

Final Report

Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism





FINAL REPORT **Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART)**

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Compiled by: Mirkka Vaarala

Publishers and financiers: State Provincial Office of Lapland and Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Contact for orders:

State Provincial Office of Lapland
International Unit
P.O BOX 8002
96101 Rovaniemi
FINLAND
Tel. +358 2051 77660
Fax: +358 2051 77550
E-mail: nflapland@lh.intermin.fi

Kemi-Tornio University of
Applied Sciences/ Research &
Development Department
Kauppakatu 58
95400 Tornio, FINLAND
Tel. +358 400 690 966
Fax +358 16 258 584
E-mail: eero.pekkarinen@tokem.fi

For obtaining electronic versions and finding regional contact persons contact: www.arctictourism.net

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Preface

The need for Arctic tourism development cooperation that would fulfil the criteria of sustainable development was already noticed in the 1990s. It was included among others in the resolution proceedings of the Northern Forum General Assembly held in Rovaniemi, 1999.

At the same time the project was being developed in Alaska, USA and in Lapland, Finland. In 2000 these two initiatives were combined as a joint project of the Northern Forum and the Arctic Council, the Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART).

When the main financing was received from the Nordic countries and from the European Union's funding sources, the focus of the project's implementation moved to the Nordic countries and especially also the Canadian actors and the WWF International Arctic Programme has given a valuable input, which became determining for the project.

The established Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association will continue the further development of the project's results, but in addition to that, other institutions are naturally needed to continue the work of the SMART.

Organizing training for tourism companies and other actors is one of the central challenges of the continuation of the SMART's activities. Adopting sustainable development principles is not an easy task on the business level. There may arise conflicts between short and long term interests. The Trainer's Manual offers good material for training. The University of the Arctic would function as an excellent channel for training and education in this purpose.

It is also important in the future cooperation that the geographical scope, especially on the Russian Federation's part, as well as the central role of the indigenous peoples' will be ensured.

Hannu Viranto
Head of the International Unit
State Provincial Office of Lapland, Finland

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1. SUMMARY

The purpose of the Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) – project was to assist the arctic tourism sector, mainly local small- to medium-sized tourism businesses (SMEs) and other local stakeholders to develop positive economic, social and environmental benefits from tourism based on the cultural and natural environment of the North. The project's goal was to create resources, tools and incentives that can be used by northern and arctic tourism SMEs and other local players in tourism development as well as to create professional training to assist the tourism sector in their respective area.

During the SMART -project, six basic principles for sustainable arctic tourism were created from existing principles and other sources of information. Based on the principles, a Trainer's manual containing six training modules of sustainable tourism were created for the tourism companies. Interviews were made within the project's pilot tourism companies and good business practises collected on actions that represent sustainable tourism, as it is defined in this project via the sustainable arctic tourism principles and their guidelines (see Attachment 2). The business practice examples are found in the training material and on the website www.arctictourism.net

Plans for a common arctic sustainable tourism label were made during the project and the partners decided to recommend using the Swedish ecotourism label, Nature's Best, as a model for the Arctic countries and regions to be adapted for the tourism industry. An initial review of the model was done in northern Finland, in Nunavut and North-West Territories of Canada as well as in Kamchatka, Russia. The model has also been introduced to the Alaskan tourism industry. The Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association (SATA) was established in October 2005 to continue the development and promotion of sustainable tourism in the Arctic and to formalize the circumpolar network of tourism stakeholders that has been built up over the past several years. The association provides a forum for sustainable arctic tourism operators and other stakeholders to share their expertise and opinions.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Tourism in the northern and arctic regions

Tourism industry has grown substantially in northern areas during the last few years, and especially arctic destinations have become more popular. This development does not only present economic opportunities, but also potential threats to local cultures and the fragile environment. Recent tourism trends in the North show that current practices and future tourism development have to take into account the environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects in a balanced approach to ensure that tourism will benefit the local people and the environment in the long term.

Even more so, sustainable tourism can be an alternative economic possibility for the remote northern communities, and can result in a reduction of the pressure on the environment and especially the living resources. After all, nature and culture are the basis tourism builds on in these northern areas.

However, it is not only with regard to long-term sustainability of tourism in the North, as seen from the supply side that environmental issues and social responsibility become more and more important in tourism and especially for the small and medium sized businesses. Customers, especially outside the mass tourism segment, are increasingly aware of the implications their travel can have on local environments and communities and thus look for experiences that reflect more responsibility. Though accurate numbers are hard to get, it can be estimated that ecotourism worldwide is growing three times as fast as tourism overall (International Ecotourism Society 2006 a). The success of Nature's Best is one proof of this as well as the growing number of eco tourism associations worldwide.

Also, tour operators from source markets with environmentally-aware customers increasingly require information about the social and environmental responsibility of their suppliers, while improved quality and safety standards of the products are another important aspect of how operators can minimize their risk.

Unplanned or poorly planned tourism activity can eventually degrade the natural environment and create conflicts with local people, decreasing the quality of life in the local community and undermining the basis of tourism. Tourism planning and development should be done in harmony with the local inhabitants, and the cultural and natural resources. In addition, tourism is a highly competitive sector and an exploited environment or commercialised cultural experience “devalues” a destination and might have far reaching consequences for the location and its inhabitants. The SMART-project aimed to address these challenges.

A good tourism experience often comes down to one basic question: quality. Quality is what the customers are looking for in their tourism experiences and sustainability should and can be a main component of a quality product. The resources developed in the SMART – project can help businesses in planning their quality, sustainable tourism products that combine social and environmental responsibility with economic feasibility. Even though the Arctic countries and their regions differ quite much from each other on their political systems, natural environment, tourism industry and its structures and from many areas of the society, they still share many similar challenges. They have a lot of things in common.

The northern and arctic conditions pose many challenges to tourism development and to lives of the northern people. Some of the environmental challenges have to do with weather and ground conditions (permafrost), slow growing flora and delicate environment. Logistical challenges are for example caused by the communities’ remote locations, limited and costly transportation, lack of infrastructure and communications, high living- and maintenance costs. Socio-economical challenges in the arctic areas differ from the southern areas: fewer people populate vast territories, educational levels on average are lower than in more urban areas as communities may have limited access to training, educational facilities and trainers. Indigenous cultures, languages and dialects as well as different lifestyles may distinguish the north of a country from its more populated southern regions. In the SMART -project, these Arctic characteristics were identified in order to identify specific

training needs for businesses operating in the Arctic. (See attachment 1: Characteristics of Arctic tourism).

However, some challenges are less distinct in certain Arctic countries. Northern Scandinavia, for example, has well-developed transportation infrastructure and also has good communications networks, and is well accessible by road, train and air. Consequently, the northern tourism destinations in those countries are comparatively easy to reach. The tourism infrastructure in some areas is suited to even serve a large volume of travellers. Many of the other challenges for tourism development identified, however, apply across the Arctic.

