



# Ecotourism

## A brief introduction

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„Europejski Fundusz Rolny na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich: Europa inwestująca w obszary wiejskie.”

Projekt opracowany przez Społeczny Instytut Ekologiczny  
Projekt współfinansowany ze środków Unii Europejskiej w ramach Pomocy Technicznej  
Programu Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich na lata 2007-2013  
Instytucja Zarządzająca Programem Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich na lata 2007-2013 -  
Minister Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi



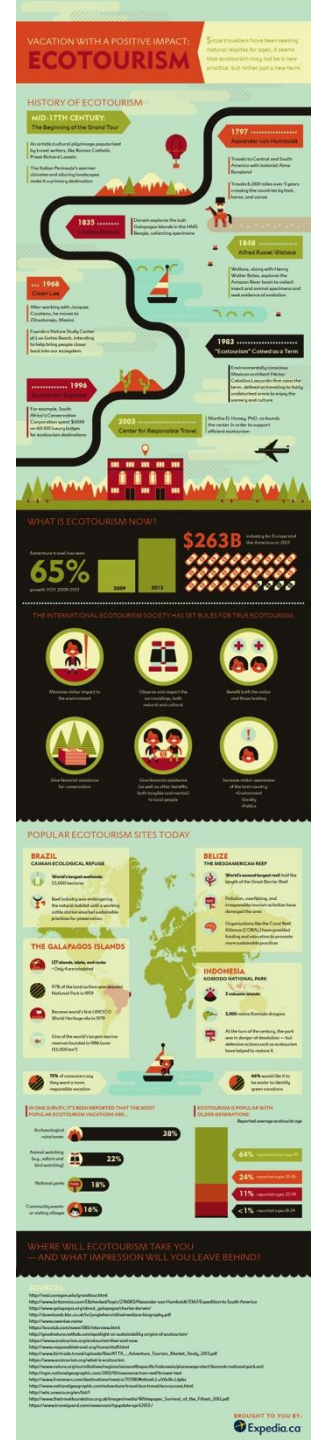
# Introduction



- Ecological Tourism in Europe: A non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting sustainable tourism practices at national and local levels
- Michael Meyer: 22 years of working experience in Central and East Europe on „Developing Sustainable Tourism in and around Protected Areas“ and assisting governments on sustainable tourism policies

