



Going, Going, Green

Greening the Tourism Sector in Dubai

As the curtain falls on yet another Olympic games there is already talk of China being transformed forever. The global population now has a deeper understanding of China's culture, heritage and people and as a result tourism will increase. Airfares have become more affordable and borders are becoming a concept of yesteryear – the global tourism market is expanding at a rapid rate with destinations unimaginable only years ago becoming accessible to all.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, Travel and Tourism is the largest business sector in the world economy and is responsible for over 230 million jobs as well as accounting for over 10% of the gross domestic product worldwide. Global tourism is forecast to reach 1.56 billion international arrivals by the year 2020 (UNWTO, 2006), the Travel and Tourism sector in Dubai must take into account the changing face of tourism and tourist preferences.

The tourism industry in Dubai is growing at a fast pace and is positively driving employment and income levels. It is expected that this sec-

tor will grow by 8% in 2008. 8.5% of jobs in UAE are travel and tourism related and this percentage is expected to increase in Dubai. At the same time, the tourism sector also has major environmental, social and economic impacts on the local and global population.

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'Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism ... requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.'

Sustainable tourism should ... ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them.'

(World Tourism Organization, 2004)



Why Responsible Sourcing is Important for your Business

How Small Actions Can Have Lasting Impacts

The words 'corporate social responsibility' and 'sustainability' are terms that can be thrown around easily to increase a firm's profile. However we must go beyond rhetoric to action in order to realize the opportunities and impact we can have on the environment around us.

One small action with a big impact is what we buy. Our purchases may use scarce raw materials and change economic and social patterns of other communities. As more businesses take into consideration environment, health, safety and community concerns into their overall strategies, the focus is shifting to what they buy. Many companies are starting to look at the bigger picture of their firms' impacts starting from the beginning of their supply chains.

'65 % of UAE customers believe that a company's social track record is very influential in their purchasing decision making' (CRB, 2008)

Responsible sourcing is a new concept to many businesses in Dubai. According to the study 'Consumer's View of Corporate Social Responsibility'(2008) conducted by the Centre for Responsible Business, a majority (62%) of businesses in Dubai do not take responsible

sourcing into consideration due to a lack of knowledge about such issues, rather than high costs or financial constraints.

The current trend is for firms' to require suppliers to adhere to minimum guidelines in line with their values. Such guidelines may include issues such as child labour, recycling, disposal systems, energy efficiency or human resource management.

Companies such as Marks and Spencer in the UK are taking such initiatives to a new level by launching programs that tackle such issues with customers and suppliers, known as Plan A. This has put M&S on a platform that few of their competitors can reach.

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Recycling centre for employees to discard waste.

Inside this Sustainable Tourism Issue

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Question of the month

How many kilograms of carbon would be emitted on an average return flight from London to Dubai?

- a 500 kg
- b 250 kg
- c 1240 kg
- d 1500 kg

See Page 3 for the answer.

Encouraging Responsible Business Practices in the UAE Dubai Chamber's Centre for Responsible Business

On 31 August, 2008, the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) held a workshop on the 'Environmental and Social Impacts of Supply Chains'. The workshop provided professional training on issues that companies face when choosing to be sustainable in sourcing and supply chain management.

The workshop was facilitated by Girish Kowale, the Director of Business Trading Ethically from the UK and Vineetha Mathew, the Senior Executive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Training for the CRB, bringing more than twenty years of combined experience in the fields of Ethical Fair Trade and Corporate Responsibility to the event.

The workshop was designed for procurement specialists and included training on

building a business case for sustainable practices in supply chains, sustainable sourcing, monitoring the supply chain as well as more practical tips for businesses to integrate such practices while protecting the financial bottom line.

New research has also been published by Dr Belaid Rettab and Dr Anis Ben Brik, from the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) on 'Green Supply Chain in Dubai' and 'Consumer's View on Corporate Social Responsibility in the UAE' this month. The next Al Youm newsletter will be showcasing the research conducted by the CRB throughout 2008. Please refer to our website to read the full reports.

