



Report on Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa “the Alliance” activities

Period covered: 5 July 2012 – 28 February 2013

1. Report back on Portfolio Committees (PFCs)

1.1 Standards and sharing of best practice

- **Chair:** Heidi van der Watt (International Centre for Responsible Tourism)

1.1.1 Standards and sharing of best practice PFC meeting with the Secretariat

The Secretariat met with Heidi van der Watt (Chair of the Standards and sharing of best practice PFC) to discuss activities and planning on 21 August 2012.

1.1.2 September 2012 Survey

The Secretariat facilitated a survey entitled ‘Highlighting Alliance’s priority areas in relation to relevance/importance for Alliance members’. Findings of the survey will inform various Alliance activities in relation to planning of special projects etc.

Given the nature of information required, the survey was sent only to standard owners/setters as follows:

- i. South African National Department of Tourism (Responsible Tourism Directorate)
- ii. Botswana Tourism Organisation
- iii. The Heritage Environmental Management Company
- iv. Eco Awards Namibia
- v. Eco Tourism Kenya
- vi. Responsible Tourism Tanzania
- vii. Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa

Six of the seven organisations invited participated completed the survey. The survey report is attached as Annexure 1.

1.1.3 ITC Standards Map workshop November 2012

The Secretariat organised a virtual workshop on the International Trade Centre (ITC) Standards Map on 19 November 2012 targeted at certification programmes that are members of the Alliance. The workshop objective was to build the capacity of targeted members to use of a freely available tool developed to conduct comparative analyses between varying standards. The workshop was

facilitated by Mathieu Lamolle (ITC Standards Database Coordinator). Participants of the one hour workshop were as follows:

- i. Eco Tourism Kenya
- ii. Eco Awards Namibia
- iii. Heritage
- iv. Travelife
- v. Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa
- vi. Global Sustainable Tourism Council

The workshop was recorded by ITC on behalf of the Secretariat and a link to download provided to targeted Alliance members (certification programmes).

Interest in using the tool was expressed by a number of Alliance members going forward. Alliance members were then provided with necessary information should they choose to make use of this resource.

To view the recorded training workshop click on the following link: <https://standardsmap.webex.com/standardsmap/ldr.php?AT=pb&SP=MC&rID=18664897&rKey=92DD5C4A47E3A994>.

1.1.4 GSTC virtual training workshop, January 2013

A virtual training workshop to support interested certification programmes in achieving GSTC recognition was facilitated on 25 January 2013. The workshop was facilitated by Amos Bien – GSTC technical director. The workshop saw excellent representation from the Alliance membership. Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties, the workshop had to be cancelled. A new date is currently being scheduled by the secretariat.

The training presentation is attached as Annexure 2.

1.2 Market development

➤ **Chair:** Sonja Gottlebe (Boogie Pilgrim)

1.2.1 Market development PFC meeting with the Secretariat

The Secretariat met with Sonja Ranarivelo (Chair of the Market development PFC) to discuss activities and planning on 8 November 2012.

1.2.2 Indaba 2013 proposal, September 2012

The Alliance Secretariat, in seeking to provide tangible benefits to its membership, proposed that Alliance members (certification programmes) have a stand at Indaba 2013 on a cost-sharing basis. The objective of the proposal was to make it more feasible/affordable for certification programmes to participate at the show.

The following organisations were invited:

➤ Eco Awards Namibia

- Eco Tourism Kenya
- Botswana Tourism Organisation
- Heritage Environmental Management Company
- Responsible Tourism Tanzania

Due to poor uptake (primarily attributed to resource constraints), it was decided not to go ahead with the project in 2013. However, the matter has been tabled for discussion at the 2013 Annual meeting.

The invitation sent to targeted Alliance members is attached as Annexure 3.

1.2.3 Alliance website

Included in the 2012 – 2015 Alliance work plan was the need to give the Alliance website a re-vamp, given that the site is not user friendly and has been dormant since 2010 as a result of resource constraints.

The Alliance Secretariat secured the services of four experts from SAP, a global consulting company, to work on, amongst other things, a plan for re-vamping the Alliance website as well as activities to increase traffic to the site. The consultants participated in this assignment as part of SAP's corporate Sabbatical programme – a four week pilot programme designed to provide in-services to non-profit organisations in various countries across the Globe.

