



**TOUR OPERATORS INITIATIVE**  
FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

## Activity Report 2005

Building upon the success of the “Supply Chain Management for Tour Operators” and “A Practical Guide to Good Practice: Managing Environmental Impacts in the Marine Recreation Sector”, released in 2004, the Tour Operator Initiative has been always working on tools for integrating environmental, social and economic considerations in the relationship between tour operators and their suppliers. This effort has been possible thanks to the financial and technical support of the French Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

### Integrating Sustainability into Business

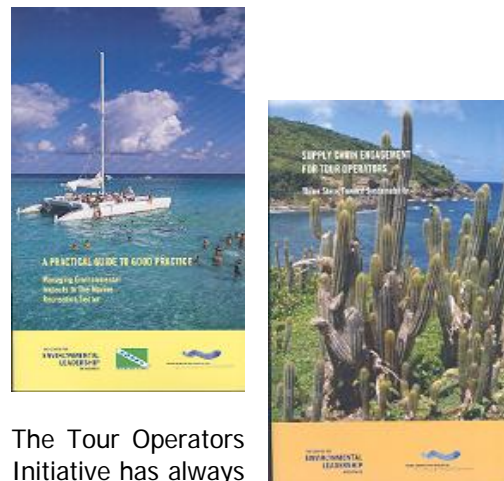


This manual, composed of two volumes, provides an overview of many practices explored by the TOI members concerning the effective integration of responsible environmental, social and socio-economic practices and principles into the day-to-day operations through a coherent and integrated approach.

The “Management Guide for Responsible Tour Operations” provides best practices in the business areas of tour operators, including product development and management, supply chain and internal management, customer relations and external cooperation.

The “Implementation Guide for Responsible Tourism Coordinators” helps the individual in charge promote responsible tourism within a company.

### Successful Dissemination of the Supply Chain Management for Tour Operators - the Practical Guide to Good Practices



The Tour Operators Initiative has always been engaged in developing tools to improve the sustainability of tour operators’ suppliers. Among these, the TOI developed a three steps approach for integrating sustainability in tour operators’ supply chain and a practical guide to good practices for marine excursion providers. More than 12,000 copies in English and Spanish have been distributed in the Mesoamerican Region to engage marine recreation providers towards sustainability. These were also distributed during the National Workshops on Sustainable Tourism held in Mexico, Belize and Honduras under the ICRAN Mesoamerican Project, which aims at developing a regional code of conduct for marine recreation providers. The French



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version will be published in the spring of 2006 to be distributed to the major French and Canadian Tour Operators.

#### CO-OPERATION WITH DESTINATIONS

The TOI members have realized that, if they join forces, they can exercise a stronger pressure on local stakeholders to integrate sustainability in local tourism development policies. Furthermore, local stakeholders striving to implement sustainable policies, often need external 'allies' to succeed in achieving the same result. The TOI is engaged as a whole in promoting sustainable tourism development in many key destinations around the world.

**Punta Cana and Bayahibe (Dominican Republic).** A meeting with key marine excursions providers, outbound/inbound tour operators, as well as NGO's and hoteliers was organized in Bayahibe, 6 April 2005. It was a follow-up activity to the TOI Multi Stakeholder Round Table organized in Punta Cana in December 2003, during which participants developed an Action Plan that highlighted the need to work in a participatory approach with all stakeholders in the Parque del Este to improve the environmental practices of the marine excursion providers.

One of the conclusions of the workshop was to explore further the idea of developing a specific code of conduct for marine excursion providers for the area of Bayahibe. This effort was lead by the Bayahibe-La Romana Hotel Association.

The financial contribution of the German Cooperation (GTZ), as well as the support of Conservation International, and the Bayahibe-La Romana and del Este Hotel

Associations contributed to the success of this workshop.

**Side (Turkey).** During the last Annual General Meeting, held in London, 16-17 November 2005, the Tour Operators Initiative members agreed that the Side case would have first priority amongst the TOI destinations activities.

The main unresolved issue is still the rehabilitation of the illegal dumpsite in Side (in sand dune system, next to the archeological excavations), which was closed as the main result of the TOI lobbying actions. In London, during the AGM, the waste issue was further discussed, and the TOI members proposed to create a special taskforce to help in the solution of this unresolved issue. A visit to this TOI destination is scheduled to be held before the summer of 2006.

