



# Compendium of Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism



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**Prepared for  
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs**





# Intro

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in June 2012, emphasized in its outcome document “The Future We Want” §§ 130-131, that “sustainable tourism, well managed and designed, can make significant contributions to sustainable development”. Rio+20 further encouraged investments in sustainable tourism, including in ecotourism and cultural tourism, small business creation and called for facilitating access to finance, including through micro credits issued to local communities, the poor, and to indigenous peoples.

Against this background, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and its Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) has conducted, in partnership with UNEP, UNWTO and UNESCO, an Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Tourism: Ecotourism, Poverty Reduction and Environmental Protection, held in New York, October 2013.

To further facilitate the dialogue, DESA commissioned the compendium of best practices for promotion of sustainable (eco)tourism. This compendium, as a supplementary document to the EGM, consists of 18 best practices in sustainable (eco)tourism initiated by governments, NGOs, and private sectors, in developing countries, including SIDS, with potentials for replication elsewhere.

The best practices were collected and analyzed by four main criteria: Conservation, Community, Culture, and Commerce, initiated by The Zeitz Foundation, the main pillars of sustainable (eco)tourism.

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## **Zeitz Foundation**

**A non-profit organization that promotes responsible tourism in southern Africa and beyond**

### **Key Words – 4Cs**

Zeitz Foundation was founded in 2008 by the business entrepreneur Jochen Zeitz with the **mission** to create and support sustainable, ecologically and socially responsible projects and destinations around the world to achieve long-lasting impact and sustainability through the holistic balance of **Conservation, Community, Culture and Commerce** (the **4Cs**) in privately managed areas. The Zeitz Foundation delivers on its vision and mission through two inter-linked programmes, the global **Long Run Initiative** and the **Laikipia Programme** in Kenya.

The **Long Run Initiative (LRI)** pursues the Zeitz Foundation’s mission internationally. By enhancing ecosystems management and building recognition and support for the 4Cs approach to sustainability, the LRI is creating a driving force to promote and encourage sustainable thinking globally. LRI aims to reach out into every aspect of daily life by putting into practice the Long Run philosophy of acting today for a better tomorrow.

**The Laikipia Programme**, centred in the Greater Segera area of Laikipia County, Kenya, is the ‘nursery’ in which innovative initiatives that encompass and represent the 4Cs approach to sustainability are nurtured and parented. When they approach maturity and show real signs of promise, the lessons and experiences are shared throughout the LRI network.

### **The Long Run Initiative (LRI):**

- ✚ The LRI is built around Global Ecosphere Retreats® (GER) certified Long Run Destinations, Long Run Alliance Members and Long Run Supporters. **Long Run Supporters** are organizations from a variety of different sectors that believe in and support the LRI mission, while **Long Run Alliance Members** are primarily tourism-focused enterprises that directly manage or significantly influence the management of a natural area of conservation value with defined geographical boundaries that are committed to achieving sustainability through a holistic balance of the **4Cs**. Long Run Alliance Members are required to meet stringent criteria in accordance with the 4Cs and that have committed to continuous improvements to eventually become certified Long Run Destinations, which are global leaders in sustainable tourism. In order to become a **GER® certified Long Run Destination**, rigorous criteria must be met through a detailed strategic plan (E4C plan) that confirms actions and results in respect to the 4Cs and ensures that best practices are adhered to and innovative approaches experimented with to develop more sustainable solutions.
- ✚ Over the past four years the Long Run Initiative has experienced fast growth. Today

it includes 8 **GER<sup>®</sup> certified** Long Run Destinations, 28 Long Run Alliance Members and 38 Long Run Supports spanning six continents.

- ✚ The Long Run Alliance Members and GER<sup>®</sup> certified Long Run Destinations together manage or significantly influence the management of approximately 7.2 million acres and protect numerous rare or endangered species.
- ✚ Examples of GER<sup>®</sup> certified LRD member activities include: a comprehensive programme to combat malaria by Nihiwatu (LRD) in Indonesia, which covers a 120 square kilometre area encompassing 400 villages and 22,000 people; jaguar conservation in Caiman Ecological Refuge (LRD) in Brazil in an area covering 130,966 acres; promotion of the concept of financially viable conservation to local landowners at Wolwedans (LRD) in Namibia to further expand the existing 444,789 acre Namib Rand Nature Reserve; and the support of indigenous community tourism as a viable business model to protect the Huaorani's thousand-year-old culture at Huaorani Ecolodge (LRAM) in Ecuador.
- ✚ The Zeitz Foundation directly supports innovative projects in LRDs. Examples include: an artificial wetland project at Monte Azul (LRD) in Costa Rica, which involves close to 2,000 people through teaching and capacity building; a project by Tahī (LRD) on the restoration of the biodiversity of Pataua North in New Zealand where alien invasive plant species are eradicated and the biodiversity of the forest, beach, wetland and estuarine habitat are restored in a 2,000 acre area.

*Sources:*

<http://www.zeitzfoundation.org/> *The Zeitz Foundation*

<http://www.thelongrun.com/the-4cs> *Global Ecosphere Retreats<sup>®</sup> (GER) Certification*

*Photograph courtesy The Zeitz Foundation official website*

## **Air New Zealand**

### **Air New Zealand Environment Trust**

#### **Key Words – Conservation; Community**

Air New Zealand has achieved great accomplishments in its efforts to become the lead in environmental sustainability of airline industry and its commitment to help the country in maintaining its international “clean and green” image.

Its commitment effectively reduced the carbon emissions by 15%, initiated using of biofuel for transportation on ground and investment in new models of fuel-efficient aircrafts.

To support New Zealand with its conservation projects of biodiversity, the airline also established the Air New Zealand Environment Trust (ANZET) to support biodiversity conservation projects in New Zealand, in partnership with other organizations and companies, encouraging donations from other potential resources and customers.

For community and culture, Air New Zealand sponsors projects of environmental education to help kids understand the importance and to protect the cultural heritage of Maori.

#### **Conservation**

- ✚ ANZET’s initial programs of conservation: widespread “native reforestation” and more than 100 acres of tree planting in Hawke’s Bay area on Mangarara Station.
  - 60,000 trees will be planted over “marginal land” in three years starting from 2008, with the Trust.
  - Trees for shelter are being planted for stock, and a sanctuary of 30-hectare lake restored for ducks, swans and weweia.
  
- ✚ ANZET will sponsor the island nursery through a two-year funding for the Motutapu Restoration Trust to help with its upgrade and expansion.
  - “Forest footprint” will double annually on the island, which will help speed up the revegetation of the island by 100%.
  - “Local cultural landscape” will be protected and maintained for Maori.
  - “Natural heritage” will be recovered for the island, and the biggest haven for the island wildlife will be built in the country.
  
- ✚ ANZET’s funding for “Glaciers to Wetlands Restoration Project” will be implemented through Department of Conservation (DOC) for a period of four year.
  - At Okarito, DOC built a local nursery to help the affected areas in “the wetland system” increase native plants. Thousands of seeds and seedlings will be distributed in 4 years.
  - At the Lake Wahapo kahikatea swamp forest, new vegetation is protected with a fence.  
Around the Okarito Lagoon, “a trapping network” is built to bring down the

numbers of mammalian predators in order to protect native bird species.

- ✚ ANZET is helping revegetate Pilot's Beach to preserve and develop it as "A Little Blue Penguin nesting habitat" for the growing visitors there.
  - The Te Awa River Ride Project is initiated for a 70km shared cycle / walkway access along the Waikato River.
  - Soil management is now handled in an integrated approach.

### **Community**

- ✚ "Kids Restore New Zealand" Programme from 2009
  - Grants are provided for environmental projects by kids on:  
Pest reduction and species diversity restoration, replanting a waste area, developing a wetland park, cleaning up and regenerating a local stream, planting a forest of native trees for the future or developing an area to be free of predators, etc.
  - Involve kids to identify environmental challenges and issues in local community.

### **Culture**

- ✚ The Te Awa River Ride Project is initiated to protect and restore the region's greatest natural landscape.

