

The following document is one of the first comprehensive attempts to define the role of the tourism sector and the challenges facing the industry in following a path to sustainability. Nearly two decades later, it still provides a comprehensive baseline of issues and solutions relevant to the establishment of sustainable tourism.

**CHALLENGE STATEMENT: GLOBE '92 TOURISM STREAM
VANCOUVER, CANADA, MARCH 1992**

CHALLENGES TO THE TOURISM SECTOR FOR THE COMING DECADE

1. POLICY, LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

1.1 Building the Institutions and the Foundations for Sustainable Tourism

1.1a Develop international, national, regional and local strategies which set forth objectives, approaches and action plans for sustainable tourism.

1.1b Actively support the establishment of integrated long-term planning processes in all jurisdictions and work to make sustainable tourism objectives a part of these processes.

1.1c Take action to integrate the interests of sustainable tourism and the environmental values on which it is based into local and regional plans and projects, particularly regional planning instruments.

1.1d Implement effective environmental impact and social impact assessment methods integrally as part of the planning process for projects, programs and regions.

1.1e Establish mechanisms to address the trade-offs at global and national levels between tourism development and environmental conservation/protection goals.

1.1f Design legislative and regulatory measures with a view to protecting the tourism product base and establish a clear regulatory base for the industry, local authorities and the tourists themselves.

1.2 Protecting the Resource Base

1.2a Support action at local, national and international levels [e.g., biodiversity convention] which protect the natural and cultural resource base on which tourism depends and to limit levels and types of use where necessary.

1.2b Strengthen existing international instruments such as the Geneva conventions to protect cultural and natural heritage sites from damage in times of armed conflict.

1.2c Promote the maintenance and enhancement of a global network of protected areas to conserve and maintain representative and critical natural and cultural

environments to maintain biological and cultural diversity and for the enjoyment and education of future generations. Such protection should be based on a framework which respects ecosystem integrity and linking corridors.

1.3 Mobilizing Industry Action for Sustainable Tourism

1.3a Promote greater collaboration between the industry, and its associations with potential partners such as non-government organizations, local authorities, senior governments and others to establish goals and means by which the industry can maintain its long-term competitiveness while sustaining the environmental base on which it depends.

1.3b Work jointly to identify and modify institutional and legislative barriers which inhibit sustainable tourism locally, nationally and internationally.

1.3c Create active partnerships between government, the tourism industry, non-government organizations and host communities to work towards agreed frameworks and procedures for regulation which respond to the needs of host communities and regions.

1.3d Develop improved mechanisms to ensure that tourism development benefits to a greater extent the residents and environments of host regions. Specifically measures need to be taken to encourage local hiring, procurement, and cooperative infrastructure development.

1.3e Take an active role to identify and take responsibility for the impacts which corporate and government activities in the tourism industry have on the environment.

1.3f Develop agreed environmental audit procedures and standards and provide these to the different parts of the industry.

1.3g Implement programs to train individuals in environmentally sound procedures in the tourism industry.

1.3h Develop comprehensive environmental planning procedures for corporations, and means to report regularly on results.

1.3i Establish the physical and institutional infrastructure needed to allow firms and tourists to more easily adopt environmentally sound practices (e.g. waste management, recycling etc.)

1.3j Increase efforts within the industry to reduce, reuse and recycle waste products.

1.3k Focus efforts on reducing energy consumption, particularly in the transportation industry.

1.3l Continue efforts to raise the general level of understanding that the continuing prosperity of the industry depends upon the protection and restoration of the natural resource base.

2. TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH

2.1 Understanding the Natural Resource Base

2.1a Identify natural resources, ecosystems and species which are critical to ecological processes and to the tourism industry at a national, regional and local level.

2.1b Support research to clearly identify the relationship between attributes of the natural environment and their reaction to stresses placed on them by different levels of tourism development or use. Key elements in this research include sensitivity analysis, standards for ecologically safe use, and the identification of ecological thresholds, and physical carrying capacity or limits of acceptable change.