The Arctic Council sustainable development action plan states, that policies and measures to achieve sustainable development in the Arctic must bear in mind the special circumstances of the Arctic region, including the following:

- Arctic ecosystems are fragile and vulnerable to anthropogenic impacts and global climate change.
- The livelihood and culture of Arctic inhabitants, especially indigenous peoples, is to a large extent based on the utilization of natural resources and is sensitive to environmental change.
- The Arctic is rich in natural resources, and there is a growing pressure to utilize them. This needs to be done in a way that maximizes benefits for Arctic residents and communities and minimizes adverse environmental impacts.
- The Arctic is sparsely populated and many Arctic settlements are challenged by a lack of good infrastructure in transport and communications.
- The Arctic region is increasingly being considered as an environmental indicator region, informing the rest of the world about the effects of global phenomena such as climate change and long-distance transport of pollutants. (Arctic Council, 2004.)

2.2 Sustainable tourism and other key concepts

Tourism development and tourist activities, in the Arctic and elsewhere, become sustainable when a business is not only concerned about its economic success, but also looks at environmental and social aspects of its activities.

In the Arctic, people's livelihoods are still very closely connected to nature and "sustainability" is not a new concept. The fragile arctic environment and its unique indigenous cultures – the main tourist attractions of the Arctic - need to be treated respectfully and on their premises.

The SMART – project looks at sustainable arctic tourism as *tourism that minimizes negative impacts and maximizes socio-cultural, environmental and economic benefits for residents of the Arctic. The project recognizes that sustainability is an on-going learning process rather than a final outcome.* In the SMART –project, sustainable tourism is defined through the principles of sustainable arctic tourism (see chapter 3.4.1) and their guidelines, which were developed under the project (Attachment 2).

Sustainable tourism has been defined, for example, by the World Tourism Organization in the Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry as tourism that *"meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems. Sustainable tourism products are products, which are operated in harmony with the local environment, community and cultures so that these become the beneficiaries not the victims of tourism development".* (World Travel and Tourism Council et al, 2001.)

The Nordic Council of Ministers describes that *"sustainable tourism development is no final state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the utilization of resources, management of resources, management of investments, the direction of technological developments, and institutional changes are brought in line with future as well as present needs. Sustainable tourism development contains 3 mutually*

dependent dimensions: an economic, a social and an environmental dimension. A sustainable development entails that a better integration of the 3 dimensions is established. This process necessitates the involvement and commitment of all parties (in Nordic tourism) including industry, the NGOs, unions, and government authorities". (Nordic Council of Ministers, Towards a Sustainable Nordic Tourism, 2001.)

Sustainable tourism definitions are closely connected to *ecotourism*, even though sustainable tourism is a wider concept than ecotourism. Even mass tourism can or rather must be sustainable. Some tourism practitioners think that mass tourism is the only way to create global sustainable tourism (Selänniemi, 2006).

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "*responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people*". This means that those who implement and participate in ecotourism activities should follow the following principles:

- Minimize impact
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate
- Support international human rights and labor agreements. (The International Ecotourism Society, 2006 b.)

In the Sustainable Development Framework document, the Arctic Council states that sustainable development must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Economic, social and cultural development are, along with environmental protection, interdependent and mutually reinforcing aspects of sustainable development and are all part of the Council's focus in this regard. The Council emphasizes capacity building at all levels of society and promotes economic activity that creates wealth and human capital. (Arctic Council, 2000.)

Sustainable tourism has been characterised as involving a spectrum of experiences, supply characteristics, and market demands. Better understanding of the niche markets and of the consumer has important research and market implications and is critical to the development of suitable services. Appropriate services lead to more value-added products and higher positive economic impact.

Sustainable tourism comprises a broad range of recreational activities occurring within the context of a natural environment. An emerging consensus is that sustainable tourism has identifiable niche markets, each with a unique set of characteristics. Such niche markets are for example ecotourism, wilderness use and adventure travel.

Market differentiation leads to higher consumer satisfaction, higher return rates, and a mature business climate. Much of sustainable tourism is characterized by small businesses, and it is wiser to target small market segments that are now under-served than it is to tackle larger segments that are difficult to handle and already have a great deal of competition.

Other important concepts used in this report and to be mentioned here include a label for sustainable tourism and training modules.

The SMART- project promotes the creation of an international, arctic –specific tourism label common for the whole circumpolar arctic region. In the beginning of the project, a more general term of sustainable arctic tourism “scheme” was used. Hereafter the word “label” will be used.

The proposed label would have a common framework and comparable criteria, yet allowing for national adaptations in each participating country. Currently, there is no such label available that would recognize the special features of the Arctic regions or the Arctic as a whole. The special traits of the natural environment, geography, indigenous and northern cultures and economies that are prominent for the region need to be taken into account in a common sustainable tourism label.

The reasons for joining and possible benefits obtained from an arctic-wide label can vary and different stakeholders may have

different interests. These can be for example marketing and gaining better market access, having more reliable business operations and showing commitment to important issues such as the community, environment, quality and safety.

A sustainable tourism label can be viewed as a *voluntary tool* that recognises tourism practitioners for implementing and achieving sustainable practices. The labels normally have a logo and achieving the label indicates that a product (or enterprise) has met a set of environmental, socio-cultural or economic standards.

Training modules are a term, which is used in the project to describe the different training packages in the Trainer's manual based on each of the six sustainable tourism principles. The modules are meant as "toolboxes" for primarily trainers to use in the different regions, to choose from and add material into. The training itself can be done in various forms, using distant education technologies and others.

3. SMART (Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism) – project 2003-2005

3.1 Project history and background

The SMART -project has a history that dates back to the year 1999 when the basic idea of the SMART-project was born at the first Northern Business Conference in Rovaniemi. In the first stage, the idea was developed further as the *'Linking Tourism and Conservation (LINKS)* -project initiated by the State of Alaska (USA) and the WWF International Arctic Programme on the one hand, and *'Sustainable Tourism Development in the North – Exploiting the Potential of the Information Society'* (SusTour), a project started by the Finnish partners and funded by the Nordic Industrial Fund, on the other.

Various stakeholder meetings and discussions took place before the SMART project was born. One such stakeholder meeting took place at the Arctic Ecotourism Conference in Hemavan, Sweden, in April 2002.

As a result of these SusTour and LINKS -initiatives as well as contacts with other arctic tourism stakeholders, an international workshop was held in Finland, June 2002 to develop a common circumpolar project: Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART). The SMART –project was implemented in 2003-2005.

This became the so called *Cultural and Ecotourism Initiative* under the Arctic Council Sustainable Development Working Group. It was preliminarily accepted in the 1998 Iqaluit Ministerial meeting and endorsed in the Barrow Ministerial meeting in 2000, when the project officially became an Arctic Council project. In the Northern Forum General Assembly in Edmonton 2001 the project also became a priority project of the Northern Forum.

The project proposal Sustainable Model of Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) has been built up in cooperation with several international tourism, community development and environmental stakeholders.

3.2 Project's vision, mission and objectives

The vision and the mission of the SMART – project were:

<p style="text-align: center;">VISION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To empower the tourism sector in the Arctic to continually innovate more sustainable tourism practices.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MISSION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To assist the arctic tourism sector to adopt economically, environmentally and culturally sustainable tourism practices.</p>

To implement the vision, five main objectives were originally defined for the project. Each objective had activities, which are described here below.

1. To collect, document and analyse best practices in relevant to sustainable arctic tourism.

Project activity: To create a common framework for sustainable arctic tourism and this would then be defined by a set of common principles and supported by a set of best practices.

2. To market sustainable tourism practices and benefits from adopting them.

Project activity: An awareness campaign promoting sustainable tourism practices in the Arctic. The campaign will focus on why sustainable tourism practices are worth integrating into tourism operations at business and destination level.

