

### Deliverable 3: Key Actions to Support Development of an Ecotourism Sector

As noted in our Analysis of the Pacific Marine Ecotourism Industry, the physical limitations of the Pacific islands represent the ultimate constraint on the nature and volume of visitation to PICTs. While the carrying capacity of each nation is different, these limits are faced by all island nations. Thus, Sustainable Tourism and Ecotourism represent the best development pathways for the tourism industry in the region.<sup>1</sup> Countries such as Costa Rica have successfully made ecotourism the focus of their brand and a concerted and coordinated effort of SPREP and SPTO—especially their incipient sustainable tourism division—and their member countries should be able to effectively brand the region as a global environmental destination of choice.

As the region embarks on this endeavour, it will be important to assess how to overcome the inherently unsustainable long-distance transportation access requirements to the region from the bulk of the world's population. This challenge notwithstanding, Cameron-Cole proposes a structured approach to begin transforming the tourism industry toward sustainability.

In this report, Cameron-Cole provides an overview of the Sustainable Tourism Market Transformation Protocol (Protocol) developed by Principal Investigator, Rob Watson to provide a roadmap for transforming the tourism sector/market toward sustainability<sup>2</sup>. In the context of this Protocol, we will discuss sustainable tourism guidelines, certification programs, and make general recommendations about labelling schemes for the region; we address specific countries in the Country Reports. Appendix I identifies the twelve goals of sustainable tourism, proposed by UNEP/WTO.

Table I below summarizes the state of market transformation—according to our Market Transformation Protocol—in each of the five countries that we visited: Palau, Tonga, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Vanuatu. It summarizes the seven key market transformation steps/components—defined in more detail in the following section—and their degree of implementation each of the countries. The six supporting elements required to support market transformation are not summarized in the table, but are expanded on later in the report. In the individual Country Reports, we will go into more detail regarding the activities under each of the market transformation protocol components and recommendations for next steps to formalize the overall market transformation of the tourism sector toward sustainability.

**Table I: Market Transformation Protocol Status**

Countries Visited	French Polynesia	New Caledonia	Palau	Tonga	Vanuatu
<b>1. Strategic Sustainable Tourism Action Plan</b>					
General Tourism <sup>3</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eco-Tourism	No	No	No	No	In Progress
<b>2. Enabling Legislation</b>					
Protected Areas <sup>4</sup>					
Marine	Partial	Yes	Yes	No	Partial
Land	Partial	Partial	Yes	Yes	Partial
Mandatory Minimum Standards <sup>5</sup>					

<sup>1</sup> The Center for Responsible Travel notes that traveller awareness of and basing decisions on environmental issues is growing. [http://www.responsibletravel.org/projects/documents/2014\\_Trends\\_&\\_Statistics\\_Final.pdf](http://www.responsibletravel.org/projects/documents/2014_Trends_&_Statistics_Final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Cameron-Cole, in its role as the successful bidder in the SPREP RFP for the **Regional Assessment of Sustainable Tourism in the Pacific**, is utilizing with permission the Market Transformation Protocol™ developed by Principal Investigator, Robert Watson.

<sup>3</sup> Most of the strategic plans for the sector are not specific to sustainability, but are open to it. Tonga has a general strategic development plan that emphasizes sustainability.

<sup>4</sup> Protected area information taken from <http://pipap.sprep.org/> with updates as appropriate. If a country's Protected Area was within 20% of the regional goal, it is counted as "Yes"; between 20% and 80% is counted as "Partial" and less than 20% counted as "No". Palau's 2015 Marine Protected Area (MPA) designation is not yet registered in PIPAP.

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Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	Partial	No	Yes
Voluntary Standards	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>3. Demonstration Projects</b>					
Protected Areas					
Marine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Land	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mandatory Minimum Standards					
Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Voluntary Standards					
Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Activities	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>4. Standards<sup>6</sup></b>					
Mandatory Minimum Standards					
Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Voluntary Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	Yes
<b>5. Pilot-Scale Implementation<sup>7</sup></b>					
Protected Areas					
Marine	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Land	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mandatory Minimum Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	Yes
Voluntary Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	No
<b>6. Full-Scale Implementation</b>					
Protected Areas <sup>8</sup>					
Marine	Partial	Partial	Partial	Partial	No
Land	Partial	Partial	Partial	Partial	No
Mandatory Minimum Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	No
Voluntary Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	No
<b>7. Continuous Improvement</b>					
Protected Areas					
Marine	No	No	No	No	No
Land	No	No	No	No	No
Mandatory Minimum Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	Yes
Voluntary Standards					
Infrastructure	No	No	No	No	No
Activities	No	No	No	No	Yes

## Market Transformation Protocol

In this section, we outline the market transformation protocol in general terms as it applies to Sustainable Tourism. In our country reports, we will make specific recommendations according to the structure for the countries visited as part of our fieldwork.

<sup>5</sup> Enabling Legislation for Overseas Territories is based on French national legislation.

<sup>6</sup> Refers to whether mandatory or voluntary standards are official or in practice adopted at the country level.

<sup>7</sup> Pilot level demonstrations cover at least 25% of the addressable market.

<sup>8</sup> <http://pipap.sprep.org/content/Progress-Towards-Protected-Area-Targets>  
<http://www.sprep.org/attachments/VirLib/Regional/cbd-aichi-targets-I1-I2-sub-regional-analysis-pacific-gidda-I6.pdf>

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Transforming markets requires both regulatory push and market pull. Neither markets nor regulations work as well in isolation, compared to coordinated efforts on both fronts. This market transformation protocol can be applied to both the existing tourist sector, as well as be applied to the development of a new sustainable tourism sector. In addition, the principles of market transformation can be applied regardless of the governance or market structure in the host country. Clearly, however, these principles will need to be adjusted and adapted to fit the specifics of the governing structure of each country.

