the Aigüestortes i Sant Maurici Natural Park, by way of an itinerary divided into **5 stages** (between **15 km and 25 km per day**).

For over **100 kilometres**, hikers will conquer the changing terrain nature offers us, while enjoying one of the most **unknown and astounding areas** of the Pyrenees: the Pla de Corts plain, the valleys of Vall Fosca and Vall de Manyanet, and discovering Montcortès lake, the Fifth Lake.

One of the **trail’s key values** is that most of the route follows bridle paths and mountain trails (62%), some especially retrieved for the occasion and others already marked out by the respective town councils. However, each stage has sections by track (26%) and road (12%).

- The trail product **Five Lakes** is a **good example** of **how local actors** - in this case, the **rural tourism accommodation establishments** of the region and the agency marketing the product, Pirineu Emoció - have

joined forces to manage the Fifth Lake and to start **revitalising a region through this sustainable tourism approach**.

- **Hiking packages:** for individuals (685 EUR) and starting from 2 persons (599 EUR). The package includes: 6 overnights in rural accommodation including half-pension, luggage transfer, information materials, and a roadbook for the trail.
- **Different ways of travelling** the Fifth Lake trail: hiking, by mountain bike, on horseback and even astride a **Catalan donkey** or guided by a local expert.
- **Target groups:** Nature and cultural interested hikers from Europe.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Catalonia tourism authority; tourism board Diputació de Leida, Pallars Jussà county (regional) and some EU projects like Hiking Europe; Special marketing tools: testimonials section on the webpage; blog, digital (brochure https://issuu.com/elcinquellac/docs/english_brochure_1), the trail stages can be downloaded on wikiloc; very strong press coverage.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| High-level community participation and involvement in planning (inhabitants of Pallars) | X | X | | |
| Revival of abandoned mountain villages | | X | | |
| Seasonality and spread of visitation is addressed | X | | | |
| Revival of rural places - jobs are generated in rural areas (rural hosts and businesses) | | | | X |
| Local products and crafts are promoted and available for sale to visitors at the destination | X | X | X | |
| Soft mobility concept | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Webpage is a bit confusing and further information on the product (intro page); the level of difficulty for each stage, and the bookable packages would be good.



NOTE

- A model for a **“bottom-up” initiative** carried out by 6 rural cottages and a local travel agency combining (1) eco-mobility (train) (2) Physical activity (hiking) (3) Natural environment (well conserved rural area) (4) Cultural immersion (recovery of old cattle paths, legends, participation of residents)
- **Revitalisation** of the authentic character of the region by **creating a flagship touristic product** – the Fifth Lake Trail
- **Low impact** tourism infrastructure – use of existing pathways and accommodation
- **Strong local added value** – main beneficiaries are stakeholders of the destination
- 5% gross income is reinvested in the maintenance and improvement of the network of the paths
- Member of the project [Gratitud Pallars](#), a step forward to **“visitors payback”** and volunteering

JORDAN BIKE TRAIL

Destination: Jordan Bike Trail

Country: Jordan

Website: <https://jordanbiketrial.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Started by Experience Jordan Adventures (private tour company), currently managed by a collaboration of private companies |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private, USAID fund in 2018 |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2014 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, Video Language: ENG |

Categories

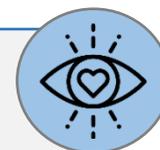


Season



Key attractions

- Breathtaking desert landscapes
- Cultural experience
- Long-distance, **cross-country cycling**



DESCRIPTION:

The Jordan Bike Trail stretches through the **western part of Jordan** from the Um Qais in the north to Aqaba city on the Red Sea in the south. The landscape along the trail changes from hills and farms in the north, to canyons and later deserts in the south. The trail passes through both **natural** and **cultural heritage sites** of Jordan, including **Petra**.

The trail is **730 km** long and is organized in **12 one-day stages**, each on average 61 km long and requiring 1600 m of climbing. The surface of the trail is 60% paved roads and 40% dirt roads. There are different options for doing the trail - one can do a **fully supported tour** with a tour operator that takes care of all the services along the way and carries the gear, or do a **bikepacker tour** and organize everything on one's own. Anything in between is also possible and the information on all the options is available on the website.

Different accommodation options are indicated along the trail, from **family homestays** and **camping in Bedouin tents** to choosing a **hotel** or other lodging. **Wild camping** is also possible. The **USP** of the Jordan Bike Trail is the combination of **biking adventure** with the **experience of Jordan's traditional culture** through encounters and stays with local people.

- **Practical information** (GPX files for every stage, printable maps and booklets) can be downloaded (<https://jordanbiketrail.com/navigation/> and <https://jordanbiketrail.com/downloads/>).
- **A unique experience of traditional Jordan** is possible by choosing **accommodation with locals**. Staying at family homestays and in Bedouin tents, one can get a first-hand experience of how local people live, not only by staying in their homes, but also by **sharing a meal** with them (dinner and breakfast are usually included). Specific accommodation options are indicated at every stage, general information is provided [here](#).
- **Sustainability**: A page dedicated to sustainability provides recommendations for environmentally conscious behaviour (<https://jordanbiketrail.com/sustainability-2/>).
- **Target groups**: Small groups of individual travellers, mostly international market (Western Europe, North America).
- **Marketing & distribution channels**: Supported tours are organized by the tour operators who manage the Jordan Bike Trail, their contacts are on the [website](#).
- The Jordan Bike Trail has been featured in the **media** in different countries (e.g., the Washington Post, Bike-Das Mountainbike Magazin, Voyageons Autrement), and won the “**Best in Adventure Tourism**” award at the International Travel & Tourism Awards 2018 ([more information](#)).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Information on sustainability issues and responsible tourism etiquette (Leave no trace) | X | X | | X |
| Revival of rural areas by generating income (family homestay, local shops) | | X | | |
| Visitors engaged in traditional lifestyle (staying with families and Bedouins) | | | X | |
| Local gastronomy promoted (dinner and breakfast shared with locals) | | X | X | |
| Advice on culture communicated (clothing, rules for communication etc.) | | X | X | |
| Existing paths and roads are used for the trail | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Waste management is an issue and is visible along the trail. | | | | |



NOTE

- Organizing the **bike trail in different stages**, each stage ending at a location with food and accommodation
- Providing local experience through the chance to stay with **local families and Bedouins**
- Providing **different travel options** - between **fully supported** and **self-supported**
- Communicating both environmental and cultural rules to visitors

6.1.6. Nos. 22 –25: Cultural Routes

ITER VITIS CULTURAL ROUTE

Destination: Iter Vitis cultural route

Country: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, UK

Website: <https://itervitis.eu/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | A non-profit association - the European Federation Iter Vitis. The institutional and legal head offices are in Sambuca di Sicilia, Italy. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, EU Funds |
| | INITIATED IN: | Since 2009 a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, weekly Newsletter Languages: ENG, FRA |

Categories

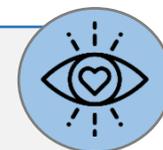


Season



Key attractions

- Cultural route
- Wine tourism offer
- Cultural experience
- Viticultural landscapes



DESCRIPTION:

Iter Vitis is a Cultural route of the Council of Europe which connects countries mostly from the Mediterranean region, Western Europe and Caucasus that share a **heritage of wine production**. Iter Vitis Route showcases and preserves the **viticultural landscapes**, the culture of the vine and **winemaking traditions**.

The **USP** of Iter Vitis route is that it creates **authentic wine tourism experiences** that include exploring the heritage of the great varieties of European oenological territories and landscapes. Besides developing **sustainable forms of enotourism**, the federation also works on preservation of the heritage of historical and ancient vines and of the culture of vine and wine, and on the promotion of research, documentation, and **environmental protection** activities to defend biodiversity.

Furthermore, Iter Vitis is a **good example** of a cultural route that, besides cultural heritage preservation activities, creates **concrete sustainable wine tourism products** – different tours across the network destinations that last from one day to two weeks. Many of the tours allow travellers to discover **lesser-known**

regions and countries, for example, Moldova. Below is a selection of a couple of their tours in different countries:

- **‘Moldova Wine Experience’**: a four-day [tour](#) organized by a Moldovan travel agency. The tour includes trips to a couple of wineries and wine cellars, including a **family-owned winery** that follows the traditions of Moldovan wine; **wine tasting** experiences, including an exclusive one accompanied by local black caviar; a visit to the local **farmers market** and more. Tour costs 420€/person and is designed for groups (min. 8 persons).
- **‘Cross Border: a very special wine tour of Slovenia and Croatia’**: a five-day [tour](#) to discover the wine traditions and tastes of Slovenia and Croatia; organized by a Slovenian tour operator. Includes such **special experiences** as tasting **indigenous wines** produced in a biodynamic way, visit to a wine cellar with one of the **largest wine barrels** in Europe, tasting wines from the **wine fountain**, truffle hunt and enjoying truffle meals accompanied by wine and others. Accommodation in 4* star hotels.
- **Other packages**: other Adriatic & Balkans wine travel experiences are offered in this [booklet](#).
- **Awards**: Since 2009 Iter Vitis Route has been a certified cultural route of the [Council of Europe](#).
- **Target groups**: International groups of travelers looking for cultural, gastronomic, and especially wine experiences.
- **Marketing & distribution channels**: Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe channels (website, social media, newsletter) and their special programmes, e.g., [Routes4U blog](#) (a joint programme between the Council of Europe and the European Union to foster regional development); national tourism authorities of the network; tour operators from the network countries; digital brochure.

|  SUSTAINABILITY CHECK | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
| Spread of visitors through often lesser known destinations | X | | | |
| Generating income in the rural landscapes | | X | | |
| Including local wine makers in the tourism value chain | | X | X | |
| Preservation of the vine and wine traditions and viticulture landscapes and heritage | | | X | |
| Promotion of the local gastronomy and products | | X | X | |
| Environmental protection activities to defend the biodiversity | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Lack of integration and offer of the soft mobility options during the tours; some tours (e.g. in Moldova) lack of authentic accommodation offers in the rural areas. | | | | |

|  NOTE | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good practice example of creating exclusive wine experiences. • Promotion of concrete tours in known and lesser-known destinations, designed by local tour operators. • Example of successful management of a wide network from 20 different countries. | |

PALESTINIAN HERITAGE TRAIL

Destination: Palestinian Heritage Trail

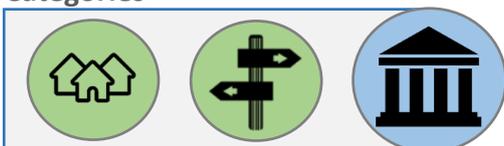
Country: Palestine

Website: <https://phtrail.org/>



| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | The Palestinian Heritage Trail (PHT) is a non-governmental organization. The organization is endorsed and supported by the Palestine Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. PHT works closely with 50 local communities and partners with local associations. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, funds through different projects, e.g., Cultural Routes for Sustainable Social and economic Development in Mediterranean project (CROSSDEV) within the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. |
| | INITIATED IN: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | 2013 Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram Languages: ENG, FRA, Arabic |

Categories

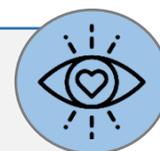


Season



Key attractions

- Local cultural experience
- Long-distance hiking
- Palestinian cuisine and hospitality
- Contact with local people



DESCRIPTION:

Palestinian Heritage Trail is a **long-distance cultural hiking trail** that focuses on a community-based tourism model. The trail is about **500 km** long and stretches from the north to the south across the West Bank. The trail goes through around 60 local cities, towns, villages, and communities in which travellers can experience the local hospitality. Palestinian Heritage Trail is organized in **5 segments and 22 stages**; in the framework of CROSSDEV project, a segment of Hebron has been recently extended with **4 additional stages** (59 km) that contribute to 16 new local communities.

The **USP** of Palestinian Heritage Trail is the **immersion in the local culture** and the opportunity to get to know the local people, hear their stories and share meals.

This is a great example of a **cultural route** that focuses on **revitalization of rural places** where tourism is usually not present, and empowerment of local people, especially women. The **local communities** around Palestinian

Heritage Trail are directly involved in the project and generate income through **services they offer to the hikers**, such as:

- **Local Accommodation:** Most of the accommodation options are directly linked to the local community, they include **family homestay** (depending on family opportunities provision of a separate room or of mats or mattresses on the floor of the living room), **locally owned guest houses** with private rooms, hostels, Bedouin tents or camping spots.
- **Local Guides:** A group of 25 local guides who received formal training from the Palestinian Heritage Trail and its local partners is available.
- **35 women cooperatives** along the Palestinian Heritage trail **sell food products**—such as shadeah, za’atar, yogurt, butter, pickles, and jams—and **handcrafts** embellished with traditional Palestinian embroidery.
- **Special initiative:** hiker passports are available for purchase in which hikers can **collect stamps** from different stops on the trail.
- **Special events:** Palestinian Heritage Trail **Thru-Hike** is a special biannual event on the Palestinian Heritage Trail taking place in March and in November. Thru Hike includes the experience of crossing the full length (330km) of the trail, 21 days in a row. Travellers can do **direct booking** of a one day, one week or the full package through project the partner’s website [walkpalestine](#). Additionally, this platform offers the chance to book packages to explore either the northern or southern parts of the trail in spring or in autumn.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic and international travelers, hikers, and trekkers, looking for immersive local experiences.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** direct booking through the project partner’s website [walkpalestine](#), featured [tour operators](#), the official Palestine tourism [portal](#). In the framework of CROSSDEV project, the [press tour](#) was organized in 2021 in Hebron and its surroundings.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Community participation in planning | X | | | |
| Visitors spread through less well-known areas | X | X | | |
| Employment of local people, special focus on women (women’s cooperatives) | | X | | |
| Visitor engagement in the traditional lifestyle, offer of local products and gastronomy | | X | X | |
| Promotion of soft mobility - hiking | | | | X |
| Guidelines on visitor behavior in place (cultural rules and Leave No Trace principles) | | | X | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: In the busy periods there is a risk that the local communities, especially those offering family stays, may experience fatigue from visitors, which can also negatively affect the project in the long run.



NOTE

- **Good practice example** - revitalization of rural places and creation of local jobs
- Offer of a truly immersive local experience – local culture, contact with locals, local cuisine
- Good example of organizing **special events** and providing booking options through the partner

ADONIS ROUTE

Destination: Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve

Country: Lebanon

Website: <https://www.enicbcmec.eu/projects/crossdev>



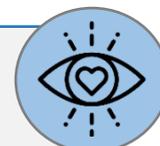
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | The Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa, working closely with the stakeholders |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | The European project CROSSDEV Cultural Routes for Sustainable Social and economic Development in Mediterranean, the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, project co-financing – 10%. |
| | INITIATED IN: | CROSSDEV project started in 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Project website and social media channels Languages: ENG, FRA, Arabic |

Categories

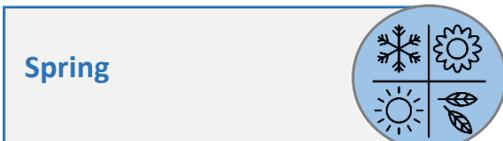


Key attractions

- Spectacular natural landscapes
- Archaeological site in the natural area
- Local Lebanese experience



Season



DESCRIPTION:

Adonis Route is located in **Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve** in Lebanon and is one of the pilot areas in the framework of the European project CROSSDEV Cultural Routes for Sustainable Social and economic Development in Mediterranean. In the framework of the project a sustainable **tourism product**, the Adonis Route, has been developed to capitalize on the heritage of the local **archaeological sites** and the **Adonis myth**, whose events, according to the myth, took place in the reserve.

This good practice **example** shows how to enhance the touristic experience from a half-day hike to a **multi-day experience**, thus also contributing to the local economy by including local communities (farmers, artisans, local guest house owners, guides, drivers, local shop owners).

The **USP** of Adonis Route is an **authentic cultural and nature experience** in the Biosphere Reserve that includes a **variety of activities** – from hikes, to visiting heritage sites, to trying local gastronomy and engaging in the local workshops.

The currently designed product is a **five-day package** called ‘**The Adonis Route: between Myth and Reality**’ that invites travellers to visit the birthplace of the Adonis Myth and to discover the beauty of nature and culture that surround it. **The offer includes** (and is estimated to cost around 500€-700€/person):

- **Cultural site visits**, for example, the archaeological site in Ghineh with Roman Temple and Byzantine church, the Adonis Rock; Qornet El Deir Archaeological site (4500 years of history); Astarte Temple in Afqa.
- **Hiking and wellness activities**: short walks (2-6 km) on easy or moderate trails are included on a couple of days. Additionally, an optional yoga session can be added alongside one of the hikes.
- **Experiences of the local gastronomy**: guest houses prepare traditional home-made breakfast, lunch and dinner from local products.
- **Lebanese culture experience** through different workshops, planned for evenings or afternoons. For example, learning with the guest house owner how to prepare pickles and special Lebanese infusions Zhourat, compotes and seasonal dishes; storytelling workshop; **workshop on making traditional Phoenician hats**.
- **Target groups**: National and international tourists, mainly from the European Mediterranean countries; families, cultural tourists.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Involvement of private and public stakeholders (including local communities) in the planning process | X | | | |
| The main beneficiaries are local communities | | X | | |
| Generating jobs in rural places, engaging local agro-food producers, artisans | | X | X | |
| Engagement of visitors with local artisans through organized workshops | | X | X | |
| Conservation of the local heritage sites (archaeological sites) | | | X | |
| Support for the protected area – Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Current product is foreseen only for the spring season. Furthermore, successful commercialization strategies should be found.



NOTE

- Good practice example of creating a multi-day experience in the Reserve.
- **Using the ancient myth** as the storyline of the route and visiting/hiking to the sites connected to the story
- Local artisans are involved by offering travellers the workshops.
- Local gastronomy is used as an important part of the experience

VIA SELINUNTINA

Destination: Via Selinuntina, Sicily

Country: Italy

Website: <https://www.enicbcmcd.eu/projects/crossdev>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Municipality of Castelvetro, Municipality of Sambuca di Sicilia, Municipality of Menfi, other public and private stakeholders, associations. There is a public private steering committee for each municipality, as well as a scientific committee. |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | The European project CROSSDEV Cultural Routes for Sustainable Social and economic Development in Mediterranean, the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, project co-financing – 10%. |
| | INITIATED IN: | CROSSDEV project started in 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Project website and social media channels Languages: ENG, FRA, Arabic |

Categories



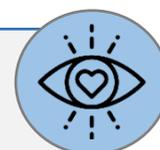
Season

Late Summer –
early Autumn



Key attractions

- Ancient cultural heritage sites
- Stunning natural landscapes
- Exclusive gastronomical experiences
- Luxury experience



DESCRIPTION:

Via Selinuntina is an ancient route that goes along the **southern coast of the island of Sicily**, Italy. In the framework of the European project CROSSDEV Cultural Routes for Sustainable Social and economic Development in Mediterranean, the **pilot** area of the Belice Valley on this route was chosen to develop a **niche sustainable tourism offer** to promote **lesser-known** sites and the astonishing local cultural heritage such as the archaeological site of Selinunte, and to provide economic opportunities for local populations.

This practice example **showcases** how to enhance lesser-known, hinterland destinations by creating an attractive tourism offer for a **higher end target group** and involving different local actors in the process.

The **USP** of the Via Selinuntina are the **ancient cultural heritage sites** with a **backdrop of stunning nature** to experience in a more private atmosphere, away from the tourist crowds, as well as the boutique experiences of quality local gastronomy and accommodation. Currently, a Via Selinuntina **touristic product** has been

developed – a **four-day package** with the title ‘The Magic of Via Selinuntina: a dream suspended between sea and countryside’ that offers this unique experience and includes the following:

- **Cultural sites visits:** archaeological park in Selinunte, villages destroyed after the earthquake in 1968, tour of the Sambuca di Sicilia town.
- **Gastronomic experiences:** different and **surprising locations** have been picked out, such as an Italian style Aperitivo in the harbour, dinner at the restaurant on the beach, lunch in the winery (including a wine tasting), lunch on the boat with a freshly caught fish dishes.
- **Other special experiences:** afternoon relaxing at the Thermal Baths, morning **fish tourism experience** with local fishermen, evening bike tour through the vineyards to arrive for sunset.
- **Target groups:** domestic and international travellers, couples, higher end cultural tourists.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| High level participation of local public and private stakeholders and associations. | X | X | | |
| Designed to extend the usual touristic season of July and August | X | X | | |
| Promotes lesser-known destinations and seeks to revitalize rural areas | X | X | | |
| Preservation and promotion of local cultural heritage sites | | | X | |
| A great offer of local gastronomy and products | | | X | |
| Main beneficiaries are local tourism businesses, restaurants, but also local fishermen | | X | | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: More soft or green mobility could be integrated. Successful commercialization strategies should be found. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good practice example – designing a touristic product to attract **higher end visitors**
- Example of creating products for lesser-known areas
- Preservation and promotion of lesser-known **cultural heritage sites**
- **Exclusive** gastronomic experiences in surprising locations

6.1.7. Nos. 26 –30: Cultural, Natural and Culinary Experiences

TORRES & EARTH

Destination: Penedès, Catalonia

Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.torres.es/en/torres-and-earth>

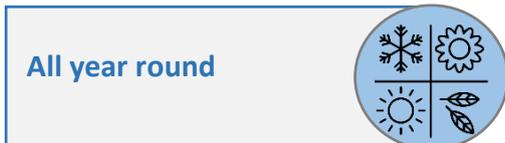


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Familia Torres, a family owned wine company, offering exclusive wine experiences |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | Company started in 1870; Torres & Earth program – in 2008 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, TripAdvisor, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest Languages: ENG, CAT, ESP, DEU |

Categories

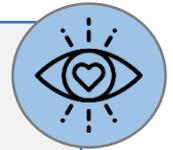


Season



Key attractions

- **Awarded Wine experiences**
- Cultural experience
- Culinary experience
- Measurable environmental **commitment**



DESCRIPTION:

Familia Torres has been a **wine company from over 150 years**, well-known worldwide for its wines and brandies. Their winery is located around 40 minutes' drive from Barcelona city and offers its visitors a range of immersive **wine experiences** reflecting the local wine culture.

The company is well-known for its **ambitious environmental action and goals** in their **Torres & Earth program**. The goals include **reducing their carbon footprint** as well as **adaptation to the changing climate**. Every year, the company puts 11% of their profits into investments related to the environment and the fight against climate change.

This practice is a **great example of a responsible company** that takes **real actions** and **achieve concrete results** in terms of environmental sustainability. Actions taken regarding the adaptation to the changing climate are crucial for the **long-term sustainability** of the company, ensuring they can continue to provide high quality products and experiences to their visitors.

The **USP** of this practice is their **award-winning wine experiences** including tasting the most exclusive of the Family's wines, visiting prestigious vineyards and wine cellars and other gastronomic experiences. The **offer of more exclusive** and individual day experiences, so called **Signature wine experiences**, is provided [here](#).

- **A range of further Wine Experiences:** for example, Wine & Tapas pairing – a visit to the vineyard, the wine cellar and pairing of 4 wines with 4 tapas, accompanied by a local wine educator or sommelier. Available on weekends in English, Catalan and Spanish, [easy booking via the website](#).
- **Awards:** Familia Torres wine experiences are awarded by the **World Food Travel Association**, see [here](#).
- **Sustainability:** Actions taken include areas of renewable energy, **energy efficiency**, sustainable transport, reduction of CO2 emissions via producing lighter bottles, investment in research (e.g., carbon capture and reuse technologies), **supporting nature conservation** through reforestation schemes with indigenous trees and working on designing **biodiverse vineyards**.
- **CO2 emissions reduction results and goals:** From 2008 to 2019, CO2 emissions were reduced by 30%, reaching the target for 2020. Their new medium and long-term commitments: reduction of emissions by 55% in 2030 and 80% in 2045, compared to the levels of 2008.
- Familia Torres in 2019, together with a winery Jackson Family Wines from California, promoted the creation of the **International Wineries for Climate Action (IWCA) group** with the goal to bring together wineries that have a real commitment to reduce CO2 emissions. This initiative was awarded at the **2019 Wine Enthusiast magazine Wine Star Awards**.
- **Target groups:** higher market segment, wine and food tourists, both domestic and international.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking on their website, booking through a specialized website for wine destinations [Wine Paths](#).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Environmental Torres & Earth program in place | X | | | X |
| Visitors are informed about sustainability issues | X | X | | X |
| A great offer of local gastronomy via Wine Experiences and Gastronomic restaurants | | X | X | |
| Protection of local identity and traditions | | | X | |
| Sustainable resource management programs in place (e.g., energy efficiency, renewable energy) | | | | X |
| Nature conservation programme in place, promoting biodiverse vineyards | X | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Direct purchase and information on the price of signature wine experiences missing.



NOTE

- **Real commitment to environmental actions**, acting in different areas (sustainable resource management, suppliers, products, mobility, research).
- **Strategies to adaptation to the climate change** are in place, investment in research on this topic.
- An example of **local identity and wine culture promotion** through designing exclusive experiences.

DISCOVER REAL CYPRUS



AGROTOURISM
discover real Cyprus

Destination: Larnaka, Pafos, Limassol and Nicosia regions

Country: Cyprus

Website: <https://www.agrotourism.com.cy/>



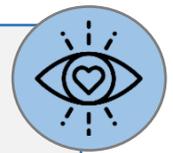
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Cyprus Agrotourism company, a public body established by the Cyprus Tourism Organization |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, EU Regional Development funds |
| | INITIATED IN: | 1996 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter Languages: EN, DE |

Categories



Key attractions

- **Traditional accommodation**
- Cultural experience
- Culinary experience



Season

All year round



DESCRIPTION:

Discover Real Cyprus is an initiative/platform featuring **rural accommodation and experiences** in Cyprus, outside of the main tourism spots. These are scattered near the coast of the Larnaka and Pafos regions and around the Troodos Mountains in the Limassol and Nicosia regions.