3. To assist the arctic tourism sector to learn how to implement sustainable tourism practices.

Project activity: A training programme in sustainable tourism that advances skills and practises and among other things prepares the graduates for participation in a proposed market recognition scheme (label).

4. To define sustainable tourism practices and to award businesses for achieving them.

Project activity: An Arctic-wide market recognition scheme/ label for sustainable tourism businesses. The previous objectives focus on providing tools and information, awareness raising and skills development, objective 4 aims at creating a tool that recognises tourism practitioners for implementing and achieving sustainable practices. This tool would then function as an incentive and a reward.

5. To create incentives for the tourism sector to adopt sustainable tourism practices and join the recognition scheme, laying the ground work to brand sustainable arctic tourism.

Project activity: Establish a web site as a part of the overall project web site that markets products and businesses affiliated with the market recognition scheme/label; International workshop; Encourage the establishment of an arctic-wide association for the sustainable tourism sector as a result of the process. The association could brand sustainable arctic tourism, promote it and carry outputs of activities 1-4 into the future.

The project work was divided in to five different work packages, and more precisely, two main components were focused on: the knowledge transfer on one hand and market incentives, a sustainable tourism label, on the other. Based on these two pillars of the project, the SMART aimed to strengthen the awareness and implementation of sustainable practices in the arctic tourism sector.

The main target groups of the project were micro, small and medium sized tourism enterprises (SMEs). Secondary target groups and beneficiaries of the SMART project included communities, tourism development bodies, trade associations, environmental organizations and other local tourism players in the field of sustainable tourism. The main target group was represented through pilot companies in the participating countries (Finland, Sweden and Canada).

3.3 Financing and partner organizations

The partners in the project were Kemi-Tornio Polytechnic (Finland), Metsähallitus (Natural Heritage Services, Finland), State Provincial Office of Lapland (Finland), ALMI Företagspartner i Västerbotten (Sweden), Rural Economy and Agricultural Society (Norrbotten, Sweden), Swedish Ecotourism Society (Sweden), WWF International Arctic Programme (Norway), Nunavut Tourism (Canada), the Government of North West Territories (Canada), Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association (Alaska / USA) and the Tourism Committee of Arkhangelsk Region (Russia). Other supporting partners in the project were Landsdelsutvalget (Norway); Rambøll, Greenland Tourism and Greenland Homerule (Greenland), State of Alaska (Alaska Division of Trade and Development)/ USA, Tourism and Environment Forum (Scotland) and the Faroe Islands Tourist Board.

The target areas of the project in Scandinavia were the province of Lapland, and more precisely the Pyhä and Luosto areas (Finland), counties of Norrbotten and Västerbotten (Sweden) as well as tourism companies in Nunavut and North-West Territories in Canada. The WWF International Arctic Programme works throughout the Arctic with an emphasis on the Barents Sea and Bering Sea regions. A separate EU TACIS -project was implemented in Archangelsk region in the Russian Federation, which focused on sustainable tourism development and white whale conservation in the White Sea.

The funding for the project came from the EU Northern Periphery Programme, Finnish Ministry of Environment, County administrations of Norrbotten and Västerbotten in Sweden, the Northern Forum, the North Calotte Council and the Government of Canada as well as from the project partners in each participating country.

3.4 Project activities and results

3.4.1 Result 1: Sustainable arctic tourism principles

The first phase of the project focused on gathering information about different existing principles, sustainable tourism and eco-labels, good business practises and examples via literature and internet research and interviews among the pilot tourism companies and other tourism experts.

Most of the information is available in the training material and on the internet site. During the first six months of the project a basic framework, six principles for sustainable tourism, was agreed upon within the project partners.

Other principles were used as a basis, for example the sustainable nature tourism principles from Metsähallitus (Natural Heritage Services, Finland) for national parks and protected areas; Nature's Best -principles from Sweden; 10 principles for Arctic tourism from the WWF Arctic Programme and others and thus they are generally widely usable in different organizations and businesses in the Arctic.

After drafting the principles, they were tested within the pilot companies and among other stakeholders throughout the partner countries. The feedback indicated that the principles are easy, agreeable and usable even in companies' and organizations' daily operations as voluntary guidelines.

The idea of the principles themselves is that they should be seen more as goals or guidelines, and not as conditions. They are recommended to be used in tourism companies, communities, regional tourist boards, organizations, among landowners and others.

Guidelines were created to support the principles and to help companies and organizations to act in a more sustainable manner by giving them another voluntary tool in their operation (Attachment 2). Thus, a framework for sustainable arctic tourism was established.

SUSTAINABLE ARCTIC TOURISM

1. Supports the local economy

Supporting stands for employing staff, buying goods and services and paying tax locally. Tangible benefits from tourism are a positive force.

2. Operates environmentally friendly

Establish and continuously improve environment policies. Transportation, waste and lodging impact policies are adjusted to local conditions.

3. Supports the conservation of local nature

The ecological carrying capacity of the area must be respected. The local inhabitants and tourism operators have a right to participate in land use planning on local and regional level. The operator should have thorough knowledge and co-operate with other actors and should give active support to preferably local conservation projects.

4. Respects and involves the local community

Promoting and preserving local cultures, lifestyles and values sets limits and rules to tourism. Quality tourism depends on active support from and benefit to local people. The networking between different stakeholders in the region is highly encouraged.

5. Ensures quality and safety in all business operations and

Sustainable tourism is quality tourism. This includes administration, planning, acting as a good host and implementing safety issues in quality management policy.

6. Educates visitors about local nature and culture.

Sustainable tourism is based on curious and respectful visitors. Operators use knowledgeable guides and constantly improve the awareness level of the personnel. The visitor is given information of the sustainable tourism in the region.

Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) –project (2003)

3.4.2 Result 2: Awareness raising

The second phase of the project focused on raising awareness on different levels about sustainable tourism and the project objectives. These included such means and forums as:

- The SMART newsletters
- www.arctictourism.net - website
- Project partner organizations' websites
- Northern Forum website and various events
- Arctic Council reports and events (SAO and SDWG meetings) and www.sdwg.org – website
- WWF International Arctic programme's quarterly publication "Arctic Bulletin". The articles published on SMART in the Arctic Bulletin are in the following issues: 02/02, pp 18 – 19; 03/02, pp 20 – 21; 01/03, page 9.
- Regional news articles and press releases
- Conference materials
- Project seminars and other regional seminars and events where SMART project was presented.

The original idea of the awareness campaign was that it would focus on why sustainable tourism practices are worth integrating into tourism operations at business and destination level. A lot of this explanation can be found in the training material.

The awareness raising that was done focused more on making sustainable tourism, the project and the message more known, visible and more important among the northern regions. The project was able to reach well the stakeholders, especially decision makers in the Arctic.

3.4.3 Result 3: Trainer's manual

One of the most central achievements in the project was creating the "*Trainer's manual*". It consists of six different modules based on sustainable arctic tourism principles, which were made in order to improve the general knowledge on sustainable tourism, to prepare the graduates for a label and to provide common curriculum for across the Arctic. The primary target groups for the training are small and medium sized tourism companies in the Northern areas, but however tourism students and teachers can take advantage of the training material as well.

