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Fostering Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Ecotourism to support sustainable development in Vietnam and the Philippines

A matter of responsibility: Awareness and education for
ecotourism

ECOVIP Online Training Module 2: Ecotourism and sustainable development

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Greening tourism

- Sustainable development is linked to the growth of ecotourism
- Quest for sustainability
 - Following lead of other industries
 - Growth of corporate responsibility
- The 'greening' of tourism refers to efforts and initiatives aimed at making the tourism industry more environmentally sustainable and socially responsible.
- Eco certification encourages this 'greening' of tourism

AWARENESS

EDUCATION

Even if many travelers (97%) can not name any, over 40% of respondents looked for 3rd party certification to verify that a travel supplier is truly 'environmentally friendly'. (CMI Green Traveler Study Report, 2010 by GreenBook.org)

Tourism Eco Certification

- Tourism certification generally involves a voluntary, third-party assessment of a tourism enterprise's conformity to a set of standards, including specific sustainability targets.
 - relevant Marketing tool, available for both tourism operators and destinations
 - quality assurance – responsibility and sustainability of the operator's activities and/or destination management
 - generates awareness among customers
- Showing that tourism products and destinations support ecotourism's philosophy
- Highlights effort made on an environmental, socio-cultural and economic basis

To what extent certification actually influence consumer travel decision making?
Are tourist duly aware of, or sure of, what the many available certification labels mean?

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (2018)



Does eco certification sell tourism services?

Karlsson, L. & Dolnicar, S. (2016). Does eco certification sell tourism services? Evidence from a quasi-experimental observation study in Iceland. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 24(5), 694-714. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09669582.2015.1088859>

Eco Certification Benefits

A solid blue circle containing the text "Tourism Operations".

Tourism Operations

- Improve environmental and social performance.
- Gain competitive advantages and access new markets.
- Reduce ecological footprint, improve reputation and attract more conscious and loyal customers.
- Incentives and guidance for continuous improvement and innovation.

A solid green circle containing the text "Ecotourists".

Ecotourists

- Make informed and responsible choices.
- Enjoy authentic and quality experiences and contribute to conservation and development.
- Supporting ethical and sustainable practices, learning from local cultures and minimizing their negative impacts.
- Increase travellers' satisfaction and awareness.

A solid yellow circle containing the text "Destinations".

Destinations

- Help protect and enhance their natural and cultural assets.
- Diversify and strengthen the economy and empower local communities.
- Increase visibility and attractiveness, generate more income and employment, and foster collaboration and participation among stakeholders.
- Support policies and planning for sustainable tourism development.

Eco Certification

Common components of eco certification programs

- Voluntary enrollments
- Logo → Ecolabels
- Improvement upon regulations
- Assessment and auditing
- Membership and fees
- Increased marketing for certified company



Tourism certification programs

Global schemes

e.g. Green Globe 21



<https://www.greenglobe.com/>

Regional schemes

e.g. Quality Tourism for the Caribbean (QTC)



<https://www.onecaribbean.org/>
<https://www.onecaribbean.org/content/files/GailHenryTourismStandardsGuyanaJune2009.pdf>

National/local schemes

e.g. ECO Certification in Australia



e.g. Smart Voyager in the Galapagos Islands



<https://www.ecotourism.org.au/our-certification-programs/eco-certification>

<https://www.ccd.ec/>

Tourism certification programs

The majority of these schemes center and/or have started focusing on accommodation:



<https://www.greenkey.global/>



https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/eu-ecolabel-home_en



<https://www.biohotels.info/en/>



<https://www.gites-de-france.com/fr/nos-sejours-themes/ecogites>



<https://www.greenstarhotel.org/>



LEGAMBIENTE

<https://www.legambienteturismo.it/>



<https://www.greensign.de/en/>



<https://ecocamping.de/>

Tourism certification programs

But efforts have been made to diversify into other segments:

Destinations

e.g. Costa Rica – CST



<https://www.ict.go.cr/en/sustainability/cst.html>

Beaches

e.g. Blue Flag



<https://www.blueflag.global/>

Protected areas

e.g. PAN Parks



<https://www.panparks.org/>

Individuals

e.g. Tour guides – ROC



<https://www.ecotourism.org.au/our-certification-programs/ecocertification-3>

Tourism certification programs

Other internationally recognized initiatives → from small operations to destinations

EarthCheck



EARTHCHECK

<https://earthcheck.org/>

BiosphereTourism



**BIOSPHERE
EXPERIENCE**

<https://www.biospheretourism.com/>

Green Destinations



<https://www.greendestinations.org/>

ISO



<https://www.iso.org/standard/87609.html>

Challenges of Eco certification Accreditation

Plethora of eco certification programs and eco-labels → who certifies the certifiers?