A concrete plan (inclusive of re-mapping) was completed and is currently being implemented. The Secretariat aims to have the website revamp complete by January 2013, with a plan to re-launch formally in May 2013. The re-vamped website will also have a newly established marketing resource centre.

The website re-mapping plan is attached as Annexure 4. Planned activities to drive traffic to the Alliance website are provided in Annexure 5.

1.3 Advocacy and Lobbying

- **Chair:** Bekithemba Langalibalele (South African National Department of Tourism)
- **PFC members:** Richard Malesu (Botswana Tourism Organisation); Damian Bell (Responsible Tourism Tanzania)

1.3.1 Advocacy and Lobbying PFC meeting with the Secretariat

The Secretariat met with Bekithemba Langalibalele (Chair of the Advocacy and Lobbying PFC) to discuss activities and planning. The PFC is now formally comprised of the Chair (from South Africa's National Department of Tourism), supported by Responsible Tourism Tanzania and Botswana Tourism Organisation.

1.3.2 Meeting with RETOSA, July 2012

Bekithemba and the Secretariat met with Simba Mandinyenya (RETOSA Research Planning and Development Director) to get more

information/clarification on RETOSA's new "Southern Africa harmonised rating standard". A major outcome of this meeting was RETOSA's agreement to enter into a two year MoU with the Alliance. This MoU will be the foundation for formal engagement with the Alliance as and when opportunity arises.

The MoU is attached as Annexure 6.

1.3.3 Eco Mark Africa workshop, June 2012

On 6 and 7 June 2012 a Secretariat representative attended an Eco Mark Africa (EMA) workshop.

Alliance membership representation was as follows:

- i. Alliance Secretariat/FTTSA (Netsai Sibanda)
- ii. Bekithemba Langalibalele (South African National Department of Tourism – NDT, and Chair of the Alliance's Advocacy and Lobbying PFC)
- iii. Heidi van der Watt (International Centre for Responsible Tourism – ICRT, Chair of the EMA working group for tourism standards, and Chair of the Alliance's Standards and Sharing of Best Practice PFC)

The purpose of the workshop was to finalise draft certification standards for the following sectors throughout Africa:

1. Forestry
2. Fisheries
3. Agriculture
4. Tourism

Delegates were given a presentation on EMA. Heidi then gave a presentation on feedback from the Alliance, based on the discussions subsequent to EMA's presentation at the 1st Annual STNSA Conference held on 10 May 2012.

The expectation subsequent to the presentation was that there would be some sort of plenary discussion with the EMA secretariat on the concerns, or, a similar discussion in the subsequent 'Tourism Sector Working Group'. This did not occur. Subsequently, concerns were noted and submitted in writing by the Alliance to the EMA secretariat.

EMA's funding runs out in the first quarter of 2013.

1.3.4 Meeting with Eco Mark Africa (EMA) Consultant, July 2012

The Secretariat, Bekithemba Langalibalele and Heidi van der Watt met with the consultant contracted by EMA to prepare its business model – Dr Lawrence Gadzikwa. Dr Gadzikwa confirmed that the 3 proposed business models for EMA for consideration were as follows:

- i. Full Service Model:

- ✓ Accreditation services (accreditation of accreditation bodies & accreditation of certification bodies)
- ✓ Benchmarking services (how to deal with various schemes i.e. approval / recognition)
- ✓ Branding (EMA will manage brand & logo)
- ii. Benchmarking services & branding
- iii. Branding only

1.3.5 Alliance newsflash, August 2012

The Secretariat circulated the first Alliance newsflash on 2 August 2012 to 410 newsflash subscribers (including registered members, media, tour operators and stakeholders interested in Sustainable Tourism).

The newsflash is attached as Annexure 7 .

1.3.6 Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) brand strategy workshop, Lesotho, September 2012

The Secretariat attended the RETOSA Brand Strategy Workshop in Maseru, Lesotho that took place on 10 and 11 September 2012. The event was an excellent networking opportunity for the Alliance, made possible through a Memorandum of Agreement signed between the Alliance and RETOSA, which forms a basis for engagement in support of both the Alliance and RETOSA's objectives. While in Lesotho, meetings were taken to raise awareness of the Alliance with the following organisations:

- i. Tourism Office of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- ii. Tanzania Tourist Board
- iii. Zimbabwe Tourist Board
- iv. Yellow Railroad (the consulting company contracted by RETOSA to support the organisation in developing a regional brand for southern Africa).