Discover Real Cyprus is a **great example** of promoting **traditional accommodation and activities** in the **countryside**. Governmental subsidies have been put in place to renovate traditional old houses and to turn them into traditional lodging. Currently there are 84 owners of renovated units, around **100 traditional houses and boutique hotels** scattered around **60 villages**.

One can **book accommodation directly on a website**, filtering by the region in which one wants to stay. All the houses, B&Bs and hotels offer private facilities with fully equipped kitchens and other features (balconies, stone yards, fireplaces etc.) while boutique hotels offer hotel services. Information on activities in the area next to each housing is provided - the focus is on **local gastronomic experiences** with many local taverns available as well as **wineries** where **wine tours** are offered for the tourists. Nature experiences with **hiking and biking** trails are also promoted. The **USP** of Discover Real Cyprus is the **experience of Cyprus' traditional culture** through encounters with local people, eating local products and dishes, and staying in **authentic rural houses**.

- One of the **special experiences** offered in the area - Ecophys Eco Tours. This family business offers **experiential and educational tours** for small groups of visitors. Visitors learn **about the rural lifestyle and traditional products** of Cyprus, e.g., getting to know about the edible mushrooms and plants from the fields or about the art of honey-making. Information on the experience [here](#).
- Many experiences relate to **wine** and [gastronomy tours](#); **wine routes** are also established and promoted. Some of the tour operators focus exclusively on gastronomy tours.
- **Target groups:** Individual travellers seeking new active and local experiences. Mostly international markets - e.g., UK, Germany.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** widely featured in **media** (e.g., The Times, the National Geographic, Sunday Times, Conde Nast Traveller); promoted through the European Federation of Rural Tourism - RURALTOUR (a professional tourism trade organisation representing this sector at European level); promoted by the official tourism organization **VisitCyprus**; digital [brochure](#).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Problem of seasonality for mostly sun & sea destination is addressed via this all-year-round offer | X | X | | |
| Revival of depopulated villages in the four regions | | X | | |
| Local products and gastronomy promoted at the destination | | X | X | |
| Preservation of the cultural heritage of wine making (wine routes, wineries) | | X | X | |
| Authenticity - lodging in renovated traditional old houses (100-300 years old) | | X | X | |
| Slow activities promoted relying on soft mobility (hiking, cycling) | | | | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Higher volume of tourists may cause disruption to local lifestyles. A Visitors' code of conduct is missing. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Government scheme** to renovate **old houses** by turning them into **traditional lodging**.
- Putting in place activities to engage tourists in the countryside (nature and culture).
- Promoting the **ancient tradition** of **wine making** (establishing a wine route).
- **User-friendly booking** system for accommodation directly on the website.

THE GOLDEN ROAD



Destination: The Golden Road, Inderøy municipality

Country: Norway

Website: <https://dgo.no/?lang=en>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | “The Golden Road” cooperative |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private (cooperative) |
| | INITIATED IN: | 1998 (cooperative was established) |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram Languages: ENG, NOR |

Categories

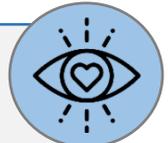


Season



Key attractions

- Cultural experience
- **Local quality products** and restaurants
- Galleries and Arts and crafts
- Fjord landscape



DESCRIPTION:

The Golden Road is located in the central part of Norway, the municipality of Inderøy, 100 km north of the city of Trondheim. It is a **peaceful place** surrounded by the landscapes of the **Trondheim fjord**. The destination is easily accessible as it is just an **8-minute detour** from Norway’s main E6 road.

The Golden Road is a local cooperative of currently **22 stops** (and members). There are strict requirements for joining a cooperative as well as staying a member as they have to adhere to the slogan of the destination - “Quality at all levels”.

The **USP** of the Golden Road is exactly this **quality of services, experiences and local products offered** that created a strong and trustworthy **brand**. The Golden Road is a **cultural destination** as the stops include artist workshops, galleries, an arts centre or a sculpture park. Besides its cultural attractions, an offer of outdoors activities, such as biking tours, is also available. On the Golden Road one can stay at **authentic rural accommodation places**, eat in **quality restaurants** that use products from the local farmers, or buy local and sometimes award-winning food products straight from the farmer (or a brewer, as there are also craft beers on the offer) as well as other products from local artists.

- **Special experiences:** For example, one accommodation provider offers an innovative and fun experience - an [Escape room](#) (mystery game for small groups) that is built **in a barn**; another place [combines](#) a hotel, gallery and a **creative workshop space**.
- **Arriving by train and biking** during the stay is promoted. E.g., a taxi service for a price of the bus ticket is offered for tourists who come by train.
- Tourists can [purchase gift cards](#) for use in Golden Road businesses as well as **gift boxes** of local products.
- **Sustainability:** Inderøy is a certified **sustainable destination**, recognized by Norway’s “Sustainable Destinations”
- **Target groups:** Domestic tourists - families and groups of friends seeking weekend trips, banqueting for celebrations and weddings, and businesses looking for team building; international tourists.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Destination is [featured](#) by the **national tourism office** VisitNorway; one of the main objectives of collaboration of the cooperative is **joint marketing** which generates higher reach; featured in the local and international media (some articles on the destination available on the [website](#)); digital [brochure](#) available.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Inderøy is a certified sustainable destination | X | | | X |
| Destination planning and development made via a model of the cooperative | X | X | | |
| The main beneficiaries are the local businesses (accommodation, restaurants, shops, galleries) | | X | | |
| Restaurants use locally sourced farmers’ products, and the food and art products are widely promoted to visitors | | X | | |
| Authenticity of the destination preserved via renovating and using traditional farmhouses, sawmills and more | | | X | |
| Arriving by train and biking at the destination is promoted | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Seasonality is a challenge - though most services are open all year round, summer season is the busiest. The concept of the Golden Road needs some further explanation



NOTE

- **Model for the cooperation** of local businesses creating together a **strong quality brand**
- Defining “**quality**” as the **main value** and selecting businesses according to that
- Providing a **full range of services** - accommodation, restaurants, shopping, nature, and culture tours
- Preserving the authenticity of the destination through stays at traditional houses (e.g., country farm hotels), shopping at farm shops and galleries

NATURALWALKS



Destination: Natural and urban destinations in Catalonia

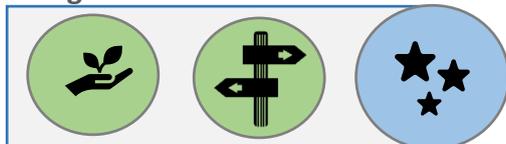
Country: Spain

Website: <https://naturalwalks.com/en>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Private local tour company |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2011 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo Languages: CAT, ESP, ENG, FRA |

Categories



Key attractions

- **Nature experience**
- Ecotourism activities
- Specialists guides on nature and environment



Season

All year round



DESCRIPTION:

Naturalwalks is a DMC that offers diverse **ecotourism** activities and operates throughout Catalonia, both in natural destinations, such as the Pyrenees, as well as urban destinations, like Girona or even the mountains of Barcelona city.

The **USP** of Naturalwalks is their **expertise** in different fields (biology, environmental sciences, ecotourism, health, and gastronomy) which they turn into **unique immersive experiences** where visitors **learn about the local culture** (food, wine, history) **through exploring nature** and landscape while hiking and walking with an expert guide. For example, visitors can learn how plants manage to survive in hostile environments like dunes or cliffs by using minimal energy or **which plants are edible**.

This is also a good practice **example** of a tour company that operates following **sustainability principles** focused on quality and environment (and promotes them to a wider network of partners, customers and suppliers). Naturalwalks' **mission** is developing ecotourism activities, consulting, and training to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity through knowledge, awareness-raising and the involvement of society.

Some of the **examples of their tours** in different parts of Catalonia include (all the tours are provided in the [Brochure](#)):

- **Walking the Coastal Trail of S'Agaro:** easy to moderate walk for 2.5 -3 hours along the famous **Costa Brava** trail. What makes this tour special is that visitors learn about **ancient plants** that are used also today by the world's best restaurant. Visitors get to know the edible plants – **sweet roots, salty leaves, and spicy flowers**. Additional optional activity - a showcooking with collected plants.
- **A glimpse at the Earth in the time of dinosaurs:** a four-day tour visiting different fossil deposits in the Pyrenees and pre-Pyrennes learning about life in Catalonia at the time of dinosaurs.
- **Barcelona nature by night:** a 3- 3.5 h moderate difficulty level tour in Barcelona **city at night**. Tour takes place in the mountains of Barcelona – visitors, together with a guide, learn about the **local fauna** they can hear and the local flora – for example, smelling **the flowers** that might bloom in the dark.
- **Target Groups:** domestic and international eco-friendly visitors, families, small groups. Also, more specialized groups, e.g., amateurs and professionals in the fields such as natural and creative cuisine or plant therapies, companies looking for interesting team building activities.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Via Catalonia tourism board marketing materials, brochures, [media](#); booking through their website.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Mission, vision and sustainability policies in place | X | | | |
| Tours available all year round | X | | | |
| Promotion, engagement of local actors (e.g., in their gastronomic experiences) | | X | | |
| Promotion of local culture (food, wines, history) | | X | X | |
| Soft mobility used (walking, hiking) | | | | X |
| Protection of biodiversity and natural heritage, educating and awareness raising | | | | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Dependance on natural resources (mushrooms, flowers, other plants).



NOTE

- **Strength lies in the guides** who are experts in their field (esp. biology and environmental sciences)
- Unique nature experiences with a strong learning component.
- Exclusive concept of learning about local culture (gastronomy and history) through nature and environment

CANYONING TOURS

Destination: Ötztal

Country: Austria



Website: <https://www.oetztal.com/summer/outdoor-adventure/canyoning.html>

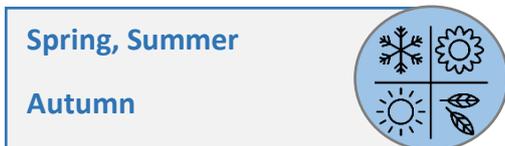


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Oetztal Tourism (regional tourism board) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Oetztal Tourism, sponsoring |
| | INITIATED IN: | NA |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube Languages: ENG, DEU |

Categories

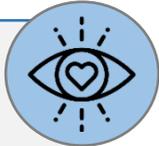


Season



Key attractions

- Unspoiled nature
- **Adventurous canyoning**
- Authentic villages
- Wild mountain landscapes



DESCRIPTION:

“**Varied and truly Tirolean**” is the slogan of the Ötztal, Inntal's longest side valley which leads some 65 kilometres towards the south, right at the heart of the Eastern Alps. Along Ötztal, 8 holiday villages are located at different altitude levels. They are surrounded by wide open fields and meadows, at the foot of steep and rugged rock walls stretching up to high Alpine terrain and wild canyons. Perfectly developed road and traffic infrastructure makes the valley easily accessible in all seasons. In addition to the multi-faceted infrastructure, there are myriad shopping and catering facilities.

The special characteristics of the valley: authentic people and nature in abundance. Each of the 8 villages has conserved its very own authentic and unique character.

One of **Europe’s most scenic canyoning** spots, the Auer Klamm, is located in the Ötztal, featuring several difficulty levels for all ages and abilities.

With “**Canyoning in the Ötztal Valley**” an adventurous tourism package has been created. Extremely steep water chutes, abseiling from dizzy heights into rushing waterfalls, jumps from up to 16 metres for daredevils – pure adrenalin for all those in search of truly unique adventures of a very special kind.

A broad range of canyoning packages are offered for all different levels:

- **Canyoning package – 5 hours for action & adrenaline (including):** (1) Equipment rental (helmet, Neoprene suit, Neoprene socks, Neoprene jacket, special canyoning shoes, harness) (2) Transfer to the canyoning access base (3) Introductory advice from certified canyoning guides (4) Plenty of fun and action. Rates per person from: 70,00 EUR
- **Other canyoning packages which are offered:** (1) for beginners, 2-hour jumps and abseiling spots which are 3 to 5 metres in height and are therefore perfect for getting a taste of the sport of canyoning, and (2) for everyone: suitable for less-experienced canyoning fans, who have the confidence to jump from 3 to 5 metres and have no problem abseiling 18 metres (3 hours).
- **Another innovative product: Geocaching,** a modern treasure hunt using GPS coordinates, takes adventurers straight to the heart of Ötztal. You can go treasure hunting throughout the valley, with or without digital help. Treasure hunters also explore the most picture-book spots in the Ötztal mountains. A welcome change that promises fun for both adults and children.
- **Target groups:** Adventure lovers and mainly individual travel market from the domestic market, Europe, and international markets.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Through the Ötztal tourism board, direct links to and marketing of the outdoor and adventure providers on the [webpage](#).
- **Special services:** LifeCam's to special sites of interest in the Ötztal, blog (in German only), online overview of opening hours [pastures & huts](#) – great for hikers, overview of availability of [lifts and huts](#) in the summer season.



SUSTAINABILITY CHECK

| |  Sustainable planning |  Community benefits |  Cultural heritage |  Environment impact |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| High level of local employment, but only for one market segment – local outdoor providers | | X | | |
| Soft mobility option – not motorized, walking | | | | X |
| Local accommodation and services promoted (over 1000 bookable local accommodations) | | | X | |
| Authenticity of the destination – promoted | | X | | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: No sustainability policy and rules for environmentally friendly behaviour for the guests communicated. More introductory information on the Ötztal is need on the webpage. | | | | |



NOTE

- With “Canyoning in the Ötztal Valley” an **adventurous tourism package** has been created based on the **special characteristics** of the valley
- High level of local employment, but only for one market segment – local outdoor providers
- **Local accommodation** and services promoted (over 1000 bookable local accommodation choices)

6.2.Sustainable Marketing Practices

This part includes a collection of **23 sustainable tourism marketing practices** featuring sustainable destinations, small tour operators and DMC.

As in the previous part, the structure is similar. Firstly, to structure the researched practices, we have identified the following **main categories** (in blue). The main categories highlight the principal characteristics of each practice in terms of marketing, while the subsequent **additional categories** (in green) highlight further general and product characteristics of each practice, mostly already identified in the previous part of the chapter.

Main categories:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Use of sustainability as an active marketing tool |
|  | Partnerships, Press & FAM Trips |
|  | Social Media Marketing |
|  | Virtual tours & Gamification for marketing |
|  | Digital word of mouth, Influencers & digital nomads |
|  | Storytelling & Creative marketing campaigns |
|  | Online Trip Planner System |
|  | Commercialization & Direct bookings (websites-booking platforms, booking centres etc.) |

Additional categories:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Revitalisation of Villages |
|  | Mountain Tourism |
|  | Natural Parks and Protected Areas (National Parks, Geoparks, Nature Reserves etc.) |
|  | Coastal Tourism |
|  | Water Activities (e.g., Kayaking, Canyoning) |
|  | Cycling/ Mountain Biking |
|  | Trail model (e.g., hiking, trekking) |
|  | City Experience |
|  | Cultural route and/or cultural tourism offer (cultural heritage, local culture etc.) |
|  | Local Products |
|  | Slow tourism experiences |
|  | Ecotourism experiences |
|  | Experiences (Special cultural, natural, culinary experiences) |
|  | Certification schemes |



Innovative Initiatives

To visualize the characteristics, category, and key features of each practice, a set of icons will be applied to each. View the following **example**:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <p>Categories</p> | <p>This example features a practice that illustrates example for (1) Social Media Marketing and features a destination or tour operator that works with (2) revitalisation of villages and (3) mountain tourism.</p> |
|--------------------------|---|

Furthermore, the **marketing performance** of each practice is briefly assessed by a Marketing Check, highlighting the following aspects

1. **Target Groups** (Does the destination target high-value, low-impact travelers?)
2. **Marketing Tools** (Which well-designed, relevant to target groups tools are available?)
3. **Marketing Channels** (What are the marketing channels used to reach targeted groups?)
4. **Innovative & Creative** (Are marketing practices innovative? Any creative marketing campaigns and tools?)

The main marketing practices will be highlighted in a short **marketing check** table. **Additionally**, key challenges and weaknesses will also be featured in the marketing check. Please see an example of the marketing check table below:



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Sustainable adventure tourists, cultural tourists looking for authentic experiences | X | | | |
| A tailored newsletter, according to the activities of interest | | X | | |
| Free digital Brochure providing trip suggestions by experts | | X | | X |
| Press coverage with a focus on specialist media | | X | | |
| Close collaboration with the national tourism authority | | | X | |
| Innovative social media campaign | | | X | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: More language options could be available for the main target markets. | | | | |

Finally, at the end of the second page of each factsheet, a small box will summarize the **key learnings**, observations, take-aways etc. of each presented practice, like in the following example:



NOTE

- Great example of a successful branded local ecotourism network
- Example of a unique marketing umbrella organization
- Good practice of a destination with value-based marketing

6.2.1. Nos. 31 –34: Using Sustainability as an Active Marketing Tool

SLOVENIA

Destination: Slovenia

Country: Slovenia

Website: <https://www.slovenia.info/en>

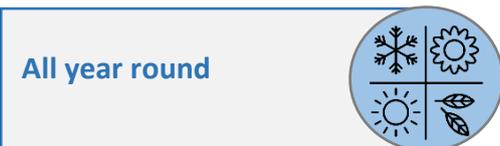


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Slovenian Tourist Board, the central national agency for the promotion of tourism |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Slovenian Tourist Board |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2015 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, TripAdvisor Languages: EN, SL, DE, FR, IT, RU, CHN |

Categories

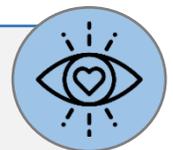


Season



Key attractions

- **Boutique** experiences
- **Sustainable offer** under Slovenia Green
- Outdoor experiences
- Cultural and culinary experiences
- Pristine nature between mountains and the sea



DESCRIPTION:

Slovenia is a small country and destination in Central Europe marked by a **variety of landscapes** that include the Alps mountains, pristine forests and lakes, impressive caves, and the Adriatic seaside. It is a **sustainable five-star boutique destination** offering a range of outdoor and **adventure** activities for **every season**, e.g., hiking, cycling, mountain biking, climbing, skiing, snowboarding, rafting, canoeing, and a variety of quality nature, cultural, gastronomic, countryside and wellness experiences.

Slovenia positions itself as **‘the green heart of Europe’**; since 2015 the country has put a lot of work in to become an established sustainable destination by creating and successfully implementing its **national certification programme**, the [Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism](#).

Slovenia is a **great example** of a country that successfully uses its work and efforts in sustainable tourism development for its **marketing**. The destination **markets its sustainable tourism offer** through the recognizable and **green brand SLOVENIA GREEN**, used to highlight a network of more than 130 destinations, accommodations, natural parks, tourist agencies, tourist landmarks, restaurants and beaches certified under Slovenia’s national certification programme. This strong sustainable brand **resulted** in Slovenia being **recognized** as one of Europe’s leaders in sustainable tourism. The number of **prestigious awards** Slovenia has

received since 2016 has **skyrocketed** comparing to the years before (see the overview [here](#)). A couple of examples - the [Destination Leadership Award](#) in the **2017 National Geographic World Legacy Awards** and [Best of Europe](#) award at the **2020 Sustainable Top 100** Destination Awards (both ceremonies were held at the world's biggest travel trade show, ITB Berlin).

- **Sustainability as the key theme:** On the official website - the [homepage](#) and subpages communicating the [story](#) of green Slovenia, the Slovenia Green [standard](#), and certified sustainable destinations and experiences.
- [Green Story of Slovenia](#) presents **Slovenia Green Label holders**: destinations, accommodation, protected areas, local attractions, travel agencies, restaurants, and beaches. Destinations and businesses are **well represented** with an attractive description, photo, and a link to their website, thus creating an easy way for visitors to book services and plan their trip.
- [Slovenia Unique Experiences](#) is a **label for the most boutique, handpicked, five-star, authentic, local experiences**, which are awarded by the Slovenian Tourist Board. The selection offers exclusive nature, culture, gastronomic, adventure, and authentic accommodation experiences, for **example** an expedition to explore the migration paths of the brown bear; **a herbal bath**, a sensory experience in a former monastery's garden by the largest Slovenian cathedral; a top **three-day fly fishing adventure** in three pristine Slovenian rivers with experienced local fishing guides. Each experience is **designed to be booked** with a link for reservations and has information on its itinerary, opening hours, starting point, price and what it includes.
- **Target groups:** higher end travellers looking for quality experiences; domestic and international.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** International fairs; media; multimedia campaigns, for example, [Slovenia, the land of waters](#) broadcast on National Geographic channels and reaching 20 million people.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Higher end individual travellers – special product Slovenia Unique Experiences | X | | | X |
| Hikers, cyclists, trekkers, families | X | | | |
| Website with sustainability as the key theme, visual and user-friendly (videos, photos) | | X | | X |
| Online trip planner system under 'Plan your trip' | | X | | X |
| Successful multimedia campaigns (e.g., Slovenia, the land of waters) | X | | X | |
| Strong presence in the main travel events and fairs (e.g., ITB Berlin) | | | X | |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Website needs constant maintenance; numerous subpages of the platform are a bit confusing.



NOTE

- Visual **Slovenia Green brand** highlights the sustainable offer of the destination
- Sustainability is the key message throughout all the communication of Slovenia
- **Original concepts and offers** to attract specific target groups, like Slovenia Unique Experiences

VISIT FINLAND

Destination: Finland

Country: Finland

Website: <https://new.visitfinland.com/en/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | DMO Visit Finland. Visit Finland is a part of Business Finland Oy, a non-profit company 100 % owned by the State of Finland |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | DMO |
| | INITIATED IN: | Sustainable Travel Finland programme initiated in 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest Languages: EN; FI, SE |

Categories

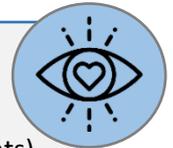


Season



Key attractions

- Pure nature
- Local traditions (e.g., sauna)
- Unique nature phenomena (Northern lights)
- Local fresh and seasonal food
- The happiest country in the world 2021



DESCRIPTION:

Finland is a country and a destination located in **northern Europe**. The country's offer is presented through **four regions**: **Lapland** in the north, **Lakeland** in the middle, **Coast and Archipelago** around the coastline and the **Helsinki region** around the capital in the south of the country. These regions offer tourists a range of **outdoor, nature and local culture experiences**, from observing the Aurora Borealis lights, enjoying a sauna with pristine lakes and forests to exploring creative towns, local gastronomy, and design.

Finland is a **sustainable destination**, with a [Sustainable tourism strategy](#), a national certification programme and label [Sustainable Travel Finland](#) for Finland's destinations and tourism companies in place. In 2021, Visit Finland also [became](#) a member of the **Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)**.

Visit Finland is a **good practice example** of a destination with **value-based marketing**. Their **sustainability principles** – ecological (nature preservation and reducing carbon footprint), socio-cultural and financial (respect for local cultures and heritage, supporting local businesses), are reflected in its **marketing approach**. Visit Finland promotes its sustainable destinations and products through dedicated [pages](#) on their website; they have defined specific **target groups** - people with the **same set of values** who appreciate quality of life, pure nature and responsibility. The country saw a steady increase of visitors before the pandemic spreading

the tourism benefits throughout the regions and has positioned itself as a sustainable destination with a high-quality offer.

- **Facts and Figures:** Number of non-residents visiting the country in pre-Covid times showed an [increase](#) with a figure of **6.8 million nights** spent by **non-residents**. Also, in a comparison of 136 countries, Finland was ranked the safest travel destination in the world by 2017 WEF Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report, which focuses on sustainable development of the travel and tourism sector.
- **Sustainability marketing:** Website has a dedicated page for [sustainability](#), providing information on how to enjoy Finland in a responsible and authentic way; **sustainable experiences and products** with national certification label are highlighted and [promoted](#). Visit Finland's website reaches **over 5 million unique visitors per year**.
- **Code of Conduct for visitors:** It does not only provide [sustainable travel tips](#), but also serves as an **inspiration** to discover Finland in an authentic way; great design – good quality photos and inspiring texts.
- **Marketing themes** used in campaigns go hand in hand with their values, e.g., **'Silence, please'** [shows](#) Finland's offer of peace, quiet natural environments, local rituals connected to nature (sauna).
- **Target groups:** Six traveller **segments** identified: Nature wonder hunters, Nature explorers, Activity enthusiasts, Comfort seekers, City breakers and Authentic lifestyle seekers. Focus target markets – Germany, UK and Sweden.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Six target segments of travellers seeking quality of life, pure nature and responsibility | X | | | X |
| Great visual website with Sustainability page | | X | | |
| Inspiring Code of Conduct | | X | | X |
| Great digital promotion set (good quality USP representing photos) | | X | | |
| Creative campaigns (e.g., virtual tours to meet locals, 'Rent a Finn', 'Silence, Please') | X | | X | X |
| Strong presence in the main travel events and fairs (e.g., ITB Berlin) | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Website does not provide options to change languages, not clear which languages are available. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Good practice example** – destination with **value-based marketing**
- Targeted travellers segments are very specific, designed to go with the values of nature, quality of life and responsibility
- Website has a sustainability dedicated page
- Code of Conduct – **sustainable travel tips** (inspiration for travellers)

AMMERGAU ALPS

Destination: Nature Park Ammergau Alps

Country: Upper Bavaria, Germany

Website: <https://www.ammergauer-alpen.de/en>

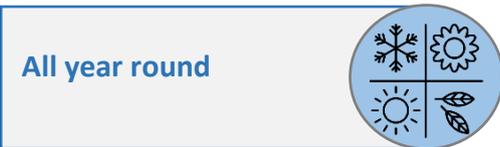


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Regional DMO Ammergauer Alpen |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | DMO – public & private partnership |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2007 DMO set, 2017 Nature Park set-up |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Newsletter, Email Marketing, AA Nature Park Magazine Languages: DE, EN |

Categories

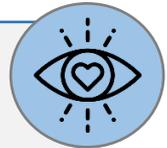


Season



Key attractions

- One region, 6 villages in **1 Nature Park**
- Outstanding cultural landscape
- Hiking, biking, trekking destination
- Unique destination and marketing model



DESCRIPTION:

In the **South of Bavaria**, in the heart of **Upper Bavaria Germany**, are located the six municipalities that jointly form the Ammergau Alps. The destination is famous for its well-preserved cultural heritage, living traditions and natural highlights - Ammergau Alps hosts the biggest natural protected area within Germany.

