The Handbook

GREENING
CYPRUS BEACHES

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CYPRUS TOURISM ORGANISATION

theTravel Foundation
caring for places we love to visit

Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative
CSTI

Introduction

This handbook has been developed as a result of a successful pilot project (run throughout 2012) which improved sustainability standards and beach user experience at two Cypriot beaches; Fig Tree Bay and Nissi Beach.

The content of this handbook has been designed to support local authorities (including municipalities), hotel managers and beachfront property owners, in Cyprus, in emulating the successful aspects from the pilot project and creating more 'green' beaches.

The background

In 2010, the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO), the Travel Foundation and Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI) entered into a partnership agreement to establish a programme of initiatives to support Cyprus in becoming a leader in sustainable tourism. With beaches being identified as one of the key motivators for holidaymakers selecting to holiday in Cyprus, one of the key initiatives

within the programme was to look at the future sustainability, or 'greening' of Cyprus' beaches.

In 2011, the Partnership employed consultants to conduct an independent feasibility study to analysis current beach standards, in relation to sustainability, and identify beach user satisfaction levels. Based on their findings, the consultants produced a report outlining what a 'green' beach in Cyprus could look like, developed key criteria and provided recommendations for how each criterion could be met.

The Greening Cyprus Beaches project team implemented a variety of the consultants' recommendations at two pilot beaches, Nissi Beach in Agia Napa and Fig Tree Bay in Protaras, throughout 2012.
Please note: Nissi Beach and Fig Tree Bay were already known as high quality, blue flag beaches prior to the Greening Cyprus Beaches initiatives being implemented, as such, the purpose of the project was to increase satisfaction levels from 'good' to 'very good'- Arguably this was a tougher task than improving 'bad' satisfaction rates to 'very good'!

A follow up survey, conducted in October 2012, showed that the initiatives implemented have improved beach user satisfaction by 9% and 19% at Fig Tree Bay and Nissi Beach respectively. Beach users commented that they 'were impressed by the new initiatives', and that they thought the beach 'looked cleaner than last year'. In addition, 4% and 5% more people stated that they would be 'very likely' to recommend the beach to friends or

family. Many beach users commented positively on the new initiatives and it was noted that beach user behaviours are being positively influenced.

This handbook has been developed based on the results of the pilot study and in response to the demand for creating more 'green' beaches on Cyprus.

What is a 'green' beach?

There is no strict definition for a 'green beach', but it can be broadly described as one of three things: a natural beach, an eco-beach or a sustainably managed recreational beach.
This handbook provides guidance for how organised recreational beaches can be managed more sustainably.
A sustainably managed recreational beach is a medium to high intensity recreational beach which demonstrates efforts to embed some aspects of sustainability into its planning framework, allowing for leisure and economic development, whilst also conserving natural and cultural resources for current and future generations of beach users.

Better quality consumer experiences

Sustainability offers the chance to create memorable, quality holiday experiences that keep people coming back for more – surely that's the key to any travel product strategy?

Today's consumers expect sustainability to be built into their product offer. A majority (70%) believe those delivering tourism products should be committed to preserving the natural environment, while three quarters want a more responsible holiday and 66% would like to be able to easily identify a greener holiday. Most consumers also expect sustainability to be made easy for them. For example, a recent survey of Thomson and First Choice customers showed that 82% would like to choose a holiday knowing the hard work in making it environmentally and socially responsible has been done for them.

The elements of a better quality holiday are also the elements of a greener holiday; pristine beaches, clean water to swim in, a peaceful and relaxing environment, local culture and cuisine, etc. 'Greening' beaches helps deliver these elements while the Greening Cyprus Beaches logo ensures consumers can easily identify 'greener' beach experiences.

Supports Blue Flag initiatives

For a beach to be recognised by the Greening Cyprus Beaches brand, it is mandatory that the beach already holds and commits to maintaining a Blue Flag award.

Encouragingly, in January 2013, the Blue Flag website (www.blueflag.org) lists 56 Cypriot beaches with a Blue Flag award.

The Blue Flag, probably the most well known of the European accreditation schemes, is a voluntary eco-label accreditation which "works towards sustainable development at beaches and marinas, through publicly awarding sites that meet strict criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, and safety and other services".

The Blue Flag and Greening Cyprus Beaches criteria are complimentary. Where the Blue Flag scheme focuses a lot of effort around the important issues of water quality, beach safety and access, the Greening Cyprus Beaches criteria will help you to focus more attention on holistic sustainability measures, such as local food, community links or sustainable transport options.

Profitability

The Cyprus economy is heavily reliant on the tourism sector. In 2011, the estimated GDP per Capita was €20,557 with the service economy (mainly tourism) the primary economic activity contributing to this.

In 2011, 2.4 million tourists arrived in Cyprus, generating tourism revenues of approximately €1.75 billion and supporting 25,500 jobs directly (including employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines, passenger transportation services, restaurants and leisure attractions) and 74,500 jobs indirectly (including wider effects from investment, the supply chain and induced income impacts).

The coast of Cyprus supports the majority of the island's tourism infrastructure, and the beaches constitute one of the highest value tourist assets of the island. Locals and foreign visitors alike cherish the beaches as important recreation areas for family excursions and leisure activities, and many Cypriot residents depend on coastal tourism for employment.

Beaches serve as economic engines by attracting foreign and local visitors whose spending supports local employment and income for local residents. As such, protecting and enhancing the resource on which many people's livelihoods depend should be a key priority.

"If you say to a customer, 'Are you booking with us because of our environmental credentials?' Invariably they'll say 'no'. But, if you say 'if you come with us and we'll take you to a destination that is well looked after, that is sustainable and you'll enjoy it' then they'll say 'of course'"

Noel Josephides, Managing Director, Sunvil

Protect natural resources

There's simply no denying the fact that happy, healthy destinations are essential to the success of tourism. Managing the issues that make a destination happy and healthy must therefore be at the heart of any strategy for ensuring the long term viability of tourism.

Many tourism locations rely on pristine natural environments with diverse plant and wildlife to draw visitors in. Unfortunately, the reality is that globally, most ecosystems are becoming increasingly degraded. According to UN, species loss is currently running at around 150-200 species per 24 hrs, approximately 1000 times the 'natural' rate of extinction.

The marine environment is also a critical part of the tourist attraction, yet 40% of the world's oceans are heavily affected by human activities. We're polluting the oceans, overfishing and removing, altering and destroying natural habitats. There is almost no part of the ocean that is unaffected.

Cyprus, due to its location at the crossroads of the European, Asian and African continents, is widely considered as a biodiversity hotspot. Cyprus' flora and fauna is adapted to the specific natural conditions of the island, resulting in a large number of in land and coastal endemic and rare species.

Without suitable, protective management measures a number of rare and endemic species are threatened with extinction.

The Greening Cyprus Beaches initiatives will help to protect and enhance Cyprus' unique biodiversity and ensure the beaches remain the key to the destinations health and happiness.

What is a 'green' beach?

Beaches perform a significant role in Cyprus's destination marketing. Many of the (often repeat) visitors are motivated by sun, sea and sand holidays and cite the beautiful, clean, relaxing beaches and the clear blue seas, as a primary reason for visiting, alongside Cypriot hospitality and food.

