

World Society for the Protection of Animals

The Contribution of **Animal Welfare** **and Tourism** for Sustainable Development



WSPA

Photo: © iStockphoto.com/Eric Isselée
A fin whale approaches a whale watching boat, Pacific Ocean.

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The Contribution of Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism to Sustainable Development

Abstract:

This Handbook, produced for WSPA by the Center for Responsible Travel (CREST), is designed to demonstrate how animal welfare and responsible tourism can collaborate to benefit local communities, protect biodiversity, and contribute to sustainable development. Through the five case studies provided, we highlight successful WSPA projects and examine their good practices and key lessons to illustrate ways in which animal welfare and sustainable tourism can effectively work together. While we are focused on how these examples can be useful to similar projects in the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica, we believe this Handbook will be useful to other destinations as well.

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1. Sustainable Development & Tourism

In 1987, the UN World Commission on Environment and Development published the Brundtland Report, defining the term “sustainable development” as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”(WCED 1987). The Brundtland report brought issues of environmental sustainability to the forefront of the international political agenda, and laid the groundwork for a more holistic, triple-bottom line,¹ sustainable approach to development. Within this new approach to sustainable development, tourism has been recognized as a key tool that can “drive economic growth, lead to poverty reduction and job creation, while improving resource efficiency and minimizing environmental degradation”(UNWTO 2011). And, because tourism is a “cross-sectoral activity with linkages to the three pillars of sustainability”(UNWTO 2011), it has the potential to play a significant role in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Tourism is a particularly critical industry for the least developed countries:

- Tourism is one of the major export sectors of developing countries, and is the primary source of foreign exchange earnings in 46 of the 49 Least Developed Countries (UNWTO STEP Program).
- Tourism is a crucial contributor to these countries’ income - up to 70% for the world’s poorest countries (UNWTO 2008).
- Tourism is included in the Poverty Reduction Strategies of more than 80% of low-income countries (ODI 2007).

¹ The triple bottom-line measures environmental and social, as well as economic impacts.

Furthermore, the tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world:

- The UN World Tourism Organization projects (UNWTO) that by 2030 there will be 1.8 billion international travelers, up from 983 million in 2011 (UNWTO 2012)
- The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), a leading industry trade association, estimates that by 2022, the travel and tourism industry will provide nearly 1 in every 10 jobs, accounting for 9.8% of total employment in the global economy, and generating 9.8% of global GDP (WTTC 2012).

Undoubtedly, as the tourism industry continues to develop, its importance as a “powerful engine for poverty reduction and development” (UNWTO 2011) will become even more significant.

Sustainable Tourism & Animal Welfare

Sustainable tourism as defined by the UNWTO, “takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”². Sustainable tourism often utilizes natural resources as part of the tourism product, all the while preserving these resources and the ecosystems and biodiversity that support them. Nature-based sustainable tourism is referred to as “ecotourism” which is defined by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people” (Honey, 2008). According to the UNEP Green Economy Report, “global spending on all areas of ecotourism is increasing by about six times the industry-wide rate of growth” (UNEP 2012).

² United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). “Sustainable Development of Tourism – Definition” Retrieved from <http://sdt.unwto.org/en/content/about-us-5>

Animals – both domestic and wild – are an important component of sustainable ecotourism. In fact, sustainable tourism involving animals employs tens of thousands of tourism workers and generates billions of dollars every year. The whale watching industry alone generates \$2.1 billion dollars and employs 13,000 people around the world (Hood 2010). Bird and other wildlife watching in the U.S. have an annual economic value of \$32 billion, according the US Fish & Wildlife Service (UNEP 2012). And, whale and bird watching are just two of the many sustainable tourism activities involving animals. Other examples include wildlife safaris, equine riding tours, touring animal rescue centers, turtle watching and bird watching – all of which, due to the rise in popularity of ecotourism – are becoming an increasingly important component of the sustainable tourism industry. When sustainable tourism depends on animals as a key component of the tourism product, their health and welfare are fundamental to long-term business success, consumer satisfaction, economic development, and biodiversity conservation.

In setting standards for the use of animals for tourism purposes, WSPA's "Five Freedoms for Animal Welfare"³ (WSPA "Our Beliefs") are the crucial benchmarks. They state that animals must have:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury and disease
4. Freedom to express normal behavior
5. Freedom from fear and distress

³ The WSPA Five Freedoms were identified by the United Kingdom's Farm Animal Welfare Council in 2003 <http://www.fawc.org.uk/freedoms.htm>.

The integration of the Five Freedoms into sustainable tourism business practices can promote a more economically, environmentally and socially responsible industry that protects the welfare of animals. Indeed, integrating animal welfare into sustainable development strategies benefits the world's poorest peoples: approximately 650 million of the 1 billion poorest people on earth depend completely on animals for their livelihoods (Animal Welfare, 2009). It is therefore clear, as WSPA Director-General, Michael Baker, told the UN in 2009, that animal welfare is not an "unaffordable luxury", but is essential to solving today's most pressing development problems (Animal Welfare, 2009). In 2010, WSPA, together with their partner organizations met in Costa Rica to launch a project in Latin America promoting sustainable tourism and animal welfare as a new tool for development. The Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism Project's mission -- "to contribute to the valuation of animal life through sustainable tourism to achieve community welfare" -- has the potential to positively impact "people, the environment, individual animals and species" (Brandt 2011, 1), and is an important component of both sustainable tourism and, more broadly, sustainable development.

2. Analysis of Case Studies Featuring Best Practices in Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism

The following five case studies provided by WSPA feature projects that have successfully incorporated the Five Freedoms of animal welfare into tourism industry practices in order to promote sustainable community development and conservation. The final section of this Handbook extrapolated a frame for best practices from these case studies, and applies them to the Osa Peninsula.

Case Study #1: The Socioeconomic impact of Whale Watching Tourism in Costa Rica

The Problem: Decline in global fisheries is threatening the livelihoods of coastal communities

According to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "Costa Rica's fishery sector is very important socially and economically as a source of foreign currency but, above all, because of the employment it generates in marginal and economically deprived areas", i.e. the country's coastal areas.

In 2002, agriculture and fisheries in Costa Rica provided more than 251,000 jobs, equivalent to 15.9% of total employment (FAO 2012). However, "coastal fisheries are fished to a maximum or over-fished" and the FAO calls on the government to "without delay, take steps to create alternative employment in these coastal areas as the pressure is having a negative impact on the resources and on the small-scale fishers – both men and women - whose incomes are diminishing daily." (FAO, 2012)

Solution: Whale watching provides a sustainable alternative income generating activity

"Tourism," states the FAO study, "is beginning to emerge as one of the best alternative solutions for these coastal areas." In recent years, whale watching, a non-consumptive marine-based tourism activity, has been growing in importance in Costa Rica and elsewhere in Latin America and is providing an alternative livelihood for a number of coastal fishermen. From 1998 to 2006, the whale watching industry in Latin America grew 11% per year – three times the growth rate of tourism worldwide during that same period (Eric Hoyt 2008); and, as of 2009 was generating US\$2.1 billion globally in revenues annually (International Fund for Animal Welfare 2009). In Costa Rica, whale watching first took off in 1994, with 3 tour operators generating US\$20,000 in net income (Hoyt 2001). By 2004, the number of tour operators had increased 15-fold to 45, and the direct income had grown 42 times, to US\$840,000. With this increase in popularity and profitability, the whale watching industry quickly came to be seen as a viable economic alternative for coastal communities, replacing income that was being lost because of overfishing.