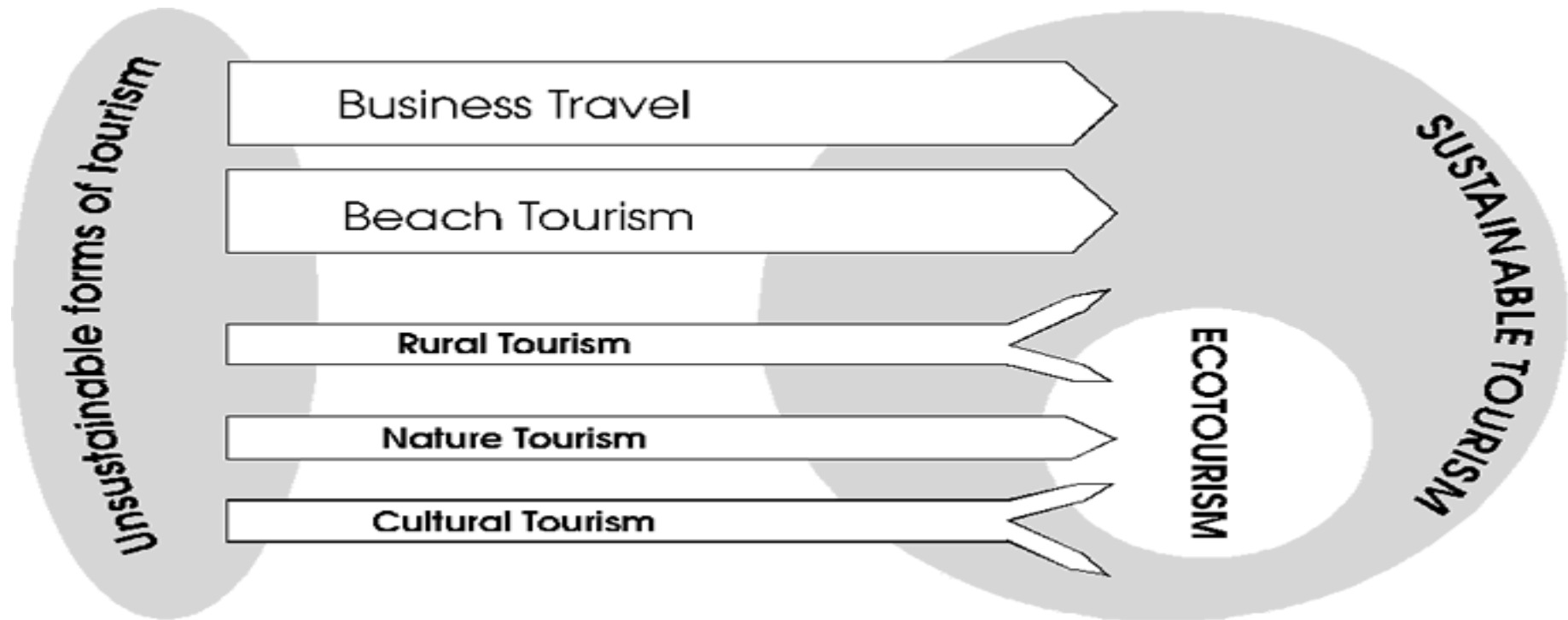
# History of Ecotourism

- **1965:** First time use of the term for travelling to Yucatan
- **1980s:** Increasing criticism on the negative impacts of tourism  
Consequence: the concept of “soft” tourism was developed
- **1990:** The International Ecotourism Society is established
- **Rio 1992:** The concept of sustainable development contains “soft” tourism
- **In the 1990s:** All major ecotourism initiatives are established
- **2000:** Millennium Summit – MDGs until 2015
- **2002:** World Ecotourism Summit – Quebec Declaration
- **2004:** CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development
- **2012:** Rio+20 – SDGs
- **2015:** Tourism Cluster in 10YFP on SCP under SDGs



# Ecotourism in the context

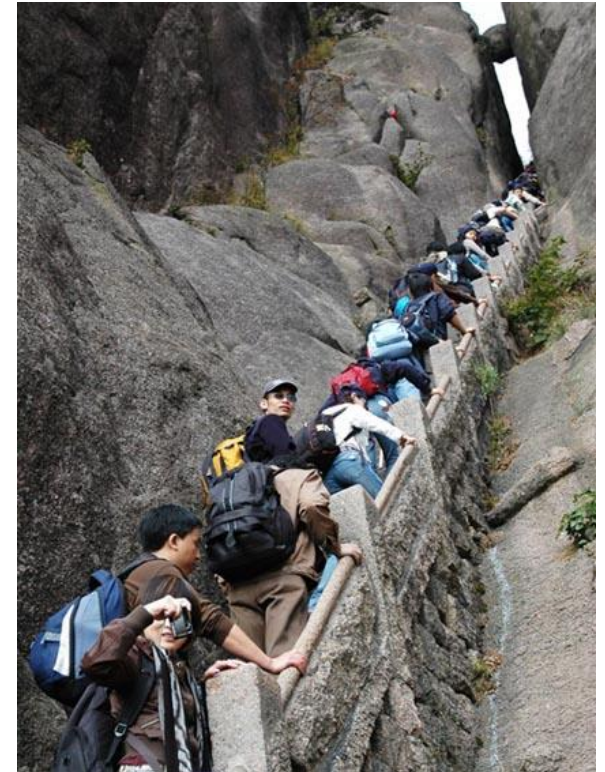
Sustainable tourism as an overarching concept:



# Ecotourism Definition

Just recently The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) has published a revised definition for “ecotourism”, which is:

***Ecotourism is now defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education". Education is meant to be inclusive of both staff and guests.***



# Principles of Ecotourism

## **Minimize negative impacts:**

- Preservation of ecological carrying capacity and ecological balance
- Ensuring acceptance of tourism development
- Environmental friendly transport alternatives



## **Involvement of local stakeholders in all processes:**

- Include local communities
- Just and human working opportunities for local people

# Principles of Ecotourism

## Benefits for local communities and nature conservation:

- Economic benefits, alternative employment, income opportunities
- Directing revenues to conservation and management of natural and protected areas

## Public awareness and Education:

- Increasing awareness towards conservation of natural and cultural assets
- Education of local people and stakeholders on the importance of conservation



# Sustainable Tourism defined by UNWTO



***"Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"***

1. Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
2. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.
3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.



# Tourism and Biodiversity

**BIODIVERSITY = NATURE = WILDLIFE =  
KEY TOURISM ASSET**



## Some examples

- Tourism economies in many African countries are based on wildlife and outdoor recreation.
- Majority of international and domestic tourists in Australia take part in nature-based or outdoor activities – and generally stay longer and spend more than other tourists.
- Tourism based on high quality natural environments contributes an estimated GBP 5 billion to England's economy each year.