The contents of the training modules can be utilized to improve the company performance in sustainable tourism issues. If the companies are going to apply for national or international labelling in sustainable tourism, it is useful for them to get acquainted with the contents of the modules before that.

The training material planning began by making an overview of existing and relevant tourism training courses. What was lacking, were the more comprehensive sustainable tourism curricula and courses that would touch the most of the subjects in sustainable tourism. Short-term courses suitable for entrepreneurs were also lacking.

The training courses can be delivered by regional-based trainers or organizations. The training modules mainly function as a framework or a set of tools, which can be used in the training and adjusted regionally and nationally. Sources and other information e.g. legislation can be added by the trainer based on the needs of the target group. The methods can also vary. The business practises that were collected during the project from the pilot companies by interviews and other sources of information are included in the training material.

Some pilot courses have already been organised in Nunavut, Canada. The actual training will be done with separate funding outside the SMART -project, and that means basically using regional or national financing. The coordination of the training on an international level is done through the Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association (SATA). Some of the

representatives of the SATA will also be involved in the trainer-trainings.

The framework for the modules contains:

- a) learning objectives
- b) suggested training methods and resources
- c) case study material and company practices or examples
(see examples farther behind)
- d) listing of the resources and publications

There will be at least three languages available on the modules: English, Russian and Inuktitut. Those, who are interested in obtaining them, may contact the Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association (SATA) via the website www.arctictourism.net. At the moment, the English versions can be viewed on the website.

SMART – project partners have made contacts with the University of the Arctic and discussed preliminarily about cooperation on delivering the training courses in the UArctic network. The negotiations are on-going at the moment. The SMART -project is by invitation a member of sustainable development discussion forum in the University of the Arctic. In the following chapters are placed few extracts from the training material in order to give a short overview of the contents and the structure.

3.4.3.1 Example: Outline of Module 1 Benefits local economy

TRAINING MODULE 1: BENEFIT THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Objectives:

- Training to meet the criteria of the Sustainable Arctic Tourism Label
- To explain the connection between tourism business sustainability and benefits to the local economy
- To provide a basic understanding of the economies of Northern and remote communities
- To provide suggestions for ways in which a tourism company is able to benefit the local community
- To promote positive and mutually-profitable relationships between tourism operators and community residents

Outline:

- Why is it important to ensure tourism businesses benefit the local economy?
- How does a “local economy” function?
- What is economic leakage and how does it affect Arctic economies?
- How can private enterprise contribute to, and strengthen the local economy?
- Social costs and social benefits to the community
- Where do you (a small tourism operator) begin?
- How can you and your business continue to improve?
- Appendix I: Operator Interviews

3.4.3.2 *Good practices*

Guideline on using the 'Good Practices'

The 'Good Practices' included in the Trainers' manuals are intended to be an integral part of SMART training workshops. Even if the trainer is, or has been a tourism operator himself/herself, the workshop is not to focus solely on his/her experience. To do so would detract from the value and sharing concept of this program. Of course, the trainer's experience may be included with the other examples where appropriate.

Some suggestions for use of the 'Good Practices' are:

- Evaluate certain good/best practices - are there any problems with them? (Group discussion)
- Compare several good/best practices - which is the most effective, why?
- Would this good/best practice be applicable in your region or business - Why yes or no? How would you alter it?
- Select and print out several as hand outs for reading
- How do these examples illustrate sustainability?
- Use sample good/best practices to apply to one of the suggested learning exercises.

A variety of reference materials are listed for each topic such as literature, websites, and audiovisuals. These are suggestions of relevant and more detailed information from which the trainer may draw, according to what he/she feels is appropriate. Ideally, trainers and participants will continue to update the list as new sources become available.

The module also incorporates numerous "real life" examples – testimonials and first person accounts – which illustrate how other northern tourism operators have adopted environmentally responsible practices.

The manual is not a textbook. It is a compilation of resources from which a trainer may choose, with the aim of giving tourism operators, or their employees' practical advice applicable to their businesses.

An effort has been made to include examples from both Europe and North America, which means that occasionally there is a repetition of ideas. It is not anticipated that any trainer will use all of the materials but, instead, will be guided by the characteristics of their group, such as:

- Experience in the tourism industry
- Educational level
- Language abilities
- Age
- Homogeneity of the group
- Tourism sector in which the participants work
- The time available for the workshop.

Each section of this manual offers a few suggestions of learning exercises, such as: guided group discussions, field trips, research projects and so on. The Trainer may wish to use these ideas or he/she may have favorite training methods of his/her own.

The intention of the SMART training program is to provide advice that is, to a large extent, supported by the experiences of exemplary northern operators. It is expected that the Trainer will have significant experience in training (rather than teaching) as well as field experience in a related tourism sector.

The examples from tourism companies have mostly been collected from the project pilot companies in the partner countries. Some of them have placed here as an example.

Example 1: Benefits the local economy

Vildmark i Värmland, Sweden

“The fact that we trade locally and provide packages of supplies to our guest is something very valuable to the local economy. Particularly to small distributors, such as the little shop in the village which otherwise might have closed down. Therefore we pay full price and in exchange they pack the provisions for us – it is a mutual way to profit, and it supports the shop and services in the district.”

Example 2: Operates environmentally friendly

Hotel Pyhänturi, Finland

“We have manuals for the staff. When we were involved in the national environment project for tourism companies, we began the work by mapping out our present working methods. We bring a strategy to our staff and there are listed indicators for measuring sustainability. We have had concrete results from minimizing energy, water consumption and waste. We purchased new showers, which only let through 8 litres of water per minute compared to the old ones that let 21 litres. This can be seen in savings in warm water and it also saves oil that goes to the heating of the water. We produce district heating ourselves. With these investments we were able to save 30 % in the costs and in the water consumed....Operating in an environmentally friendly manner, means small things, such as using re-chargeable ‘smart’ ski lift tickets. We have been able to reduce ticket waste from 100.000 to 30.000 compared to the old tickets. A lot of the things we do have become obvious to us although we don’t market that in the brochures. We print paper on an environmentally friendly paper, use eco toilet paper, etc. We have eliminated all disposable packages that we could. Before we make purchases, we already consider what products we want and what we will sell.”

Example 3: Support the conservation of local nature

STS - The Mountain Hut of Grövelsjön, Sweden

“We started to source-separate waste as early as 1993, a very symbolic action because the community’s refuse collection wasn’t completely organized. We were even reported for recycling too much paper! The fact is that the contractor was paid less for our garbage...Today the contractor is very grateful to the diligence we showed. Now he’s taking care of all recycling and has also improved his work environment. We, on the other hand, have become experts in recycling and a dialogue partner to the community. It has contributed so that the community has become really good at source-separation.”

Example 4: Respects and involves the local community

Bathurst Inlet Lodge, Western Nunavut

“We make it a policy to:

- *Actively encourage ‘ownership’ of our facility by seeking community involvement and input into what we do*
- *Communicate activities and direction to the broader community*
- *Offer industry placements or work experience to students at local schools*
- *Give the local workforce access to training that will improve their chances of more highly-skilled (paid) occupational jobs*

Having a ‘purchase local when possible’ -policy is good for the community and strengthens the ‘local flavour’ for customers at the same time.”