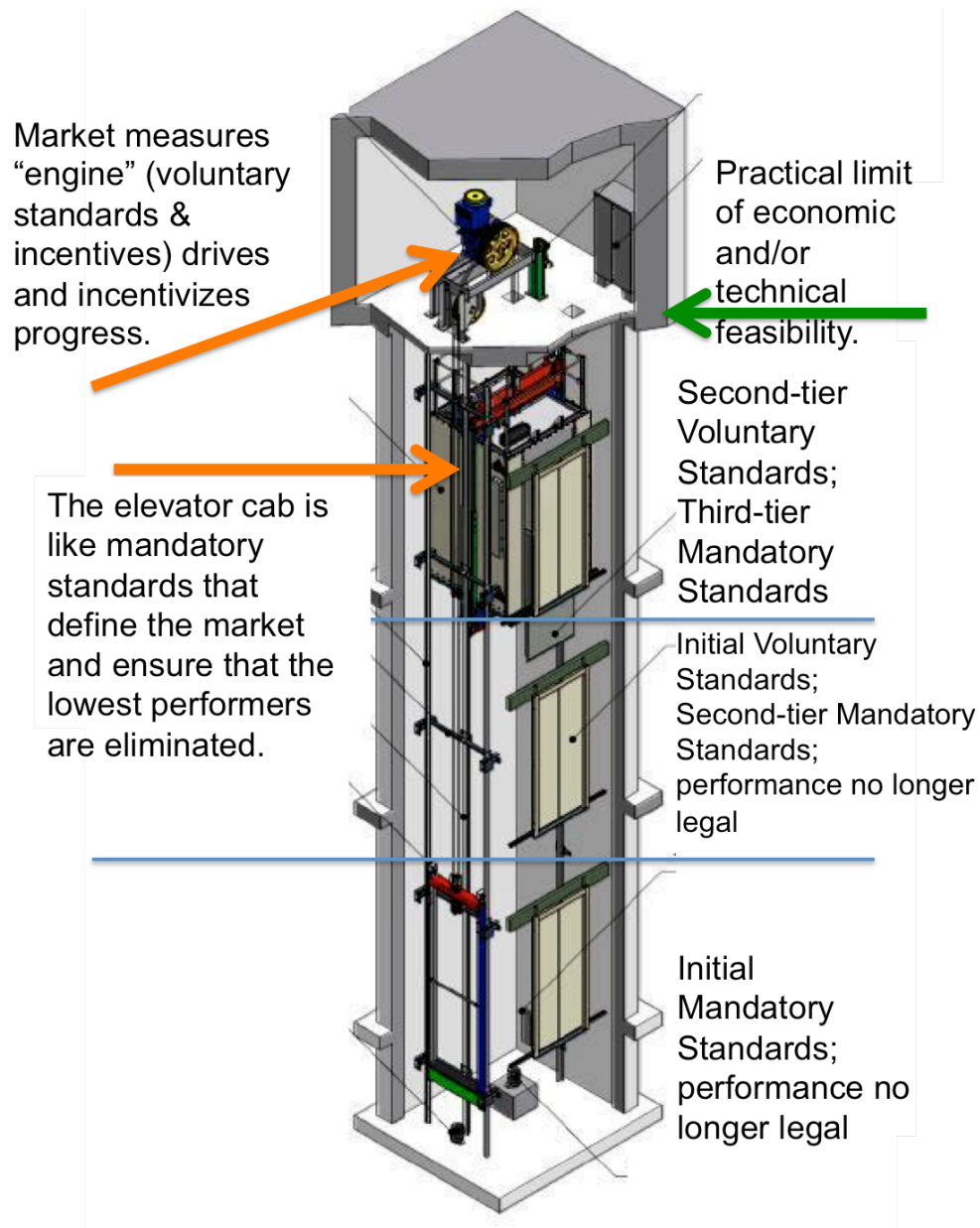


**Figure 1: Market Transformation Framework for Sustainable Tourism**

Both standards and market-based approaches are necessary, but neither is sufficient by itself. When developed jointly and in coordination, it is our experience that the end result is at least threefold greater than a course of action that emphasizes one approach over the other. Indeed, both mandatory and voluntary approaches are market transformation tools that are complementary, not exclusive.

As shown in the figure below, just like an elevator requires a fixed cab and a motor to move passengers up and down, market transformation requires mandatory standards to define the industry and establish minimum acceptable performance, and voluntary standards to recognize and encourage the best performers. For maximum effectiveness, voluntary and mandatory standards should be developed and implemented in parallel.

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**Figure 2: Market Transformation Elements Complement One Another Like Parts of an Elevator**

With any market transformation, there will be two principal paths to follow: 1) implementing change to new infrastructure and/or market entrants; 2) implementing change in existing infrastructure and/or market participants.

New infrastructure and new entrants are the easiest to influence because overall, changes are marginal by definition (except in the instance of the first set of mandatory or voluntary standards) and the marginal cost is lowest. In addition, when creating or designing or implementing something new, there are opportunities for design or operational integration that can lead to even more effective or less costly results, which would not exist, or would exist to a lesser extent, with existing infrastructure or participants. In the context of this report, we use the term “lost opportunities” to represent the experience that, if sustainable tourism

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requirements are not implemented at the beginning of a new project or program, the economic or cost-effective opportunity for implementing changes is effectively lost for some initial year(s) of the new activity.

With regard to existing infrastructure or participants, the process of transformation is naturally one of incremental improvement. But, compared with new development/programs, there tend to be fewer places to intervene. Often, because of the lack of ability to integrate solutions, the potential for improvement is smaller and the cost of these improvements is greater, since almost by definition the entire investment is considered marginal, not just the incremental improvement in performance.

In the case of tourism infrastructure, adopting standards for components of the infrastructure (e.g. appliances and operating equipment for buildings; engines or vehicles for transportation related activities, etc.) is the best way to secure immediate and on-going improvement. For tourism activities, bringing service providers up to minimum standards is relatively easy to implement and could occur over the course of one to two years at most. Requiring compliance with minimum standards at key transition points (e.g. sale, acquisition, or renewal of license/franchise) provides the leverage to create larger improvements in existing infrastructure and practices.

#### **Implementing the Market Transformation Protocol**

Figure 1 shows the structure of our proposed market transformation protocol.. Because "the chain breaks at its weakest link," there are certain prerequisites that must exist for market transformation to occur. These are the five key elements:

1. An overarching strategic plan that articulates goals, timing, resources, etc. for transforming the market;
2. The development and passage of enabling legislation that allows regulations and other industry-focused programs and incentives to be implemented;
3. A regulatory track that establishes, implements and enforces mandatory minimum performance standards for the infrastructure and/or activities in question;
4. A parallel market driven track that has voluntary standards that are applied to the same elements as the regulatory track, but at a higher level of environmental performance consistent with the objectives of the strategic plan;
  - (a) Both the regulatory and market-driven tracks need a capable and respected structure of administration and enforcement to be in place. Answers regarding questions about how to comply must be delivered clearly and by people who are competent and respected. Similarly, clear rules and fair enforcement by experienced professionals is also crucial.
  - (b) In addition, a means for continuous improvement—both in the performance targets and in the administration and enforcement of those targets—must be in place.
5. Supporting activities and institutions that facilitate and enhance the development and implementation of both the mandatory and market driven performance tracks. These activities, combined with the parallel tracks help build a reasonably available supply of physical materials and equipment necessary to build and operate the infrastructure and/or activity at both the mandatory minimum and all or most of the best practice performance level.

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### Step I: Develop a Strategic Market Transformation Plan

The American General and President, Dwight D Eisenhower, is quoted as saying: "plans are useless, but planning is indispensable." Thus, while a Strategic Market Transformation Plan may not be an exact blueprint to follow for each country, researching and developing the overarching goals, the basic opportunities, and the assessment of political, technical and economic feasibility that good planning entails will provide vital insights into the markets being transformed.



**Figure 3: Developing a Strategic Market Transformation Plan is the first step.**

The knowledge gained can allow adjustments when the assumptions necessary for planning are shown not to be correct. If the necessary resources are identified and sourced, then implementation can take place. However, without planning, these resources may not ever be identified.

The Strategic Market Transformation Plan should outline the key enabling legislation required to provide the foundation for market transformation. It should also cover both the mandatory/regulatory transformation track, as well as the market/voluntary track of standards development, and most important, ensure that the two tracks are coordinated and complementary. The plan should also look at how the supporting institutions and activities that applied to both tracks can be encouraged and coordinated.