For more details on the importance of supply chain sustainability to your organisation,

please refer to the article, 'Why Responsible Sourcing is Important for your Business.'

If you would like to learn about how the CRB can assist your business, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are the premier source for sustainability education, coaching and research in the UAE. We host an extensive range of events on pressing CSR issues, provide in-house assistance and conduct original research in areas affecting the UAE. The CRB looks forward to working with you to take your organisation to the next level.

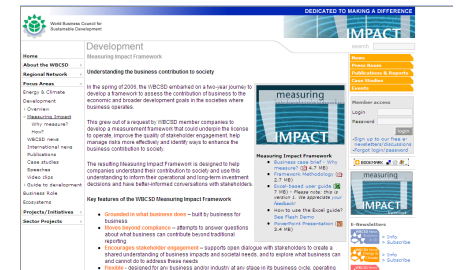


WBCSD Measuring Impact Framework Helping Companies Give Back to the Community

WBCSD recently released, after 2 years of development, a measuring impact framework to assist companies in assessing their contribution to the economic and broader development goals of the societies in which they operate. (<http://www.wbcd.org/templates/TemplateWBCSD5/layout.asp?type=p&MenuId=MTU3Mw>)

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is a network of around 200 international companies in

more than 30 countries and 20 major industrial sectors that share a commitment to develop in a more sustainable manner and seek more sustainable solutions to conducting their business. It was established before the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit to present a business face to the sustainability discussions and is based in Geneva, Switzerland.



Going, Going, Green Greening the Tourism Sector in Dubai

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Sustainable or 'green tourism' is important in conserving local species, preserving natural habitats and improving the welfare of the local population. Green tourism in Dubai has been limited, as tourist attractions have been predominantly manmade structures. The emerging interest in the natural wonders of the region is positive for the tourism of Dubai. The late president of Abu Dhabi and the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan established the 'Champion of the Earth' - a federal agency on the environment and conservation. This initiative emphasised breeding projects and eco-friendly tourism developments.

Dubai offers an innovative approach to sustainable tourism with Al Maha - a desert resort in the centre of the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve. The resort incorporates solar power, water recycling and the use of natural materials but still maintains the high end luxurious lifestyle while allowing visitors to learn about conservation issues in the desert. Al Maha has

won over ten international awards for their efforts in sustainable tourism, including the Eighth Arab Cities Award, the 2004 World Legacy Award for Natural Travel by the National Geographic and Conservation International as well as a nomination as an outstanding case study for future tourism by the World Travel and Tourism Council.

International hotel chains have also begun the journey towards more sustainable practices to highlight their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility. Hilton International runs a variety of schemes that include recycling waste water and using it for gardens, employee training on helping to implement environmentally friendly measures as well as developing a regional environmental program to be taught through the Hilton University.

Hilton's Human Resources Director, David Leman says the basics of the program include 'promoting awareness of the environment, cost savings, efficient energy usage and how to use renewable materials'.

Sheraton Deira and Sheraton Dubai Creek have also placed emphasis on recycling, responsible sourcing, installing water saving and energy saving fixtures and all chemicals used in kitchens and for cleaning are eco friendly. Other hotel chains such as the Shangri La and Jumeriah have also utilized CSR initiatives to raise awareness and to integrate best practices.

The typical expectations of tourists are evolving to include consideration for the local population, high levels of environmental sustainability and eco friendly operations for tourism operators. The tourism industry in Dubai must also evolve not only to preserve our fragile ecosystem but also to ensure that tourism continues to boom.

The Centre for Responsible Business will be holding a seminar focusing on 'Corporate Social Responsibility in the Tourism Sector' on 23rd September 2008. For more information and registration please refer to our website: www.dubai-ethics.com



Launch of MRM Corporate Social Responsibility Award

The Dubai Chamber Centre for Responsible Business is proud to announce the new Mohammed Bin Rashid al Maktoum (MRM) Corporate Social Responsibility Award. Corporate Social Responsibility

(CSR) has been an integral part of the MRM Business Awards from the start. This year, the MRM introduces an award dedicated to honouring companies that successfully implement CSR initiatives. Applications close

on **20 November 2008**. For more information go to: <http://www.mrbizaward.ae/> or call 800 CHAMBER (800 242 6237).