But, Cyprus is not the only destination with a strong reputation for good beaches; in fact it was Spain, Turkey, and Portugal, with very similar products to Cyprus, which dominated the 2012 Tripadvisor Travellers Choice awards for Top 10 Beach Destinations in Europe!

Fortunately Cyprus has a clear opportunity to differentiate the product offering; no other European beach destination is yet championing itself as sustainable!

Although the majority of consumers are still price driven rather than driven by their eco-conscious, the good news is the things they do look for in terms of quality reflect the values of a sustainable tourism business model.

Sustainable tourism is being increasingly linked to product differentiation and a better holiday experience for consumers and can lead to earlier booking curves, higher consumer satisfaction and retention and superior margins. They are also difficult for competitors to replicate.

Additionally, the links between sustainable business and brand reputation are clear. According to Interbrand, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is responsible for 13% of brand favourability.

Beaches are crucial to the Cypriot tourism product and if a differentiated product is the best way to ensure competitive advantage, it can be anticipated that those beaches implementing 'Greening Cyprus Beaches' initiatives will be used more widely in destination marketing.

Can you afford not to get involved?

The implementation plan centres on a set of standards that have been developed specifically to 'green' Cyprus beaches.

The 'green' beach standards for Cyprus are divided into 10 broad categories, which all relate to some aspect of sustainable development or the 'green' agenda, and can be applied to **any** recreational beach.

The 'green' beach categories are:

1. Sand quality
2. Water quality
3. 'Green' facilities
4. Noise pollution
5. Eco beach furnishings
6. Vegetation and planting
7. Public environmental information / education
8. 'Green' signage
9. Sustainable transport
10. Local food and drink

The 10 categories are subdivided into sets of standards; there are 20 standards to meet in total.

While all of the standards are important, they have been allocated individual weighting / importance scores:

4 = essential to a 'green' beach
3 = important to a 'green' beach
2 = desirable for a 'green' beach
1 = added value for a 'green' beach

Please note that, before starting to implement Greening Cyprus Beaches activities, all beaches should hold a current (and be working to maintain) Blue Flag status.

CATEGORY	GREEN BEACH STANDARD / AIM	IMPORTANCE / WEIGHTING	POINTS AVAILABLE	TOTAL SCORE AVAILABLE (WEIGHTING x POINTS)
Sand Quality	No cigarette butts on beach	4	10	40
	No general man-made waste on beach (i.e. glass, plastic, cans etc)	4	10	40
	No sewage-related debris on beach (i.e. feminine hygiene, human faeces, dog faeces, toilet paper etc)	4	10	40
Water Quality	Meet the highest standard of EU Bathing Water Directive quality / Meat the highest standard of EU Water Framework Directive when applicate (2015 onwards)	4	10	40
Green Facilities	Any existing / new toilet facilities provided must be 'greened'	3	10	30
	Any existing / new shower facilities must be 'greened'	3	10	30
	Regularly maintained recycling facilities must be available	3	10	30
Noise Pollution	No personal amplified music system allowed on beach Rectrictions to amplified music systems in beach bars / restaurants (not exceeding 55 decibels) No off-shore cruisers with engines to be moored within 150m of the foreshore Restrictions to speed and proximity of all watersports	3	10	30
Eco Beach Furnishing	Sun loungers must be sustainably sourced and / or aesthetically sensitive to the natural environment	2	10	20
	Beach umbrellas must be sustainably sourced and / or aesthetically sensitive to the natural environment	2	10	20
Vegetation and Planting	Beaches must be seen to be supporting endemic and / or indigenous plants to attract high levels of native bio diversity	2	10	20
Public enviromental information / education	Enviromental education activities must be offered by beach committee once a month	2	10	20
	Information about local enviroment must to be provide in innovative and compelling ways	2	10	20
Green Signage	All public signage must be sensitive to the natural environment	2	10	20
Sustainable Transport	Beaches must be maximising the use of low-carbon transport option to the beach	1	10	10
Local Food / Drink	Beaches must be taking steps to promote and supply locally produced and / or seasonal and / or organic and / or fair trade food	1	10	10
	Solar panels to be used on all beach front shops / bars / food vendors	1	10	10
Total Score Available				**430**

Introduction

Each category has been given a separate section over the following pages:

Each category has an introduction, a section outlining suggested activities for achieving the particular criteria and a box outlining; the category's individual standards, the weighting/importance rating attributed to the criteria, the measuring and monitoring required and an outline of how scoring will be carried out. (The template to the right shows how this information will be laid out).

In action: Where appropriate, each category is supported with examples of the suggested activities 'in action' at the pilot beaches; Nissi Beach and Fig Tree Bay.

Green boxes: These contain useful snippets of information and facts to support each of the criteria.

Blue Boxes: These contain quotes, relating to each criterion, from stakeholders, holidaymakers and local residents

Category: This is the overall category (e.g. Sand Quality)

Individual standards:
• This lists the standards that must be met within the overall category

Weighting / Importance rating: This is a weighting (from 4 to 1) that has been qualitatively calculated by assessing what impact poor management of the category ('top down') will have on the environmental quality of the area, along with what impact poor management will have on beach user satisfaction ('bottom up'). This weighting must be multiplied by the points accrued to produce the overall score that a beach will achieve

Measurement / Monitoring: This indicates how to measure and monitor the individual standards to assess progress towards a 'green' beach

Points: This outlines a points system, which attributes a score to different levels of 'green' beach progress. It is not intended to be used as an accreditation system, but it can be used to identify how different beaches are both progressing.

Where to start

It is not believed that implementing individual criteria activities in isolation will achieve the Greening Cyprus Beaches goal. Therefore, it is recommended that activities across all criterions are incorporated into any 'green' beach work plans.

However, it is advised that the categories are tackled in descending order of weighting / importance (i.e. 4 to 1). This will ensure that the most important issues, such as sand and water quality, are addressed first.

Please note: While safety is a crucial feature of beach management (and is included in the Blue Flag) it is I not included in the 'green' beach categories.
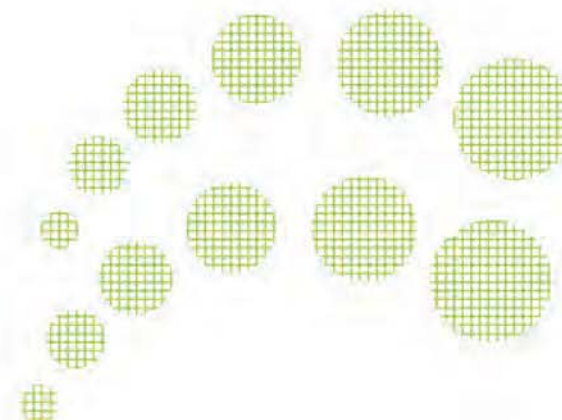
Introduction

Sand quality is the most important aspect of a beach for beach users.

In Cyprus, for nearly all people that were asked during initial Greening Cyprus Beaches surveys, the absence of litter / rubbish was the paramount expectation of a 'green' beach. This was most closely followed by clear / clean water and a 'natural' beach. Beach litter is the most detrimental factor in user perceptions of sand quality and it is also hugely detrimental to the immediate natural environment and to biodiversity off-shore.

Due to its importance to beach users combined with the potential impact on the environment, sand quality receives a category four weighting status, and should be considered as a major priority.