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#### **Case Study: Palau Conservation Management Plans—Strategic Market Transformation For Marine Protection & Sustainable Tourism**

Palau is building its sustainable tourism/ecotourism platform on the designation and protection of State-level Marine Protected Area Plans and Conservation Action Plans whose development was supported by the Palau Conservation Society (PCS) and its Protected Area Network. A compendium of these plans can be found here:

[http://www.palauconservation.org/cms/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=108&Itemid=70](http://www.palauconservation.org/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=108&Itemid=70)

Each 5-year Management Plan is developed by a small group—9-10 people is considered ideal—over the course of approximately 6 months. The management planning group consults extensively with local affected communities. The management plan covers:

1. The current and future legislative & regulatory underpinning
2. Vision, goals & objectives
3. 5-year Plan addressing strategies in:
  - a. Legal and policy
  - b. Monitoring & Enforcement
  - c. Tourism
  - d. Education, Capacity Building & Outreach
  - e. Operations & Maintenance
  - f. Research & Innovation
4. Permits and Access
5. Allowed and prohibited activities
6. Appendices with
  - a. Detailed scientific, technical, social and economic background material
  - b. Detailed planning and implementation materials

Most of the time of the committee and consultation with the community covers the vision, goals and objectives of the plan.

The management plans are built upon a conservation assessment of the natural areas—both marine- and land-based that addresses the following elements:

1. Conservation targets and viability for protection
2. Identification and assessment of critical threats
3. Analysis of the current situation
4. Conservation strategies
5. Indicators and monitoring

Based on the lessons learned from this process PCS provided the following guidance:

- Put the Plan up front and the justification at the end.
- The planning process should be legislatively sanctioned and officially supported
- Picking the right leader of the process is key: strong, but not domineering
- Larger groups get more done (less danger of not having a quorum)
- It is not necessary to have all the information to make a good plan
- With limited budgets, focus on bringing people together rather than paying for consultants
- Volunteer planning groups are best for involving the community
- Independent and local facilitators work best
- Planning group must undertake a comprehensive tour of the planning area
- Vision, Goals & Objectives development should be undertaken as a whole-group exercise
- Groups work best with a firm deadline in place; volunteer groups seldom last past 6 months
- Tying the completion of the plan to an incentive (e.g. access to implementation funds) is key
- Seek peer review in-person and during the process, not afterward
- Finishing the final details of the plan can be left to a sub-group of the committee

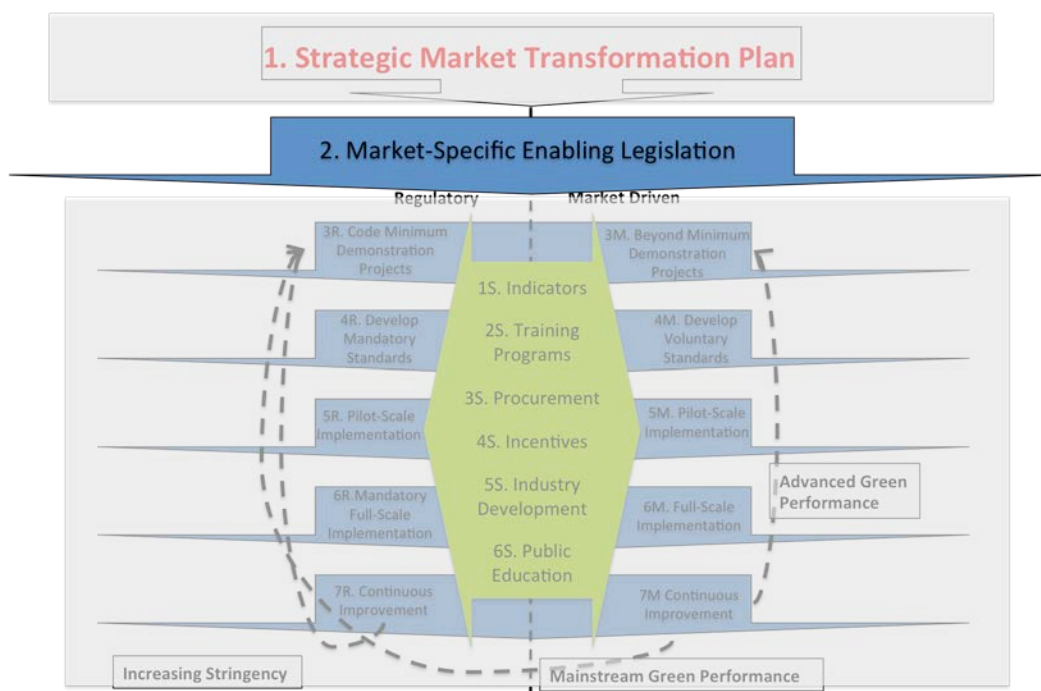


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### Step 2: Enact Enabling Legislation

Although many aspects of the market transformation protocol can be implemented in the absence of enabling legislation, having this foundation fully or partially established will make a very significant difference in the speed and success of implementing both the regulatory and the market driven elements needed.

Often, the enabling legislation required to implement aspects of a transformation to sustainable tourism will be as simple as adding a few lines to existing legislation that pertain to the sector. In other cases, basic legislation would need to be developed, whether it involved the establishment of marine protected areas, enabling or empowering a new or existing agency to regulate the conduct of business in the tourism sector, or the ability to regulate the use of energy or water in buildings.



**Figure 4: Legislative Authority is needed for comprehensive market transformation**

Table 2 shows representative—but not comprehensive—suggestions for types of enabling legislation that could or should be enacted in each of our countries studied country. In the table below, we provide a sample list of enabling legislation, representative government or private sector institutions that it might affect and its anticipated impact on making the tourism sector more sustainable.

**Table 2: Representative topic areas for enabling legislation to support sustainable tourism**

1.	Registration and regulation of investment
2.	Land tenure, conservation, improvement or other interest in land
3.	Development planning and control



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4.	Building regulation
5.	Public health, sanitation, water quality and waste management
6.	Environmental impact assessment, and the avoidance or minimisation of adverse effects on the environment
7.	Fisheries and forestry
8.	Labour and employment, and occupational safety and health
9.	Revenue and custom laws
10.	Business licensing
11.	Liquor licensing
12.	Fair trading and other aspects of commercial activity
13.	Currency and exchange control
14.	Transportation by land, sea or air
15.	Fire prevention and control
16.	Sunday operation laws

Within many of these legislative areas, numerous elements need to be incorporated in order to make tourism sustainable from a social, economic and environmental perspective.

- Authorization to set standards, for example:
  - Tourism activities (guides, transport, etc.)
  - Tourism infrastructure: hotels, restaurants, transportation modes, equipment
- Authorization to protect marine and land areas, as well as species of flora and fauna, for example:
  - Protection authorization should include ability to restrict access
  - Need to protect indigenous/historical usage techniques and reasonable levels of traditional, non-commercial harvesting.

