



# **The Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa (“the Alliance”)**

## **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**Hotel Verde, Cape Town International Airport**

**Cape Town, South Africa**

**4 April 2016**

**Conference Report**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa (“the Alliance”) fourth Annual Conference was held on 4 April 2016 at Hotel Verde which is located at Cape Town International Airport. The conference was organised and convened by Fair Trade Tourism (FTT) in its capacity as Alliance Secretariat with funding secured by FTT from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The event was attended by 41 delegates through which included Botswana, Egypt, Germany, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Kenya, Namibia, Netherlands, Seychelles, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania and the United States of America.

The conference programme is provided below.

### In Attendance

	Country	Organisation	Representative
1	Botswana	Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO)	Richard Malesu
2	Botswana	BTO	Jonathan Camm
3	Botswana	BTO	Judith Maifala
4	Botswana	BTO	Tebogo Ntsatsi
5	Botswana	BTO	Phuthego Thokomela
6	Botswana	BTO	Mildred Mackennie
7	Botswana	BTO	Tshoganetso Carl-Ponoesele
8	Botswana	BTO	Thatayaone Mmpatsi
9	Botswana	KAZA TFCA	Morris Mtsambiwa
10	Egypt	Ministry of Tourism	Emad Hassan
11	Germany	Phipps University Marburg	Annika Surmeier
12	Germany	GIZ: Tourism for Sustainable Development	Jose Froehling
13	Germany	University for Sustainable Development Eberwalde	Nadja Pilz
14	Madagascar	Boogie Pilgrim	Sonja Gottlebe
15	Madagascar	Boogie Pilgrim	Patrice Raoull
16	Malawi	Malawi Tourism Authority	Rollings Moyo
17	Mozambique	Terra Agua Ceu	Philipp Walz
18	Mozambique	UEM & ANAC	Mohamed Harun
19	Kenya	Eco Tourism Kenya	Grace Nderitu
20	Namibia	Eco Awards Namibia	Hazel Milne
21	Netherlands	Travelife	Emilie Hagedoorn
22	Seychelles	Seychelles Ministry of Tourism and Culture	Sinha Levkovic
23	Seychelles	Seychelles Ministry of Tourism and Culture	Janice Bristol
24	South Africa	Africa Travel Concept	Martina Vollmer
25	South Africa	Fair Trade Tourism (FTT)	Nivashnee Naidoo
26	South Africa	FTT	Netsai Sibanda
27	South Africa	FTT	Malebo Rammekoa
28	South Africa	FTT	Manuel Bollmann
29	South Africa	National Department of Tourism	Bekithemba Langalibalele
30	South Africa	Heritage Environmental Management Programme	Greg McManus
31	South Africa	Levelle Perspectives	Lisa Scriven
32	South Africa	Green Girls in Africa	Louise de Waal

<b>33</b>	South Africa	Better Tourism	Heidi van der Watt
<b>34</b>	South Africa	Abang Africa Travel	Henko Wentholt
<b>35</b>	South Africa	Tourvest	Karien Le Grand
<b>36</b>	South Africa	Boundless Southern Africa	Roland Vorwerk
<b>37</b>	South Africa	Peace Parks Foundation	Kathy Bergs
<b>38</b>	South Africa	Tourism Results	Uwe Sturmann
<b>39</b>	Switzerland	Kuoni / Advisor	Matthias Leisinger
<b>40</b>	Tanzania	Responsible Tourism Tanzania	Damian Bell
<b>41</b>	USA	Global Sustainable Tourism Council	Randy Durband

## 1. Alliance Chairperson's Welcome address

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, to the 5<sup>th</sup> annual conference on sustainable tourism – the first in Cape Town. This event takes place in the shadow of WTM-Africa – one of the most comprehensive tourism showcases on the Continent, and it provides us



with a valuable opportunity to share experiences and talk about the state of sustainable tourism in Africa. Tourism growth in Africa is set to outperform global growth projections for the next few years, with South Africa achieving the 10 million visitors a year mark in November last year. And while the growth projects benefits for all of us across this region, it also brings with it challenges that unless addressed, will undermine sustainability across the region to the detriment of communities and our cultural and social fabric.

**Social** impacts associated with unbridled tourism – or tourism growth in-line with projections, can result in serious long-term damage. While travel and tourism are great wealth and growth developers, they also have the potential to create instability in the social fabric of destinations unless well managed. We need to be aware of this and ensure that our regional, national and indeed, continental strategies are aligned with best practice in social development and protection.