In response to the rapid expansion of the whale watching industry, a local NGO, Fundación PROMAR, pioneered a study in Costa Rica in order to better understand the socio-economic impacts of the industry.⁴ PROMAR found substantial evidence that living whales provide a tremendous opportunity to generate income for local communities through sustainable whale watching activities. In the Osa Peninsula, for instance, PROMAR found that whale watching generated \$2,384,671 in direct income, from 59,163 tourists arriving to the region in 2007⁵. Moreover, whales and dolphins can be observed year-round in the Osa, therefore providing a dependable income source throughout the year.

of Tourists Participating in Whale watching Activities in Osa (2007)

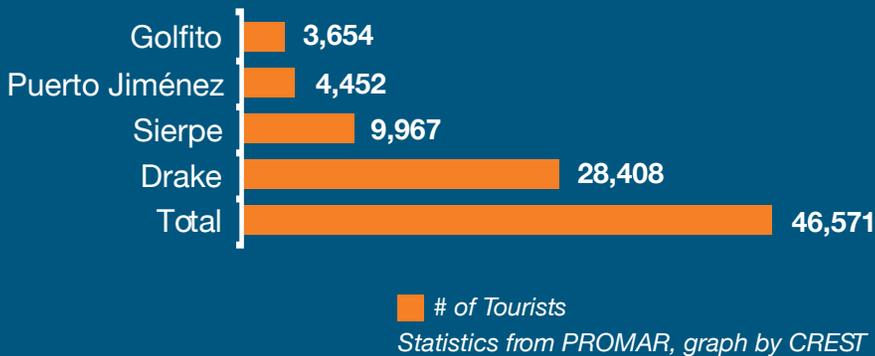


Figure 1 Tourists participating in whale watching activities in 4 Cantons of the Osa Peninsula. (Statistics from PROMAR 2007)

⁴ In 2007, PROMAR surveyed 62 whale watching tour operators in the regions of: Golfito, Puerto Jimenez, Drake-agujitas, Sierpe, Ballena, Quepos, Samara, El Coco, and Manzanillo

⁵ PROMAR surveyed 37 tour operators in the areas of: Golfito, Puerto Jimenez, Drake, Sierpe and Ballena

Direct Income From Whale watching Activities in Osa (2007)



Figure 2 Direct Income from whale watching activities in 4 Cantons of the Osa Peninsula. (Statistics from PROMAR 2007)

Impact:

Whale watching activities also serve as tools for **environmental conservation and the promotion of animal welfare**. Regions that depend heavily on whale watching as a source of income are more likely to be aware of issues surrounding marine conservation and sustainable fisheries. For example, PROMAR found that 100% of tour operators surveyed believed that Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are important for their activities, and 100% do not allow tourists to swim or feed the animals. This not only conforms to WSPA's Five Freedoms, but furthermore, PROMAR found, a large majority of tour operators (69.7%) surveyed had received formal training on best practices for whale watching activities.

Whale watching can also spur small-scale local **entrepreneurship** – if the industry is properly regulated. PROMAR found that 60% of tour operators surveyed hire additional personnel (guides, captains, staff, etc.), providing employment opportunities for community members; and, 58% of surveyed tour operators had actually started their own independent whale watching operations – demonstrating that barriers to entry into the industry for small operators can be overcome. It is important to note, however, that only 26% of operators are local – which indicates that many locals lack the skills or resources to open their own whale watching business, although they are finding employment within this sector.

Lessons Learned:

1. Rapid growth of whale watching has left the industry vulnerable to uncontrolled and unsustainable growth. Furthermore, in certain destinations, whale watching companies are dominated by foreigners or nationals from other parts of the country, making it difficult for locals to capture the better jobs within the supply chain. **Recommendation:** Requiring tour operators to register with national/local institutions (for example, INCOPESCA or MINAE in Costa Rica) who can then regulate their numbers and ensure that the industry grows at a sustainable rate; such institutions should also take steps to provide training and financial resources to local entrepreneurs so that they can become operators. Forming local associations or cooperatives also facilitates social inclusion and local participation.
2. Insufficient monitoring of tour operators can lead to inadequate training, lack of accurate information for tourists, and other poor whale watching practices.

Recommendation: More substantial training for tour operators will help to ensure best practices in animal welfare are followed, and that tours are of high quality and educational value. This will also enhance the tourist experience.

3. Irresponsible whale watching practices can distract the animals from normal feeding, resting, and mating behavior; and, over time, animals may be forced to leave the area due to accumulated stress (Environment Society of Oman 2009), thereby destroying the local whale watching industry.

Recommendation: Developing an official certification program for whale watching businesses will ensure that best practices in animal welfare and whale watching are followed, and therefore support the long-term sustainability of the industry. In Costa Rica, Fundación Keto has just released their certification program for best practices in whale watching and marine tourism called the Sea Star Certification program.⁶

Case Study #2: Economic Impact of Equine Workers on Rural Communities in Guatemala

The Problem: Poor treatment of equines reduces their lifespan and productivity, thereby decreasing the animal's long term worth and monetary value.

Guatemala, one of the poorest countries in Latin America, relies heavily on the agricultural sector, which employs approximately 38% of the labor force (CIA World Factbook 2012).

⁶

See <http://www.fundacionketo.org/seastarsystem.php>.

Because much of the country remains rural and undeveloped, a large proportion of the rural labor force relies directly on equines (horses, donkeys, and related animals) as working animals for transportation, agriculture, and, in some areas, tourism related activities. Despite the important role of working equines in rural Guatemala, Fundación Equinos Sanos para el Pueblo (ESAP-Guatemala), an organization promoting best practices in animal welfare for working equines in Guatemala, found that many animals are poorly treated and suffer from a variety of ailments including malnutrition, dehydration, plagues, cuts and lacerations, and a lack of veterinary care. Furthermore, ESAP found that the poor treatment of working equines decreased the animals' lifespans, their productivity, and ultimately their economic value to the owner.

The Solution: Undertake an education campaign to raise awareness of the importance of proper care of equines

ESAP-Guatemala undertook a study of the economic value of working equines in order to determine their monetary value and demonstrate their importance in the economy. And, they found that the economic value of equines is high – especially to the rural poor. The 2010 study found that owning an equine costs a maximum of \$1.61/day (Q12.64/day) in maintenance costs, while renting an equine costs between \$3.81 and \$6.35 (Q30 and Q50) per day.⁷ The study also found that other alternatives to owning an equine – buying a motorized vehicle or walking long distances – are far more costly and/or less desirable.

With this in mind, ESAP initiated a campaign to raise awareness around best practices in the treatment of equines in order to ensure humane working conditions for the animals, thereby increasing their life spans and productivity.

⁷ Note that at the time of this writing, 1 \$US equaled 7.87 Guatemalan Quetzals.

It held workshops to train local community members in animal welfare and basic veterinarian practices, and held special events such as the 'Dia del Caballo' ("Day of the Horse") to raise awareness about the importance of equine welfare. As communities began to realize the monetary value of incorporating good animal welfare practices, they began treating their horses, donkeys and mules more humanely and in line with the Five Freedoms of animal welfare.

Impact:

ESAP (and the communities) found that working equines lived longer, and worked more productively. As communities began to implement the Five Freedoms of animal welfare into their treatment of working animals, they became more economically stable, and were able to allocate resources towards housing, schooling, and other needs, rather than towards the purchase of a new working animal.

Lessons Learned:

1. The loss of a working animal disproportionately affects the poor who rely most directly on working equines for transportation and employment.

Recommendation: Raising awareness in rural communities about animal welfare, and demonstrating the monetary value of working animals, leads to better care of equines, thereby ensuring they live longer and work more efficiently.

2. Promoting grassroots participation and education helps to ensure long-lasting change at the community level.

Recommendation: Training key local people who can serve as ambassadors and provide ongoing education in animal welfare best practices helps to ensure the effectiveness of training programs and promotes longer lasting change within the community.

3. It is important to accurately identify problems and opportunities at the community level in order to facilitate participation by members of rural communities in sustainable tourism businesses.

Recommendation: Working equines can offer rural poor easier entry into the tourism industry. For example, equines can be used for horseback riding lessons or tours and to transport handicrafts to tourist markets. However, basic training is required to facilitate entry into the sustainable tourism supply chain.

Case Study #3: Funzel: Saving the Caray Turtle in El Salvador

The Problem: Threatened extinction of marine turtles along El Salvador's coasts due to egg poaching

The four different turtle species (Ridley, Leather backs, Green and Hawksbill) that nest along the coasts of El Salvador are endangered, in part because of the collection and sale of sea turtle eggs in the local market. Despite conservation efforts dating back to the 1970's, the number of commercialized eggs in restaurants and bars has continued to increase at an alarming rate. In 2008, for instance, it was estimated that between 9,000 and 13,000 nests were being "harvested" each year (Romanoff, Benitez & Chanchan 2008).

In response to this growing conservation crisis, FUNZEL (Fundación Zoológica de El Salvador)⁸ together with other local organizations (and with funding from USAID) undertook a study of the collection and commercialization of turtle eggs.

The study found that turtle eggs were not being poached for sustenance: only 4-6% of poachers actually consumed turtle eggs.

⁸ <http://www.funzelsv.org/>

Rather, the majority of turtle eggs were being consumed in bars and restaurants in the capital San Salvador where they bring a higher price. In rural areas, collectors could sell turtle eggs for \$3.70 per dozen, while merchants in the city were paid \$4.02 per dozen. The study concluded that poachers are hunting eggs because there is a lack of viable economic alternatives in rural areas. Interestingly, it also found that neither turtle egg collectors nor merchants were aware of the negative environmental consequences of consuming eggs from endangered sea turtles.

The Solution: Develop turtle egg hatcheries and other programs to provide alternative economic opportunities for local communities that help to sustain turtle populations.

After a national ban on turtle egg poaching was approved in 2009, local communities in El Salvador were forced to look for other ways to make a living. FUNZEL, together with local organizations, municipalities, and the private sector, took advantage of this situation to establish a turtle egg hatchery and promote a 'payment for turtle egg collection system.' This system pays turtle poachers to collect eggs from nests on the beach and bring them to a hatchery; and, when the turtles hatch, FUNZEL holds community events where they liberate all the baby turtles to the sea.

