



CYPRUS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INITIATIVE

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2015

CSTI is affiliated to the



«Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.»

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Annual General Meeting

The Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI) held this year's Annual General Meeting with the associated annual event, on Friday, 23rd October 2015 at the Sotira Municipal Theatre with the inspiring title «Sustainable Tourism Building Bridges».

Moving ahead and considering the importance of tourism for the Cypriot economy (as the recently published TIMM study) the CSTI is promoting the idea of building the new Tourism Strategy around Sustainability Policies picking up on the results of the before mentioned study and bringing Cyprus Tourism in line with the targets of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the UN. Sustainable tourism is firmly positioned in there, but it is also clear that successful implementation requires clear strategies, support at the highest political level, committed financing and investments in technology, infrastructure as well as human capacity.

This, was also one of the key messages of the main speaker of the event, the Ambassador Mr. Andreas D. Mavroyiannis, Negotiator, presenting in an inspirational way how sustainable tourism can build bridges.

The event was addressed by representatives from the tourism industry including Mr. Costas Koumis, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Cyprus Tourism Organisation, Mr. Panagiotis Neos, Vice President of Tourism Commercial and Industrial Company Famagusta, TEBEA and Mrs. Salli Felton, Chief Executive of the Travel Foundation UK. The speech of the Commissioner of the Environment was read by Mrs Yianna Orphanidou, CSTI board member.

Following the speeches, Mr. Philippos Drousiotis, Chairman of the CSTI presented the work of CSTI and its future plans in incorporating sustainability in the tourism industry.

Finally like every year, awards were given for outstanding sustainable efforts in the categories for Business Tourism Sustainability to LOUIS HOTELS PUBLIC COMPANY LTD, for Small Business Sustainability to S J M LAZAROU and for Community Sustainability to ECOVILLAGE TRIS ELIES.

A reception followed with traditional delights.



Ambassador
 Mr Andreas D Mavroyiannis



Mr Costas Koumis



Mr Panagiotis Neos



Mrs Salli Felton



Mr Philippos Drousiotis

More photos of our event.



CSTI 2015 Awards

Business Tourism Sustainability Award LOUIS HOTELS PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED

This award is given to LOUIS HOTELS for outstanding performance in improving its operational efficiency by applying environmental and sustainability beneficial processes, systems and practices.



Award to Louis Hotels

Small Business Sustainability Award S J M LAZAROU

This award is given to S J M LAZAROU for achievement and leadership in adopting sustainability practices that reduce its environmental impact and strengthen its commercial viability and contribute to the local economy and culture.



Award to S J M Lazarou

Community Sustainability Award ECOVILLAGE TRIS ELIES

This award is given to ECOVILLAGE TRIS ELIES for measurable achievements in environmental care and natural resource stewardship.



Award to Ecovillage Tris Elies

Get to know our Members



Cyherbia Botanical Park and Labyrinth is an oasis in the east side of the island, near Avgorou. The park consists of:

- Nine different herb gardens, each with a theme, where visitors can learn about the benefits of the herbs of Cyprus in health, beauty and cooking
- A distillation room, where visitors can witness the fragrant process of essential oil extraction, as well as learn about the uses of these
- A herb shop with organic herbal products, such as teas, oils, cosmetics and more, all produced on site by our herbalist
- The first and only Maze on the island, where you can test your skills in finding the way out, as well as finding the hidden birds
- A woodland, where tall Cypress trees form the outline of the island, so visitors can walk around Cyprus and learn about the local flora.

The park has been embraced by tourists and locals alike, and regular events are organized on site, such as workshops, family fun days, seminars and the annual Lavender Festival. Cyherbia's educational program for schools is very popular with children. Cooperation with universities in the research of the medicinal plants of Cyprus is also underway.

A new feature to be opened in 2016 will be the Lavender Labyrinth, for relaxing meditation walks.

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World Responsible
Tourism Awards 2015
at WTM® London

Organised by:
responsible travel

World Responsible Tourism Awards



Silver award: Cyprus

Cyprus, with 2.4 million visitors every year, is tourism central. So it is reassuring when an island so devoted to hosting that many people every year, commits to taking serious steps towards being sustainable. The main step being that all hotels at 3* level and above, A class hotel apartments and tourist villages not only have to attain quality ratings from the Cyprus Tourism Organisation, but sustainability ratings too. And these are not just about changing light bulbs either. Cyprus, as an ancient island with UNESCO world heritage sites with history dating back eons, knows that if you are going to do something, you are in it for the long term.



