

## PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

### Name of the Partnership/Initiative



### Certification for Sustainable Tourism "CST"

*"CST is changing the way tourism is done." World Tourism Organization, May 2000*

#### Expected date of initiation:

Initiated in Costa Rica in 1993 as a country-proposal to achieve the effective development of sustainable tourism.

Begun in the six additional countries of Central America, including Belize and Panama, in 2001.

#### Expected date of completion:

2-4 years in Central America, Belize, and Panama;

2-6 Other countries that request it.

### Partners Involved:

#### Governments:

Leading Partner in Costa Rica: Costa Rican Tourist Board (ICT)

Name of the contact person/focal point: Rubén Pacheco Lutz

Position: Minister of Tourism

Address: Edificio Genaro Valverde, piso 10, San José, Costa Rica

Phone: (506) 2553-368

Fax: (506) 223-5107

E-mail: rpacheco@ict.go.cr

#### Partners Involved:

#### Governments:

Leading Partner in Belize: Belize Tourist Board

Name of the contact person/focal point: MarkEspal

Address: Level 2 Central Bank Building Gabourel Lane, Belize City

Phone: (501) 3191-331910

Fax: (501) 3191-223194 ext 255

E-mail: Vision@st.net

Leading Partner in Guatemala: Guatemala Tourist Board

Name of the contact person/focal point: Juan Francisto Callejas

Address: 7° Avenue. 1-17 Center Civic 01004. Guatemala City

Phone: (502) 331-2059

Fax:

E-mail: [subsecre@inguat.net](mailto:subsecre@inguat.net)

Leading Partner in Honduras: Honduras Tourist Board  
 Name of the contact person/focal point: Ana Abarca Ucles  
 Address: Building Europe, floor 5, San Carlos, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.  
 Phone: (504) 222-4002 /2124  
 E-mail: ihturis@hondutel.hn

Leading Partner in El Salvador: Salvador Tourist Corporation  
 Name of the contact person/focal point: Alberto Morales  
 Address: 508 San Benito, San Salvador, El Salvador  
 Phone: (503) 243-7835  
 Fax: (503) 243-0427  
 E-mail: amptur@salnet.net

Leading Partner in Nicaragua: Nicaragua Tourist Board  
 Name of the contact person/focal point: Leda Sánchez  
 Address: Bolivar Avenie, Managua, Nicaragua  
 Phone: (505) 223-1238 / 1337  
 Fax: (505) 228-1187  
 E-mail: intur@intur.gob.ni

Leading Partner en Panamá: Panaman Tourist Board  
 Name of the contact person/focal point: Liriola Pitti  
 Address: Convencions Center Atlapa, Panama City.  
 Phone: (505) 226-3167 /4614  
 Fax: (507) 226-5058  
 E-mail: ggral@ns.ipat.gob.pa

### **Intergovernmental organizations:**

In Costa Rica, CST is supervised by the **Sustainable Tourism Accreditation Commission**, which is the maximum authority in accreditation, certification, and revision of the norms. The Commission is interdisciplinary, and is comprised of representatives of the principal stakeholders: government, business, academic, and national and international non-governmental organizations. These are:

Leading Partner: **Earth Council**  
 Name of the contact person/focal point: Lorena San Román  
 Address: San José, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 205-1600  
 Fax: (506)  
 E-mail: isanroma@terra.ecouncil.ac.cr

Leading Partner: **International Union for la Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**  
 Name of the contact person/focal point: Enrique Lahmann, Representative for Mesoamerica  
 Address: Moravia, San José, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506)-241-0101  
 Fax: (506)-240-9934  
 E-mail: [enrique.lahmann@orma.uicn.org](mailto:enrique.lahmann@orma.uicn.org)

Leading Partner: **Latin American Center for Competitiveness and Sustainable Development (CLADS), Central American Institute of Business Administration (INCAE)**

Name of the contact person/focal point: Crist Inman. Lawrence Pratt  
 Address: Alajuela, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 437-2200  
 Fax: (506) 437-2297  
 E-mail: prattl@mail.incae.ac.cr