### *Sources:*

<http://airnzenvironmenttrust.org.nz> *Air New Zealand Environment Trust*

<http://www.kidsrestorenz.org.nz> *Kids Restore New Zealand*

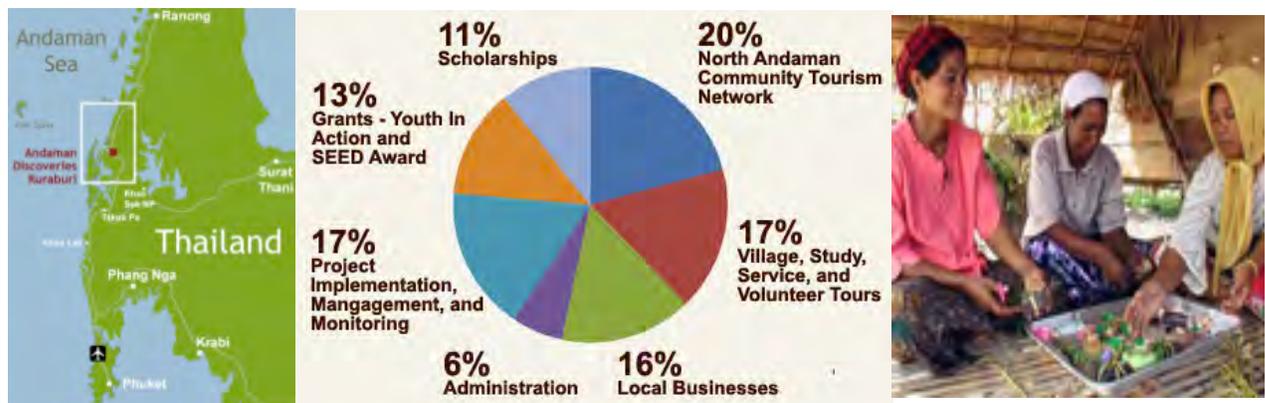
<http://www.airnewzealand.co.nz/history> *Air New Zealand*

## Andaman Discoveries From Relief to Self-Reliance



**Keywords: conservation, community, commerce**

Andaman Discoveries, formerly The North Andaman Tsunami Relief, is a Thai social enterprise serving local communities. After the devastating tsunami in 2004, Andaman Discoveries, together with a network of supporters helped villages of southern Thailand implement over 120 projects in a dozen villages. All projects have focused on creating realistic economic opportunities for local communities. Andaman Discoveries has placed long-term social, economic, and environmental sustainability as its top priority in all of its projects.



### Conservation

- ✚ Protecting local plant species
  - Restored orchid population with The Orchid Conservation project and re-established water lily into original habitat.
  - Collaborated with Mangrove Action project and International Union for Conservation of Nature to create groups to participate in Youth in Action for the Next Generation.
- ✚ Promoting conservation via education programs
  - Funded Youth Action Conservation Project to focus on “Local action, Global change” to educate youth on the environment, human interaction with environment, and local conservation efforts.
  - Educated local youths on restoring mangrove forests and measuring biodiversity and other physical changes over time with transects on plots.
  - Hosted Reef Education Program in collaboration with Reef Check International to minimize the community based tourism’s effects on reef
- ✚ Assisting local community conservation efforts
  - Established no-fishing zone together with Tung Dap community to prevent overfishing as numbers of tourists increase.

### Community

- ✚ Empower local communities and prepare communities for tourism growth.
  - Offer lessons in English and on income generating activities (handicrafts and cards made from recycled paper).
  - Enroll adults in hospitality and travel planning courses.
  - Initiate tour guide and First-aid training to local communities.
  
- ✚ Assist local community construction projects
  - Partnered with Birmingham University International Volunteer Community to build path to Samakeetham Buddhist Temple in Tung Rak village.
  - Funded construction of Ban Talae Nok village community center which the village uses as library, tourism office, education space, souvenir shop for local products etc.
  
- ✚ Providing assistance to local communities
  - Donated books, gym equipment, and traditional Thai instruments to village schools (students performed for Thai Princess in 2008).
  - Recruited volunteers to offer first-aid training and education sessions on dental care, hygiene, and family planning in Ban Talae Nok.
  - Provided relief to local Moken community when natural disasters prevented locals to fish and harvest.

## **Commerce**

- ✚ Offering community based tourism programs
  - Helped Moken community develop snorkel and Koh Surin tours.
  - Developed in-depth tours of island and village communities. (Ban Talae Nok, Ta Pae Yoi, Tung Dap, Tung Nang, Damn, Ban Lion)
  - Created customized tours concentrating on benefitting local communities in the areas of social welfare, community development, and conservation.

The projects that Andaman Discoveries implemented have provided genuine benefits for the local communities. Through its efforts, the organization has also helped volunteers to directly work with local population to promote education, conservation, health, and community development.

Through the years, Andaman Discoveries received multiple awards from Thailand and internationally for its constant efforts in community development. Some of the awards include: Wild Asia's Responsible Award ('07- '09 & '10); Travel + Leisure Global Vision Award ('08). BBC World Challenge Finalist ('09) and many more.

*Sources:*

<http://www.northandamantsunamirelief.com/> ***The North Andaman Tsunami Relief***

<http://www.andamandiscoveries.com/> ***Andaman Discoveries***

<http://www.ecotourism.org/news/north-andaman-tsunami-relief-natr>

***International Ecotourism Society***

*Photograph courtesy of Andaman Discoveries official website*

## **Caribbean Tourism Organization**

### **“One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean”**

#### **Key Words – Conservation; Community**

Originally established in 1989, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) is headquartered in Barbados and operates offices in New York and London. The CTO serves as the tourism development representative office for more than 30 countries and territories, and a myriad of allied private sector members from the Caribbean.

The natural beauty and the year-round warm weather draws many visitors from around the world to the Caribbean. With a large number of visitors each year, the CTO is missioned to provide service and information needed for developing sustainable tourism for the social and economic benefits of the Caribbean countries.

#### **Conservation**

- ✚ Developing the Regional Monitoring and Evaluation System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean Tourism Sector Project with a \$750,000 USD grant from the IDB and the CDEMA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency).
  - Aimed to reduce vulnerability of tourism industry in the event of natural hazards and disasters in the Caribbean.
  - Executed by the CDEMA, the risk reduction program includes a holistic soil management program that has already been implemented.
- ✚ Partner of the CARIBSAVE partnership set up by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and the University of Oxford.
  - Aimed to holistically address the challenges posed by climate change, environment, tourism, economic and community and across the Caribbean region.
  - Introduced practical and environmentally friendly strategies to help build skills and capacities in the Caribbean region for pro-poor and national economic development.
- ✚ Executing agency of the US\$2 million initiative “Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action Program (CHENACT),” Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST).
  - Performed detailed energy audits and analysis of energy consumption patterns in Caribbean hotels to design and prepare a program to increase energy efficiency (Barbados was the first case study country).
  - Supported efforts in making Caribbean tourism sector more energy efficient by assessing energy providers and their potential to serve tourism sector, surveying the overall energy consumption, and preparing policies.
  - Formed partnerships with other international agencies between the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) and CTO on energy efficiency campaign. Other organizations include:

German Technical Cooperation (GTZ); Centre for Development Enterprise (CDE) based in Brussels; Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) through the Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Initiative (SECCI); United Nations Environment Programme (UNDP)

### **Community**

- ✚ Setting up the CTO scholarship Foundation, which awarded its first set of scholarships and study grants in 1998.
  - Supported studies in tourism, hospitality, and language for persons who demonstrate high levels of leadership, academic achievements, and interests in contributing to Caribbean tourism.
  - Provided more than \$760000 USD for 83 major scholarships and 114 grants to Caribbean nationals. The main sponsors of this foundation are: American Express, American Airlines, Interval International, allied members, and CTO chapters from around the world.
- ✚ Initiating the CTO-Travel Mole Sustainable Tourism Annual Awards competition Created to showcase CTO member countries' good practices in sustainable tourism; this award recognizes individuals, groups, or any types of organizations that have developed innovative and unique tourism products or have engaged in initiatives related to sustainable tourism.

The CTO has been working with various countries and territories to provide instruments for collaboration in tourism. Their instruments are critical in maximizing economic results while minimizing the adverse social and psychological impact on the integrity of the Caribbean countries.

*Sources:*

<http://www.onecaribbean.org> **Caribbean Tourism Organization**

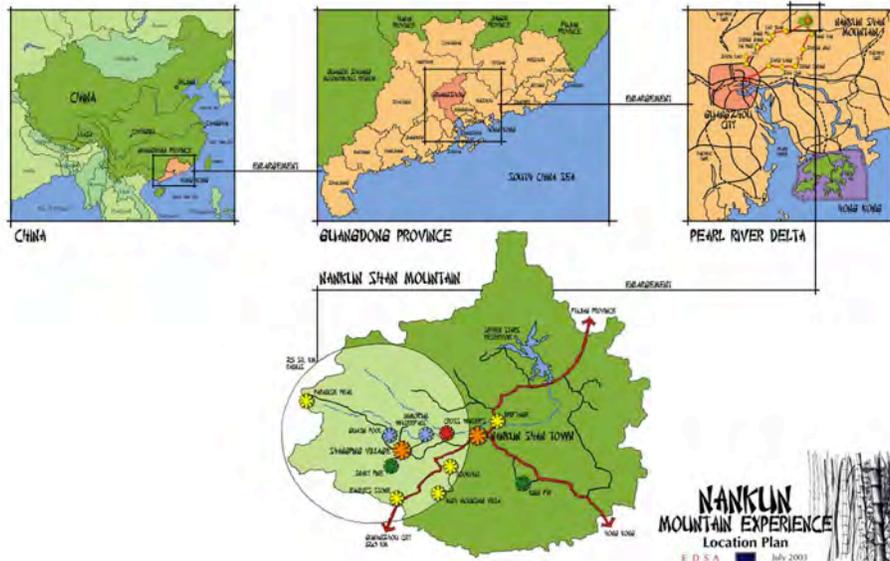
<http://www.wttc.org/research/economic-impact-research/regional-reports/caribbean/>

**World Travel & Tourism Council's regional report on Caribbean**

## Crosswaters Ecolodge, China

**Keywords: conservation, community, bamboo, commerce**

The aim for Crosswaters Ecolodge, located 80 miles away from the bustling international city of Guangzhou, was to become the first ecolodge in China. The ecolodge is located in a forest reserve covering 260 km<sup>2</sup> and is the home to more than 5,000 Keija population, 30 km<sup>2</sup> of bamboo, and 1,300 plant species. This ecolodge is the first project in a 10-year ecotourism development plan in Nankun Mountain reserve. During the planning stage, the design team of the lodge conducted extensive observations and research to ensure the buildings had minimal negative impact on the environment and surrounding communities. The project featured extensive use of bamboo, a sustainable building material that grows rapidly, and is the main native plant in the region.