Water Efficiency Program

Dubai Municipality and Emaar Come Together to Conserve Water

Dubai Municipality, in conjunction with Emaar who sponsored this initiative, officially launched a water savings programme to retrofit 58 towers on Sheikh Zayed Road with water saving devices on 5 July 2008. Water saving devices are to be installed free of cost to the towers. It is predicted that this program will save 365,000 m³ of water per year which is the equivalent of 80 million gallons.

Dubai Municipality assigned City Services and MEETS General Trading, a local company under the Sheik Mohammed Bin Rashid Program Business Leaders that specializes in conservation initiatives, to establish the water conservation program of high-rise buildings along Sheikh Zayed Rd.

This initiative was in response to the over capacity currently being placed on the Dubai sewerage system, particularly the network that moves the sewage from the Dubai Marina towards Bur Dubai. Every day, over 378 541 m³ of sewage flows into the already strained sewage

system of Dubai and this on the rise with rapid expansion of new construction. Under Dubai Municipality's guidance 50% of the effluent, once treated goes towards irrigating the greening of Dubai whilst the other 50% is returned to the water table.

The results of this program so far, whereby water flows were tested and water saving devices installed (such as reduced flow from taps, showerheads and toilet flushes), has led to an average water saving of over 30%. Considering the costs of installing such devices and the water savings they create, this is a return on investment of around only 3 months! It is very encouraging to see the success of the first four towers in saving over 757 m³ of liquid from entering the Dubai sewerage system each month.

This initiative is also supported by the Emaar Properties UAE Managing Director, Mr Ahmad Al Matrooshi who states 'Enhancing water use efficiency can be integrated into the every day lifestyle of individuals and the sewage reduction program will help achieve this.'

Installation of water saving devices can reduce flows substantially, often by 20 to 60% from taps and showers (which account for around 63% of water flows), as well as 30% from toilets (which account for around 37% of water flows). Initiatives such as these encourage customers to be more responsible in how they use water and shows the community how easy it is to be sustainable every day!



Why Responsible Sourcing is Important for your Business

How Small Actions Can Have Lasting Impacts

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This has put M&S on a platform that few of their competitors can reach. Al Futtaim-Marks & Spencer (AF-M&S) in the UAE have been implementing initiatives towards making their supply chain more eco-friendly and sustainable by reducing the number of shipments by air from the UK by 40% in



Clothes hangers being collected to be recycled.

2007. They also now recycle the plastic hangers that come with the merchandise. Store Manager and Plan A Champion of AF-M&S for the Gulf, TG Ganesh says 'Customers are nowadays more conscious of quality, social, environment and ethical standards and want to know how we do business in all aspects of our operations. Plan A helps us to focus on these standards and deliver some of this information'

Within Dubai, responsible sourcing is important to all businesses as there are growing trends that consumers would like to buy from 'responsible companies'. 65% of consumers in the UAE believe that a company's social track record is 'very influential' in their purchasing decisions (CRB, 2008). As mentioned in the article 'Going, Going, Green: Greening the Tourism Sector in Dubai' - large hotel chains such as Hilton Ho-

tel group and the Sheraton Hotel line are heavily investing in responsible sourcing to reduce their overall environmental footprint.

Employing responsible sourcing has specific benefits for businesses in Dubai. Responsible sourcing can act as a tool to reduce costs and rethink the lifecycle of their products. Growing numbers of organisations are recognizing that the quality of their product; both environmentally and socially can be a real competitive advantage to attract and retain customers. Responsible sourcing also acts as a risk management tool, which minimises backlash from consumers on products, processes or issues that may potentially affect the organization.