Since 2017 the region of **Ammergau Alps** has been officially declared one of the 105 **nature parks** in Germany. The goal of the Ammergauer Alpen Nature Park is the protection, cultivation, and preservation of the outstanding **natural and cultural landscape** of 227 km². The initiator to becoming a nature park was the tourism destination management organisation Ammergauer Alpen GmbH.

It is a **great example** of how the conservation of cultural heritage, the preservation of natural resources together with **professional** and a **unique management and marketing approach** from the regional DMO can turn into a **successful model** for a whole region – 6 villages form one DMO and the entire region was declared Nature Park. It is an example of protected area destination in which all tourism **development and marketing activities**, services and products offered are designed within the **framework of a sustainable development** and the **unique selling point (USP)** of the nature park.

- **Facts & figures:** Tourism is the biggest economic driving force in the region; 180 million euros gross value added through tourism (2017); **12,000 inhabitants** in 6 villages of which **3000** live off tourism; **600** hosts, 50% private hosts; 50% accommodation businesses.
- **Budget & funding:** There are funds from the Bavarian state administration and the villages of the Ammergau Alps; additional income is generated through **marketing partnerships** with the private sector and contributions from the tourism businesses of the region (marketing packages for local hosts, online- and print advertisements). The yearly budget is about 400,000 EUR, including administration support.
- **Capacity building** and quality and service quality programmes for the **private hosts** through a “**regional hosts academy**” – seminars on service quality, web management etc.
- **Marketing tools for local services & products:** strong hiking & trekking infrastructure in place guided by a cost-free **APP** (also includes places to visit, accommodation, transportation etc.); sustainable culture & nature experiences can be directly booked & purchased on the **DMO website** (<https://www.erlebnisse.bayern>).
- **Target groups:** Higher market segment individual travellers, families, hikers and sustainable adventure lovers; German-speaking countries, UK, USA, Europe.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Regional DMO Ammergauer Alpen, travel books, guides, media, organisation of big cultural events e.g., [Passion play](#), sports events; representation at all major tourism fairs.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Higher market segment, sustainable adventure tourists, hikers, families | X | | | |
| A cost free APP available, provides information on sustainable activities and services | | X | | |
| DMO website for direct booking and showcase of sustainable culture and nature experiences | | X | | |
| Special Ammergauer Alps Nature Park Magazine | | X | | X |
| Organizing big cultural local events | | | X | X |
| Presentation at all major tourism fairs | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Sustainable travel guidelines and communication on sustainability principles missing. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Unique destination and marketing model** within Germany – one tourism destination became a Nature Park
- One of the most successful sustainable nature and culture destinations – success factor: **strong protection** of the cultural landscape and natural heritage and **marketing based on the USP**
- At least 2/3 of this income is completely **re-invested** in **marketing activities** e.g., brochure of the hosts and hotels of the Ammergau Alps region

DESTINATION DAHAR

Destination: Destination Dahar

Country: Tunisia

Website: <https://destinationdahar.com/>

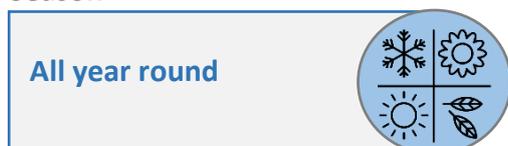


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | DMO Fédération Tourisme Authentique Destination Dahar (FTADD), a not-for-profit organization (38 members, mostly local service providers) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | International cooperation - established with the support of Swisscontact and mandated by the SECO "Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs"; market access projects financed through partnership with Import Promotion Desk (IPD). |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2018 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Newsletter Languages: FR |

Categories

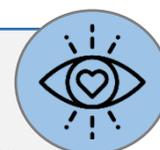


Season



Key attractions

- **Authentic Amazigh culture**
- Long-distance hiking
- Impressive natural and cultural landscapes
- Unique accommodation (e.g., troglodytes)



DESCRIPTION:

Destination Dahar is a **unique, upcoming sustainable tourism destination** in the **southeast of Tunisia**, focusing on the conservation of the **authenticity** of the destination and promoting **community-driven** cultural heritage, eco and adventure tourism. Dahar's main adventure tourism product is the so-called '**La Grande Traversée du Dahar**', a **hiking trail** around 200 km long leading through the destination. The destination is also marked by local **Amazigh culture**, its authentic handicraft, and many cultural festivals, which can be found in different Berber villages as well as the offer of **authentic accommodation** in "Troglodyte caves" offered by locals.

Destination Dahar is a **great example** of an **emerging destination** that has taken its first steps towards their ambition to become an established **sustainable** destination and that uses it for **marketing**. In 2021, Destination Dahar successfully participated in the Green Destinations Top 100 Sustainability Stories [competition](#) (with the support of AGE Tourism for Sustainability consultants on behalf of the IPD programme) - they were [awarded](#) as **one of Top 100 sustainable destinations worldwide**, which immediately resulted in local and national **media**

attention. The DMO further **leveraged** this achievement to attract **further visibility** in foreign specialist media by organizing a **FAM trip** for Austrian journalists in November 2021 (e.g., the article on [Traveller Online](#)) and by organizing a **press conference in Tunis** in collaboration with the Tunisian Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts in December 2021, which resulted in further articles, radio interviews and [broadcasts on the National TV](#).

- **Another press conference** to present and market the opening of ‘**La Grande Traversée du Dahar**’ was organized on December 11th, 2021, on the **International Mountain Day**.
- **ITB Berlin 2022:** Besides their Top 100 award, Destination Dahar was nominated as one of six finalists to further compete at the **Green Destinations Story Awards** at ITB Berlin 2022, which will increase their further **visibility in the international market**.
- **‘Authentic and Sustainable Dahar’ mark:** At the end of 2021, the destination created a special mark and a series of **Codes of Conduct** (for DMO, visitors and tourism service providers) to further develop their sustainability efforts as well as to use it as a promotional tool highlighting authentic businesses.
- **Target Groups:** Hikers and trekkers, cyclists, cultural tourists, families, couples. Target markets are mainly European markets and French-speaking markets.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Press conferences and media (local, national, international), collaboration with the national tourism organization, international fairs (ITB Berlin, World Travel Market), [Good Travel Guide](#). A couple of unique accommodations market through Airbnb, more to be registered.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Hikers and trekkers, cyclists, cultural tourists | X | | | |
| A cost free APP - information on places to visit, accommodation, local culture and festivals | | X | | |
| Digital promotion set – good quality photos, videos, including Good Practice Story video with the voices of locals | | X | | X |
| Brochures (digital, in EN, FR, DE), Hiking guide and Travel guide in French | | X | | |
| Visual ‘Authentic and Sustainable Dahar’ Codes of Conduct for local service providers and visitors | | X | | X |
| Presentation at all major tourism fairs, press trips for journalists and influencers | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Website currently only in French limiting the wider market access. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Good practice example** – first Top 100 sustainable destination in the North African region
- Leverage of the Top 100 award for media attention (local, national, international), visibility at ITB Berlin 2022 via Green Destinations Story Awards
- Attractive **Authentic and Sustainable Dahar** Code of Conduct and mark for local service providers

6.2.2. Nos. 35 –38: Partnerships, Press and FAM trips

VISIT GOOD PLACE

Destination: Slovenia

Country: Slovenia

Website: <https://www.visit-goodplace.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Local tour operator |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | Company started in 2015 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Newsletter, free Brochure Language: EN |

Categories



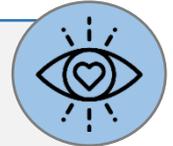
Season

Spring, Summer,
Autumn



Key attractions

- Pristine nature
- Top Cycling and Mountain Biking tours
- Sustainable tour operator
- Hiking tours
- Wildlife watching tours



DESCRIPTION:

Visit Good Place is a **responsible tour operator**, certified by Travelife and a holder of the SLOVENIA GREEN label, which is located in Slovenia's capital city Ljubljana and specialises in **destinations** marked by **pristine nature**, local culture, and great possibilities for **outdoor activities** (mostly in Slovenia, but also Croatia, Austria, Italy). They offer hiking and wildlife watching tours, but the biggest focus is on **cycling tours** lasting from three days to two weeks – e.g., Trans Slovenia tours on a **mountain bike (MTB)**, easy and moderate cycling tours through **Alpe-Adria** region, **gravel biking** tours in Slovenia.

Visit Good Place is a **great example** of a tour operator that has great **international specialist media** coverage. Articles on their tours and destinations are found in such media channels like Lonely Planet, **National Geographic**, The Guardian, **the New York Times**, Conde Nast Traveller. However, since their main target group is cyclists and bikers, a great **focus** is placed on media outlets **tailored** directly to **active travellers**. As a result of a widespread specialist media coverage, Visit Good Place has become a **well-recognized** outdoor tour operator, especially for cycling and mountain biking adventures.

- **Specialist media:** they have been **featured in** Adventure cyclist, Bicycling, Mountain Bike rider, Prime Mountain biking Magazine, Mountain biking UK, Active Traveller magazine, Big Bike (links to articles provided [here](#); articles in English, German and French).

- **MTB Bestseller:** [Trans Slovenia 01](#) – a week-long tour with a qualified MTB guide, going from the small Alpine town to the Adriatic coast for more than 300 km, staying in 3–4-star boutique accommodations (cost 1480€). Well covered in such **specialized magazines** as **the Active Traveller**, [Prime Mountain Biking Magazine](#). Also, **excellent SEO** - one of the first results that appear in search engine if you look for ‘mountain biking in Slovenia’.
- **Touring Bestseller:** [Bike Slovenia Green: Alps to Adriatic](#), a week-long tour running through the famous Alpine lakes (e.g., Bled), wild Soča river, forests and vineyards and ending at the Adriatic coast (total of 240 km). The guided tour includes cultural and gastronomic (e.g., wine tasting, prosciutto tasting) visits along the way, and costs 1590€/person. Tour **covered in** such specialist magazines as **Bicycling magazine**.
- **Target groups:** international adventure tourists, especially cyclists and mountain bikers from the UK, USA, German-speaking and French-speaking markets; individual travelers, small groups.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** National tourism authority ([featured](#) as holder of Slovenia Green travel agency label), besides media, also active presence on social media, **tailored newsletter** (depending on interests in activities), free digital [brochure](#) with Top 5 suggestions for travelers, e.g., Top 5 sports activities, Top 5 panoramic roads (appears as a pop-up on the website), [TripAdvisor](#).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Sustainable adventure tourists, especially cyclists and mountain bikers | X | | | |
| Newsletter (tailored to activities of interest) | | X | | |
| Free digital Brochure – Top 5 suggestions by experts | | X | | X |
| Press coverage, focus on specialist media for active travellers, cyclists and mountain bikers | | | X | |
| Works with the National tourism authority, is part of a national certification scheme | | | X | |
| TripAdvisor (5-star rating) | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: More language options could be available (e.g., German and French since these are among the markets targeted through media). | | | | |



NOTE

- Strong identity – responsible tour operator offering authentic outdoor experiences
- **Positioned** as experts for **cycling and mountain biking** adventures
- **Press coverage related to target groups** – mostly in specialist cycling and mountain biking magazines
- **Good SEO** results when searching for mountain biking in Slovenia
- Inspiration for potential customers – free digital brochure (pop-up on the website)

PEAKS OF THE BALKANS TRAIL

Destination: Dinaric Alps

Country: Albania, Montenegro, and Kosovo

Website: www.peaksofthebalkans.com



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Ministry of Tourism in Montenegro, Regional tourism authority Peja (Kosovo); Regional tourism authority Skoder (Albania) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Initial financing through GIZ programme |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2010 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram Language: EN |

Categories

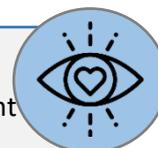


Season



Key attractions

- **Wild landscapes**
- Trail model – driving force for development
- Unique cultural experience
- Long distance, **cross-border trekking**



DESCRIPTION:

The destination “Peaks of the Balkans” (PoB) leads through **remote and wild mountainous regions** of the Western Balkans (Kosovo, Montenegro, and Albania). This area of the Dinaric Alps is counted among the least known areas of Southeast Europe and **has virtually remained untouched**. The “Peaks of the Balkans” trail comprises **192 km** and completes a circuit crossing the three countries. The **10 stages** of the trail can be hiked in 10 to 13 days, depending on the motivation and condition of the hiker. The level of difficulty ranges from easy to moderate; requires mountain equipment.

Peaks of the Balkans is a **great example** to illustrate the importance of **strong partnerships** between different stakeholders to **create and promote** a viable transnational **hiking product**. To generate income for the local population, end abandonment of the mountain region of Kosovo, Montenegro, and Albania and to bring these parts of the region closer together, national, and local **tourism organizations** and **hiking clubs joined forces** with the **German Development Cooperation** to develop “The Peaks of the Balkans” regions as a single destination for mountain tourism. The **success factor** to **promote** this product was two **tailor-made press trips** with the AGEG Tourism for Sustainability press network that resulted in **3 years of press coverage** and a very strong presentation in international press and media (German TV), for example, a half an hour programme on

a public television broadcaster of Bavaria, available [online](#) also now, also [on YouTube](#). **Reviews** from partners, **tour operators** and **journalists** are displayed on the website, in the section ‘What people Say’, please see [here](#).

- The cross-border hiking trail **has been selected** as a practice, **showcasing** how creation and marketing of a **flagship product** can **successfully** promote this largely unknown mountain region to the international hiking community and can turn into a driving force for the whole region. With the development of a transnational hiking trail, one of only a few in the world, a common base for further sustainable development for the region was set up.
- **Competitive tourism infrastructure:** Quality standards for local B&Bs in all 3 countries introduced; campaign Taste the PoB started; quality standards for mountain huts and a programme for mountain guide certification implemented according to German DAV (German Alpine Federation) standards.
- **Awards:** Winner of the Tourism for Tomorrow destination stewardship [award](#) (World Tourism Council), resulting in a wider recognition on the **international market**.
- **Target groups:** Main market: international hikers from UK, USA, Australia, and German-speaking markets. Broad network of **specialist tour operators** resulting from the GIZ project.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** National, regional and local tourism authorities, YouTube channel (videos shared, e.g., [here](#)), PoB hiking trail map distributed via Amazon.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Main target group - international hikers | X | | | |
| Targeted specialist tour operators | X | | | |
| Hiking trail map distribution and online sale internationally | | X | | |
| Tailor made press trips – 3 years of press coverage | | | X | |
| Partnerships with hiking clubs, specialist tour operators | | | X | |
| Strong presence on YouTube – videos shared by travellers, media channels, video on award winning with voices of local actors | | | X | X |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Information on the website needs to be updated, more language options (e.g., German) could be added; Peaks of the Balkans branded YouTube page could be created to showcase all the PoB content shared on this channel. | | | | |



NOTE

- PoB turned into a **lighthouse model** for the entire region and has been already copied several times
- **Good practice example** – forming partnerships with key target groups (hiking clubs, specialist tour operators)
- Importance of the media coverage in target markets
- **Importance** of well-done **video material** – from television broadcasters, but also traveller-generated

AUTHENTIC AMALFI COAST



Destination: Amalfi coast

Country: Italy

Website: <https://authenticamalficoast.it/>

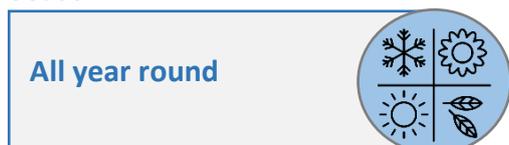


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Public-private entity Distretto Turistico Costa d'Amalfi; Tourism Development Network Amalfi Coast (Rete sviluppo turistico Costa d'Amalfi). Supported by National Tourism Board ENIT |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Invitalia, the National Agency for Development, owned by the Ministry of Economy |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2014 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website-online magazine, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Newsletter Languages: IT, EN |

Categories



Season



Key attraction

- Local authentic culture
- Gastronomic experiences
- Breathtaking landscapes
- Soft mobility



DESCRIPTION:

The Amalfi Coast is a **coastline** stretching between picturesque towns of Positano and Vietri sul Mare, situated in the Campania region, Italy. It is one of Italy's most famous tourist destinations. Authentic Amalfi coast is a project focused on promoting the **hinterland** of the busy and touristic coastline. This initiative unites 94 local private, non-profit, and public actors seeking to offer an **authentic and sustainable tourism** alternative for the Amalfi coast. The touristic offer includes a range of **soft and cultural activities**, including hiking and cycling tours, cultural tours and workshops, culinary experiences, wildlife observation.

The Authentic Amalfi Coast has been selected as a **good practice example** to show how such a project can achieve great success via **successful partnerships**. In July 2021, a cooperation was launched between the National Tourism Board ENIT, local district administration and the [forum anders reisen e.v.](#) – a Germany-based business and trade association uniting **137 small and medium-sized tour operators** dedicated to socially just, ecologically and economically sustainable tourism. The association, using its expertise in sustainable tourism, its network, and its marketing and public relations work, has since **supported the sustainable development and marketing** of the Authentic Amalfi Coast. In September 2021 a group of **German press** representatives

were introduced to the destination and the project; in October 2021 a **FAM trip** for tour operators was organized, presenting the local sustainable service providers and the offer of authentic activities – both events providing direct opportunities for local service providers.

- **Articles in German media:** Featured, for example, in the independent media outlet ‘taz’ (articles [here](#) and [here](#)).
- **Website-magazine:** the website of the Authentic Amalfi coast provides **a range of articles** about the local history, gems of the destination and authentic and green accommodation (example [here](#)), local restaurants (e.g., the [taverna Buonvicino](#)), [foodmakers](#) and more.
- **Online survey** for residents and travellers was active in July – October 2021. It was done to analyze the needs of residents and of tourists, and plan for needed improvements. Topics such as mobility, authenticity, sustainability, accessibility, and training were addressed.
- **Target Groups:** Domestic and international markets (focus on German market through the partnership); higher-end cultural tourists, slow tourists. Network of specialized sustainable small and medium-sized tour operators from Germany via partnership with forum anders reisen e.v..
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Press and Fam trips, social media channels, partnership with the national tourism board and tour operator association.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Targeting higher end sustainable travellers | X | | | |
| Targeting specialist sustainable small and medium size tour operators | X | | | |
| Website organized in a magazine style providing insights into the destination, local stories, and interesting history | | X | | X |
| Newsletter and Social media channels | | | X | |
| Partnership with German association uniting small and medium sized tour operators | | | X | |
| FAM trips and Press trips | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Concrete directly bookable touristic products and experiences missing. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Good practice example** – partnership with sustainable tour operator association
- Organizing Press and FAM trips in the destination (German market)
- Example of **promotion of the hinterland** via sustainable and authentic offer

ALPINE PEARLS

Destination: Alpine Pearls

Country: Italy, Germany, Slovenia, Switzerland and Austria

Website: <https://www.alpine-pearls.com/en/>

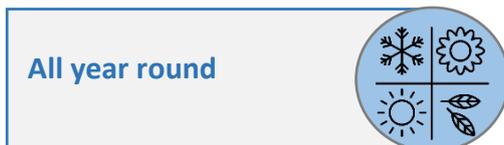


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Network of Charming 21 Villages in the Alps Offering Green Mobility |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Initial EU funding, marketing fees |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2006 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Alpine Pearls brochure, holidays destination map Languages: GER, FR, IT, SL, EN |

Categories

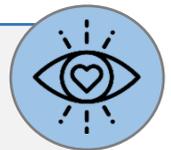


Season



Key attractions

- Holiday in **eco-motion**
- Unique **soft mobility concept**
- 21 Alpine quality villages
- Mountains, natural heritage



DESCRIPTION:

A Network of **Charming Villages** in the Alps offering **Green Mobility** – the Alpine Pearls. Alpine Pearl villages are strung across the entire Alpine area of Germany, Austria, Italy, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

The umbrella organization Alpine Pearls joins together **21 of the most gorgeous Alpine villages**, in their quest for gentle mobility and climate-friendly holidays. Guests at these villages will enjoy carefully chosen **environmentally friendly mobility solutions** like nowhere else. **These handpicked villages** provide a variety of mobility options ensuring your ability to get around in ways that do not adversely affect the environment.

This is a **great example** of the **unique marketing umbrella organisation** that combines recreation and environmental awareness. In 2006, Alpine Pearls was **established** by 17 member villages, the “Pearls of the Alps”. The association was the result of **two successive EU projects** (Alps Mobility and Alps Mobility II). Both projects originated in an initiative by the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment, and Water Management. Idea behind it was to **create innovative tourist packages** that **protect the environment**. The results of these EU projects were implemented by creating the transnational umbrella organization Alpine Pearls for the entire Alpine region. The 21 affiliated villages have to comply with a set of quality and environmental criteria to be selected and offer numerous premium qualities with a wealth of different **holiday**

packages. Entry **fee** for destinations 8,000 EUR; yearly membership fee for the destinations 12,000 EUR per year.

The **concept:** environmentally friendly activities, outdoor fun and regional culinary delights wrapped around adventure, variety and quality.

- **Activities offered:** Hiking, walking, Nordic walking, mountaineering, climbing, cycling, mountain biking, swimming, rowing, water sports, horseback riding, horse-drawn carriages, paragliding, cross-country skiing, biathlon, Alpine skiing, snowboarding, ski touring, ski mountaineering, ice skating, snowshoeing, sledding (all promoted on the Alpine Pearls webpage).
- **Soft mobility concept:** At each Pearl, numerous shuttle services, hikers’ and ski buses, taxicab services, e-cars, bicycles and e-bikes ensure that you can get around easily, yet without adversely affecting the environment. Guest & Mobility Cards, which allow free access to local public transportation.
- **Target groups:** German-speaking markets, Europe, UK, international, upper segment of individual travelers (hikers, trekkers, bikers, families).
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Marketing campaigns (social media marketing), newsletter (60,000 contacts), strong media work and presentation at fairs and conferences. Strong cooperations with national & international tourism organisations. Marketing cooperations and cross-marketing.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Targeting upper segment individual travellers (hikers, bikers etc.) | X | | | |
| Unique marketing umbrella organization | | | X | X |
| Social media marketing campaigns | | | X | |
| Newsletter with 60,000 contacts | | X | | |
| Partnership with national and international tourism organizations | | | X | |
| Brochure, map | | X | | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Growing competition for mountain tourism destinations around the globe; more and more destinations start soft mobility concepts. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Alpine Pearls** – Green Travel with Mobility Guarantee- unique soft mobility concept
- Example of the unique **marketing umbrella organisation**
- Success factor: innovative tourism practices, recreation and **environmental awareness**
- **Strong participation** from local tourism stakeholders – training of local hosts by Alpine Pearls

6.2.3. Nos. 39 – 40: Social Media Marketing

ICELAND TRAVEL



Destination: Iceland

Country: Iceland

Website: <https://www.icelandtravel.is/>



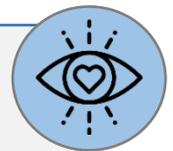
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | DMC in Iceland |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 1937 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website-booking platform, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TripAdvisor Languages: EN, IT, FR, RU, DE, ES, Chinese, Japanese |

Categories



Key attraction

- Adventure experiences
- Stunning landscapes
- Northern lights tours



Season

All year round



DESCRIPTION:

Iceland Travel has been the **leading DMC** in Iceland since 1937, offering tours all around this northern country. Iceland is a **popular adventure tourism destination** well known for its spectacular and unique landscapes ranging from rugged coasts to **glaciers** and waterfalls, and offers distinctive experiences of **hot springs**, **northern lights**, and wildlife (e.g., whales, puffins).

Iceland Travel has a diverse product portfolio that includes a variety of nature, culture, and adventure tours in Iceland as well as **unique experiences**, such as a guided volcano tour or kayaking by the glacier.

Iceland Travel is a **good example** of a **thriving tourism business** that successfully uses **social media** channels for its marketing. They have a vast social media presence – through their social media channels they reach around 300,000 people, with **Instagram** being the main channel with **215,000 followers**. To keep the audience interested and to enthruse them to visit Iceland and book the tours, the company does **daily posts** on their main social media channels (Instagram and Facebook). They mainly use photos of breath-taking scenery, as well as showing **short video clips** from their tours. A strong social media presence helps Iceland Travel to remain the leading gateway to Iceland - every year they assist more than **85,000 tourists** visiting Iceland.