## Some examples

- Coral reefs generated tourism worth around USD 5 billion a year in the Caribbean.
- Nearly 90 million US residents participate in wildlife watching and outdoor activities generating over USD 120 billion for the economy each year.
- To maintain the value of biodiversity for tourism, it's vital to invest in conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity using contributions from tourism revenues.



# Biodiversity supports life on Earth – Protecting it is a global challenge

- World's biodiversity under pressure from human activities
- Severe losses over the past decades
- Loss of biodiversity damages vital 'ecosystem services' like supplies of food and clean water
- UN assessment: human activities threaten Earth's ability to sustain future generations
- Halting biodiversity loss is as critical as tackling climate change



## Tourism has both positive and negative effects

### Positive effects:

- ✓ employment and economic development
- ✓ generation of export earnings
- ✓ protection from other more detrimental forms of development
- ✓ economic basis for investments in conservation and ecosystem restoration
- ✓ raising awareness amongst tourists of biodiversity and the need for conservation
- ✓ conservation



# Tourism has both positive and negative effects

## Negative effects:

- ❖ conflicts with local communities (eg. over resource use, local cultural norms, employment practices)
- ❖ land conversion for tourism; inappropriate siting of tourism
- ❖ contribution to climate change
- ❖ overexploitation of natural resources
- ❖ introduction of invasive alien species
- ❖ pollution and wastes
- ❖ disturbance of and damage to wildlife



## Linking Ecotourism, Poverty Alleviation and Biodiversity

- Poor people and communities rely more directly on environmental resources for their livelihoods than other groups.
- Ecotourism can create employment and income-generating opportunities for poorer and disadvantaged groups, thus providing a further incentive for communities to ensure that their natural resources are used sustainably.



- Long-term poverty reduction requires also environmental protection measures.
- 75% of the 2 billion people living with less than a dollar a day live in rural and natural areas.

## Ecotourism includes protection of biodiversity

Ecotourism approaches to enhance positive effects and minimize negative effects of tourism, include:

- **careful planning**, with controls to protect key biodiversity sites and sensitive areas from tourism development
- **involvement of local stakeholders** at all stages of tourism development and operation
- **measures to reduce environmental impacts** (e.g. reduction and disposal of remaining wastes)
- **measures to conduct tourism activities** in ways that avoid or minimise damage to biodiversity and disturbance of wildlife
- **equitable local distribution** of income and employment linked to tourism
- **ensuring that tourism and conservation do not place additional burdens** on local people, such as reducing or preventing their access to livelihood resources





# Eco-certification

More than 70 eco-label. Which to choose??



Green Tourism Business Scheme  
Scotland/United Kingdom



Milieubarometer – Milieukeur  
Netherlands



Das Österreichische Umweltzeichen für Tourismusbetriebe  
Austria



Blue Flag Campaign  
International



Legambiente Turismo  
Italy



Eco-label Luxembourg  
Luxembourg



Den Groenne Noegle  
Denmark, Estonia, Greenland, Sweden



La Clef Verte  
France



Nordic Swan  
Scandinavia (Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland)



Steinböcke – nachhaltig geführte Hotels  
Switzerland



Green Certificate  
Latvia



El Distintivo  
Cataluna, Spain



# A success story from Sweden

## Main issues:

1. Respect the limitations of the destination – minimize the negative impacts on local nature and culture.
2. Support the local economy.
3. Make all the operators activities environmentally sustainable.
4. Contribute actively to nature and cultural conservation.
5. Promote knowledge and respect and the joy of discovery.
6. Quality and safety all the way

- 3.2.2 Eco-labelled lodgings are used where possible.
- 3.2.3 Regularly used lodgings are influenced into getting eco-labelled.
- 3.2.4 The operator strives towards using KRAV-labelled (Swedish organisation for ecological food production - an active member of IFOAM, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements), and/or locally produced food.
- 3.2.5 Train and bus transportation is actively offered to the customer, where this is possible.
- 3.2.6 The itineraries of all tours are adapted to the timetabled arrivals – when available - of more environmentally friendly modes of transport.
- 3.2.7 When using air transport, first choice always goes to companies that have an expressed environment policy or program, and who invest in fuel-saving engines with less emissions and noise.
- 3.2.8 Transportation of visitors, materials, supplies and food are as efficiently co-ordinated as possible.