> One of the greatest initiatives on the beach, noticed by many holiday makers, was the good quality of the sand. Also the innovative smoking zone on the beach had many positive comments from the tourists"
>
> *Mr. Hadjicosteas, Manager, Nissi Beach Resort*

Suggested activities
Waste bins

The provision of poorly considered waste bins (e.g. size, number and positioning) can sometimes be more detrimental than no provision at all. The build up of rubbish around full bins can be extremely unsightly (potentially influencing more negative behaviours) as well as leading to litter being strewn across the beach. As such, it is recommended an appropriate and specific number of waste

Category: **Sand Quality**

Individual standards:
- No cigarette butts on beach
- No general man-made waste on beach (i.e. glass, plastic, cans etc)
- No sewage-related debris on beach (i.e. feminine hygiene, human faeces, dog faeces, toilet paper etc)

Weighting / Importance rating: 4

Measurement / Monitoring: Measurement to be taken once a month throughout the year; number of cigarette butts per 1m squared to be measured / Number of man-made waste items per 100m squared to be measured / Number of sewage-related debris items per 100m squared to be measured.

Points: 0 items = 10 points / 1 to 3 items = 8 points / 4 to 10 items = 6 points / 11 to 25 items = 4 points / 25+ items = 2 points (the average score over the course of the year must be determined at the annual assessment).
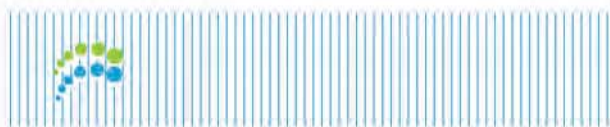
bins are provided for the optimum *volume* of people on the beach.

> **Did you know?** One beach user creates, approximately, one litre of waste and recycling per day visit to the beach!

Factors that need to be considered in the bin calculation are the size of bins available, the capacity of the beach and the number of collections that can be made by the local waste management service each week. Please note: recycling facilities are dealt with separately in the 'green' facilities section below.

If we assume a typical beach user will create 1 litre of general waste per day, the calculation will be:

No. of Bins required = Litres of waste per person (1 litre) x capacity of beach ÷ size of bin (in litres) ÷ number of collections per day.

This is not an exact science, this is a generic estimation. Therefore, we recommend further litter-specific research, as part of the regular measurement and monitoring process is conducted to understand more about the types, formats and volumes of litter throughout the year.

Positioning and the look of bins are crucial to the attractiveness of the beach environment; bins can be unsightly, especially if overflowing. It is suggested that bins, ideally larger and fewer to create a clear 'waste area', are located at the back or at access points of beaches, and some thought should be given to their aesthetics (i.e. housed in FSC certified wooden units).

Education and information are vital in behavioural change. Work with beach staff to ensure they understand and can easily communicate and encourage any new initiatives. Also, inform beach users about how to manage their litter and make it easy for them, for example: guide them to waste disposal areas with clear and appropriate signs.

In action: During the pilot project, Green Dot, helped create bi-lingual (Greek, English, German and Russian) waste management leaflets to place on umbrella stands at both beaches. The attractively designed leaflets provide beach users with simple information about managing their litter and the location of the general waste and recycling bins. At Nissi Beach, this resulted in a 20% increase in beach users stating that they were 'Very Satisfied' with beach cleanliness.

Did you know? Green Dot can provide both general and recyclable waste bins

Smoking zones

To tackle the issues of cigarette butts and keep butts limited to certain areas, the introduction of smoking 'zones' is recommended. These can be introduced in different ways; budget and beach dependent...
- simple smoking zones could involve a roped off or sign-posted area
- sun beds could be designated smoking or non-smoking
- designated smoking areas could be an attractive option, particularly for beaches which attract a young crowd who wish to socialise with new people.

In action: Nissi Beach Resort introduced an innovative new initiative during the summer 2012 season; a designated non-smoking zone covering 30 sun beds.
Creating informative stickers on umbrella stands and training beach staff to communicate and enforce the zones professionally, has meant that the smoking zone cost very little to implement and that it has been very positively embraced by both beach staff and tourists.

> The (pilot) project initiatives (including waste facilities and the placement of ashtrays) meant the sand quality was in a better condition than last year and that was noticed by many beach users that I have talked to
>
> Mr. Oikonomou, Beach Inspector, Fig Tree Bay

Eco-ashtrays

In addition to smoking zones, provide beach users with suitable cigarette ash and butt disposal methods...
- Large, sand filled pots or bins with 'stubber' plates at beach access points.
- Sun bed tables, in smoking zones, to hold large ashtrays (made form sustainable materials, e.g. clay or recyclable plastic). Ensure these are emptied and cleaned regularly.

In action: At both Nissi and Fig Tree Bay Beaches the biggest cause of litter and beach user dissatisfaction, identified by pre-pilot project beach user surveys, was cigarette butts. With this in mind, both beaches introduced, during the summer 2012 season, permanent ashtrays.
Those at Nissi Beach were created locally using traditional Cypriot pottery techniques (this added a great story to the selection of the ashtrays which was promoted in the Resort hotel). The umbrella stand ashtrays at Fig Tree

Bay were made from sturdy, recycled plastic. For a cost of between 2 and 7 Euros per ashtray, both of the beaches have since reduced beach users' negative perception of litter and sand quality.

Water fountains

To reduce the number of plastic drinking bottles littering the beach environment, the installation of drinking-water fountains is recommended.

As Cyprus experiences serious water shortages, in addition to the regulatory monthly analysis to ensure drinking water requirements are met, fountains should be carefully maintained ensuring minimal water wastage through pipe leaks. Additionally, messages could accompany fountains to educate beach users on the scarcity of water.

In action: For approximately 450 Euros (summer 2012) Fig Tree Bay purchased and installed an aesthetically sensitive drinking-water fountain at the central beach access point, close to the life guard station. Concerns that beach users would not think the water from the fountain safe and therefore not use it were quickly alleviated; the fountain was busy all summer with people drinking directly from it as well as people re-filling their water bottles!

> "The beach is fine now. We have really noticed improvements since last year"
>
> Beach user, October 2012, Fig Tree Bay

Introduction

After sand quality, water quality is usually the next most important aspect of the beach experience for beach users. It came second in the survey of British beach users (Williams and Tudor 1999), joint top along with 'clean sand' in a survey of German beach users (Ecotrans, 2002) and 'poor water quality' was second in a survey of the factors most dissatisfying for Polish beach users (2004).

Poor water quality can be harmful to human health and, depending on the type of poor water quality, can be very detrimental to the immediate natural environment, and biodiversity off-shore. In the qualitative tourist interviews, conducted to gain base line data for the Greening Cyprus Beaches pilot project, 'clean / clear water' was the second most commonly cited expectation of a 'green' beach.

Water quality and sand quality are often inextricably linked. Researchers have found links between beach water quality perception and visual pollution. For example, Dinius (1981), showed that beach users considered that visually polluted sites had lower water quality, arguing that if efforts to improve water quality ignored the importance of keeping recreational sites clean, then the public may not appreciate/perceive the benefits.

In addition, Morgan (1996) indicated that beaches perceived to have the greatest amount of litter were also perceived to have the poorest water quality. Meeting the Bathing Water Directive is not enough if beach users do not perceive the water to be clean due to excess marine litter. Both sand quality and water quality must go hand in hand in a

'green' beach.

Due to all the factors above, water quality receives category four rating in importance.