Leading Partner: **University of Costa Rica**

Name of the contact person/focal point: Gabril Macaya  
 Address: San Pedro, Montes de Oca, San José, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 207-4708  
 Fax: (506) 207-4032

Leading Partner: **National Institute of Biodiversity (INBio)**

Name of the contact person/focal point: Alfio Piva,  
 Address: Santo Domingo, Heredia, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 244-0690  
 Fax: (506) 244-4654  
 E-mail: apiva@inbio.ac.cr

Leading Partner: **National Chamber of Tourism (CANATUR)**

Name of the contact person/focal point: William Rodríguez  
 Address: Zapote, San José, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 234-6222  
 Fax: (506) 253-8102  
 E-mail: direge@canatur.org

Leading Partner: **Ministry of the Environment and Energy**

Name of the contact person/focal point:  
 Address: San José, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 283-8004  
 Fax: (506) 283-7343

Leading Partner: **Costa Rican Tourist Board (ICT)**

Name of the contact person/focal point: **Rubén Pacheco L., Minister**  
 Address: Edificio Genaro Valverde, San José, Costa Rica  
 Phone: (506) 2553-368  
 Fax: (506) 223-5107  
 E-mail: rpacheco@ict.go.cr

### **Major groups:**

The seven countries of Central America have the logistic and political support of the Central American Integration System (SICA).

Leading Partner: **Tourism Secretariat, Central American Integration System (SICA)**

Name of the contact person/focal point:  
 Address: San Salvador, El Salvador  
 Phone: (503) 289-6131  
 Fax: (503) 289-6642  
 E-mail: gsica@sicanet.org.sv

**Other:**

CST has received financial support from the **Spanish government** and the **United States Agency for International Development (US-AID)**, as well as non-reimbursable funding from the **Interamerican Development Bank (IDB)** for the implementation of CST in Ecuador.

**Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative**

*Please provide a brief description:*

The **Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST)**, is one of the first systems, if not the first, to achieve the integration of the principle elements of sustainable tourism, analyzing good management practices, the environmental and social impacts of services, as well as the client's perception of image and the congruence between the service offered and the product's promotion. In its four years of operation in Costa Rica, CST has been able to objectively measure sustainability of operating businesses, improve business environmental and social practices, and motivate businesses to improve practices and clients to choose sustainable tourist businesses.

**The main objective of this proposal is to transfer CST and make it fully applicable in other countries**, in such a way that these countries can share a common foundation for promoting sustainability in tourism. **This will achieve a number of goals: economies of scale, greater market recognition of the standard, increasing consumer awareness, and substantial improvement in the environmental and social impacts of tourism.**

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTIVITIES
Transfer CST to the other countries in the region that have already requested this (8 countries to date)	Obtain official support of the national tourist boards, chambers of tourism, and tourist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize the CST Technical Committee to systematize and transfer information accumulated during four years of operation in Costa Rica.</li> </ul>
	Establish a regional system of certification and accreditation for CST.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate a CST Regional Certification Commission.</li> <li>• Establish a regional discussion forum to evaluate and enhance the implementation of the system.</li> </ul>

		<p>governmental, non-governmental, and private sector certifiers and auditors, in accordance with internationally accepted norms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train and accredit auditors in each country.</li> </ul>
	<p>Improve the social and environmental performance of participating tourist businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a program of marketing and promotion aimed towards both consumers and businesses, to increase the market share of certified businesses and increase the number of certified businesses.</li> <li>• Support certified businesses by providing access to clean technologies and know-how, in accordance with the CST standard.</li> <li>• Establish a continuous training program for the private sector on CST-related issues and best practice.</li> <li>• Train private consultants to work with potentially certified businesses to implant best practices in accordance with CST.</li> <li>• Sensitize the industrial and export sectors on the need to supply the tourist sector with clean and environment-friendly technologies.</li> <li>• Generate a data-base of socially and environmentally friendly products, suppliers, and best-practices.</li> </ul>



- ✓ Avoid emissions, damage, and contamination.
- ✓ Promote conservation and environmental management.
- ✓ Properly manage solid and liquid wastes.
- ✓ Reduce the use of water, electricity, and consumables.
- ✓ Use natural, recyclable, and biodegradable products.
- ✓ Employ and train local people.
- ✓ Promote local foods, traditions, handicrafts, and customs
- ✓ Support natural areas and respect local culture.
- ✓ Educate guests about these issues.