Codes of conduct are used and explained to the participants.  
They can include:

- Local conservation regulations, appropriate behaviour in sensitive habitats, wildlife encounters, finding fragile and rare plants.
- Recommendations and local regulations regarding camping, making fires, latrines, waste disposal, cleaning.
- The Right of Public Access in general and specifically during the tour.
- Rules for access to historical places and/or areas with on-going scientific research.
- Special considerations during the time of the visit. e.g. during the nesting season.
- Respect for the local people and their industries.

# The Association of Ecotourism in Romania (AER)



The Ecotourism Certification System developed by AER has adapted the international experience to the Romanian context. It is based on the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Programme promoted by the Australian Ecotourism Association (NEAP is the first accreditation system in ecotourism) and on Nature's Best developed by the Swedish Ecotourism Association (the first accreditation system in ecotourism in the northern hemisphere).

The Ecotourism Certification System addresses two different categories of applicants:

- ecotourism programmes / tours provided by tour-operators (i.e. eco-tours of maximum 15 participants),
- small-scale accommodation structures in rural and natural areas (eco-lodges and guesthouses of maximum 25 rooms).

# Ecotourism accomodation

## Main issues:

- Sustainable building materials –organic archtecture
- Passive solar design
- Minimal impact on the environment,
- Located in exceptional natural areas,
- Inspire visitors by protecting and working with the environment,
- Provide opportunities for visitors to learn about the surrounding ecosystems,
- Commitment to conservation and local supply
- Lodges run with or by aboriginal communities providing jobs and a way to preserve cultural heritage, as well as allowing non-indigenous visitors to learn about aboriginal culture.

## Australian Ecolodges

An **eco lodge** is an ecologically-themed hotel which provides accommodation. **Eco lodges** differ to traditional hotels in that they are structurally designed to reduce environmental impact, usually with certification from an independent third party. Also, **eco lodges** help finance the local community



*sleep  
naturally...*



# The example of KUONI

## BUSINESS SKILLS WORKSHOP

- › Exploring the ecotourism potential of a site
- › Business planning
- › Ensuring sustainability
- › Focusing on Health and Safety
- › Marketing, sales & customer care for your ecotourism business

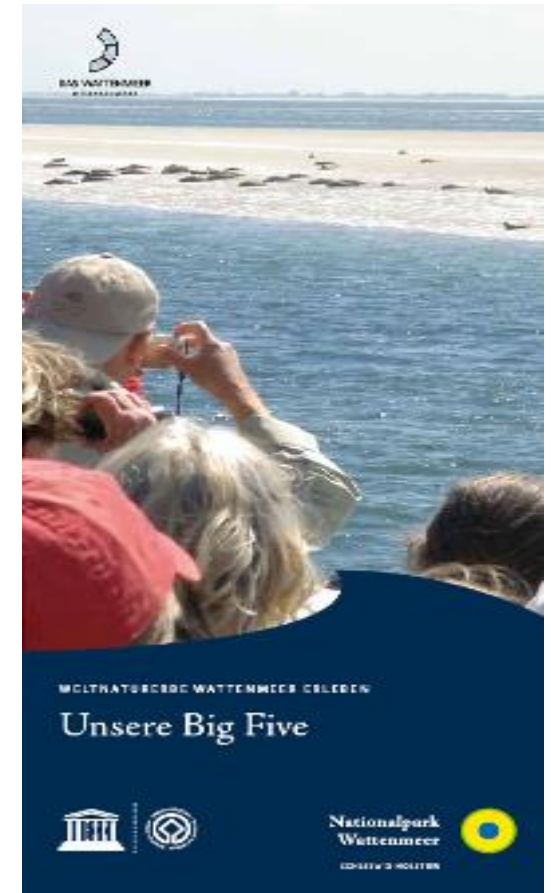
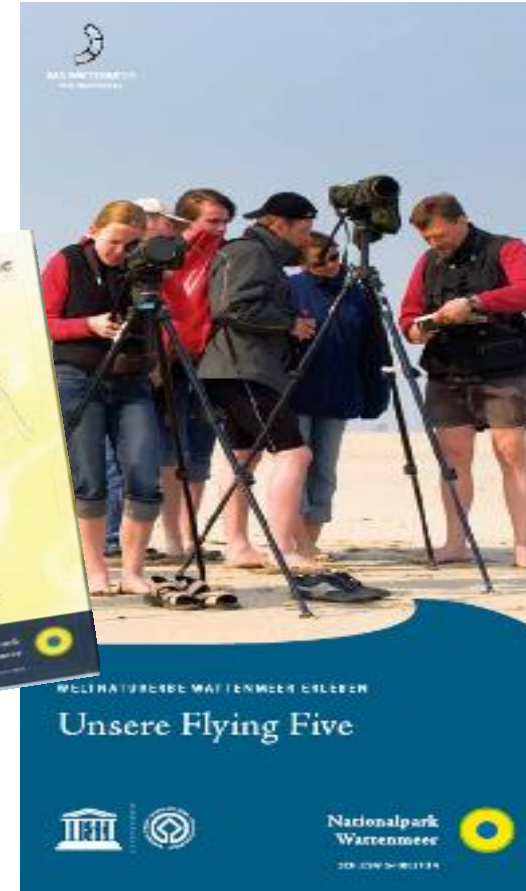
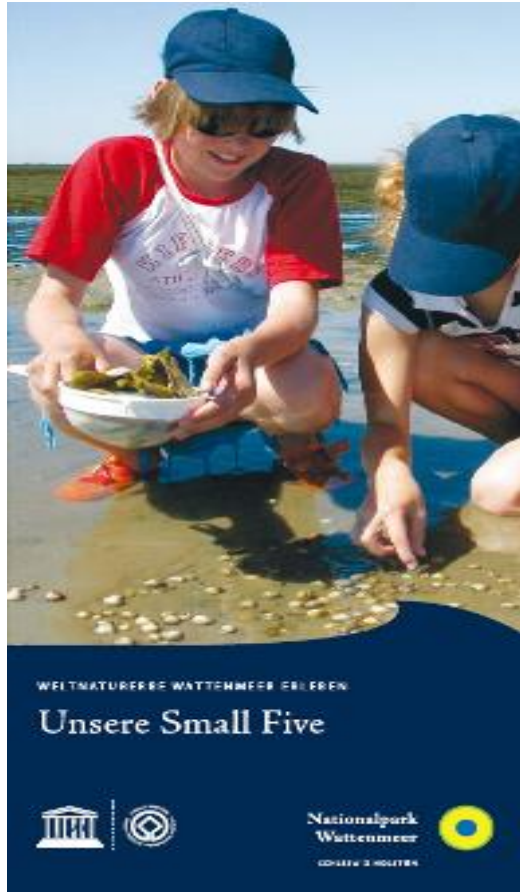