### Conservation

- ✚ Planning the lodge with harmony to surrounding in mind
  - Conducted three different types of research: social, environmental, and metaphysical analysis in the spring, summer, and winter to observe changes in temperature and natural environment.
  - Combined input from an international team of bamboo experts, horticulturists, and ecologists from industry and academia.
  - Analyzed the relationships between drainage, current agriculture activities, waters levels, and surrounding industries to ensure natural elements are undisturbed.
  - Surveyed site with GIS and 3D analysis to find optimum construction location in relation to natural landscape.
  - Consulted with local “Feng Shui” master for metaphysical analysis of the project site and the “Chi” of the area.
  
- ✚ Constructing lodge with sustainable and green building materials.
  - Constructed extensively with local bamboo and other building materials from area such as clay tiles, marbles, and river rocks to minimize carbon emission.

- Used recycled materials (tiles, railway ties) in construction process for sustainability.
  - Built the lodge with earth-rammed walls made locally by Keija people for authenticity to area and environmental purposes.
  - Furnished rooms with local bamboo products (sheets, towels, furniture, etc.).
- ✚ Respecting other surrounding natural elements.
- Introduced zero exotic plant species in the construction of the seven gardens at the lodge to protect integrity of local plants.
  - Harvested bamboo used in construction at a sustainable rate to ensure balance between growth and usage.

### Community

- ✚ Consulting and working with local Keija community.
- Held community meetings prior to start of the project to assess project impact and seek opinion from villages.
  - Worked with village leaders and council members in a democratic process for design approvals.
  - Applied input from locals and traditional design elements in the landscape architectural design.
  - Used traditional construction methods taught by local Keija minority group.
  - Hired local artists to sketch designs and create scaled models with materials on-site.

### Commerce

- ✚ Providing local commercial opportunities at all stages of development
- Hired locals to help plan and design the project.
  - Recruited Keija workers in construction of the ecolodge using traditional building methods.
  - Sourced furniture, linen, etc. from local industries made with local materials.
  - Drew investments for other developments in the surrounding areas leading to more commercial opportunities.
  - Maximized purchase of locally produced foods to supply the ecolodge.

The Crosswaters Ecolodge has provided an excellent example of sustainable buildings/gardens and ecotourism. At the time of construction, it was the largest bamboo built commercial project. In 2010, the planner of Crosswaters Ecolodge, EDSA Inc., received the Honor Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) for its sustainable design and thorough consideration of all natural and social environments of the surroundings in building the ecolodge. The multi-award Crosswaters Ecolodge was the result of an International collaboration between Consultants from 5 continents with Hitesh Mehta being the Team Planning and Design leader.

*Sources:*

***HM Design***

*Photograph courtesy of **Hitesh Mehta***

## Experiencias Xcaret

### Key Words – Conservation; Commerce

Experiencias Xcaret is a Mexican sustainable entertainment group of businesses, with 25 years of history. Its products and services are famous for the top creative, exciting, adventurous, and unforgettable travel experiences for the tourists.

In 1994, Xcaret merged its business with Xel-Há, the world's famous natural aquarium, and in 2009 with Xplor, an underground adventure park. The merge allows realignment of the services and products which complements and maximizes the entertainment and experiences of the tourists in the “natural, cultural and archaeological richness of Mexico”.

Xcaret and Xel-Há both signed the United Nations Global Compact in (2004/2005). And Experiencias Xcaret is committed to Corporate Social Responsibility, and they have practiced the Principles of the UN World Pact, The Axes of Corporate Social Responsibility by the Mexican Center for Philanthropy, and the Global Reporting Initiative Indicators (GRI) for years.

In addition, Xcaret was awarded in 2012 with the “Ulyses Prize” for the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the excellence in his best practices in sustainable tourism.



### Conservation

- ✚ A Non-profit organization was built to promote conservation of “natural and cultural treasures”. In support of this objective, Experiencias Xcaret has organized and developed different awareness and conservation programs to help educate children and young people.
  - Organized activity to release sea turtle hatchlings: 858,000 in 2011 and a total of 5,539,355 between 1996 and 2011
  - Initiated “Saturday Marketplace”, attracting 4,000 visitors every year and helping Mayan communities.
  - Conducted “Nature’s Schoolroom” at 18 schools for 1,250 students, teachers and parents to develop the awareness of environmental concerns and issues in 2011.
  - Planted 290,600 trees for reforestation of 56.76 hectares (nearly 142 acres) of land with 84.9% survival rate, 2009 to 2011.

- Nurtured more than 100,000 trees reforest state in 2011.
- 13,073 students took part in the reforestation activity of 61 public schools, with 1,747 trees and 570 ornamental trees planted for 44,950 square-meter coverage, 2009 and 2011.
- “Chemical-free sunblock program” exchanged 152,506 sunblock products free of chemicals for tourists’ non-environmental sunblock

### **Culture**

- ✚ Sponsoring Xcaret KNOROSOV Center in collaboration with State University of Human Sciences of Russia and of the Universidad Veracruzana (2010-2012):
  - Developed research projects with the participation of Mexican scientists;
  - Promoted study of “Mesoamerican epigraphy and the reading of hieroglyphic texts through the Knórosov method”;
  - Promoted the “application of epigraphy as a tool for other disciplines and the study of Mayan history based on hieroglyphic texts”.
- ✚ Presenting Mexico’s culture and traditions to the world
  - Organized MARIACHI, a combination of string music, song and trumpet, which was titled as Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2011
- ✚ Organized the Sacred Mayan Journey, an annual event and the festival of life & death traditions, with wide participation from Mayan Zone. The “Native festivities dedicated to the dead” was designated as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNSCO in 2008.

### **Community**

- ✚ 99.8% of program sponsors are local.

#### *Sources:*

[http://en.xcaretexperiencias.com/Experiencias Xcaret](http://en.xcaretexperiencias.com/Experiencias_Xcaret)

[http://en.xcaretexperiencias.com/responsibility activities/sustainability report experienciasxcaret\\_2011.pdf](http://en.xcaretexperiencias.com/responsibility_activities/sustainability_report_experienciasxcaret_2011.pdf) *Experiencias Xcaret CSR Report*

*Photograph courtesy of Experiencias Xcaret official website*

## Feynan Ecolodge, Jordan



### Key Words – Conservation; Culture

Operated by EcoHotels and owned by the Jordanian Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), an NGO that has helped preserve Jordan's natural resources since 1966, Feynan Ecolodge is the first and only true ecolodge in Jordan. It is situated in the Dana Biosphere Reserve and is designed to contribute to local socio-economic development in total harmony with its environment.

Feynan Ecolodge is located in the largest nature reserve in Jordan, the Dana Biosphere Reserve, covering over 320 square kilometers. The elevation of Dana Reserve ranges from near sea level between the plains of Wadi Arabia to 1500m at the top of the plateau in Quadesiyya, thus providing a wide variety of wildlife, geological features and landscapes within the reserve. The reserve is unique in Jordan as it covers four widely different biographical zones: Mediterranean, Irano-Turanian, saharo-Arabian and Sudanian. With such diverse bio-geographical features, Dana Biosphere Reserve provides the habitat for more than 800 plant species (with 3 unique to the reserve). Besides the plants, there are records of 449 different animals in the reserve, including sand cat, Syrian wolf, lesser kestrel and spiny-tailed lizard (all endangered). BirdLife International has also included the Dana Biosphere Reserve in a large region designated as the Dana Important Bird Area (IBA) due to its position on bird migratory routes.



### Conservation

- ✚ Maximizing the use of solar energy due to the geographical location of Jordan.
  - Generating electricity exclusively using photovoltaic (PV) panels with capacity to store up to three days of electricity to account for cloudy days.
  - Electric lights use 8W CFL or 1-3W LED bulbs and are used only in three areas of the lodge: kitchen, washrooms, and offices. At night the lodge is lit by candles made on-site.
  - Purchasing only essential electrical appliances and only those rated Energy Star or A/A+ in US and EU respectively. Feynan's daily energy consumption is less than a typical two bedroom apartment in Jordan's capital, Amman.
  - Air-drying laundry, thus eliminating the need for dryers.
  - Heating water for the entire lodge solely with solar water heating system.
  
- ✚ Limiting use of other natural resources
  - Water is sourced from a perennial spring in Wadi Dana nearby. Water use for

the entire lodge is restricted and aerators are installed in room faucets and showers to reduce consumption.