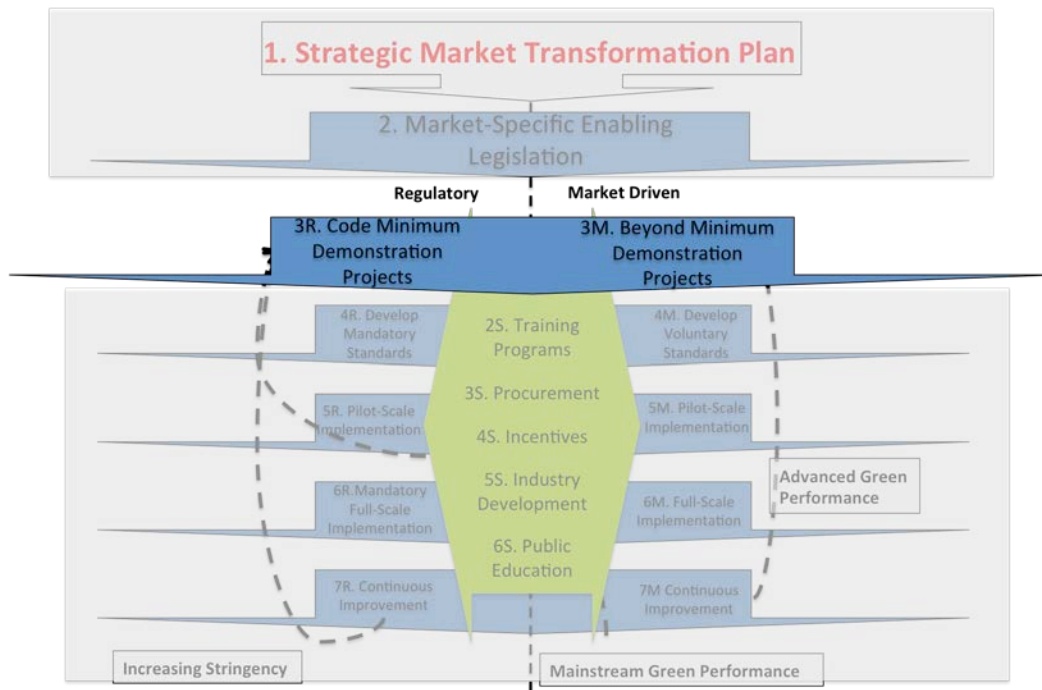
#### Case Study: **[Island]** Enabling Legislation for Sustainable Tourism

### Step 3: Implement Demonstration Projects

After the planning process has been completed, demonstration projects for both minimum performance standards and beyond minimum best practice standards should be developed. Demonstration projects can be implemented in tourism infrastructure projects, such as hospitality or transportation projects, and/or tourism activities, such as with tour guides. The purpose of demonstration projects is to test planning assumptions and demonstrate both technical and economic feasibility of implementing the performance targets identified during the planning process. Demonstration projects build the first experience in infrastructure or activity

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design and implementation, including important supporting elements such as engineering, construction, administration, inspection and enforcement.



**Figure 5: Demonstration projects show technical feasibility and set the stage for standards development**

The other important function of demonstration projects is to build awareness within the relevant professions, as well as within the public and target markets, of the goals of market transformation being pursued. One would hope that this awareness would in turn lead to greater demand for products and services that either meet the minimum or the higher voluntary thresholds of performance. In addition, it begins signalling to material and professional supply

#### Case Study: Demonstration Projects in Sustainable and Ecotourism

In 2016 Tonga confirmed that an invasive species eradication program focused on rats was successfully carried out on four islands. Building on a SPREP-sponsored biodiversity rapid assessment and a hands-on training, the rat eradication program was conducted using traps and careful monitoring for signs of rats and then monitored for 8 months to ensure the eradication was complete.

The benefits include increased populations and egg-laying of several bird species, rebounds of fruits and flowers commonly eaten by rats, as well as increased sightings of crustaceans that had previously been hiding in their burrows because of predation. Rats are also known to invade nests of endangered hawksbill and green turtles, so this simple and effective program removing the predatory vertebrate is proving to be a huge success.

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chains that new skills and new materials and equipment will be in demand.

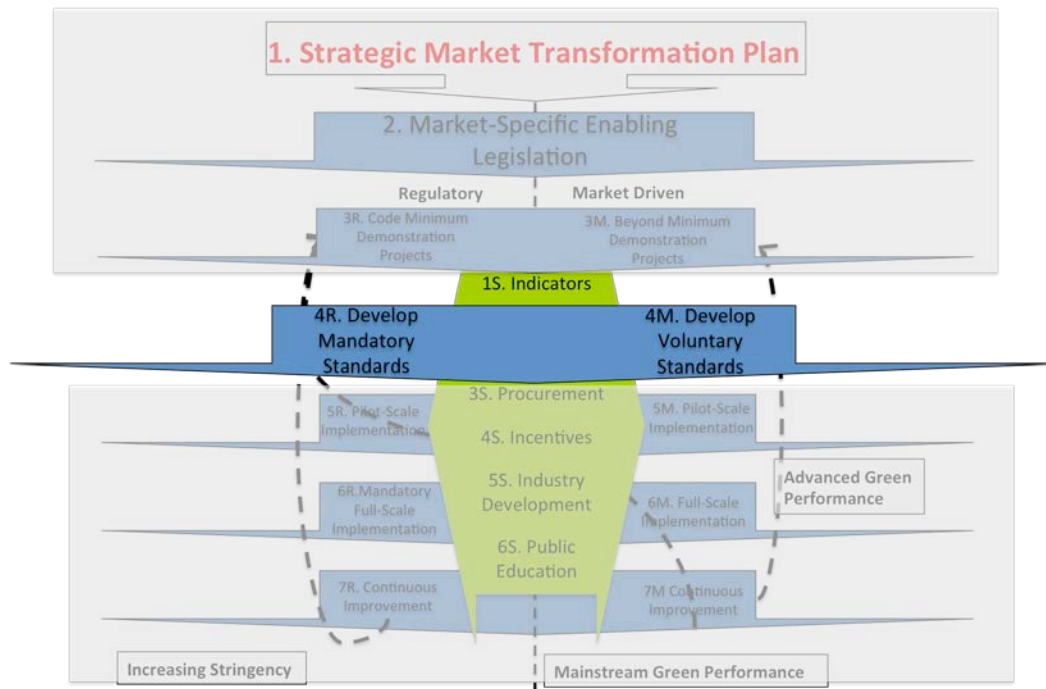
Finally, the demonstration projects should reflect the scope of the overall transformation being sought. For example, new infrastructure or activities that meet proposed mandatory minimum performance requirements should be demonstrated and the same for voluntary/best practice standards. There also should be demonstration projects involving existing infrastructure and activities that can test the effectiveness of different measures there.

#### **Step 4: Develop Standards**

The next key step in market transformation is to develop a coordinated set of mandatory and voluntary performance standards that cover both the infrastructure and activities of the tourism industry.

In most cases, there is little need to reinvent the wheel since many standards covering the necessary elements are already developed. In the cases where mandatory standards will be implemented for the first time, there may need to be some customization of existing standards. In Cameron-Cole's Country Reports, we will make recommendations for each country that we visited about a standards development strategy. As part of the Strategic Market Transformation Plan, the spectrum of standards to be developed should be laid out and priorities established for developing and implementing standards. Voluntary standards need to be coordinated with and, ideally, pegged to the mandatory standards, but this may be complicated since most existing voluntary standards will not reference the new standards in question. It is most effective to bring existing infrastructure and activity programs up to minimum standards at key transition events, such as sale of a property or renewal of professional licensing. Some existing infrastructure may not be able to conform to modern standards, either because of historical preservation considerations or the fact that it is cost-prohibitive to make the full structure conform. In these cases, many of the benefits of increased performance can be secured through equipment standards. For example, an historic building may not be able to add modern windows, but high-efficiency air conditioning can be installed in favour of less efficient equipment.

