

Competency Standard

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| UNIT TITLE: DEVELOP/MONITOR ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM OPERATIONS | | NOMINAL HOURS: 80 |
| UNIT NUMBER: D2.TCS.CL5.14 | | |
| UNIT DESCRIPTOR: This unit deals with skills and knowledge required to plan monitor and evaluate the introduction of ecologically sustainable tourism operations in selected destinations. | | |
| ELEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA | UNIT VARIABLE AND ASSESSMENT GUIDE | |
| <p>Element 1: Develop plans for ecologically sustainable tourism operations</p> <p>1.1 Verify the <i>ecological impacts</i> that apply to the selected destination</p> <p>1.2 Identify <i>potential suitable tourism operations</i> that may be undertaken</p> <p>1.3 Consult <i>stakeholders</i></p> <p>1.4 Identify the <i>economic and social returns to the destination community</i> of the introduction of tourism operations</p> <p>1.5 Research <i>minimal impact techniques and methods of managing tourism impacts</i></p> <p>1.6 Incorporate stakeholder and other research information into the planning process</p> <p>1.7 <i>Establish existing relationship between tourism and the environment</i></p> | <p>Unit Variables</p> <p>The Unit Variables provide advice to interpret the scope and context of this unit of competence, allowing for differences between enterprises and workplaces. It relates to the unit as a whole and facilitates holistic assessment.</p> <p>This unit applies to the effective management of ecologically sustainable tourism operations within the labour divisions of the hotel and travel industries and may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel Agencies 2. Tour Operation <p><i>Ecological impacts</i> may include positive and negative impacts and may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the natural environment – including impacts on breeding events, species sighting, density of stocking rates, general and specific changes to flora and fauna • Opportunities for conservation and general ecological protection of sites and species • Education potential of visitors to raise awareness of environmental issues and species-specific concerns • Reclamation and improvement to sites already adversely impacted • Physical damage to landmarks and sensitive sites | |

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| <p>1.8 <i>Identify and establish plans</i> for the implementation of agreed sustainable tourism operations</p> <p>1.9 Establish <i>environmentally and ecologically-friendly policies and procedures</i> to support sustainable tourism operations</p> <p>1.10 Develop <i>strategies to balance ecological sustainability and the economic viability of projected tourism operations</i></p> <p>1.11 Allocate <i>roles and responsibilities</i> for sustainable tourism development to <i>appropriate participants</i></p> <p>1.12 Identify and subscribe to recognised eco-tourism certification program for the proposed tourism operations</p> <p>Element 2: Monitor results of planned ecologically sustainable tourism operations</p> <p>2.1 <i>Conduct site evaluations</i> to establish starting point for the measurement of ecological impacts</p> <p>2.2 Apply suitable <i>methods of data collection</i> to record ecological impacts</p> <p>2.3 Initiate immediate <i>remedial action</i> to address significant adverse real-time impacts on the ecology</p> <p>2.4 Involve local communities in monitoring activities</p> <p>2.5 Share information with stakeholders as it arises</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of exotic and/or feral species into the area • Pollution – including air, water, land and visual • Excess demand on limited resources – including energy, consumables and waste management facilities and infrastructure • Congestion of traffic causing potential for off-road driving and the creation of unauthorised tracks • Loss of habitats for threatened and other domestic fauna. <p><i>Potential suitable tourism operations may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail shops • Attractions • Tours – including sight-seeing, short-stays, day trips and extended tours • Land, water and air-based activities • Accommodation and camping • Interpretive activities. <p><i>Stakeholders may be related to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The host community where the proposed tourism activity is to be sited • Investors • Local authorities • Land management agencies • Consumer group representatives – including tour operators, attraction operators, and service providers • Suppliers of environmentally-friendly technology, products and services • Peak industry bodies. |
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| <p>Element 3: Redress the negative impacts of ecologically sustainable tourism operations</p> <p>3.1 Take <i>remedial action</i> to limit observable negative impacts</p> <p>3.2 Undertake <i>habitat creation</i></p> <p>3.3 Engage in <i>habitat reinstatement and restoration</i></p> <p>3.4 Undertake <i>habitat and species translocation</i></p> <p>Element 4: Report on the impacts of ecologically sustainable tourism operations</p> <p>4.1 <i>Prepare report material</i> for dissemination</p> <p>4.2 Share report material with stakeholders</p> <p>4.3 Make report material available to the wider community</p> <p>4.4 Identify report issues requiring attention</p> | <p><i>Economic and social returns to the destination community</i> should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of culture • Safety of local people • Employment and business-related opportunities • Enhanced infrastructure • Increase in standard of living • Maintenance of lifestyles for individuals and community groups • Retained ability to enjoy and use the area to be developed • Higher levels of income. <p><i>Minimal impact techniques</i> should relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing visitors on expected behaviours • Site hardening techniques • Technological solutions • Public education campaigns • Barriers and constructions to restrict or limit access to areas and sites • Staged authenticity. <p><i>Methods of managing tourism impacts</i> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) • Zoning of threatened areas • Total bans on access to nominated areas • Involvement of local community in identifying changed situations • Scheduling of visitations to govern access and use |
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- Consideration of restricting access to times of suitable weather conditions and/or seasons
 - Limitations on the size of visiting groups
 - Bans on entry of nominated items – including pets, and certain vehicles
 - Bans on nominated activities – including hunting, picking flowers, getting near fauna, lighting fires, and taking items from the area
 - Integrating ecological best practice into plans and practical implementation of plans.
- Establishing existing relationship between tourism and the environment should include:*
- Identifying endangered or threatened species
 - Describing past impacts of tourism operations on the environment and ecology
 - Describing and evaluating past attempts at achieving ecological sustainability in the area
 - Researching projections relating to the future impact of continuing existing tourism operations at selected destination
 - Reviewing reports and environmental and ecological assessment already undertaken
 - Conducting environmental impact studies to generate fresh research material.
- Identify and establish plans should include:*
- Ensuring that development proposals are ecologically appropriate and genuinely sustainable as far as can be verified
 - Developing a suite of plans that align with the accepted requirements of plans to be SMART (Specific; Measurable; Accurate; Realistic and Relevant; Trackable and Time-related)
 - Developing policies and procedures to guide and govern the implementation of the plan(s)
 - Allocating tasks, resources and responsibilities to enable the attainment of the goals of the plan(s)