The **cultural** value of Africa as a whole could be easily undermined unless we take measures to protect and enhance our identity as a destination. As has been seen in other destinations globally, mass tourism has the tendency to smother traditional, local cultural identities in an effort to meet the needs of tourists. Paris – for example, recognised the need to protect the cultural legacy of French by demanding that the global McDonalds organisation only use French in the menu's, while similar demands have been made across other destinations, requiring the giant to include regional and national dishes on their well-known menu. In destinations across the world, host communities are starting to expect governments and tourism authorities to protect their cultural identities while at the same time growing visitor numbers.

The **economic** impacts of tourism are immense. It is understood that tourism represents one of the highest multiplier effects on local economies, but continued leakage of the tourist Dollar in the actual source markets means that less and less wealth is actually being created at local level in many parts of the world. In order to ensure the sustainability of tourism in general, we need to encourage and grow the economic benefits at local community level – through responsible procurement, development and marketing initiatives. Greater emphasis will be needed on the economic impacts of tourism to ensure that we provide sustainable jobs and benefits to our people.

And the **environmental** impacts almost speak for themselves. Tourists consume vast amounts of resources that would otherwise be used to develop local communities and the destination itself. By ensuring more responsible use and management of our water, energy and natural resource base – and by driving greater commitment to environmental protection in all its forms, we can ensure

future generations of our community and of visitors alike enjoy the benefits, attractions, cultures and uniqueness of Africa itself.

With all of this in mind, we are pleased to see the supply of responsible products across the region continues to grow – albeit slowly. Responsible tourism and sustainability programmes are growing across Africa, and a lot of work has been done to encourage and support harmonisation of standards. But in a country like South Africa, where there are over twenty-thousand tourist accommodation establishments, less than one hundred of these have been independently certified as being responsible or sustainable – a shocking indictment on our industry’s leaders. But we are not alone – this is a global phenomenon, and we need to double our efforts to increase this figure through a combination of awareness and leadership.

In spite of this low certification level, awareness of sustainability and responsible tourism in general is high. Almost no day passes without some issue related to the subject being noted in the media, and discussions with any hotelier – globally, reflects a high awareness of issues. We need to convert that awareness into action, and the adoption of certification as the “validation of performance”. This week, we will see the winners of the 2016 African Responsible Tourism Awards announced here in Cape Town, but sadly I predict it will focus on ‘the usual suspects’ winning recognition. We need to encourage greater participation and recognition across our respective countries.

This conference focuses on a very important part of our tourism industry, the distribution side. The role played by travel agents, tour operators and other distribution channels in the development of responsible tourism is underestimated – and under-utilised. This sector has an immediate impact on our efforts to entrench sustainability, but there is still a lack of involvement by some of the largest distributors globally. There is a slow take-up of certified products – with many distribution channels continuing to rely on self-assessment and PR claims by products themselves, and these needs to change if we want to become a sustainable destination. The growth in responsible products – in spite of slow certification trends, provides a great basis on which distributors can build their itineraries and product base, but we need this network to play their part in encouraging second- and third-party certification of products to avoid the greenwashing that currently seems to be the norm. Knowing what to look for is an important part of the sustainable tourism journey, and hopefully today we will gain a better understanding of how certification bodies, governments and labels can work closer with the distribution channels to create a more sustainable future for all. I invite you all to be involved and to participate fully in the conference, and together work towards a future that secures sustainability as a cornerstone of Africa’s tourism development.

To our speakers, welcome. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas on this important issue. To the visitors and delegates that are attending for the first time, welcome to our network and to the organising team that has brought us together – our Alliance Secretariat under the guidance of Netsai, well-done on the effort. A final word to members of the Alliance itself, thank you for your continued commitment and support. Without you this would not have been possible.

Thank you

## 2. Introductions

Hazel Milne, Programme Coordinator for Eco Awards **Namibia** managed the introductions. She asked those present to find someone in the meeting, whom they did not know well, then gather information from that person, regarding who it is, and at least one sustainability achievement in the last year. The second person would then relate the details to the audience, introducing the other one.



## 3. Keynote: Travel trade perspective on demand for responsible tourism products and itineraries across Africa

Matthias Leisinger, CSR and Sustainability Consulting, (former Vice President CSR, Kuoni) gave the above titled presentation which provided insight how travel trade perceives demand for responsible tourism products and itineraries across Africa looking at trends, consumer expectations and the link between sustainability and quality. The presentation is attached as Annexure 2.



Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- Linking products with markets
- Looked at mega trends and how to adapt products to these trends
- Sector that is quite good at adapting to trends is the car industry – new BMW investment into developing new cars
- More a consumer expectation towards large brands that Kuoni etc. big operators don't ask for it – they just expect them to do it
- Sustainability is very much linked to quality – the experience is better – better service means better consumer satisfaction – customer satisfaction leads to higher margins etc.
- Quality not in terms of grading but in terms of experience - better this means better that
- It is essential to know what the consumer actually wants – what type of person is interested in your product and what type of product does he want – what does he expect and make sure you tell him the truth!!! Don't over-promise
- If you are not transparent you will be damaged in social media – facebook, trip advisor etc.
- Stories have to be remembered and shared afterwards – this is an 'authentic experience'
- The challenge is how can you bring those products to markets – are you really attractive enough for the market
- Make people want your product and find the right distribution channels
- Understand your competition

## 4. Randy interactive plenary on Matthias' presentation

- Randy's reflections:

The element of looking for authenticity is key

Sustainable tourism is niche – it is a soft demand – price convenience still comes first? We have to get beyond that and figure out how to sell authenticity

- We don't think about labels e.g. when you buy an electrical item with lots of stamps on it you don't pay attention to the labels/stamps – but you know that one of them probably means you won't get electrocuted when you plug the product into the wall

- Greg:

Getting each label to promote itself and to become known globally (more than 200 in the world) is very expensive. The sales side of the industry is trying to meet the demand for what is out there. The average traveller doesn't know what he's looking for and he is relying on tour operator brochures to get that information. The consumer is label and concept confused.

- Emad

Sometimes we are trying to create a science out of sustainability – maybe we should be the translator of this wonderful through into the future to the current demand. GSTC is trying to test this with booking.com. Trying to use the green label to the demander as a filter... Does it come within the sphere of importance when using booking.com? The demander guy isn't necessarily going to look into social responsibility as a filter. We need this to be a key filter when using booking.com.

- Randy - thanks to Naut Kusters who opened the discussions with booking.com. With GSTC – booking.com is looking for an icon for sustainability. Consumers are not accustomed to see there is a filtering of responsible product. Trip advisers

Green leaders programme... - purely self-assessment so could be the largest greenwashing scheme we have ever seen

- Matthias – Kuoni always tries to avoid use of the word sustainable travel because the word sustainable is a word that people in Europe are critical of what that actually means. Kuoni has different words they can use.

On trip advisor – don't know if this is good or bad. The best auditor of greenwashing is the consumer. There are thousands of consumer auditors out there fostering sustainability.

- Lisa – people need to know (consumers) what is relevant for the destination from a development perspective.

- Henko – certification programmes miss out huge segment of the market as costs exclude small businesses. This needs to be addressed as certification bodies.

- Randy - The term 'sustainability' terminology should be limited to people in the room – not in brochures and marketing materials – doesn't resonate with consumers.

- Mohamed – tourism can be a different tool for educating our new generation for sustainability. If we look at the sustainable development goals – more than half

these goals touches what Matthias has said today. Travellers when they experience something they are learning for life.



**5. Success in harmonisation of leading schemes in Southern and East Africa: A collaborative, integrated approach to sustainable tourism standard-setting and certification in Africa.**

Netsai Sibanda, Regional Development Manager for Fair Trade Tourism presented on Mutual Recognition process, challenges, lessons learned and outcomes, making reference to Mutual Recognition Agreements between Fair Trade Tourism and Botswana Tourism Organisation, Eco Awards Namibia, Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Label and Responsible Tourism Tanzania. The presentation is attached as Annexure 3.

Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- Botswana feels recognition and partnership is good
- Namibia – good that they added criteria and are starting to see benefits to the clients
- Tanzania – fair trade is well recognised so they believe it could have positive impact. We will wait and see as the newly certified businesses against the mutual recognition criteria to see if we derive real benefits
- Kaza – social economic impacts are very important and so this speaks well to what Kaza is doing. While communities live in and around Kaza – they are not benefiting from a social economic impact.
- Matthias – it is extremely important to have a holistic approach – tourists already have holistic picture and are interested in communities and people. From a tour operator marketing perspective – responsible tourism needs social, environmental and economic sustainability – holistic.
- Grace – we need to focus more on responsible tourism
- Randy – so much choice people freeze to inaction
- Grace – there is a movement and this is heading somewhere
- Seychelles and Tanzania are happy with their brand as they are small and few resources for market development.
- Botswana – we are not saying countries are going to forgo their logos. Mutual recognition says we are meeting a minimum requirement. Destinations still maintain logos.
- Egypt – clarify – is FTT a brand for Africa? ETK, BTO and Seychelles – this is not the case.

- Manuel – at the end of the day it's about how the tour operator wants to package and sell. What they need is consistency in terms of the context.