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**Figure 6: Complementary mandatory and voluntary standards are very powerful market transformation tools**

It should be noted that mandatory standards do not represent, nor do they drive, best practice. These standards represent the minimum allowed level of performance allowed by the state. Another way of describing minimum standards: “If it were done any worse, it would be illegal.”

The standards development process is an excellent framework around which to build the industry and the necessary supporting associations.

#### Codes and Standards

There are two basic types of standards that would be developed to guide the transformation of sustainable tourism and the creation of an ecotourism industry. The first would be standards governing qualifications, actions and activities of all tourism professionals. These standards could be made mandatory for minimum qualifications and voluntary for more specialized or sensitive activities. Levels of certification can be tied to accessing certain sensitive locations, as well as the ability to participate in incentive and other professional development programs.

The other set of standards would be applied to tourism infrastructure: accommodations, appliances and equipment, transportation equipment, etc. As with everything in the Market Transformation Protocol, these standards would have a mandatory component (code) and a voluntary component that would identify and reward best practices.

In addition, because of the large impact that non-tourist infrastructure has on overall environmental quality and visitor experience, we strongly recommend that broad infrastructure categories, such as buildings, or vehicles, be covered by at least the mandatory minimum performance requirements.

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For programs and infrastructure that do not already have a minimum performance code in place: ***the most important thing to remember is that the first set of standards is not about promoting achievement and improvement, rather the first set of mandatory codes is to create a culture of compliance.*** The first implemented standard is about building enforcement infrastructure and adjusting the expectations of the regulated entities.

Thus, for most buildings, the initial set of mandatory standards should be focused on life and safety, with perhaps a modest energy and water efficiency element. For example, structural integrity requirements, emergency egress requirements and perhaps a requirement that emergency exit signs have energy-efficient lighting, should be the limit of the first building code implemented. A simplified common sense code should be well received by the market. The process of developing and enforcing this simple code can be a steppingstone to promoting and encouraging more stringency after an agreed-upon time – three years is most common for buildings.

The other area that is right for effective intervention in codes and standards is the appliance and equipment market. Because much equipment is sold and produced internationally, it is easier to have requirements for higher efficiency equipment than it is to, say, require higher levels of insulation, or better windows, in a building. Since most buildings have extensive equipment, the energy-efficiency requirements can have a very significant overall impact on saving energy. As time moves on, building codes can be integrated with the appliance codes and other elements such as window and envelope overall performance can be included.

For transportation equipment, standards initially can be adopted for fleet and commercial vehicles with later requirements placed on private vehicles. Basic energy requirements and emissions requirements can be integrated.

#### **Standards for Tour Guides and Companies**

From a sustainable tourism perspective, the minimum mandatory requirements for being licensed as a tour guide or operator should integrate basic sustainability elements, such as energy efficiency, saving water and minimizing the generation of solid waste. For countries that are implementing their first set of minimum standards the requirements should focus on basic business and operational competency with simple sustainability elements. As noted elsewhere in our report, the main goal of the first set of standards is to establish the framework and enforcement of common performance attributes, as well as the value of being minimally certified. The voluntary standard could provide the minimum benchmarks for the ecotourism segment of the industry. The voluntary guidelines could include higher resource efficiency goals, as well as additional elements around cultural or economic sustainability. Voluntary certification, if confirmed to be meaningful, could be one element in determining access to restricted Marine or Land Protected Areas.

#### **Standards for Marine Protected Areas**

Many PICTs already have extensive Marine Protected Areas (MPA) set aside. For these countries, the challenge is principally enforcement of regulations. Below, we describe a strategy for deputizing members of the community—principally for coastal zone Community MPA enforcement—and tour and activity companies to support the protection of the MPAs. Standards can take many forms, ranging from permitted and/or prohibited activities,

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authorization, type and hours of access, limits on permitted activities, penalties for violations, etc.

#### **Standards for Open Water Marine Interactions**

With regard to open water marine wildlife interactions, attention needs to be paid to the type and nature of interactions, as well as the intensity of interaction between wild creatures and the tourists. SPREP has already facilitated the development of standards for interaction with marine mammals and SPTO can help disseminate these materials through tourism channels.<sup>9</sup> Training and certification in these guidelines should be part of mandatory minimum training for all marine tour operators. Best practices have been developed for interactions with other marine creatures, such as sharks and rays.<sup>10</sup> These best practices should be demonstrated and adapted for local conditions. Once these best practices have been demonstrated locally and turned into more guidelines, they too should be integrated with the minimum mandatory requirements for that country. The enabling legislation (Step 2) would empower the relevant national ministry with the ability to establish regulations governing interactions with marine life. Knowledge of these regulations would be part of the requirement to become certified to conduct tours or manage sites where these interactions would occur.

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<http://www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/Pacific%20Regional%20Guidelines%20for%20Whale%20&%20Dolphin%20Watching.pdf>

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<https://www.openchannels.org/sites/default/files/Best%20Practices%20on%20Sustainable%20Shark%20and%20Ray%20Tourism.pdf>

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### Case Study: Vanuatu's Development of Mandatory and Voluntary Standards for Tourism and Ecotourism

Developing a full set of standards for an entire industry is a multi-year undertaking. The Vanuatu Department of Tourism (VDOT) has worked since 2010 to develop comprehensive province- and national-level tourism plans to help frame and underpin a comprehensive program of existing and proposed standards that encompasses the:

1. Vanuatu Tourism Product Classification System (completed)
2. Vanuatu Tourism Operator Minimum Standards (completed; evaluation of 2-year pilot undertaken in 2017; full launch in 2018)
3. Vanuatu Tourism Rating System (under development)
4. Vanuatu Green Tourism Rating System (under development)
5. Vanuatu Tourism Operator Code of Practice (completed)

Mandatory Tourism Standards. For example, compliance with Vanuatu's Tourism Operator Minimum Standards is mandatory in order to receive a business license. The Minimum Standards, cover 23 sub-categories within 3 broad categories: 1) Accommodations, 2) Tours & Activities 3) Transportation. Vanuatu's Minimum Standards cover Legal/Operational Requirements, Association Membership, Communications, Safety, Environment and several other requirements specific to each of the three major categories.

The process ([https://tourism.gov.vu/accreditation\\_process.php](https://tourism.gov.vu/accreditation_process.php)) originated within VDOT and engaged a Vanuatu Tourism Standards Committee made up of representatives from tourism associations, tourism businesses and government agencies. VDOT has developed a 2-4 month, 17-step process, supported by extensive resources for businesses to support compliance with the standards: [https://tourism.gov.vu/accreditation\\_resources.php](https://tourism.gov.vu/accreditation_resources.php). During the 2-year pilot phase, VDOT created self-assessment forms, which will be replaced with a site-assessor model that will confirm the self-reporting. During the pilot phase, no fees will be charged for initial accreditation applications. To date, over 400 businesses across the tourism industry have gone through the initial accreditation process and provided feedback to improve the program.