Category: Water Quality

Individual standards:
- Meet the highest standard of EU Bathing Water Directive quality / Meet the highest standard of EU Water Framework Directive when applicable (2015 onwards)

Weighting / Importance rating: 4

Measurement / Monitoring: Water quality to be measured a minimum of once a month outside the bathing season and a minimum of twice a month in the peak bathing season, to identify isolated pollution incidents

Points: Meet standards at all sampling points = 10 points / Meet standards at 95% of sampling points = 8 points / Meet standards at 90% of sampling points = 6 points / Meet standards at 85% of sampling points = 4 points / Meet standards at 80% of sampling points or less = 2 points

Suggested activities
Water quality readings

Water quality is already very good in Cyprus but it is not measured often enough to identify isolated pollution incidents. The balance needs to be made between ensuring these isolated incidents are identified, whilst not creating huge costs for the relevant departments.

It is suggested that for a 'green' beach, water quality needs to meet recommended EU levels throughout the year and thus the bathing season should be considered annual. As such, readings to comply with the parameters laid out in the EU Bathing Water Directive should be taken a minimum of once a week during the bathing season and once a

month during the non-bathing season, if finance allows.

In action: For both Nissi and Fig Tree Bay beaches, water quality readings were carried out twice a month throughout bathing season. This was achieved with cooperation from the municipalities and the beach inspectors.

Staff involvement

Good water quality is crucial to the beach user experience therefore, in addition to ensuring regular water quality readings are taken, train beach staff to get involved in improving the beach environment. Beach staff and lifeguards can be provided with basic equipment (litter picks, nets, gloves, waste bags) and encouraged to keep bathing water debris free, clean and safe.

Be transparent

Show beach users and staff that you are doing your best to ensure their experience is faultless by publicising water readings on beach notice boards. Where there is a negative reading, add information to explain to beach users (and staff) what is being done to rectify the situation.

Introduction

While 'green' facilities per se are not important to beach users, facilities are. In the qualitative tourist interviews, conducted for the Greening Cyprus Beaches pilot project, 'green' facilities were a key expectation of 'green' beaches. Poorly constructed and maintained facilities can also harm the environment, using lots of precious water and causing small-scale pollution incidents. 'Green' facilities receive a category 3 importance weighting.

While, for the purpose of greening beaches, it is not necessary to develop new facilities, especially if they visitor numbers attracted are small, where facilities exist (as expected with Blue Flag beaches) it is important that they are as aesthetically and physically sensitive to the environment as possible and attention is paid to the materials used for construction.

Suggested activities

Toilets

Composting toilets, housed in sustainable timber / FSC certified wood, should be standard on an ideal 'green' beach. They are excellent for the environment and the sustainability lifecycle. They lead to greatly reduced water usage, and enable the production of compost. If composting toilets are considered too expensive, an absolute minimum of installing water saving devices in current facilities with standard toilets is recommended. Easily installed, these devices save many litres of water per year. Most conventional siphon toilets use around 8 litres each time they are flushed. By fitting a standard, reliable device this can be reduced to an average of 4 litres; a huge saving when looking at the average usage on a busy summer's day!

Category: 'Green' facilities

Individual standards:
- Any existing / new toilet facilities provided must be 'greened'
- Any existing / new shower facilities must be 'greened'
- Regularly maintained recycling facilities must be available

Weighting / Importance rating: 3

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation to be made once a year in peak season

Points:

Toilets: All beach toilets are composting toilets, there are adequate numbers for beach users, and they are housed in sustainable/FSC timber units = 10 points / Some beach toilets are composting toilets and they are housed in sustainable/FSC timber units, but there are inadequate numbers = 8 points / No composting toilets are available but all toilets available have installed water-saving devices = 6 points / No composting toilets are available but some toilets available have installed water-saving devices = 4 points / No composting toilets and no water-saving devices are being used on existing toilets = 2 points

Showers: All beach shower units have water-saving heads and are housed in sustainable/FSC timber units = 10 points / Some (at least half) beach shower units have water-saving heads and are housed in sustainable/FSC timber units = 8 points / All beach shower units have water-saving heads = 6 points / Some (at least half) beach shower units have water-saving heads = 4 points / General shower facilities with no water-saving heads = 2 points

Recycling: Facilities for the separate recycling of paper / glass / plastic organic waste adequate for the volume of beach users = 10 points / Facilities for the separate recycling of paper / glass / plastic organic waste inadequate for the volume of beach users = 8 points / Mixed recycling facilities adequate for the volume of beach users = 6 points / Mixed recycling facilities provided inadequate for the volume of beach users = 4 points / No recycling facilities = 2 points

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In action: Nissi Beach Resort's answer to increasing demands from guests for more hygienic and better quality toilets was to renovate existing facilities and to improve the quality and frequency of maintenance and cleaning operations. This initiative increased beach user satisfaction by 15% year-on-year.

Showers

For existing or new shower facilities, shower units should be fitted with water-saving showerheads and housed in sustainable timber.
For an average five-minute shower, with a standard showerhead, a person uses approximately 100 litres of water; with a simple water-saving device fitted this consumption can be reduced to 25-35 litres.
Shower units could also have information for consumers about water scarcity and the impact soaps and shampoos can have on the delicate local environment.

Facilities

As with general waste, recycling facilities need to take account of visitor numbers and making them a 'feature' to encourage usage.
Some research suggests it is ease of recycling, and not environmental consciousness that most effectively determines whether one will recycle (Jackson, 2004).

Did you know? Correctly installed and operating composting toilets will not smell as there is a positive suction of air present at all times. In fact, there should be less smell than a conventional toilet!

Introduction

A truly 'green' beach should have very limited man-made noise. Noise pollution can affect certain marine species and impact land-based bio-diversity (e.g. birds). Noise pollution can also significantly affect the enjoyment of some beach users. As such, any music and any recreational watercraft should ideally be limited in the beach environment.

However, a balance needs to be struck. Noise pollution is difficult to assess, as it is a matter of personal taste. Some beach users specifically come to Cyprus for water-based sports, and some beach users like a certain level of noise and activity. As such, the aim of these standards is to create some parameters concerning noise pollution but not to eradicate it completely. Further research at individual beaches is also recommended to determine the precise levels of acceptable noise.

Suggested activities
Sound systems

There should be restrictions to music systems in beach bars / restaurants so that they do not exceed 55 decibels
Lifeguards and beach staff should also ensure that personal amplified music systems are not used on the beach.

Water sport engine noise

There are of course already laws in place in Cyprus to deal with noise. Indeed, according to the 'High speed craft law': *"powered vessels able to navigate at speeds equal or higher than 15 knots may not produce engine noise level measured at 17 metres from the noise source, higher than 74 decibels of "A" scale."*

Category: Noise pollution

Individual standards:
- No personal amplified music systems allowed on beach
- Restrictions to amplified music systems in beach bars / restaurants (not exceeding 55 decibels)
- No off-shore cruisers with engines to be moored within 150m of the foreshore
- Restrictions to speed and proximity of all water sports

Weighting / Importance rating: 3

Measurement / Monitoring: ite evaluation to be made once a year in peak season

Points: All four standards are being enforced / met in beach environment = 10 points / Three standards are being enforced / met in beach environment = 8 points / Two standards are being enforced / met in beach environment = 6 points / One standard is being enforced / met in beach environment = 4 points / No standards are being enforced / met in beach environment = 2 points

However, in addition, implementation of zoning systems should be investigated to ensure no off-shore cruisers (with engines) are moored within unacceptable distances of the foreshore. Zoning should also be considered for restricting the speed and proximity of water sports. The most common rule employed is that water sport craft (involving engine use) should not exceed 5 knots within 60m of the foreshore.

