



Implementing Sustainable Tourism

Ana Paula Tavares
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Rainforest Alliance Mission

The Rainforest Alliance works to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behavior.



Collaborating with Industries to Achieve Conservation and Social Well-being



Forestry and non-timber forest products



Agriculture:
Coffee, Citrus, Bananas, Cacao, Ferns & Flowers

Sustainable Tourism



Sustainable Tourism Strategy



- 1) **Help the tourism industry protect the environment and provide sustainable livelihoods.**
- 2) **Build traveler demand for sustainable tourism and enable them to travel responsibly.**
- 3) **Facilitate the development of regional and global sustainable tourism standards, and increase credibility and market support for sustainable tourism certification.**



Sustainable Tourism Objectives



1) Help the tourism industry protect the environment and provide sustainable livelihoods.

- **Train and provide technical assistance** tourism operations in sustainable practices and help them achieve certification .
- **Encourage and enable** tour operators and tourism internet providers to source from sustainable operations



Tools

- **Best Management Practices Guides for:**
 - SMEs
 - Indigenous tourism
 - Ecosystem-specific guide for accommodations
 - Ecosystem-specific guide for tour operators
- **Current Training Courses**
 - Quality in service
 - Best Management Practices
 - Certification
 - Marketing
- **Future Training Courses**
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Identifying priorities and solving problems

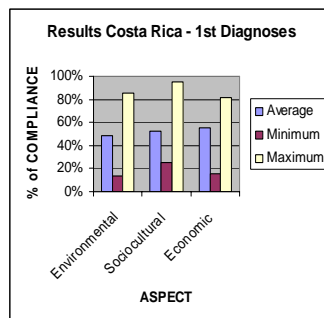


Training and Technical Assistance 2003 - 2007

- Over 4,000 people introduced to BMP and certification through seminars
- Over 1,500 entrepreneurs trained in BMP
- More than 250 businesses have enrolled in the BMP training program
- 150+** tourism enterprises have been certified or are on the road to becoming certified



Results of Initial Sustainability Evaluations - Costa Rica



- In 2003, 80 businesses analyzed in 8 regions.
- On average, the businesses complied with half of the requirements to be certified.
- About 30% of these businesses comply with less than 25% of these requirements.
- 7 hotels achieved an 85%+ score.
- Businesses could benefit from training on managing water usage, monitoring water quality, protecting ecosystems, and solid waste management.



Preliminary Comparison Between First and Second Evaluations

Sarapiquí, Costa Rica

Name of Hotel	First Diagnostic			2nd Diagnostic		
	Environment	Sociocultural	Economic	Environment	Sociocultural	Economic
Hotel S1	70%	63%	63%	85%	96%	97%
Hotel S1	30%	35%	63%	80%	96%	89%
Hotel S3	47%	57%	69%	62%	94%	80%
Hotel S4	23%	32%	40%	57%	69%	63%
Hotel S5	30%	45%	61%	86%	81%	85%

Villa Blanca, Costa Rica

Certified by **CST**
Sustainability level: **5**

- Recycling center
- Labeling hazardous materials
- 80% of plants in garden are native
- Information available on ntl parks and protected areas for guests
- Formation of staff-led "green committee"
- Monitoring water and energy consumption
- Vegetables grown in organic gardens or purchased locally
- Biodegradable products
- Staff training – sexual harrassment workshop, basic wine course for restaurant staff
- Environmental education program at local school



"By promoting responsible tourism, we are attracting the kind of client that we would like to have stay at our hotels. Our presence sends out an important message not only about what our business believes in, but also about the tourism industry in my country."