The Impact:

FUNZEL has been extremely successful: by the end of 2009, the program had liberated more than one million hatchlings into the sea, and the number of turtle eggs sold illegally fell significantly. Almost overnight, poachers were turned into conservationists as they found it more profitable to collect eggs for conservation than to sell them illegally: in 2009 alone FUNZEL's egg collectors received a total of \$260,000 in direct payment for their work.

FUNZEL's model also included a component in environmental education, which has increased awareness and improved local attitudes towards conservation. Finally, FUNZEL has helped to launch community-based micro-enterprises that promote marine conservation, including guided night tours to watch turtles laying their eggs.

Lessons Learned:

1. Environmental conservation measures that restrict access to resources requires viable economic alternatives for local communities who are often the most negatively impacted by these restrictions; without community support, conservation efforts will likely fail.

Recommendation: Provide economic incentives for conservation by designing environmentally sustainable projects that include employment opportunities and income for locals.

2. Conservation measures such as banning sale of turtle eggs will be more effective if they are accompanied by environmental education for local communities in order to help them understand the importance of stewarding their own resources.

Recommendation: Experiential education is widely recognized as an effective means of creating long lasting change – especially in youth. Projects that involve locals in the release of turtle hatchlings, for example, will create a very personal sense of participation and attachment to the conservation project and will be more successful in the long run.

3. Conservation of turtles and other endangered species can provide opportunities for local entrepreneurship in eco/sustainable tourism.

Recommendation: Provide basic training in marketing, business management and hospitality service so that locals are able to take advantage of turtle-related tourism opportunities. Supporting local, small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) until they are able to become competitive is also important in order to avoid failure and counter the dominance of foreign-owned tour operators.

Case Study #4: Sustainable Coastal Development: economic partnerships between sustainable fisheries and tourism operators in Bejuco, Costa Rica

The Problem: Overfishing and unsustainable finishing practices that negatively impact local communities

Unsustainable fishing methods such as shrimp trawls and gill nets, combined with an exponential increase in seafood consumption, have resulted in overexploitation or depletion of approximately 77% of the world's fish stocks (FAO 2011). This has led to deterioration of ecosystems, decline in biodiversity, and loss of traditional livelihoods in many coastal communities.

The Solution: Promote direct supply chains from local fishermen to regional hotels

In the small fishing community of Bejuco, Costa Rica, PRETOMA (Programa Restauración de Tortugas Marinas) has sought to link artisanal fishermen directly to hotels and restaurants committed to sustainable tourism practices. Through a direct marketing model, local hotels and restaurants buy sustainably caught snapper and other fish directly from local artisanal fishermen, thereby cutting out larger corporate buyers. This model allows local fishermen to retain more profit per fish and, through educational programs targeting fishermen, also promotes more sustainable fishing techniques.

The Impact:

In Bejuco, Costa Rica, PRETOMA has successfully linked sustainable coastal tourism businesses with local fishermen who are practicing responsible fishing techniques. This project thereby helps to support a sustained market demand for the responsibly caught fish and other marine products. The local fisherman earn more for their catch while the hotels and restaurants can assure their customers they are being served fresh, responsibly caught local products. Furthermore, Costa Rican hotels seeking to be rated by the country's Sustainable Tourism Certification⁹ program also have an incentive to because buying sustainable and local products is one of the best practice criteria under the program.

Lessons Learned:

1. Commercial use of common resources such as fisheries often leads the 'Tragedy of the Commons' syndrome of over-exploitation and depletion of the resource base.

Recommendation: Inserting economic incentives that promote sustainable practices into the production model supports resource conservation and the protection of traditional livelihoods. It also ensures a more participatory decision-making process whereby fishermen are more likely to play a pro-active role in managing the fisheries on which their livelihoods depend.

2. Large commercial fishing operations and middlemen buyers, via overfishing and depressed prices, harm livelihoods of artisanal fishermen in coastal communities.

Recommendations: Local sourcing promotes the sustainable use of marine resources.

⁹ Costa Rican Certification of Sustainable Tourism (CST) addresses: a) company interaction with environmental and cultural resources, b) improvement of quality of life of local communities, and c) economic contributions to other development programs. <http://www.anywherestarica.com/sustainable/cst-sustainable-tourism>

The growth of sustainable tourism businesses along coastlines encourages more responsible fishing practices and provides opportunities for local fishermen to sell directly and at a higher prices to coastal hotels and restaurants. When local hotels purchase fish directly from artisanal fishermen, they reduce or eliminate large-scale commercial fishing enterprises that use unsustainable fishing techniques.

There is a growing demand for sustainable products, a 'green'-ing trend in tourism, and a proliferation of sustainable tourism certification programs, all of which support the responsible use of marine resources. Adopting the Marine Stewardship Council's certification¹⁰ for sustainably caught seafood helps to differentiate and market sustainable tourism hotels and restaurants, meets growing consumer demand for sustainable seafood, and brings artisanal fishermen higher prices for their catch.

Marine product certification could also lead to increased support from national and local fishing agencies and spur the creation of new MPAs that protect spawning areas and prohibit unselective fishing techniques such as gill nets and shrimp trawling.

Case Study #5: Proceedings of the 1st International forum on Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism, San Jose, Costa Rica

In December 2011, WSPA organized a forum for representatives of local animal welfare projects that are involved in tourism. Most of the projects are in countries in the Americas; in addition representatives from several international organizations were invited to participate. The following presents four case studies from this forum.

¹⁰ <http://www.msc.org/get-certified>

i. Roundtable: Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism – Success Cases

The Problem: Poor Animal Welfare Practices in Tourism

In her presentation “Linking Tourism and Animal Welfare,” Giovanna Costantini, head of the Responsible Tourism program of the Fundación para la Adopción, Apadrinamiento y Defensa de los Animales (FAADA) in Spain, highlighted some of the biggest animal welfare problems within the tourism industry. These include:

- Interactions (elephant rides, swimming with dolphins, etc.),
- Shows (horse racing, dolphinariums, bird exhibitions, and circuses),
- Traditions involving captive animals (snake charming, dancing bears, rodeos), and
- Irresponsible wild animal watching (whales, turtles cheetah).

Taking animals from their natural environments conflicts with at least three of WSPA’s Five Freedoms for Animal Welfare, namely freedom from discomfort, fear and distress, and the ability to express normal behavior. When activities such as those listed above use animals for human entertainment and violate the Five Freedoms, they also serve to desensitize tourists to acts of abuse and cruelty.

Often prevalent in high volume tourism destinations, including beaches and cities, are large numbers of stray cats and dogs. This creates a range of serious problems including open-air fecalism, broken garbage bags, raiding of turtle nests, and risk of disease for both visitors and local inhabitants. In addition, overpopulation of these animals leads to their mistreatment, starvation, and neglect, and generates a poor image of the destination.

The Solution: Adopt education initiatives for both travel providers and tourists to stop animal welfare abuse

As a part of its Responsible Tourism Initiative, FAADA identifies and contacts travel agencies, tour operators, hotels, tourists, and others involved in activities that harm animals and proposes ethical alternatives. FAADA also created a website (<http://www.faada.org/>) to provide easy access to animal welfare information for travelers. It offers travel providers advice and information, and asks them to sign a pledge to follow FAADA’s recommended policies and guidelines for activities involving animals.

In Nicaragua, the Universidad de Ciencias Comerciales held several participatory workshops for tourism providers to inform them about animal welfare issues, and specifically, the WSPA’s Five Freedoms. Another organization, Preserve Planet, based in Costa Rica is using educational and media campaigns to increase awareness about the negative effects of holding wild animals captive.

In order to promote responsible management of canine and feline populations, Asociación Nacional para la Protección Animal (ANPA) and the McKee Foundation has proposed sterilization of stray cats and dogs be added to Costa Rica’s Ecological Blue Flag certification program for beaches as an additional requirement in order to obtain an “A” level rating. Cats and Dogs International (CANDI), based in the U.S., has launched projects in Cancun, Mexico and elsewhere that raise funds from tourists and businesses to support neuter clinics as a humane way to address overpopulation. Its educational campaigns that teach animal lovers and travelers about responsible animal ownership and how to help strays.

The Impact:

FAADA's Responsible Tourism Initiative has had the following results: five travel agencies have signed an agreement to follow suggested policies regarding animal welfare; eight companies have entered into collaborative agreements with FAADA; three travel agencies have stopped offering elephant rides; and a number of tourism businesses are distributing FAADA's campaign brochures. Tourism businesses that took part in the Universidad de Ciencias Comerciales' workshops reported that many of the concepts could be integrated into business practices. For example, they could incorporate animal welfare practices into bird watching tours. Participants also proposed that an animal welfare network be created to help provide further training and educate and involve local communities in best practices for handling wild and domestic animals.