**Lastovo (Croatia).** Together with the Croatian environmental association Sunce, the TOI and WWF agreed to use their environmental knowledge and tourism experience in the island of Lastovo in order to create concrete opportunities for the economic development of the island and a real example of how nature conservation can enhance livelihood of local communities.

A one-day workshop was organized in September to familiarize the local population with the sustainable and unsustainable aspects of tourism development. The participants concluded that a 'strategic plan for tourism' was needed to define the priorities and specific actions required to support the sustainable tourism development of the island. As the follow up to the discussions, TOI and WWF decided to keep on working together to obtain the best results.



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**Itacaré (Brazil).** In the context of the implementation of the tourism strategic plan for Itacaré, called Itacaré 2015, a Pilot Project Workshop was held in Itacaré in November 2005. The Workshop involved 63 participants (some 40 local and some 12 regional), in addition to representatives of the Tour Operators Initiative and of the Sustainable Tourism Certification Programme in Brazil (PCTS).

Participants were asked to identify the main problems that affect the tourism development of Itacaré. Four sets of such problems were then selected for consideration by four working groups (**Environmental Preservation, Basic Sanitation and Trash Disposal; Safety; Social and Cultural Integration of the Community; and Capacity Building**).

The outcome was to include the identification of specific projects, even small ones to be put in practice by the local community through the Taskforces set up during the Workshop.

### KEY PARTNERS

Reaching sustainability requires striking a balance between the social, economic and environmental aspirations of current and future generations. Tourism thrives on a pristine environment, and it therefore provides fertile ground for testing innovative partnerships towards more sustainable destinations.

Only through a goal-oriented partnership between the private and public sectors the sustainability of tourism can be achieved.

During the last AGM, in November 2005, the TOI and WWF signed a letter of intent to bring forward the TOI/WWF partnership for sustainable tourism in marine destinations.

### SPREADING THE WORD ON SUSTAINABILITY

The TOI is a vehicle to promote sustainable development within the tourism industry. In 2005, the Tour Operators Initiative have

organized and participated in many events, such as:

- Marketing Workshop, during the Tourism Forum International, Hanover, 3 February 2005
- ITP Post-Tsunami Steering Group meeting, London, 2 March 2005
- UN General Assembly side event, Harnessing Tourism for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), New York, 13 September 2005
- The Tour Operators Initiative: Building Sustainability through Partnership, IEF Roundtable, Ile de Porquerolles, 23 September 2005
- IIPT Peace Through Tourism World Congress, Tsunami Recovery and the Tour Operating Industry, Pattaya, Thailand, 5 October 2005
- Education Opportunities of the Tourism Sector: Examples from the Tour Operators Initiative, WEEC, Turin, 4 November 2005
- Tour Operators Initiative Seminar: Creating a Sustainable Tourism Experience, London, 16 November 2005
- International Environment Forum on 'Biodiversity: which challenges for industry?', 22-23 November 2005



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*The Initiative provides a neutral platform for sharing and refining ideas on strategies and actions, as well as a mechanism for acting together. Being a TOI member also gives the opportunity to participate in technical meetings and workshops, exchange information and learn from each other.*

### **INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT**

The Initiative was developed with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). These organizations are still full members of the Initiative and actively support it by providing guidance and technical advice.

### **WORKING TOGETHER**

The Initiative pursues its mission through five key areas of action:

- *Research and information exchange* to explore and share ideas and practices on key environmental, socio-economic and cultural topics;
- *Capacity building* to assist members of the Initiative and other tour operators in putting into practice sustainable development and management principles through publications, workshops, conferences and training;
- *Technical support* for members of the Initiative to further their commitment to the sustainable development of tourism;
- *Communication* to increase awareness of the priority issues and to raise the visibility of the Initiative among the key players in the tourism sector; and

- *Outreach to open direct dialogues* with other tour operators and stakeholders.

### **LIST OF PUBLICATIONS**

- **A Practical Guide to Good Practice: Managing Environmental Issues in the Marine Recreation Sector**
- **Supply Chain Management for Tour Operators: Three Steps toward Sustainability**
- **Integrating Business into Sustainability**
- **Tourism Guide to Good Practice/ Managing Environmental and Social Impacts in the Desert Recreation Sector**

**For more information on TOI:**  
<http://www.toinitiative.org>

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