

United Nations Environment Progra

Exploring the possibilities of green tourism worldwide



Marit Mellema

Deputy Chair

Lucas Berlea

Head Chair



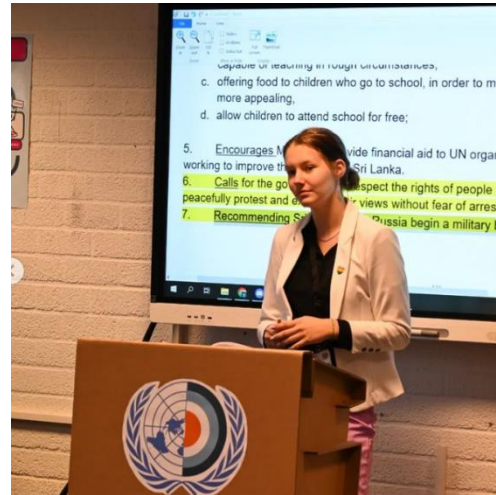
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Introducing Your Chairs

Hi!

I'm Marit Mellema, I'm seventeen years old and I go to The Vechtdal College in Ommen. In my spare time I like to volleyball, read, crochet and sleep. I am a really chaotic person and am often way to enthusiastic. This will be my first time chairing and I'm, next to being really nervous, really excited to experience the chairing experience. See you all at FAMUN!



An Introduction To The Topic

Green tourism, also referred to as sustainable or eco-friendly tourism, is a conscientious approach to travel aimed at minimizing its ecological and social footprint. This concept revolves around responsible practices that prioritize the well-being of the environment, local communities, and cultural heritage. In green tourism, there is a focus on reducing negative impacts such as pollution, habitat destruction, and resource depletion. Accommodations, transportation, and activities are selected based on their adherence to eco-friendly principles, often involving energy efficiency, waste reduction, and the use of renewable resources.

This form of tourism also emphasizes community engagement, encouraging travelers to support local economies and respect indigenous cultures. The goal is to foster a positive relationship between tourists and the destinations they visit, promoting understanding and appreciation. Certification programs, like Green Key and EarthCheck, play a role in identifying and endorsing businesses that align with sustainable tourism practices. Ultimately, green tourism strives for a harmonious balance between the economic benefits of tourism and the preservation of natural and cultural assets for future generations.

Definition of Key Terms

Green Tourism: also known as ecotourism, focuses on environmentally friendly and sustainable travel practices that minimize the impact on natural resources and promote conservation efforts.

Ecological and social footprint: Ecological footprint refers to the environmental impact of an individual, organization, or activity in terms of resource consumption and waste generation. Social footprint considers the social and cultural impact of actions on communities and societies.

Renewable resources: Renewable resources are sustainable and naturally replenishing energy or raw materials, such as sunlight, wind, or biomass, that can be used without depleting the Earth's finite resources.

Fossil resources: Fossil resources are non-renewable energy sources derived from the remains of ancient organisms, such as coal, oil, and natural gas, formed over millions of years through geological processes.

Green key: The term "Green Key" typically refers to an eco-label awarded to tourism and hospitality businesses, such as hotels and accommodations, that meet certain environmental and sustainability standards. It signifies a commitment to responsible and environmentally friendly practices within the tourism industry.

Earthcheck: "EarthCheck" is a certification and business advisory program that helps organizations, particularly in the tourism and travel sector, to achieve environmental sustainability. It provides a framework for measuring and improving the environmental and social performance of businesses, ensuring they operate responsibly and contribute to sustainable development.

A General Overview of the Issue

Green tourism, also known as sustainable or eco-friendly tourism, is an approach to travel and tourism that emphasizes responsible and environmentally-friendly practices. The goal of green tourism is to minimize the negative impact of tourism on the environment, promote conservation, and support local communities. This type of tourism seeks to balance the economic benefits of travel with the need to protect natural resources and cultural heritage.