Preserve Planet's media and educational campaign has had a strong impact in the targeted communities. School children have become more sensitive to animal welfare and captive wildlife issues, and they, in turn, are influencing the behavior of the adults in their families.

While limited in its scope (Blue Flag certification only covers beaches), the ANPA and McKee Foundation's proposal for an additional requirement under the Ecological Blue Flag certification program would lead to much healthier animal populations in regards to disease and malnutrition, less mistreatment and neglect, an improvement of human health in regards to transmissible diseases and bites, cleaner communities, more responsible owners, and finally more tourism. CANDI's projects have resulted in a greater number of cats and dogs being sterilized in Mexico and the Caribbean; and, more tourists have become aware of the issues through an educational video shown on airlines.

Lessons Learned:

1. There is a segment within the tourism sector that is interested in animal welfare – people who would like to know that destination institutions share their values.

Recommendation: Incorporation of animal welfare criteria into Blue Flag and other tourism certification programs will add value to the tourism sector and be well received by many travelers.

2. Poor practices in animal welfare are often the result of a lack of information.

Recommendation: All those involved in tourism – businesses, NGOs, government agencies, and travelers -- will benefit from education and increased awareness of animal welfare issues and the Five Freedoms. Information can come in the form of brochures, media campaigns, websites, and videos. For tourism businesses, training workshops, such as those given by WSPA in Nicaragua, are important for changing behaviors and improving industry practices.

3. It is important to form alliances, collaborations, and networks with the private sector, government agencies, NGOs, and media services.

Recommendation: Building a network facilitates the sharing of information, opens up new avenues of funding for projects, and promotes awareness of projects to a larger audience.

ii. Roundtable: Traveler's Philanthropy – Success Cases

CREST Co-Director Martha Honey gave a presentation on travelers' philanthropy, one of CREST's main focus areas since 2003.

Travelers' philanthropy is defined as "tourism businesses and travelers making concrete contributions of 'time, talent, and treasure' to local projects beyond what is generated through normal tourism business" (Travelers' Philanthropy Handbook 2011, 3). As travel to developing countries continues to increase, there is great potential for Travelers' philanthropy programs to provide additional resources to local communities and conservation efforts. But it is important that the host communities, not the traveler, decide what are priority needs and that assistance be provided in organized and transparent ways to help ensure positive impacts.

The Problem: A lack of funding for animal welfare and conservation programs, resulting in poor animal welfare

Working equines are a crucial source of income for many of the world's poorest regions. However, due to the heavy dependence on equines for human livelihoods, and a lack of knowledge of the benefits of animal welfare, working equines often survive in poor living conditions. The WSPA has found that "the main welfare problems that working equines face in terms of prevalence and severity are malnutrition, skin lesions, lameness, parasites, poor hoof and foot quality, overwork (due to the needs of their owners) and poor genetics." (WSPA "Communities for Horses"). In Mendoza, Argentina, the poor conditions of equines also created a poor image of local tourism businesses.

The Solution: Travelers' philanthropy as a form of sustainable funding for community projects

Fundación Cullunche, since 2005 has run a program dedicated to improving the health and living conditions of working equines on the provincial reserve in Mendoza, Argentina. With funding from travelers, equines are now attended to by veterinarians and field assistants, and are no longer subjected to carrying loads heavier than 60 kg.

The program educates local employers as well as tourists on equine welfare, and also provides a means for tourists to donate funds to support equine-welfare related activities through travelers' philanthropy.

The Impact:

In 2012, the program maintained 426 working animals; and, 2012 also marked the first year where there were no reported injuries to equines. The welfare of equines has become an important value for tourism employers in the park as well as in the region. Local businesses recognize the importance of equine health for touristic purposes, as many tourists choose to visit destinations with higher standards of animal welfare, and also wish to support animal welfare projects in the destinations they visit. The program's next step is to promote good practices in animal welfare to other sectors of the tourism industry (Fundación Cullunche, 2012).

Travelers' philanthropy serves the tourists' growing demand for companies that contribute back to the local communities and environmental resources upon which the tourism industry depends, and can serve as a sustainable source of funding for community projects. Recent surveys highlight consumer demand for travelers' philanthropy: 46 million U.S. tourists say they select tourism companies that "donate part of their proceeds to charities" that make donations to community projects 84% of percent of 'green' travelers say they are willing to donate between \$11 and \$500 to charitable organizations while traveling (Handbook, 2010, 192-193).

CREST's Osa Peninsula ecotourism study found that 58% of travelers surveyed said they are willing to donate on average \$68 to support local projects in the Osa (CREST 2011, 8).

Lessons Learned:

1. Travelers' philanthropy programs can provide organized ways for tourists to donate 'time, talent or treasure' to community projects, while giving visitors hands-on experience in animal welfare and conservation issues.

Recommendation: For programs to be effective, communities must assess and determine a) what needs can be met through outside contributions, b) the capacity of community organizations or programs to absorb contributions, c) the pros and cons of community site visits by tourists, d) the role and impact of having volunteers, and e) fundraising strategies (Handbook 2011, 211-214).

2. Travelers' philanthropy can help to build a business' reputation with the local community.

Recommendation: By establishing alliances and partnerships with local communities through travelers' philanthropy programs, tourism businesses can become more deeply and constructively involved in the community and thereby play a positive role as a 'responsible citizen.'

3. By generating social and environmental capital, travelers' philanthropy can mitigate the impact of state economic policy and provide a cost effective means for delivering services.

Recommendation: For businesses to implement effective travelers' philanthropy programs they must a) assess the needs of the area, b) build their program based off of this assessment, c) analyze the local organization's commitment and capacity to make an impact on identified needs, d) create a marketing strategy, e) design a method for collecting donations and handling donated funds, and f) ensure ongoing accountability (Handbook 2011, 208-211).

iii. Roundtable: Tourism & the Green Economy – Success Cases

Speaker Amos Bien, of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), emphasized the importance of tourism for the global economy: valued as an industry at 1 trillion US\$ per year, tourism represents 5% of the planet's entire GDP and provides for 6-7% of total employment (Pratt, Rivera & Bien 2011).

The Problem: the tourism industry is impacting biological and cultural systems, and raising issues concerning water usage and waste management.

For example, in the Dominican Republic, the destination of Bayahibe has been heavily marketed both nationally and internationally as a "sun and sand destination for partying". However, Bayahibe also has natural, cultural and historical values that have yet to be recognized by most tours; and, these important resources could be eroded by mass 'sun and sand' tourism development.

The Solution: The WSPA's Compassionate Travel Campaign uses tourism as a tool to drive change on behalf of community well being and animal welfare. By representing the economic and social sectors in addition to animal welfare, the campaign achieves a greater value – or a "shared value". Shared value creates a crucial link between different stakeholders that fuels the campaign's objectives to strengthen citizen participation and to generate revenue through projects in sustainable tourism and animal welfare.

The Fundación Dominicana de Estudios Marinos (FUNDEMAR) together with the Hotel Association of La Romana and Bayahibe (AHRB) and the Cluster of Tourism La Romana-Bayahibe (CTRB), have worked together in order to create 'shared value' and highlight Bayahibe's natural, cultural and historical resources.

They have designed an eco-tourism route – the “Ecobayahibe Marine Excursion” – that features the region’s natural and cultural attractions, and adheres to the IDB’s Sustainable Tourism Management Model. Operators involved receive training, a handbook on good marine tourism practices, informational material to distribute, national and international promotion, and personalized assistance from FUNDEMAR. Operators must also sign an agreement that includes their agreement to comply with good environmental practices.

They have also undertaken a study to determine visitor willingness to make small financial contributions to support the conservation of the region’s biological, cultural and historical resources. By promoting the value of natural and cultural attractions in Bayahibe, tourists and locals alike will have a greater incentive to conserve and sustainably manage these resources.

The Impact:

GSTC’s Amos Bien urges that investment in sustainable tourism can provide solutions to problems within the tourism industry without compromising economic growth. “Greening the economy” can in fact generate growth in terms of natural capital (biodiversity, animal populations, renewable and nonrenewable resources), reduce energy and water costs, help support the local economy and alleviate poverty, create new and better employment, and lead to more economic, social and environmental advantages (Pratt, Rivera & Bien 2011).



The FUNDEMAR projects have resulted in the improvement of the conservation of Bayahibe’s natural, cultural and historical resources. Training of local community members in sustainable tourism and good environmental practices has increased local participation in the tourism industry, and also diversified the local economy.

Lessons Learned:

1. Tourism as part of the green economy can be an integrated model of natural, cultural and economic resources that generates return on investment.

