What is the role of certification?

In making tourism more sustainable

Prof. Harold Goodwin

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Our holidays their homes

- Someone else's environment

- "Your everyday life is someone else's adventure"

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- Swedish NGO fly-posting in Ljubljana, Summer 1997

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Diverse world

- Cultural and biological diversity
- Issues vary from place to place
- There are some global issues
- Some issues occur frequently but in diverse circumstances
- Most issues are local and particular
- Who decides priorities?
- There is no global market place

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What is certification for?

1. Recognition of achievement?
2. Recognition of engagement/effort

3. Marketing advantage

4. Measuring progress, delivering sustainability - benchmarking

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DO WE NEED A SEPARATE SCHEME FOR TOURISM?

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Is tourism different?

- Blue Flag
- Fair Trade
- MSS
- FSS

- Holidays are complex products
- Tourism is not a commodity – issues are different place to place and by market
- Consumers are in the factory

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Two approaches:

- CERTIFICATION
- SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING

1. Not mutually exclusive
2. Public sector has shaped what is offered through funding and presentation/marketing

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Sustainable Places

■ Sustainable destinations produce sustainable holidays

■ Cannot reduce sustainable destinations to sustainable business

■ Public realm and common property resource use issues

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Criticisms of certification as applied to tourism (1)

- Long lists – GSTC
- Who decides which issues are most important? Doing the easy things..
- Most impacts are local

- **Priorities need to be set locally & geographically**

Criticisms of certification as applied to tourism (2)

- Certification is opaque
1. I cannot know what it means
2. I generally cannot experience the difference – the New Forest breakfast encourages me to repeat, refer and recommend

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Criticisms of certification as applied to tourism (3)

- As a consumer I cannot seek recompense
- The claims are not specific and they are not part of the contract
- I have no contract with the certifier

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Criticisms of certification as applied to tourism (4)

- Who certifies? A matter of cost and method. Pecuniary advantage.
- Who ensures that certifiers apply the criteria objectively, fairly and robustly?
- Second or third party certification?
- Who polices the certifiers?

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Not mutually exclusive

- Certification – no liability on the business
- Reporting – false claims actionable and can externally verified
- TUI: Travelife, Carbon disclosure, ISO 14001,GRI

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Why is there churn?

1. Environmental management advice
2. Marketing advantage

- May not make sense to renew membership
- Leaving is not criticism of (1)

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Measuring success

- How much water, waste, air pollution reduction has been achieved?

- How much additional local sourcing has resulted?

- Outcomes and impacts – not numbers of certified businesses

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www.rtreporting.org

CO$_2$ EMISSIONS

THE LODGE HAS REDUCED ITS CO$_2$ EMISSIONS BY **1KG** PER BED-NIGHT IN THE LAST YEAR.

81.8 TONNES OF CO$_2$ ANNUALLY

21.2 KGS OF CO$_2$ PER BEDNIGHT

WATER MANAGEMENT

A WATER METER HELPS THE LODGE MONITOR WATER-EFFICIENCY & CONSERVE ITS WELL WATER SUPPLY.

20% MAINS	60% WELL	0% HARVESTED	20% RECYCLED	100% TOTAL

average usage per person per day
340 ltrs - USA*
153 ltrs - UK*
20 ltrs - developing nation*

650 LTRS PER BED-NIGHT

FREE DRINKING WATER IS PROVIDED.
GUESTS USE AN AVERAGE **0.19** PLASTIC BOTTLES PER BEDNIGHT.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

TOURISTS LEAVE 100 TONNES OF UNRECYCLEABLE PLASTIC IN THE HIMALAYAS EACH YEAR.

REUSED	COMPOST	RECYCLED	LANDFILL	TOTAL
40%	20%	30%	10%	100%

5.2kg
3.2ltrs
PER BED-NIGHT

THIS INFOGRAPH IS AN EXAMPLE AND THE DATA SHOWN IS FICTIONAL

supplied by **RTreporting** verify your claims

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What next?

- Sustainability is a destination level issue

- Combining advice, certification and transparent reporting
  - By business
  - By destination

http://haroldgoodwin.info/blog/?p=2427

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