



HANDBOOK  
FOR LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

**General Definition**

Simply put, Responsible Tourism “creates better places for people to live in, and better places to visit”. The 2002 Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations defines Responsible Tourism as follows. “Responsible Tourism is tourism which:

- minimises negative economic, environmental and social impacts
- generates economic benefits for local people and enhances the well being of host communities
- improves working conditions and access to the industry
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances
- makes positive contributions to the protection of natural and cultural heritage and diversity
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- provides access for physically challenged people
- is culturally sensitive, encourages tourists-hosts respect, and builds local pride and confidence”.

**Responsible Tourism and Sustainable Tourism**

Responsible tourism and sustainable tourism have an identical goal: sustainable development. The pillars of responsible tourism are therefore the same as those of sustainable tourism – environmental integrity, social justice and maximising local economic benefit.

The major difference between the two is that, in responsible tourism, individuals, organisations and businesses are asked to take responsibility for their actions and the impacts of their actions. The emphasis on responsibility in responsible tourism means that everyone involved in tourism - government, product owners and operators, transport operators, community services, NGO’s and CBO’s (Community Based Organisation), tourists, local communities, industry associations – are responsible for achieving the goals of RT.

**Typologies of RT (customer/tourist side)**

- Adventure and Transfer Responsible Tourism
- Eco and Ethical Tourism
- Community Tourism
- Cooperation Tourism
- and so on...

**RT in the Bridge-it perspective**

To be eligible for inclusion, your business/service/project/activity/attraction must meet the most of the following criteria.

- Minimises negative economic, environmental and social impacts
- Generates economic benefits for local people, enhances the community and improves working conditions
- Involves local people in the decision-making process
- Guarantees local ownership of the tourist product
- Contributes to the conservation of the environment and cultural heritage
- Provides an enjoyable tourism experience and opportunity for tourists to meet locals
- Provides tourists with a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
- Provides access for physically challenged tourists (?)**
- Promotes respect between tourists and hosts, while building up locals’ confidence.

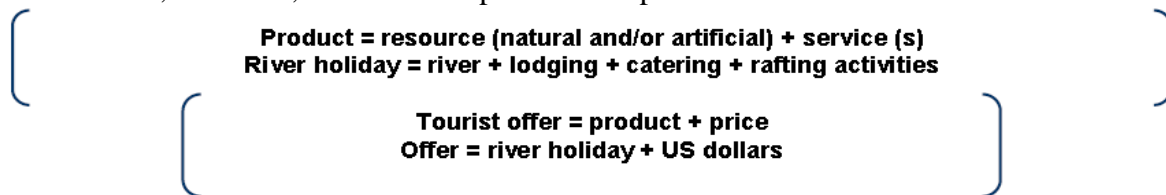
### From Local Resources to Tourist Resources

Local resources exist everywhere. Resources may be natural like rivers, mountains, sea, weather, etc., and/or artificial and cultural like monuments, museums, historic buildings for civil use, religious buildings, beliefs, religions, traditions etc.

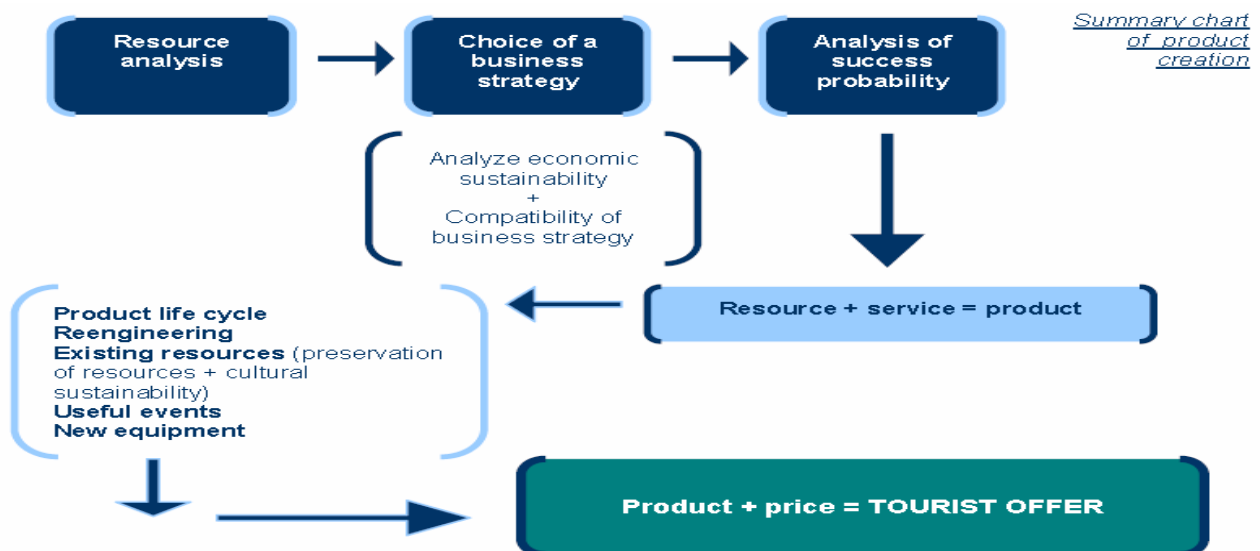
Knowing what is available in a territory is essential to assess whether that territory has the potential to generate a tourist product. This first phase of analysis – which represents the collection of information on the local territory – is what we will do in this workshop.