If significant funding is available, an optional extra to target noise pollution could be the acquisition of a fleet of eco-friendly watercraft. Eco-jet skis are new to the market and have numerous environmental benefits; they are solar-powered, they produce no CO_2, they produce no noise, and yet they can go at speeds of 50mph.

Meet up

Organise a meeting or workshop for all beach front bar / restaurant and water sports managers. Discuss noise issues, current beach user needs and the potential excessive noise has to ruin the beach atmosphere. Use these sessions to agree minimum noise levels, develop training for staff and communication strategies for beach users.

Did you know? You can purchase automatic sound regulators for bar sound systems.

In action: During the pilot project it was a difficult task to ensure that maximum noise levels were adhered to; it was thought that music, rather than appearance or quality, was the key to attracting customers. As such, bars were competing to be the one heard by potential customers and constantly increasing music volume throughout the day. However, following a number of individual meetings and a successful workshop with beach front bar managers it was agreed, by everyone, to restrict music levels to no more than 55 decibels.
As a result, returning beach users at Nissi Beach noticed the difference year-on-year and commented that the beach atmosphere was much more welcoming and pleasant, making them want to stay longer.

Introduction

Beach furnishings do not play a large part in the preferences and priorities of beaches. However, eco-furnishings are an expectation of a 'green' beach and, importantly, they are a very visible reference to the 'green' status of a beach. Their presence can be a powerful visual cue to the sort of beach that users are on, and the sorts of behaviours that are acceptable in the environment (i.e. using recycling bins or disposing properly of cigarette butts).

The general public's first impression of coastal environmental quality is often based upon an initial aesthetic and emotional judgment of the surroundings (House and Sangster, 1991).

Suggested activities
Sun loungers & umbrellas

All beach furnishings should be aesthetically sensitive to the natural beach environment (e.g. natural colours to blend with the sand and beach vegetation over bright, bold colours) and, ideally, should be constructed from a sustainable material, such as FSC wood or recycled/recyclable plastic.

Introduce eco furnishing through a gradual process rather than replacing everything at once. Replacing items in one go will lead to a lot of unnecessary waste, therefore it is recommended that sun loungers and umbrellas are only replaced once they have reached the natural end of their life span.
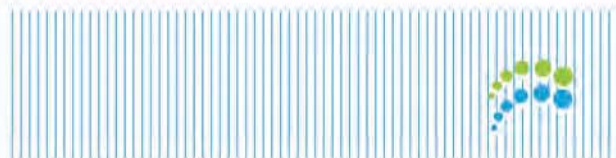
Category: Eco beach furnishings

Individual standards:
- Sun loungers must be sustainably sourced and/or aesthetically sensitive to the natural environment
- Beach umbrellas must be sustainably sourced and/or aesthetically sensitive to the natural environment

Weighting / Importance rating: 2

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation of sun loungers and umbrellas to be made once a year in peak season

Points:
Sun loungers: All sun loungers are consistent and made of eco materials (e.g. sustainable sources/FSC recognised wood/recycled materials/reclaimed materials) = 10 points / Some (at least half) sun loungers are made of eco materials (e.g. sustainable sources/FSC recognised wood/recycled materials/reclaimed materials) = 8 points / Sun loungers are not made of eco materials but are consistent in style with any mats aesthetically sensitive to the natural environment (e.g. green/brown/beige/blue) = 6 points / Sun loungers are not made of eco materials and mats are not aesthetically sensitive to the environment (e.g. red/stripy) but they are consistent in style / Sun loungers are not made of eco materials and are inconsistent in both colour and style = 2 points

Umbrellas: All beach umbrellas are made of natural/sustainable/FSC recognised materials e.g. 100% natural palm leaf = 10 points / Some (at least half) beach umbrellas are made of natural/sustainable/FSC recognised materials e.g. 100% natural palm leaf = 8 points / Beach umbrellas are not made of natural/sustainable materials but colours are consistent and in shades sensitive to the natural environment (e.g. green/brown/beige/blue) = 6 points / Beach umbrellas are not made of natural/sustainable materials and in shades insensitive to the natural environment (e.g. red/stripy) but colours are consistent = 4 points / Beach umbrellas are not made of natural/sustainable materials, are in shades insensitive to the natural environment and are inconsistent = 2 points

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In action: At a cost of approximately 45 Euros per unit, Nissi Beach Resort replaced the majority of umbrellas with sustainable, more aesthetically pleasing, wooden ones for the summer 2012 season. Additionally, at a cost of approximately 100 Euros per unit, the Agia Napa municipality replaced 30 sun loungers with neutrally coloured alternatives made from recycled plastic.

As a result, beach users commented that the beach looked much more appealing than in previous years, helping improve the number of beach users who were 'Very Satisfied' with sun loungers by 16%.

Leave space

The Foreshore protection Law of the Republic of Cyprus stipulates that when preparing a 'beach utilization plan' the Local Foreshore Committee must calculate the carrying capacity of any (sandy) beaches and ensure a suitable proportion of the beach is left free of sun beds and umbrellas for any person wishing to use their own (not hired) items or spread out towels and blankets. It is suggested that this rule be applied at any beach wishing to 'green' activities!

Keep it clean

It is suggested that beach furnishings are removed from the beach a minimum of once per week to allow for thorough cleaning of the sand.

Introduction

Native vegetation is positive for attracting bio-diversity, giving an area a sense of place, and keeping Cyprus distinctive. For Cyprus, native vegetation will also be best suited to the climatic conditions of the area so will not require excessive watering. As such, beaches should be seen to be supporting endemic and/or indigenous plants to attract high levels of native biodiversity and reduce pressure on scarce water supplies.

Vegetation is of importance to some beach users; advocates of Konnos beach, spoken to during the Greening Cyprus Beaches pilot study, spontaneously talked very positively about the vegetation there, and of the aesthetic importance they felt it had for the beach environment.
Vegetation and planting not only helps preserve endemic Cypriot species but also improves beach user perception; beach users perceive the beach as better cared for and better managed.

Suggested activities
Assess current vegetation

Assess the vegetation on the beach, dunes and access points to the beach to determine what is already growing and whether it is native or not.

Did you know? The forestry department has a number of experts who can help you in identifying suitable endemic, low maintenance and attractive plants to fit with each specific beach environment.

Category: Vegetation & planting

Individual standards:
- Beaches must be seen to be supporting endemic and/or indigenous plants to attract high levels of native biodiversity.

Weighting / Importance rating: 2

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation to be made once a year in peak season

Points: Significant amount of indigenous/endemic planting = 10 points / some indigenous/endemic planting = 8 points / Limited indigenous/endemic planting = 6 points / Significant amount of general planting = 4 points / General planting = 2 points

Get planting

The cost of planting will depend heavily on the size of the beach and the number of dedicated 'green' areas needing planting.

Planting could be an activity undertaken by the municipality, 'green' beach committee volunteers, or as public awareness-raising event. You could even organise a planting event to inform and engage the local community, increasing public awareness regarding your beach 'greening' activities and endemic Cyprus flora.