- Heating the lodge by burning 'jift' (charcoal made from olive pits after they have been pressed for oil) for 60-90 evenings a year it is necessary. Only by-product with no alternative use is burned in process.
- Transforming all biodegradable waste into fertilizer at on-site composting facilities
- Using re-usable crates to collect supplies and minimizing all other packaging waste. The amount of waste sent to landfill has reduced by 60% since 2009.
- ✚ Contributing directly to the conservation of the Dana Reserve
  - A proportion of Feynan's revenue goes directly to the Dana Biosphere Reserve to fund conservation programmes and habitat protection in the reserve

### Community

- ✚ Hiring locally and investing in socio-economic initiatives
  - Exclusively hiring lodge staff from local communities and sourcing up to 80% of food and supplies from nearby villages. This provides employment, supports the local economy and creates an authentic local experience for guests.
  - Providing opportunities for local women in candle making and leather workshops on-site at the lodge.
  - Transportation to and from the reception centre is provided by 45 local Bedouin drivers in their spare time, which provides their families with supplemental income.

### Culture

- ✚ Promoting the rich Bedouin culture of the region
  - Projects producing bread, candles, leather goods and the cultural exchanges create a rare income generating opportunity for women. Particularly important in a very conservative culture.
  - Activities such as local Bedouin cross cultural exchange, where guests can spend a day with a local Bedouin shepherd or learn Bedouin traditions that include coffee making, goat-hair tent making, bread baking and kohl (traditional eyeliner) from local people providing an authentic immersion into local life.
  - Local guides share with guests their culture, history and environment often whilst sharing tea outside a family's tent and watching shepherds herding.

EcoHotels has created a truly unique escape at Feynan Ecolodge for guests in Jordan. Guests are embedded in the rich local culture and have the opportunity to learn about the natural environment. With an exemplary level of environmental sustainability demonstrated through the design and the operation of the lodge, it should serve as a model for many other future ecotourism developments across the Middle East.

*Sources:*

<http://www.feynan.com/index.html> Feynan Ecolodge

*Photograph courtesy of Feynan Ecolodge official website*

## Frégate Island Private

### Key Words – Conservation; Commerce

Frégate Island Private (FIP) was built in 1998 as an eco-resort to operate with sustainable tourism and environment conservation strategies. FIP used to be mainly plantations of coconut and cinnamon which were depleted by 1960s. The sole economic use of the FIP resources led to the destruction of 90% of its vegetation and devastation of the habitat.

To help revive the island, Seychelles introduced wild rats, cats, and mynah birds, which greatly helped displace the native plants and vegetation, and especially the birds native to FIP and Seychelles. Up till now, the systematic managed process has restored about 70-80% of the island.

### Conservation

- ✚ Partnership with Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust to protect giant Aldabra tortoises and sea turtles
  - Built a nursery to protect and monitor the development young ones
  - Tortoises grew from 150 to 2,000 in the last 2 decades, which shows the outcome of the conservation efforts.
  - Several hundred nests are monitored and safeguarded for nesting during the season from October to January each year.
  
- ✚ Collaboration with “Birdlife International”
  - Build the island free of pesticides, rats and rodents for birds to “breed safely on the ground”.
  - Restore the habitat through continuously planting native trees and bushes.
  - Help develop “healthy and stable populations” for four other islands of Seychelles.
  
- ✚ Establishment of a large nursery 30 years ago, bringing back “rare and almost extinct” vegetation to help improve ecological balance.
  - Many native vegetation have been planted on the island: the giant Takamaka - a national icon; Wrights Gardenia-rare fragrant species; and Indian Mulberry, the favorite food for giant Tortoise.
  
- ✚ Improvement of energy efficiency
  - Promote solar power energy and recycle cooking oils.
  - Adopts a system that collects rainwater; allows no importation of bottled water; 100% recycling of all water; and uses “grey water” for landscaping and agriculture.

### Community

- ✚ Returns benefit to Seychelles, with 41% of its staff coming from Seychellois, a higher percentage for all resorts in Seychelles.

- ✚ Benefit staff with decent wages, cost prices for fresh and organic local produce, and loans and/or support for health care and insurance.
- ✚ Promotes one key social project each year –for example: providing school-kits for all Seychelles’ first grade students in 2007.

### **Commerce**

- ✚ Expand local food production through organic farming to lower fly-in food importation, which has sufficiently provided fresh produce for its own need and other demand.

What has helped FIP most, through all its programs, is its focus on conservation in four areas of “energy and carbon reduction, habitat and ecosystem improvement, water and general resources management, and economic, social and welfare investments for the local population”. Even though there is still no permanent population on FIP, the focus is helping Seychelles’ social initiatives.

*Sources:*

<http://www.fregate.com/start> ***Frégate Island Private***

<http://www.wttc.org/tourismfortomorrow/winners-finalists/>

***WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards***



## Hidden Valley Inn Reserve, Belize

### Key Words – Community; Culture

Located on a private reserve of 7200+ acres in Belize, the Hidden Valley Inn Reserve is located in one of the oldest Belizean parklands. The resort features two very different ecosystems (grassland savannah and lush rainforests) and is the natural habitat to several endangered animal species. Hidden Valley Inn is classified as an IUCN Category 6 “Managed Resource” protected area. In addition to the unique geographic features and wildlife, the resort is also surrounded by heritage sites of three diverse local cultures: Mayan, Creole and Mesquite.

The Hidden Valley Inn operates on the principle that economic development needs to be in complete harmony with nature and culture. Through strategic planning, the resort presents the beauty of the unique yet fragile ecosystems of SIDS. With the numerous innovative tourism products offered, the resort also creates economic opportunities to empower local communities and showcases the rich heritage.

Table 2. Summary of provisional species richness of Hidden Valley

	No. of Species		Globally threatened		Belizean Endemic	
	C	L	C	L	C	L
Amphibian	9	12		1	1	1
Birds	167	285	3	3	0	0
Fish	2	12	0	0	0	0
Mammal	61	65	1	2	0	0
Fish	2	12	0	0	0	0
Reptile	56	65	1	2	0	0
Butterflies & moths	49	126	0	0	0	0
Damselflies	20	25	0	0	0	0
Dragonflies	18	28	1	1	0	0
Vascular Plant	145	349	2	5	2	3
Non-Vasc Plant	2	42	0	0	0	3

C = confirmed in HV; L = Likely total based on nearby records and those from Hidden Valley



### Conservation

- ✚ Founding the Hidden Valley Institute to monitor and preserve 81+ species of orchid, 5 cat species, and few other endangered species such as tapir and the black howler monkey.
- ✚ Providing technical support and accommodations to research centers and organizations.
  - Safeguarding local wildlife through monitoring and research.
  - Cooperating organizations include: Peregrine Fund, Belize Raptor Research Institute, Jaguar Project, and Friends for Conservation Development.
- ✚ Partnering with Belize Department of Forestry to promote resource management to ensure quick land recovery from tree logging.
- ✚ Enforcing annual quota to ensure loggers follow sustainable methods.

### Community

- ✚ Employing 80% of unskilled labor locally and providing trainings, which expose the local population to many other tourism products of Belize.

- ✚ Establishing community-outreach program to support two local schools by donating photocopiers and constructing facilities.
- ✚ Encouraging resort guests to visit local schools and providing necessary assistance.
- ✚ Setting up wild life club in collaboration with Blacanaux Lodge to raise environmental conservation awareness among the young.
- ✚ Organizing “Conservation Supported by Tourism Education” to achieve the following educational goals for school aged students:
  - Raising awareness in natural resource management projects.
  - Educating students on the economic impact and employment opportunities driven by sustainable tourism.
  - Leading students on trips to explore the different ecosystems located on resort’s property.

### **Culture**

- ✚ Offering tours to Caracol, largest Mayan site in Belize, guided by a Mayan descent tour-guide to showcase the prosperity of the ancient Mayan city.
- ✚ Providing cultural immersion programs for guests to interact with local families to experience the traditional Mayan culture.
- ✚ Combining Victorian British and Mayan influences in the hotel’s building style and decor to reflect the national and local heritage.
- ✚ Offering unique menu with traditional Mayan recipes and popular international selections to maintain local culinary traditions.
- ✚ Demonstrating support for local cultural festivals and events such as La Ruta Maya, Ride for Belize, etc.

### **Commerce**

- ✚ Purchasing all fresh produce from local villages to promote local economy.
- ✚ Cultivating and processing coffee on hotel property, providing employment for local on harvesting, roasting, etc.
- ✚ Outsourcing all logging operations on resort property only to local FSC certified loggers.

The Hidden Valley Inn Reserve is an exemplary model of sustainable tourism for SIDS countries. Despite the limitation of the fragile environment, the resort is still able to achieve economic viability while benefitting the local communities. The business model of the resort successfully maintains the harmony between conservation, community, culture, and commerce.