## 6. Potential Across Regional Itineraries

Philipp Walt, Sales and Marketing Manager from Terra Agua Ceo shared his presentation about the projects Terra is currently involved in and the challenges and opportunities associated with his work at Terra Agua Ceo. The presentation is attached as Annexure 4.

Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- Portfolio includes diving and now extending group tours, FITs – a lot of combo between SA and Mozambique – diving and safari operations.
- Working in two projects –beach clean-ups and collecting waste (recycled and created into crafts by local community members), also started TicTac – tourist information and activity centre – they provide as much info as possible to tourists that come to Tofo who try to identify and experience local activities.
- Presented Joburg-Mozambique tours – the tours into local communities have been developed in partnership and close collaboration with local communities – input and respect for local communities/culture

## 7. Vanilla Islands Hopping between Seychelles-Madagascar: Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Label and Go To Madagascar

Sonja Gottlebe, Managing Director for Boogie Pilgrim gave a presentation on the above titled. The presentation is attached as Annexure 5.



Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- No island hopping perspectives at this stage!
- We are all “islanders”, jealous to protect our territory, Indian Ocean Commission (COI), Vanilla Islands concept etc... never really worked!
- Economics & politics are too different
- Madagascar is the biggest island in terms of size and potential but needs to develop its access, tourism strategy, improve investment climate etc.
- Madagascar already keeps most of visitors 20 days, no time left to combine with other destinations
- Madagascar has it all: beach, mountains, forest, desert, biodiversity

## 8. Potential Trans-regional Itineraries – Cape to Cairo

8.1 Emad Hassan, Energy Advisor to the Egypt Ministry of Tourism gave a presentation on the potential trans-regional Cooperation “A ‘Cape-to-Cairo’ Green Path?” for Green Star Hotel Programme. The presentation is attached as Annexure 6.

Highlights of the presentation included the following:



- Focus of joining the Alliance -mix of countries cooperating have different dynamic than that of Egypt
- Coming to create synergies and leverage the group with their synergies
- Vision – Egypt has a unique tourism landscape – beach, culture, river, desert and eco-tourism. Diverse clients, diving. They have bits and pieces of everything in Egypt. But they cannot come up with a standard for everything. What does the future look like? Then the Green Tourism concept came...
- The goal is to reach 20/30 million tourists from the public sector initially. Discussion then was why this should be our goal – i.e. number of tourists. They wanted to come up with something else.
- In terms of regional and continental cooperation with countries in Africa. They wanted to revise the agenda looking at that.
- Political situation hurt tourism.
- Change in pattern of tourism trends to Egypt. Before people came to see the pyramids. Now 90% coming to Egypt were for beach tourism. People weren't coming for the resort all-inclusive. These numbers don't care about sustainability so we are in trouble if we continue to push the boat in that direction.
- Against this backdrop people started to look to green tourism. The concept then came up 7 years ago.
- Come up with financing tool to give 0% interest loan for hotels to green their operations and pay back in pattern that matches their occupancy. That is the role of the government to stand behind the sector.
- How do I cooperate – standards, marketing, and investment? These are the areas where they are looking for partners to 'play ball' with. We need marketing. GSTC, as a virtual organisation is a fairly known credibility base for people to use – so if we comply it is another marketing thing. They cooperate with UNWTO on standards – what are the numbers to corroborate that. What would the hotel investor know about greening his/her hotel vs. last year. We don't have green indicators in Egypt that we can say impact per room/tourist etc. Working with UNWTO to come up with simplified green indicators.
- On money – creating large fund that will give money to hotels to make them greener. If we do this as one country the ceiling will be better than at continent level.
- If we cooperate with the Alliance or FTT – what is the impact on the ground? If we can dream up / link an itinerary – Cape to Cairo – a “green” itinerary – at the end the tourist gets points for offsetting – we pitched the idea to the Minister (SA) and it was well received. He hopes they can crown this cooperation in a very basic manner that comes up with a document that might involve itinerary of Cape to Cairo etc. The concept will link the 2 strongest magnets on the continent (SA & EGYPT). Three points – collaborative marketing, a green path itinerary, cooperation on green norms. His preference is a consortium – if we belong to responsible tourism Africa – then fine and dandy. Fair Trade – connotation of socio economics. Does this comprehensively describe sustainable tourism?

8.2 Damian Bell, Executive Director for Responsible Tourism Tanzania also gave a presentation on the Potential trans-regional Itineraries – Cape to Cairo. The presentation is attached as Annexure 7.



Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- In his region culture and wildlife
- Trans-boundary itineraries
- How far can people go?
- Green Girls – to come to Africa people already have to go on a long-haul flight. If we package more destinations within the continent we are leaving a greater carbon footprint. Also – country hopping – tourists don't have ¾ weeks to spend on the continent. Time constraints need to be kept in mind.
- Henko – Cape to Cairo – in Europe people see Africa as a country. Having one brand/label makes a lot of sense – on sustainable holidays they haven't decided where they are going yet. They decide they are going to Africa. Then they pick their destinations. So from this point of view – welcomes one label associated with all the different labels so you can use both.
- Uwe – we did a regional cross border survey with FTT. We asked about 120 tour operators (businesses and professionals working in the sector). Asked them about several indicators. The report shows and ranks countries across different criteria. These results should be work shopped regionally – then we can make a list of comparative strengths and weaknesses – we have already identified the restraints.

**9. Break away session discussions on potential cross-border, inter and intra-regional itineraries:** Martina Vollmer ,Sales and Product Manager for ATC, Matthias Leisinger, CSR and Sustainability Consulting, (former Vice President CSR, Kuoni) and Henko Weltholt- Market Developer and General Manager for Abang Africa Travel.

Highlights of the presentation from Martina, Matthias and Henko are as follows:



**(i) South Africa – Kaza**

**Martina Vollmer – Sales and Product Manager for ATC**

- How to combine SA itineraries with Kaza itineraries
- Fantastic and valid points from team

- Kaza consists of Namibia, bots, Zimbabwe, Angola – how to combine in a profitable way for the Kaza countries
- Disregarding the length of stay – starting with basic itinerary of 4 nights in SA or the Kaza countries and build on to those country-linked modules also a 3 or 4 nighter module and create the link between the countries.
- So the clients have a choice re length of stay of what countries they want to visit of where to start and where to end. Dynamic packaging in a module way.
- We should cover categories, budget e.g. if we have a module for Zimbabwe – it should not only cover length of stay but also a 3, 4 or 5 star option for the clients so they can chose from those
- We should offer 2 countries options e.g. Namibia/bots, Zimbabwe/Zambia and offer that as a six-nighter so the clients actually have an option.
- Morris heads Kaza and takes care of conservation duties and tourism development. He had a fabulous idea – Kaza development is going to follow on a trans-boundary nature wild life dispersal areas (from higher to lower concentration). Chobe has lots of elephants but when you go up north (even to part of Angola) there are fewer elephants and animals have started to move on their own. The idea is to develop tourism routes along these migration routes. There are six wildlife dispersal areas in that part of the world linking the different areas of Kaza and it is along those routes that we want to develop products.
- Visa issues – Kaza has a big advantage as in the process the univisa is being developed for all Kaza countries. This works at the moment for Zimbabwe and Zambia. SA is not really a big problem. We have possibilities to see in a short while that these univisas will be extended to the other Kaza countries making travel a lot less complicated between the countries.
- Kasane and Vic Falls airports have been upgraded so the bigger planes can take up these routes also. This facilitates travel to Kaza countries.
- Increased activity in terms of tourism in Angola. Accessibility into Angola is limited at the moment. Hopefully visas will be easier to obtain in the near future. Some countries are running ahead and Angola is left behind and will miss the train if they don't come to the party very soon. We need to engage the tourism board in the near future.
- Botswana is a little bit price sensitive. In Botswana – more the 5 star segment that was predominantly booked and available in bots. Now there are mobile camps to 3 and 4 star lodges being build and accessible as well. So if people don't have a lot of money available they will also be able to experience Botswana.
- In buffalo range airport has been refurbished which should easily link the TFCAs between vic falls and the area under discussion.

**(ii) Vanilla Islands – Matthias Leisinger, CSR and Sustainability Consulting, (former Vice President CSR, Kuoni)**

- Talked about vanilla island concept. There are controversial issues around approach and market potential.
- We tried to think about solutions and a way forward. We already know about challenges (competitions, visa, flights)
- We tried to find common links.