Interpretation

Some beaches are already strongly delivering in this 'green' area (i.e. Konnos Beach) and where this is occurring it is suggested that municipalities simply add interpretation about species, to connect people with their environment. Interpretation can be a powerful way to increase understanding/awareness and levels of respect and positive behaviours.

Most beach users' ignore the surrounding vegetation due to a lack of knowledge. By incorporating small information signs, made from sustainable materials, describing the plants and their origin you increase the beach user satisfaction and help improve behaviours (e.g. reduce trampling, littering or removal of vegetation).

In action: Ahead of the summer 2012 season, The Forestry Department conducted a preliminary study of current vegetation at both Nissi and Fig Tree Bay beaches. The study included site visits and the listing of current and recommended endemic or indigenous plants for each of the beach environments.

At Nissi Beach, as well as the development of a botanical garden, along the beach non-endemic plants were removed, replaced by indigenous Cypriot species. Small signs providing details of species origin and Latin names have also been dotted throughout planted areas. The changes were noticed by the majority of visitors, some commenting on Tripadvisor. The focus on indigenous planting and interpretation was also a key component to Nissi Beach Resort receiving an honorary tourism award, in 2012, for their sustainable practices.

"The gardens stretching down to the sandy beach are a sight to see. Fantastic! They have also planted many new plants this year, some of which are Cypriot, all labelled with their Latin names"

Nissi Beach Resort Guest (Tripadvisor), October 2012

Introduction

Public information will improve the environmental awareness level of beach users and could help to encourage improved beach behaviour.

It is recommended, alongside the wide use of the Greening Cyprus Beaches logo, that regular educational activities are offered, and information about the environment is provided in innovative and compelling ways. This is to avoid the passive in-taking of information by beach users; optimising the chances of behavioural change by using platforms more powerful than signs, posters and leaflets.

Environmental activities could include beach cleans, conservation activities, planting, local food events (i.e. farmers markets) or group cycle rides. Environmental information could be communicated by such medians as art exhibitions (on the beach) or other one-off social marketing activities, and offers up opportunities to engage beach volunteers.

Suggested activities
Greening Cyprus Beaches Logo

Using the Greening Cyprus Beaches logo (for which you will need permission from the CSTI and CTO) at a number of touch-points, e.g. beach entrance, recycling points, vegetation signage, water fountain, etc, will help reinforce the message that the beach management are actively trying to improve the sustainability of the beach through the implementation of a variety of initiatives. It will also help identify each initiative.

Category: Information & education

Individual standards:
- Environmental education activities must be offered by beach committee once a month
- Information about local environment must to be provided in innovative and compelling ways

Weighting / Importance rating: 2

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation to be made once a year in peak season / Diary of 'events' to be provided

Points: Education activities: Points awarded per activity offered (1 point per activity, to a maximum of 10 points) - Activities must documented and evidenced Information initiatives: Points awarded per initiative (maximum of 2 points per initiative, to a maximum of 10 points overall)

In action: The Greening Cyprus Beaches logo was placed at the entrances to both pilot beaches using 'green' graffiti; a process which uses recycled water to blast concrete or stone and 'wash' an image or logo onto designated surfaces. This process in itself created a lot of publicity at each beach; the local mayors attended and the events were publicised in local newspapers.

Following the placement of the Greening Cyprus Beaches logo at the entrances of the pilot beaches and the introduction of a number of branded initiatives (e.g. the water fountain at Fig Tree Bay and the plant signage at Nissi Beach) there was much more conviction from beach users about the 'greenness' of the beaches. There were increases of 155% and 150%, at Fig Tree Bay and Nissi beach respectively, in the percentage of beach users classing the beaches as "very green"!

Information boards & signs

The presence of 'green' signage can be a powerful visual cue to the sort of beach that users are on, and the sorts of behaviours that are acceptable in the environment. Find out more about improving your information boards and signs in the 'Green' Signage section.

Social Media

Include any Greening Cyprus Beaches initiatives in social media feeds, or set up dedicated pages focusing on the 'green' aspects of the beach. Social media is a quick and simple way to communicate with, predominantly, the younger generation and get people actively involved in any events or volunteering activities.

In action: the Greening Cyprus Beaches Facebook page, in its first 8 months, received 180 'likes' from interested parties and holidaymakers from countries including; Australia, Cyprus, Egypt, Germany, Greece, and the UK. Regular new stories and images worked well to increase the reach and numbers of people talking about the topic.

Beach cleans

Debris left on beaches is unsightly and can easily ruin a beach's image. Beach users want to enjoy beautiful, clean and safe beaches void of chances to cut themselves on glass, metal or sharp plastic.

Litter, as well as being an eye sore for beach users, is detrimental to the marine and seashore environment and wildlife.

By organising and running regular beach cleans, one per season (minimum) and ideally once a month between May and September, you are setting a great example for others on how to reduce marine and seashore debris.

Beach cleans are an excellent opportunity to involve the local community, including schools, municipality, tour operator and beach front business (i.e. hotel or bar) employees or local environmental organisations.

Events cost very little to run and can be advertised through social media networks, posters and local newspapers, all free of charge.

Remember! When running beach clean events you will need to ensure the safety of those involved: provide a clear briefing, including any specific hazards on the beach (e.g. sharp rocks or steep cliffs), gloves, litter pickers and waste disposal bags.

If finances allow, creating hats or t-shirts for beach clean volunteers to wear (with the Greening Cyprus beaches logo and details of the event or beach name) will give the event presence on the beach and draw more interest.

In action: During the pilot project three beach clean events were held between Fig Tree Bay and Nissi Beach and both beaches also participated in the annual Let's Do It Cyprus campaign. Members of the local community, including; Paralimni Scouts, Thomas Cook staff, municipality employees, Nissi beach hotel employees, Paralimni and Agia Napa school groups and local beach users, helped clear a large quantity of litter and cigarette butts from both beaches. In addition, Easy Divers conducted an underwater clean at both beaches.

These activities were picked up by the media; activities were published in many online sites, newspapers and announced by the local radios

Other activities

Conservation activities, planting, group cycling events and local food events (i.e. farmers markets) are discussed in the relevant Vegetation and Planting, Transport and Local Food and Drink sections of the handbook.

The next generation

Help to positively influence the next generation of Cypriot beach users by participating in presentations at local schools and ensuring that invitations are sent to local schools regarding beach clean events.

In action: During the pilot project a number of presentations were delivered at schools and local events to introduce the children to ways to help protect the beach environment.

Each presentation was given prior to a local beach clean event so that what was presented could be actively implemented.

"The presentation regarding Greening Cyprus Beaches was very constructive, presented to the children level of understanding with many positive outcomes. The cleanup activities that were organized by the project activate the children and make them understand the importance of preserving the beach clean. Several parents contact with me during summer and said that after the clean ups their children changed their behaviour on the beach".

Mrs. Vaso Llia, Head Teacher, Paralimni Primary School

Introduction

Despite much mention of signage within other standards (i.e. Vegetation and Planting and Information and Education), signage deserves a standard of its own.

Signage is important to people in that it allows them to navigate the beach environment. It can also direct people to important areas such as waste disposal and recycling. However, poor and excessive signage can be an unsightly blot on the beach environment.

As with beach furnishing, the presence of good quality signage can be a powerful visual cue to the sort of beach that users are on, and the sorts of behaviours that are acceptable in the environment.