CST certified businesses



Tourists

*Please also provide a brief description of the relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nation Millennium Declaration:*

Certification processes in tourism are key instruments for achieving the goals of Agenda 21, in environmental, social, and cultural responsibility of businesses and clients, especially when

economies of scale permit the popularization and positioning of the trademark – informed consumer demand then motivates environmental and social compliance by businesses. The process of internationalizing CST, with the participation of several countries, guarantees synergy and a shared vision of the future, facilitating the implementation of sustainability in tourism in all the countries involved.

Widely used and properly implemented certification systems should benefit local service providers, local communities, conservation efforts, and the surrounding environment, as they are a way to motivate tourist developments to contribute effectively and constructively to the well-being of the whole society.

CST identifies and rewards the tourist businesses that come closest to this model of sustainability, in reduced operating costs from lower energy and water consumption, better relations with staff and the neighboring communities, higher occupancy levels by selective consumers, and greatly enhance image. These aspects are measured using four sets of parameters:

1. Physical-biological environment: This examines the interaction of the business with its surrounding environment, taking into account emissions, contamination in general, conservation measures, and natural risk management.
2. Physical plant: This analyzes the internal processes of the business and its environmental management systems, including waste management, use of efficient technologies to conserve water and energy, and the type of consumables that are used.
3. External clients: These criteria evaluate actions taken to motivate, educate, and increase awareness of guests, in order to mitigate negative impacts and make adequate use of the natural resources used by the business, as well as to prepare clients for low-impact tourism to protected natural areas and local communities.
4. Social environment: These parameters consider the interaction of the business with the surrounding population. They take into account the use of locally produced food, decoration, and crafts, as well as efforts to avoid deleterious social effects and benefit the local community.

**Expected results:**

*Please provide a brief description:*

The widespread implementation of CST will produce direct individual benefits to businesses (reduced costs, increased occupancy, and better image) while offering substantial environmental and social guarantees to the local population. At a regional level, it serves as a unifier and a common basis for the promotion of sustainable tourism.



Contributions of CST to the sustainable development of the countries where implemented:

- CST is an instrument for directing tourist development towards sustainability, having positive repercussions in environmental, cultural, and social conditions, to the benefit of present and future populations.
- CST promotes cooperation among different stakeholders and among the countries that implement it, in a joint effort towards sustainability.
- Local populations should see a marked increase in the use of locally produced agricultural and

handicraft products, as well as high quality employment in tourist businesses.

- Harmony between tourist businesses and adjacent communities should be enhanced, along with concrete social and economic benefits.



For tourist businesses:

- CST should influence the development model of each country, so that tourist businesses operate without damaging the natural and cultural resources on which they depend.
- The three fundamental pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and socio-cultural) should be integrated into the business model, as a key factor for increasing market share in the international tourism market.
- CST should produce substantial reductions in operating costs after a modest initial capital investment.



For other sectors:

- CST should generate a significant new market for goods and services associated with clean technologies (solar, microhydroelectric and wind energy, water conservation devices, efficient air conditioners and other devices, organic agriculture, biodegradable products, etc.).
- CST should, in the same vein, generate pressure to develop local industries based on the consulting and manufacture of clean and appropriate technologies.

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

2 to 4 years in: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama.

2 to 6 years in: Other countries that adopt it.

#### **Coordination and Implementation mechanism**

*Please provide a brief description of expected coordination/implementation mechanism of the Partnership/Initiative.*

#### **Phase I: Coordination with stakeholders in each country and accreditation of auditors.**

Because the accreditation and certification mechanisms of CST are incipient outside Costa Rica, and the existing structures have been shown to be transparent and credible, during the start-up period the existing CST Accreditation Commission based in Costa Rica will accompany the process and award CST certification. The Commission will also accredit auditors who have been trained by the experienced Technical Commission based in Costa Rica.