Green tourism aims to minimize the environmental impact of travel and tourism activities. We call this Environmental Conservation. This includes efforts to reduce energy and water consumption, waste generation, and pollution. Conservation of natural habitats and biodiversity is also a priority.

Community Involvement - Green tourism emphasizes the importance of involving local communities in tourism initiatives. This helps ensure that the economic benefits of tourism are distributed more equitably, and it promotes cultural exchange and understanding between travelers and locals.

Cultural Respect - Travelers are encouraged to respect and appreciate the local culture, traditions, and heritage of the destinations they visit. This involves understanding and following local customs, supporting local artisans, and avoiding behaviors that may be disrespectful.

Sustainable Practices - Accommodations, transportation, and other tourism-related services are encouraged to adopt sustainable practices. This includes the use of renewable energy, waste reduction and recycling, and the promotion of sustainable and locally sourced products.

Education and Awareness - Green tourism advocates for educating both travelers and tourism industry professionals about the importance of sustainable practices. This includes raising awareness about environmental issues, cultural sensitivity, and the benefits of responsible tourism.

Preservation of Natural Resources - Green tourism places a strong emphasis on the preservation of natural resources, such as water, forests, and wildlife. Sustainable tourism practices aim to reduce overconsumption and ensure that these resources are protected for future generations.

Examples of green tourism initiatives include eco-friendly resorts, wildlife conservation programs, responsible tour operators, and community-based tourism projects. Certification programs, such as EarthCheck or Green Key, are often used to identify and promote businesses that adhere to sustainable tourism practices.

By adopting green tourism principles, travelers can contribute to the preservation of the environment and cultural heritage while still enjoying the benefits of travel.

Historical Background

The historical background of green tourism can be traced back to the early roots of the environmental and conservation movements, with the concept gaining prominence in the latter half of the 20th century. The development of green tourism is closely tied to broader concerns about environmental sustainability, conservation, and responsible travel practices.

Some key milestones in the historical development of green tourism are:

The Early Conservation Movements in the 19th and early 20th centuries:

The roots of green tourism can be linked to early conservation efforts and movements that emerged in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Figures like John Muir in the United States and John Evelyn in England were advocates for the preservation of natural landscapes.

The establishments of National Parks and Protected Areas:

The establishment of national parks and protected areas in various countries was a crucial step in recognizing the need to conserve natural environments. The creation of Yellowstone National Park in the United States in 1872 is often considered the world's first national park.

The rise in Environmental Awareness (1960s and 1970s):

The 1960s and 1970s saw a surge in environmental awareness, with concerns about pollution, wildlife conservation, and the impact of industrialization on the planet. The first Earth Day in 1970 marked a significant moment in raising public consciousness about environmental issues.

Birth of Ecotourism (1980s):

The term "ecotourism" gained popularity in the 1980s as a way to describe travel that focuses on experiencing and preserving natural environments. Ecotourism involves low-impact activities that contribute to conservation efforts and support local communities.

The Brundtland Report (1987):

The concept of sustainable development was widely popularized by the Brundtland Report, officially titled "Our Common Future," published by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. The report emphasized the need to balance economic, social, and environmental considerations for future generations.

Agenda 21 (1992):

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 produced Agenda 21, a comprehensive plan of action for sustainable development. This document included recommendations for the tourism sector to adopt sustainable practices.


The establishment of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC):

The GSTC was established in 2008 to develop and manage global sustainable tourism standards. The GSTC Criteria provides a framework for businesses and destinations to implement sustainable practices in the tourism industry.

Rise of Certification Programs:

Over the years, various certification programs and labels, such as EarthCheck, Green Key, and Rainforest Alliance, have been introduced to identify and promote businesses and destinations committed to sustainable and responsible tourism practices.

Today, green tourism continues to evolve as a response to growing environmental concerns and the recognition of the need for responsible tourism practices to ensure the long-term health of ecosystems and cultural heritage. The historical trajectory of green tourism reflects a broader societal shift toward sustainability and responsible stewardship of the planet.

