



# Sustainable Destination Management: Trends & Innovations

Seleni Matus, Executive Director

October 7th, 2016

Hof Cultural Center • Akureyri, Iceland



# Tourism destinations are at risk

---



# Destinations at the heart of sustainability

---

“The global celebration of the demand side of the tourism business, while the supply side is facing an increasingly urgent threat, is not dissimilar to the subprime mortgages crisis of the period of 2005-2007...”

-- *Megan Epler Wood, Sustainable Tourism on a Finite Planet*



# Shifting tides - consumer demand

---

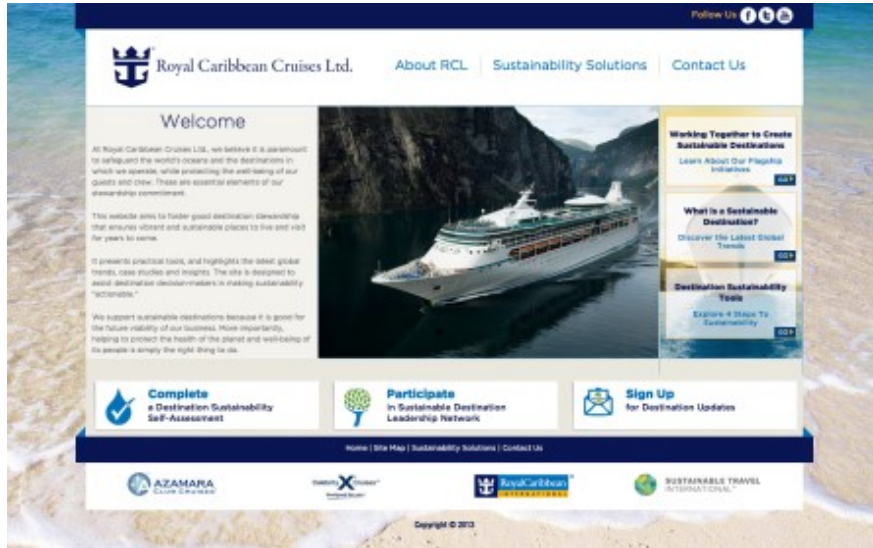
- 30% of travelers chose a destination for a trip because it is considered eco-friendly\*\*
- 44% of travelers consider the environment when making travel decisions\*
- 59% of travelers would be influenced by a green rating index\*
- 24% of travel agents noted that 'green' travel is the highest it's ever been in the last 10 years\*\*\*
- 56% of travelers are skeptical and looking for information\*

\*Saber Holdings, 2010

\*\* Trip Advisor 2012

\*\*\*Travel Guard 2013

# Sharing responsibility – industry leaders



STLN SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL LEADERSHIP NETWORK®

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL™

Destination Sustainability Self-Assessment Indicator Report		
	Indicator	Level of Implementation
A. Destination Management	A1. Sustainable Tourism Strategy. Does the destination have a multi-year sustainable tourism strategy with implementation, monitoring, development control and evaluation systems?	Green
	A2. Sustainability Standards. Does the destination have an industry supported voluntary, verified, certification/labeling program to promote sustainable tourism standards?	Red
	A3. Tourism Satisfaction. Does the destination have a system to monitor, publicly report, and improve tourist satisfaction at a destination level?	Green
	A4. Safety and Security. Does the destination have a system to respond to tourism related crime and safety?	Green
	A5. Access for All. Does the destination have an accessibility policy that requires tourist sites and facilities to be accessible to all including persons with disabilities and others who have specific access requirements?	Red
	A.6. Promotion. Are the destination's promotional materials accurate and complete with regard to the destination and its tourism products and services, including sustainability claims?	Green

Supported development of GSTC destinations criteria, and is actively investing in development of integrated destination assessment, planning and monitoring tools and co-investing in improving management of priority destinations



# Sharing responsibility – industry leaders

---



Supported GSTC criteria development, and creation of early destination sustainability assessment tool that was used to make decisions more informed decisions about how best to support priority destinations at different stages of development

2012  
Destination Sustainability Risk  
Assessment Reports:  
Hammamet, Tunisia  
Island of Sal, Cape Verde  
Sarigerme, Turkey



# Destination Sustainability Tools & Awards

---

## European Tourism Indicator System for Sustainable Destination Management (2013 & 2016)

Indicator system for monitoring and management consists of 43 core indicators and an set of supplementary indicators:

- **Destination management**
- **Economic value**
- **Social and cultural impact**
- **Environmental impact**

[www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/indicators](http://www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/sustainable-tourism/indicators)



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

## Progress to date:

- ✓ **2-year pilot testing period – more than 100 destinations have completed the data collection process**
- ✓ **PM4SD methodology is being applied to help provide assistance to destinations in the actual implementation of the toolkit**