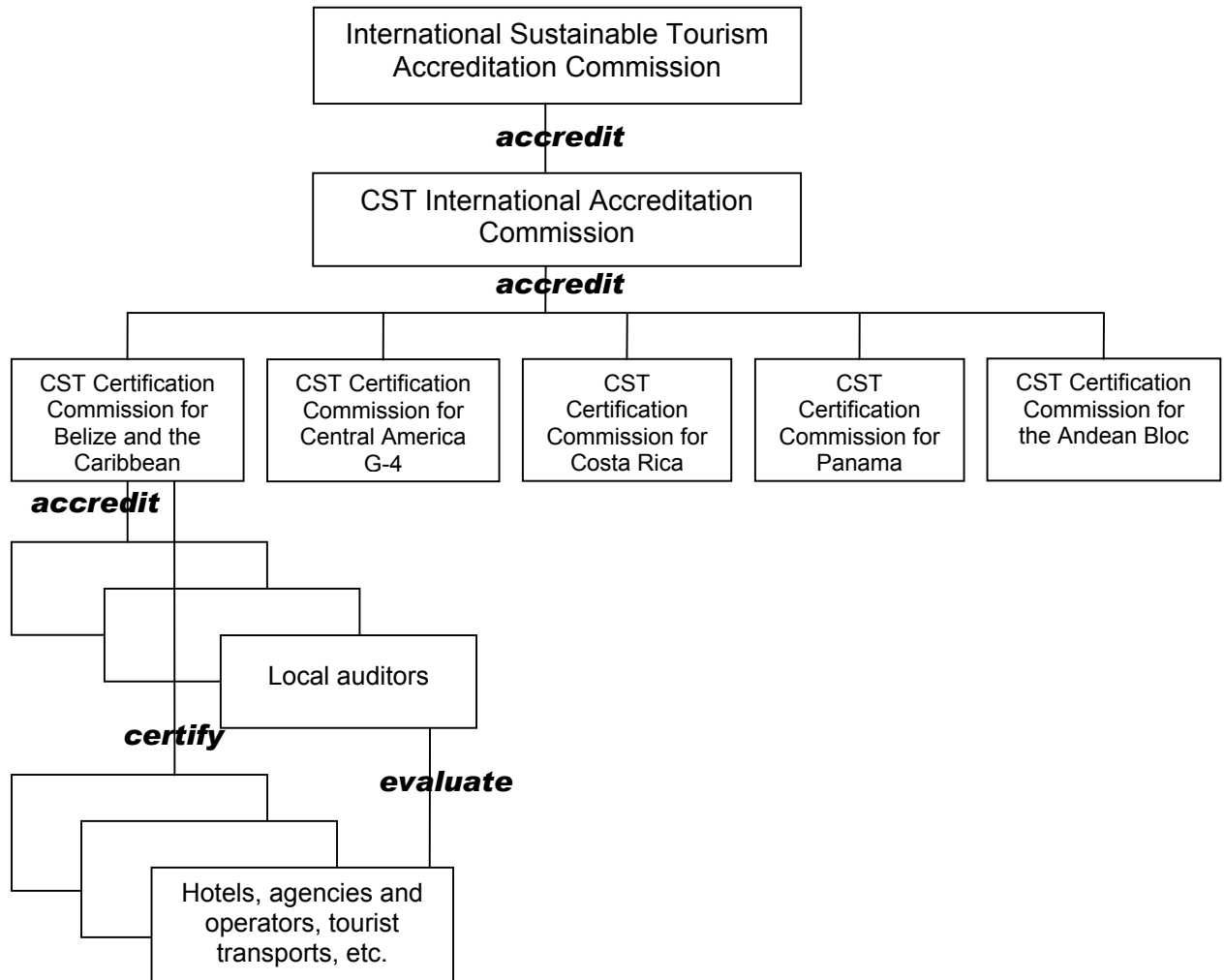
Stakeholder workshops and field trials in conjunction with government, NGOs, local communities (including indigenous communities), businesses, and trade groups will establish the parameters for local implementation and the selection of auditors, representatives for the accreditation body, and members of the certification bodies.