*Sources:*

<http://www.hiddenvalleyinn.com/> **Hidden Valley Inn Reserve**

<http://thelongrun.com/members/view/alliance-member/hidden-valley-inn-reserve>

**The Long Run Initiative**

<http://www.hiddenvalleyinstitute.com/> **Hidden Valley Institute**

*Photograph courtesy of Hidden Valley Inn Reserve official website*

## The Bushcamp Company, Zambia

**Key Words – Community; Conservation**



Zambia's South Luangwa National Park, a world-renowned wildlife haven, is at the southernmost of three national parks in the valley of the Luangwa River. The Bushcamp Company, founded by Andy Hogg (from Zambia) in 1999 and now run from its headquarters at Mfuwe Lodge, operates six exclusive safari camps in South Luangwa National Park.

Being the only safari operator in the southern section of the park, with a strong belief that conservation will only work through benefiting the local community, The Bushcamp Company has always been making efforts towards responsible tourism, which has become the cornerstone of its Safari operation. The primary concern of The Bushcamp Company's commitment to the wildlife and people of the South Luangwa are environmental conservation and sustainable income generation, through partnering closely and effectively with both the local community and conservation NGOs.



### Conservation

- + Fund-raising and providing logistical support to 3 local wildlife organizations
  - The South Luangwa Conservation Society (SLCS)
  - The Zambian Carnivore Programme (ZCP)
  - The Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA)
  - Aiming for strengthening anti-poaching patrols and surveillance to combat the threats posted to Luangwa's wildlife and natural heritage
  - Providing aircraft to the organizations for aerial anti-poaching, monitoring, and research activities
- + Following environmental best practice
  - Introducing solar technology throughout the Bushcamps and Mfuwe Lodge for the heating system, lighting, charging, fridge-freezers, and water pumping
  - Using sustainably sourced timber, and setting up tree planting programmes
  - Implementing "Green" waste management system to ensure minimized environmental impact
- + Setting up the "Luangwa Conservation & Community Fund" since 2009
  - Introducing to the rates a donation of \$10 per person, per night
  - Distributing donations evenly among conservation and community projects

### Community

- + Sponsoring 2 local schools and over 250 students from around the park
  - Building classrooms and staff houses; providing transportations for students;

- Facilitating clean water access, through its own charity and with support from guests and other charities,
  - Long-term support for the Kakumbi Community Clinic.
- + Implementing eco-initiatives to enhance the livelihoods of the communities
  - Partnership with Conservation Science Africa (CSA) that provides capacity building workshops and technical & educational support on livelihood and agricultural methods
  - Supporting other community projects related to deforestation reduction
- + Enrichment of the local staff
  - Providing medical cost assistance through the Luangwa Safari Association Medical Fund (LSAMF)
  - Providing school fees assistance and bursaries to staff and their families through “Charity Begins at Home” scheme
  - Encouraging and facilitating training for staff development in skills and responsibility
  - Initiating programmes on raising HIV and AIDS awareness

### Culture

- + Helping set up a Cultural Village in Mfuwe, run by The Bush Company’s head guide, to promote rural Zambian culture learning.
- + Supporting a local theatre group, SEKA, that performs plays themed as human-wildlife conflict.

### Commerce

- + Employing local people and buying locally
  - Supporting vegetable market-gardens in Mfuwe, buying vegetables and herbs that produced in Zambia by COMACO (Community Markets for Conservation)
  - Supporting businesses that promote alternatives/energy-efficient cooking solutions, such as solar cooker and ‘rocket’ stove projects.

The Bushcamp Company’s persistent efforts and contribution towards responsible tourism through last decade have not only strengthened the local community and safeguarded the natural heritage in Luangwa Valley, but also have set a successful business model in Zambia. By placing education and community enrichment as primary concerns, working together with the local conservation organizations, its various efforts have not gone without reward.

The Bushcamp Company was nominated as one of the twelve finalists for The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) Tourism for Tomorrow Awards, which are one of the highest accolades in the global Travel & Tourism industry.

*Sources:*

<http://www.bushcampcompany.com/> **The Bushcamp Company**

<http://www.wttc.org/tourismfortomorrow/awards/> **WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Award**

<http://www.thelongrun.com/the-4cs> **Global Ecosphere Retreats® (GER) Certification**

*Photograph courtesy of The Bushcamp Company official website*

## Matin Abad Desert Camp & Organic Farm, Iran

### Key Words – Culture; Conservation

Matin Abad Desert Camp & Organic Farm was established in 2008. The group of experts in tourism and naturalists want to provide the tourists with an opportunity for an experience and adventures close to the nature. In the company of seasoned naturalists, tourists will experience treks with camel ride or walk; they can ride bikes through waves of sand and mountain valleys, and can even enjoy desert walks in the beautiful star-lit nights.

Located between the sand dunes and vast semiarid grass-covered plain is the camp with modern facilities. It is about 45 Km away from Kashan, one of the popular tourist places in central Iran.

The essential purposes of building Matin Abad EcoCamp were to demonstrate, educate and to help promote the ideas of “Consider, respect and conduct the ethic codes” and guidelines by the international organizations of Tourism and Ecotourism, so as to practice the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and SRB (Socially Responsible Business) models and to build sustainable Tourism in Iran.



### Culture

- ✚ The main building of the camp was built on a “Caravanserai plan”, a traditional style of Persian inn by the roadside for tourists to rest and to recover from the fatigue of the journey.
  - The designing and building gives utmost attention to protect the environment, surroundings and the customs.
  - The camp has only one doorway, which has to be wide enough for camels with

heavy loads to enter. It has an open courtyard with “identical stalls, bays, niches, or chambers” to accommodate tourists.

- Also, the camp is built to allow views of the Karkas Mountains and the endless desert from where their tents and places are.
- The tents are designed according to the traditional style of Iranian tents for nomads. They are furnished with mosquito nets for the hot season and a special Iranian style of heating, Korsi, for the cold season. Red Cross in Iran produced the mosquito nets and Korsi.

### Conservation

- ✚ All operations at the camp are energy-saving
  - Measures to conserve heat and water are taken; eco-friendly lights are installed; and guests are supplied with limited electricity. All these help bring down “oil/gas and carbon emissions”.
  - The Camp uses solar and wind energy to heat water for shower and cooking. It can cover the consumption of 100 people a day. Solar energy accounts for 70% of what is needed.
  - Funds are mobilized to research and develop more sources of renewable energy
- ✚ Waste Management
  - Training are delivered for “the host communities”, people from Matin Abad village, to help them become more sensitive and aware of environmental protection in terms of more recycle, less pesticides and toxic, energy-saving practices, and protection of the conservation area.
  - Minimum garbage should be taken into the vast wilderness. Purchase large packaged goods to reduce and avoid single packaging in paper, tin or plastic.
  - Do not leave garbage in the wilderness and bring down the organic waste.

### Community

- ✚ The camp was constructed with materials from local communities to reduce the transportation of materials into the conservation area, so as not to affect the conservation of the area and its surroundings.

### Commerce

- ✚ Supreme quality of service and food are maintained. Authentic Persian food is served in authentic Persian huge plate. The Farm of the camp provide us most of the organic food and supplies; and we really want to return to the local communities to help them with their “economic growth through responsible tourism.”

*Sources:*

<http://www.matinabad.com/home/home.aspx> *Matin Abad Desert Camp & Organic Farm*

<http://www.ecotourism.org> *The International Ecotourism Society*

*Photograph courtesy of Matin Abad Desert Camp & Organic Farm official website*

## Huangshan Scenic Area Administrative Committee (HSAC), China



### Key Words – Conservation; Commerce

Mt. Huangshan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and recorded in the World Geopark Network, is rated as China's top tourist place for its geological formation, beautiful sceneries, and cultural richness. Mt. Huangshan boasts of a coverage of 1,200 square kilometers and the center area for about 160 square kilometers, famous for the beautiful mountain peaks and the long formation history, as far back as more than 1 million years from the Mesozoic era.

Huangshan Scenic Area Administrative Committee (HSAC), as the committee “in-charge”, was built in 1988, and is committed to promoting responsible and sustainable tourism in the area.



### Conservation

- ✚ Environmental Management System (EMS)
  - Acquired the ISO14001 Environmental Management System Certificate in 2008, with a “leading committee” of more than 100 high profile auditors and allocated resources, fund and supporting policies.
  - Developed ISO14000 National Demonstration Zone in 2006, which was highly applauded by the National Bureau of Environmental Protection and Ministry of Construction.
  
- ✚ Ecology and vegetation restoration and conservation of natural resources
  - Enforcing closure rotation on the most frequented scenic spots since 1989 (effective practice recommended by UNESCO), including the Lion Peak, the Rosy Cloud Peak, the Heavenly Capital Peak, and the Lotus Peak. Every closure lasts 3-5 years.
  - Series of restoration measures taken during the site closure period. Constantly dynamic monitoring and investigation  
Prevention and treatment of forest pests

Soil recovery, exposed roots protection, and fertilizing  
Data collecting and comparison on sites before and after closure.

- ✚ Environmental protection actions
  - Infrastructure Construction:  
Annual spending over 50 million RMB on updating technology and the equipment to guarantee the smooth operation and standard discharge of all pollution disposal facilities.
  - Solid Wastes Disposal management:  
Striking progress in garbage reduction and harmless disposal  
Hazardous waste management improvement under the 5-manifest system, further standardization of hazardous waste transportation.
  - Standardize carbon Emissions, Cooking Oil Fume and Sewage Discharge:  
Mandatory installation of gas and smoke disposal equipment for all local business, Regular-basis checking on 100 tourist vehicles and 168 staff vehicles as required to ensure the standard carbon emission.
  