Recommendation: By investing in more effective and environmentally sound waste management, water usage and transportation practices, tourism businesses can save money and increase the value of their products. Investment in natural capital and cultural resources fosters a healthy foundation for sustainable tourism (Pratt, Rivera & Bien 2011).

2. Sustainable tourism demands clarity of requirements and coordination of involved parties at the destination level.

Recommendation: Tourism businesses, local communities, government and NGO’s must work together to establish a framework for coordinating responsibilities in regards to the environment, energy, finance, etc (Pratt, Rivera & Bien 2011).

v. Roundtable: Sustainable Tourism – Success Cases

The Problem: A lack of regulation and monitoring of the tourism industry can hinder growth its growth, and even destroy the very attractions the tourism industry is trying to promote.

Chile has seen enormous growth in the whale watching industry: the number of whale watchers arriving to Chile has increased from about 300 in 1994 to 13,720 in 2006, and total expenditure in the industry has increased from \$53,000 to \$2,453,826 in the same time period (IFAW, 2009, 274). However the Chilean government and the industry have yet to put in place the necessary regulatory infrastructure to stimulate and control sustainable growth in this sector.

Similarly, Costa Rica, as the “fastest growing whale watch area in Latin America” (IFAW, 2009, 246), also has potential to promote sustainable tourism through whale and other marine-fauna watching. However with demand growing fast there is a need for mechanisms to control industry expansion, and evaluate the sustainability of this sector.

The Solution: Certification, regulation, and monitoring the tourism industry.

In order to promote the sustainable development of whale watching in Chile, the Centro de Conservación Cetácea (CCC) proposed strategies for the development and implementation of legal framework to regulate the industry. In 2007 the CCC prepared whale-watching guidelines that have been supported by the International Whaling Commission (IWC). In 2008 they implemented a “Whale Sanctuary” campaign that garnered 99% of citizen support and led to the passing of the Protection of the Cetaceans law. CCC then held an International Seminar on Responsible Tourism in Cetacean Watching – to promote a regulation framework, the implementation of the Whale Sanctuary, and to develop an action plan to promote Chile as a high-quality tourist destination for whale watching. The Under Secretary of Fishing held an open, transparent and participatory working group that met monthly and finally prepared a first draft of regulations to submit for public consultation. The regulations, outlined as follows, should enter into force in 2012:

- Regulate all whale-watching activities, aerial, marine and coastal, not just for tourism purposes
- Include approach methods and establish minimum requirements so for vessel type, and training for captains, and guides.
- Special provisions for Blue whale and Southern Right whale, as well as the possibility of formulating specific future regulations for species and/or areas
- Formalize the Cetacean Watching Network under the Chilean Navy
- Make it mandatory to deliver cetacean watching records to tourism operators in whale watching, and researchers doing publicly funded research.

In Costa Rica, Fundación Keto together with the local tourism operators association and Conservation International have developed the Sea Star System, a national level marine tourism certification system based on best practices for both the environment and community. The Sea Star certification program is based on two main principles: quality of the tourism experience, and environmental responsibility. It uses 51 criteria to evaluate responsible tourism based on key components such as waste management, cetacean watching, and responsibility to the community. This system supports practices that enable animals to express the fifth Freedom for Animal Welfare – the freedom to express normal behavior in their natural environment.

The Sea Star system is also complimentary and compatible with the Costa Rican Tourism Institute’s existing sustainable tourism certification program.

The Impact: Sustainable management of the tourism industry.

As a result of the CCC's work to develop and implement a legal framework for whale watching in Chile, the municipal ordinance for Puñihuil is the nation's first example of tourist activity regulation based on concept of carrying capacity.

In Costa Rica, the Sea Star System is currently being used by 14 local marine tourism microenterprises in Ballena National Marine Park, and the region has become renowned for its self-regulated sustainable marine tourism industry. Fundación Keto is currently working to establish an international network of partners to expand the Sea Star Best Practices system.

Lessons Learned:

1. Creating "shared value" can enable change through the tourism industry that will impact the triple bottom line: people, profit and planet.

Recommendation: Shared value can be used to create a crucial link between different stakeholders. Greater value is created by including sectors in the tourism industry that have not yet been represented, and by linking actors – non-profit, government, local associations, private sector – together in a common goal.

2. Necessary regulatory infrastructure must be in place in order to meet sustainable tourism objectives.

Recommendation: Necessary infrastructure would include: mechanisms for citizen inclusion; frameworks and criteria to regulate and evaluate tourism activities; and administrative structures to foster the link between animal welfare, environmental, social and economic impacts.

3. The behavior of tourists, community members, and other stakeholders drive change within the tourism industry.

Recommendation: The behavior of parties involved is influenced by the information that is available to them. Education on concepts of animal welfare, social, economic, and environmental impacts is crucial to driving change within the tourism industry.

Conclusions of the Analysis of Case Studies Featuring Best Practices in Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism:

The case studies analyzed above clearly demonstrate the negative consequences that poor animal welfare practices have in the tourism industry and on local communities. From the tourism perspective, poor animal welfare conditions greatly detract from the tourist experience, as was seen in Mendoza where tourists heavily criticized the poor conditions of working equines. Poor animal welfare practices in whale watching can even ruin the very attraction featured in the tourism product, as irresponsible whale watching can cause the animals to permanently leave the area. From the community perspective, poor animal welfare practices often cause economic hardship – for instance, the premature loss of a working equine due to mistreatment, which disproportionately affects the poor.

It was found that poor practices in animal welfare are often the result of a lack of education and awareness around the benefits of incorporating animal welfare into the tourism product and community practices. Community education programs that incorporated local people into conservation efforts – for instance, having community members get involved in the release of baby turtles – were greatly successful in transforming habits and creating local ambassadors for conservation and animal welfare.

Setting more formalized standards for animal welfare practices was also recommended. For example, incorporating animal welfare criteria into the Blue Flag and other tourism certification programs would ensure the industry is sustainable, as well as raise the value of animal welfare in the tourism sector.

The case studies also showed the clear benefits of incorporating good animal welfare practices into the tourism industry. With activities ranging from whale watching and turtle tours to horseback-riding, it is clear that animal attractions have become a key ingredient in the tourism experience. These animal attractions provide a non-extractive economic alternative for local communities, and promote economic incentives for conservation by creating opportunities for local entrepreneurship. Furthermore, animal attractions in tourism can offer the rural poor easy access into the tourism industry. Sustainable tourism involving animal attractions can also improve education around issues of environmental conservation, species protection, and biodiversity. Ultimately, the case studies present a clear picture that – from an economic, environmental, and social perspective – incorporating best practices in animal welfare into the tourism industry will be beneficial to both sectors.

3. Sustainable Tourism & Animal Welfare in the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, sustainable tourism – which is generally referred to as “ecotourism” -- has proven to be a very profitable economic alternative to traditional tourism which was practiced without a strong regard to social and environmental sustainability: between 1986 (just before Costa Rica’s ecotourism industry took off) and 2009, Costa Rica’s tourism arrival numbers increased more than seven-fold, from 261,000 to 1,023,000, while gross receipts jumped more than 14-fold, from \$133,000 to \$1,980,000 (CREST 2011a, 13). This shows that as a result of the ecotourism boom, Costa Rica is earning two times more per tourist than under the conventional tourism of the mid-1980s and earlier. This trend has continued up to the present, with international arrivals surpassing 1.4 million in 2011 (ICT 2006-2011). And, because of the importance of ecotourism in Costa Rica, the country provides a good laboratory to study the benefits of animal welfare and sustainable tourism and their collective contribution to economic development.

Sustainable tourism involving animals has been an important component of Costa Rica’s ecotourism boom. Airport surveys in 2011 of international travelers at the Juan Santamaria International Airport in San Jose found that 58.1% of tourist arrivals to Costa Rica visited a national park, protected area, or biological reserve (ICT 2006-2011); and, another ICT survey of all international arrivals entering Costa Rica by air found that, 50% of tourist arrivals participated in ‘ecotourism’ activities¹¹, 56.9% in marine tourism activities¹² and 68.3% in adventure activities¹³ (ICT 2006-2011). A significant number of these types of tourism in Costa Rica utilize animals as a part of their tourism product.

¹¹ Ecotourism activities as defined by ICT include: Bird watching, hiking (with or without a guide), observation of flora and fauna, and rural community visits.

¹² Marine Tourism Activities as defined by ICT include: Sun and Sand, snorkeling, scuba diving, rafting, sport fishing, kayaking, whale and dolphin watching

¹³ Adventure Tourism Activities as defined by ICT include: Surf, Scuba Diving, Bungee Jumping, Canopy, Kayaking, and Rapids

In 2011 alone, approximately 430,269 tourists participated in bird watching activities, 73,281 went sport fishing, and 58,198 went on whale and dolphin watching tours. These statistics demonstrate that natural attractions involving animals are indeed one of Costa Rica's main tourist draws.