# Destination Sustainability Tools & Awards

## **GSTC Destination-Level Criteria & Indicators (2013-2015)**

Collective of 40 criteria with 81 corresponding indicators organized around:

- Sustainable destination management
- Social and economic issues
- Community and cultural heritage issues
- Environmental issues

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



## **Progress to date:**

- ✓ **Early Adopter Program: 22 on-site destination assessments**
- ✓ **GSTC Destinations Program:**
  - **Destination Assessments**
  - **Destination Management Training**
- ✓ **GSTC guiding framework for national level destination certification programs:**
  - **Indonesia**
  - **Ecuador**
  - **S. Korea**



# Destination Sustainability Tools

## Criteria, Indicators, Assessment & Reporting, Certification

Indicator system for monitoring and improving sustainability policies around:

- Destination management
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Social Well-being
- Business & Hospitality

[www.greendestinations.info](http://www.greendestinations.info)



### Progress to date:

- ✓ On-line self-assessment and reporting system
- ✓ Awards & Certification

The screenshot displays the "Green Destinations Standard" web application interface. The main content area is titled "Criteria overview" and shows progress for three main categories:

- 1. Destination management** (17% progress):
  - Commitment & organization: 1-5 (82% progress)
  - Planning & development: 6-13
  - Monitoring & reporting: 14-20
  - Legal & ethical compliance: 21-26
  - Destination management: 27-29
- 2. Nature & scenery** (10% progress):
  - Nature & conservation: 1-5
  - Nature experience: 6
  - Landscape & scenery: 7
  - Nature: 8-10
- 3. Environment & climate** (100% progress):
  - Land use & pollution: 1-5
  - Water management: 6-9
  - Sustainable mobility: 10-12
  - Waste and recycling: 13-15
  - Energy & climate change: 16-17

The interface also includes a sidebar with navigation options like "Planning and reporting", "Action plans", "Sustainability report", "Remarks report", "Publish report", "Share report", and "Overview". On the right side, there are sections for "Status" (The report is editable, Audit report not released), "View" (All subthemes shown, Available languages: EN), "Progress" (Reporting progress shown), and "Remarks" (Questions to your coach shown, Internal remarks shown, System remarks shown).

# Destination Sustainability Tools

## Criteria, Indicators, Assessment & Reporting, Certification

---

### Certification Programs:

- Earth Check
- Biosphere
- QualityCoast & QualityDestination



### Award Programs:

- WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow – Destinations Award
- Green Destinations Top 100 Sustainable Destinations