Cyprus has a worldwide reputation for excellent agritourism products, but determined to show that responsible tourism can apply to norm as well as niche, the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) has insisted that hotels get their sustainable acts together. So, in other words, they won't get their star ratings just for having x number of swimming pools, or x number of thread counts in their bed linen. They will be assessed and obliged to report on all their energy and water usage, their employment conditions, how much local produce and services they buy, and the efforts they make to tell their guests how they too can be more responsible on their holidays. And that doesn't mean asking them to forget having their towels washed. That means promoting hiking, cycling, archaeological trails, local markets and so. Supported by a working partnership between the CTO, the UK's Travel Foundation and the **Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI)**, the mainstream tourism sector is sharing all the stuff that many of the agritourism businesses have been doing for years. Because, for an island to create change to this degree, the only way is to go back to grassroots, take their wisdom and knowledge and share it among all businesses and visitors.



Cyprus Destination Partnership

In 2010 the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO), the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI) and the Travel Foundation UK, entered into a partnership agreement to establish a programme of initiatives to support Cyprus in becoming a leader in sustainable tourism.

This destination partnership has been set up to improve sustainability of tourism in Cyprus and help the island meet the challenges it faces, both now and in the future, whilst supporting tourism businesses in dealing with issues such as water scarcity, dependence on finite resources and environmental impacts.



Cyprus Breakfast

As part of the Cyprus Destination Partnership effort to support and promote the Cypriot culture a 'Cyprus Breakfast' project was implemented as a pilot in Pafos last year and is now extended in all the hotels in Cyprus.



The programme focuses on Cypriot gastronomic tradition, aiming to improve the local/traditional character of the breakfast offered by the participating hotels with a view to create an added value in the hotel service industry. Our ultimate goal is to identify the brand with the authenticity of the products we use and to know their rich cultural tradition. The 'Cyprus Breakfast' is a unique concept currently offered by 21 hotels in Cyprus.



On Saturday, 24 October there was a presentation of the 'Cyprus Breakfast' at the Nissi Beach Resort at Ayia Napa and guests enjoyed a breakfast with elements of the mediterranean diet.

Optimising 'All-Inclusive' spend in the Pafos economy



In 2012 the Travel Foundation commissioned research into the contribution of the hotel sector in Cyprus to the local economy. One of the findings was that tourists staying in the Pafos region spend less money outside the hotel than those spending their holidays in any other city in Cyprus.

In order to improve this issue, the Cyprus Tourism Organisation, the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative and the Travel Foundation UK assigned the Brighton Hospitality Research Group (BHR) to investigate further and find motives for all-inclusive tourists to spend more time and money outside their hotel.

Two of the main findings were that:

- There was a misconception amongst the tourists that there was nothing on offer outside the hotel that was of interest or value to them
- The local businesses that did have something appealing to offer tourists did not have the opportunity to promote themselves to the tourism market.

In order to address these findings the 'Destination Pafos' scheme was born. It was designed to raise awareness amongst tourists of the wonderful Cypriot experiences available to them in Pafos and it also aims to help businesses to maximize their offer and promote their businesses more effectively. The participated businesses are expected to meet a set of criteria.

The project also trained 'Ambassadors' from 10 All-Inclusive hotels in the region who in turn have trained another four members of staff from their hotel.

At the 'All-Inclusive' press conference which was held on 16 June, the Acting Director General of CTO Mrs Annita Demetriadou mentioned that 'the implementation of actions arising from the recommendations of this project focused on the Pafos district. Our ultimate goal is to expand this initiative across Cyprus and contribute to the efforts to increase the positive impact of tourism to the local economy and local businesses around Cyprus. Through the project activities, we seek to facilitate and encourage tourists to experience the cultural richness and authentic hospitality of our country which is one of our important

competitive advantages and is essential to promote and protect it'.

