

## PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

**Name of the Partnership/Initiative**

The Sustainable Tourism Initiative (STI)

**Expected date of initiation:**

Design process initiated in April 2001, implementation of permanent process expected in September 2002.

**Expected date of completion:**

The initial STI process has led to the creation of a permanent multistakeholder process for implementing sustainable tourism. This permanent process, and the institutions which will manage it, will be launched in September/October 2002.

**Partners Involved:**

## Governments:

The UK Government (led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), in partnership with the Department for International Development (DFID).

*N.B. Working with tourism destinations will be a major focus of the STI permanent process. At present, work with the Gambia and Cyprus is being taken forward as a part of the pilot phase of the STI's work. Going forward, the STI will be seeking to work with a wide range of destinations.*

## Intergovernmental organizations:

The United Nations Environment Programme Tour Operators Initiative (UNEP TOI)

## NGOs, Expert and Community Groups:

Friends of Conservation; The International Institute for Environment and Development; The Overseas Development Institute; The Royal Institute of International Affairs; Tearfund; Tourism Concern; WWF UK, Action for Conservation Through Tourism

## Businesses:

Abercrombie and Kent  
ABTA (Association of British Travel Agents)  
Andante Travels  
Association of Independent Tour Operators  
BA Holidays  
BESO (British Executive Service Overseas)  
British Airways  
Deloitte & Touche  
Discovery Initiatives  
Dunira Strategy  
Environment Business and Development Group  
Exodus  
Federation of Tour Operators  
First Choice Holidays & Flights Ltd  
Future Forests  
Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd  
Green Globe 21 Ltd

Henderson Global Investors  
 Imaginative Traveller  
 Integra Systems Limited  
 International Hotel Environment Initiative  
 Into Africa UK  
 Mytravel UK  
 P&O Princess Cruises plc  
 Rainbow Tours  
 Regency Holidays UK  
 ResponsibleTravel.com  
 Saga Holidays  
 Scott Wilson  
 Sunvil Discovery  
 Symbiosis Expeditions  
 Tapestry Holidays  
 The Gambia Experience  
 Thomson Tour Operations Ltd.  
 Travel Mole  
 Tribes Travel  
 WEXAS International

**Potential Partners:**

Cyprus Tourism Organization  
 The Gambian Tourism Authority  
 The Gambian Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Tourism (ASSET)  
 The Gambian Responsible Tourism Partnership

*Leading Partner (Facilitator):*

Name of the contact person/focal point:

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**Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative**

To create a step-change in the implementation of sustainable tourism practices by the UK outbound tourism industry, and to build the foundation for an ongoing process of continual improvement and engagement, by:

- Increasing the economic benefits from tourism by promotion of sustainable livelihoods for local communities from meeting the needs of the tourism industry.
- minimising the use of scarce resources – land, soil, energy and water.
- reducing pollution, waste, noise and congestion
- conserving of plants, animals, ecosystems and landscapes including protected areas
- respecting the integrity of the local cultures and avoiding negative effects on social structures of communities affected by the tourism industry
- encouraging responsible behaviour by tourists

In meeting these objectives, the work done by the STI will help to deliver on many of the sustainable development objectives in Agenda 21 and the United Nation Millennium Declaration. The Initiative will also play an important role in implementing the agreed text in Paragraph 41 of the *Draft Plan of Implementation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development*, which commits governments to promoting sustainable tourism development (*inter alia* through partnerships with the private sector and through building local business' capacity to benefit from tourism).

### **Expected results:**

**Permanent organizations** The establishment of two new organizations, a multistakeholder charitable foundation and a business-run unit, and a fund based on monies raised from a voluntary consumer levy.

**Work in destinations** The STI will set up an ongoing process of engagement between UK stakeholders (including tour operator representatives, DFID officers and NGOs) and destination stakeholders (including businesses, national and local governments and community groups) in a wide range of destinations that are visited by UK tourists. The aim of this process will be to identify opportunities for the UK and destination stakeholders to work together to tackle social, economic and environmental problems in the destinations concerned. The results of this process will be a significant increase in the capacity of UK and local stakeholders in destinations to implement sustainable tourism practice<sup>S</sup>, and a significant increase in the capacity of local communities and businesses to benefit from tourism. The process will seek to work closely with existing destination-led processes. It will be piloted in the Gambia and Cyprus, and will then be introduced to other destinations in both developed and developing countries as appropriate.

**Communications** The Sustainable Tourism Initiative will develop and implement a wide range of communications activities, aimed at raising public and staff awareness of sustainable tourism issues. Planned activities include providing destination specific information on the UK Foreign and Commonwealth's official website for tourists ('Know Before You Go'), and working with Tour Operators to develop and implement coordinated strategies for communicating with tourists about sustainable tourism issues throughout the 'customer journey' (i.e. from the time of booking to the point that they return from holiday).

**Sustainable tourism management tools** The STI will develop and implement a wide range of tools aimed at enabling UK Tour Operators to operationalize sustainable tourism practice, and to monitor progress made. These tools will have a strong focus on supply-chain management, given the nature of the industry.

### **Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:**

**Establish new organizations:** By end of 2002.

**Pilot destination process:** September 2002 – April 2003

**Introduce destination process to further destinations:** By end of 2004

**Provide destination specific sustainable tourism information on major UK destinations:** By end 2004

**Implement sustainable tourism management tools:** Ongoing process.

**Coordination and Implementation mechanism**

The implementation of the STI workplan will be managed by two organizations:

A multistakeholder charitable foundation will have responsibility for developing the sustainable tourism tools and processes which will be needed to deliver on the STI objectives, and for managing the new sustainable tourism fund.

An industry funded unit will provide support to UK tour operators in implementing key industry-focused tools and processes that will be developed by the foundation.

**Arrangements for funding**

- The eighteen month design phase of the STI has been funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- Funding for the two-year start-up phase for the permanent process will be provided jointly by the FCO, and the four major UK tour operators: Thomsons, First Choice, Mytravel and Thomas Cook.
- It is expected that long-term funding will be provided by a voluntary customer levy. A process for agreeing the details of how the levy will be administered is ongoing.

**Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer**

The STI will build capacity to implement sustainable tourism practice in the following stakeholder groups:

- Destination businesses and communities
- UK Travel Companies – management and staff
- UK tourists

**Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)**

The work of the STI will be strongly linked to the United Nations Environment Programme's Tour Operator's Initiative (UNEP TOI). The STI will also seek to work in partnership with other international and regional organizations and processes that are addressing sustainable tourism issues.

In addition, the STI will seek to work with, and strengthen the implementation of, sustainable development processes at the national level, including National Strategies for Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies, as well as processes that are led by civil society actors such as community groups and trade associations.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

A general audit of the work of the permanent organizations of the Sustainable Tourism Initiative will be carried out on an annual basis. The organizations will be required to report on the outcomes of this audit to a Multistakeholder Forum, who will comment and make suggestions on future work. Individual organizations and businesses involved in the STI will also be encouraged to report on progress made in delivering the STI objectives.

### **Other relevant information:**

The permanent process of the STI will consider setting up a website to provide general information about the work of the initiative. In the meantime, information about the initiative can be obtained from Kate Kinsman at the Royal Institute of International Affairs ([kinsmank@riia.org](mailto:kinsmank@riia.org)).

Enquiries about the STI during the Johannesburg Summit should be sent to Fanny Calder, the Facilitator of the STI, who will be attending the Summit, at [fanny.calder@dial.pipex.com](mailto:fanny.calder@dial.pipex.com).

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