- **Tailored videos:** A series of authentic and personal short videos where a **local guide shows** different destinations and talks about what to expect on the tours (for example, showing the hot springs) are used on Instagram (around 4000-5000 views per video clip).
- **User-generated content:** Iceland Travel selects photos posted by other Instagram users (of which many are also amateur and professional photographers) to share on their profile (mentioning and linking the post to the author).
- **Target Groups:** Adventure and nature tourists, international markets from all around the world (from Western Europe and the USA to Japan).
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Website-booking platform, social media channels, features on the national tourism website; membership of many domestic and international associations (e.g., the Icelandic Travel Industry Association, the United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA), the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA)).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Targeting adventure tourists | X | | | |
| Video clips with local voices and faces (guides) showing around the destination and tours | | X | | X |
| Website-booking platform | | X | | |
| Strong presence on social media, especially Instagram | | | X | |
| Daily posts with good quality photos, using user-generated content | | X | X | |
| Member of international and local professional associations | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Along more specialized small group tours, there are also jeep tours and similar tours that do not target sustainable adventure tourists. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good Practice example – strong social media presence
- Investment in visibility on Instagram – **daily posts** of Iceland’s landscapes
- Use of user-generated content for social media
- Creative and more personal approach - short videos by guides showing the destination and offer

ZAYTOUN

Destination: Palestine

Country: Palestine (company operating in the UK)

Website: <https://zaytoun.uk/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Zaytoun - a social enterprise and community-interest company |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2004 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Newsletter Languages: EN |

Categories

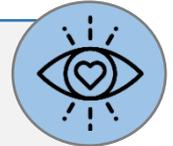


Season



Key attractions

- Quality products
- Gastronomic experience
- Cultural experience
- Creative actions for promotion on social media



DESCRIPTION:

Zaytoun is a **social enterprise** based in London, UK, which was founded to **support Palestinian farmers**. This community interest company commercialises local and quality Palestinian fair-trade **products** (e.g., olive oil, almonds), and acts as a local DMC for the promotion of **immersive cultural tours** in Palestine that they organize around the end of October, the time of the **annual olive harvest**. 100% of the profits of Zaytoun are reinvested into furthering their mission.

Zaytoun is a **great example** of an award-winning responsible company that uses an **innovative and creative marketing** strategy, in which the **social media** marketing plays a vital role. Combining all their social media channels, Zaytoun reaches around 26,000 users, with their biggest presence noted on **Instagram** (13,000 followers). They engage with the audience through posts (on their products, showing the local farmers), but mostly through **'stories'**, where the company creates original content but also shares the content of other users (for example, users posting reviews of their products). They also have **highlighted sections** on the [Zaytoun Instagram stories](#) for different topics - customers' experiences, their products, media coverage and more. Moreover, Zaytoun has a solid collection of authentic videos on their **YouTube channel**, such as interviews with Palestinian farmers. In general, their overall marketing approach, including the use of social media, allows their customers to **connect with the Palestinian farmers and community** even offline and goes

hand in hand with the mission of Zaytoun of not only promoting Palestinian products, but also raising awareness about the country.

- **Local culture and gastronomy tours:** Zaytoun offers three types of trips to Palestine: **Taste the Palestine** (run in partnership with Amos trust) 11-day trip with unique local gastronomic experiences, e.g., cooking with local communities in the refugee camps, meeting date farmers, harvesting olives with the Palestinian fair trade association; **Protective presence** – helping (as volunteers) the Palestinian farmers with olive harvest, but also offering support and solidarity; one week long **Harvest tour** – immersive cultural tour witnessing the daily life of Palestinian communities and farmers.
- **Creative promotion campaign:** To promote the products Zaytoun involved **chef-influencers** - they provided different chef influencers with Zaytoun products, chefs prepared meals and shared their recipes and photos of the results on their personal Instagram profiles. Those stories were then also shared through Zaytoun’s platforms; see the highlighted section ‘Chefs’ on their Instagram stories [here](#).
- **Recipes are also provided [on the website](#)** as an inspirational tool to cook with Zaytoun products.
- **Target Groups:** Mostly UK customers. Target group of customers looking for responsible, ethical, and sustainable products.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking through their website, great coverage on [media](#), strong social media presence, products distributed via wholesalers.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Responsible consumers | X | | | |
| Video clips with local voices and faces – interviews with farmers on YouTube | | X | X | X |
| Website-booking platform. Strong storytelling throughout the website | | X | | X |
| Strong presence and users engagement on social media, especially Instagram | | | X | |
| Promotion campaign with chef-influencers on Instagram | | | X | X |
| Strong press coverage | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Lack of information on their social media marketing channels on their organized visits to Palestine. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good practice example – an **ethical company** supporting the local farmers and communities
- Strong **social media presence**
- Creative promotion campaigns involving chef-influencers
- Creating the connection between the local farmers and customers via interviews and videos

6.2.4. Nos. 41 -42: Virtual Tours and Gamification

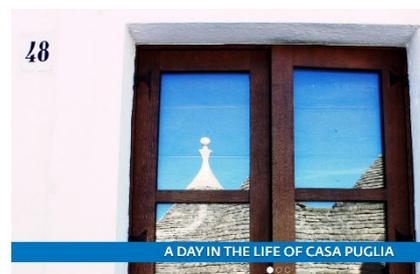
Practice No. 41

PUGLIA

Destination: Apulia region

Country: Italy

Website: <https://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/>

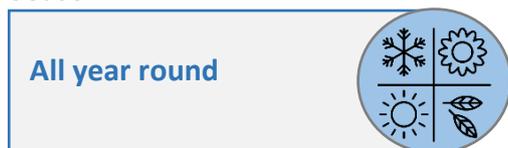


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Regione Puglia (regional department for tourism and culture), Puglia Promozione (The Regional Tourist Board), Innovapuglia (Puglia region in-house Agency) |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, EU funds (e.g., Programma Operativo Regionale 2014-2020) |
| | INITIATED IN: | NA |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter Language: EN, IT, DE, ES, FR, RU |

Categories

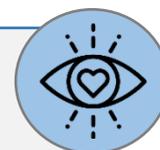


Season



Key attractions

- Cultural heritage (e.g., Trulli)
- UNESCO World Heritage sites
- Diverse nature
- Impressive coastline
- Great gastronomy offer



DESCRIPTION:

The Apulia region (“La Puglia”) is a southern region of Italy, marked by its extraordinary colours and **beautiful diversity of nature, culture, history**, and its breath-taking landscapes. It’s bordered by two seas, the Ionian and Adriatic, with **800 km of coastline**. Puglia has a strong soft tourism infrastructure, including 9 official **walking routes** (many ancient Mediterranean routes), 6 **cycling routes**, and 12 **routes of wine and tastes**; as well as an authentic culinary offering - 10,000 local restaurants of which 2,000 have an excellence certificate; cultural offer including 4 UNESCO heritage sites and a network of protected areas and natural diversity.

Puglia is a **great example of innovative marketing** since it uses different **creative initiatives** to engage with their potential visitors. One of these initiatives is “**A Day in Casa Puglia**” (see [here](#)), a section on the official tourism website offering a **virtual tour** of Puglia. Visitors of the website are invited to spend a day in Puglia right from their home. The page is **structured** into four parts of the day (morning, lunch, afternoon, and evening) and for each time of the day suggestions and links are provided for **immersing yourself in the destination from home**. For example, in the **morning** one can listen to local radio podcasts or visit Puglia’s castles through 3D virtual tours; for **lunch**, cook a **typical Pugliese dish** following provided recipes and videos of local chefs; visit one of the museums in **the afternoon**; and spend an **evening** with a movie from Foggia film

festival or check out Puglia’s digital library. Innovative initiatives help to **engage already loyal customers** (for example, once tourists are back home from the destination), but also to attract the attention of **potential visitors** who are planning to come; it is also a perfect tool in scenarios when travel is restricted, for example, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Gamification** – [Puglia Travel Test](#): another creative initiative, a game-test on the official website with questions for users, presented in a Who Wants To Be a Millionaire? style, which helps users to define their tourist profile and get special travel suggestions for visiting the destination based on their profile (places to visit with itineraries, a local recipe, a movie to watch and more).
- **Social media presence** is also very strong with a great following. Use of their own hashtags (#WeAreInPuglia #VieniaMangiareinPuglia) that other social media users can use to allow reposting on official Puglia channels.
- **Target markets**: Domestic and international travellers, cultural, slow tourists looking for authentic nature, culture and gastronomy offer.
- **Marketing and Distribution channels**: Main official website, social media channels, the APP, partnerships, for example with [Lombardy](#) region; Italy’s official tourism site.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Slow tourists, cultural tourists looking for authentic experiences | X | | | |
| A consolidated virtual experience offer “A Day in Casa Puglia” on the official website | | X | X | X |
| Gamification – Puglia Travel Test | | X | | X |
| Videos of local chefs and grandmas cooking traditional dishes (on social media channels) | | X | X | X |
| Partnerships for promotion – e.g., with Lombardy region | | | X | |
| Strong presence and users engagement on social media channels | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Direct booking options missing. | | | | |



NOTE

- Great example of innovative user engagement initiatives – gamified test, virtual tours
- Virtual experience offer to **engage visitors** to spend a day in Puglia from home
- Building on local cultural and **gastronomic identity** – for example, section with local recipes, videos with chefs cooking local recipes

THE FAROE ISLANDS

Destination: The Faroe Islands

Country: Self-governing region within Kingdom of Denmark

Website: <https://www.visitfaroeislands.com/>

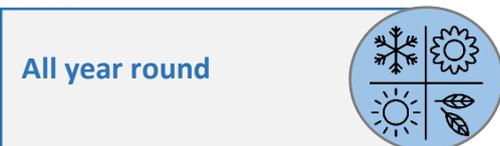


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Visit Faroe Islands, the Faroe Islands' official tourist board under the Ministry of Trade and Industry |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2012 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Vimeo Languages: EN, DE, DN |

Categories

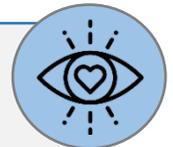


Season



Key attractions

- **Unspoilt nature and landscapes**
- Outdoor activities
- Unique local culture
- **Wildlife watching**
- Innovative creative marketing campaigns



DESCRIPTION:

The Faroe Islands is an archipelago of **18 mountainous islands** located halfway between Iceland and Scotland in the **North Atlantic Ocean**. Tourism is one of the main industries of this small country with fishing being the most important one. Islands are marked by **unspoilt nature**, wild landscapes with waterfalls, biodiversity and unique local architecture, such as **grass-roofed houses**. The touristic offer of the islands includes a range of **outdoor activities** – hiking, birdwatching, cycling, diving, fishing and more.

The Faroe Islands is a **good practice example** that showcases a **creative marketing approach**. One of their most recent initiatives to combat the restrictions of travel during the early COVID-19 pandemic was the **Remote Tourism** project. Visitors could explore the destination from home, via live **interaction** (using their smartphone, tablet, or PC) **with a local Faroese**, who had a camera attached to his/her helmet and was acting as the viewer's eyes and body on a virtual exploratory tour, and taking visitors on a **tour on land, water and even by helicopter**. **22 tours** were organized before the destination re-opened again – now these tours serve as an inspiration for prospective travellers who want to get a glimpse of the destination.

These tours also make part of the **virtual experiences** that Visit Faroe Island prepared to enable people **to visit the Faroe Islands from home**. Besides the tours, on a dedicated page visitors can find links to Faroese music, recipes to cook **local seafood dishes** and even information on how to **knit a sweater** using Faroese patterns or

links to listen to or read the most well-known **myths** and legends from the Faroe Islands. These and other innovative campaigns (see below) **position** Faroe Islands as a **unique and creative destination**, it attracts attention from the **international media** (the Faroe islands have **great press coverage**, including such media outlets as Lonely Planet, the New Yorker, BBC, see [here](#)) and increase tourism.

- **Google Sheep view:** in 2016 the Faroe Islands put **cameras on their sheep** to create their own version of Google Street view – with **no media budget**, the story was covered by all the major media in the world and was the **third most mentioned news story** in July 2016. Record **17% passenger growth** was recorded in 2017 by the national airlines of the Faroe Islands.
- **Faroe Islands translate:** Another **creative marketing** project – to provide an opportunity for tourists to learn some of the Faroese language, the destination created **their own translation tool** and alternative to Google Translate – but instead of a written translated word, they use **short video clips** of different **local people**.
- **Closed for Maintenance:** An initiative to attract voluntourists who come to the islands to help to maintain their popular tourist sites (e.g., hiking trails); volunteers are provided both accommodation and food over the three-night period.
- **Target groups:** Travellers from international markets (e.g., Western Europe, the USA, Canada, German-speaking markets, Scandinavia); adventure travellers looking for exceptional outdoor activities.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** cooperation with international tour operators (see [here](#)), their own **booking site** [Guide to Faroe Islands](#), a special site **to book hiking tours**, great presence on social media channels, impressive press coverage, more than 140 videos (on [Vimeo](#)), a range of [brochures](#) and a free to download travel guide (hiking, birds, camping, cycling).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| International adventure travellers, nature tourists | X | | | |
| Remote tourism campaign – live virtual tours with locals | | X | X | X |
| Page for virtual experiences- Visit Faroe Islands from home | | X | X | X |
| Faroe Island translate – short clips of locals translating phrases in Faroese | | X | | X |
| Great international press coverage as a result of creative marketing campaigns | | | X | X |
| User-friendly direct booking websites | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Remote tourism website currently not working and there is a lack of adequate information to see virtual tours- the provided link to virtual tours videos is misleading. | | | | |



NOTE

- Great example of how **creative campaigns** with **no media budget** generate international media attention
- Creation of a set of original experiences for visitors to get to know the destination from home
- Good practice example – **remote tourism** through interaction with a local person

6.2.5. Nos. 43 -44: Digital word of mouth, Influencers and Digital nomads

LOVE CAPE TOWN

Destination: Cape Town

Country: South Africa

Website: <https://www.capetown.travel/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | The tourism board Cape Town Tourism |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2004 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter Languages: EN |

Categories

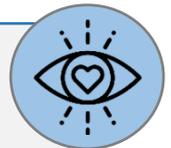


Season



Key attraction

- Spectacular views of the coastlines
- **Hiking in and around the city**
- Vibrant city life, creative neighbourhoods
- Wildlife watching
- **Media hosting programme**



DESCRIPTION:

Cape Town is a **port city** on South Africa’s southwest coast. It is marked by impressive landscapes ranging from the blue waters and **sandy beaches** to the mountains, offering visitors numerous **spectacular viewpoints**, hiking opportunities in and around the city, wildlife watching (e.g., penguins) as well as all the city benefits including rich culture, museums, and **vibrant neighbourhoods**, as well as food and wine experiences in and around the city (e.g., [wine tram](#)). Cape Town is also a **responsible destination** – visitors are advised with tips on [travel safety](#) as well as on the actions the city takes in terms of environmental protection and sustainable resource management (e.g., water, waste, energy, and other issues).

Cape Town is a **good practice example** that showcases **efforts to attract media**, including **influencers and digital nomads** (people who use the Internet to work remotely without having a fixed home base). For this purpose, the city created a **Media Hosting programme** that allows media influencers and travel journalists to be hosted as guests. On the official website, an [application form](#) for media hosting is provided, where applicants have to provide information on their media channels and reach as well as offered exposure (in terms of written articles, videos etc.). Approved applicants are provided with assistance during the trip and discounts on services. Moreover, the destination also created the Cape Town Tourism **Digital Assets Library** that proposes high-resolution digital assets (photos and footage) for promotional usage. The destination is covered in numerous articles, **blog articles**, coverage in social media channels (especially Instagram and YouTube).

- **Collection of Experiences:** Experiences [list](#) provided, offering the possibility to choose between land-based adventure, water-based activities, and air-based adventures.
- **Examples of influencers coverage:** Various blog articles (e.g., [here](#) and [here](#)), coverage on Instagram (e.g., [here](#)), videos on YouTube.
- **Social media marketing:** The DMO also has a strong presence on social network platforms, namely through its “LoveCapeTown” social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube. Direct access to their Instagram account is provided through the web portal.
- **Pocket friendly challenge:** A friendly competition between four groups in six locations around Cape Town – every person can spend R150 to enjoy the activities in Cape Town. As a result, a series of videos have been produced.
- **Target groups:** international travellers, independent travellers; in their [Tourism Development framework 2024](#), four main **target segments** have been identified – **indulgers** (people looking for fine experiences – exquisite accommodation and food, cultural life etc.), **explorers** (looking for natural and cultural experiences, soft adventures), **specialists** (niche segments focused on specific experiences, including outdoors and adventure, culture & heritage, and food & wine) and MICE.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Web portal, social media channels, digital word of mouth, the South Africa’s national tourism portal.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Four main segments, focused on travellers looking for natural, cultural, food experiences | X | | | |
| Video content (e.g., from pocket friendly challenge) | | X | | X |
| Digital promotion set – a great dataset of good quality photos, lots of visual content on social media | | X | X | |
| Media hosting programme | | X | | X |
| Coverage by travel journalists, bloggers and influencers | | | X | X |
| Lively website, direct connection to Love Cape Town social media accounts | | X | X | |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Direct booking options missing, for example for highlighted Experiences.



NOTE

- Great example of a **media hosting programme**
- Using digital word of mouth – promoting via digital nomads, bloggers, and influencers
- **Travel Wise initiative** – includes responsible tourism, but also information and visitors’ guidelines regarding safety while traveling in Cape Town.

WILDERNESS SCOTLAND

Destination: Scotland

Country: The United Kingdom

Website: <https://www.wildernessscotland.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Private local tour operator |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2000 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Newsletter Languages: EN |

Categories

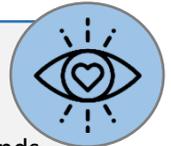


Season



Key attraction

- **Pristine nature**
- Adventure holidays
- Most remote regions – Highlands and islands
- Ecotourism
- **Nearly 5000 client reviews on their website**



DESCRIPTION:

Adventure travel and ecotourism company based in Scotland, offering a wide range of nature holidays and **wilderness experiences** in the **most remote and wild regions** of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Among the activities offered, there are **walking**, cycling and mountain biking, **sea kayaking**, canoeing or **photography** tours. Wilderness Scotland is also a **sustainable** company with different practices and initiatives in place, for example, they run a **carbon labelling project** to calculate the kg of carbon per traveller, they collect funds for different **conservation** initiatives and more.

Wilderness Scotland is a **great example** of a company that has an excellent **reputation** that results from their offering of exceptional quality tours. Using and showing this reputation is one of their key **marketing messages**, clearly visible on their website. Their **customers' reviews** are the first thing one sees when visiting the website – displayed on the **top of the homepage** is the reviews score (4.87 out of 5), based on 4,802 travellers' reviews (Feb. 2022) as well as an example of a review. These '**digital word of mouth**' messages are portrayed throughout the website and all customer reviews can be found under the section 'About Us'. The company collect reviews by sending a **feedback survey** to all their clients when they return from their guided, self-guided or tailor-made holiday with them. Reviews include information on the type and total number of the trips customers took with Wilderness Scotland, their **country, age group** and trip date. This system is **the best**

quality badge for Wilderness Scotland services, and it clearly shows their potential customers how many people have already enjoyed their tours and why, thus is a **great strategy** for new customer acquisition.

- **Other channels for reviews:** Besides their own platform, Wilderness Scotland also have reviews platforms on [Aito](#) – The Specialist Travel Association and on [Trustpilot](#).
- **Awards:** Gold Award by Green Tourism, a UK-based certification programme; winner of the 2014 Leading Green Tour operator award at World Travel Awards.
- **Media:** Featured in National Geographic Traveller 50 tours of a lifetime edition.
- **Target groups:** Domestic and international travellers, adventure travellers, ecotourists, photography enthusiasts and professionals; independent travellers, families, and small groups.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Direct booking through their website; partnerships with AITO Specialist Travel Association, with ABTA (the UK's largest travel association, representing travel agents and tour operators), social media channels.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted to adventure travellers, ecotourists | X | | | |
| Client reviews as the quality badge used throughout the website | | X | | X |
| Monthly newsletter | | X | | |
| Attractive and informative website | | X | | |
| Media coverage (National Geographic) | | | X | |
| Partnerships with associations – the specialist travel association | | | X | |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Investment and maintenance needed for the customer review system.



NOTE

- Great example – **using digital word of mouth** as the key marketing approach
- Reviews system directly on the website; reviews are personalized – information about the traveller's country, age group, tour taken
- Example of a sustainable tour operator with a range of sustainability initiatives in place

6.2.6. Nos. 45 -46: Storytelling and Creative marketing campaigns

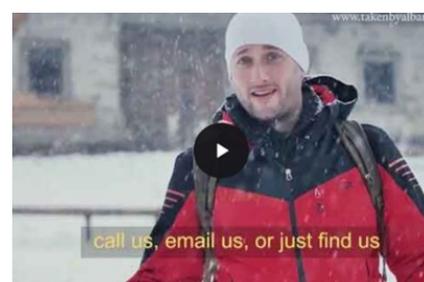
ACTIVE ALBANIA



Destination: Albania

Country: Albania

Website: <https://www.activealbania.com/>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Active Albania – an initiative and licensed tour operator |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private; international cooperation - USAID, Swisscontact, EU funds |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2019 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Newsletter Languages: EN, IT, DE, FR, SV, ES, NB, NL, CS, PL, HR, SQ, BS, MK |

Categories

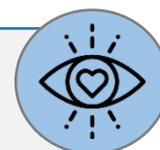


Season



Key attractions

- **Adventure activities**
- Great outdoors
- Wild nature – mountains, rivers, sea
- **Creative promotion campaigns**



DESCRIPTION:

Active Albania is a **responsible tour operator** based in Tirana, Albania’s capital, which runs tours around the country and its neighbours. Albania is an attractive destination that has **great natural and cultural assets**, its landscapes ranging from high mountains to crystal clear sea. Active Albania has a great offer of **adventure tours** on land and on water – hiking, cycling, rafting, snorkelling, kayaking, horseback riding and more. The **USP** of Active Albania is the offer of adventure activities with the local experience since the company works with **small local businesses**, thus travellers can experience the genuine hospitality and **authenticity** of small, often family-run accommodation and taste local food.

Active Albania is a **good practice example** for developing **creative** responsible tourism **campaigns**, such as their 2019 **innovative marketing campaign** [Taken by Albania](#) . The idea of the campaign came from the **movie** “Taken”, a thriller where actor Liam Neeson played the main role and which portrayed some negative stereotypes of Albanians. Thus, within the framework of the Taken by Albania campaign, Active Albania developed the **promotional video** with the slogan **“Be taken by Albania”** that refers directly to the movie, combats the stereotypes and addresses the **actor Liam Neeson** to come and be taken by the many **great local features of Albania** – from spectacular landscapes, outdoor activities, local culture and food. During the three years since its release, this video on **YouTube** has been viewed **more than 450,000 times**; this campaign helped

Active Albania to **better position** itself as a green, hospitable, and active tourism destination and to showcase their offer.

- **Other campaigns:** in 2020, a campaign with promotional video ‘Stay Safe now and Meet Albanians later’ was released and in 2022 a [video](#) ‘Visit Albania 2022 - Unparalleled, Exceptional & Authentic’. Both videos use the storytelling that showcases Albania as exceptional country compared to other destinations in terms of its wilderness and authenticity.
- **Local voices:** [Testimonials](#) from small local businesses that are mostly run by local families are portrayed on the website, providing the credibility regarding the local character of the tours and efforts of the company in terms of supporting the local communities.
- **Social media:** The [highlights](#) of Instagram Stories are organized according to the activities offered by Active Albania, thus working as a perfect promotional tool for adventure travellers looking for inspiration for specific outdoor activities.
- **Press coverage:** [Featured in international media](#), like Lonely Planet, the Independent.
- **Professional associations:** Active Albania is a member of Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA); partners with World Rafting federation.
- **Target groups:** Adventure travellers from international markets, as well as from the Balkan region.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Website, TripAdvisor ([5-star rating](#)), Albanian National tourism agency, social media channels.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Targeted to adventure travellers | X | | | |
| Creative campaigns – videos with innovative storytelling | | X | | X |
| Newsletter | | X | | |
| Attractive social media channels – well organized to get information on offered activities | | | X | |
| Media coverage | | | X | |
| Partnerships with Adventure Travel Trade Association | | | X | |

Challenges/ weaknesses: A pop up promotional video appears automatically on every page of the website.



NOTE

- Great example of **creative marketing campaigns**
- Using a film reference for the campaign
- **Involving diverse local actors** in the promotional campaign – from the minister to the local producers, local communities, and hosts

BAY OF PLENTY

Destination: Coastal Bay of Plenty region

Country: The New Zealand

Website: <https://www.bayofplentynz.com/>

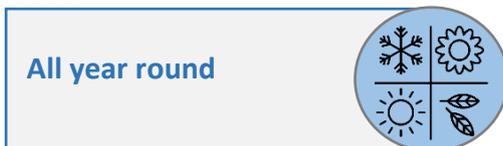


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Tāpoi Te Moananui ā Toi Tourism Bay of Plenty is the destination management organisation (DMO) for the Coastal Bay of Plenty region |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public |
| | INITIATED IN: | DMO since 2018 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Instagram Languages: EN |

Categories

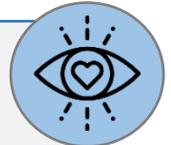


Season



Key attraction

- Outdoor activities
- **Ecotourism**
- Authentic local destination
- Coastal destination
- Cultural activities, local Māori culture



DESCRIPTION:

Bay of Plenty is a destination situated on the northern coast of the North Island of the New Zealand. It is the destination marked by spectacular **beaches**, but also **lush forests** and thriving communities. Bay of Plenty offers a range of **experiences** – from engaging in outdoor adventures (e.g., walking, cycling, surfing), cultural activities (from Māori to contemporary culture) to local restaurants.