Voluntary Ecotourism Standards. The Green Tourism Rating System addresses how businesses integrate culture, the environment, climate change and renewable energy & energy efficiency into their businesses. The development process has been on going over 3 years with consultations with Ecotourism Australia ([www.ecotourism.org.au](http://www.ecotourism.org.au)) and sustainable tourism experts. According to officials and consultants engaged in program development, rather than creating new ecotourism standards from scratch, the Ecotourism Australia (EA) framework will be adapted to Vanuatu conditions. EA has a comprehensive program "ECO certified" that addresses the sustainability of Tourism Programs, Lodging, Tour Guides, and Ecotourism Destinations. The certifications range from a basic level of sustainability to an advanced level of ecotourism. <http://www.ecotourism.org.au/our-certification-programs/eco-certification-2/>. The goal of the three-year ecotourism pilot program is to have 30 Operators across the three certification areas certified under the program.

Continuous Improvement. The Tourism Permit and Accreditation Program, both the Mandatory Minimum and the Ecotourism accreditation programs will be reviewed and revised on a three-year time scale.



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### Step 5: Pilot Scale Implementation

Pilot scale implementation of standards is the next level of implementation up from demonstration projects. Both mandatory and voluntary standards/programs should be implemented at the pilot scale. These larger projects fulfil several important roles. First, they prime the market for design and implementation expertise, which is the principle purpose – building infrastructure for ultimate full-scale adoption – rather than identifying technical potential, which is the purpose of demonstration projects. In addition, large-scale programs can be on-the-job training for oversight and enforcement elements necessary to maintain the integrity of the standards. Pilot implementation can be both limited, where there is a defined but large number of participants, as well as open, where participants are not defined, but are responding to limited scale programs and incentives established to encourage early adoption of standards. Pilot implementation stage programs are a good place to implement and test incentive programs, as well as build education and training programs, which is discussed below.



**Figure 7: Pilot-scale implementation focuses on scaling administration and enforcement of standards**

Each pilot implementation project will have an appropriate scale, depending upon the aspect of the market being transformed. The scale should be big enough to be meaningful, while small enough to be manageable given the still nascent stage of development for that aspect.

#### **Pilot-Scale Implementation: Deputizing Enforcement of Standards and Protected Areas**

As far as enforcement at the pilot scale goes, each group visiting a protected site would be required to have a Deputy in the paid crew of the tour.

Although this agent would be empowered as a deputy, they would not necessarily have enforcement or arrest capabilities. Rather they would have an education function and a

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reporting and verification role that would then allow violators and violations to be identified documented and radioed in to the authorities, which would be ready to greet the offending parties upon return to land.

One criticism of this approach is that by deputizing individuals from certain companies you are giving them a potentially unfair competitive advantage or that the system is open to abuse. Naturally, violations would need to be accompanied by suitably strict penalties that would be as severe or nearly as severe for false reporting as they would for actual violations.

#### **Case Study: Pilot-Scale Demonstration on Sustainable Tourism Enforcement: New Caledonia's Ambassadors of the Lagoon (Les Ambassadeurs du Lagon)**

The Southern Province Lagoon covers 2 million hectares, 1 million hectares of which is located in 50 Protected Areas, 26 of which are exclusively marine. It is quite difficult to police this large area with the limited number of professional rangers assigned to this task.

To supplement the official Rangers, the Ambassadors of the Lagoon program officially started in 2016 with an inaugural class of 15 Ambassadors. The dual mission of the Ambassadors is to: 1) Be a lagoon mediator with clients and the public and 2) Be a protector of the lagoon.

Ambassadors are invited from within the marine/land tourism industry for a 2-year appointment. They are subject to 2 mandatory trainings per year and ongoing professional development. They are charged to

“Engage personally and collectively to defend, enhance and promote heritage exceptional biodiversity while respecting the regulations in force and the principles laid by the charter of which they are signatories.”

Ambassadors are expected to be examples of best practices and behavior within the Lagoon. They should disseminate an educational message to their clients and fellow industry members as well as intervene with users in case of maladaptive behavior if there are no Rangers around, and also to notify guards if any serious breaches are found.

Ambassadors are identified by armbands and name badges and always carry a set of documents identifying them as ambassadors and a copy of the rules and regulations under which they work.

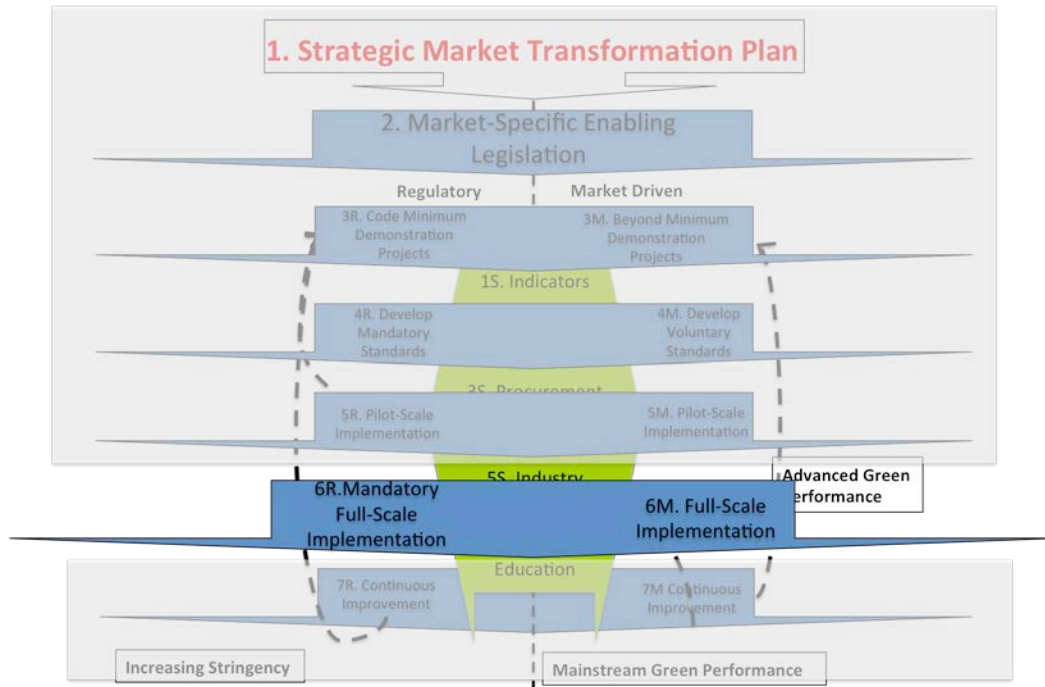
### Step 6: Full-Scale Implementation—Launch or Ramp up

Before standards can be launched at full scale, sufficient infrastructure must be in place, especially for mandatory standards. ***It's very important not to prematurely launch a standard: a launch plan without resources is worse than no plan at all.***

If expectations are established and then fail to be fulfilled, it is very difficult to re-establish the trust and participation necessary to be successful in another attempt.

Although voluntary standards can be ramped up, mandatory standards—because they apply to everyone—must be implemented all at once. For this reason, **the scope of the first set of standards must be reasonable for the current state of the market.**

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**Figure 8: The requirements of full-scale implementation are different for mandatory and voluntary standards**

The biggest mistake people make when implementing an initial set of mandatory standards is to adopt a standard that is too far advanced for the existing market. If mandatory performance levels are not possible given the level of market development, what has been created, in fact, is a culture of noncompliance. The most important thing to establish from the outset with the first mandatory standard is a culture of compliance. The easiest way to ensure this is to have a mandatory standard with a real, but modest, improvement in performance but one that is absolutely enforced.