Being responsible in business is now a first resort, instead of a last resort.



Question

of the month

How many kilograms of carbon would be emitted on an average return flight from London to Dubai?

a 500 kg

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(See page 1)



How to Design a Sustainability Policy

Sustainable Travel International Shows Us the Easy Way

For businesses it has become important to implement sustainability policies, as awareness continues to grow about the environment and our responsibilities towards it. Responsible business practices have emerged as a priority in Dubai and companies are beginning to realise its potential as a strategic management tool.

A business's sustainability policy will define and help to clearly communicate the organisational goals and objectives as they relate to environmental, socio-cultural, and economic performance. According to Sustainable Travel International (STI), five steps have to be considered by a business when designing a sustainability policy:

Step 1

Determine your businesses commitment to achieving sustainability goals e.g. minimise waste.

Step 2

Determine your company's positive and negative impacts, such as the amount of energy and water consumed by your business, and the economic benefits you provide to local communities. There should be emphasis on impacts that are relevant to your operations. Prioritise the most significant impacts combined with those that can be implemented at best value. Establish a framework for your action plan

Step 3

Address your connection to stakeholders. Determine how you are going to cooperate with your employees, clients, other service providers, and local communities.

Step 4

Your sustainability policy should also focus on continuous improvement. Set fixed objectives and targets, which can be quantified by measuring your im-

acts, and then create systems to measure your progress so you know what's working and what isn't. Third party assessments and customer feedback are also good ways to monitor your progress. You may also seek assistance from a third-party environmental specialist when dealing with your facilities and their impact on the environment.

Step 5

Last but not least, review and update your sustainability policy annually to ensure that it's up-to-date. Eliminate practices that aren't working and develop new ones to address issues that may have come up during the past year. Your sustainability policy should be a living document, something that will evolve along with your business.

Source:

http://www.sustainabletravelinternational.org/documents/gi_tp_guide2.html



Helping Us Travel Responsibly

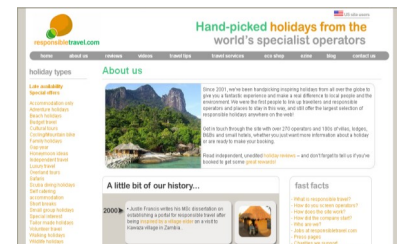
Responsibletravel.com Eases Our Conscience About Travel

As we return from our exotic holidays, relaxed and excited about all we did, how many of us spare a thought to what we have left behind? As tourism increases- with more affordable airfares and more countries opening their doors to tourists, many communities are facing a loss of natural and cultural heritage. Here in Dubai, tourism is one of the largest sectors and so awareness of services that promote responsible practices by tourists have become a necessity.

Responsibletravel.com is a service that allows travelers to book holidays and activities in some of the most exciting destinations all over the world that in a manner respects, protects and supports the local community.

The website offers an innovative array of information on topics such as: travel services, an eco shop for traveling essentials and travel tips to save on carbon emissions. Responsibletravel.com has taken ecotourism to new heights by providing simple tools and information

accessible to all. Such tools are now also being used by firms to promote ethical practices beyond the workplace. Visit their website today and book your next holiday!



CRB Events

23 September 2008

Social and Environmental Impacts in the Tourism Sector

14 October 2008

CSR Leadership Forum on Tourism Sector

20 October 2008

CSR for SMEs

27 October 2008

CSR in the Healthcare Sector

12 November 2008

Launch of ENGAGE in collaboration with BITC

17 November 2008

Supply Chain Seminar/CSR Leadership Forum

15 December 2008

SA 8000 Awareness Training



CRB Participation Events

2-4 November 2008

2nd Annual Middle East CSR Forum
Gillian Foster: **'Sustainability Reporting'**

Dr Anis Ben Brik: **'Green Supply Chains'**

10 -13 November 2008

Corporate Ethics and FCPA Compliance

Gillian Foster: **'Corruption and FCPA Compliance'**

If you would like more information about these events please contact the CRB team.



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