Example 5: Promote quality and safety in all business operations

Uncommon Journeys, Yukon Territory, Canada

“Our company is well known for its safety practices – we adhere to Outward Bound standards. Our business involves dog team trips with guests driving their own sled and team. We therefore take a huge amount of time after their arrival on “how to dogsled”. Guests can be a little anxious. The first night is like a ‘Mushing 101’. We spend time instructing and letting clients know what they can expect the next day. We also explain the physics of mushing – why we wait a certain running. In the morning we repeat the information over again.

We operate with a low guide to client ratio – never more than three guests for each guide. On the trail there is a guide in front and one at the back. Our trails have a progression, starting with easy logging trails and then they gradually narrow down to finally a single winding track. Clients start with about six well-trained dogs, but some can be un-hooked in difficult sections so that the guests always feel in control. In six years we have never had a serious injury.”

Example 6 : Educates visitors about local nature and culture

Nutti Sámi Siidá, Norrbotten, Sweden

“By thoroughly explaining and demonstrating cultural experiences, guests become familiar with traditional values and the close connection between local people and nature. As well, guides must be properly trained in dealing with multi-cultural differences and being able to explain and demonstrate the value and benefits of cultural diversification....Our guests appreciate the openness of the guides and are astonished by their and the Sámi People’s knowledge about nature – and want to learn more from them. Of course that increases our guides’ pride in their ancestry. ...We are adding to the knowledge of the guides and staff members by providing them with information, inviting lecturers and by organizing information days when we discuss how to improve and develop our skills and products.”

“We have high demands on our guides and they are used to working with reindeer, have good local knowledge, are skilful and are interested in nature and the Sámi culture. They should also know the languages and like guiding and taking care of people. Some guests are ignorant and have prejudices about the Sámi traditions such as hunting and fishing. Sometimes quite heated discussions can come up in the hut, which our guides must be able to handle in a professional way... Our guides are locals and we buy services from other Sámi and reindeer keepers. In that way we bring more Sámi in contact with the tourists and hopefully are increasing the understanding between them.”

3.4.4 Result 4: A framework for sustainable arctic tourism label

Why do we need a label for tourism activities in the Arctic? Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world, and it is moving millions of people each year. And as people travel more, they become more demanding and experienced in their choice of vacation and operator. At the same time, more and more tourism businesses are trying to market their products to the customers, who are overwhelmed by the options they have.

This is why in recent years, certifications and labels have developed around the world: to certify the bearer of a certain achievement, and to tell the customer about it. This is also true for the tourism industry, and although there are many labels in the market today, only few of them are well-known and successful. Some examples are the Australian nature- and ecotourism certification, and increasingly also the Swedish Nature's Best.

The consumers' interests are about quality in general and how to find the quality tourism products. Conservation organizations want to make sure that the environment is not harmed through tourism, and that activities interpret nature and support conservation efforts. Other benefits can include better visibility and marketing of arctic tourism, international networking and experience exchange with other arctic operators as well as cost savings, e.g. through better efficiency.

The activity of the fourth work package in the project was to create an Arctic-wide market recognition scheme (later referred to as sustainable tourism label) for tourism businesses operating in a sustainable manner. The aim was to create a tool that recognises tourism practitioners for implementing and achieving sustainable practices. The tool would function as an incentive and a reward. The original aim was to create a common label for the whole Arctic.

In the project, information was gathered on existing principles, sustainable tourism guidelines and labelling that could be used as a basis for preliminary label criteria. After the sustainable tourism principles were finished and agreed upon, a conclusion was made that the Swedish Nature's Best

ecotourism label was the closest label related to both the principles and the contents of the SMART and also practically the only label developed in the North, even though it does not especially highlight the Arctic features as such.

In the SMART project, different options for an arctic-wide sustainable tourism label were therefore checked and evaluation done in to some extent to map out which labels exist that could be adapted to arctic conditions. It was considered valuable for the marketing of the ideas of SMART to be able to refer to the experiences and practical solutions of an existing label. The Nature's Best label was consequently recommended as a model to be used in the Arctic countries. To develop a common Arctic label is more time and resource consuming than what one project can handle. This is one of the reasons, why the project suggested cooperation with an existing label.

With the help of the Swedish Ecotourism Society, SMART - partners discussed the suitability of the Swedish criteria to other Arctic areas. The Nature's Best framework was discussed with and commented by stakeholders in Finland and also preliminarily tested and reviewed within tourism companies and by stakeholders in Finland, Canada and Russia (Kamchatka) and Alaska. Canada and Alaska are exploring different options at the moment. The further development work, evaluation of the applicability and acceptability of the proposed label, is the responsibility of the countries and regions themselves, but the former SMART partners in each country and the follow-up organization SATA will be partaking this discussion and help bring it forward. In addition, Nature's Best itself is becoming more international and the Swedish Ecotourism Society has indicated an interest to cooperate on international and country level in the label development with the project partner countries.

There are different options for cooperation with the Nature's Best. It can be about a) directly complying with the label and also using the name and the trademark in a specific country, or b) a country wishing to cooperate may use the knowledge gained to produce their own labelling program and name it something else, or c) providing that there is demand and

possibilities, Nature's Best could be used to create a common Arctic labelling program and a trademark.

There are many reasons for cooperating with an existing tourism label. Too many (eco) labels are already creating confusion in the tourism market. At an international level, there is a tendency to consolidate labelling schemes in order to improve market share. Working with an existing label gives further work a quick-start and access to existing expertise. It becomes possible to learn about the benefits and other experiences from an existing scheme while at the same time use it a concrete selling 'tool' or example.

Nature's Best was chosen over other schemes as a model and a platform for an Arctic label because it:

- Addresses the same target group as the SMART project (SMEs) and most tourism in the North is nature-based and small scale (NB target group)
- Is based on the same pillars as the SMART principles
- Is the most advanced scheme in the "northern" countries and developed in the North
- Is comprehensive in its approach (addresses all aspects of sustainability, includes capacity building and marketing, etc.)
- Is already tested and well received by target group and market
- Is built on a strong and broad stakeholdership
- Has built a delivery system for the scheme
- Is planning to go international (and thus would increase recognition and market share)
- Is cooperative and open for adaptations to local/ national conditions
- Has expertise and experience in scheme development and implementation
- Has been involved in developing the Arctic wide scheme from the beginning.

In northern Sweden, labelling has had positive development effects in the form of increased environmental awareness, increased maturity among the labelled companies and different kind of business-driven networking. Labelling makes it possible for the customers to find arrangements of high quality with

respect to nature, culture and adventure. Labelling also brings advantages in marketing and the image of the labelled companies. Nature's Best was developed in co-operation with travel associations, land owners, nature conservation associations, non-profit organizations, public authorities, tourist companies and institutions. More than 30 companies and 20 national associations took part in the process of creating the criteria.

Some benefits that the Nature's Best offers to tour operators are

- Attention in local media and a stronger position in the local society.
- More and better marketing opportunities at a low cost.
- Increasing amount of visits to own web sites, requests and bookings through Nature's Best travel site.
- Knowledge and incentives to product development and overall quality improvement, which also enables higher priced products.
- Easier to get permits and understanding from local authorities.
- Prouder and more aware staff that want to work towards the same goals.
- A better understanding of the interplay between their own company's values and way of doing business, the customers needs and desires and the need for nature conservation.
- Access to a network that gives inspiration, support, opportunities to cooperation, sharing of knowledge and training. (Nilsson 2005.)