- Very much top down driven – institutional approach – artificial and does not get a lot of support from the private sector. This is a challenge that can be overcome. We believe joint-marketing (vanilla islands) makes sense in terms of market visibility. The completion is not necessarily the island next door. A joint marketing position makes sense if you have buy in from critical stakeholders – private sector
- Some local itineraries already work e.g. Mauritius visitors spending time in Reunion. We tried to figure out why this is working and why it isn't working across island itineraries (historic, government relations etc. so they don't want to work too closely together).
- What can be done – Joint FTT promotion – if a customer stays in a hotel in Seychelles he gets info on other FTT options using the FTT certification as quality seal to promote responsible tourism in the region. This way we can increase visibility of brand to the consumers.
- What can be done between Seychelles and Madagascar? One approach is to find common linkages (not necessarily vanilla) but a lot of people are interested in more ecotourism – related sites. We can link the endemic species in the region to one itinerary and finding customers that would be interested in doing such itineraries e.g. chasing the endemic species in the region.
- There are already itineraries working across the islands – national geographic routes take cruises in the region – Madagascar and Seychelles. We realised this already exists. This might be an opportunity to look into accommodation providers working in Seychelles and Madagascar. In Seychelles chains/groups may have hotels on both islands – they can use their marketing budget to do a cross island itinerary. We don't have to push things through that don't get sold afterwards. We see a certain potential. In other regions e.g. Kaza might be easier than in the vanilla island region.
- They should think of a vanilla island tourism board. But if we had a politically independent tourism board for the vanilla island region this may have been more effective.

**(iii) Trans-regional itineraries- Henko Weltholt- Market Developer and General Manager for Abang Africa Travel**

- The obvious way would be Cape Town to Vic Falls. This exists a lot and so we would be repeating what Kaza is talking about.
- Used examples of Henko saying people see they refer to Africa first – then they decide where they go. They want to see Serengeti, Cape Town etc. They want safari and a tan.
- Typical itinerary – 2 weeks but has to be done in a sustainable way – train from Dar to Lusaka – but then you still need to fly 500km from Serengeti to Dar es Salaam. The other option is to fly...
- If you leave out the issue of carbon offsetting – you can fly. Serengeti to Vic Falls 1300us for example. This is more expensive than flying from the states to Africa and back. So this wouldn't be sustainable.
- If you want to engage in sustainable tourism activities you need to minimise travel distances. Joburg, Zimbabwe back to Joburg. Zimbabwe/Zambia combo. But how to make it sustainable within a small distance. We came up with the need to minimise travel distances.
- Why would you go trans-regional or cross a border? Lots of people want the extra stamp in the passport. Makes for good stories. Lots of people go for

famous names e.g. Serengeti and Zanzibar. Hard to avoid going across countries if you look at the demands of people.

- How can you make it sustainable? Here is a list of things to include:
- Staying local (homestays and locally owned small businesses) – money goes back into local circulation. International hotel chains – Hilton – goes back to escapades of Paris. Ibis to France. International means money leaves the country.
- Community tourism is a fun aspect to add to the tour e.g. Cape Town township excursion on public transport. It is sold has fun and more interaction with people vs. sustainable.
- You can compensate with carbon offsetting. Even with short distances this can't be done without carbon footprint. But you can compensate with offsetting.
- Do not fly if possible. Flight is 30 to 40 times more pollution than a vehicle is.
- Grace – if you put more people in one vehicle it pollutes less. Group tours and overland vehicle tours minimises pollution. This is negated with community tourism.
- It will only work in a small area if you are serious about sustainability or between two countries if flight is short and then you can offset to compensate.

#### **10. Interactive session - Jose Froehling – Advisor for GIZ**

- Who bears the brunt/responsibility to ensure sustainable travel is undertaken? The other challenge is the size of Africa...
- Randy – the mature markets in the developed world are moving to slower and more. But then there is the new/emerging markets e.g. China – they may want more quick trips where they want to do a lot / more... other industries are getting cleaner and china is not. Then the whole industry will have more pressure from reducing emissions from jet travel.
- Greg – control what you can control and accept what you can't. Air travel is part of our lives. A lot is being done in the airlines industry to clean things up. We as an industry need to accept the things we can't change and work around them. Ultimately that is what is affecting communities and the environment. This is where tour operators play such a crucial role as the gate keeper. Government are imposing fuel levies and all sorts of carbon taxes. Airlines are working on saving fuels etc. because they have their own cost benefit. But tour operators have the power to teach the clients about what is happening.
- Your highest impact from air travel is at the point of departure. It is not nearly as high enroute or where you arrive. Let's work at the other end of it. That is where we can make a difference.
- 80% of carbon emissions come from air travel. Accommodation and other services are not so bad. Biggest challenge is air travel.
- We should link the projects that are funded by carbon offsetting schemes to the destinations that the traveller has been visiting. At present – offsetting programmes are usually not benefiting the visited and damaged destinations.
- Matthias – climate change is always the big elephant in the room. What is important is that when you start packaging the itineraries you cannot market an itinerary in the region including 6 domestic flights. The customer wants to book a responsible tourism journey. He will criticise the flights. They are very sensitive about those discussions so they know the right questions to ask. So you have to be very careful – the triple bottom line product

cannot be packaged with six itineraries in the region because you lose credibility. Also – no one will buy it because it will be very expensive.