The first set of standards is mostly about establishing compliance and the enforcement infrastructure and less about improving performance (improving performance has a bigger role in the first set of voluntary standards). It is far easier to ratchet up performance when a culture of compliance is established, than to ratchet up compliance for unrealistic performance.

### Step 7: Continuous Improvement

Although a great deal of time and effort can go into creating the initial set of mandatory or voluntary standards, often there is little thought given to subsequent sets of standards and a pathway for continuous improvement. A piece of legislation or set of rules can represent an important milestone toward sustainability, but it is the requirement for continuous improvement that leads to the ultimate transformation of the market.

Continuous improvement in each of the regulatory and market-based track serve different purposes. For example, the purpose of increasing the stringency of mandatory standards is not to advance the state-of-the-art. Rather, mandatory standards get increased in order to get rid of the worst performers. For this reason, mandatory standards should not vary more than 25 to 30% from the previous set of requirements and should set a maximum performance increase between 20 and 25%. The purpose of voluntary standards on the other hand is to set the forward boundary of performance.

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**Figure 9: A process of continuous progress is essential for true market transformation**

Voluntary standards may be able to become more stringent more quickly, but are subject to the ability of the market to absorb change. As voluntary standards become more mainstream, their requirements can be integrated into the mandatory requirements. Advanced performance elements can similarly go through the pilot integration and adoption process through the voluntary standard development cycle. In this way, the progress in performance continually increases as shown in the Market Transformation diagram.

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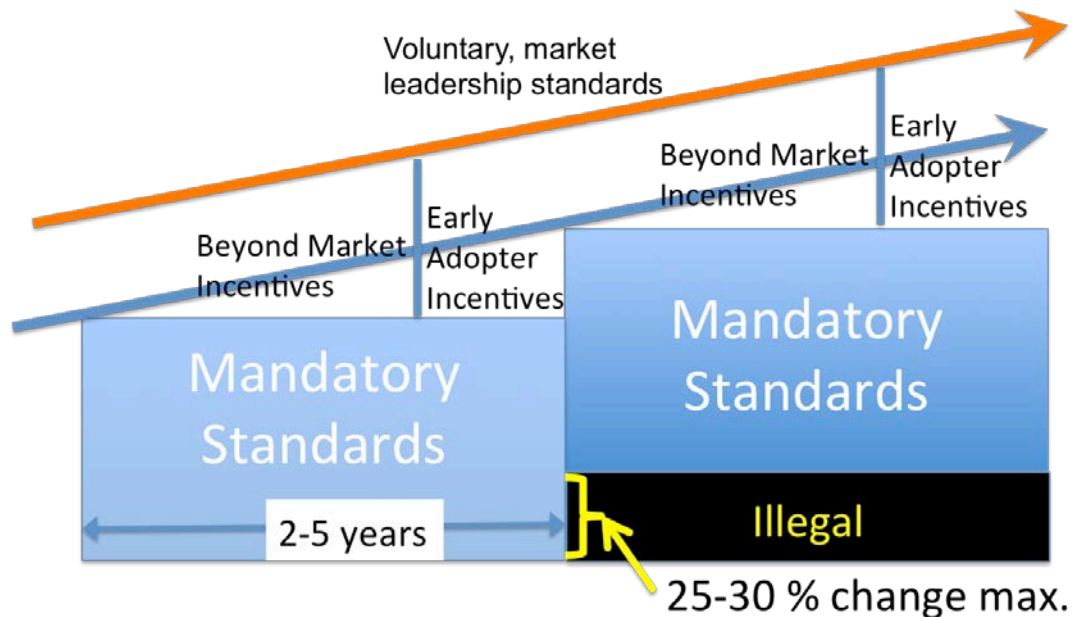


Figure 10: Dynamic Interplay Between Mandatory and Voluntary Standards

#### Continuous Improvement Timeline

One key aspect of continuous improvement is setting a regularly spaced time horizon for when performance requirements get updated. The time horizon for updating both mandatory and voluntary standards represents a balance between stability and progress and there will always be a dynamic tension between “how far?” and “how fast?” Too little time between modifications of practices and requirements means that the industry is not sufficiently stable and that there is not enough time to implement measures cost-effectively. Similarly, if requirements are changed too infrequently, progress stagnates as the industry fails to implement best practices.

This time horizon will vary depending upon the type of area being regulated. For regulations that affect tourism services, 1 to 3 years is an adequate cycle to allow improvements to be developed and integrated into performance standards for activities, such as tour guides, or standards affecting operational procedures, as opposed to capital investment.

For infrastructure that requires moderate to high investment, such as buildings and operational equipment, a cycle of three years should be adequate to allow practices to be adopted and implemented cost-effectively, while allowing performance improvements to be developed and taken up by the market. For longer-term and more capital intensive infrastructure such as transportation vehicles<sup>11</sup>, power, or water treatment, a 5 to 10 year horizon for increasing performance standards will be adequate to develop and integrate cost-effective improvements into design and operations of such infrastructure.

<sup>11</sup> We should note that there is a distinction between purchasing standards and manufacturing standards. A purchasing standard that requires increased energy efficiency for vehicles could be adopted on a three-year cycle. However, a manufacturing standard that requires the production of higher efficiency vehicles would likely require a five-year or more lead-time, depending upon the efficiency improvement mandated.

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#### **Case Study: Vanuatu Tourism Accreditation Plan Continuous Improvement Proposal**

The soon-to-be-released Operational Plan for implementing Vanuatu's Tourism Accreditation program contains the following key continuous improvement elements:

##### **Phase 5: Program Operation and Continuous Improvement Program**

Project tasks: **5.1 Develop a Continuous Improvement Program** and approach with stakeholders to annually review minimum standards to raise them over time in a logical and achievable method that improves the visitor experience and strengthens and builds the Vanuatu Tourism Brand. Revised version of minimum standards to be launched after 3 years.

##### Project Description:

- Identify target areas for improvement, plan training priorities around these and engage with relevant stakeholders including operators to achieve this
- Ensure the Continuous Improvement Program is included in the Communications Plan
- Communicated to operators through awareness and training
- A rolling three-year program
- Consider Environment, Climate Change, Kastom (custom), Renewable Energy
- Empower associations to be equipped with knowledge around risk management

Responsibility: DoT including Volunteers

Timeframe: Ongoing - Consider in Sep 2016 minimum standards review; Communicate to stakeholders Nov 2017.

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### Market Transformation Support Elements

The supporting elements and institutions described in the next section enable both the development and implementation of the first set of standards, while at the same time providing on-going support for the continuous improvement of performance in whichever element of the tourism sector is being modified.

The market transformation protocol includes six core support elements that facilitate the development and implementation of mandatory and voluntary standards and programs to facilitate the transformation of the market.

Ideally, each of these six elements would exist to some degree simultaneously on an on-going basis. Obviously, financial resources and the degree to which the necessary skills exist will constrain the degree to which these elements are implemented at any given point.