The Lesotho workshop report is attached as Annexure 7.

All of the abovementioned organisations were invited to become members of the Alliance. Follow ups are being conducted to support the organisations to become registered members.

October 2012. Once finalised, the Secretariat will share the approved brand strategy document with the Alliance membership. The workshop report is attached as Annexure 8. The Brand Communications Strategy is attached as Annexure 9.

1.3.7 GSTC board appointments, July 2012

The Alliance Secretariat successfully lobbied for the appointment of Jennifer Seif and Heidi van der Watt (Alliance members) to the GSTC board through a 'Vote

for Africa' campaign in July 2012. The Secretariat lobbied for votes from the GSTC membership.

A copy of the widely circulated campaign message is attached as Annexure 10.

1.3.8 Skype meeting with GSTC Technical Director, August 2012

The Alliance Secretariat had a Skype meeting with Amos Bien, GTSC Technical Director on 23 August 2012. The objectives of the meeting included familiarising Amos with the Alliance as well as to discuss potential for collaboration. The meeting was very positive, with Amos conveying nothing but positive sentiments about the Alliance. In this meeting Amos confirmed his interest in facilitating a workshop on GSTC recognition and accreditation for Alliance members. The GSTC is considering becoming a formally registered Alliance member.

1.3.9 EMA standards Sector Working Group Chairs' meeting, Nairobi, February 2013

Towards the end of 2012, the AEM Executive Board opted for EMA to develop a strategy to roll out a programme of work through which EMA would adapt a 'full service model' which encompasses the following:

- ✓ Accreditation services (accreditation of accreditation bodies & accreditation of certification bodies)
- ✓ Benchmarking services (how to deal with various schemes i.e. approval / recognition)
- ✓ Branding (EMA will manage brand & logo)

Alliance membership in attendance was covered by Heidi. Following the end of the public review process on the EMA draft standards and reaction on comments, the final output of the draft standard was discussed in the meeting. This draft was circulated to Alliance members for comment on 5 February 2013 by the Secretariat on behalf of Heidi.

The draft standards differ in the 'face' and structure from the original committee draft that was circulated for public review. The original draft was based on extensive discussion in the Sector Working Group where the group tried to ensure alignment with the GTSC criteria and SANS1162:2010. The new document substantially deviates not only in structure but also in intent and content from the document originally distributed (also attached). According to the AEM secretariat, the changes were necessitated by a technical decision of the AEM to structure the content of the draft standards into principles and for each principle the criteria and indicators that affiliate to it.

The AEM secretariat is trying to push through adoption of the standard as it stands now at the next SWG meeting scheduled for 19 February, 2013. Heidi is working to submit a coordinated response to the revised standard to stem this attempt. The deadline for submission of comment to the AEM secretariat is 9 February 2013.

1.3.10 RETOSA workshop, January 2013

The Secretariat (represented by Netsai Sibanda) attended Day 2 of RETOSA's workshop entitled "The Southern Africa Tourism Quality Standards and Skills Development Workshop".

The workshop covered the following topics:

1. The quality standards developed by RETOSA for Tourism for its 15 member states
2. Sustainable (Green) Tourism Including Climate change
3. Skills development (in order to deal primarily with point 1 above)
4. Certification (as it relates to sustainable/responsible tourism product certification)

The Secretariat gave a short presentation on developments in certification globally, continentally, regionally and from a destination-specific perspective and finally on the Alliance (as a means through which the various programmes in southern and East Africa communicate and share information in a coordinated manner). A working group has been established by RETOSA to discuss matters pertaining to sustainability certification.

Expressions of interest in formally becoming a member of the Alliance came from the following organisations subsequent to the workshop:

- i. Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation
- ii. Mauritius Tourism Authority
- iii. Tanzania Tourist Board

1.4 Impact Analysis

- **Chair:** Anna Spenceley (Stand cc)
- **Members:** Steve Collins (Africa Safari Lodge Foundation); Irene Lane (Greenloons LLC)

1.4.1 Appointment of new Impact Analysis PFC Chair

The originally appointed Chair of the Impact Analysis PFC (Rodney Knipe) was completely incommunicado despite numerous contact attempts (electronic and telephonic) since his appointment at the May 2012 Annual Meeting. Subsequent to consultation with the Executive Committee (EXCO), Anna Spenceley was appointed as Chair of the Impact Analysis PFC on 4 December 2012.

