



YOUR REGIONAL DESTINATION SPECIALIST

Adriatic DMC
Sustainability Report 2023

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1. Introduction

Adriatic DMC is committed to promoting sustainable tourism that respects the environment, supports local communities, and preserves Croatia's cultural heritage. Our annual sustainability report provides a comprehensive overview of our efforts, achievements, and future goals in 2024.

2. Message from our Sustainability Manager

Dear Stakeholders,

This year, Adriatic DMC has made significant strides in our sustainability journey. Our commitment to environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and cultural preservation has been an integral part of our operations. We are proud of the progress we have made and remain dedicated to driving positive change in the tourism industry.

Sincerely,

Ivan Gavranic

Sustainability Manager, Adriatic DMC

3. Sustainability Vision and Strategy

Our vision is to be a leading destination management company that champions sustainable tourism. Our strategy is built on Environmental Responsibility, Social Equity, and Cultural Integrity. These pillars guide our decision-making and help us create meaningful experiences for our guests while ensuring our planet's and communities' well-being.

4. Environmental Initiatives

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Reducing Carbon Footprint

We have moved to a hybrid working model meaning staff can work from home depending on the business' requirements up to three days a week. This means that on any given workday, there are up to 20 fewer cars on Croatia's roads. We continually strive to reduce the carbon footprint of our business operations, taking care to plan inspection trips in a way that staff already living and working in a destination conduct inspections over a member of staff traveling the length of the country for an entire itinerary. We have seen a great uptake for our tours that utilize eco-tuk-tuk vehicles on the Adriatic Coast in particular. These vehicles are electric and allow travelers a green alternative to traditional petrol or diesel-fueled vehicles. We continue to use buses that have the EURO 6 certification as a standard, which deliver a 67% reduction in NOx.

Conservation of Natural Resources

A staff member completed 5 days of volunteering for Mljet National Park, clearing and cleaning pathways along the park's extensive hiking routes. This was a significant moment in our sustainability journey as it demonstrated the positive impact that an individual can have.

Waste Management

Recycling Programs: Established comprehensive recycling programs in our offices and partnered with local waste management services. Plastic Reduction: Reduced single-use plastics through initiatives such as providing reusable water bottles to tour guides and issuing reusable cotton bags.

5. Social Responsibility

Community Engagement

Local Partnerships: Collaborated with local artisans, farmers, small businesses, and artists to offer authentic Croatian experiences to our guests.

Supporting Local Economy

Local Hiring: 100% of our staff are local residents, promoting economic stability and growth within the community. Our salaries continue to be above the national minimum.

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Employee Wellbeing

Training and Development: Invested in continuous training programs for our employees, focusing on sustainability practices and professional development. Work-Life Balance: Implemented hybrid working.

6. Cultural Preservation

Cultural Tours: Developed tours that highlight, preserve, and celebrate Croatian cultural heritage, including traditional crafts, music, dance, and cuisine.

Support for Cultural Institutions: Sponsored folklore ensembles, cultural festivals, and initiatives to promote and maintain Croatia's rich cultural history.

7. Sustainable Tourism Practices

Eco-Friendly Accommodation: Promoted hotels that adhere to sustainable practices on our social media channels and website.

Responsible Travel Guidelines: Educated our guests on responsible travel behaviors, such as respecting wildlife and minimizing environmental impact through our codes of conduct.

Leading By Example: We took part in the EU-funded program SUSTOUR to help develop sustainability criteria that can be applied industry-wide for shore excursions. This also included delivering a key note at a sustainability in tourism conference where we shared our best practices.

8. Performance Metrics

Carbon Emissions: Monitored levels and donated to an environmental initiative to compensate against our footprint. Estimated reduction of 50% in carbon emissions through new hybrid working model.

Waste Reduction: Decreased total waste through reusable water bottle and cotton bag purchases.

Improved Recycling: 100% of paper waste is now recycled. All EE waste is disposed of through a specialized waste management company.

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Community Impact: Invested over €4,000 in local community projects and initiatives that promote Croatian culture and heritage.

Guest Satisfaction: Named Tour Operator of the Year 2022 by one of our partners, Azamara Cruises.

9. Future Goals and Commitments

Employee Volunteer Program: Aim to have 50% participation in the scheme by 2026.

Employee Skills Program: Facilitate and finance upskilling of staff through courses and training.

Enhanced Community Programs: Expand our community engagement and support programs through donations.

Innovative Sustainability Solutions: Continuously explore and implement creative solutions to enhance our sustainability practices.

10. Conclusion

Adriatic DMC is dedicated to making a positive impact through sustainable tourism. We are grateful for the support of our stakeholders and the local communities we work with. Together, we can continue to create unforgettable experiences while protecting our planet and enriching the lives of those around us.

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Sustainability Policy

We are committed to delivering travel products that develop sustainable tourism in destinations and communities we operate in.

Our mission

The goal of our company is to assist in the creation of a sustainable society and tourism, reducing the negative impact of our operations on the environment. We achieve this by introducing new elements to our operations that measure and control the ecological, sociocultural and economic influence of our products on society and the region in which we operate. Together with our partners and suppliers we instill an awareness in our guests of the importance of sustainable tourism.