Sustainable Destinations  
Alliance for the Americas

*Achieving change at scale: a case study*



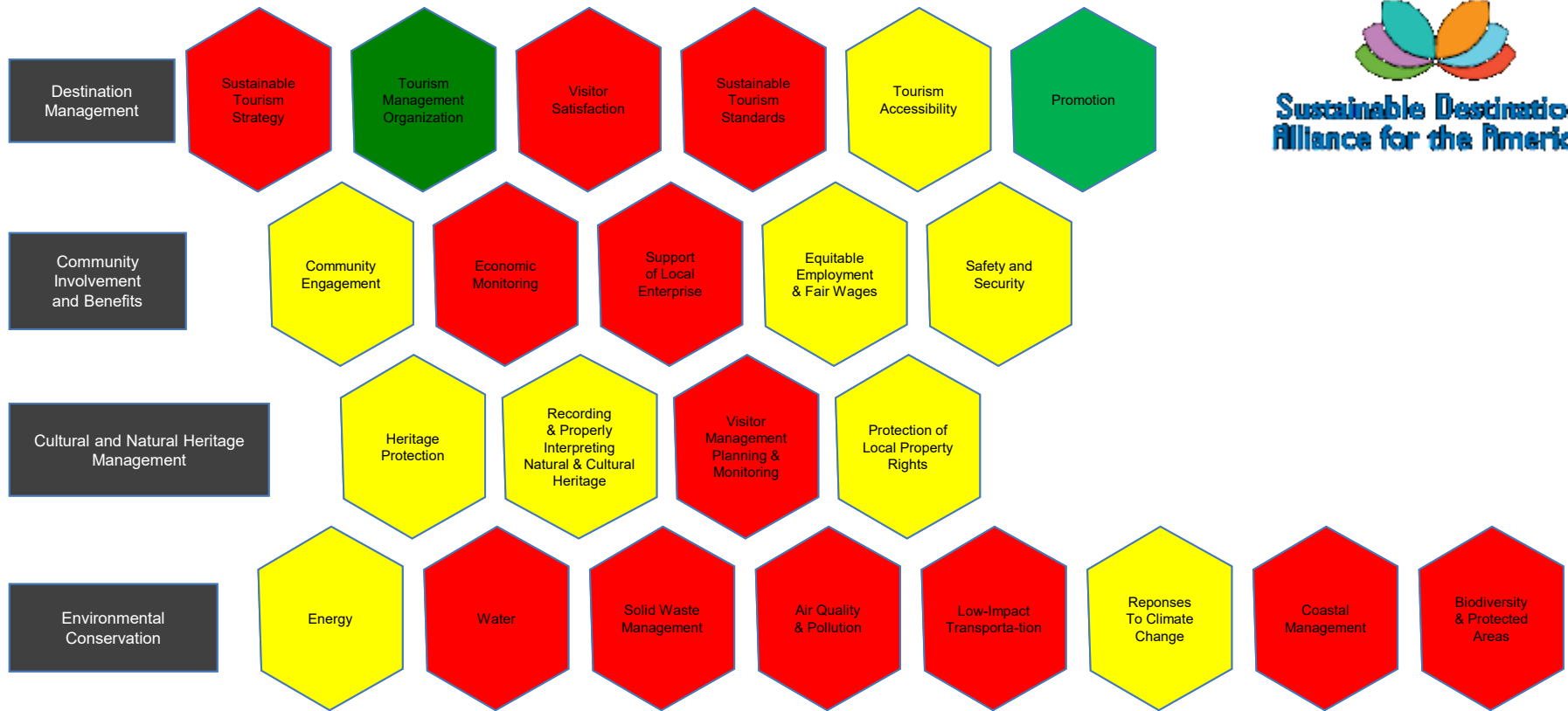
# Purpose & Goals

To improve the way tourism is managed and enhance competitiveness of 30 destinations across the Caribbean and Latin America by 2020

- Embed sustainability into the day-to-day management and marketing of destinations
- Protect cultural and natural assets
- Improve the lives of 1.3 million residents