1.4.2 Methodology to measure the impacts of certification

A priority need for sustainable tourism programmes globally, is the establishment of a developmental (for donors) and business case (for tourism products) for responsible tourism certification. Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTT) secured the services of four experts from SAP, a global consulting company, to work on developing a methodology to address this need. The

team, comprised of representatives from Germany, India, USA and the Ukraine worked with FTSA for 4 weeks (October – November 2012). Given the nature of the work, FTT incorporated this work into its work as the Alliance Secretariat, given that the findings would be of interest for the Alliance membership.

The SAP team participated in this assignment as part of SAP’s Corporate Social Sabbatical programme – a four week pilot programme designed to provide in-kind services to non-profit organisations in various countries across the globe.

The Secretariat is pleased with the outcomes of the team’s work and looks forward to sharing the outcomes at the Alliance’s 2013 Annual Conference.

A report on the process is attached as Annexure 11.

2. Current formally registered Alliance members

The table below provides details of all formally registered Alliance members as at 8 February 2013.

No.	Country	Organisation	Membership Category
1	Botswana	Botswana Tourism Organisation	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
2	Germany	TourCert	International and/or regional certification scheme owners and certification bodies involved in tourism certification in Africa
3	Kenya	Basecamp Foundation Kenya	Business development service providers (BDSPs) in Africa providing services to tourism businesses and/or certification schemes
4	Kenya	Eco Tourism Kenya	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
5	Namibia	Eco Awards Namibia Alliance	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
6	Seychelles	Seychelles Tourism Board	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
7	South Africa	Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa(FTSA)	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
8	South Africa	Heritage - The Environmental Management Company	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
9	South Africa	National Department of Tourism	Tourism boards and tourism ministries responsible for creating an enabling environment for sustainable tourism certification / seeking to position their responsible destinations in the marketplace
10	South Africa	Levelle Perspectives	Business development service providers (BDSPs) in Africa providing services to tourism businesses and/or certification schemes
11	Southern Africa	RETOSA	Regionally focused organisations with a stake in sustainable tourism

certification			
12	Southern Africa	All Out Africa	Affiliate
13	Southern Africa	Stand cc	Business development service providers (BDSPs) in Africa providing services to tourism businesses and/or certification schemes
14	Southern Africa	African Safari Lodge Foundation	Business development service providers (BDSPs) in Africa providing services to tourism businesses and/or certification schemes
15	Southern Africa	Serendipity Africa	Business development service providers (BDSPs) in Africa providing services to tourism businesses and/or certification schemes
16	Switzerland	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)	Affiliate
17	Tanzania	Tanzania Tourist Board	Tourism boards and tourism ministries responsible for creating an enabling environment for sustainable tourism certification / seeking to position their responsible destinations in the marketplace
18	Tanzania	Responsible Tourism Tanzania	Certification scheme owners and certification bodies based in Africa
19	USA/International	Greenloons LLC	Affiliate

Total countries represented = 8¹

Targeted organisations/countries from February 2013 – May 2013

Country	Organisation
Democratic Republic of Congo	National Tourism Office
Global	GSTC
Lesotho	Lesotho tourism Development Corporation
Madagascar	Go To Madagascar
Mauritius	Mauritius Tourism Authority
Mozambique	Mozambique Tourism Authority
Swaziland	Swaziland Tourism Authority
Tanzania	Tanzania Tourist Board

¹ Botswana, Germany, Kenya, Namibia, Seychelles, Tanzania, South Africa

List of Annexures

- Annexure 1 Survey entitled 'Highlighting Alliance's priority areas in relation to relevance/importance for Alliance members'
- Annexure 2 GSTC workshop presentation
- Annexure 3 Invitation to Alliance members to exhibit at Indaba 2013
- Annexure 4 Alliance website re-mapping plan
- Annexure 5 Planned activities to drive traffic to the Alliance website
- Annexure 6 RETOSA MoU
- Annexure 7 Alliance August 2012 newsflash
- Annexure 8 Retosa Lesotho workshop report
- Annexure 9 RETOSA DRAFT Brand Communication and Marketing Strategy
- Annexure 9 'Vote for Africa' campaign
- Annexure 10 SAP report to FTSA