- ✚ UNWTO observation station at Mt. Huangshan
  - International Conference on Sustainable Tourism Management at Heritage Sites in 2008, sponsored by UNESCO and the UNWTO, concluded with the "Huangshan Declaration".
  - First observation post set by UNWTO in China since 2008.

## **Culture**

- ✚ Implementing the inscription criteria of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Property by UNESCO since 1990.

HSAC has been awarded and recognized internationally for its outstanding management and achievements in promoting ecotourism and preserving the culture landscapes of Huangshan:

1. Melina Mercouri, the first prize of its kind for Asia, by UNESCO, 1999.
2. A finalist, out of three, first time for China, for the Tourism for Tomorrow Award, by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2010.

Besides, the HSAC has joined the GSTC “as Asia’s first scenic area”, to develop “the baseline criteria” for Global Destination. Meanwhile, following the guidance of UNWTO, the HSAC have initiated the building of “an observatory on sustainable tourism development at world heritage site”.

*Sources:*

<http://www.chinahuangshan.gov.cn/> **China Huangshan Official Website**

[http://www.heritagehuangshan.gov.cn/heritage/english/A0202index\\_1.htm](http://www.heritagehuangshan.gov.cn/heritage/english/A0202index_1.htm)

**Huangshan World Heritage Site**

*Photograph courtesy of China Huangshan Official Website*

## Premiki, Slovenia



### Institute for counseling, promotion and development of accessible tourism

#### Key Words – “Tourism for All”

Tourism accessibility is an example of a social responsibility that also has a compelling business case. Today, this market is vastly underserved around the world. One NGO & travel agency “Premiki” has placed offering tourism products to “everyone” at the heart of its business. Today, many organizations see accessible tourism as a social responsibility; however, Premiki has seen it also as a compelling business case for Europe.

By 2050, population of 65+ in Europe will be 3 times what it was in 2003 and 80+ will be 5 times greater. Also with between 600-900 million persons with disabilities of varying degree around the world, there lies a great amount of potential in the market. In Premiki’s business concept, they have embraced the concept “tourism for all” the number one priority. The concept encompasses that regardless of physical or mental limitation shouldn’t be prevented from being able to travel to the place they desire. In order to accomplish its mission, Premiki offers accessible travel products, certifies tourism facilities which are “disability friendly”, and provide trainings to tourism professionals on accessible tourism.

Through creating supply to meet the increasing demand, Premiki has successfully provided services in its native Slovenia and internationally. From the requests of customers, the organization has created a network of providers who are disabled-friendly whether it’s accommodation facilities or comprehensive travel services. Premiki is also focused on sustainable tourism.



#### Accessibility Criteria & Target Groups

- ✚ The Slovenian Association for Mental Health (ŠENT), a non-profit organization, established the initial criteria for basic accessibility via project NETMEN. Over the years, these criteria are known as the “Disability Friendly Certificate.” The main criteria for accessible tourism established by ŠENT are: accessibility of information, economically accessible, and psycho-social accessibility.
  
- ✚ Target Disability Groups include:
  - Physical impairments,
  - visual and hearing impairments,

- learning difficulties, mental disorders, and
- Other impairments (e.g. allergies, diabetes).

### Ongoing Projects

- ✚ TRAVEL AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (TURAG4ALL)
  - As the leader partner with the NTZ (National Tourist Association) and Premiki for counseling, promoting, and developing of accessible tourism, ŠENT developed the project, TURAG4ALL.
  - After completing the six-month TURAG4ALL training program which prepared persons with disabilities to become travel professionals, three out of the ten participants were hired by Premiki. This project provided an opportunity to empower disadvantaged individuals.
  - This project, implemented between 2009 and 2011, served as a showcase to integrate disabled persons into the workforce and provided equal opportunities for vulnerable groups within the labor market.
- ✚ EUROPEAN DESTINATION OF EXCELLENCE
  - Project EDEN, “European Destinations of Excellence,” was initiated based on the political and tourism trends of Europe. The main aim of EDEN is to focus on promoting destinations where tourism development aims to improve social, cultural and environmental sustainability. In 2013, the EDEN project made accessibility a focus point.
- ✚ EVOCATE
  - Through the Evocate project, framed within the Leonardo da Vinci training program, Premiki works with partners from GB, Italy, Turkey, and Germany to explore the possibility to make accessible tourism part of the education curriculum on different levels.

Premiki is a trailblazer in the field of offering accessible tourism programs, trainings, and certifications. In their operations, this institute has truly embraced the concept of “tourism for all.” As the European population age in the coming years, the Premiki institute will inspire other similar organizations to shoulder the social responsibility of offering equal employment opportunities, trainings, and tourism for “all”.

*Source:*

<http://premiki.com>

**Premiki, Institute for counseling, promotion and development of accessible tourism**

<http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.commercialslovenia.1168>

**European Network for Accessible Tourism – ENAT**

*Photograph courtesy of Premiki Institute official website*

## Rivers Fiji

### Key Words – Conservation; Community

Rivers Fiji, an award-winning tour operator, began exploration of Fiji in 1993 for ecotourism whitewater rafting and kayaking related trips. RF originated through a partnership of individuals with a combined experience of over 70 years in conservation, adventure travel, education, & whitewater product manufacturing. Through a selection of exciting trips, the company provides unique opportunities to experience remote highland villages, tropical forests, and the surrounding coral reefs.

River Fiji is a champion of ecotourism, the company strives to help promote sustainable tourism and responsible travel worldwide. Respecting and protecting the environment has been the foundation of Rivers Fiji's vision. In addition, the company also partners with local communities to ensure the natural resources and environment, Fiji's "natural capital" will be available for many generations to come. Through River Fiji's partnerships with landowners and families living in the rural highlands, the company ensured the essential long-term viability of its tourism programs.

### Conservation

✚ In 2000, RF established Fiji's first lease for conservation, known as the Upper Navua Conservation Area (UNCA) with assistance from local landowning groups, a logging company, and Fiji's Native Land Trust Board (NLTB).

- Designated a conservation corridor 18 km long to protect the Upper Navua River canyon and surrounding natural environment as well as the cultural sites found within its borders.



- Landowners are compensated through lease payments, employment opportunities, and user fees that combined with a conservation lease help to protect the UNCA.
  - Established a Conservation Area Management Plan to guide the efforts in ensuring sustainable tourism practices in the area.
  - Provides training to all guides in "leave no trace" practices, an initiative to minimize impacts caused by human activities on the health of the surrounding ecosystem.
- ✚ In 2006, the UNCA was designated as Fiji's first Ramsar site with efforts from Rivers Fiji, the World Wildlife Fund for Nature, various governmental agencies, and scientists at the University of the South Pacific. As a result, the UNCA:
- Protects the freshwater supply and associated critical habitat necessary for the

sustained health of the surrounding communities.

- Hosts perhaps the last healthy population of Fiji's endemic sago palm (*Metroxylon vitiense*) which has been severely impacted and nearly wiped out in many if not all of Fiji's remaining freshwater riverine ecosystems.
- Rivers Fiji guides provide interpretation and education to all guests with an overview of the establishment of the conservation area and potential threats to it in an effort to raise awareness.

### **Community**

- + Empowerment within local communities through employment and education.
  - Provides local employees with training in first-aid and CPR, comprehensive guide training, interpretation, issues and conservation efforts, swift water rescue, and customer service.
- + Supports local tourism and conservation associations.
  - Promotes Pacific Harbour Tourism and the highlands as a unique tourism destination within Fiji; supports the Fiji Ecotourism Association; and supports the Nature Fiji conservation organization.
  - Facilitates community support through tourist philanthropy for education, health, and community infrastructure; Provides conservation education for youth and their families in rural highland communities through a partnership with Nature Fiji.

### **Culture**

- + Organize guided visits to villages to experience local culture and traditions such as kava ceremonies and life in the rural highlands.
- + Educate guests on specific rituals, protocols, appropriate dress code, and behavior while visiting indigenous communities.

### **Commerce**

- + Brings diverse commercial opportunities to rural highland communities. Enable employment in program support and service positions, which include drivers, mechanics, raft and kayak builders, and maintenance staff.
- + Provides direct employment opportunities in: guiding, punt driving, road, trail, and bridge infrastructure, crews for special events, cooks, and office management.

River Fiji continues to promote Fiji and the natural and cultural resources often overlooked by sun, sand, and sea tourism, to the world. Though relatively a small enterprise, Rivers Fiji has demonstrated a unique model for conservation through their lease for conservation, and provides economic alternatives to rural highland communities, creating a unique conservation and sustainable tourism model now and for future generations.

*Sources:*

**Rivers Fiji:** <http://www.riversfiji.com>

**The International Ecotourism Society:** <http://www.ecotourism.org>

*Photographs courtesy of Rivers Fiji website:* <http://www.riversfiji.com>

## **Shamwari Game Reserve**

**A membership organization of Kenya Tourism Federation**

**Key Words – Conservation; Community**

Founded in 1992 in Eastern Cape, the Shamwari Game Reserve has been a showcase project of conservation and tourism in synergy. When the reserve was first founded, it started with only 7 members; their goal was to make conservation profitable, so the concept and the reserve can sustain into the future.