Major Parties Involved

Tourists = Tourists play a crucial role in green tourism by making responsible and sustainable choices during their travels. This includes choosing eco-friendly accommodations, supporting local businesses, and minimizing their environmental footprint.

The tourism industry = The tourism industry itself, including hotels, tour operators, airlines, and other service providers, can adopt sustainable practices. This may involve implementing energy-efficient measures, reducing waste, and promoting conservation efforts.

Local Communities = Local communities are essential stakeholders in green tourism. They are directly impacted by tourism activities, and their involvement is crucial for the success of sustainable initiatives. Community engagement and empowerment can help ensure that tourism benefits the local economy and environment.

Government and Regulatory Bodies = Governments and regulatory bodies play a key role in shaping policies and regulations that promote sustainable tourism practices. They can enforce environmental standards, establish protected areas, and incentivize businesses to adopt eco-friendly measures.


Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) = NGOs focused on environmental conservation and sustainable development often work with local communities and governments to implement and support green tourism initiatives. They may provide expertise, advocacy, and resources to promote responsible tourism.

Certification Programs = Various certification programs and organizations, such as EarthCheck, Green Key, and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), play a role in accrediting businesses and destinations that adhere to sustainable practices. These certifications help guide tourists toward eco-friendly options.

Educational and Research Institutions = Academic institutions and research organizations contribute to the understanding of sustainable tourism and help develop best practices. They may conduct studies, provide training, and offer recommendations for improving the environmental and social impact of tourism.

Media and Advocacy Groups = Media outlets and advocacy groups play a role in raising awareness about the environmental and social impacts of tourism. They can encourage responsible travel behavior and highlight destinations and businesses that prioritize sustainability.

Technology and Innovation by tech companies = Technological advancements can contribute to green tourism by introducing more sustainable practices. This includes innovations in renewable energy, waste reduction, and eco-friendly transportation options.



Suppliers and Partners = Suppliers and business partners in the tourism supply chain, such as food suppliers, transportation providers, and equipment rental companies, can adopt sustainable practices and collaborate with the industry to reduce its overall environmental impact.

Timeline Of Key Events

While there isn't a specific comprehensive timeline for green tourism, as it has evolved over time with various initiatives, policies, and events contributing to its development.

1970s-1980s: Emergence of Environmental Awareness

The environmental movement gained momentum during this period, with concerns about pollution, deforestation, and other environmental issues becoming more prominent. This laid the foundation for increased awareness of the environmental impact of tourism.

1992: Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro

The Earth Summit marked a turning point for sustainable development and included discussions on the environmental and social impact of tourism. Agenda 21, a key outcome of the summit, highlighted the need for sustainable tourism practices.

1996: Formation of The International Ecotourism Society (TIES)

TIES was established to promote responsible tourism and ecotourism. It played a pivotal role in advocating for environmentally and socially conscious travel practices.

2002: Launch of the Green Key Certification Program

The Green Key program, initiated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), started providing certification to hotels and other accommodation facilities adhering to sustainable practices.

2008: Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Established

The GSTC was founded to establish and manage global sustainability criteria for travel and tourism. It developed the GSTC Criteria, a set of standards for sustainable tourism.

2010: United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Focus on Sustainable Tourism

The UNWTO declared 2010 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, emphasizing the role of tourism in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2012: Earth Summit (Rio+20)

Sustainable tourism was a key focus at the Rio+20 Conference, and the outcome document called for the promotion of sustainable tourism as a means to contribute to sustainable development.

2014: Global Ecotourism Conference in Bonito, Brazil

The conference brought together stakeholders to discuss the challenges and opportunities in ecotourism and sustainable tourism. It emphasized the



importance of community involvement in green tourism initiatives.

2017: International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

The United Nations declared 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development to raise awareness about the contribution of tourism to the SDGs.

This timeline provides a general overview, however it's important to note that sustainable tourism is an evolving field with ongoing developments and initiatives. Many organizations, governments, and businesses are continuously working to improve and promote sustainable practices within the tourism industry.

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