- Establishes international criteria for certification
- Monitors compliance with such criteria
- Increases credibility of certification schemes
- Ensures transparency
- Supports marketing efforts



<https://www.gstcouncil.org/>

Challenges of Eco certification

Future aspiration:

- Eco responsibility should be less about one attribute or another, and more about a holistic approach of thinking through the past, present, and future of every tourism product/destination.

Just a marketing ploy?

- More than marketing positioning, environmental and social responsibility should be an aspect of product quality in every tourism product.

The Other Coast By Adrian Raeside



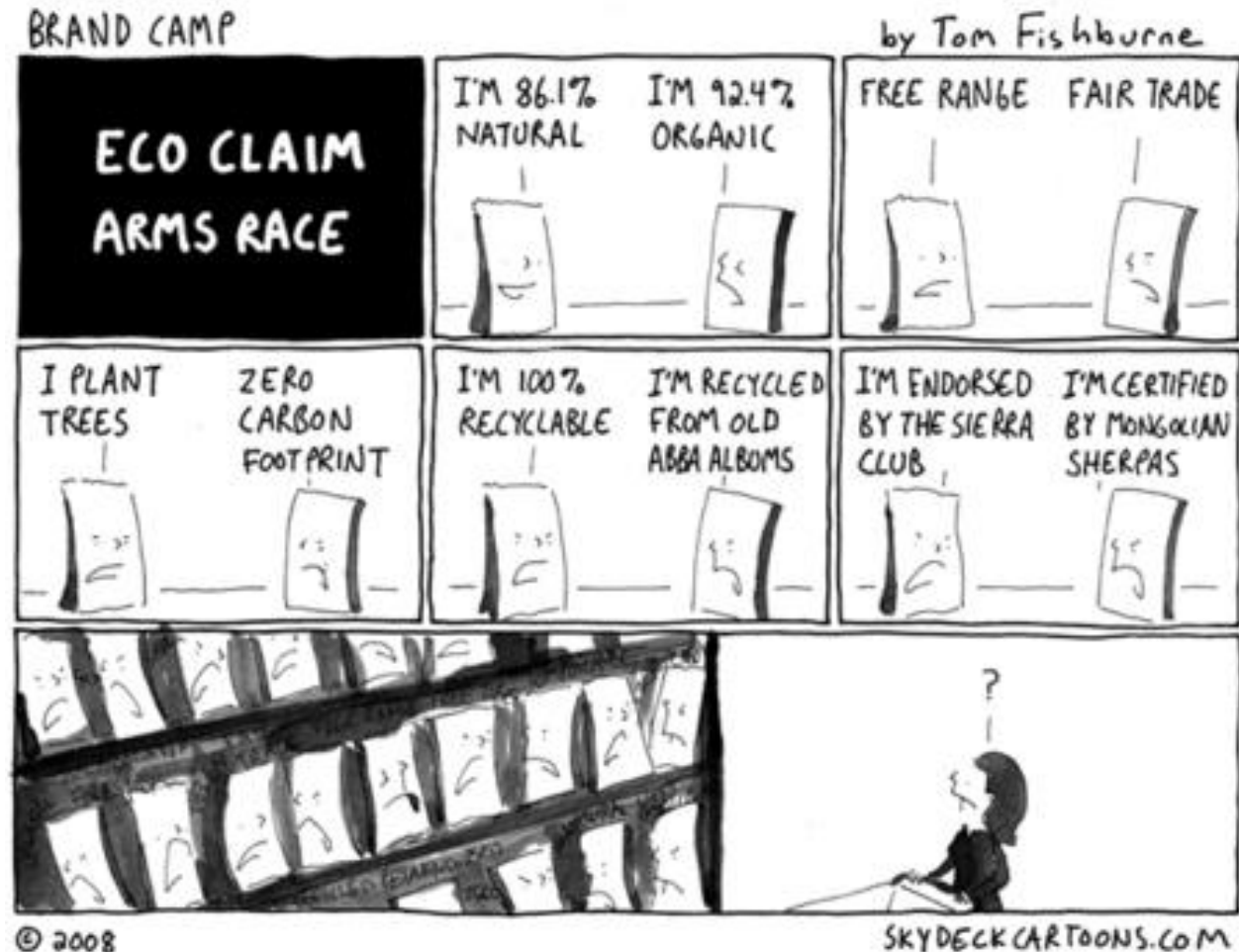
Challenges of Eco certification

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Thank you!

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Do conhecimento à prática.



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