#### **Phase II: International framework for the Certification of Sustainable Tourism (CST)**

Once the system has been appropriated by stakeholders in each country and has been normalized regionally, the Accreditation Commission will expand its membership and divide into a representative international accreditation body and a national certification body, in parallel with the establishment of other national and regional certification bodies. Based on proximity, cultural similarity, market preferences, and travel costs, regional bodies may use existing free-trade regions to define geographic

boundaries.

The final accreditation and certification mechanisms will be established according to generally accepted international norms, and are likely to be similar to the following scheme:



The final development of this scheme is likely to take a number of years and is highly dependent on a sufficient number of certified businesses to achieve economies of scale. The interim mechanism will be a partial execution of this master design, according to current needs for expansion.

### **Arrangements for funding**

*Please describe available and/or expected sources of funding for the implementation of the Partnership/Initiative (e.g. donor government(s); international organization(s)/financial institution(s); foundation(s); private sector; other major groups, etc.)*

In Costa Rica, where the CST system was developed, financial support has been assumed primarily by the Costa Rican Tourist Board (ICT) and thus by the Costa Rican government. This support includes the costs associated with the generation of the knowledge and experience to design and develop the system, as well as implementation costs over a six-year period. Nevertheless, in addition to these contributions by Costa Rica, the economic support of donors is necessary to achieve the proposed goals in the associated

countries within a reasonable time frame.

External funding has been for specific tasks, such as a donation from the government of Spain for a pilot study, and from US-AID for the development of a sophisticated website for CST. Additional funding has been received for the comparative evaluation of CST relative to other certification schemes (revealing that it is one of the strongest and most transparent of all systems worldwide for certifying sustainable tourism), the feasibility of international implementation, and the design accreditation and certification bodies.

For the future activities described in this proposal, Costa Rican government support will continue for in-country activities, and support is expected from the governments of the associated countries to a lesser degree. CDG (Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft e.V.) funds through the Central American Institute of Business Administration (INCAE) will provide for some activities in Central America. Substantial additional funding is necessary to implement all the activities described in this proposal, especially in those countries outside of Central America. The funds would be directed towards establishing, promoting, and positioning CST among stakeholders, through workshops and local field training. This is even more fundamental for the execution of the second phase, where the CST system becomes economically sustainable and self-sufficient, through economies of scale and the payment of fees.

In Phase II of this program, the CST System should move towards economic self-sufficiency, as economies of scale and license and user fees by businesses, auditors, and certifiers come into play. Economic self-sufficiency can only be achieved when the scale of the program involves several countries. This goal should be achievable near the end of the period of this proposal.

#### **Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer**

*Please include information if the Partnership/Initiative provides for training, informational support, institutional strengthening and/or other capacity building measures:*

For the export of the model, Costa Rica is facilitating not only the core CST system for its implementation and execution in other countries, but also documentation of accumulated experience, the conformity system, and field training in Costa Rica, which will allow important savings in the learning curve.

The proposed scenario for Phase I will be supported basically with resources coming from the international cooperation with the purpose of establishing the conditions for the effective transfer of the CST System on the part of the Costa Rican Government.

In Phase II, once CST is firmly established in the business sector in the associated countries, the CST Accreditation Commission in Costa Rica will transfer functions to the newly established international entities in these countries or regions. In this way, the accumulated knowledge, experience, and institutional memory can be replicated in different countries.

*Please also provide here a brief description of expected arrangements for technology transfer (if applicable).*

Costa Rica will establish the minimum conditions for CST implementation in the associated countries, in order to maintain standards and credibility. The philosophical principles implicit in CST are associated with certain unchangeable core parameters. Peripheral standards and additional parameters will address local conditions in each region. The CST logo will be licensed for use with complying systems, as it reflects the relationship between humanity and nature, and establishes a marketable corporate image for sustainable tourism, as opposed to destination-specific images.