More information about the Nature's Best you can find at www.naturesbasta.se

3.4.5 Result 5: Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association

During the years 2003 to 2005, the SMART project worked for the promotion of sustainable tourism practices, training and capacity building for businesses, as well as market incentives and circumpolar co-operation. SMART -project also sought to help businesses and communities understand what sustainable tourism is and how to get involved.

This project brought together people and businesses from diverse cultures of the North in an effort to innovatively develop sustainable tourism. The web portal for sustainable arctic tourism and many of the materials and information there are outputs from the SMART -project.

In order to strengthen the circumpolar network and carry on the work on developing sustainable tourism, the Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association (SATA) was founded in October 2005. It is a non-profit organization based in Skellefteå, Sweden. The SATA has a board of 9 members from countries of Finland, Sweden, Norway, USA (Alaska), Canada and Russia (Kamchatka).

The purpose of SATA is to

- Promote sustainable arctic tourism
- Provide a forum for international sustainable arctic tourism operators and other stakeholders to share their expertise and opinions and to uphold the highest standards
- Foster cooperation among its members
- Own and develop the resources created during the Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism project (SMART) and promote sustainable tourism practises in the Arctic environment.

SATA is at an early stage at the moment, and member benefits are under development, but it offers a forum for international networking for like-minded people representing tourism businesses, NGOs, government agencies and dedicated individuals and the opportunity to contribute and shape the further development of the association and the discussion of sustainability in the arctic tourism context. The membership of

SATA is divided in 3 categories: businesses, associate members (organizations and public entities) and individuals. The association is currently financed only through membership fees and the association is actively looking for funding of its base needs as well as of activities. More information about the membership as well as national contacts can be found on the www.arctictourism.net - website.

4. SMART and sustainable development topics

The SMART project has contributed to the areas prioritised in the Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Framework document by promoting capacity building, cooperation and networking on international and inter regional levels, and integrating sustainable economic development with environmental considerations in the sphere of sustainable tourism in the Arctic.

The Arctic Council sustainable development projects should include elements of capacity building (Arctic Council 2000). The SMART project can be said that it addressed capacity building by increasing the knowledge, know-how, experiences and business practices on sustainable tourism. The principles themselves include environmental, socio-cultural and economic aspects, which are all important pillars in sustainable development.

The role of the indigenous peoples' in the arctic and northern communities as also in the work of the Arctic Council is essential. The SMART -project involved indigenous peoples' representation in the project by involving indigenous tourism operators and companies mostly in Nunavut Territory, Canada, and in Northern Sweden.

The training material is made in a way that reflects the indigenous peoples central role in sustainable tourism and tourism in the Arctic and northern communities in general. Also contacts have been made through the project with other indigenous peoples' organizations such as the Yukon First Nation tourism association, and the Sámi Parliament in Finland. Involving indigenous peoples in the future development work of sustainable tourism is important in training delivery and sustainable tourism label development, in the work of the Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association as well as developing new circumpolar projects.

One central element in the project implementation was trans-nationality. The network, which had been formed in the project cooperation over many years starting from 1999, is wide and contacts have been made in all the Arctic countries.

It became evident in many occasions and in the events and seminars, where the SMART project was involved that there is a growing interest for sustainable tourism activities at the moment and also it can be assumed that the interest will continue in the future. The process of sustainable development needs international cooperation. Sustainability is taken increasingly as an important theme in national tourism strategies, for example it is mentioned in the Finland's new national tourism strategy.

Transnational cooperation brought added value for the contents of the training modules, as well as sharing the know-how, knowledge and experiences on tourism development and sustainable tourism development. Different aspects and experiences from around the arctic areas have been taken into account, even though the training modules will partly be localized. A starting point for the arctic tourism label is to have some form of a transnational element in it.

The SMART – project was able to take advantage of the following sources of information among others:

- Sweden: Nature's Best – label
- Norway: a regional tourism project "Nature-based tourism" and sustainable tourism manuals and tools (GRIP)
- WWF: Ten Principles for Arctic Tourism, Codes of Conduct for Arctic Tour Operators and Tourists
- Finland: Quality management programmes, experiences with tourism in protected areas from the PAN Parks initiative, Pyhä-Luosto area's strategy process and the sustainable nature tourism principles used in the Finnish protected areas and national parks
- Alaska: "Guiding Alaska Tourism" program
- Scotland: Green Tourism - label

Some partners such as from Norway and Greenland became inactive during the project, but some new cooperation areas were also found (Kamchatka, Russia).

The wide network that was created during the project is its strength. Some sustainable tourism initiatives to mention, where the SMART project partners took part in include:

- EU Commission's consultation document on sustainable tourism. The open consultation document was delivered to the EU Commission in July 2003.
- New strategy for sustainable tourism in the Arctic initiated by the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Industrial Fund.

5. Conclusions and future recommendations

The SMART -project started serious discussions on eco-labelling in the partner regions and created training material, which was in demand. Many international organizations can be talking about sustainable tourism, but they have no real partners.

The project was able to facilitate this discussion in a wider geographical context and to lay a basis for future work on international labelling and other circumpolar cooperation.

The project was necessary for creating a stronger base for development of sustainable arctic tourism. In these kinds of projects, where sustainability is looked at a long-term development issue, the continuation is important and results are not achieved in an instant.

The countries and the regions have their own responsibility, but international cooperation can in the future make the message stronger and increase follow up by decision-makers.

The next phases for each country is to begin the training for the companies as well as to further develop the label, and among other things by deciding, whether they will want to use the Nature's Best as a model to start from.

Follow-up will require a strong national process and resources, which at the same time is coordinated with the other Arctic countries and coordinated with an overarching framework such as the one established through SMART.

In order to develop arctic tourism towards more sustainability, cooperation and support is needed from all stakeholders in the Arctic to unite the forces.

Thus, the partners of the Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) and the Sustainable Arctic Tourism Association board members recommend the Arctic countries and regions the following:

1. The launch of the Sustainable Arctic tourism label needs the supportive decisions of all the respective Arctic countries

For example support for the creation of a regional / national tourism label that leads to or is compatible with an arctic-wide certification or standard (Sustainable Arctic Tourism label).

2. The support from the Arctic decision makers is highly appreciated in finding creative solutions at their national and regional level for enhancing capacity building and promotion of sustainable tourism business practices with arctic-wide coordination.

3. Each Arctic country is encouraged make more efforts in developing tourism in a sustainable way in their respective country and to cooperate with other Arctic countries in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ARCTIC COUNCIL SAO
REPORT AND THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION
(Made in September 2006)

Arctic Council SAOs

To “endorse and to encourage Arctic nations to support the development of Arctic tourism in a sustainable manner by engaging in capacity building and raising of know-how and in recognition of sustainable tourism practices; and encourage to continue the circumpolar Arctic cooperation as well as help find financial support for sustainable arctic tourism development”.

Ministerial Declaration:

“Arctic countries acknowledging the need to develop arctic tourism in a sustainable manner continue to support the development of sustainable tourism in the Arctic nations”.