Special attention is given to including immersive local experiences that not only promote cultural and natural values within the destinations we cover but also help grow small, quality local suppliers who are essential to the smaller community development.

We are also committed to responsible travel practices, which we strive to install in our staff, leaders, experts and guides by constantly improving and monitoring the business processes as well as promoting principles of corporate social responsibility and ecological awareness.

The CSR team will discuss the progress of the action plan and take corrective measures at its meetings, if necessary.

Certification

The Travelife Certified award is a recognition of excellence towards social and environmental sustainability. We complied with more than 200 criteria related to sustainability management, office operations, working with suppliers and customer communication to achieve Travelife Partner status in 2018 and Travelife Certified in 2019 and 2021. We are currently in the process of recertification for the Travelife Certified standard. Travelife as a certification body is formally accredited by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), the highest global body for sustainability in tourism, Supported by the United Nations.

Waste

Adriatic DMC is committed to the reduction of waste production and encourages all staff to consider and comply with 'the four Rs' when disposing of waste – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Responsible Disposal in order to reduce the amount of waste produced and sent to landfill.

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Reduce

All staff are encouraged to reduce the amount of waste they produce as part of company operations through advanced planning. Procuring biodegradable alternatives, securing drinkable tap water and monitoring printing are just some of the ways we achieve this.

Reuse

We strive to find a home and purpose for items that no longer meet the company's needs or requirements whether it's office furniture or props purchased for an event, we use our network of contacts to ensure that reusable items aren't binned.

Recycle

Our paper, plastic and electronic waste are segregated from food and non-recyclables in order to be recycled.

Responsible Disposal

We ensure the safe disposal of waste via responsible partners in line with current waste management legislation. Adriatic DMC is committed to promoting awareness of best practice in waste management among its employees, suppliers and subcontractors through its communications, training and working practices. The waste management policy will be reviewed at regular intervals.

Charities

As part of our commitment to the communities in which we operate in, we provide financial support to local charities and organizations each year. So far, we've been delighted to be able to help organizations such as Dubrovnik General Hospital's Children's Department, Split Hospital, Lopud Fire Station and the Deaf Association.

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Community-Based Tourism

Our tours, excursions, cruises and events don't simply cover destination highlights that form a tourist's bucket-list such as the Dubrovnik City walls or Mostar's famous bridge. We know that in order to truly experience this region, tourists need to be immersed in local culture and that's why we continuously work with the local communities in which we operate to develop and deliver authentic experiences. From jewelry making workshops to cooking classes in rural family homes, our excursions offer an insight into local life and introduce tourists to the wonderful characters that make these places so special.

Cultural Respect

While similar in many aspects, culture and customs can vary across the Balkans. We always ensure that our tour leaders are properly trained so that they can guide our guests as to how to respectfully enjoy all of the experiences on their tour or excursion.

Pay and Forced Labor

Adriatic DMC does not engage in or condone the unlawful exploitation of children in the workplace or forced labor within our company or those that supply or sub-contract to us. The company pays salaries that are both above minimum wage and the industry average.

Sexual Exploitation of Children

Adriatic DMC takes all necessary measures to ensure the prevention of child sexual exploitation. This includes clauses in supplier and partner contracts explicitly stating that the company will cease operations immediately with any third party engaging in such activity. Adriatic DMC will report any suspicious behavior to local authorities.

Illegal Souvenirs

You may find marine shells such as Giant Clams, which actually originate from the South Pacific, as well as seahorses offered for sale in seaside resorts along the Mediterranean. All seahorses require permits for trade to the EU, while Giant Clams are limited to three per person. In some countries, coats made from spotted cat furs may also be offered, as well as jewellery made from marine turtle shell, ivory and other wildlife products and tourists interested in these should remember that international trade in most of these wildlife products is prohibited.

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Sustainable Purchasing Policy Model

Our company gives preference to more sustainable products & services. When selecting our providers, we apply the following procedure:

- We give preference to products with a recognized environmental or sustainability certificate or proved sustainability qualities;
- We prefer products which have been locally produced;
- We buy from local suppliers when possible;
- We prefer to work with suppliers and service providers who have a sustainability reputation.

When purchasing key products, we apply the following sustainable purchasing procedure:

- We try to figure out how much of our purchases meets the five R's: Reduce, Repair, Repurpose, Reuse, Recycle;
- We investigate possible sustainable alternatives;
- We compare these alternatives on price, quality and availability;
- We commit ourselves to buy the most sustainable alternative in relation to above factors;
- The result of this evaluation is documented.

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Key products include, but are not limited to: paper, electric devices, cars, electricity, heating, furniture, cleaning materials and building materials.

Alternatives of tourism key products:

Buy gifts and giveaways from social enterprises or charities;

Make sure not to promote souvenirs which threatened flora and fauna, as indicated in the CITES treaty <https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/what.php> & the IUCN Red List <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

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