## 11. Tour Operator Panel



### Sonja-Go To Madagascar (Madagascar)

- Sonja – nature/lover adventure trips. 45 employees – two foreigners in the company including herself. The marketing she is doing for the past 26 years (focus on Boogie Pilgrim). Had some successes through leveraging the ITB/German connection. This is with big operators in Germany like TUI and smaller German agencies. If you sell Madagascar for biodiversity 80% of their biodiversity is unique to Madagascar – so we don't have the interest challenge. The challenge is how to make these people come. The people have to be green (in terms of cash – middle green) – but the product may not be appealing to them because they are not looking to this type of journey.
- We work with Germany and lots of Americans. There are a lot of upmarket agencies coming with big group tours sometimes combined with Madagascar – very expensive trips. She worked with Henko when he was with baobab. It is very difficult to get money from Dutch tourists. Long trips and community based stuff, hiking activities traveling by bus – and the agency baobab still stays in her lodges. The Dutch people also pushed us to create sustainable products. That's how she learned – she learned from the customers. The Dutch and the Germans. The Germans told her to follow eco-touristic routes. The middle green might not be or should be our target. We should increase the quality of our product so the higher green can come because the middle green market is slow, tough but is growing.
- We need visitors who understand this type of destination. The only thing we know from the Chinese is that they eat our shark fins and buying gem stones and have not a good reputation. This type of Chinese tourism is not up to date now.

### **Henko- Abang Africa travel (South Africa)**

- Set up 2005 as incoming operator. Mainly European tourists with heavy focus on sustainable and community tourism. We want as much tourism to flow into local communities as possible.
- In most countries when you talk about eco -tourism but in SA a lot of community tourism is possible and they are in the luxury position to market community tourism.
- We are dependent on how agents market tourism then we try to sneak in as much responsible tourism as possible through promise of sustainable and lovely experiences.
- On marketing we focus more on direct marketing as this is much more the future than working with agents.
- We have social media hash tag - fun and fair.
- We market more towards middle and richer greens – very much on the Dutch market.
- We try to manoeuvre requests that come in that we can offer off the beaten track (excursions and activities not usually found with other tour operators. These are mostly responsible tourism travels.
- We focus on fair trade tourism certification programmes.
- We can achieve more than telling them they have to be responsible.
- They are selling experiences – experiential travel.
- Is there a role for government? Agencies? Do we need governments need to do more. Most outdoor experiential tour operators are not responsible.
- Our profit margins are extremely low. In Europe it is 3 to 4 percent. This limits what you can do as a company as far as responsible tourism goes. So you have to put money aside to do responsible tourism stuff. Some kind of grading system would do well and would have to come from government or an alliance associated member – not from us.

### **Karien –Tourvest (South Africa)**

- The most important part is sharing of knowledge. It is crucial to learn from industry and accreditation bodies.
- She sees constant collaboration so from us to know from you guys what's new and what new products are there from the different regions. We are seen as we should know it all so the constant communication is key with all the tourism and accreditation bodies
- We are an inbound wholesale tour operator. Most for ST is Scandinavia, the Dutch, Germany – these are some of the key markets we found are conscious of their travel patters
- What we offer our agents (we market b2b not direct with the consumer but we provide tools to the agents to then inform the clients). We often don't know which ones are accredited. You even have to go to heritage's website to see who is accredited so we can package accordingly.
- We punt all those products to our agents so they can put the products together on their side.
- We can't really run with fair trade holidays because of the limited availability of products. We work with alternatives – we need to have a similar alternative which we can book. If there is only one product certified in an area that is a problem.

- We offer magnets our green seed – SANParks rangers have partnered with us – anti poaching
- Trees for tourism is our partners
- We tell our clients that their funds will go with those various entities and we strongly feel as a tour operator we have that communication with the lodges and can inform they can play a direct role with anti-rhino poaching.
- We play as a credible middle man between us the agents and our suppliers.
- Marketing-wise – we don't have the super green group. We target all the people that want to travel responsibly. We want to make it fun and easy for people.
- Could the company expand its business but somehow messaging to other source markets in the world aside from the travel champions? Can you expand your markets? Yes – the easiest way is to really focus on those markets where we get the numbers now. Once we have leveraged that potential then we can work on developing our product offerings to meet demands of other source markets.