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ATTACHMENT 1: Characteristics of Arctic Tourism

Environment and Climate		
CHARACTERISTICS	IMPACTS	TRAINING NEEDS
Highly seasonal, extreme weather	Short season, limited revenue generating season	Value-added for increased revenue
Weather undependable, sometimes life-threatening	Special clothing and equipment	Programming to mitigate delays/cancellations
Locations remote	Limited access to healthcare, emergency response	High level of training in first aid, emergency / contingency plans; risk management plan
Ground conditions	Affects construction and operation of facilities	Low impact infrastructure; technical knowledge of waste management and minimizing.
Slow growing flora, environment delicate	Land quickly damaged, but slow to recover	Use of vehicles; no trace camping; alternate transportation
Fauna unique but often widely spread	Wildlife viewing may be seasonal, not always easy to find	Programming with hard-to-find wildlife (<i>e.g. know habits, habitat of wildlife; alternate activities related to wildlife; provide guests with realistic expectations; program not solely based on viewing one type of wildlife</i>)
	Often stressed by excessive human activity	Recognizing signs of stress; establishing wildlife viewing guidelines
Working on and around sub-zero waters	Hypothermia can set in within a few minutes for people falling overboard, overturned boats, etc.	Superior safety equipment, survival suites
Infrastructure		
CHARACTERISTICS	IMPACTS	TRAINING NEEDS
Many communities remote	High construction costs	Providing high quality service to justify high cost of tourism products
Transportation links may be limited	Public transportation expensive, sometimes infrequent, limited options	Learning to program according to airline schedules, fall-back programs
Community infrastructure may be limited	Accommodations limited and sometimes substandard (not corresponding to high-end clientele)	Providing quality service in simple facilities; operators working with local accommodations providers
Costs of building and maintaining infrastructure high	Forces high cost tourism products	Options such as B&B's, hospitality meals / meals with local residents

Limited local building material	Infrastructure materials virtually all imported	Learning about environmentally friendly alternatives
Environmentally friendly products not available and not widely accepted		Educating local population; creative construction solutions
Communications problems in remote areas	Interruptions in (esp. electronic) communications	Training in electronic communications
	Missed business opportunities	Training in back-up communication plans
Socio-Economics		
CHARACTERISTICS	IMPACTS	TRAINING NEEDS
Most Arctic areas are remote areas of developed countries	Have higher expectations regarding income than under-developed countries	Service levels must be high to justify high-cost products; visitor expectations
Populations more sparse than in southern areas	Large labour force may not be available	Benefits to communities besides jobs
Educational levels on average lower than urban areas	Business and tourism skills often lacking	Doing business in the Arctic; Resources available; Marketing the Arctic; Branding AST
Limited access to training / educational facilities (and trainers)	Training programs are costly and challenging to design / deliver; physical training facilities limited	Development of varied training mechanisms / "road-shows"
Cost of living / cost of doing business high	Passed on through pricing of products	Pricing
Culture		
CHARACTERISTICS	IMPACTS	TRAINING NEEDS
Usually differs significantly from urban areas	Requires cross-cultural sensitivity by trainers, tourism operators and visitor education	Cross-cultural training for operators and cultural learning for visitors
Local languages and dialects different from mainstream	Local operators may have difficulty communicating with international travellers	Language training, tourism terms
May have different world view	Misunderstandings may occur between visitors, local operators and local residents	Communication between tourism business and other residents
Closer relationship with the land	Visitors need to learn new inter-action with the land; operators need to respect the land	Promoting mutual respect between visitors and residents
Sustainable Model for Arctic Regional Tourism (SMART) – project (2005)		

ATTACHMENT 2: SUSTAINABLE ARCTIC TOURISM GUIDELINES

1. SUPPORT LOCAL ECONOMY

Arctic tourism should provide benefits to local economies. The involvement of local people in the planning process of tourism activities and land use helps to ensure that tourism operations address environmental and cultural concerns. This will in turn, provide an opportunity to maximise benefits and minimise the impact to indigenous peoples and the communities. A local connection also leads to a better tourism experience. This principle stands for the employing of staff locally, buying locally produced goods and services and paying tax locally. Tangible benefits from tourism will act as a positive motive power for the indigenous peoples and the local communities.

- **Promote local authenticity of activities, arrangements, accommodation, food, transport and guidance.**
Whenever local history, traditions and nature form the base for tourism planning, this will give authenticity to the tourism experience and provide economic benefits for indigenous peoples.
- **Seek and support involvement and partnerships with indigenous peoples and local communities in tourism operations.**
Encourage indigenous/local participation and ownership; provide investment opportunities or shares to indigenous peoples. Locally based companies should be locally owned.
- **Encourage the recruitment, training and employment of indigenous peoples in tourism businesses.**
Train and hire indigenous people for your businesses' activities and operations whenever possible. Indigenous guides give the tourism activity authenticity.
- **Make or encourage economic investments locally.**
This will support the development of required infrastructure for your company as well for the local communities. Payment of tax locally and register your company locally.
- **Encourage consumption of locally produced goods, foods and services.**
Minimise economic leakage and retain local expenditures through maximum local self-sufficiency by developing linkages with local industries. Whenever possible buy supplies and services locally, and also encourage your clients to buy locally-made arts, crafts and products.
- **Support infrastructure development - be active in lobbying.**
By using locally owned service facilities as well as local transportation options, existing roads and airports your business will show the need for infrastructure development and this will in turn benefit local peoples.
- **Search for cooperation with other local companies.**
Always use locally owned businesses as subcontractors when possible. Develop long-term partnerships with local operators, businesses and suppliers. Sharing tourists and business opportunities, develop cooperation and networking.

2. OPERATE ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY

Conservation and the use of natural resources in a sustainable way are essential to the long-term health of the environment. Untouched areas in the Arctic are non-renewable resources, once affected by any kind of development it is impossible to return them to their original state. Therefore it is important for tourism operations in the Arctic to be carried out in a sustainable manner, with special consideration given to the environment. Environmental assessment must always be undertaken prior to any development of tourism projects and the tourism activity should always comply with all international conventions relating to the environment as well as all national, state and local laws. This principle stands for establishing and continuously improvements to all environmental policies. Transportation, waste, lodging routines and cultural as well as environmental impacts are carried out with consideration to the specific demands of the Arctic and further adjusted to local conditions. The use of available best practices is continuously monitored, evaluated and improved.

- **Written environmental plan.**
All operators have a written environmental plan for their company and activities. This plan should consist of planned environmental improvements and their connected schedules as well as land-use planning. The environmental plan should be visible to guests.
- **Minimize waste and energy use.**
Applies environmentally responsible practices concerning waste management, recycling and energy consumption through all phases of the operation. Be sure waste disposal has minimal environmental and aesthetic impact and be efficient in the use of natural resources like water and energy.
- **Minimize transports.**
Companies work with effective transport planning. Activity based transport systems are connected with logistic planning, minimised use of fossil fuels and use of best practical technology that is available. Transportation systems with minimised impact on environment are given preference.
- **Respect the limitations of the destination.**
Minimize the negative impact on visited natural sites and local cultures. It is always the destination that sets the limit for tourism activities. Land use planning and environmental impacts should form the basis for planning tourism activities.
- **Monitor your impacts.**
Monitoring is an important resource tool and needs to be included as part of all operator's activities within the sustainable tourism setting, especially in sensitive areas like the Arctic. Two aspects of monitoring tourism in sensitive areas are visitor impacts and service quality. Ensure that measurements of tourism activities, volumes and impacts are accurate, as complete as possible and the data is effectively communicated. Monitoring will give respectability to your environmental and conservation efforts as well as acting as a marketing advantage.
- **Evaluate all tourism activities to ensure that business and environmental goals are met.**
Monitoring, evaluation and management of impacts in the surrounding areas should be accomplished on at least yearly basis.