As stated earlier, the general public's first impression of the coastal environmental quality is frequently based upon an aesthetic and emotional judgement of the surroundings (House and Sangster, 1991) and signage without doubt contributes to this.

Where signage is poorly maintained or executed, it can result in a 'shabby' appearance, at odds with the natural environment, and at could result in less respectful beach user behaviour.

Suggested activities
Sign aesthetics

'Green' signage needs to be minimal, consistent, aesthetically and materially sensitive to the natural environment and well-maintained - the ultimate aim is to enable users to successfully navigate the beach environment whilst behaving respectfully.

Category: 'Green' signage

Individual standards:
• All public signage must be sensitive to the natural environment

Weighting / importance rating: 2

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation to be made once a year in peak season. A qualitative assessment must be made of the proportion of signage meeting 'green' criteria based on size, consistency, aesthetic sensitivity to the natural environment, materials, and maintenance.

Points: On a scale of 1 to 10 a beach qualitatively believed to be adequately meeting all of the above criteria should receive a maximum of 10 points whilst a beach not meeting any of these criteria should receive zero points.

Signage should be made locally (ensuring money is supporting local, Cypriot businesses and crafts people) and should be created from sustainable materials (e.g. FSC wood, recycled/recyclable plastic). Ideally signs should also reflect or compliment the natural landscape in their shape, colouring and size; they should be clearly identifiable as information signs (i.e. consistent with each other), but not overpower or distract from the natural beauty of the beach.

In action: At Fig Tree Bay two new navigational signs were erected to direct beach users to all available facilities.

At a cost of approximately 700 Euros each, the locally made wooden signs look attractive and help to point out new initiatives such as the new drinking water fountain.

Sign Information

It is important that the wording and images on your signs are pitched at the right level for the audience, that they provide guidance or incentives for correct behaviour but avoid lecturing or making beach users feel guilty about using the beach.

As Futerra (n.d) suggest; "think about what your audience wants (not what you want them to want)... frosty messages try and sell policy and behaviour changes 'uphill' to audiences who dismiss or downright reject what needs to be done" – instead make your signage engaging and provide a view of a better beach environment and invite beach users to help you achieve it!

In action: At Nissi Beach, educational information signs have been placed alongside indigenous plants and vegetation to explain their origin.

Example plant / vegetation signage:

GREENING
CYPRUS BEACHES

Endemic Species Information Point

Latin Name
Cyclamen cyprium

Common Name
Κυκλάμινο κυπριακό - Cyprus cyclamen

Information
*This plant is unique to Cyprus.
It grows in the Kyrenia Mountains in woodland in
rocky terrain, around Mount Troodos in pine forest,
and in cedar forest in the Paphos area.*

Introduction

Transport does not immediately affect the beach environment, but people's transport to the beach should be considered for a holistic 'green' beach strategy, and to create momentum around the 'green' issue across Cyprus.

Transport is important to many holidaymakers in Cyprus, but common transport options include carbon-intensive mopeds, quads and buggies which can also cause significant noise pollution.

Suggested activities

Bus

Ensure that up to date bus timetables are available at beach side bars and restaurants and are displayed on beach notice boards. When running any events (i.e. beach cleans or local food events) that the bus routes and frequencies are clearly included in the details of how to get to the beach.

Walking

Is the beach in walking distance of the local town or any hotels? If so, promote safe walking routes using information leaflets or branded maps.

Cycling

Cycle hire is a pleasant, economical and low-impact way to travel – promote safe cycling routes using information leaflets and branded maps...
Ensure that facilities meet cyclists' needs when they arrive! It is recommended that all 'green' beaches have parking available for at least 10 bicycles.

Category: Sustainable transport

Individual standards:
• Beaches must be maximising the use of low-carbon transport options to the beach

Weighting / importance rating: 1

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation to be made once a year in peak season

Points: 2 points awarded for each of the following initiatives: Adequate bike racks in place at one beach entrance location / adequate bike racks in place at all beach entrance points / bus timetables and route maps for the local area clearly show relevant stops for beach / bus timetables and route maps available from beach front businesses or displayed in beach entrance signage / walking trail from local town identified and promoted

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Ideally bike racks should be available at all beach entrance points, however if this is not possible, clear signs and any leaflets or maps should direct cyclists to the bike rack areas.

Promote the options

Make walking or cycling routes more appealing by using leaflets and maps to provide interpretation of the surrounding area or landscape, including the flora or fauna, which can be seen along the way.

For young families, incorporate a scavenger or treasure hunt which provides educational, environmental and cultural input in a fun and engaging way.
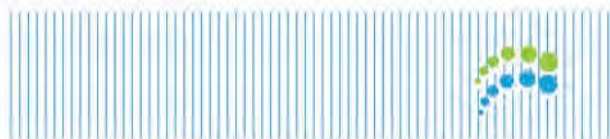
Why not organise a walking or cycling event to launch new leaflets and maps or as a regular activity throughout the summer season? Use a local, enthusiastic and knowledgeable historian or environmentalist to lead groups from a central point in town to the beach, using the advertised walking or cycling routes and interpreting the local landscape along the way.

In action: In collaboration with the Municipality of Agia Napa, the Greening Cyprus Beaches pilot project encouraged the installation of bicycle parking areas at the entrance of Nissi Beach.

The bicycle parking was in use from the first day it was installed and remained full throughout the summer season.

This initiative was fast to implement and made an immediate impact on beach user experience; following installation of the bike racks, 16% more people rated the transport options at Nissi Beach as *Very Good* when compared to the previous season.

Introduction

As with transport, local food and drink does not immediately affect the beach environment. However, the provision of local food has the potential to spread the benefits of tourism, whilst giving tourists a much richer holiday experience and food and drink providers have the opportunity to reduce their negatives impacts on the environment.

Obviously, there is little point in giving holidaymakers something they do not want, so it is recommended further research is conducted in the food/drink area, to identify latent needs. In particular it is suggested the feasibility of two key changes are investigated on both the consumer-side and service-side: Provision of local/traditional food and drink and, a weekly beach-side farmers market.

Suggested activities

Reduce energy consumption

Beach front food and drink providers (snack huts, bars and restaurants) have the opportunity to reduce negative impacts on the environment while also saving money and improving their image!

Alongside measures to reduce water consumption and reduce or recycle waste, the Greening Cyprus Beaches criteria also asks that energy consumption is minimised and the installation of solar panels is investigated.

Solar panels, while sometimes costly in initial outlay and installation, are an excellent way to take advantage of the great Cypriot weather and reduce monthly energy costs in the longer term.

Category: Food & drink

Individual standards:
- Solar panels to be used on all beach front shops / bars / food vendors
- Beaches must be taking steps to promote and supply locally produced and/or seasonal and/or organic and/or fair trade food

Weighting / Importance rating: 1

Measurement / Monitoring: Site evaluation to be made once a year in peak season

Points: Energy reduction (solar panels): All beach front shops, bars, food vendors have solar panels = 10 points / Some beach front shops, bars, food vendors have solar panels = 8 points / No beach front shops, bars, food vendors have solar panels, but all have made efforts to reduce energy consumption = 6 points / No beach front shops, bars, food vendors have solar panels, but some have made efforts to reduce energy consumption = 4 points / No beach front shops, bars, food vendors have solar panels, or have made efforts to reduce energy consumption = 2 points
Food/drink provision: 2 points awarded for each of the following initiatives: beach front bars and food vendors use a minimum of 25% local produce / beach front bars and food vendors use a minimum of 50% local produce / beach front bars and food vendors use a minimum of 75% local produce / beach front bars and food vendors provide at least 2 traditional dishes on menus / a regular (weekly during peak season) beach-side 'farmers' market is organised and hosted

Provide local food and drink

It is recommended that food and drink providers procure a minimum of 75% of produce, ingredients and goods locally. Local food is more likely to be seasonal and fresh and so taste better, as well as have a smaller carbon footprint as it will not have to travel far to reach customers plates!