Bay of Plenty is also an exemplary destination that has a strategy developed according to the **regenerative tourism** principles, with vision focusing on tourism’s role to help the region flourish, by regenerating instead of extracting and helping make Bay of Plenty a better place over time.

Thus, Bay of Plenty is a **great example** of the region that develops its tourism **with the local stakeholders** and communities and has a **storytelling** focused on the authentic local life. The **domestic marketing campaign** ‘Sure to make you smile: One destination. Endless Stories’ is an example of that since it portrays the **unique cultural heritage** and local natural assets as well as the local lifestyle as the key messages. The website features the **section** ‘Meet the Locals’, which provides information on stories of local businesses through short interviews; and a section ‘**Stories**’, allowing visitors to explore the destination through the **stories of the local** artists, restaurant owners, tour operators etc. The **DMO achieved great results** with the ‘Sure to make you Smile’ campaign to attract visitors **even during the Covid-19 pandemic** - numbers of domestic visitors during

the 2020 winter school holidays were 26% higher than in 2019 and there was a **6% increase in overall visitor spending**.

- **Bookable Experiences:** A very wide range of directly bookable experiences is available. Experiences include guided tours (e.g., evening kayaking tour or a visit to a boutique craft brewery), **marine wildlife watching** (dolphins, whales, seals), cultural experiences (e.g., **cultural immersion experience** with an indigenous storyteller) and more.
- **Walks and Trails:** Available on the [website](#), suggestions to explore different parts of the destination on foot, plenty of easy walks and also suggestions for dog-friendly walks in the Bay.
- **Off-grid accommodations:** Featured on a separate page, options for **unique stays** at the Bay of Plenty, ranging from luxury glamping or staying in a cob cottage.
- **Tourism strategy:** [Shared](#) on their website; one of the four strategic priorities is ‘Connect with Residents’.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic and international visitors, independent travellers, families. Target market segments: Outdoor adventurers, Eco-travellers, Culture lovers and Ocean and beach lovers.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Main website, social media channels, the destination promoted by the national tourism authority of New Zealand (see [here](#)).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Targeted to eco-travellers, cultural tourists – four segments identified | X | | | X |
| Creative campaign ‘Sure to make you Smile’ | | X | | X |
| Great digital promotion set – good quality photos, numerous videos throughout the website | | X | | |
| Attractive social media channels | | | X | |
| Stories and interviews with locals | | X | | X |
| Featured through the national tourism website | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: More language options for international tourists missing. | | | | |



NOTE

- Great example of a successful marketing campaign
- Example of the destination with a strategy along **regenerative tourism** principles with significant involvement of local stakeholders and communities
- Use of **local stories and local faces** – interviews with local tour operators, artists, restaurant owners etc.

6.2.7. Nos. 47 -48: Online Trip Planner System

Practice No. 47

GALICIA

Destination: Galicia

Country: Spain



Website: <https://www.turismo.gal/inicio>

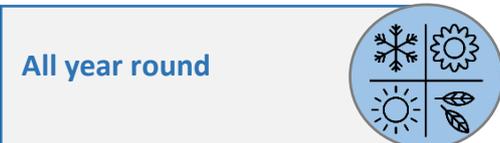


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Turismo de Galicia |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public private partnerships, EU funds |
| | INITIATED IN: | NA |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website/blog, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram Language: GL, EN, FR, DE, ES, PT, IT, RU, Japanese, Chinese |

Categories

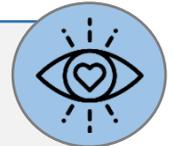


Season



Key attractions

- The Way of St. James
- Stunning **coastal landscapes**
- Birding
- Nautical sports
- Convenient trip planning tool



DESCRIPTION:

Galicia is in the north-western part of Spain, situated on the Atlantic coast and marked by **stunning coastal landscapes** and beaches as well as numerous **cultural heritage sites**. Besides its most famous attraction, the Way of St. James (a popular ancient pilgrim route, see practice nr. 18), the Galicia region also offers a variety of **nature activities**, such as birding, mountain biking, nautical sports, as well as **cultural and gastronomic activities**, including wine tourism, itineraries to discover the cultural heritage and sanctuaries.

Galicia is a **great example** of a destination that has successfully integrated the **Online trip planner system tool** in its website. Their tool is called **'My Trip'** and it is easily found on the landing page (the suitcase icon on the top of the page).

It is a **service** that provides users with **help to organize their trips** to Galicia during three different stages - of the planning stage, during the visit and after the visit. To use this tool, visitors have to **register on the website**. Travellers can use the My Trip icon on the website to **add** their favourite **places to visit, restaurants, accommodation** and other attractions on their own itinerary – on their personal My Trip page they will get the map of their route and will be able to **export information in PDF** or export the GPS locations. They can also use this tool during the trip (to see the map, use GPS locations) as well as after the trip – they can note what they visited and add notes on what they would like to see next time. Its **benefits** include direct user

engagement and providing all the information for planning their trip and to **book services** directly or to book provided packages. Thus, it creates a sales opportunity.

- **Brochures and Publications:** Available on the website is the collection of useful information in the form of **39 brochures** (on natural parks, routes and trails, birding, gastronomy, etc.), **7 videos**, **8 APPs** (including Way of St. James, Birding, Wine Tourism, Cultural Agenda, Natural parks and more), **7 street maps**-downloadable pdf files of maps of the main cities', and 5 other **touristic maps**.
- **Virtual tours:** Offer of virtual tour experiences, for example, of the monasteries and cathedrals.
- **Target groups:** Domestic and international travellers, active travellers, ecotourists, hikers and cyclists, cultural tourists.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Active presence on social media channels; direct booking of products possible through the official website, for example, [here](#); trade fairs like ITB Berlin; digital brochures, APPs, maps.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted to active travellers, ecotourists, hikers, cultural tourists | X | | | |
| Online trip planner system ,My Trip' integrated in the website | | X | X | X |
| Great digital promotion set – good quality photos, numerous video clips | | X | | |
| Brochures and maps available to download | | X | | |
| 8 APPs for different products and interests available, e.g., birding, wine tourism | | X | | X |
| Social media channels | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Website is rather slow, pages take quite a lot of time to load. | | | | |



NOTE

- Great example of a destination with an **integrated Online trip planner system** on the website
- Creating direct sales opportunities for visitors
- Further commercialization by offering direct booking of packages – travel offers

THE WAY OF ST. JAMES

Destination: The Way of St. James, Galicia

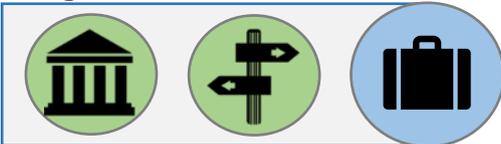
Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.caminodesantiago.gal/en/inicio>



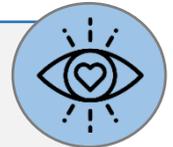
| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Public body “The Sociedade Anónima de Xestión do Plan Xacobeo”, under the Turismo de Galicia |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Public, EU Regional Development Fund |
| | INITIATED IN: | In 1987 the Way of St. James was declared the first European Cultural Route by the Council of Europe |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Blog, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter Language: EN, FR, DE, PT, IT, ES, Galician |

Categories



Key attractions

- Ancient pilgrim routes
- Cultural experience
- Long-distance trekking



Season

All year round



DESCRIPTION:

The Way of St. James, internationally mostly known as Camino de Santiago, is an ancient **pilgrimage path to the city of Santiago de Compostela**, where the tomb of St. James lies. Pilgrims have travelled to this Spanish city since the 9th century, and it has become very popular again in the last few decades. There are **10 different ways**, some of which even start in France or Portugal, but they all go for around 100-200 km and **end in Galicia**. Most travellers go on foot, though there are also cyclists and a small group of tourists who travel on a horseback. The **USP** of The Way of St. James is an offer of embarking on a centuries-old **living pilgrimage tradition** while following the **ancient pilgrim paths** marked by distinctive waymarking of yellow and blue arrows and shells and staying in authentic and budget accommodations, so called “albergues”.

The Way of St. James also has a **great website** which is a **good marketing practice example** to showcase the user-friendly **planning tools** that help potential visitors to plan and embark on the trip. On the website, using the practical section **Plan your Way** one can choose the way they would like to travel and get **suggestions of the route**, check and **book their accommodation** and add everything to the Online Travel Planner system **tool – ‘My Way’**. This tool allows people to add and edit the planned routes, and additionally has a section **‘My Experiences’** where, already during the trip, travellers can **add their photos and travel diaries** and using the

proposed templates create their own [pilgrim's ebook](#) and share it with their friends. This user-friendly system **benefits the destination** since travellers can easily implement the trips, book local services, and later promote the route to other potential travellers.

- **Pilgrims Number:** In pre-COVID years the number of visitors was constantly growing, reaching its highest in 2019 (**347,578 visitors**). In 2020, it dropped to just more than 50,000, but has steadily increased in 2021 reaching nearly 200,000.
- **Authentic Accommodation:** Accommodation sites are also spaces where pilgrims meet and share their “Camino” experiences. A **public network of Pilgrim hostels**, known as “albergues”, in the Galicia region includes more than **70 centres** with over **3000 places**. These public centres are often in **historical buildings** and are organized according to the network of medieval hospitals. They operate on a first-come, first-served basis, and staying in each of them is possible only for one night.
- **The Way of St. James APP:** a helpful tool serving as a pocket travel guide once on a way with all the practical information regarding the routes, accommodation, but also weather, health centers and emergency etc.
- **Stickers:** Innovative marketing tool – a series of ‘The Way of St James’ [stickers](#) that users can download and use in WhatsApp and iMessage applications.
- **Awards:** Since 1987 The Way of St. James has been a certified cultural route of the [Council of Europe](#). In 1993, Camino Frances and the Northern Routes were included in the **UNESCO World Heritage list**.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic and international, mostly individual travelers. Regarding the international markets, Europe (especially the Western part) and North America are the main markets.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Featured on the national tourism website of Spain, Lonely Planet, [National Geographic expeditions](#); local and international tour operators promoting the trail; digital word of mouth (numerous blogs, videos, photos on the internet and social media channels).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted to cultural tourists and active travellers | X | | | |
| Online trip planner system ,My Way‘ integrated in the website; ,My Experience‘ - pilgrim ebook | | X | X | X |
| Stickers with the symbol of the way for users to use in WhatsApp and iMessage | | X | | X |
| Practical APP for the use during the trip | | X | | |
| International media coverage | | | X | |
| Regional and national tourism agencies | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: The route is very popular, plus receives further promotion through portrayal in the popular media, so the challenge lies in the risk of overtourism. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good practice example – **success story of cultural route**
- **User-friendly** website with all the practical information one needs for planning and during the trip
- Fun tools for travellers to share with others – ebook, stickers

6.2.8. Nos. 49 -53: Commercialization and Direct Bookings

PILGRIM TRAVEL

Destination: The Way of St. James

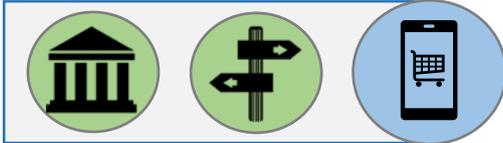
Country: Spain

Website: <https://www.pilgrim.es/en/>

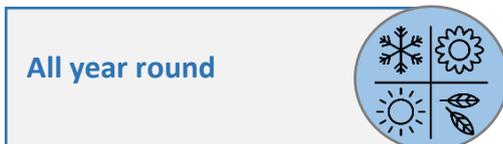


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Pilgrim Travel, a licensed travel agency |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Private |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2015 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram Language: EN, ES, DE, IT |

Categories

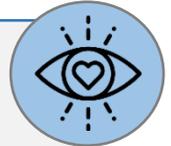


Season



Key attraction

- Tailored experiences of Camino routes
- Cultural experience
- Long-distance trekking
- Long-distance hiking in comfort



DESCRIPTION:

Pilgrim Travel is the **leading tour operation platform** for the Camino de Santiago or otherwise called The Way of St. James, an ancient **pilgrimage path** to the city of Santiago de Compostela (please find more information on this destination under the Marketing practice example no. 18). They have offices in A Coruña and Santiago de Compostela cities in Galicia, Spain.

The USP of Pilgrim Travel is their **quality and expertise** in Camino Ways and the offer of a **great selection of services** (e.g., accommodation, bike rental, luggage transfer) for travellers traveling one of the Camino ways as well as **packaged experiences to travel in a comfortable way**.

Pilgrim Travel is a **great example** of a tour company that **promotes and makes** Camino de Santiago **accessible** to different groups of travellers, depending on their interest and needs, thus attracting new groups of travellers to the destination. For example, they offer such **different services** as the city tour of Santiago de Compostela, bike rentals for people doing Camino by bike, and backpack delivery. Also, using the Pilgrim Travel online system, visitors can **plan their whole itinerary** and **book accommodation services for the entire journey**, choosing the type of accommodation, based on one's needs and budget (from private hostel to hotel/country cottage).

Moreover, the company offers so-called **Experiences** designed for different routes. These include experiences of traveling parts of Camino in an organized group with an experienced guide or buying a prepared package

that includes accommodation with breakfast, all the maps and needed information, travel insurance, backpack transfer and 24-hour assistance.

- **Special Experiences:** Among the Experiences offered, one, [‘Portuguese Way Last Kms in Premium accommodations’](#) is designed for walking the Camino (Portuguese way) by staying in the most boutique accommodations (traditional Galician houses ‘pazo’, hotels and country cottages), thus with extra comfort and immersion in the local cultural sites.
- **Experience with a group:** A one week [group travel](#) for the last 100 kms. Advantage of an experienced guide who also share history and stories about the route, stays in charming accommodations.
- **Target groups:** Both domestic and international individual travellers; hikers, trekkers, cyclists, cultural tourists. Targeting special groups, such as families, and travellers with dogs.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Participating in international travel trade shows, for example, the Madrid International Tourism Fair FITUR.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted at both cultural tourists and active travellers | X | | | |
| Website-booking platform | | X | X | |
| Blog – sharing recommendations for travellers | | X | | X |
| APP for the use during the trip | | X | | |
| Social media channels | | | X | |
| International fairs | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Although the website has foreign language options, the social media channels are all in Spanish. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good practice example – travel agency focused on a cultural route/long-distance hiking
- User-friendly website allowing visitors to plan the trip and book needed services easily
- Different offers – to travel individually or in a group; to stay in premium accommodations or in more budget places
- Attraction of new target groups for this destination – families, people with dogs

MEDITERRANEAN EXPERIENCES OF ECOTOURISM



Destination: A selection of protected areas around the Mediterranean

Country: Spain, Tunisia, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Albania, Lebanon, France

Website: <https://www.meetnetwork.org/ecotourism-experiences>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | MEET Network Association |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Model for ecotourism was developed through EU projects, including ENI CBC MED Programme MEET project and Interreg Mediterranean Programme DestiMED project |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2013; Association founded in 2018 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn Languages: EN |

Categories



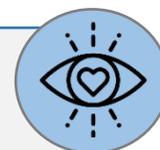
Season

Spring, Summer,
Autumn



Key attractions

- Ecotourism experiences
- Wildlife
- Local culture and gastronomy
- Outdoor activities



DESCRIPTION:

Mediterranean Experiences of Ecotourism is an offer of currently 11 ecotourism experiences designed in different **protected areas around Mediterranean**. It is an initiative by the MEET Network Association with founding organizations of Shouf Biosphere Reserve, MedPAN network and IUCN Mediterranean.

Experiences have been developed by a group of **tourism** and **conservations experts** together with **local communities** and have been designed to **immerse travellers** in the local nature and culture and to offer a range of soft activities to enjoy the destinations (by biking, hiking, trekking, snorkelling etc.).

Mediterranean Experiences of Ecotourism is a **great example** of how to **commercialize unique experiences** through the relevant travel industry partnerships. They look for **travel industry partners** that would have shared values and so far, have been **successful** in setting up partnerships with such **strong brands** as WWF Travel and Intrepid Travel. In June 2021 they **set up the partnership** with **Intrepid Travel**, which is the largest small group adventure travel company in the world – two tours from Mediterranean Experiences were

included in Intrepid Travel offer, available to book. In September 2021, MEET Network [partnered up](#) with conservation travel experts **WWF Travel** that promote **conservation-focused tours** to commercialize their varied portfolio of ecotourism experiences for the **Italian market**.

A few examples of commercialized tours:

- **Ebro Delta tour**: Available on **WWF Travel**, a six-day tour in Ebro delta – one of the most important wetland areas in the western Mediterranean, a destination located in the Terres del Ebre UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in Catalonia. The tour includes a variety of natural, cultural, and gastronomic activities. For example, such activities as biking in the natural surroundings, **trips in (traditional) boats** in the Ebro River, **birdwatching** – from the boat, from the kayak; gastronomy experiences, such as showcooking and lunch of traditional paella, **tasting of local seafood**, wines; cultural visits to **local historical towns**; and more (tour foreseen in spring 2022, price from 900€/person).
- **Croatia: Sibenik and the Kornati Islands**: Available to book on **Intrepid Travel** for spring, summer and autumn dates, a five-day tour through the southern part of Croatia. Includes such local experiences as home-cooked lunch with local family, olive oil & honey tasting, such outdoor activities as snorkelling, biking and guided walking tours through the local towns (price from 946€/person).
- **Target groups**: Specialized tour operators promoting ecotourism, adventure, and nature tourism.
- **Marketing & distribution channels**: Marketed via MEET Network website and their social media channels; partnerships with tour operators (WWF Travel, Intrepid).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Targeted to eco-travellers, adventure tourists | X | | | |
| Brochure – catalogue of ecotourism experiences | | X | | |
| Marketing via MEET Network website | | X | | |
| Partnership with strong and relevant brands | | | X | X |
| Social media channels of MEET Network | | | X | |
| Good digital set with good quality photos | | X | | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Lack of promotional content regarding Mediterranean Experiences on social media channels. | | | | |



NOTE

- Good practice example – partnerships with **strong brands**
- Example of developing attractive **multiday ecotourism experiences**
- Collaboration in developing experiences – tourism, conservation experts and local communities
- Targeting travel industry catering to the focused target groups of travelers

ALPE ADRIA TRAIL

Destination: Carinthia, Friuli, Slovenia

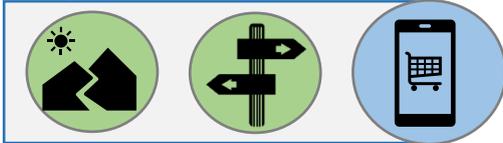
Country: Austria, Slovenia, Italy

Website: <https://alpe-adria-trail.com/en>

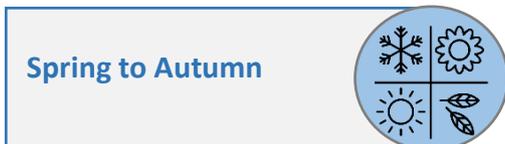


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Regional tourism authorities |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | EU Interreg Italia – Austria, Regional Tourism Authorities |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2013 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram Language: DE, EN, IT, SL |

Categories

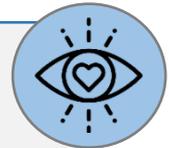


Season



Key attractions

- Hiking from the **glacier to the sea**
- **Competitive** trail model
- Scenic and cultural diversity
- Long distance hiking (**3 countries**)



DESCRIPTION:

The Alpe Adria Trail - from the glacier to the sea, connects the three regions of **Carinthia, Slovenia, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia** in a total of **43 stages** (one stage per day) and circa **750 km**. This long-distance hiking trail leads from the foot of the highest mountain in Austria, the Grossglockner, through the most beautiful mountain and lake regions in Carinthia, and without any major detours leads close to the point where the three countries of Austria, Italy and Slovenia intersect and then on towards Muggia (the Adriatic Sea in Italy). The existing Alpe-Adria-Trail infrastructure opens the dream of a **hiking trip**, which is characterized by **scenic and cultural diversity**.

Alpe Adria Trail **features** a well-developed trail model, including a **professional business model and booking office**. The Alpe Adria Trail operates with **three booking centres**: Heiligenblut (B2C and B2B cross border) in Austria, Tarvisio in Italy, and Bovec Booking Centre in Slovenia. The overall management and coordination of joint marketing activities and budget lies in the hands of the Carinthia Tourism Board in Austria. A **central Booking Centre** provides information, services and **booking for the Alpe Adria Trail for B2B and B2C** clients with the USP product -the bookable stage (client can start anytime and anywhere). Packages are also available for individuals.

- The transnational project was initiated within the framework of the EU Interreg programme to revitalize existing hiking tourism in Carinthia (an Austrian mountain region) and to promote sustainable tourism development in the neighbouring regions of Slovenia and Italy.
- **Budget & financing** per year (total cross border for marketing and trail maintenance and the booking office) 300,000 EUR – 400,000 EUR (including selling activities).
- **Products & services** (1) Individual packages (accommodation, luggage transfer, information, guiding) can be directly booked for groups or individuals; (2) seasonal packages are offered and can be booked online or directly via the booking centre. For example, '[This is how the Alpe Adria Trail tastes](#)'.
- **Target groups:** High class segment of “enjoy hikers” from German-speaking markets, European neighbouring countries and other adventure and hiking tourism-interested target groups. Hiking with dogs is an additional target group. Specialized tour operators.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Strong marketing and promotion channels through the regional Tourism Authorities, all relevant fairs (ITB etc.); tailor-made press trips for selected magazines, strong press and communication strategy. Special tools for hikers: free Alpe Adria App, free map, free Alpe Adria guide, free description of stages.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted to higher segment hikers | X | | | |
| Alpe Adria guides and maps | | X | | |
| Alpe Adria App | | X | | |
| Strong web portal | | X | | |
| Tailor made press trips | | | X | |
| Professional booking centers for B2B and B2C | | | X | X |

Challenges/ weaknesses: Different levels of quality in the three countries, in terms of signposting, service quality, information and organization.



NOTE

- **Highly professional and competitive trail product** through **booking centres**
- Strong and professional **tourism marketing and communication strategy**
- Professional **local partner scheme:** different categories of local B&B, private hosts, hotels restaurants, tour guides and small local tour operators have become licensed and branded (Alpe Adria Trail) partners.
- Low investment for the development of the basic trail because existing trail infrastructure is used in all 3 countries

ROTA VICENTINA



Destination: Sw Alentejo and Vicentina Coast Natural Park

Country: Portugal

Website: <https://rotavicentina.com/en/>

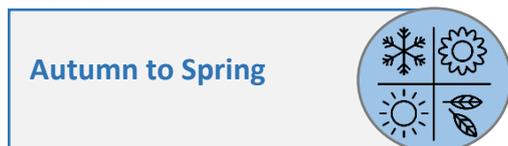


| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Managed by Rota Vicentina Association |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | Co-financed by EU (Alentejo 2020, Portugal 2020), co-financed by Turismo de Portugal (public) |
| | INITIATED IN: | Rota Vicentina Association founded in 2013 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Tripadvisor, Newsletter Languages: PT, EN, FR |

Categories



Season



Key attractions

- Spectacular coastal landscapes
- **Unique coastal hiking trail**
- Experience of fishermen's villages
- Scenic views



DESCRIPTION:

Rota Vicentina is a network of walking and cycling trails, located **in the southwestern part of Portugal** in the **protected area** within Sw Alentejo and the Vicentina Coast Natural Park. Rota Vicentina comprises 750 km of walking trails and more than 1000 km cycling routes. It is probably one of the **best coastal trail networks** in the world running through the main towns and villages in a rural itinerary with several centuries of history and leading through spectacular landscapes on the coast.

Rota Vicentina is a **great example** of a destination managed by a non-profit association that generates additional income through **direct bookings** on their portal. Rota Vicentina has a **branded partner network** of small local businesses (accommodation, car rental, taxis and luggage transfer, restaurants, local commerce, activities, agencies and operators) that support the Rota Vicentina association and promote sustainability and quality standards in their business. Booking directly with Rota Vicentina partners is highly encouraged, the **'Book with Us'** sign is highly visible on the top of the website with a dedicated [page](#) to showcase the partners that visitors can directly buy from.

- **Individual bookable packages:** Travelers can be picked up and dropped off at predetermined spots and have their luggage [transferred](#); accommodation can also be organized.

- **Packages and programs** offered: (1) multi-day itinerary programs throughout the region, with accommodation included, (2) thematic programs for several days staying in the same accommodation, with activities included and (3) programs of activities for a few hours, a full day, or a week.
- **Example of a hiking trail:** The **Fishermen’s trail** (226.5 km long and into 13 one-day sections) is one of the most popular trails, always by the sea, and can only be done by foot, following the marked paths used by the local fishermen to access the coast. The **USP** of the Fishermen’s Trail is the experience of the **authentic local fishermen’s culture** through encounters with the locals, staying in guesthouses and small hotels in the fishermen’s villages, and eating at local seafood restaurants.
- **Business model:** Co-financed by the EU (Alentejo 2020, Portugal 2020), co-financed by Turismo de Portugal (public), additional income generated through a partner-scheme (provison), a shop.
- **Target groups:** Domestic and international tourists; both experienced as well as less experienced hikers (including families with kids), cyclists.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** The Rota Vicentina destination is **supported by** the **regional and national tourism** entities Visit Algarve/Visit Portugal; and featured in travel and other **media:** National Geographic, Conde Nast Traveller, Forbes, etc. In 2019 European certification “Leading Quality Trails-Best of Europe”.
- **Rules and Recommendations** for each section and a separate page on responsible tourism are [provided](#).