% of tourists participating in activities related to Animal Welfare in 2011

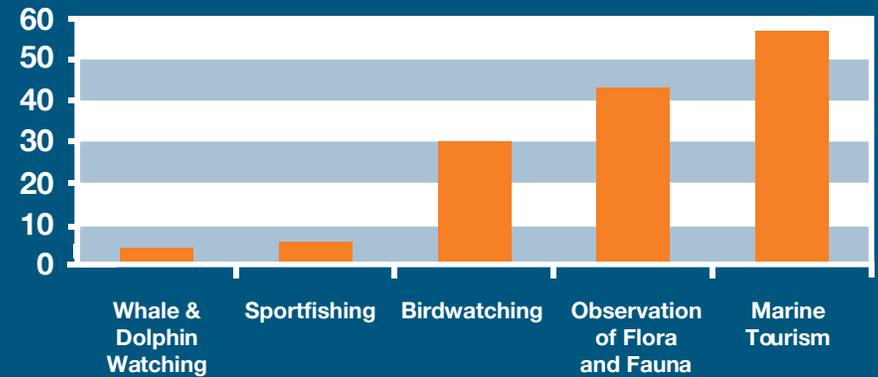


Figure 3 The percentage of international tourists arriving to Costa Rica by air that participated in activities related to Animal Welfare in 2011. (Statistics from ICT 2006-2011 survey)¹⁴.

In this report, we will narrow the focus of study to Costa Rica's Osa Peninsula, because of this region's importance as "the last remaining section of Costa Rica's Pacific coast where ecotourism is the dominant activity" (CREST 2011a). Indeed, National Geographic goes even further, terming the Osa Peninsula "the most biologically intense place on the planet" (CREST 2011a, 10).

¹⁴ Marine Tourism Activities as defined by ICT include: Sun and Sand, snorkeling, scuba diving, rafting, sport fishing, kayaking, whale and dolphin watching

Activities	Visitors per Year					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Observation of Flora and Fauna	538,964	575,902	531,674	676,499	718,959	620,531
Bird watching	368,949	413,954	367,898	522,939	530,997	430,269
Sport fishing	89,931	94,312	86,304	81,428	98,579	73,281
Whale & Dolphin Watching					43,302	58,198
Marine Tourism	716,572	820,789	820,717	747,389	831,274	830,278
Total # of Tourists arriving by air	1,231,950	1,356,995	1,424,034	1,319,615	1,417,980	1,463,989

Table 1 Number of international visitors involved in 5 leading animal related activities (ICT 2006-2011)



Photo from: Lonely Planet

Located on the southern Pacific Coast of Costa Rica, the Osa Peninsula is an area of less than one million acres, but it contains half of the country's 500,000 species (Herrera 2011), thirteen distinct tropical ecosystems and, hosts two and a half percent of all the existing flora and fauna species on earth (The Nature Conservancy N.D.). Today, 80% of the Osa Peninsula is under some kind of protection (CREST 2011, a 12) as a result of Costa Rica's strong environmental conservation policies and extensive national parks system. However, the Osa Peninsula is at a crossroads. While rich in biodiversity and natural beauty, the two cantons – Osa and Golfito – that make up the Peninsula are among the poorest in Costa Rica.¹⁵ Indeed, the Osa's population has decreased steadily and significantly over the last decade, from 36,763 in 1999 to 22,601 in 2008. As a result, the Osa shows the highest level of population decline in Costa Rica (Marviva 2009:4).

The Osa's limited employment opportunities have contributed to a reliance on unsustainable income-generating activities, including logging, poaching, gold mining, and other destructive land-use practices. These activities are having detrimental effects on wildlife populations and eventually will have an adverse impact on the quality of ecotourism.

¹⁵ Osa ranked 73 and Golfito ranked 78 out of the country's 81 Cantons according to a 2007 Ministry of Planning social development index (MIDEPLAN 2007, 58).

Ecotourism & Economic Development in Osa

Because the Osa is so rich in biodiversity, yet so economically poor, ecotourism has emerged as the most viable economic alternative for community development and conservation because it minimizes dependence on unsustainable economic activities. Ecotourism has proved successful in generating fees from tourists to support environmental protection, parks, local businesses, and most importantly, jobs for local residents.

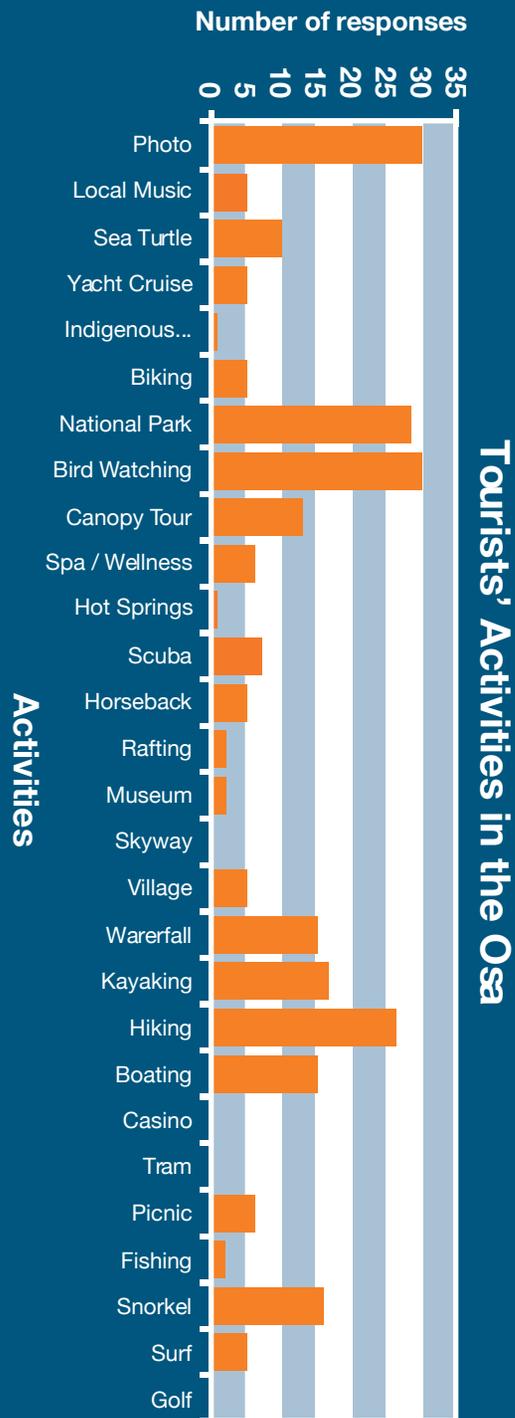
While ecotourism in the Osa remains a small component of Costa Rica's tourism industry, it has grown significantly in the past decade: the number of tourism arrivals in the Osa from the year 2000 to 2009 nearly doubled (from 75,000 international visitors in 2000 to 147,815 in 2009) (CREST 2011a, 17). It was estimated that in the year 2000, approximately 20% of Puerto Jiménez' economically active population worked directly in ecotourism, and 60% received indirect economic benefits from it (Horton 2004, 6-7); and interviews for a CREST study on ecotourism in the Osa found that many locals in Osa see ecotourism as the dominant economic activity in the region (CREST 2011a, 17). Furthermore, CREST found that the average monthly income of tourism workers is twice that of non-tourism workers (\$709.70 vs. \$357.12), and that tourism workers were twice as likely as non-tourism workers to feel their jobs allowed them to progress to better employment or management-level opportunities (CREST 2011a, 4). Interviewees in the Osa also credit ecotourism for educating local residents on the importance of environmental conservation and animal welfare.¹⁶

Reasons for visiting the Osa

CREST's study of ecotourism in the Osa sought to understand the main reasons that tourists visit the Peninsula. The number one reason, those surveyed said, is to visit Corcovado National Park, followed closely by Osa's reputation as an 'unspoiled' and 'wild' place to observe animals and nature (CREST 2011a, 45).

¹⁶ For example, while both tourism and non-tourism workers share a positive view of national parks, tourism workers viewed parks with a slightly more positive attitude than non-tourism workers, 85% vs. 74% (CREST 2011a, 54).

Figure 4 CREST survey of tourism activities on the Osa Peninsula in 2009 (n=47).



Those surveyed listed as other popular activities: hiking (66%), bird watching (64%), photography (64%), national park tours (62%), and snorkeling (32%). In addition, 32% of tourists participated in sea turtle watching or release programs, 11% went horseback riding, and 7% did scuba diving. Given the popularity of these types of animal-centered tourism activities, their popularity with likely grow as tourism to the Osa increases.

Ecotourism in the Osa involving the sustainable use of wildlife and animals is providing an important economic alternative, while preserving the Peninsula's high level of biodiversity. This report seeks to isolate and analyze the ways in which sustainable tourism involving animals promotes community development, in order to apply the model as a tool for sustainable development in the Osa.