In addition to procuring local ingredients, it is suggested that menus offer minimum of 2 unique, Cypriot inspired or traditional dishes/snacks.
Ideally, produce and ingredients should also be organic and / or Fair Trade.

Remember! The concept of 'local', when it comes to procurement of goods, services and employment, can be tricky to understand - how do you decide what is meant by 'local'? Is it the immediate area, the state or province, the country or decided by number of kilometres from your location?
It makes a big difference to your customers and your destination if you procure 'locally' wherever possible. How 'local' this is depends on you... however, make sure you explain your interpretation of 'local' to customers.

Run an event

As a beach community (beach management, hotels, bars, restaurants, etc), why not organise and host local food events on the beach? Include traditional Cypriot food cooking demonstrations and tasting opportunities, enhance the event by also inviting local artisans, crafters and musicians to attend

Although initially this type of event will take time and resource to develop (sourcing producers and developing promotional

materials), financially (at the most basic level) they can cost very little to run.

Events can be advertised through social media networks, posters and local newspapers; all free of charge. In return,

EXPERIENCE A TASTE OF CYPRUS!

The Greening Cyprus Beaches project team and Nissi Beach Resort are pleased to invite you to a cooking event.

Come and experience traditional Cypriot snacks, cooked by the hotel chef, using fresh, local ingredients!
Learn more about Cypriot traditions, and the recipes passed down through generations.

When? Saturday 13th October 2012
Where? Nissi Beach Resort (Taverna area)
Time? 15:30

MORE ABOUT GREENING CYPRUS BEACHES.
Greening Cyprus Beaches is a project run by CTO, CSTI and the Travel Foundation. The project aims to make Nissi Beach and Fig Tree Bay great beaches for holidaymakers and the local community. Ask for more information at the event or find out more at: www.facebook.com/GreeningCyprusBeaches

these types of engaging events are sure to generate positive media coverage and publicity.

In action: Nissi Beach Resort worked with local suppliers and the beach front bars and restaurants at Nissi Beach and Bay to host a Taste of Cyprus event which offered beach users the opportunity to try traditional Cypriot snacks, watch cooking demonstrations and learn more about traditional Cypriot culture.

The event was supported by a number of printed recipe booklets for beach users to take away and use to recreate the dishes they had tasted at home.

It's so good to see, in a resort like Agia Napa, an event promoting traditional Cypriot culture.

Me and my husband really enjoyed sampling the different local dishes (we'll be trying to recreate some when we get home, especially the Lokmades) and seeing the traditional Cypriot potter make some vases.

We will certainly be on the lookout for more things like this next time we are on holiday! "

UK Holidaymaker and Taste of Cyprus event attendee. October 2012

The event directly resulted in a 22% increase in the number of people rating local food provision at Nissi Beach as 'Very Good' and the event received lots of positive feedback.

Furthermore, the media covering this event gave maximum exposure to it and a chance to the hotel to inform the media and the beach users the actions taken to help 'green' the beach.

It makes good business sense

Implementing activities to make your beach 'greener' makes good business sense; it supports Blue Flag initiatives, many elements require simply rethinking current budget allocation rather than increasing budgets, some activities will help save money, most initiatives will improve beach user experience and all initiatives help protect and support the natural resource on which business relies – the beach!

How do you get Involved?

Email the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI), on info@csti-cyprus.org, to express your interest. Ensure that you provide the following details in the email:

- Beach name
- Managing municipality or company
- A copy of the Blue Flag award
- Contact details

Use the dedicated Greening Cyprus Beaches web pages, on the CSTI website, to download a pdf copy of this manual and copies of the monthly audit sheets.

Use your first audit to highlight what you are already doing and the key areas for improvement.

Make yourself an action plan and timeline for the coming months detailing the activities you intend to implement, who will be involved and the associated costs.
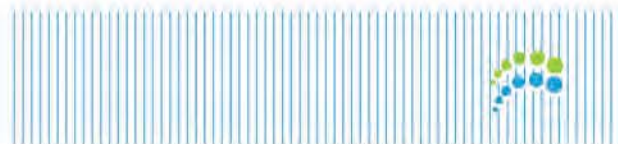
Remember! Include a range of short term (quick win) activities (e.g. ashtrays or increasing sand cleaning activities) as well as longer term projects (e.g. replacing sun loungers or introducing solar panels) in your action plan... it is great to be able to see results quickly as well as be able to work at your own pace to implement some of the larger initiatives.

What's expected from you?

It is your role to ensure that initiatives are implemented and changes are recorded.

However, as the CSTI and CTO would like to keep track of your activities, you will need to:

- Complete the relevant sections, in accordance with the Measurement / Monitoring requirements for each criterion, of an audit sheet (available to download from the website) each month.
- Email your monthly audit sheets, along with any supporting stories or images, to the CSTI

"The project was just the first step towards sustainable management of the beach, giving us the motivation to seek other sustainable options to deal with problems on the beach next year"

Mr. Oikonomou, Beach Inspector, Fig Tree Bay

What can you expect in return?

- A Greening Cyprus Beaches handbook and a host of online resources (including; auditing sheets, action plan templates, additional data collection tools, case studies, etc)
- Phone and email support from the dedicated beach staff at the CSTI / CTO
- Use, in line with terms and conditions, of the Greening Cyprus Beaches logo (following submission of 3 complete monthly audit reports)
- An online acknowledgement of your participation
- Inclusion, in online updates and (where possible) press releases, of any innovative / unique stories regarding your activities
- The possibility of receiving a Greening Cyprus Beaches annual award (please note: this annual event will not start until at least winter 2014 and will be dependent on number of participating beaches and the activities implemented to date).

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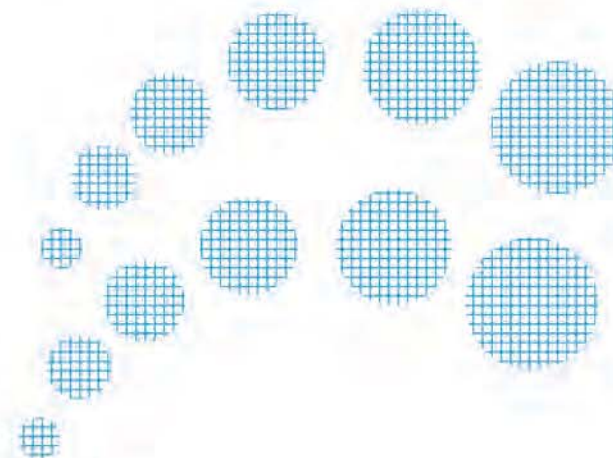Tripadvisor (2013) - http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/TravelersChoice-Beaches-cDestinations-g4

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