In general, the following aspects will define the parameters for technology transfer:

- Establishing a platform for local and regional Certification Commissions, which are indispensable for the transparency and credibility of the CST System.
- Train and accredit auditors in each country.
- Support certified businesses by providing access to clean technologies and know-how, in accordance with the CST standard.
- Establish a continuous training program for the private sector on CST-related issues and best practice.
- Train private consultants to work with potentially certified businesses to implant best practices in accordance with CST.
- Sensitize the industrial and export sectors on the need to supply the tourist sector with clean and environment-friendly technologies.
- Generate a data-base of socially and environmentally friendly products, suppliers, and best-practices.

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

*Please provide a brief description:*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
<p><b>58 lodging establishments certified by CST in Costa Rica</b> see website: <a href="http://www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr">www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr</a></p>	<p>The establishments reflect the application of the CST standard, and therefore demonstrate that their operations are sustainable. A similar number of businesses did not pass the certification process.</p>
<p><b>Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism</b> World Tourism Organization (WTO) May 2002</p>	<p>CST was subject to consideration in this study by the WTO, which was published at the World Summit on Ecotourism in Montreal.</p>
<p><b>Ministers of Tourism of Iberoamerica</b> Ecuador, May 2002</p>	<p>Proposed joint agenda to present at the World Summit of Sustainable Development in Johannesburg</p>
<p><b>Mesoamerican Coral Reef System</b> May 2002</p>	<p>The member countries (Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras) accept CST as their standard.</p>
<p><b>Protecting Paradise: Certification Programs for Sustainable Tourism and Ecotourism</b> Institute for Policy Studies, October 2001</p>	<p>CST was analyzed in this study by IPS.</p>
<p><b>Plan Puebla Panamá</b> Declaration of the heads of state involved in the PPP proposal, June 2001</p>	<p>CST is approved as a form of going beyond the certification of environmental protection or ecotourism.</p>
<p><b>System of Central American Integration (SICA)</b> May 2001</p>	<p>Ministers of Tourism, within the framework of SICA, sign declaration to use CST as a Central American brand.</p>
<p><b>Association of Caribbean States</b> December 2001</p>	<p>Accept CST as a requisite for developing the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the ACS.</p>
<p><b>Tourism Certification</b> WWF, August 2000</p>	<p>CST was subject to consideration in study by WWF of 24 certification systems for sustainability. Only two systems comply with the fundamental principles, one of them being CST.</p>

**Monitoring Arrangements**

*Please describe expected arrangements for monitoring of progress in the implementation of Partnerships/Initiative after it will be launched at the WSSD (e.g. frequency/modalities of preparation of progress reports; electronic updates, news-letters, etc):*

Evaluation mechanisms applied during the process can not only monitor the development of the

associative relationship of the participant countries, but also the progress of the proposal at an individual level. This information is viable to obtain, given the commitment and appropriation of the instrument by the associated countries. Therefore, conditions exist for monitoring agreements according to the needs and requirements of the donors.

**Other relevant information:**

Although CST was initially developed for lodging establishments, Costa Rica has already established the CST standard for Agencies and Tours Operators, which will be officially launched at the end of 2002, becoming the only certification system that evaluates more than one activity.

**Web-site:** [www.tourism-sustainable.co.cr](http://www.tourism-sustainable.co.cr)  
[www.sustainable-tourism.co.cr](http://www.sustainable-tourism.co.cr)

**Name and contact information of the person filling in this table:**

<i>Name:</i>	<i>Rodolfo Lizano R.</i>	<i>Rosaura Monge Q.</i>
<i>Position:</i>	<i>Director of Planning, ICT</i>	<i>Technical Secretary CST headquarters</i>
<i>Address:</i>	<i>Edificio Genaro Valverde, piso 10</i>	<i>Edificio Genaro Valverde, piso 10</i>
<i>Phone:</i>	<i>+506-255-0841</i>	<i>+506-255-0903</i>
<i>Fax:</i>	<i>+506-258-2912</i>	<i>+506-258-2912</i>
<i>E-mail:</i>	<a href="mailto:rlizano@tourism-sustainable.co.cr"><i>rlizano@tourism-sustainable.co.cr</i></a>	<a href="mailto:rosmonge@tourism-sustainable.co.cr"><i>rosmonge@tourism-sustainable.co.cr</i></a>

**Funding required:** US\$4 million (\$4,000,000)