- Identifying quality standards that will apply to plan implementation
- Developing monitoring and evaluation criteria against which to assess the progress and success of the plan(s) – including development of benchmarks, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and operation cessation indicators
- Submitting plans to key stakeholders for comment, feedback and approval
- Revising plans as required on the basis of valid ecological concerns.

Environmentally and ecologically-friendly policies and procedures may include:

- Codes of practice
- Standard operating procedures
- Blanket prohibitions on certain products, operations or activities
- Regular monitoring and testing
- Consultation with relevant conservation groups – including adoption and adaptation of existing best practices.

Strategies to balance ecological sustainability and the economic viability of projected tourism operations may include:

- Prescribing triggers for action in relation to the cessation of tourism operations
- Nominating objective and quantifiable indicators to guide and control operations and usage
- Using external and independent third parties to monitor ecological and environmental impacts and issue cessation orders
- Negotiating trade-offs – including reparations and rehabilitation at a later time.

Roles and responsibilities may include:

- Finance
- Marketing

- Promoting sustainability
- Facilitating working partnerships
- Liaison and communication with stakeholders.

Appropriate participants may include:

- Private sector organisations – including land owners, developers, businesses, transport providers
- Public sector organisations – including tourism information centres, land management groups, government agencies
- Voluntary organisations – including local community groups and service groups.

Conduct site evaluations may include:

- Recording existing data and statistics relating to the ecology in general terms
- Conducting terrestrial and habitat surveys
- Conducting fauna surveys
- Specifying the condition of species that are of special concern
- Recording images of the site/area
- Involving independent third party ecological assessors
- Filing the material gathered for future reference
- Making the findings of the initial site evaluation available to key stakeholders.

Methods of data collection may include:

- Logbooks
- Sighting forms
- Temperature measurements
- Recording of weather conditions

- Estimations of percentage cover
- Calculations of water flows and storage levels
- Testing and analysis of levels of contamination as appropriate to the location
- Recording visual images
- Observations recorded in journals.

