

## The Tour Operators' Initiative: joining forces for a common future

To catalyze action in the tour operators' sector, a group of tour operators from different parts of the world joined forces in 2000 to create the **Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development**.

The Initiative is voluntary, non-profit, and open to all tour operators, regardless of their size and geographical location.

Members of the Initiative are moving towards sustainable tourism by committing themselves to integrating sustainability into their business practices, and by **working together** to promote and disseminate methods and practices compatible with sustainable development.

The Initiative was developed with the support of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** and the **World Tourism Organization (WTO/OMT)**, which are also full members of the Initiative, and actively support the Tour Operators' Initiative by providing guidance and technical advice.

The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (at Conservation International) is an active partner of the TOI, providing technical and financial assistance in all of the Initiative's areas of activity.

## Join the Tour Operators' Initiative members

Accor	NSTravel
Atlas Voyages	Orizzonti
Aurinkomatkat-Suntours	Premier Tours
DiscoveryInitiatives	Sahara Tours International
Dynamic Tours	Settemari
Exodus	Studiosus
First Choice	Thomas Cook
FreeWay Adventures	Travel Walji's
G.A.P. Adventures	TUI Group
Hotelplan	VASCO Travel
KEL 12	Ventaglio
LTU Touristik	

For more information on the TOI and updated list of members, visit:

[www.toinitiative.org](http://www.toinitiative.org)

### TOI Secretariat

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**TOUR OPERATORS INITIATIVE**  
FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

# Be a business leader Be sustainable



## What is sustainability?

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of current generations, without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainability rests on shared responsibilities and actions. Only by **working together** – in the public and private sectors along with civil society – can sustainable alternatives be successfully developed and implemented.

## Does sustainability make business sense for tour operators?

A clean and pristine environment, with authentic local culture and friendly people, are the reasons why people travel. It is in the tour operators' interest to preserve the environment in destinations and to establish good relationships with local communities. More and more surveys also show that customers respond positively to actions taken by tour operators to improve the sustainability of their businesses.

Integrating sustainable principles into tour operators' business practices will also create better relationships with suppliers and local communities. Cost savings, improved productivity, better image, and greater credibility with shareholders will follow.

## Tour operators play a leading role in promoting sustainability

Tour operators have a central role in the tourism industry, acting as intermediaries between tourists and tourism service suppliers. They influence consumer demand, destination development patterns, and their suppliers' performance, as well as tourists' behaviour. This gives tour operators a unique opportunity to move toward greater sustainability in tourism development.

## Integrating sustainability in everyday business practices

Integrating sustainability in the tour operator's business means taking into account environmental, social and economic aspects throughout the process of developing a holiday package, and in particular in:

**Product management and development**, selecting destinations, services and activities taking into account their effects on the environment and society.

**Supply chain management**, selecting suppliers based on their own environmental and social performance.

**Customer relations**, raising customers' awareness of responsible travel and sustainable options at destinations.

**Co-operation with destinations**, establishing long-term partnerships with destinations and contributing to local conservation and development efforts.

**Internal operations**, focusing on workforce conditions in headquarters and country offices, as well as on the production of printed materials.

## Working together for new approaches and tools

Together, the TOI members are taking action in three key areas:

**Supply chain management**, to develop a common approach and tools for assessing suppliers.

**Co-operation with destinations**, to exert a positive influence and speak with a collective voice on the actions of all partners, tourist boards, customers, suppliers, governments, and developers.

**Sustainability reporting**, to develop and test reporting guidelines and performance indicators on sustainable development.

Being a member of the TOI network also gives the members the opportunity to participate in technical meetings and workshops, exchange information and learn from each other.

## Join the network – shape your own business future

Reap the benefits of working in partnership with other tour operators and stakeholders. As a member, you can:

- Get the support of three international organizations: UNEP, UNESCO and WTO/OMT.
- Seize the opportunity to exchange and build partnerships with other operators to more efficiently address sustainability issues with suppliers and in destinations.
- Take an active role in shaping the management tools and strategies that will be part of the future of your business.