2.1c Identify threatened or impacted species, habitats and ecosystems on a systematic basis.

2.1d Identify risks to the tourism resource base and tourism products at local, regional and global scales due to global change and initiate preventative actions and adaptation strategies as appropriate.

2.2 Understanding Cultural Values

2.2a Support research to identify the cultural values associated with different communities. Identify the sensitivity of such cultural values to tourism impacts and clearly document these so that the tourism industry can be made aware of them.

2.2b Identify cultural resources which are important to cultural integrity and/or to the tourism industry at the national, regional and local levels.

2.2c Use and employ local knowledge in the planning of tourism and to enhance the tourism experience .

2.3 Measuring Tourist Demands and Expectations

2.3a Identify the public demands and expectations regarding the behaviour of the tourism industry.

2.3b Support research to identify the value of the environment to tourism and the sensitivity of tourist values to changes in the attributes of the natural and cultural environment.

2.4 Measuring Tourism Impact

2.4a Develop better means to identify and monitor the impact of different levels and types of tourist use on the natural and cultural environment.

2.4b Develop effective means to assess the contribution of tourism to global environmental problems.

2.4c Develop and implement means to measure the impacts of tourism activity on local economies and markets.

2.4d Develop means to relate different intensities and types of tourist use to the attributes of the resource base and perceptions of the quality of the experience. (How many people doing what result in a perceived loss in the quality of the product?)

2.5 Information for Better Decisions

2.5a Develop better baseline information on tourism activity and levels of use, at a scale which permits it to be associated with particular environments and activities.

2.5b Develop the monitoring capability and indicators needed to capture the relationship between tourism and the environment effectively in a way which can facilitate better decision-making by the industry.

2.5c Develop better means to value and portray the benefits and costs of environmental factors in tourism decisions, and to identify opportunities for simultaneous environmental and economic gain.

2.6 Mobilizing Appropriate Technology

2.6a Identify environmentally sound technologies and means to apply them in particular industry sectors. Create clearing house of appropriate technologies.

2.6b Create partnerships to develop and apply more environmentally sound technologies to tourism sector concerns.

2.6c Sponsor development of creative architectural and engineering solutions which permit tourism to coexist with fragile and valuable environments.

2.6d Develop demonstration projects and share the results with other parts of the industry.

2.7 Visitor Management Techniques and Practices

2.7a Develop and implement appropriate techniques to control and manage tourist flows, particularly for mass tourism and in sensitive environments.

2.7b Contribute to the development of means to effectively respond to tourism demands in more energy efficient ways, including potential substitution of local experiences for distant ones, regionally focused multi-destination tours etc.

3. ECONOMICS AND FINANCE

3.1 Incorporating Environmental Costs

3.1a Create means to identify and integrate environmental costs and benefits into the mainstream of decision-making at the level of the project, the firm, and the region [standards for accounting and project assessment].

3.1b In keeping with the polluter-pays principle place responsibility on the tourist and the individual firm for impacts on the environment.

3.1c Apply visible surcharges to tourists directed at the preservation and enhancement or restoration of the environmental base on which their experience depends.

3.1d Use tools such as pricing mechanisms, user charges, as well as permitting and lottery systems to limit use to levels compatible with the sensitivity of the natural and cultural environment.

3.2 Modifying our Reporting Procedures

3.2a Produce regular reports on the state of tourism and the environment to identify concerns and accomplishments at the level of the project, the region, the nation, and the international tourism community.

3.2b Include environmental sections in annual corporate reports which clearly identify challenges, actions, accountability and progress by firms to address environmental concerns in their business

3.3 Using Market Influence at Home and Abroad

3.3a Identify areas where the tourism industry has market power and act to apply this power to have suppliers provide the environmentally sound products the industry needs to become environmentally responsible.