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted to hikers and cyclists | X | | | |
| Website – booking directly with partners of the Association | | X | X | X |
| A great collection of immersive videos on their YouTube channel | | X | | |
| Newsletters | | X | | |
| Featured on international (travel) media | | | X | |
| Supported and featured by regional and national tourism organizations | | | X | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Efficient planning tools for individual travellers missing (e.g., difficult to allocate the needed accommodation, it is not indicated on the trail map provided on the website); social media channels only in Portuguese. | | | | |



NOTE

- **A branded partner scheme** - to promote and book from local businesses with quality standards
- **Responsible travel principles** and rules are clearly communicated within each trail section and on a separate page
- **A variety of services** provided, including luggage transfer and pick up/drop off
- Recommended season is indicated on the page of each section

SCHIST VILLAGES

Destination: Central Portugal

Country: Portugal

Website: <https://bookinxisto.com/en/site/index>



| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| KEY FACTS | ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP: | Agency for the Tourism Development of Schist Villages (ADXTUR), Portugal’s Coordination Commission for the Development of the Centre Region |
| | FINANCED BY/THROUGH: | European Regional Development Fund (via programmes CENTRO 2020, Portugal 2020) |
| | INITIATED IN: | 2001 |
| | COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: | Website-booking platform, Facebook, Instagram Languages: PT, EN, FR, ES, DE |

Categories



Season



Key attractions

- Local rural experience
- Cultural experience
- Hand-made products and crafts
- Local workshops



DESCRIPTION:

The Schist Villages is a network of **27 villages** situated in the interior of the country, in the Central Region of Portugal. The destination is marked by local **cultural heritage** – the name Schist villages comes from the local abundant stone used in the construction of houses. This material is in various shades, making these **traditional houses** blend into the natural landscape; the rock is also used for paving the narrow winding streets. The **USP** of the Schist Villages is an **authentic local rural experience** in unspoiled natural surroundings.

The Schist Villages **network** is a **perfect example** of a regional sustainable development project which has created a **booking platform** to book **authentic local tourism offers**. The network comprises more than **100 private business** operators that work closely with **21 municipalities**: accommodation providers (the majority offering house rentals); local restaurants; producers of local gastronomic products; local textile, ceramics, woodworking and other craft artisans; (historical) shops; and local adventure tour providers offering hiking, biking, canoeing, canyoning and nature tours. On the **booking platform** for **booking local experiences** one can book accommodation, a visit to local restaurant for a regional dish, or experiences, ranging from nature

adventure tours to **local workshops** teaching regional crafts (e.g., making homemade jam with seasonal fruit, constructing miniature schist houses, woodcarving, making fresh, handmade goats' cheese etc.).

Local businesses that want to be a part of the network have to be **validated** by the ADXTUR agency and upon successful application are recognized as official partners of Schist villages and are **shown on the bookinxisto website**. **Benefits** include advice and technical support in the formulation and submission of applications for financial support instruments as well as **branding and promotion**.

- **The start of the project:** The Aldeias do Xisto Program was implemented in 2001 by the Commission for Coordination and Regional Development of the Central Region of Portugal. 24 villages were selected for the program based on their "Village Plans" - studies of the villages, their surroundings, and the population, which helped to define the actions to promote them. More information on the project provided [here](#).
- **The involvement of all the stakeholders** (municipalities, associations, local businesses, residents) in decision-making processes in the development of the destination is considered its **key success factor**.
- **Awards:** In 2019 the Schist Villages were **certified as the "Starlight Tourist Destination"** by the Starlight Foundation, as this destination does not have much light pollution and is a great place for stargazing.
- **Target Groups:** Families looking for gastronomic and rural experiences. Domestic and international tourists, from markets such as Spain, France, the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands.
- **Marketing & distribution channels:** Via national tourism board - [website](#); international travel trade fairs (ITB Berlin etc.); social media channels.



MARKETING CHECK

| |  Target groups |  Marketing tools |  Marketing channels |  Innovative & Creative |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Targeted at individual travellers, families looking for rural experiences | X | | | |
| Website – booking site with a wide range of local experiences to book directly | | X | | X |
| Voucher books valid for one year for purchase | | X | | X |
| Marketing through national tourism board | | | X | |
| International travel trade fairs | | | X | |
| Social media channels | | X | | |
| Challenges/ weaknesses: Content on social media channels only in Portuguese. | | | | |



NOTE

- **Involvement** of all the stakeholders in the destination planning process is the key to success
- USP - **authentic rural experiences**, involving meeting local people, staying in authentic houses, tasting regional cuisine made from local products, learning local crafts
- User-friendly **fair-trade booking platform** for partners of the Schist Villages network

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Recommendations

Provides a set of recommendations and recommended actions to encourage destination stakeholders to move towards the implementation of sustainable practices within their destinations.

On destination level the **European Travel Commission**⁶¹ encourages NTO's and DMO's to create the conditions for destinations and businesses and visitors to adopt more sustainable practices in tourism by following the:

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ON ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES

- **Vision, strategic planning and management:** Identifying the ways in which tourism can contribute to a thriving destination, and to shaping tourism development and management accordingly.
- **Data, research and intelligence:** Generating and sharing data on market behavior, visitor flows, tourism's carbon footprint in the destination, the business operating environment, resident sentiment and the value of tourism's contribution to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage assets.
- **Advocacy and partnerships:** Use of a position of influence and representation to encourage stakeholders at all levels to recognize the value of tourism and the importance of a sustainable approach.
- **Business support and skills development:** Develop national frameworks to be delivered and supported at local or regional levels by DMOs, to support and incentivize skills development, improve sustainability standards and encourage good business practice.
- **Communications and marketing:** Influence stakeholder behavior (for example by providing clear, accessible information and tools to guide consumers in making sustainable choices or by helping visitors understand how to reduce the impacts of their own trips).
- **Finance and capital investment:** Work with local and national governments to lobby for and facilitate access to finance and investment that supports the implementation of sustainable tourism practices.

⁶¹ European Travel Commission: Encouraging Sustainable Tourism Practices

CONCLUSION

As already mentioned, not every adventure tourism practice has the same level of **sustainability performance**.

There are 10 **key indicators** creating the highest level of sustainability performance:

- **Sustainable planning** approach (e.g., seasonality and spread of visitors addressed).
- High level of **community benefits** (e.g., the main beneficiaries are local communities, revival of rural villages).
- **Conservation** and **active promotion** of **cultural heritage**, living traditions and the authenticity of the destination.
- **Low-impact** tourism **infrastructure** applied (e.g., existing shepherds' pathways used, revival of traditional buildings, villages).
- **Sustainable** and **green building** and construction.
- **Tourism activities** of the practice **generate** the **least possible impact** on the environment.
- A **great offer** of **local gastronomy** and **local products** in **place**.
- **Protection** of **biodiversity** and natural heritage.
- Reliance on **soft mobility** options.
- **Sustainable resource** management among **tourism businesses**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To develop your destinations towards sustainable adventure tourism destinations, it is essential to establish a solid sustainability framework for efficient governance within your destination.

Some key steps that need to be taken are:

- The setting up and creation of a **joint vision for sustainability** for all key tourism stakeholders within the destination (view practices: No.3: Azores (Sustainability charter), No.31 Slovenia (Slovenia Green), No.33 Nature Park Ammergau Alps).
- **Assign an organization** or a department within your organization (DMO) who will oversee, guide, and monitor the process.
- **Construction** and **building guidelines** (No.33 Nature Park Ammergau Alps).
- **Sustainable certification** and training programs for the local businesses (e.g., accommodation sector or guiding standards (No.2 Green Star Hotel program, No.31 Slovenia (Slovenia Green), No.33 Nature Park Ammergau Alps)

ACTIONS

(1) Policy Level

If you would like to get a better understanding of what type of policies are needed to develop a sustainable and equitable Post-Covid Mediterranean Tourism, please view the following overview:

Source: eco-med-briefing 01/21, eco-union (2021)

POLICIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE POST-COVID MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM



Public authorities

- Support re-skills and upskills of tourism workers in digitalization and sustainable management through training programs targeting youth and women in particular.
- Finance research and innovation programs on environmental and social management through public funding and knowledge sharing activities.
- Involve local Communities, Businesses and Civil Society Organizations in the tourism planning, decision and policy processes as well as Recovery and Resilient Plans.
- Promote ecological and social certifications to indicate to the market and consumers the environmental, social and economic benefits of sustainable tourism.



Insurance and finance sectors

- Invest in ecosystem restoration (blue bonds), which has an important return on investment in terms of natural capital to mitigate climate change impacts such as Sea Level Rise (SLR), coastal erosion or extreme climate events.
- Finance the retrofitting of existing facilities to implement net-zero emissions and energy efficiency systems; requiring switching to self-produced renewable energy (Prosumers).
- Support green infrastructures based on Nature-based Solutions (NbS), with low ecological footprint and high socio-economic benefits.
- Phase out support to carbon intensive infrastructures and facilities such as airport extensions, brown assets and other potentially harmful investments.



Maritime industry

- Retrofit and eco-design vessels, electrify ports, implement fuel and water efficiency systems, build renewable energy facilities to become prosumers.
- Invest in smart monitoring and technology, prioritize multi-modal connections, improve efficiency of logistics and supply chain.
- Support an Emission Control Area (ECA) in the Mediterranean to reduce air and marine pollution from vessels and ships.



Tour operators, hotels and resorts

- Implement circular waste management systems in facilities through low water footprint, reusing grey water, treating black water and recuperating rainwater.
- Develop organic and local food systems, eliminating food waste, investing in organic products, prioritizing local suppliers and responsible value chains.
- Educate and train visitors and staff on the necessary behavioral changes to reduce energy and water use, prioritizing low-carbon transportation such as electric cars, low-carbon public transport and international trains.

(2) Product Development Level

If you would like to design a new sustainable tourism practice for your destination, please use the following list of criteria for sustainability performance:

BRIEF LIST OF SUSTAINABLE ASSESMENT CRITERIA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| SUSTAINABLE PLANNING | COMMUNITY BENEFITS | CULTURAL HERITAGE | ENVIRONMENT IMPACT |

1. Sustainable Planning

- a) **There is an institutional structure coordinating the sustainability aspects.**
- b) **Sustainable destination management strategy (are planning, guidelines, regulations, policies, vision, action plan, sustainability awards in place?).**
- c) **High level of community participation and involvement in planning.**
- d) **Visitor information on sustainability issues. (Is there information on sustainability issues/responsible tourism etiquette on the destination's website?).**
- e) **Seasonality and spread of visitation are addressed. (Are products available/promoted throughout all the seasons and/or in different areas of the destination?).**
- f) **Monitoring system/instruments/mechanism to monitor and steer visitor volume and activities and impact of tourism (carrying capacity).**

2. Community Benefits

- a) **Local added value – the main beneficiaries are stakeholders in the destination. (Are the main beneficiaries from the practice the local stakeholders from the destination?).**
- b) **Equality of opportunity for local employment (Are local stakeholders' entrepreneurs and business owners, or just have service jobs?).**
- c) **Revival of rural places - jobs are generated in rural areas. (Are services/products based in rural areas?).**
- d) **High level of local employment. (Are employment opportunities taken by local people, including women, young people, minorities, and people with disabilities?).**
- e) **Engagement of local farmers, artisans, and food producers in the tourism value chain. (Do local service providers use locally sourced products?).**
- f) **Local products and crafts are promoted and available for sale to visitors in the destination. (Are local products and crafts promoted to visitors via communication platforms, or directly offered to visitors?).**
- g) **There are schemes for visitors to support local community/sustainability issues and/or they are supported by local tourism enterprises.**

3. Cultural Heritage

- a) Support for the **conservation** of **cultural assets** via income from tourism. *(Is there information on tourism support for the preservation of cultural heritage?)*.
- b) **Visitor engagement** in the traditional lifestyle. *(Can visitors participate in the traditional lifestyle?)*.
- c) Visitor engagement with **local artisans**. *(Are educational activities/workshops with local artisans promoted?)*.
- d) A great **offer** of **local gastronomy** and **local products** in place. *(Is the local gastronomy and other local products promoted to visitors?)*.
- e) **Communication** on **cultural values** and etiquette. *(Are there guidelines on visitor behaviour at the destination, and especially at cultural events, sensitive sites?)*.
- f) **Authenticity** of the **destination**. *(Does the practice rehabilitate and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage, architecture, and cultural landscapes?)*.
- g) **Intangible heritage** *(Does the practice support the celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, gastronomy and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness)*.

4. Environmental Impact

- a) **Low-impact tourism infrastructure** applied. *(Is low impact tourism infrastructure chosen e.g. existing shepherds' trails used instead of construction of new trails)*.
- b) **Sustainable** and **green building** and construction. *(Do buildings and tourism infrastructure respect the local architecture, use natural materials, are and no higher than three stories?)*.
- c) **Monitoring** of **visitor flows** and impact on cultural sites and natural sites.
- d) **Tourism activities** of the **practice** generate the **least possible impact** on the environment and sensitive places such as protected areas, wildlife, reefs etc. *(Does the activity have a low impact on the environment in terms of noise, pollution etc.?)*.
- e) **Protection** of **biodiversity** and natural heritage. *(Is there protection of natural sites, habitats, species, and ecosystems and is it enforced?)*.
- f) **Support** for **nature conservation** via income from tourism. *(Is there information on tourism support for nature conservation?)*.
- g) **Communication** on **rules** for **visiting natural** sensitive **sites**/wildlife interaction in place. *(Are there guidelines for visitor behaviour available?)*.
- h) Reliance on **soft mobility** options. *(Are walking/cycling/other soft mobility options promoted?)*.
- i) **Sustainable resource management** among tourism businesses. *(Are there sustainable resource management practices, in terms of energy, water use, wastewater and solid waste?)*.

ANNEX

ANNEX NO 1: OVERVIEW – GUIDING DOCUMENTS

INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TRENDS (LINKS)

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Agoda’s Sustainable Travel Trends Survey 2021 Download link | Global Sustainable Tourism Council | Article on Agoda Sustainable Travel Trends Survey Reveals Traveler’s Top Concerns About Tourism’s Impact, and Measures to Make Travel More Sustainable | 2021 |
| The Barcelona Declaration "Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit" Download link | | The full Barcelona Declaration to download and including background information. The declaration demonstrates what tourism, and the cultural heritage sector can achieve together. | 2018 |
| The Glasgow Declaration Download link | UNWTO | Article on the Glasgow Declaration. An urgent global call for commitment to a decade of climate action in tourism | 2021 |
| Tourism in the 2030 Agenda Download link | UNWTO | Article on the Tourism 4 SDGs. UNWTO is responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism geared towards the achievement of the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). | 2021 |

INTERNATIONAL REPORTS/STUDIES/LITERATURE

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Sustainable Travel in an Era of Disruption: Impact of COVID 19 on Sustainable Tourism Attitudes Download link | European Travel Commission (ETC) | This study is designed to support European Destinations to better understand consumers' attitudes in the pandemic context. More specifically - the extent to which tourists are ready to make concessions and adopt more sustainable approaches while travelling. | 2022 |
| The Changing Tourism Environment and its impact on the work of NTO's: the stakeholders' perspective Download link | European Travel Commission (ETC) | A report on primary research relating to the evolution of NTOs. Report comes in two parts - the first part relating to the interviews with key stakeholders, and the second - to the analysis of NTO data. | 2021 |
| Handbook on Encouraging sustainable practices Download link | European Travel Commission (ETC) | This handbook provides successful tourism cases from different entities and destinations worldwide that encourage sustainable tourism practices among consumers and the industry. | 2021 |
| The future of Mediterranean tourism in a (post) covid world. Eco-med briefing 01/21. Download link | Eco-union | This publication reviews the situation of Mediterranean tourism in terms of sustainability, the effect of COVID 19 and future prospects. | 2021 |
| Regional Governance, | Eco-union | Focusing on the Mediterranean, this report | 2021 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|---|---|---------------------|
| Environmental Management and Sustainable Recovery of Mediterranean Coastal and Maritime Tourism. Download link | | explores the current State of play of coastal and marine tourism in the region, reviews the socioeconomic impact related to COVID-19 pandemic and highlights opportunities for a better management of coastal and marine tourism based on inclusive, participatory and long-term environmental policies and strategies. | |
| 10 infographics to understand the state of the environment and development in the Mediterranean in 2020 Download link | UNEP/MAP and PlanBleu | Provides 10 illustrated infographics related to sustainable development in the Mediterranean region. | 2020 |
| Sustainability in Tourism. A Guide through the label jungle Download link | Naturefriends International, arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung (Working Group on Tourism and Development), ECOTRANS e. V., Bread for the World – Tourism Watch | Provides information and comparison of the main characteristics and quality features of well-known sustainability labels in tourism. | 2016 |
| UNWTO Mediterranean Tourism Trends, 2015 edition Download link | UNWTO | This World Tourism Organization publication, prepared on the occasion of the 2nd Conference on Destination Management in the Mediterranean, held in Budva, Montenegro on 22-24 June 2015. The report | 2015 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|---|--|---------------------|
| | | <p>was prepared by UNWTO's Tourism Market Trends Programme.</p> <p>It provides the overview, trends, long-term prospects and opportunities and challenges for the Mediterranean countries and tourism.</p> | |
| GSTC Destination Criteria Version 2.0 Download link | Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) | The GSTC Criteria were created to provide a common understanding of sustainable tourism. | 2019 |
| One Planet Vision for a responsible recovery of the tourism sector Download link | One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme | The One Planet Vision for a Responsible Recovery of the Tourism Sector builds on the UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism released by the Global Tourism Crisis Committee on 28 May 2020 with the objective to support tourism to emerge stronger and more sustainable from the COVID-19 crisis. | 2020 |
| Catalonia, a sustainable destination Download link | Agència Catalana de Turisme | Information on sustainable tourism in Catalonia, including a list of certifications used by Catalan businesses and destinations. | 2019 |
| International Adventure Travel Guide Qualification and Performance Standard Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | Revised guidelines and recommendations for adventure travel guides. | 2021 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|--|---|---------------------|
| Adventure Travel Industry Snapshot Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) invited adventure industry businesses to share information about their company’s wellbeing; their 2020 guest profile; and trending consumer motivations, activities, and destinations for 2021. | 2021 |
| Adventure Travel Trends Snapshot Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | For the adventure travel industry, it shares marketing and sales tactics that businesses find the most effective in acquiring new consumers, breaks down the elements of best-selling 2019 adventure travel products by consumer budget ranges in varied markets, profiles the adventure consumer, and offers financial benchmarks. | 2020 |
| Attracting and Serving the US Adventure Traveller Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | This report is provides information on: Understanding U.S. Adventure Traveler Personas; Findings to Inform Product Development; Findings to Support Marketing Strategy | 2015 |
| Shaping the Future of Adventure and Cultural Travel Download link | Pacific Partnership (Australian Aid, IFC International Finance Corporation, New Zealand Foreign Affairs & Trade), in partnership with Adventure Travel Trade Association | Profiles and behaviors of adventure and cultural travelers from the United States and Australia | |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|---|--|---------------------|
| Survey report: How ANA members are using Influencer marketing? Download link | ANA (Association of National Advertisers) | The survey report with illustrated case studies examples from ANA network. | 2018 |

PRACTICAL REPORTS/ TOOLKITS/ GUIDELINES

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|---|--|---------------------|
| A guide to developing memorable and authentic visitor experiences Download link | The English National Park Experience Collection | This guidebook is a resource created to give ideas about how to develop, deliver and promote new and memorable visitor experiences. This toolkit will enable to create business opportunities from the current market trend for experiential travel. | 2018 |
| What is a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe and how to become one Download link | Routes 4U project | A quick overview on the term of the cultural route of the Council of Europe and steps towards becoming one. | 2018 |
| Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit. Experience Development Toolkit Download link | Tourism Northern Ireland | A toolkit which sets out the experience development steps. | - |
| The Guidelines for Creating and Narrating the Slow Adventure Product Download link | Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research, West Highland College UHI | Guidelines presenting ‘Slow adventure’ concept – its principles, the market research; it also provides practical case studies from the Northern Europe. | 2018 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Cost Effective Offline Marketing Tactics Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | A second report in series of practical reports on relevant marketing topics for the adventure industry. | 2017 |
| Instagram Stories Adventure Marketing Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | A practical report on Instagram stories – case studies, examples, and tips. | 2017 |
| Email Lead nurturing for Adventure Travel businesses Download link | Adventure Travel Trade Association | Tips on how to collect email addresses, how to segment leads, how to setup email workflows, how to measure the impact of email lead nurturing activities. | |
| Getting the most from your photography. Northern Ireland Tourism toolkit. Download link | Tourism Northern Ireland | Practical guidelines how to make the best photos of accommodation. | |