Remedial action may include:

- Ceasing operations
- Limiting operations
- Modifying the nature of operations and activities
- Re-scheduling visitations
- Reducing usage of affected areas
- Reducing group numbers
- Initiating professional appraisal of the identified or suspected impact
- Seeking professional advice on action to be taken to retrieve the situation.

Habitat creation refers to creating a new habitat on land previously occupied by another habitat.

Habitat reinstatement and restoration refers to the re-establishment of a degraded environmental and the rehabilitation of nominated areas.

Habitat and species translocation: refers to moving a habitat from one location to another along with as many species as possible.

Prepare report material may include:

- Generating a formal report on the ecological impacts of the tourism operations
- Ensuring total disclosure and total transparency
- Preparing material for stakeholder consumption and for wider general public consumption
- Including comparative images
- Providing statistics and graphs
- Providing interpretation of data
- Making predictions regarding the future ecological impacts of the operation
- Using an independent third party to prepare and disseminate the report.

Assessment Guide

The following skills and knowledge must be assessed as part of this unit:

- Enterprise policies and procedures in regard to sustainable tourism operations, interactions with local communities, government agencies and industry associations including protocols relating to public meetings, media liaison and the making of public comment on behalf of the enterprise
- Principles of sustainable ecological practice
- Knowledge of global and local environmental and ecological issues
- Ability to use ecological monitoring and recording techniques
- Knowledge of minimal impact techniques
- Knowledge of and the ability to practice ecological and environmental management strategies
- Knowledge of tourism trends in relation to selected sites and destinations
- Knowledge of host country legislation and requirements in relation to the planning and implementation of ecologically sustainable tourism operations.

Linkages To Other Units

- Plan, trial and implement minimal impact operations
- Develop and monitor culturally appropriate tourism activity
- Develop host community awareness programs
- Develop, implement and evaluate regional tourism plans
- Promote tourism products and services
- Manage and monitor innovative tourism programs and projects
- Develop and update local knowledge
- Establish and maintain a business relationship
- Plan and establish systems and procedures
- Plan, manage and conduct meetings
- Manage legal requirements for business compliance.

Critical Aspects of Assessment

Evidence of the following is essential:

- Understanding of host enterprise policies and procedures in regard to sustainable tourism operations, interactions with local communities, government agencies and industry associations including protocols relating to public meetings, media liaison and the making of public comment on behalf of the enterprise
- Demonstrated ability to develop effective and comprehensive plan for (one or more) ecologically sustainable tourism operations – to be identified by the candidate - in a nominated area. The plans must fully describe the context of the proposed operations and provide detailed actions including particulars of how the proposal will be monitored and reported on to the identified stakeholders.

Context of Assessment

Assessment must ensure:

- Actual geographical destination and community.

Resource Implications

Training and assessment must include a real destination, real historic patterns, real concerns and issues and simulated action to be taken to ensure ecologically sustainable operations.

Note:

- The assessment may focus on a theoretical situation within a real environment
- There is no requirement for the candidate to implement the ecologically sustainable practices described in the plans due to time and cost considerations.

Assessment Methods

The following methods may be used to assess competency for this unit:

- Observation of practical candidate performance
- Portfolio of documentation produced by the candidate – including records of interviews and meetings, research material identified, and plans
- Role plays
- Oral and written questions
- Third party reports completed by a supervisor
- Project and assignment work.

| Key Competencies in this Unit | | |
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| <i>Level 1 = competence to undertake tasks effectively</i> | | |
| <i>Level 2 = competence to manage tasks</i> | | |
| <i>Level 3 = competence to use concepts for evaluating</i> | | |
| Key Competencies | Level | Examples |
| Collecting, organising and analysing information | 1 | Researching ecological issues that are relevant to community |
| Communicating ideas and information | 2 | Sharing information with identified stakeholders |
| Planning and organising activities | 3 | Determining plans for implementing sustainable tourism operations |
| Working with others and in teams | 2 | Organising community and other meetings |
| Using mathematical ideas and techniques | 1 | Calculating statistics that relate to identified ecological issues |
| Solving problems | 2 | Resolving ecological issues that have the potential to negatively impact on the host environment |
| Using technology | 1 | Using ecological monitoring equipment |