3. SUPPORT THE CONSERVATION OF LOCAL NATURE

To a certain extent, the Arctic consists of large tracts of untouched areas with a unique blend of nature and cultural values. These vast areas of wilderness are one of the primary reasons why tourists visit the Arctic and therefore it is of great importance to promote maintenance of these untouched, remote areas. Strengthen of conservation efforts will enhance the natural integrity of places visited. As well, there is a need for nature preservation and conservation due to the biodiversity, science and in the search for future understanding and knowledge concerning the uniqueness of the Arctic's nature and inhabitants. This principle stands for conservation efforts and the need for local inhabitants, indigenous peoples and tourism operators to participate in land-use planning at a local and regional level. Tourism operators should have thorough knowledge about the Arctic environments, cooperate with other operators and provide active support to preferable local conservation projects.

- **Support conservation of local nature and wildlife.**
Tourism activities should not conflict with conservation efforts in the area. Operators should cooperate and support local and regional authorities as well as the efforts of nature conservation organizations. Contribute time and/or money to local conservation organizations and projects. Tourism planning that supports conservation efforts and incorporates conservation plans should be encouraged.
- **Plan all tourism activities.**
Tourism operators active within the sensitive areas of the Arctic need a plan describing how tourism and associated development will be managed and impacts minimized. Consideration must be given to the vulnerability of the sites visited depending on the time of year and other impacting factors. Nature and wildlife vulnerability will set the limits for the size of visiting groups able to visit the area at any given time.
- **Cooperate with other operators who use conservation ethics.**
Cooperation with other operators, accommodation providers, carriers and other businesses in the area who work with conservation ethics that serve to enhance the tourism experience.
- **Inform indigenous people, locals and voluntary groups about conservation efforts.**
This will encourage respectability for your conservation efforts and tourism activities as well as give good marketing values.
- **Keep informed of current Arctic political and environmental issues.**
Support for initiatives such as the further development of the Circumpolar Protected Area Network (CPAN) and other efforts, and as well as keeping informed of the work by the Arctic Council.
- **Encourage environmental awareness.**
Both management and staff of all tourism related projects and activities should apply environmental and conservation principles in their daily work.

4. RESPECT AND INVOLVE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The preservation and respect of local cultures and traditions are important. Indigenous people's lifestyles and values will set the limits and guidelines for tourism development. Quality Arctic tourism depends on the active support from and the provision of benefits to indigenous people. Tourism should not impact the lifestyle of indigenous peoples or their communities unless they decide so. The building of networks between different stakeholders, tourism operators and indigenous peoples in the region is highly encouraged. This principle stands for communication, coordination with and respect for indigenous peoples and local communities.

- **Communication.**
To debrief the season activities with local/indigenous groups within the community is one way to respect and involve the inhabitants. Communication between tourism operators, indigenous people, locals and stakeholders will avoid conflicts.
- **Coordination.**
Coordination between tour operators and communities in local/cultural events helps enhance the participation of indigenous people. Coordination with communities encourages locals to welcome the visits by tourists, as they will be expected and not disruptive. Allow indigenous people to be involved in all tourism operations and, if needed, assist indigenous peoples in the development of skills necessary for tourism activities to be successful.
- **Code of Ethics is in use for the company and their guests.**
Work according to a Code of Ethics and inform your customers about this as well. This will ensure that community attitudes, cultural values and concerns, including indigenous customs and beliefs, are taken into account when planning tourism-related projects.
- **Respect the sensitivity, rights and wishes of indigenous people.**
Provide opportunities for indigenous people to celebrate their cultural traditions in peace. Ensure that clients respect spiritual sites, churches, cemeteries and other sites with spiritual, historical or cultural significance, and that they do not remove any artefacts.
- **Tour guides should be well versed and respectful of indigenous cultures and environments.**
Accuracy and authenticity in the presentation of genuine local culture and products can be achieved through cooperation with indigenous people.
- **Respect historic and scientific sites.**
Archaeological, historic, prehistoric and scientific sites and remains are important to local heritage as well as to science. Respect the value of the sites and remains and ensure their protection.

5. PROMOTE QUALITY AND SAFETY IN ALL BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Sustainable tourism is quality tourism. This includes administration, planning, acting as a good host and implementing safety issues through a quality management policy. The Arctic can be a treacherous environment and everyone involved in Arctic tourism needs to include extra caution and safety rules into all of their activities and work practises. Quality thinking should act as a foundation and permeate every level of sustainable tourism. This will give the tourism operator a marketing advantage and gain increased confidence from their customers. This principle stands for quality and safety in all business operations.

Quality:

- **Written business plan.**
The company should have viability and credibility in economic affairs. Certify that tourism operations are based upon competent financial management.
- **Implement a monitoring programme.**
This will provide assurance that the business is evaluating and improving on it environmental concern and efforts.
- **Customer feedback and response systems are in use.** This will confirm that the company maintains its quality service levels.
- **Aim for high service quality in all tourist services.** Sustainable practices should be part of a company's quality management plan.
- **Guarantee that staff is trained in tourism planning, service management and act as good hosts.**

Safety:

- **Written response plan.**
This plan will include safety issues, risk analysis connected to specific activities and a risk management plan that is reviewed regularly. Visitor risk management is the systematic identification, analysis and control of the broad range of visitor risks.
- **Follow safety rules.**
The company follows national, regional and local legislation regarding essential safety laws and regulations. Local authorities are informed of regularly used itineraries for safety reasons as well as assure that the company's activities comply with local regulations.
- **Employ only well-trained and skilled staff.**
All staff is trained for first aid skills and are certified for accepted regional (Arctic) first-aid. Educated and well-trained staff is the key to responsible tourism.
- The company has relevant insurances in place.

6. EDUCATES VISITORS (TO LEARN) ABOUT LOCAL NATURE AND CULTURE

Sustainable tourism is based on a principle that clients are interested and respectful. When tourists learn about a culture, indigenous people and the environment, then the tourism business is providing the most benefits for all involved and minimizes their impacts. Knowledge and a positive experience enable tourists to act as ambassadors for Arctic environmental protection. The special vulnerability of the Arctic environment, its special characteristics and its global significance is important for visitors to understand. This principle stands for the importance of the tourism operator to act as an informant of the special vulnerability of the Arctic environment so it will fully be understood

- **Guides inspire visitors.**
In indigenous tourism it is important to extend extra consideration in the interpreting of culture, traditions and history to customers. If the company employs competent staff, that has a good knowledge of the culture, history and nature of the region, they will be able to communicate their knowledge creatively to the customers which will enhance the tourists' experience.
- Guides and managers should have appropriate training concerning environmental issues as well as cultural sensitivity.
- Information about destination and environmental issues is provided to visitors beforehand.
- Visitors are given verbal and written interpretation and guidance with respect to the nature, culture, historic traditions as well as today life of the area visited.
- Professional conservation principles are incorporated into tourism education, as well as in training and planning of the tourism activity.
- Develop a constituency of satisfied and supportive visitors, people who will argue for objectives in the larger political debates in society.