DOCUMENTS/ OUTPUTS FROM THE MED PROJECTS

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|---|---|---------------------|
| MEET Manual. A guide to plan and promote ecotourism activities and measure their impacts in Mediterranean Protected Areas following the MEET approach. Download link | EU Interreg MED programme, DestiMED project Noll, D., Scott A., Danelutti, C., Sampson J., Galli, A., Mancini S., Sinibaldi I., Santarossa L., Prvan M., Lang M. | A guide to plan and promote ecotourism activities and measure their impacts in Mediterranean Protected Areas following the MEET approach. | 2019 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|---|---|---------------------|
| <p>BEST MED. Sustainable Path and Cultural Routes Model – MED S&C Path</p> <p>Download link</p> | <p>EU Interreg MED programme, BEST MED project</p> <p>Developed by AnySolution, S.L. (Dolores Ordoñez, Tayrne Butler and Pierrick Le Guillou), in collaboration with the CAST research team (Cristina Bernini, Maria Laura Gasparini, Alessia Mariotti, Valeria Villalobos) as external experts of Regione Lazio project partner.</p> | <p>Presentation of the new green model - MED S&C Path - Sustainable Path & Cultural Routes Model.</p> <p>The objective of the MED S&C Path model is to achieve an integrated planning and management of cultural routes and other physical or thematic paths in the Mediterranean destinations, by following sustainability principles.</p> | <p>2021</p> |
| <p>Emblematic Mediterranean Mountains as Coastal destinations of excellence (EMbleMatiC) Transfer Guide</p> <p>Download link</p> | <p>EU Interreg MED programme,, EmbleMatiC project</p> <p>Authors: PP8, CETT-UB, Alexis Sancho Reinoso, Ramon Serrat Mulà</p> | <p>The Transfer Guide is addressed to any Destination Management Organisation (DMO) or similar local public or private entities willing to implement the scheme of the EMbleMatiC project and its product, the Ecojourneys, to their territory. The outcomes are based on on-site experience of the partners.</p> | <p>2019</p> |
| <p>Study on Identification and Analysis of Sustainable Innovative Practices of Adventure Tourism</p> <p>Download link</p> | <p>MEDUSA project</p> <p>Developed by Barbara Fritz, Sustainable Tourism Expert, Owner of AGEG Tourism for Sustainability and Team, Amira Pötsch</p> | <p>The main purpose of the study is to identify and provide insight into innovative sustainable adventure (40%) and sustainable tourism practices (tourism models, products and services) practiced by and in tourism destinations including</p> | <p>2020</p> |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|---|--|---------------------|
| | and Ieva Zamaraitė, Junior Experts | destinations in the MED region and elsewhere in the world. | |
| Marketing Strategy for MEDUSA Destinations & Flagship Products | MEDUSA project Developed by Barbara Fritz, Sustainable Tourism Expert, Owner of AGEG Tourism for Sustainability | Marketing strategy for five MEDUSA countries - Spain, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Italy; forms part of the project output 'Mediterranean Adventure Treasures' sales and marketing alliance developed as a joint, cross-border, long-term strategy for sales, marketing, and communication to promote and exploit the routes and associated products developed under the project. | 2021 |
| Marketing Practices for Tour Operators from the MEDUSA Destinations (draft) | MEDUSA project Developed by Barbara Fritz, Sustainable Tourism Expert, Owner of AGEG Tourism for Sustainability | Practical guide to tour operators. | 2022 |
| Conceptualization of Sustainable tourism products for the Adventure Tourism segment | MEDUSA project Elaborated by Maria Luisa Caringella, Department of Tourism, Economy of Culture, Valorization of Territory - Puglia Region, Pugliapromozione (ARET) | This report develops the conceptualization of adventure travel through 6 phases: inventory tourism assets of the adventure product, travellers' profiles and needs, strategy and concept of experience, sustainable impacts check, organizing and packaging the product, and sales, promotional channel and distribution | 2021 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|--|--|---------------------|
| <p>Research and Study of Market Demand, Supply and Competitiveness</p> <p>Download link</p> | <p>MEDUSA project inytur</p> | <p>Study with a focus on five target markets: France, the UK, the USA, Norway, Germany</p> | 2020 |
| <p>Business Planning Workshop. Sustainable adventure tourism model in the Mediterranean (presentation)</p> | <p>MEDUSA project</p> | <p>ToT Workshop presentation. Includes tips to do a business plan, collaborative strategies and partnerships to increase marketing reach and sales leads standards and certifications that can help SMEs to distinguish themselves from competitors and to increase their credibility and more.</p> | 2021 |
| <p>Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. Slow Tourism product creation manual</p> <p>Download link</p> | <p>Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting</p> | <p>This manual is based on the Research study of the same title. Information includes concepts and trends in Sustainable/Slow tourism, Criteria for Slow Tourism packages, Market research for Slow Tourism demand, examples of Slow tourism offer – on the destination level and on a product/package level. And lastly, events on tourism and ICT, plus ICT tools.</p> | NA |
| <p>Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. CHAPTER 1: Conceptualization and trends on</p> | <p>Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting</p> | <p>Chapter 1 includes a characterization of Sustainable Tourism at a global level (major trends, keys factors and main markets, a characterization of the Slow Tourism phenomenon, which stems from the previous.</p> | NA |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|--|---|---------------------|
| Sustainable and Slow Tourism Download link | | Operative definition for the concept has been set together with key managerial implications for tourist operators. | |
| Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. CHAPTER 2: Criteria and requirements for Slow Tourism packages Download link | Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting | Chapter 2 presents a technical factsheet of the most important criteria and requirements to be met to create Slow Tourism packages and experiences that are highly attractive to Incoming Travel Agencies and Tourists. The technical factsheet is classified in different sections: General (related to package and DMC/Incoming Agency), transport, accommodation, activities and food. | NA |
| Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. CHAPTER 3: Market research on Slow Tourism demand Download link | Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting | Market research on Outbound markets – France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States. Per each market information provided on: country demographics, GDP, trips overseas, top destinations, preferred type of vacations, seasonality and national public holidays, booking and planning, use of media and social media, preference of transport, accommodation, arrivals in Med Pearls countries in 2018, flight connectivity to Med Pearls, Travel Exhibitions, Media/Associations for | NA |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|--|--|---------------------|
| | | Slow Tourism, Slow Tourists profiles per country, Facts on Sustainability and Sustainable/slow tourism. | |
| Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. CHAPTER 4: Destinations with a Slow Tourism offer Download link | Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting | This chapter provides overview and examples of six Slow Tourism destinations: Ajloun Forest Reserve (Jordan), Bohinj (Slovenia), Fethiye (Turkey), Isle of Wight (England), Morges Region (Switzerland), Seine-et-Marne (France). Each example has: general information (e.g., how to get there, nr. Of tourists, attractions, distinctions/awards) and Slow Tourism Information – Accommodation, Gastronomy, Activities, Transport, Events. | NA |
| Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. CHAPTER 5: Products with a Slow Tourism approach Download link | Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting | In the chapter 6 examples of a Slow Tourism Product provided including such information as highlights of the package, assessment of Slow/Sustainable Tourism elements according to Chapter 2 criteria, target profile, season, transport, accommodation, price, promotion and sales channels, and tour itineraries. | NA |
| Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. | Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting | This chapter presents four international events linking tourism and ICT: MENA ICT Forum (Jordan) for Middle | NA |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|--|---|---------------------|
| CHAPTER 6: Featured international events linking Tourism and ICT Download link | | East and North Africa region, Travel Forward (London), Travel technology Europe (TTE), London, Web Summit (Lisbon). General information, information on exhibitors, entry prices and exhibit information, partners and sponsors. | |
| Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. CHAPTER 7: Innovative ICT solutions applicable to the Slow Tourism Offer Download link | Med Pearls project aQa marketing consulting | This chapter presents four innovative ICT solutions for slow tourism offer. | NA |
| Research Study. Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations Download link | Med Pearls project Open Calabria | Study includes qualitative analysis of seven case studies of DMOs and DMCs successfully using digital technologies for promotion and commercialization. Study analyses online strategies, digital tools, practices and aspects of each digital marketing initiative. Furthermore, recommendations and guidelines are provided, including eight fact sheets for developing marketing strategies, particularly in small destinations and slow-tourism products. | 2021 |
| Research Study. Guidelines on most innovative practices | Med Pearls project | Presentation based of the research study 'Guidelines on most innovative | 2021 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations. (Presentation) Download link | Open Calabria | practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’. | |
| Med Pearls. Cross-border conclusions on: SWOT analysis, Mapping of assets and Action Plan Download link | Med Pearls project | Includes a summative SWOT analysis (from SWOT analyses in Med Pearls pilot areas), short guidelines on mapping resources and the local action plan guidelines. | |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 1. Methodology Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Analysis of the Slow tourism demand in the markets for Med Pearls: France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, USA and UK. Observations/identification regarding tour operators, institutions, media and fairs. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 2: France Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on France market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products already commercialised by tour operators of this specific market. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 3: Germany | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on Germany market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products | 2021 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Download link | | already commercialised by tour operators of this specific market. | |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 4: Netherlands Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on the Netherlands market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products already commercialised by tour operators of this specific market. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 5: Sweden Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on Sweden market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products already commercialised by tour operators of this specific market. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 6: Switzerland Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on Switzerland market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products already commercialised by tour operators of this specific market. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 7: United States Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on United States market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products already commercialised by tour | 2021 |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|---|---|---------------------|
| | | operators of this specific market. | |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 8: United Kingdom Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Extended specific information on United Kingdom market: tour operators, best tourism fairs, most interesting media and examples of products already commercialised by tour operators of this specific market. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Chapter 9. Recommendations Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Final chapter of the analysis, providing final recommendations. | 2021 |
| Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand. Manual Download link | Med Pearls project inytur | Base on the study 'Analysis of the Slow Tourism International Demand'. | 2021 |
| The Model of Analysis to develop LAPs - Local Action Plan Download link | CROSSDEV project Coop Culture | Model of analysis – a practical tool for local action plan development. | 2019 |
| CROSSDEV Seminar – Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Region of Gastronomy – Empowering communities | CROSSDEV project Developed by Diane Dodd PhD | Provides an overview of the Local gastronomy as a basis to create tourism experiences. | |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|--|---|--|---------------------|
| A path towards enhancing territorial values. The case study of the Cammino Naturale dei Parchi (Italy) | CROSSDEV project Silvia Scozzafava | Case study of a walking route for all Cammino Naturale dei Parchi, coming out directly from Rome. Territorial marketing and branding example. | 2020 |
| Case study. Local stakeholders engagement | CROSSDEV project Emanuela Manca, Sustainable Development Sociologist, Public officer Autonomous Region of Sardinia | Case study from DESTIMED project on creating ecotourism packages and their collaborative approach, namely LEC – local ecotourism clusters. | 2020 |
| Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe presentation | CROSSDEV project Carolina Clark, Project manager European Institute of Cultural routes | Presentation on the concept of Cultural routes of the Council of Europe and their implementation – from idea to project | |
| Driving innovations in creative gifts and products. Strategies and training for trainers | CROSSDEV project Ms. Diane Dodd, PhD | Presenting a practical training tool -guidelines for creating valuable, local and sustainable gifts and products for tourists – Local Gift Challenge by IGCAT. | |
| CROSSDEV project. Local Action Plan. PRESENTATION | CROSSDEV project | The document contains methodology for the identification and definition of the Local Action Plan (LAP) for the target areas of the CROSSDEV project. Contents are oriented to local project partners, who will be able to use it as a support, orientation (or confirmation) tool for the preparation of their respective Local Action Plans, to plan a possible | |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|---|---|---------------------|
| | | inclusion of destinations within international tourist itineraries. The logic of LAPs is to involve public and private actors in the extended tourism and cultural supply chain in the adoption process, in order to give a proactive contribution. | |
| Local Action Plan guidelines. Needs assessment. PRESENTATION | CROSSDEV project | Assessment of implementation of LAP guidelines. | |
| DEVELOPING LOCAL ACTION PLANS (WP3) (FULL DOCUMENT) | CROSSDEV project | The document contains the methodology for the identification and definition of the Local Action Plan (LAP) which must be used by the target areas of the Crossdev project. (FULL DOCUMENT) | 2020 |
| Challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism post-Covid 19 | CROSSDEV project Ms. Diane Dodd, PhD | Presenting the Region of Gastronomy Award as an ideal forum for private, public, academic and third-sector collaborations that can bring about shared solutions. | |
| Social Tourism as Post Pandemic Sustainable Recovery Opportunity | CROSSDEV project ISTO – a fair and sustainable tourism for all | Presentation of ISTO and some initiatives taken and planned during and after covid crisis. | 2020 |
| Building new sustainable tourism offers. Strategies and training for trainers | CROSSDEV project Ms. Diane Dodd, PhD | Provides some examples of local sustainable tourism experiences | |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|---|---|-------------|---------------------|
| State of Play of the STP Umm Qais | CROSSDEV project Jordan University of Science and Technology | | |
| State of Play of the STP Aqaba | CROSSDEV project | | |
| State of Play of the STP Palestine | CROSSDEV project | | |
| State of Play of the STP Adonis Route | CROSSDEV project | | |
| Local Development Plan Via Selinuntina-Sambuca di Sicilia and Castelvetrano | CROSSDEV project | | |
| Building a Sustainable Cultural Tourism Experience. The Path of Adonis: between Myth and Reality. | CROSSDEV project Local working group LBN - Jabal Moussa Biosphere Reserve | | |
| Building a Sustainable Cultural Tourism Experience. Enjoy an Experience of Culture and Hospitality. | CROSSDEV project Local working group PSE - Masar Ibrahim Al-Khalil (Beit Mirsim - Batter) | | |
| PHtrail tourist product- itinerary (Palestine) | CROSSDEV project | | |
| Via Selinuntina Tourist product | CROSSDEV project | | |

| Title | Issued by | Description | Year of publication |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| MED GAIMS, Evaluation report | MED GAIMS project Produced by ARCO | External Evaluation of MED GAIMS covering period up to October 2021. | 2021 |
| MED GAIMS game presentations-videos | MED GAIMS project | | |

ONLINE RESOURCES

1. DestiNet portal, Certificates worldwide <https://destinet.eu/resources/certificates/>
2. Ecolabel Index, <https://www.ecolabelindex.com/ecolabels/>
3. MED project Labelscape. Collection of MED sustainable tourism certifications, https://sustainablelabels.eu/?page_id=136
4. GSTC-Recognized Standards for Destinations, <https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-destinations/>
5. GSTC-Recognized Standards for Hotels, <https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-hotels/>
6. GSTC-Recognized Standards for Tour Operators, <https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-tour-operators/>
7. Travel Agency Industry – statistics & facts, https://www.statista.com/topics/1859/travel-agencies/#topicHeader__wrapper
8. UNWTO eLibrary, <https://www.e-unwto.org/>
9. UNWTO Tourism Data Dashboard, <https://www.unwto.org/unwto-tourism-dashboard>
10. Adventure Travel Trade Association, <https://www.adventuretravel.biz/>
11. <https://www.adventure.travel/>
12. Business model canvas, <https://www.canvasgeneration.com/canvas/business-model-canvas/>
13. Regiondo, Influencer marketing for Travel and Tourism companies, <https://pro.regiondo.com/influencer-marketing-tourism/>
14. ECO-CICLE Good Practice – LeBonPicnic <https://pro.eurovelo.com/download/document/Eco-Cicle%20Good%20Practice%20Le%20Bon%20Picnic.pdf>

SOURCES FOR PHOTOS OF GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES (CHAPTER 6)

1. Photos provided by MED projects (MEDUSA, CROSSDEV, MED GAIMS, Med Pearls)
2. Photos from Catalan Tourist Board
3. Photos from AGEG Tourism for Sustainability archives
4. Photos from Pexels.com

5. Photos from Destination Dahar
6. Photos and snapshots from websites and social media pages of the practices:
 - <https://www.kayakingcostabrava.com>
 - <https://www.apuliaslowtravel.com/>
 - <https://www.casaleonardo.net/en/>
 - <https://www.kmzerotours.com/>
 - <http://media.visitjordan.com/Gallery.aspx>
 - <https://lebonpicnic.com/>
 - <https://itervitis.eu/>
 - <https://www.torres.es>
 - <https://naturalwalks.com/en>
 - <https://www.slovenia.info/en>
 - <https://new.visitfinland.com/en/practical-tips/sustainability/> Marjaana Tasala (screenshot)
 - <https://destinationdahar.com/>
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/jan/04/where-to-go-on-holiday-in-2020-alternative-hotlist-ethical-destinations>
 - <https://www.visit-goodplace.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Prime-mountain-biking-trans-slovenia.pdf>
 - <https://authenticamalficoast.it> (Priscilla Santos da Silva, Salvatore Guadagno photos)
 - <https://www.facebook.com/forumandersreisen/posts/10159881062061204>
 - <https://www.icelandtravel.is/>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/p/CWqpb0qlgWE/>
 - <https://zaytoun.uk/>
 - https://www.instagram.com/zaytoun_cic/
 - <https://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/espe/212/it/Una-giornata-in-Casa-Puglia>
 - <https://www.remote-tourism.com/about-the-project>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/wildernessscotland/photos>
 - <https://www.wildernessscotland.com/>
 - <https://www.takenbyalbania.com/#block-views-portfolio-masonry-block-2>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/bayofplentynz1>
 - <https://www.bayofplentynz.com/?fbclid=IwAR1GmxqakgMY1Vo2ORBfS5drhkVySOLFduS3mFV80g5gSfdjgdN-0e2YHBU>
 - <https://www.turismo.gal/inicio>
 - <https://www.pilgrim.es/en/>
 - <https://www.meetnetwork.org/ecotourism-experiences>

ANNEX NO 2: ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE 1

Source: Conceptualization of Sustainable tourism products for the Adventure Tourism segment, Puglia Region, 2021 (MEDUSA Project)

TEMPLATE 1: INVENTORY OF ADVENTURE TOURISM ASSESTS

Example:

ATTRACTION INVENTORY OF MOUNTAIN BIKE PRODUCT IN.....

| TRIP ELEMENTS | AVAILABLE RESOURCES |
|---|-------------------------------|
| The cycling distance daily on mountain bike routs is usually between 35-70 km <i>Detailed itinerary descriptions and levels of difficulty</i> | Name, Description, map, photo |
| The standard trip is a full week trip with around 4/5 days of activity <i>Additional trail from.....to</i> | Name, Description, map, photo |
| The quality of paths is important, with intermediate level of the diversity and conservation of the landscape and the diversity of flora and fauna <i>Detail landscape, fauna, flora</i> | Name, Description, map, photo |
| Technical equipment: general own bike, quality rental bike essential, e-bike <i>Local specialized supplier</i> | Name, Description, map, photo |
| Tasting local cuisine and local restaurants <i>Local restaurant, Agri-tourism farmer market</i> | Name, Description, map, photo |
| Accommodation with bike parking | Name, Description, map, photo |
| Logistic service (vehicle support for luggage transfer) | Company/local supplier |
| Guided tours | Company/local supplier |
| Experience local culture | |

ANNEX NO 3: CUSTOMERS NEED TEMPLATE 2

Source: Conceptualization of Sustainable tourism products for the Adventure Tourism segment, Puglia Region, 2021 (MEDUSA Project)

TEMPLATE 2: LIST OF CUSTOMERS' NEEDS

| SECTION A - IDENTIFICATION OF TARGET SEGMENT | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Multi-activity |
| NOTE: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generation Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Solo travelers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couples | <input type="checkbox"/> Millennials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Female travelers |
| NOTE | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experienced | <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Beginner |
| NOTE | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated sustainable travelers | <input type="checkbox"/> Soft sustainable travelers |
| NOTE | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors from nearby area | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle distance visitor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> International visitors |
| NOTE | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Segment enlargement | |
| NOTE | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Segment enrichment: | |
| NOTE | |
| SECTION B – LIST OF NEEDS | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs and motivations trend for all adventure travelers _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs and motivations of specific adventure traveler profile (walker, leisure cyclist, etc.) _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs and motivations of adventure traveler based on to the outbound market _____ | |

ANNEX NO 4: STRATEGY & CONCEPT TEMPLATE 3

Source: *Conceptualization of Sustainable tourism products for the Adventure Tourism segment, Puglia Region, 2021 (MEDUSA Project)*

TEMPLATE 3: STRATEGY AND CONCEPT OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

| SECTION A – STRATEGY AND VALUE PROPOSITION | |
|--|---|
| 1. | Name of product |
| 2. | Travelers's profile |
| 3. | List of stakeholders to collaborate with the local community members List of stakeholders that collaborate to co-create new "resources and values" communities and the touristic products in Medusa destinations |
| 4. | Attend meetings in your community and be proactive to engage partners to discuss attending Medusa activities |
| 5. | Identification of value proposition in connections with community evaluating the results of activities n.4 |

| SECTION B – PLANNING THE TRAVELLER EXPERIENCE IN THE DESTINATION (skeleton of experience) | |
|--|---|
| B1 - CUSTOMER JOURNEY | |
| Adventure activity experience _____ | |
| • | Location _____ |
| • | Level of difficulties _____ |
| • | Equipment/ technology (for example GPS map...) _____ |
| • | If trail ... start location/end location + experience involved (map and description) _____ |
| • | Guided/self-guided |

- **Multi-activity**

Selection and pairing to other experiences, which really help boosting the offer. Include

- Historical experience
- Culture and authentic experiences by local community,
- Planning free time

Hospitality experience

- Breakfast, lunch/dinner experience _____
 (indicate if culinary products provided during the tour are local and/or come from local producers)
- Accommodation experience _____
 (indicate if the properties are local and/or family-run business; the types of accommodations are farmhouse, country homes, cottages, camp sites, small hotels)
- (Optional) wellness experience (spa, fitness) _____
- TV experience _____
- Other's services (internet connection, parking, laundry) _____

Cleanliness: protocol used _____

Management (number, permission, information) _____

Seasonality and type: weekend, short vacation _____

Logistic service _____

Price positioning _____

B2 - EMPLOYEE/SUPPLIER JOURNEY

Guide _____

Customer service _____



Host_____

Restaurant_____

Baker_____

_ecc.._____

B3 - PIVOTAL EXPERIENCES/MOMENTS

Describe_____

B4 - EVALUATION

Describe how these experiences satisfy the specific needs and general transformational needs of traveler's profile:

- Self-awareness_____
- Authentic, Unique and amazing experience_____
- Growth and learning_____
- Expands world view_____
- Personalization (ex-flexible itineraries, self-guided option) _____
- Deeper connections (engagement with local community)_____
- Fun_____
- Specific needs of traveler's profile_____

B5 – GOVERNANCE OF CONCEPT EXPERIENCE

Explore local agreements with local services to create the integration of tourism with other sectors:

- to stage a meaningful and seamless experience
- to share operational standards

ANNEX NO 5: SUSTAINABILITY TEMPLATE 4

Source: International Benchmarking Study of Adventure Tourism, Tunisia, 2020 (MEDUSA Project)

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  SUSTAINABLE PLANNING |  COMMUNITY BENEFITS |  CULTURAL HERITAGE |  ENVIRONMENT IMPACT |
|--|--|---|--|

1. Sustainable Planning

- There is an institutional structure coordinating the sustainability aspects.
- Sustainable **destination management strategy** (*are planning, guidelines, regulations, policies, vision, action plan, sustainability awards in place?*).
- High level of community participation and involvement in planning.**
- Visitor information** on sustainability issues. (*Is there information on sustainability issues/responsible tourism etiquette on the destination's website?*).
- Seasonality and spread of visitation** are addressed. (*Are products available/promoted throughout all the seasons and/or in different areas of the destination?*).
- Monitoring system**/instruments/mechanism to monitor and steer visitor volume and activities and impact of tourism (carrying capacity).

2. Community Benefits

- Local added value** – the **main beneficiaries are** stakeholders in the destination. (*Are the main beneficiaries from the practice the local stakeholders from the destination?*).
- Equality of opportunity** for **local** employment (*Are local stakeholders' entrepreneurs and business owners, or just have service jobs?*).
- Revival of rural places** - jobs are generated in rural areas. (*Are services/products based in rural areas?*).
- High level of local employment.** (*Are employment opportunities taken by local people, including women, young people, minorities, and people with disabilities?*).
- Engagement of local farmers, artisans,** and food producers in the tourism value chain. (*Do local service providers use locally sourced products?*).
- Local products and crafts** are promoted and available for sale to visitors in the destination. (*Are local products and crafts promoted to visitors via communication platforms, or directly offered to visitors?*).
- There are **schemes** for **visitors to support local community**/sustainability issues and/or they are supported by local tourism enterprises.

3. Cultural Heritage

- Support for the **conservation of cultural assets** via income from tourism. *(Is there information on tourism support for the preservation of cultural heritage?)*.
- Visitor engagement** in the traditional lifestyle. *(Can visitors participate in the traditional lifestyle?)*.
- Visitor engagement with **local artisans**. *(Are educational activities/workshops with local artisans promoted?)*.
- A great **offer of local gastronomy and local products** in place. *(Is the local gastronomy and other local products promoted to visitors?)*.
- Communication on cultural values** and etiquette. *(Are there guidelines on visitor behaviour at the destination, and especially at cultural events, sensitive sites?)*.
- Authenticity of the destination**. *(Does the practice rehabilitate and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage, architecture, and cultural landscapes?)*.
- Intangible heritage** *(Does the practice support the celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, gastronomy and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness)*.

4. Environmental Impact

- Low-impact tourism infrastructure** applied. *(Is low impact tourism infrastructure chosen e.g. existing shepherds' trails used instead of construction of new trails)*.
- Sustainable and green building** and construction. *(Do buildings and tourism infrastructure respect the local architecture, use natural materials, are and no higher than three stories?)*.
- Monitoring of visitor flows** and impact on cultural sites and natural sites.
- Tourism activities** of the **practice** generate the **least possible impact** on the environment and sensitive places such as protected areas, wildlife, reefs etc. *(Does the activity have a low impact on the environment in terms of noise, pollution etc.?)*.
- Protection of biodiversity** and natural heritage. *(Is there protection of natural sites, habitats, species, and ecosystems and is it enforced?)*.
- Support for nature conservation** via income from tourism. *(Is there information on tourism support for nature conservation?)*.
- Communication on rules for visiting natural sensitive sites/wildlife** interaction in place. *(Are there guidelines for visitor behaviour available?)*.
- Reliance on **soft mobility** options. *(Are walking/cycling/other soft mobility options promoted?)*.
- Sustainable resource management** among tourism businesses. *(Are there sustainable resource management practices, in terms of energy, water use, wastewater and solid waste?)*.

ANNEX NO 6: CHECK THE PACKAGE 5

Source: *Conceptualization of Sustainable tourism products for the Adventure Tourism segment, Puglia Region, 2021 (MEDUSA Project)*

TEMPLATE 5: CHECK THE PACKAGE

GENERAL INFORMATION

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Main product_____ | Meals_____ |
| Type of activities. _____ | Accommodation_____ |
| Level_____ | Itinerancy Yes/No |
| Destination | Possibility of extension Yes/No |
| Tour type Guided/not guided/ | Protected area YES/NO |
| Nights | Assistance |
| Time of the year | Keyword |

PRICE

Commercialization is an important part of the package. This item describes what it is included in the price and what is not.

STRUCTURE OF EXPERIENCE

| C1) ITINERARY | C2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|--|
| Description of main activities during the trip day by day | Accommodation Food Equipment: includes/ does not include possibility to rent Transportation: includes/ does not included/ transportation and luggage transfer Wellness: sauna yoga, etc... |

ANNEX NO 7: ST PACKAGE – GENERAL CHECKLIST

Source: Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. Slow Tourism product creation manual, 2020 (Med Pearls Project)

GENERAL

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The package consists of a small group (a maximum of about 15 people) or individual travel experience tour.
- The package can be guided (local guide) or self-guided (with permanent assistance).
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency that offers the package has a sustainable and responsible tourism approach/promotion / philosophy.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency develops alliances with other local touristic stakeholders.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency offering the package actively seeks to promote the image of the packages and destination through various media platforms and means of communication.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency promotes social equality in the contracted products and services from local suppliers.
- The package aims to minimize the impact on local resources and the environment.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency offering the package is preferably based on the same location where the experience takes place or otherwise close enough to ensure smooth operation on the ground and links with the local communities and value chain.
- Fair working conditions have to apply to all stakeholders and employees involved in the package.
- The experience takes place in areas with reduced tourism flows covering: rural, coastal and/or mountainous areas; and also small towns or villages.
- The package is promoted on websites and in sales channels with a sustainable perspective.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency is committed to developing a long-term relationship with their touristic local stakeholders and suppliers.

- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency encourages staff development and life-long learning as part of sustainability management system. All staff receive training in social and environmental policies.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency tour operator has implemented purchasing policies which favour sustainable and local goods and services including building materials, capital goods, food, beverages and consumables.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency communicates their actions concerning sustainable management, social responsibility and ethics in labour relations.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency uses new technologies in its promotion and communication actions (such as online brochures, online contact channels, etc.).
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency has a modern and updated website in different languages (at least in English).
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency makes themselves available to provide information to customers through conventional means but also social networks.

ANNEX NO 8: ST PACKAGE – TRANSPORT

Source: Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. Slow Tourism product creation manual, 2020 (Med Pearls Project)

TRANSPORT

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The package includes and promotes the use of sustainable means of transport.
- The package includes at least one sustainable transportation such as bicycle or electric bike, Segway, walking, electric vehicles or any other environmentally friendly means of transport.
- The package presents itineraries in less travelled routes.
- Sustainable means of transport are part of the experience and activities of the package.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency takes actions to reduce or compensate CO2 emissions.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency provides information and facilitates the use of the local public transportation.
- The majority of transport suppliers put processes in place to minimise negative environmental impacts.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency organizes group transfers during the experience taking into account the most efficient option.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency offers luggage transfer for the participants undertaking a soft-mobility route.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency has options for people with special accessibility requirements.
- For self-guided tours, GPS or transport applications are provided.