The area of the reserve is unique because it contains the five converging ecological bio-systems. This unique natural feature combined with sufficient summer and winter rainfalls fosters an unequalled diversity of wildlife. In its effort to create harmony between wildlife and natural environment, The Shamwari Game Reserve takes a systematic and scientific approach to ensure that re-stocking procedures are gradually and strictly followed so no resources would be over-stressed.

Eight years after it was founded, the Reserve became large enough, with enough wild-life to support large predators. In October 2000, the first lion pride was reintroduced to the Shamwari under a systematic program. Today, over 5000 head of game roam freely on the more than 25000 hectares of the Shamwari Reserve. In order to continue its success in the rescue program, Shamwari also operates a Julie Ward Animal Rescue Center and the Jean Bryd Born Free Animal Rescue and Education Center.

Currently, the reserve hires over 325 staff, all from local communities, to operate its six lodges throughout the reserve and also provides facilities at its rescue centers to provide education programs on wildlife.



### **Conservation**

- ✚ Creating Shamwari Wildlife Department in 1996.
  - Pioneered ecotourism in Eastern Cape region of South Africa and led resurgence of other tourism programs.
  - Ensuring that the integrity of wildlife and biodiversity is maintained within the rich ecosystems of the Shamwari Reserve.
  - Hired a team of two veterinaries, two ecologists, an environmentalist, and other nature conservationists to maintain the sustainability of all environment within the reserve and the quality of the wildlife experience.

- Created Ecological sector within department to continuously and actively monitor the effectiveness of ecological management programs.
- Implemented two key monitoring projects to study two factors with the greatest impact on the environment: vegetation, and integrated predator/prey relationship.
- + Reclaiming Land for reservation since 1990.
  - Designated as the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Global Biodiversity Hotspot, Shamwari has restored both the wildlife and the flora since 1990.
- + Achieved Green Leaf Environmental status through South African Wilderness Foundation.
  - Gained accreditation through efforts in water resource management, waste management, electricity conservation, recycling, and education/training.
- + Set-up “The Born Free Foundation Animal Rescue and Education Centre” jointly with British organization, The Born Free Foundation.
  - Aimed to provide care for inhumanely treated African cats and educate visitors of all ages on the subject.
  - Emphasizes environmental education in addition to the efforts in protecting the wildlife in Shamwari Game Reserve’s two centers. These centers serve 700+ students from disadvantaged communities each month.
  - Launched education program when The Julie Ward Center was opened in 1999 to host rescued big cats previously in captivity.

### **Commerce**

- + Experiencing the entire Shamwari Reserve.
  - Hosts various programs to bring visitors into the wild and be surrounded by game, birds, and the spectacular nature.
  - Operates one exclusive villa for guests to stay on the Reserve to see the dramatic sunrise to be a part of nature.
  - Offers an exotic experience to visitors with six five-star rated lodges to synergize “wild,” with modern luxuries.
- + Empowering locals with skills training.
  - Provides field guide training and specialized trainings to locals to prepare them for employment in tourism industry.

In the past 30 years, the Shamwari Game Reserve has both grown in size and in the scope of its operation. The efforts of the reserve have gained international recognition in the tourism industry. The Shamwari demonstrates that even private entities with commercial goals can make a tremendous impact in the area of conservation.

*Sources:*

<http://www.shamwari.com/propertydefault.asp> ***Shamwari Game Reserve***

<http://www.shamwarigroup.com/default.asp> ***Shamwari Group***

*Photograph courtesy of Shamwari Game Reserve official website*

## The Blue Yonder, India

- “Creating Better Places for People to Live & for People to Visit”



### Key Words – Culture; Community

Nila Foundation was started as a non-profit organization in 2004. Then, in order to develop “responsible tourism” in a village in Central Kerala, India, a travel company called The Blue Yonder (TBY) was established. Out of the idea to promote sustainable development with tourism, TBY initiated creative travels along Nila in Kerala, India. The river, which nurtured the old civilization of Kerala, is now trying to bring back its past wonders from the deteriorating and drying-up predicament. In 2011, TBY had vigorous development in South Africa, which is another new market. Since 2012, TBY has been forming partnerships to help promote Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Because of its roots from the local area, TBY has a great understanding of the problems related to the river and uses tourism as an approach to solve challenges of development. Besides that, TBY has a strong belief in and is also trying to help “the people, culture, heritage, lifestyle, livelihood and the future of the community”.



### Culture

- ✚ Program of musical trail since 2006.
  - Showcase traditions of music along the River Nila, with musicians from Mulayankaavu, in collaboration with Njaralathu Hari Govindan.
  - Created regular “music campus” as a stage for music learning, which is part of the trips for the TBY tourists.
  - Produced ‘Sacred Science’, a music piece, in collaboration with ‘Dewarists’, a TV Program of the country.
  
- ✚ Collaboration with Vayali, the folk group since 2006.
  - Financially supported 40 plus volunteers of the folk group.
  - Archived and advocated traditional art forms.
  - Attracting responsible tourists from other countries and creating stage for folk artists from the area to help restore the traditional art forms.
  - Promoting the development of folk group with TBY’s network around the world.

- ✚ Collaboration with community potters and craftsmen of Bell Metal.
  - Train local artists and sponsor “pottery and craftsman workshop” for tourists.
  - Artists are given money to train younger local artists to make bell metal crafts and to help maintain the traditional art.

### **Community**

- ✚ Emphasizing that all partners of tourism activities maintain their jobs to secure their steady income while involving in such activities.
- ✚ Support for Institute of Palliative Medicine (IPM).  
Attracting volunteers from other countries to partner with IPM. Vayali is a leading example for volunteer in “palliative care” in Thrissur.
- ✚ “Musical trail Initiative”.  
Featuring local musicians by media helps improve local musician’s social ranking and change their working situations.

### **Commerce**

- ✚ “Folk group of Vayali” generate sufficient additional income for the members to continue their pursuit of folk art through workshops and tourism.
- ✚ Growing potential tourist market and souvenir business to generate more income for local craftsman and artists.

### **Conservation**

Building different eco-initiatives to promote “sustainable waste management and eco-restoration” through planting varieties of native trees as Travelers’ forest.

“Musical Trail, Folk expressions, Thoni Cruise, Traveller’s Forest,” all of the projects by TBY are featured with the “theme of ‘River Nila’”. It has been the brand for the area and the residents there in the last 8 year. Meanwhile, River Nila has been made the case study for more than 30 international conferences. TBY has been awarded and recognized internationally.

*Sources:*

<http://theblueyonder.com> *The Blue Yonder*

<https://www.pinterest.com/theblueyonder/> *The Blue Yonder on Pinterest*

*Photograph courtesy of The Blue Yonder official website*

## The Tryall Club, Jamaica

### Key Words – Community; Commerce

The Tryall Club, opened in the 1950's, has a history spanning 300+ years. The property originally served as an English fort built for defense against Spanish and French invaders and later became a working sugar plantation. Tryall Club gained global fame in 1995 when it hosted the Johnny Walker World Golf Championship. Later, the club also hosted the Davis Cup tennis tournament. Today, the club is home to 74 luxury estate and 13 Great House villas, all of which are one-of-a-kind show pieces built between the 1970's to now.

Since hosting the renowned international golf and tennis tournaments, The Tryall Club maintains its reputation as a world-class private golf course and one of the most prestigious vacation estates in the entire Caribbean region.

Besides its fame, the Tryall club also prides itself on the conscious efforts it takes to protect and enhance the environment through operation. The club maintains a high level of service for members, guests, and at the same time minimizes environmental impact on the residents of Jamaica.



### Conservation

- ✚ Raising awareness of environmental issues.
  - Hosted “Eco Summer Camp” to educate kids in ecological issues. Through the participating of seminars to let kids interact with nature thus raising awareness of environmental problems.
  - Implemented a standard procedure, “Environmental Management System,” which focuses on sustainability in business operations of the Tryall Club and Villas. This includes an environmental and purchasing policy which is geared toward the reduction of consumption of natural resources as well as the protection of scarce resources.
  - Prepared a proposal presented to the Jamaican cabinet to establish 530-acre property of the Tryall Club as a legally protected forest reserve.
  - Is an established National Heritage Site with its own monuments

### Community

- ✚ The Tryall Fund, a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization, since the early 1960's to support education and health programs in Hanover parish.
  - Established and implemented a program for preschoolers and caregivers to focus on improvements in education, literacy, health and nutrition.
  - Created an endowment of 1 million USD to ensure the sustainability of the

- Tryall fund.
- Supplemented basic healthcare service provided by government operated Sandy Bay health clinic that serves more than 40 residents weekly.
  - Solicited household goods, educational materials, toys, and other supplies needed for the West Haven Orphanage, home to approximately 80 children between the age of 6 and 18.
- ✚ Offering “capstone” program under the Tryall fund.
    - Implemented intervention plan that is designed to provide a foundation for early learners to achieve lifelong learning, growth, and self-sufficiency.
    - Doubled the size of the Sandy Bay Basic School through expansions and renovations to ease pressure on existing buildings and creating a pleasant learning environment.
    - Improved the literacy rate of preschoolers through a model literacy program.
    - Training teachers to promote individualized learning with new books and computers in classrooms.
    - Sponsoring early childhood education programs for caregivers of early learners.
    - Funding program, which offers health and dental check-ups for each student and more nutritious lunch in the schools.
- ✚ Continuing its longstanding practice of providing to school aged children.
    - Funding scholarships for 20 high school, college and university level students annually.
- ✚ Involving members of Tryall Sports Club in philanthropy work.
    - Helping renovate buildings and equipment, repair existing buildings and paint classrooms to create better learning environment.
    - Organizing functions for older and needy residents to connect with members of the club as a way to show compassion and feed the less fortunate.