Mrs Salli Felton, Chief Executive of the Travel Foundation mentioned that 'tourists spend outside the hotel can make a significant contribution to local economies and there are actions that many destinations can take to encourage this. In Pafos, there is a need to ensure customers to know what the local area has to offer and to support local businesses to access the tourism market. Collaboration between the tourism stakeholders in Pafos is a key to achieving this and we are delighted that 10 All-Inclusive hotels and 30 local businesses are involved'.

Mr Philippos Drousiotis, Chairman of the CSTI stated that 'it is imperative now to safeguard the environment, our cultural heritage and to promote Cypriot products. We need to restore the 'local pride' as correctly stated by Rachel Jelly, Sustainable Manager, Sunvil, at a conference held in Nicosia. It is confirmed that tourists have become more demanding, looking for experiences from their holidays'.

Waste Mapping

Cyprus is one of the highest producers of solid waste in Europe generating 760 kilos a year per person (Eurostat). In 2010 87% of all solid waste was going to landfill with the tourism industry being a large contributor to the amount of waste produced. In 2013 the Cyprus government paid €70,000 in fines for non-conformity with European waste-management and minimum recycling standards. Waste is an issue that increasingly impacts on the tourism industry in Cyprus and the partners were keen to investigate further initiatives in the hotel industry to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. In 2013 the partners worked with RICARDO-AEA consultants to develop a tool, tailored predominantly to hotel operators, to highlight the financial and environmental benefits of undertaking waste mapping and targeted waste reduction as part of on-going business operations.

The tool uses descriptions and templates to guide hotel operators through key steps in identifying the sources, types and quantities of waste being produced. In 2015 the partners entered into an agreement with Louis Hotels to trial the waste mapping tool, support hotels within the Louis Hotels chain in reducing waste, reducing costs and improving visitor and staff satisfaction, including a case study based on best practice examples from Louis Hotels, to encourage other hotels to look at reducing their waste. The final report outline the implementation of the tool will be published end of January 2016.

Minimum Sustainable Criteria

The most significant achievement of the partnership has been the introduction of minimum standards for sustainability into the quality criteria for hotels – a global first. The partnership recruited and managed consultants to conduct a feasibility study into how minimum standards for the Cypriot hotel industry might work and, if so, how they might be appended to existing accommodation quality criteria.

In June 2014 minimum standards were officially incorporated within the quality criteria for hotel establishments in Cyprus; the first destination in the world to establish mandatory minimum standards for sustainability for accommodation providers.

Outcomes

Fifteen minimum standards for sustainability were established covering 5 areas:-

- 1 The integration of sustainability into business planning – creating, delivering and measuring against a published sustainability policy
- 2 The introduction of systems for measuring and minimising environmental impacts
- 3 Protecting human capital – treating staff fairly and providing training and development in sustainability management
- 4 Supporting the local communities – purchasing local goods and services where viable to do so
- 5 Communicating sustainability to customers

Comprehensive guidance was developed for both hoteliers and inspectors followed by a series of workshops throughout Cyprus.

The following results have already been achieved:

- 118 hotels have been trained
- 35 inspectors have been trained
- 49.3% of the 79 units assessed have achieved compliance with the new standards to date

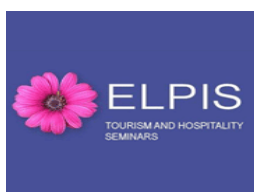
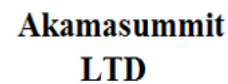
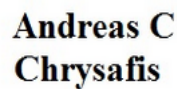
Greening Cyprus Beaches



The Chairman of CSTI presented the initiative at the MITOMED conference in May 2014. MITOMED is promoting the manual by including it in an action plan for sustainable management of maritime and coastal tourism. Despite the success of the pilot project there has been minimal take up from beach managers in Cyprus and very little incentive for them to do so.

CSTI future plans include a cooperation with CYMEPA for organizing a forum for beach management and sustainability. The forum's ultimate objective would be to integrate the green initiatives into a policy framework through the commitment of core stakeholders.

Our Members



Our Members



Producers



Dairy A.M.
Droushia



Regena Gardens
Potami

Municipalities/Community Councils



Community
Council of Pano
Akourdaleia

Community
Council of
Droushia



Universities/NGO's



Hotels, Companies, Municipalities, Community Councils, Producers and individuals are welcome to become CSTI members. More details are available from www.csti-cyprus.org