ANNEX NO 9: ST PACKAGE – FOOD

Source: Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. Slow Tourism product creation manual, 2020 (Med Pearls Project)

FOOD

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- Culinary products provided during the tour are local and/or come from local producers.
- The package promotes gastronomy as part of the culture and tradition of the destination.
- Information about origin, producers, typical dishes and quality of the food is provided.
- The package includes culinary tastings and/or visiting local producers.
- Products provided during the tour are seasonal, organic and fair-trade.
- Preferably restaurants or facilities related to gastronomy included in the package have recognitions and accreditations such as fair-trade and organic labels or Designation of Origin recognition.
- The package includes an activity of harvesting and/or buying at a local market.
- Service personnel and chefs are trained in the importance of communicating the origin and quality of the products used.
- All suppliers involved are committed to minimizing a negative environmental impact and avoiding food waste.
- Menus provided are appropriate to the type of activity (i.e. hiking or cycling route) and the time of day required for the activity (e.g. early breakfast for birdwatchers).
- Refuse single-use plastic for reusable items (e.g. for picnic packages).
- Including a QR code in each menu or food in the menu list to check more information about the area of its origin, nutritional facts and any relevant information.

ANNEX NO 10: ST PACKAGE – ACTIVITIES

Source: *Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. Slow Tourism product creation manual, 2020 (Med Pearls Project)*

ACTIVITIES

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The activities of the package aim to protect and promote natural and cultural heritage (tangible and intangible).
- The activities of the package allow for a better understanding of the local identity.
- The package includes a mix of activities from several of these fields: nature, culture, wellness and wellbeing or gastronomy.
- Guides and activity providers are reputable local experts that treat the environment and local communities with respect.
- Responsible Tourism behaviour and values are encouraged throughout the activities.
- The activities of the package allow visitors to connect with the local history and traditions of the destination in many forms: local festivals and traditions, gastronomy, craftsmanship, etc.
- The activities of the package include a learning component.
- The activities of the package involve the participation of local groups such as ethnic communities, representatives of NGOs, opinion leaders, local institutions, etc.
- The activities of the package allow time and space for participants for introspection and self-reflection.
- The package avoids contrived and controversial cultural experiences that are not respectful with the local culture.
- The package includes a range of activity levels for all types of tourists.

- Activities of the package are experiences that suit the season when they take place.
- Itineraries and packages taking into consideration the needs of tourists with specific accessibility requirements are included in the offer of activities.
- Activities build local pride and confidence and foster respect between tourists and hosts.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency shall explain to the clients which are the rules of protected areas or any information considered relevant in order to protect / respect the locals, the place and the environment.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency avoids the use of single use plastic items and makes clients aware of not leaving waste in nature.
- Technology innovations are present through the use of Apps, Virtual Reality or other innovative solutions.

ANNEX NO 11: ST PACKAGE – ACCOMODATION

Source: *Research Study on Slow Tourism International trends and innovations. Slow Tourism product creation manual, 2020 (Med Pearls Project)*

ACCOMMODATION

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked

- The properties are local and/or family-run businesses.
- The types of accommodations are farmhouses, country homes, cottages, campings, small hotels, etc.
- Properties work with local providers.
- Properties are in contact with local producers, and buy and incorporate their local products into their daily menu planning.
- Properties offer a close and personalized service, taking the time to welcome customers and inform them about the surroundings and the possibilities for activities in the area.
- Properties take actions about stimulating a change process, and encourage management and staff members to innovate.
- The reduced number of rooms of the properties allows a close and customised treatment.
- Properties are surrounded by a natural/rural landscape.
- Properties are accessible to customers with specific accessibility requirements.
- Properties are prepared and/ or certified to host specialized customers with specific technical requirements: cyclists, hikers, birdwatchers.
- Properties communicate their actions concerning sustainability and recognitions in that sense.
- The property possesses recognitions or awards regarding sustainability and responsible behaviour.
- The property has a defined policy of sustainability.
- Properties offered in the package carry-out training sessions to their employees in terms of Sustainability and Slow Tourism.
- Properties apply policies that encourage to hire local staff, both permanent and temporary employees.
- The property has energy-saving policies, which are implemented and monitored.
- The property has an active policy to reduce water consumption which is implemented and monitored.
- The property has developed and implemented a solid waste reduction and recycling policy, with quantitative goals to reduce non reusable or recyclable waste.
- The common areas have LED screens to provide information about the area, the weather forecast or any other useful information for the visitor.

ANNEX NO 12: STEPS DEVELOPING EXPERIENCE

STEPS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN DEVELOPING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Source: A guide to developing memorable and authentic visitor experiences, the English National Park Experience Collection, 2018

Will the experience really appeal to your target audience? Would visitors want to come to your destination to be part of this experience?

- (1) **Offer your customers an exclusive opportunity** something not available to everyone, or a benefit that they would not receive if they purchased the components of the experience separately. This might be a cost saving or an inclusive free or special element.
- (2) **Determine the theme** of your **experience**, e.g. culture, history, heritage, adventure, landscape, events, food and wine, and create incentives that make it easy for the customer to take up the offer. Think about and tell the story of your experience and that of your community. Build in as much detail as possible every step of the way. Plan time for interaction, conversation, reflection.
- (3) **Give a name** to your **experience** that will convey the type of experience you are offering. If you are targeting an overseas market, think about how the title will translate into different languages.
- (4) **Determine the target market** that your experience will best suit, e.g. outdoor enthusiasts, mature experience seekers etc.
- (5) **Work out when** you will be offering the package, e.g. daily or scheduled departures, and the time period during which your **experience** will **be available**, e.g. low season, midweek, weekends.

Make it personal and pay attention to the detail.

- (6) **Determine the partners' services** and suppliers that you want to build into your experience, such as attractions, accommodation, tours.
- (7) The **total price** should **reflect all elements** of the experience (the goods, services, local partners etc). It is the combination of all these elements that creates a unique and memorable offer that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Make sure you know how many people you need to make the experience profitable and sustainable for your business.
- (8) **Descriptions, conditions** and **waivers**: develop clear and concise information on all terms and conditions affecting the provision of the experience. Any conditions outlining responsibility must be clearly expressed in exact terms and details of any specific insurance requirements are also recommended.

ANNEX NO 13: CHECKLIST PRICING FOR PROFIT

Source: Enterprise Development Programme Northern Ireland (<https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business>).

PRICING FOR PROFIT FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES -TOP TIPS

Please find below a range of ‘Top Tips’ for how to develop a structured approach to pricing and how to embed good pricing practices in your business – Courtesy of Tony Haren, Admor Business Solutions.

- 1. Define your products & services** – be clear about what you offer and define them in writing.
- 2. Consider working collaboratively with others** – you can often expand your packages, market and profit if you work with other providers.
- 3. Look at the big picture** – pricing is not a standalone issue as it is one of the “P’s” in the Marketing Mix and a key element of your own Business Model, which is one of the 5 Pillars of Good Business Finance.
- 4. Work out what your products and services cost to deliver** – calculate your direct costs (booking fees; cost of supplies; etc.) and your indirect costs (marketing; rent; insurance; staff costs; bank fees; etc.) so you know what you’re spending.
- 5. Know your gross profit from your net profit** – understand how these are calculated so you can see how to maximise both and reward you for your experience, expertise, time and risks.
- 6. Decide on your pricing strategy, here are 3 common options:**
 - a. Cost plus – work out your costs and add on your desired profit
 - b. Competitor based – benchmark your prices against your competitors
 - c. Consumer value – look at it from the customer’s perspective and what they might pay
- 7. Consider a mix of strategies** – combine different strategies to arrive at your prices.
- 8. Develop your own pricing template** – a simple spreadsheet based system could help you to ensure you’re covering your costs and help you to sensitise your variables and maximise your profit.
- 9. Don’t forget your time** – track the time you spend preparing for and winding up from a tour/event etc. and include travel and other time directly attributable to your products or services.
- 10. Develop a clear written pricing policy** – documenting this forces you to be clear about what exactly you want from your pricing and allows you to share it with your team if appropriate.
- 11. Seek outside challenge on your pricing** – find someone independent who will give you honest and professional feedback and advice on your pricing.
- 12. Know your breakeven point** – this is particularly important if you are launching a new business or a new product or service (and remember timing of this is important too).
- 13. Track and manage your pricing and your profit** – use a quality bookkeeping system so you can accurately measure your business performance.

14. Develop a plan and a forecast - use your prices as a basis for structured business planning so you can stabilise or grow your business over time.

15. Be clear about your USP – develop your own Unique Selling Proposition and communicate that to your customers and markets before you communicate your pricing.

16. Don't undercharge – it's easier to lower your prices if you need to, than it is to increase them.

17. Use discounts sparingly – premium products or services rarely need to offer discounts.

18. And last but not least... don't undervalue yourself or your team - if you don't believe in yourself, why would your customers?

ANNEX NO 14: TIPS ONLINE STRATEGY

10 TIPS TO DEVELOP OR IMPROVE YOUR ONLINE STRATEGY!

Source: Tourism Northern Ireland (<https://www.tourismni.com/build-your-business>).

(1) Identify your goals

Grow your followers

More website visitors

Brand awareness

More sign ups

Once you know your goal you can develop a strategy – SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound).

(2) Know your Audience

Post content your audience wants to know about and research, use analytics and insights to break down where they live, what content they want to see. Facebook insights will provide you with information on gender, age, location.

(3) Post when your followers are active

Use Facebook and Instagram insights to see when your followers are online to gauge the best time to post.

(4) Use the right platform

LinkedIn – B2B (more professional)

Facebook – News / entertainment content

Instagram – Good for brand awareness. Not good for site traffic

Pinterest – Similar to Instagram, Pinterest highly visual

(5) Content creation: Provide value or entertainment

Value most of the time works best such as news articles and opinions.

(6) Schedule posts in advance

Use [Hootsuite](#) for Instagram, FB and Twitter – good tool to use to schedule posts

Set aside 2 hours a week to week to schedule posts.

Be proactive so you have time to be reactive – if something else comes up newsworthy you can spend time on that as your other posts are scheduled and done for the week.

(7) Be active, but not too active

Facebook 1-3 times a day

Instagram 1-3 times a week

Twitter (3+ times a day) or as much as you want – constant feeds and sharing

(8) Engage with your audience

Respond to comments and reviews and rectify any bad comments or reviews.

(9) Consider sponsored advertising

Organic is good, but if you have the budget, consider paying for advertising.

Ads are a great way to reach travelers or customers that would otherwise never come into contact with your message.

(10) Constantly refine your content

Measure your results and see what content works well and what doesn't, try some photos, videos and use your status to ask people to engage. **Repeat what works!**

ANNEX NO 15: SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING FACTSHEET

Source: Research Study 'Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations', Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Description | <p>This practice increases the brand's visibility and engages directly with the potential consumer through visuals, competitions and giveaways, as well as valuable insights and information, or sharing updates and the latest news on the following platforms: Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat.</p> <p>It is important to mention that, at the time of writing, TikTok is growing rapidly and is particularly recommended for those who want to reach users under the age of 30.</p> <p>A well-managed SMM could represent great support for the SEM (see specific fact sheet) by increasing the popularity of the main website, its popularity and consequently the visibility of the site on the main search engines (e.g. Google).</p> |
| How it works | <p>The first step to implement SMM is to perform an audit and to gather some important information, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On which social platforms is the company currently active? • Which social networks bring more value? • What kind of content do competitors post? • What is the best style in which to communicate? • What types of content are posted by our company on different channels? How frequently? What results from investing in social media advertising? • How would the SMM strategy be monitored? <p>Once the SMM is launched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider creating and always sharing videos, photos and multimedia with high technical quality, in order to guarantee a good experience for users. • Be consistent with the message spread among the different platforms. • Engage users with games, competitions and campaigns. • Give users the right digital assets (such as logos or branded templates) to encourage creativity, to stimulate the practice of remixing effectively and to ensure the integrity of your valuable brand. • Use hashtags to stimulate online word of mouth and promote the role of brand ambassador among users. • Consider managing paid partnerships with influencers and digital nomads (see below Action 6). • Boost the shared content with paid promotions and ads. |
| Budget | <p>Implementation costs can vary considerably, as they depend on a large number of aspects, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • content quality level • translations • use of specialised human resources <p>SMM indeed requires time and human resources dedicated to it.</p> <p>However, it is possible to say that this type of practice is relatively inexpensive because the creation of social profiles is free. Creating and managing social networking campaigns will be easier if a specialised social media management team is already part of the human resources department of the organisation.</p> |
| Timing | <p>Variable, according to the strategy.</p> |

ANNEX NO 16: LIST OF PROMOTION EVENTS

Source: Marketing Strategy 2021; Jordan (MEDUSA Project)

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TRADE FAIRS

- WTM World Travel Market London, 2022 dates TBD <https://www.wtm.com/london/en-gb.html>
Highly recognized international travel and trade fair, B2B
- CMT Stuttgart, January 2023, <https://www.messe-stuttgart.de/cmt/>
Travel Inspirations, focus on biking, culture, public trade fair for the German speaking market.
- ITB Berlin, March 2023
The world's leading travel trade show, fair and congress, B2B and B2C
- FITOUR, January 2023, <https://www.ifema.es/en/fitur>
International Tourism Fair bringing together Travel Agencies, Wholesalers - Tour Operators, Hotels & Accommodation, Carrier Companies, Leisure & Culture, Infrastructures, Residential Tourism, Service Companies, Spanish Official Organizations, Travel Media, Trade Associations, Foreign Official Organizations, Meetings, Incentives, Education & Training, Congresses, and Inbound Spain.

Other Travel and Trade Fairs

- Salon Mondial du Tourisme (Lille, Lyon, Paris in France), <https://www.salons-du-tourisme.com/>
February 2023 in Lille; March 2023 in Lyon; March 2023 in Paris
Travel fair in France focused on B2C; around 170,000 visitors. Themes include "Sustainable and Accessible tourism", "Culture and Heritage", "Nature and Mountains".
- IFTM Top Resa (Paris, France), 2022 dates TBD <https://www.iftm.fr/en-gb.html>
France's international tourism and travel trade fair, covering all sectors – leisure, business and events. B2B.
- B Travel (Barcelona, Spain), 1-3 April 2022, <http://www.b-travel.com/en/home>
International Tourism Fair in Catalonia region in Spain for national and international destinations. Includes focus on travel experiences, adventure, rural, health, sustainable tourism. 83% of visitors are from Barcelona.
- BIT (Milan, Italy), February 2023 <https://bit.fieramilano.it/en/>
The most important Tourism Fair at national level that aims to showcase the best offers of the Italian and international tourism market. B2B and B2C.
- FESPO (Zurich, Switzerland), January 2023, <https://www.fespo.ch/en/fes-en.aspx>
Switzerland's biggest travel and tourism fair.
- Ferien/Vacances (Bern, Switzerland), January 2023 <https://www.ferienmesse.ch/fr/fea-fr.aspx>

This fair offers its visitors information on holidays and travel. Focus on adventure and relaxing holidays.

- Reiselivsmessen (Oslo, Norway), January 2023 <https://reiselivsmessen.no/en/>
It has become a popular and an important international meeting place for the travel industry in Scandinavia.
- MIT- Marché International du Tourisme (Tunis, Tunisia), April 2022
International tourism and travel fair.
- Arabian Travel Market (Dubai, UAE), 8 - 11 May 2022 (17 - 18 May 2022 - ATM Virtual) <https://www.wtm.com/atm/en-gb.html>
This dynamic B2B event brings professionals from all over the world to showcase their brand, their products and to do business, with buyers and travel trade attending from the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Australasia, the Americas, and Europe.
- *Tip for Spanish and Italian destinations and tour operators – to organize special events presenting the offer in the respective national pavilions at the EXPO DUBAI 2020, happening on 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022.* <https://www.expo2020dubai.com/en>

SPECIALIZED ADVENTURE TOURISM TRADE SHOWS

- Adventure Travel Show, London <https://www.adventureshow.com/>
Over 70 free inspirational talks over 4 theatres, get face-to-face with the biggest collection of specialist adventure travel companies, all under one roof.
- Travel & Adventure Show (different places, USA), various dates in 2023 <https://travelshows.com/>
Travel show covering more than 150 destinations around the world. B2C and B2B.
- Adventure Travel World Summit by ATTA (every year in different country), 3-6 October, 2022 in Switzerland, <https://www.adventuretravel.biz/events/summit/switzerland-2022/>; previous editions - <https://www.adventuretravel.biz/events/summit/>
Produced by the Adventure Travel Trade Association, the Summit is for tour operators, adventure travel writers and influencers, tourism boards and industry partners. More than just a conference, the Summit is a global gathering of the adventure travel industry.
- Adventure NEXT by ATTA (in different countries and regions) <https://www.adventuretravel.biz/events/adventurenext/>
AdventureNEXT helps put emerging destinations on the adventure map - countries or regions may host an AdventureNEXT. Local suppliers will be offered the chance to present themselves to international buyers and media through a large Tour Operator MARKETPLACE and by hosting adventure FAM trips.

ANNEX NO 17: INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – GAMIFICATION

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Description | <p>Gamification is the use of game design elements in contexts other than the game to achieve a certain goal, such as to entertain, motivate, engage and sell.</p> <p>Tourism marketing campaigns based on (or supported by) the practice of gamification guarantee a particularly high level of interaction. It has the power to develop people’s motivation and behaviour in a ludic way.</p> |
| How it works | <p>Quite often, the support of a specialised company or consultancy is required. Consider contacting some of them to mutually define steps, costs and a possible schedule.</p> <p>Study the motivations and psychological profile of your target audience. Integrate a user-centred design by identifying the player’s interests, social boundaries and competencies.</p> <p>Always remember that fun is the key to the gamification experience.</p> <p>Define the best game components to share your message and at the same time to engage your users. Define the rewards.</p> <p>Focus on game dynamics and aesthetics, which is the interaction facility creating the game’s experience, enabling the value co-creation between the traveller and the brand.</p> |
| Budget | <p>Medium to high.</p> <p>Using gamification practices to attract audiences and boost their interaction online with the brand/destination/product is more expensive than other practices. This is due to the programming work that is necessary to develop specific games.</p> |
| Timing | <p>The creation of the software to play online may be relatively short, but the timing of this practice depends on the use you make of it. For instance, it can be limited in time if associated with a specific marketing campaign.</p> |

ANNEX NO 18: INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – STORYTELLING

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Description | <p>Storytelling conveys and interprets experiences or stories in a way that engages the potential consumer you are sharing the experience with.</p> <p>Every destination or brand has a story to tell about what makes it the most attractive, from culture and livelihoods to people, food, nature, adventure or activities.</p> <p>The story should convey value and meaning to the listener to engage his or her emotions and dreams.</p> |
| How it works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the type of story and theme based on audience and campaign topic. • Choose the storyteller character to be genuine with a unique perspective. • A campaign could involve the local community, or local guides. It could be in the form of eWOM through a digital influencer (a photographer, blogger, YouTuber, journalist) or sharing by local guides or travellers themselves. • Select the means of storytelling through interviews, series or tours presented with visuals such as videos or photos with a narrative caption, or gamification on mobile apps. |
| Budget | <p>Low to high.</p> <p>The use of specialists for advice/consultancy, as well as the media used and their quality, increases the cost of the activity.</p> |
| Timing | N/A |

ANNEX NO 19: INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – VIRTUAL TOURS AND REMOTE TOURISM

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Description | <p>The use of technology such as VR and other mixed systems based on digital technologies and human interaction represents a stimulating way of promoting a tourist destination.</p> <p>Particularly now, with the absence of travellers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, DMCs, DMOs, tourism agencies and hotels have turned to VR to keep the interest of potential, future visitors.</p> <p>Virtual tours are essential elements to create enthusiasm in potential customers towards tourism products and provide inspiration for future real-world travel.</p> |
| How it works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select the appropriate technology to use (VR, augmented reality, mixed methods, other innovative methods). • Define the content to be promoted. • Design and develop the digital tool. • Promote the tool online. |
| Budget | <p>Medium to high.</p> <p>This practice’s costs are mainly related to the use of digital technologies and highly specialised human resources.</p> |
| Timing | N/A |

ANNEX NO 20 INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – DIGITAL WORD

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Description | <p>“Electronic word-of-mouth communication (eWOM) is any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or former customers about a product or a company which is made available to multiples of people and/or institutions and is spread on the internet” (Cheung & Thadani, 2015: 329).</p> <p>eWOM is a key advertising asset and metric of the awareness variable of the consumer acquisition process. It consists of user-generated content that helps build a sustainable relationship with the traveller.</p> <p>It can impact and target other potential consumers and increase the visibility and credibility of the brand.</p> |
| How it works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve bloggers, influencers and partner brands and motivate them to promote a brand/destination in their own pages and profiles directly. • Stimulate previous travellers to share their experiences either by the use of hashtags or page tags on their social media channels, via travel diaries and multimedia content. • Motivate travellers to publish their reviews via meta-sites such as TripAdvisor and Expedia. |
| Budget | <p>Low to medium.</p> <p>The budget for this practice can be considered negligible, as the platforms to stimulate positive feedback are accessible for free.</p> <p>If you want to rely on digital marketers or brand consultants to maximise the results, the cost depends on the fees required for consulting.</p> |
| Timing | N/A |

ANNEX NO 21: INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – INFLUENCERS AND DIGITAL NOMADS

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| <p>Description</p> | <p>Persons who, being decisive in the influence of public opinion (influencers) or a specific community (digital nomads) are personally involved in the promotion of the destination.</p> <p>The high relational potential (influencers) and a consolidated reputation deriving from the high degree of interest and knowledge of a certain topic or type of product (digital nomads) validates a product’s authoritativeness, generating confidence on the part of its followers.</p> |
| <p>How it works</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the influencer in line with the target you want to attract to the destination. • There are different types of influencers (for instance, depending on the number of followers in their social networks, or on the real capacity to influence the market). Choose carefully the right one who suits you and your objectives. • Invite influencers and/or digital nomads (photographers, bloggers, YouTubers, journalists and others) to learn about the destination, offering a period of stay (that eventually could be longer for digital nomads). • DMOs (or DMCS) commonly pay the influencer/digital nomad to actively promote the destination using their own channel. The amount of compensation varies and depends on the potential audience and the modalities of promotion, ranging from supplying a free T-shirt with the name of the destination to a more consistent campaign to present the destination. • Make and share online interviews, series and tours presented with visuals such as videos or photos of the influencer’s experience. |
| <p>Budget</p> | <p>Medium to high.</p> <p>The more famous the influencer, the higher the cost required. Less expensive will be the presence of digital nomads.</p> <p>As for digital nomads, in contrast, no budget is needed (unless you want to create specific incentives for these figures to encourage their presence), but it is necessary to promote the destination as an ideal place for digital nomads, in order to attract them to the place.</p> |
| <p>Timing</p> | <p>Variable, depending on the marketing strategy.</p> |

ANNEX NO 22: INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – ONLINE TRIP PLANNER SYSTEM

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Description | <p>An online trip planner system (OTPS) is an online system associated with the main website.</p> <p>It offers users the opportunity to select the attractions, activities and favourite offerings found on the site.</p> <p>Based on its selection, which remains registered in a personal account previously created, the user can then decide to plan (and possibly purchase) a totally tailor-made trip.</p> |
| How it works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OTPS is associated with a page that promotes the destination. • Each component of the offering displayed on the page is associated with an icon. • By clicking on the icon, the user chooses to select a specific offering. • User preferences are saved in a personal account previously created. • The user can finally use this selection to plan his or her own travel and eventually purchase it directly online. |
| Budget | <p>Medium.</p> <p>The cost of this practice is mainly related to the specialised human resources for the creation and maintenance of the online system.</p> |
| Timing | N/A |

ANNEX NO 23: INNOVATIVE MARKETING FACTSHEET – SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

Source: Research Study ‘Guidelines on most innovative practices for the promotion and commercialisation of Sustainable Tourist Destinations’, Open Calabria, 2021 (Med Pearls project)

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| <p>Description</p> | <p>Search engine marketing (SEM) is the complex of web marketing activities aimed at bringing targeted traffic to a website, increasing its visibility on search engines (Google, Yahoo, etc.).</p> <p>In recent years, search engines have taken on mediators’ role between companies and users and have replaced, or otherwise integrated, traditional means such as newspapers, TV, word of mouth and specialised magazines.</p> <p>The vast majority of users and potential buyers search, analyse and compare products and prices online using search engines. For this reason, the integration of SEM with traditional web marketing guarantees not only the mere online presence but also a boosted visibility.</p> |
| <p>How it works</p> | <p>To appear among the first results in the list provided by a search engine for a given search query, a company can choose two methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search engine advertising (SEA) • Search engine optimisation (SEO) <p>SEA is a paid service and guarantees immediate visibility.</p> <p>SEO is based on a search engine’s algorithm that displays a search query in a ranking according to the popularity of the webpages. In this case, a site needs to be attractive, clear, engaging and easily accessible, and capable of promoting new visits from the same users from other web resources (back-linking).</p> |
| <p>Budget</p> | <p>The budget for this practice may vary depending on the tool chosen (SEA or SEO).</p> <p>It is important to note that even if an organisation opts for SEO, the need could emerge for collaboration with specialists who can be entrusted with creating a particularly effective page. In this case, although the SEO service is free, the specialised work has a cost.</p> |
| <p>Timing</p> | <p>Variable, according to the digital marketing strategy (albeit six-month time is the minimum).</p> |