Joxan Obando, Marketing & Sales Manager

Sustainable Tourism Objectives

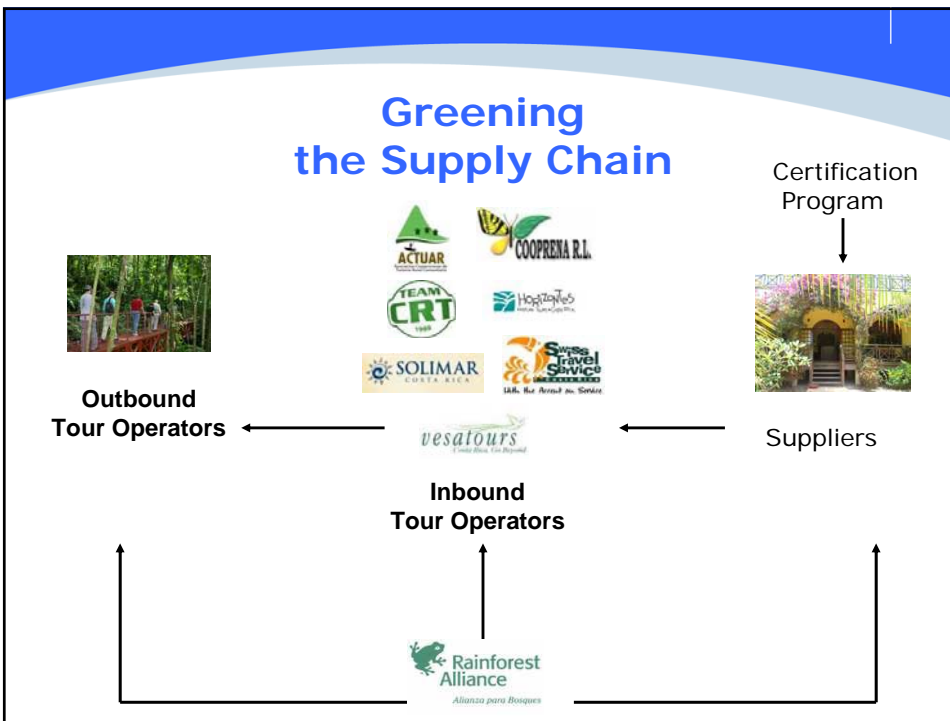


2) Build traveler demand for sustainable tourism and enable them to travel responsibly.

- **Green the supply chain** through partnerships with tour operators
- **Educate** consumers through marketing and media



Greening the Supply Chain



International Tour Operator Partners



Local Partners



Industry Partners and Affiliations



International Partners



Partnerships with Donors



Belize
Costa Rica
Guatemala
Ecuador
Nicaragua
Peru
Mexico



Belize
Ecuador



Nicaragua
Ecuador
Peru



Ecuador

Public/Private Partners



www.purecuador.com

Eco-Index Sustainable Tourism

www.eco-index.org/tourism

Statistics:

- 150% increase in visits in a 12 month period.
- 120 businesses in 14 countries.
- Over 30 articles in Central and North America.

Comments:

"Everything looks wonderful. It is an honor to be included in the Eco-Index of Sustainable Tourism. Thank you very much."

-Jack Ewing, Hacienda Baru, Costa Rica

"So far this month we have received 20 visits to our Web site from the Eco-Index, many thanks!"

-Joxan Obando, Green Hotels, Costa Rica



Sustainable Tourism Objectives



3) Facilitate the development of regional and global sustainable tourism standards, and increase credibility and market support for sustainable tourism certification.

- Support** national and international certification programs, networks and accreditation
 - Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas
 - Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council



Certification Programs in the Americas



- Consolidated
- In development

Network's Baseline Criteria

- Compliance with legislation
- Resource consumption (water, energy)
- Waste disposal / pollution
- Biodiversity conservation
- "Green" and local purchasing
- Community development
- Respect local cultures
- Working conditions
- Environmental education
- Responsible marketing



Lessons Learned

- Entrepreneurs demonstrate enthusiasm but require constant follow up.
- It is necessary to categorize businesses according to their particular needs.
- Best management practices can be a vehicle for raising awareness and informing businesses about certification
- It is necessary to have backup from ministries, institutes and chambers of tourism.



Lessons Learned

- We cannot promise that visitation will grow overnight, but we can prove that market trends indicate a growing preference for responsible tourism
- Quality, service, safety and price continue to be determining factors for a business' success
- The involvement of tour operators maximizes the potential of impacting existing channels without having to create new and unproven market structures
- Strategic alliances with tour operators have increased training workshop attendance



Lessons Learned

- The nature of ecotourism and community tourism assume best management practices as part of the product



- While sustainable tourism should take social, cultural, environmental and economic considerations into account, tourism ultimately is a business and thus needs to be profitable.
- Many businesses and organizations have proven their commitment to sustainable tourism in Latin America, which makes the reality of marketing the region as a responsible destination a real possibility.

Questions & Answers



Sustainable Tourism
Rainforest Alliance, Costa Rica
www.rainforest-alliance.org
sustainabletourism@ra.org
Tel/Fax: +506 234-8916