### From Tourist Resources to a Tourist Product

Make sure you do not confuse terminologies: A tourist resource is not a tourist product, though many people and municipalities believe so. A territory launching a new tourist activity cannot and should not think that because it has a tourist resource, either natural or artificial, it has a **tourist product**. A product is the combination of a resource (natural and/or artificial) and services. A tourist offer, therefore, is the sum of product and price



In any case, we have to **know the client**. It has already been said that the customer is an essential factor and must be taken into account in planning. The products we create must appeal to their future clients. Analysing their preferences will reveal what they want and how they want it. Be aware: there are different sorts of responsible tourists and we have to identify them previously. Which kind of tourists do we need?



### A Responsible Tourist Product

is a tourist product that combines the idea of preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the destination with principles of inclusion, within a framework of local development and cooperation.



### General Guidelines:

Always remember that the quality of a holiday is dependent on its degree of safety and comfort, or the TRUST the tourist can put in the operators

Always keep the margin of worry of the tourist at a minimum.

Always maximize the positive aspects of the holiday: the attractions, the contact with local people

### The ABC for Local Tour Operators:

- **(A) Awareness and security.** Make sure the tourists are protected from physical harm (violence, diseases, accidents...) throughout the holiday. No tourist has to get injured while under your responsibility. In particular make sure all operators keep up security measures to prevent dangers like:
  - Criminality
  - Accidents during transfer
  - Accidents during the activities
  - Accidents/Infection within accommodation structures
  
- **(B) Basic Standards.** Remember that European tourists come from a different cultural and sanitary background. Their immunity system is used to different risk factors. What is normal and safe for local population might be risky/ uneasy for tourists. Try to prevent all situations where the tourists might feel vulnerable and exposed. Always take care of
  - Personal Hygiene
    - **Water supply**  
Make sure the tourists have access to water for washing at least at some point of the holiday, always after physical activities, and if possible, at least once a day (morning or evening)
    - **WC equipment**  
Europeans are used to private WCs. If there are only collective sanitary structures, make sure you organize a private one – even rudimentary – for the tourists
  - Feeding
    - **Healthy food**  
Make sure the food tourists eat is well cooked; raw vegetables well washed, avoid raw meat and fish, or if you use it, tell the tourists!
    - **Healthy water**  
Water that tourists drink directly should be potable – boil it if you are not sure
  - Environment
    - **Contact with domestic animals**  
Make sure the tourists are protected from infection (diseases that domestic animals might have), throughout the holiday. Avoid extreme promiscuity with domestic animals in feeding and sleeping structures.
    - **Bugs**



If there are insects that are dangerous/very annoying for humans, try to prevent contact (use environment-friendly solutions like nets, etc.)

- **Fierce animals**

If your itinerary plans contact with wildlife, make sure all necessary safety measures are taken. Remember that Europeans are less used to meeting fierce animals: they might put themselves into danger! Prevent situations of danger.

- **Protect your environment**

Responsible tourists are supposed to take care of not polluting the environment of destination. Nevertheless: always take care of your environment. Make sure all garbage the tourists produce gets properly collected and disposed of. You should plan in advance how to dispose of garbage in all locations of your itineraries. Remember that a clean environment is one of your MAJOR RESOURCES to attract tourism in the first place!

- **(C) Constant Care for your tourist.** Remember that the local tour operator is the MAJOR REFERENCE POINT of the tourist. The tourist will feel lost and vulnerable if left completely on his own. Remember that the trust in local tour operators is very important to make the holiday special! The concept of constant care refers to some behavioural aspects the local tour operators should learn and apply. Apart from the general notions of communication and interaction (see E01), the awareness for security (A) and the basic standards of quality and comfort (B), local tour operators should learn how to actively take care of tourists: In particular this means active problem solving and implies three stages of behaviour:

- I) PERCEPTION**

The tour operator has to look out for how the tourists feel. Some tourists might suddenly have a problem that makes them feel uneasy without expressing it. The tour operator should always notice if somebody is not happy/ satisfied.

- II) SOLUTION**

If you perceive that someone of the tourists is unhappy with some aspect of the day/itinerary, try to understand why (put yourself into his place or simply ask him/her) and think about a solution to the problem. Solutions for the problems of one tourist should not have negative effects for the other tourists/for the local population/ be against the principles of responsible tourism.

- III) ACTION**

If there is a solution to the problem of the tourist, act immediately. If you think there is no solution, make sure the tourist gets to know that you have tried to solve the problem. Always explain that you tried to solve the problem and why there is no possible solution. The tourist will understand and appreciate your effort. You will gain his trust.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**