The Impact of Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism in the Osa

Many of the lessons learned and best practices from the case studies above can be replicated in the Osa Peninsula. As tourism arrivals have nearly doubled in the Osa Peninsula between 2000 and 2009 and as the industry continues to grow in this region, so do the opportunities to link animal welfare with the effort to use sustainable tourism as a tool for conservation and community development. The following are six pragmatic recommendations for the Osa Peninsula taken from the case studies above:

1. Capturing the socioeconomic impact of whale watching in the Osa:

Whale watching is already an important economic alternative for coastal fishing communities along the southern Pacific coast of Costa Rica; it is most prominent in the Osa communities of Drake and Sierpe, as well as Bahia Ballena just north of the Osa.

Because whale watching trends predict that the industry will continue to grow in the coming years, it is important to organize, regulate, and educate tour operators in order to take advantage of this growing market, without harming the cetaceans. Recommended steps include (i) creating local cooperatives and community associations to promote local participation in the industry; (ii) educating tour operators, guides and boat operators in best practices. This training could be done by governmental institutions such as INA or ICT¹⁷, by non-governmental organizations specializing in marine resource management, or by the tourism department at the University of Costa Rica in Golfito; and (iii) implementing Fundación Keto's Sea Star Certification program for marine tourism operators to help maintain high standards in the industry. Small tourism operators in the Ballena National Marine Park are currently using this certification program.

2. Incorporating Osa workers and community-based activities into local hotel packages:

According to the UN World Tourism Organization, globally, "experiential" tourism, which includes ecotourism, is growing rapidly and is projected to remain strong over the coming decade. (UNWTO, 2001) Hotels in the Osa, many of which are catering to this growing consumer demand for authentic experiences have opportunities to promote tourism activities with rural communities and community-based tourism operators. For local campesinos, farm horses can provide a low-cost entry into the tourism supply chain through horseback riding tours or even transport for tourists. In addition, other low entry cost tourism activities suitable for Osa residents include nature, birding, fishing, and

whale watching guides. With this in mind, it is important to recognize that international tourists – especially ecotourists – expect a certain level of quality to be provided by tour operators. It is therefore important to provide adequate training in basic hospitality and best practices in treatment of the animals so that campesinos may successfully enter the tourism industry. Several Costa Rican organizations, including ACTUAR and Rainforest Alliance, specialize in assisting community-based tourism and could provide this type of training.

3. Linking local artisanal fisheries to local hotels:

In 1990, the Osa had only five small hotels catering to a few thousand visitors a year. Since then nature-based tourism has grown exponentially and by 2009, the number of hotels registered for international tourism had increased to 28 hotels. All are small individually owned properties; there are as yet no transnational hotel chains in the Osa. In reality, however, the number of accommodations in the Osa is far larger, with many cabinas and small hotels catering to an informal, largely domestic and international backpacker market. (CREST 2011a, 15)

This has brought an increase of direct and indirect employment opportunities related to the growing ecotourism industry. However, many of the hotels, especially those catering to the international market, import much of their food, including seafood, from San Jose (Zambrano et al. 2010). This inefficient supply chain hurts local artisanal fisherman who often lack a direct market for their product, and ultimately end up selling much of their raw catch to a middleman. The middleman process and package the fish, and then sends it back to Osa – retaining much of the profit.

¹⁷ INA is the Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje/National Training Institute which does distance learning courses. ICT is the Instituto Costarricense de Turismo/Costa Rica Tourism Institute.

Applying a direct marketing model such as that being used by PRETOMA in Bejuco that links artisanal fishermen directly to local hotels could support the Osa Peninsula’s struggling artisanal fishermen, and ultimately help to ensure a more sustainable fishing industry in the Osa.

4. Education to promote responsible practices in animal welfare:

Improper practices in handling wild and domestic animals often stem from lack of information. There are a variety of channels to disseminate information, including participatory workshops, brochures, media campaigns, and online resources. Asking businesses to sign a pledge to comply with the Five Freedoms and responsible tourism is also an effective means for garnering support. In addition, in the Osa, countering bad practices such as poaching of endangered species and sale of animal skins, turtle shells, and live birds requires the collaboration and education of the tourism businesses, travelers, NGOs, parks officials, and government agencies.

5. Use travelers’ philanthropy as a means to combine socioeconomic and animal welfare goals through sustainable tourism:

Travelers’ philanthropy is a growing trend in the international tourism industry, involving travelers and tourist businesses donating financial resources, time, and expertise to benefit local community projects. In 2011, CREST together with Fundación Corcovado, undertook a study of travelers’ philanthropy in the Osa Peninsula in order to quantify the impact of ‘time, travel and treasure’ donated to local communities in the region.

The study found that all businesses sampled¹⁸ were engaged in some kind of charitable activity; and, that types of donations were almost equally divided between material contributions, monetary donations, and the volunteering of time and expertise. The median amount of yearly donations per business for the sub-sample surveyed was \$800 (Col. 400,000) (CREST, 2011). In addition, a majority of tourists surveyed in the Osa expressed an interest in contributing to support local environment and community projects (CREST 2011a, 8)

It was also found that travelers’ philanthropy contributions addressed a wide range of social, environmental, and health issues as figure five depicts, of which education and environmental conservation were most important. Respondents often linked educational priorities in relation to environmental conservation, as they saw a need to instill in youth, and in local communities, a respect for the Osa’s natural environment, and wildlife.

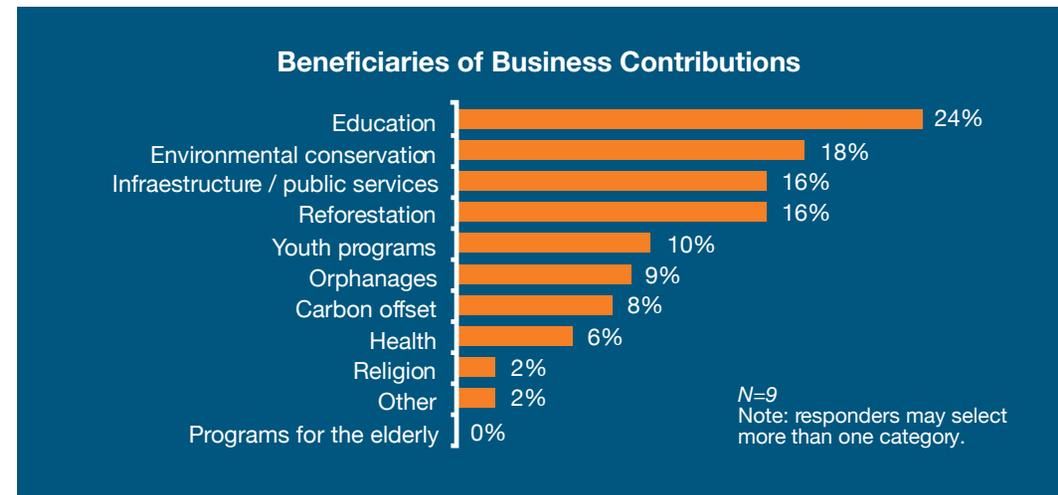


Figure 5: Beneficiaries of Business Contributions (Source: CREST 2011, p. 11)

¹⁸ CREST and Fundación Corcovado surveyed 17 businesses in the two cantons of Osa and Golfito

The Lapa Rios Eco-Lodge is an outstanding example of the potential for travelers' philanthropy to contribute to social and environmental projects in the Osa. Through traveler contributions and foundation support, they have supported the Carbonera School since 1993, providing high-quality education for local families in the area. Lapa Rios also operates a locally run turtle project in the Piro Beach area of the Osa Peninsula, funded directly from the income of 'turtle tours' for the ecolodge's guests. Additionally, at the request of employees, Lapa Rios has organized a variety of educational activities on topics such as illegal hunting and logging, recycling, and organic fertilizer use (Zambrano et. al. 2010).

There is also potential in the Osa to promote voluntourism – tourism involving the inclusion of a volunteer component (CREST 2011.b) – as a form of environmental conservation and community development. Voluntourism often attracts more socially and environmentally responsible tourists, looking to 'give back' as a part of their vacation, It can also provide more intangible benefits through volunteer research, environmental education, and meaningful interactions between visitors and locals. For example, attracting voluntourists to work with sea turtles in the Osa Peninsula could bring economic contributions to local communities as well as provide important research for conservation and protection of these endangered animals.

Ultimately, because the majority of travelers arriving to the Osa value sustainable practices, environmental conservation and community development, the Osa Peninsula has significant potential to support environmental conservation and promote animal welfare through travelers philanthropy.