# (Ecotourism) Nature Experience Offers for Tourists

Marketing

## ➤ Attractive Offers

„Small Five“  
„Flying Five“  
„Big Five“



15 ambassadors of the World Heritage Wadden Sea

# Visitor centers and exhibitions of National Park administration

## Nationalpark-Haus in Husum

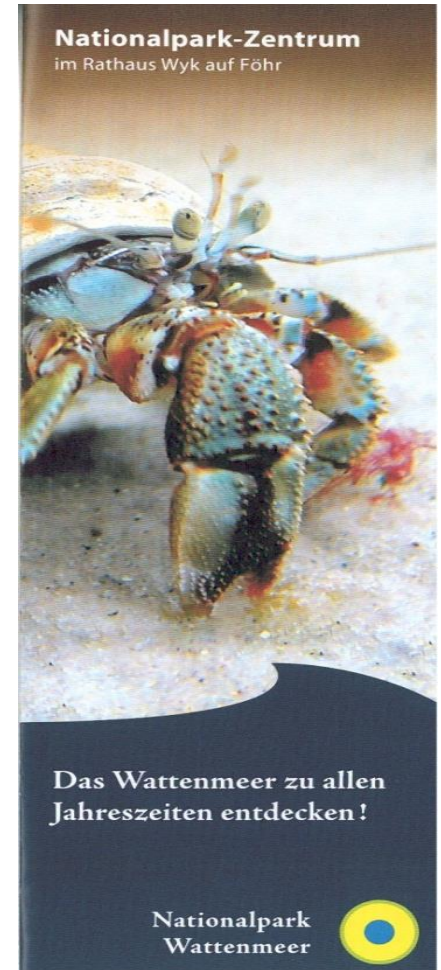


**Gemeinsam  
betrieben von**

Nationalpark  
Wattenmeer



Nationalpark-Zentrum  
Multimar Wattforum



Nationalpark-Haus  
Wyk auf Föhr



## Zoning



# National Park: Well prepared!

## Visitor guidance and information



## Well-trained staff



## Attractive activities



## Regional co-operation



## Monitoring data



Thank you  
for your attention...



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[www.oete.de](http://www.oete.de)

[www.tourism4nature.org](http://www.tourism4nature.org)

[www.wilderness-society.org](http://www.wilderness-society.org)

**Ö.T.E.**



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