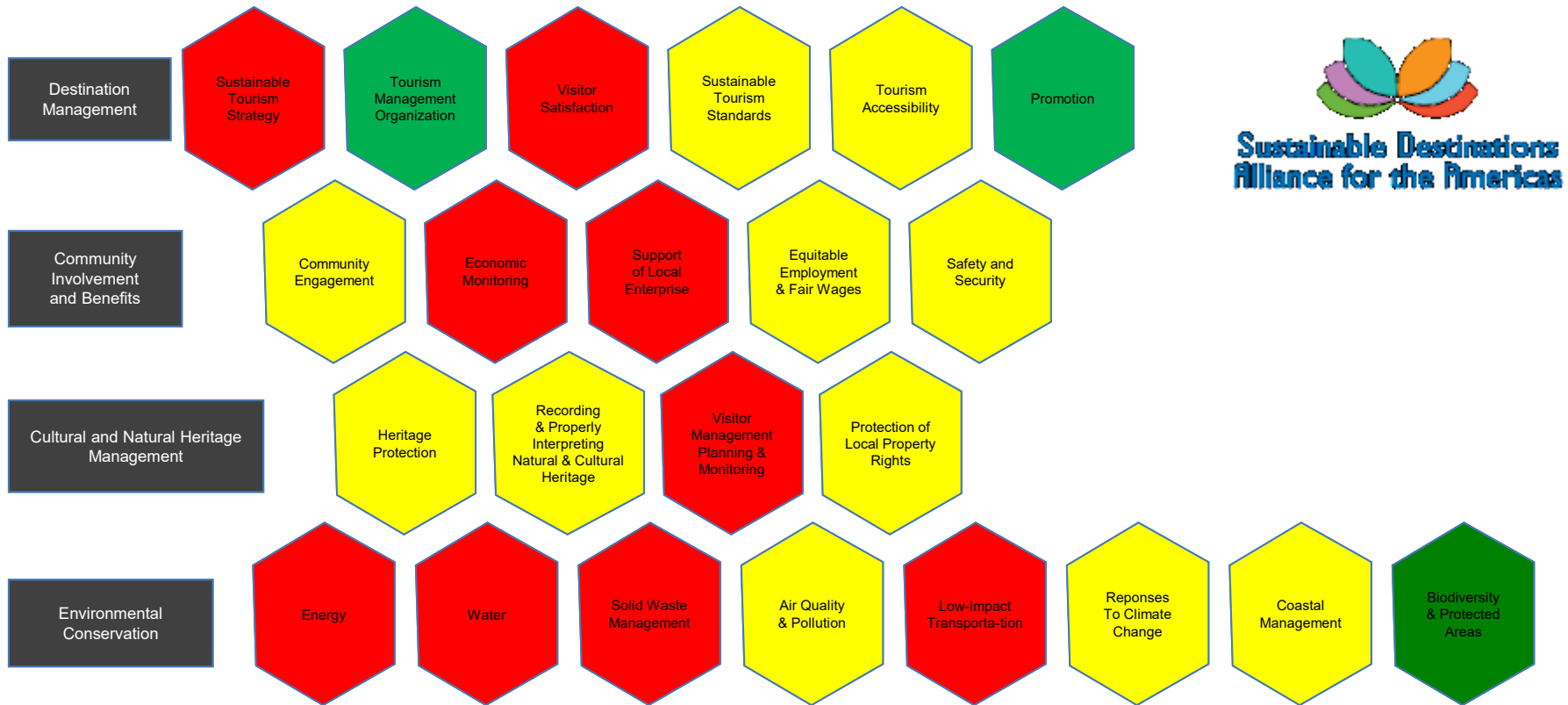


# Snapshot of Caribbean destinations



Participating Destinations: Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Nassau in Barbados, Dominica, Falmouth in Jamaica, St. Kitts

# Snapshot of destinations in Mesoamerica



Participating Destinations: Roatan & Utila in Honduras, Ometepe Island in Nicaragua, Cozumel & Riviera Maya in Mexico



# Destination Responses

Community-based  
product development



New destination  
management  
models



Water and  
waste  
management



Destination stewardship councils have been established  
to sustain efforts in destinations over time





# Shared Responsibility



# Re-establishing trust and hope

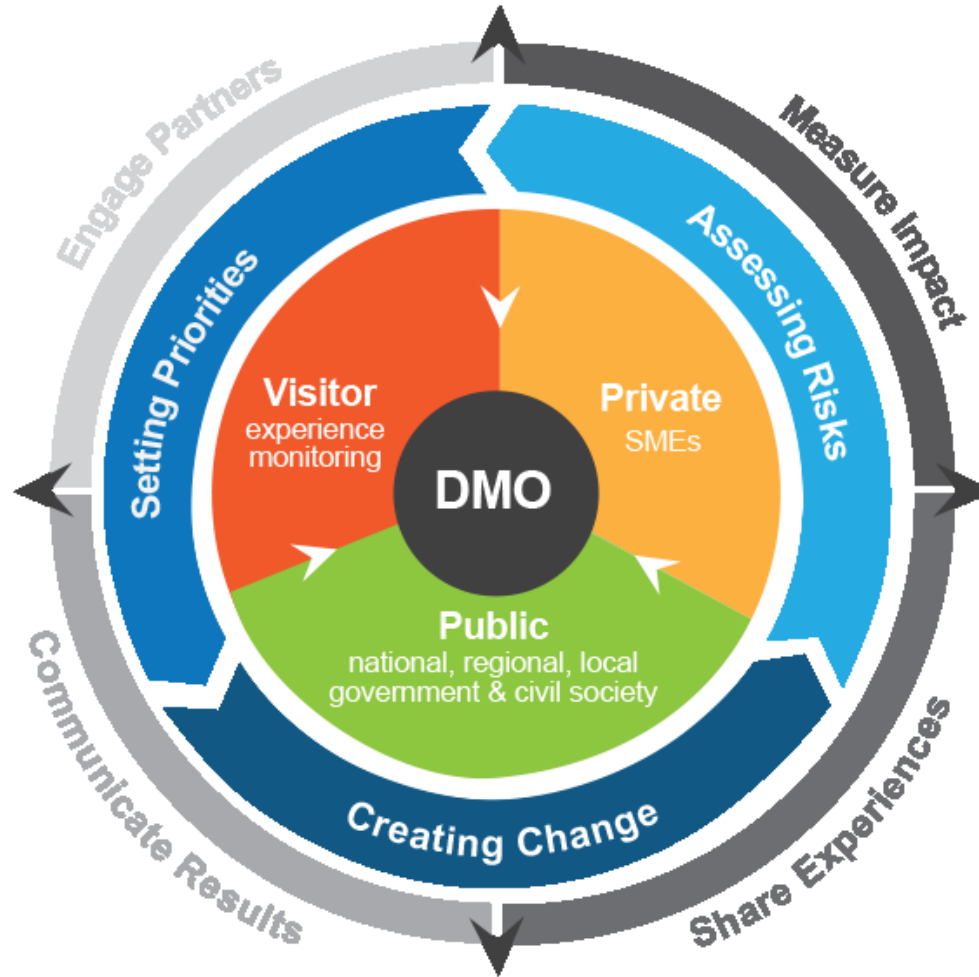


# Permanent Mechanisms for Intersectoral Collaboration



# Innovations in Destination Management

## Next Gen Tools & Approaches





---

THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY

---

WASHINGTON, DC

Seleni Matus  
[selenim@gwu.edu](mailto:selenim@gwu.edu)