6. Address the need for infrastructure to support responsible practices in animal welfare and sustainable tourism:

In 2011, CREST and Fundación Corcovado found that 53% of businesses on the Osa Peninsula participated in sustainable tourism programs, with some holding multiple sustainable certifications (CREST & Fundación Corcovado 2011, 13). As demand for tourist activities involving animals increases in the Osa, so does the need for the necessary infrastructure to ensure that animal welfare and sustainable tourism practices are in place. Certification systems such as Fundación Keto's Sea Star System will provide a means to uphold as well as evaluate standards in sustainable business practices. Additionally, collaborations between certification programs such as the Sea Star, Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST), the Blue Flag program, Rainforest Alliance verification, the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, and others, will further strengthen standards in animal welfare and sustainable business practices on the Osa.

4. Sustainable Tourism and Animal Welfare Framework:

The Framework of Sustainable Tourism and Animal Welfare for Sustainable Development

The Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare	Sustainable Tourism
1. Freedom from hunger and thirst	Sustainable tourism as defined by the UNWTO, “takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities
2. Freedom from discomfort	
3. Freedom from pain, injury and disease	
4. Freedom to express normal behavior	
5. Freedom from fear and distress	

Results of the link between Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism, based on the evidence built by participating organizations in WSPA’s Animal Welfare and Sustainable Tourism Regional Project.

Regulation, Certification & Evaluation	Education	Travelers’ Philanthropy	Creating Shared Value	Sustainable Resource Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulate the non-lethal and sustainable use of animals, i.e. the cases of cetacean and bird-watching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote environmental education and experiential learning, i.e. including community-members in the release of turtle hatchlings. Enhance levels of public health & tourist satisfaction by appropriate management of populations of companion animals. Support responsible or conscious tourists by providing access to information, i.e. via brochures, online web-based forums, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote information about animal welfare to locals, tourists, and tourism groups (non-profits, hotels, environmental groups etc.) through Travelers’ Philanthropy programs. Create revenue to fund animal welfare initiatives through Travelers’ Philanthropy programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a sustainable production and consumption model, i.e. the economic partnerships between sustainable fisheries and tourism operators. Invest in environmentally sound management practices, natural capital and cultural resources fosters a healthy foundation for sustainable tourism. Create Shared Value by linking different actors (private sector, non-profit, government) & causes at the destination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure resources for a sustainable livelihood, i.e. the case of saving the Caray Turtle. Measure the economic contribution of working animals to quantify their monetary value and promote more sustainable use.

Framework applied to Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica.

Regulation, Certification & Evaluation	Education	Travelers' Philanthropy	Creating Shared Value	Sustainable Resource Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the need for infrastructure to support responsible practices in animal welfare and sustainable tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate locals and tourists alike to promote responsible practices in animal welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Travelers' Philanthropy as a means to combine socioeconomic and animal welfare goals through sustainable tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate Osa workers and community-based activities (such as horse-back rides) into local hotel packages • Link local artisanal fisheries directly to local hotels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture the full socioeconomic impact of whale watching in the Osa

About the Sustainable Tourism and Animal Welfare Project: A new tool for development

Sustainable Tourism has been identified as a key tool to achieve Sustainable Development. Animals represent a utilized vital resource which improves the incomes and the quality of life of thousands of communities all over the world.

That's why the United Nations promotes this kind of initiatives in their Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production.

WSPA and a group of partner organizations met on 2010 in Costa Rica to start the construction of a regional project of Sustainable Tourism and Animal Welfare. We want to everybody take advantage of this new tool for development.

The participating organizations in the regional project are:

- Asociación para el Desarrollo Económico en Latinoamérica, APEDELA
- Cullunche Foundation, Argentina
- Foundation for Equine Welfare, ESAP, Guatemala
- Dominican Foundation of Marine Studies, Fundemar, Dominican Republic
- Promar Foundation, Costa Rica
- Keto Foundation, Costa Rica
- Salvadorian Zoological Foundation, Funzel, El Salvador
- Cetacean Conservation Organization, OCC, Uruguay
- Promotora de Bienestar Animal, PBA, Costa Rica
- Social Management Program, Nicaragua

As a result of the meeting, we built a mission and three specific lines of action:

“To contribute to the valuation of animal life through sustainable tourism to achieve community welfare”

Lines of action:

- 1. Economic, environmental and social results: The generation of improvements in undertakings that promote Sustainable Tourism and Animal Welfare:** To improve the management of instances linking animal welfare, environmental and social impacts to the economic impacts materialized in business plans.
- 2. Citizen participation in the development model:** To foment Public Participation to create inclusive value chains that achieve the integral valuation of Natural Resources, an inclusive development model, the identification of community leaders, committee organization and the facilitation of dialogue.
- 3. Income Distribution:** The generation and strengthening of Sustainable Tourism and Animal Welfare productive undertakings: income generation, local capacities development and the implementation of best practices.

About the Center for Responsible Travel (CREST)

The Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) is a unique non-profit organization affiliated with Stanford University, devoted to increasing the positive global impact of responsible tourism. CREST stands alone in its field, having built an international network of highly-trained experts providing research and interdisciplinary analysis and solutions, as well as publications, conferences, courses, training, and educational workshops.

Since its founding in 2003, CREST has become recognized as the independent conscience of travel - the world's largest economic sector - establishing the gold standard in best practices and principles in ways that protect communities and conservation. CREST's core programs and projects have focused on analyzing coastal tourism, residential and retirement developments, ecotourism, cruise tourism impacts on ports-of-call, indigenous rights and tourism, 'green' certification programs for tourism businesses, travelers' philanthropy, sustainable destination management, tourism trends and consumer demand, tools for financing sustainable tourism projects, and cost benefit analyses of different types of tourism. CREST identifies and promotes innovative and replicable models of sustainable tourism. It utilizes a network of experts and collaborates with institutes and other organizations around the world. Through its Consulting Services, CREST brings together tourism professionals from around the world to assist with field research and project implementation in destination countries.

CREST's mission is to promote responsible tourism policies and practices globally so that local communities may thrive and steward their cultural resources and biodiversity.

By addressing the environmental and cultural devastation that can result from irresponsible travel policies, CREST has created an international footprint in preserving and enhancing some of the most beautiful and culturally rich parts of our planet. Managed access to places of natural and architectural beauty cultivates learning and exploration, and in the process allows people to experience some of the planet's most unique and important environments.

CREST has demonstrated that when tourism development is responsibly managed and incorporates sustainable best practices, it has the power to bring employment and conservation to areas that otherwise fall prey to clear-cut logging, mining, industrial agriculture, and illegal trade and traffic. Through its offices in Washington D.C. and at Stanford University CREST works to “transform the way the world travels.”

CREST has two websites: www.responsibletravel.org & www.travelersphilanthropy.org

Appendix I: List of Animal Welfare and Sustainable Travel Organizations (referenced in Report)

ACTUAR: www.actuarcostarica.com/

Asociación Nacional para la Protección Animal (ANPA): <http://www.anpacostarica.org/>

Blue Flag: www.blueflag.org/

Cats and Dogs International (CANDI): <http://www.candiinternational.org/>

Center for Responsible Travel (CREST): www.responsibletravel.org

Centro de Conservación Cetácea (CCC): <http://www.ccc-chile.org/>

Costa Rica Certification of Sustainable Tourism (CST): <http://www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr>

Fundación Corcovado: www.corcovadofoundation.org/

Fundación Cullunche: <http://www.fundacioncullunche.org/>

Fundación Dominicana de Estudios Marinos (FUNDEMAR): <http://www.fundemar.org.do/>

Fundación Equinos Sanos para el Pueblo (ESAP): <http://esap.org.gt/>

Fundación Keto: <http://www.fundacionketo.org/>

Fundación OCAC (Chile): www.ocac.cl (non-working webpage)

Fundación para la Adopción, Apadrinamiento y Defensa de los Animales (FAADA): <http://www.faada.org/>

Fundación PROMAR: <http://www.fundacionpromar.org/>

Fundación Zoologica de El Salvador (FUNZEL):
<http://www.funzelsv.org/>

Global Sustainable Tourism Council: <http://www.gstcouncil.org/>

Instituto de Costarricense Acueductos y Alcantarillados (Blue Flag Ecological Program):
<http://www.aya.go.cr/Contenidos/frwContenidos.aspx?d=17&a=1>

Marine Stewardship Council: <http://www.msc.org/>

Organización para la Conservación de Cetáceos (OCC):
<http://www.occ.org.uy/>

Preserve Planet: <http://www.preserveplanet.org/>

PRETOMA: <http://www.pretoma.org/>

Rainforest Alliance: www.rainforest-alliance.org/

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES):
<http://www.ecotourism.org/>

Traveler's Philanthropy: <http://www.travelersphilanthropy.org/>

United Nations World Tourism Organization:
<http://www.unwto.org/>

United Nations Environment Programme: <http://www.unep.org/>

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