Being one of the most prestigious resorts in Jamaica, The Tryall Club has invested a lot of attention in providing for its community through different fund programs as well as caring for the environment. From helping the underprivileged youth get better education and nutrition, to programs for the elderly, the club can serve as a role model that many other clubs in developing nations use to study.

*Sources:*

<http://www.tryallclub.com> **The Tryall Club**

<http://www.tryallfund.org> **The Tryall Fund**

<http://greenglobe.com/blog/jamaicas-premier-resort-makes-green-choices/>

**Green Globe Certification**

*Photograph courtesy of **The Tryall Club** official website*

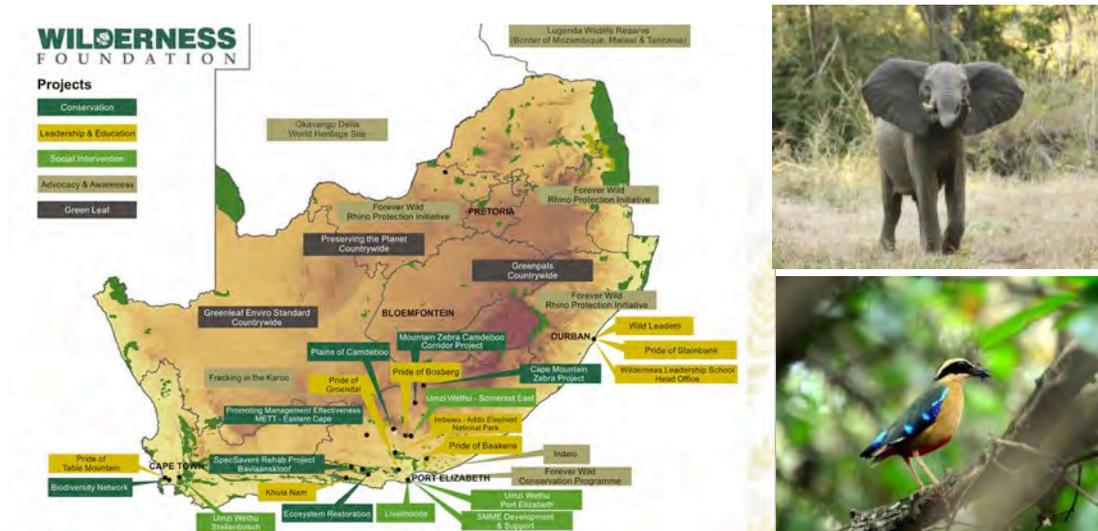
## Wilderness Foundation

“A positive force for social and environmental sustainability in Africa”

**Key Words – Conservation, Community**

Officially registered by Dr. Ian Player in 1972, the Wilderness Foundation was the first South African non-profit organization dedicated to provide wilderness expeditions to people of all races, genders, and nationalities (including in the apartheid period). Dr. Player’s organization is located in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape. Since foundation, this organization has spawned a network of conservationists from around the world to commit to saving the wilderness and wildlife.

In 2000, Dr. Ian Player handed over the Wilderness Foundation to his mentee Andrew Muir. Mr. Muir has expanded the scope of the organization by also incorporating social programs aimed at helping vulnerable youths. In 2008, Muir received the Social Enterprise award sponsored by Rolex for the establishment of the Umzi Werthu Vocational Academy.



### Conservation

- ✚ Pioneered the INDALO (Eastern Cape Private Nature Reserve Association) in 2002, with the key private reserves in the Eastern Cape region of South Africa. The association and its members cover an area over 100000 hectares of various types of natural environment.
  - Promoted social responsibility and proper land use among its members to ensure sustainability in wildlife and bio-diversity.
  - Supported non-consumptive tourism programs among all members in the association.
  - Assessed the impact of socio-economic impact of privatization of the game reserve industry in the Eastern Cape region of South Africa.
  - Co-developed project working with Conservation International to create Eastern Cape’s Albany Biodiversity Hotspot.
- ✚ Partnering to raise awareness of climate change.
  - Formed the Climate Action Partnership (CAP), an alliance formed with South

African NGOs that battles against political, social, economic challenges in order to reduce impact of climate change. Members of the CAP include:

BirdLife South Africa,  
The Botanical Society of South Africa,  
Conservation South Africa (CSA),  
The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT),  
The Wilderness Foundation,  
The Wildlands Conservation Trust,  
The Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA),  
And World Wide Fund for Nature South Africa (WWF-SA).

- ✚ Founding the Wilderness Leadership School (WLS) based on a 50 year-old vision shared by Dr. Player and his mentor, Magqubu Ntombela. The WLS has educated more than 60,000 participants. The WLS, headquartered in the Kenneth Stainback Nature Reserve, has conducted trail tours in many areas throughout South Africa.
  - Providing different levels of experiential learning opportunities to travelers through outdoor adventure programs to explore the relationship between human cultures and nature.

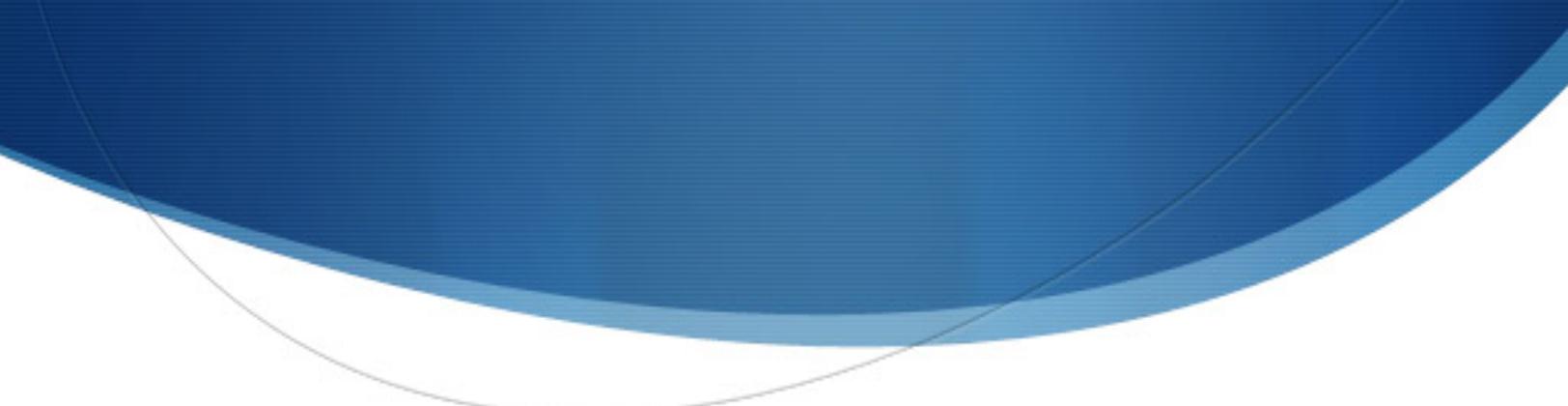
### **Community & Culture**

- ✚ Initiating a host of social programs mainly aimed to improve local life.
  - Offering orphaned and vulnerable youth chances to develop soft and hard skills for personal growth which can empower them for future growth.
  - Providing numerous personal and professional skills development with some leading to income opportunities for local communities.
  - Combining professional training with life skills, environmental knowledge, and health (especially AIDS/HIV) and family planning knowledge for a holistic program.
- ✚ Hosting leadership & education program, Imbewu project, in partnership with People & Conservation Dept. of South African National Parks to help young black leaders develop various skills and awareness.
  - Introducing disadvantaged youth to experience the wilderness of South African National Parks to gain pride of their nation and the rich natural resources.
  - Connecting youth with their historic-cultures and the surrounding nature via teachings in the wilderness by elders on camping trips.
  - Empowers youth by helping restore self-identity, connect with individual heritage, and gain an environmental consciousness.

Today, even after over 40 years of operation, the Wilderness Foundation continues to be run based on Dr. Ian Player's original values: respect for all living beings; passion for education and conservation; transparency and integrity; innovation and sustainability. Under new management, the Foundation will carry on Dr. Player's legacy in conservation, and community and culture enrichment efforts.

*Sources:*

<http://www.wildernessfoundation.co.za> **Wilderness Foundation**  
*Photograph courtesy of Wilderness Foundation official website*



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