3.3b Create North-South partnerships to take full advantage of the concept of ecotourism as a means to advance understanding of the environment and as a means to direct funds to conserve and protect critical environments. Work to make certain that ecotourism development remains consistent with the principles of sustainable tourism.

3.4 Benefiting from the Environmental Market

3.4a Develop and market products which advance understanding of environmental resources and focus efforts on the identification and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

3.4b Create partnerships with others to conserve and develop responsibly natural and cultural resources in a way which sustains their valued attributes.

3.4c Create effective means to ensure that the benefits of tourism remain in the host regions in the form of jobs, locally produced products etc., thus giving local residents a clear stake (equity) in tourism.

3.4d Establish linkages between large firms and smaller industry partners to permit development and exchange of environmentally sound technology and cooperative use of market power.

4. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

4.1 Mobilizing the Firms and Employees

4.1a Educate and work with employees within firms to address environmental problems as an integral part of their work.

4.1b Develop and distribute decision-support modules tailored to each industry sector to aid in understanding linkages to the environment and the means to build manage to include environmental factors integrally in operations.

4.1c Create working committees/round tables with local residents, employees and management to define opportunities to reduce environmental impacts and to build more environmentally robust systems and to work to implement them.

4.2 Self-regulation

4.2a Develop and adopt codes of practice within the industry and in particular sectors, and put in place means to implement them.

4.2b Adopt standards for environmental audit for different parts of the industry.

4.2c Develop and implement operational standards for particular parts of the industry such as adventure tourism, ecotourism, resort development, and means to monitor and encourage compliance.

4.2d Through international, national and regional associations produce industry-wide reports on compliance with codes of practice on a regular basis, including clear identification of accountability.

4.2e Related to the concept of no net loss (or net overall environmental gain) examine means to offset environmental impact (e.g. tree planting by firms, contribution to conservation works.)

4.3 Modifying Demand/Tourist Expectations and Actions

4.3a Provide opportunities for and remove barriers to responsible behaviour by tourists by providing appropriate facilities and infrastructure (recycling boxes, trash barrels, clearly labelled environmentally sound alternative products)

4.3b Support Tourist Information Centres and Interpretation Centres in efforts to inform visitors about the value of the environment, the potential impacts of their activities, and the role they can play in attaining sustainable tourism.

4.3c Promote codes of ethics and practice for tourists, applicable both nationally and internationally. Mobilize the travel agents, marketers and industry associations to make these widely available at point of purchase of tours and as part of the tourism experience. [Badge/passport, etc. that individual tourist can sign on to?]

4.4 Success Stories

4.4a Identify and publish success stories of best practice to act as models for sustainable tourism development at local, regional and global scales.

4.4b Create an international clearing house for cases of best practice and for methods of sound sustainable tourism planning and implementation which can be used as models for the industry and governments.

4.4c Create an international clearing house for expertise and technical capability in sustainable tourism.

4.5 Becoming Proactive

4.5a Actively educate other sectors to the values which the tourism industry derives from the natural and cultural environment.

4.5b Influence other sectors [e.g. forestry, agriculture, regional planning] to include tourism values and concerns integrally into their sector and regional plans.

4.5c Establish means to exchange information between components of the industry and between different regions in order to transfer technologies and approaches which may benefit host regions.

4.5d Develop training modules on sustainable tourism, the concept, methods of application, and success stories and work to get these in to the curricula of appropriate education and training institutions.

4.5e Make available information on tourism and the environment for school curricula.

4.5f Prepare and distribute interpretive guides which clearly reflect the local environmental and cultural values and aid in understanding of the value of natural and cultural environments.

4.5g Use tourism's financial capability as a catalyst and source of income and capital to address local problems to the mutual benefit of the local community and tourism.

NOTE: *This challenge statement is based on the presentations and discussions of the Tourism Stream of the Globe '92 Conference, Vancouver Canada, March 1992, and summarizes the key challenges identified. All statements were not necessarily supported unanimously by all delegates. These are intended to contribute to an agenda for action by the industry and its components over the coming decade.*

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