#### **Philipp-Terra Agua Ceo (Mozambique)**

- Works on inbound market. We don't do direct marketing but work rather with operators from all over Europe, USA and Brazil and other source markets. We can only provide with information and give as much info and raise awareness to people who prepare marketing strategies of our partners. So we try to raise awareness as much as possible.
- We don't have a lot of fair trade – but there are other lodges that meet a lot of requirements so we still work with those ones.
- We try to get that story across of what it means to stay at certified and other responsible businesses.
- Clients come to Mozambique for 7 days. We cannot really get the people with the eco scheme because they are just having – but it is in the end that our partners abroad....

#### **Martina –ATC (South Africa)**

- Strictly inbound b2b and b2c
- Experience as a sales and product manager
- A good example is ITB that she lately attended.
- The first couple of days you meet your agents which are all B2B and present them with your sustainable itineraries and hope they put them in their brochures. The last couple of days you meet with the direct consumers.
- When you come in direct contact with direct consumers and then you tell them at the end of the presentation you tell them that it is fair trade they become shocked and interested in fair trade.
- There is trend booming with smaller groups – use that.
- With fair trade what you want to achieve is responsible clients and these responsible clients once they have experienced that type of travel they will become loyal clients and will always ask for that type of product.

- Issue of smaller groups – much better concept and is an interesting concept growing in both Europe and the US. Small groups are more personal and rewarding – more authenticity and responsibility. This trend of smaller groups – we need the vehicles to support that. From ST perspective that can support smaller businesses as the groups are smaller so can engage with smaller lodges and it is medium price, carbon footprint is reduced as the group is smaller – so it is up to 9/10/12. Definitely a group to be watched.

### **Matthias –Kuoni (Switzerland, United Kingdom, Scandinavia)**

Be close to the end consumer.

#### **Interactive session**

- Role of destination management (new and existing) – Henko – as a tour operator we don't necessarily need new destinations – Abang is not necessarily looking for new destinations outside of southern Africa. There are a lot of destinations with potential that for one reason or another do not have access to market. Information to bring the information out there of these products – organising something new doesn't really work. In this area the role of the government must be more pronounced.

Matthias – in India they have travel scouts that have to travel for the whole year but to look for new products. It is not called destinations but rather experiences. Destinations are experiences collections of the traveller – experiences collected by the traveller. There are amazing products out there – you just have to experience them first. Opening up 10 new islands in the Maldives is developing new products but it's not an innovation.

It would be a lot easier to work with destinations with an established type of tourism so it's easier to work with these guys to sustain awareness. That way we can implement something that's good for the tourist. Before we start with something new rather stick to the established ones.

In Mozambique– 70% of the country in the north doesn't have proper infrastructure so there is a lot that can be done in the north and the middle when it stabilises. In the south moz is in a good way – for this one point for RT you need smaller businesses and not just big hotel chains. In tofo the biggest accommodation is 30 rooms. And there are so many beaches where there is a lot happening.

- Greg – we see RT as special rather than the norm. The tour operators then play a vital role in taking it out of the niche. We can only provide the product that there is a demand for at the end of the day. Let's start applying this across the board. The product is there already – our challenge is ensuring the operators are acting responsibly. And trade has a unique perspective in this regard. Don't wait for government to do it. There is also collaboration with key stakeholders. Look at sustainability criteria in grading for example – it should be a key element in all those considerations. Don't put all emphasis on accreditation bodies but also educate suppliers – give them guidance of what to do and what our clients want on a continual basis. It is a simple question tour operators can ask businesses. They may not change immediately but they will start to think about it.

- Tour Operators need to know what the standard is so they can give that guidance to suppliers.
- How do you move middle greens and the super greens are willing to buy and to take. Uwe – question – panel response? How can we make ST in Africa competitive with what is happening around the world. Abang – drop the rand and make it more affordable as in SA. Make sure it is affordable until you reach scale – then the price climbs slowly. Madagascar – expensive because of weakness of the currency and price of the access so we can't be fairly compared to some destinations – need to compare apples with apples.
- Also look at domestic tourism
- Everyone is saying make it simple on both sides – supply and demand. How can we make it easier – are there tools out there.

## 12. Conference Summary

Netsai Sibanda, Regional Development Manager for Fair Trade Tourism (Alliance Secretariat) provided a short summary of the day's events and closed the conference. In so doing, she thanked the FTT colleagues (Secretariat) for coordinating a successful event. Participants were also thanked for actively engaging and participating in the day's discussions.



## **Annexures**

- Annexure 1 Conference programme
  - Annexure 2 Keynote from Matthias
  - Annexure 3 Netsai Sibanda presentation
  - Annexure 4 Philipp Walt presentation
  - Annexure 5 Sonja Gottlebe presentation
  - Annexure 6 Emad Hassan presentation
  - Annexure 7 Damian Bell presentation
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