The six Market Transformation Support Elements are as follows:

1. Sustainability Indicators
2. Training Programs
3. Procurement
4. Incentives
5. Industry Development
6. Public Education

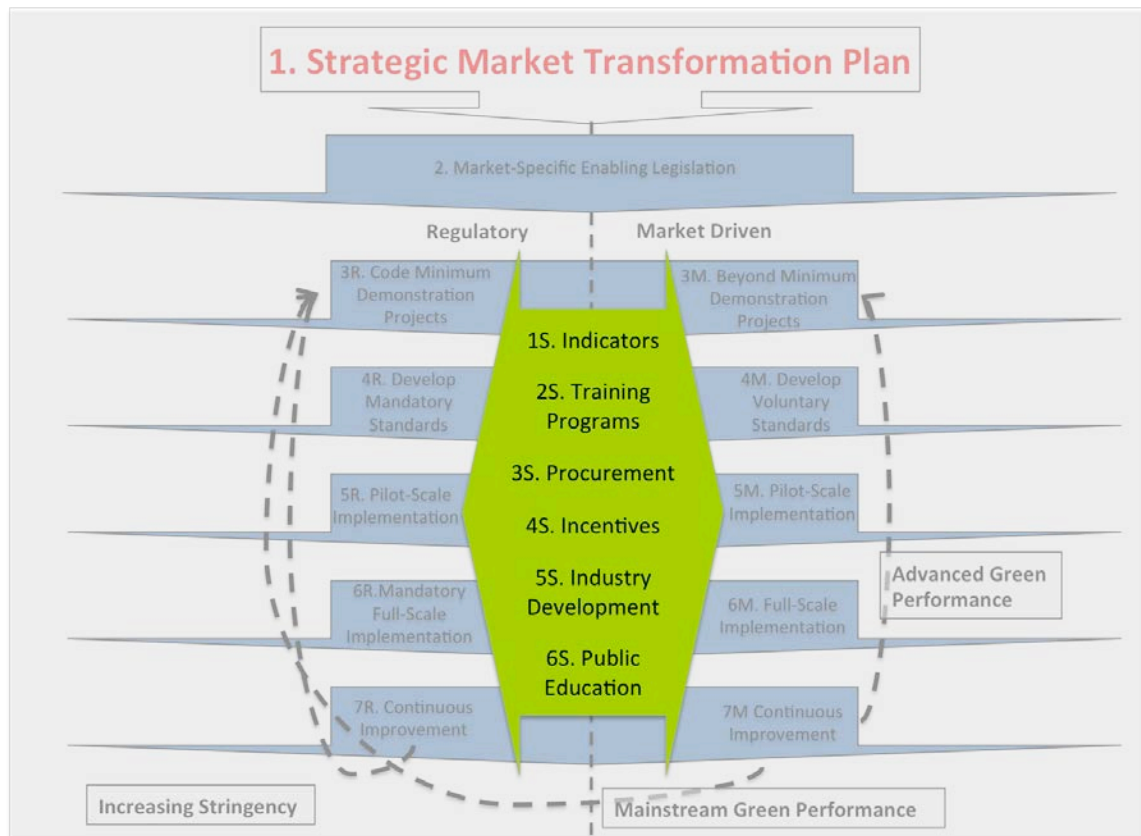


Figure 11: Key Supporting Elements for Market Transformation



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### Supporting Element: Sustainability Indicators

Defining, measuring and tracking sustainability indicators will be a key element of moving tourism toward sustainability. The development of sustainability indicators should be an inclusive process that will build awareness and a supporting constituency within the community. Once demonstrated in the field, these indicators can be modified based on actual practice. Table 3 shows the evolution of Sustainable Tourism Indicators in Samoa. Initial measurements of these indicators will be key in assessing which areas need to limit access and what the carrying capacity of alternative sites might be. SPREP has sponsored excellent work by Louise Twining-Ward on Sustainable Tourism Indicators, which should be integrated into the Step 1 Strategic Planning effort. SPTO can play an important convenor role within the tourism industry to adapt and adopt indicators specific to the country and its tourism industry that support marine conservation goals.

**Table 3: List of Sustainable Tourism Indicators Developed for Samoa<sup>12</sup>**

First working list of indicators	Final list of indicators
1a) Village participation in conservation programmes 1b) Tourist visits to conservation areas	1a) Percentage of villages important to tourism, participating in land and forest conservation programmes 1b) Percentage of all holiday-makers to Samoa, going on nature tours
2a) Village participation in marine conservation programmes 2b) Tourist participation in marine activities	2a) Percentage of coastal villages important to tourism, participating in marine conservation programmes 2b) Percentage of all holiday-makers to Samoa, taking part in marine tourism activities
3a) Type of hotel waste-water treatment 3b) Type of hotel solid waste management	3a) Percentage of tourist accommodation facilities, using secondary or tertiary waste-water treatment systems 3b) Percentage of tourist accommodation facilities, recycling their biodegradable wastes
4a) Tourism accommodation with potable tap water 4b) Hotel water usage	4a) Percentage of villages important to tourism in the Samoan Water Authority (SWA) sampling programme, whose water meets SWA quality standards 4b) Average volume of water used per guest night, in hotels with water meters
5a) Rural tourism employment 5b) Tourism businesses located outside Apia	5a) Percentage of full time jobs in tourist accommodation facilities, that are located in rural areas
6a) Newly registered tourism businesses 6b) GDP generated by the tourism industry	6a) Percentage of newly registered tourism businesses, compared to other newly registered businesses 6b) Percentage of GDP generated by tourism businesses

<sup>12</sup> Indicator handbook: A guide to the development and use of Samoa's sustainable tourism indicators. Louise Twining-Ward, Samoa Visitors Bureau & SPREP (2002) p.15 & p.18.

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7a) Villages included in awareness programmes 7b) Hotel employees who have been on training courses	7a) Percentage of villages important to tourism, included in tourism awareness programmes 7b) Percentage of full-time tourist accommodation employees, who have been on training courses during the year
8a) Provision of information about village protocol by tourism operators 8b) Villages providing a traditional home-stay experience	8a) Percentage of hotels and tour operators, consistently providing visitors with information about village protocol.
9a) Entries in traditional dance competition 9b) Exhibitors at annual craft fair	9a) Percentage of traditional events in the Teuila and Independence Festival Programmes 9b) Percentage of stalls in the three main markets, selling handicrafts as the main product
10a) Quality rating given to attraction sites 10b) Quality of service in key tourism enterprises	10a) Percentage of the top 20 most visited attraction sites, rated either good or excellent in terms of their services, facilities and environment
11a) Hotels with environmental assessments conducted 11b) Historical and cultural sites protected by national law	11a) Percentage of newly registered tourist accommodation facilities, that have had an environmental assessment conducted 11b) Percentage of key tourist sites and landscapes, damaged by inappropriate developments (on a cumulative basis)
12a) Tourism operators showing commitment to sustainable tourism 12b) Projects undertaken as a result of monitoring programme	12a) Percentage of tourism operators, adopting sustainable tourism practices

### Supporting Element: Training Programs

Professional development and training is needed during all phases of the market transformation cycle. Training is needed in professional services and practices, as well as in the design and operation of facilities and attractions.

Training programs can be offered through government entities as well as through private associations and professional associations. Ideally, these training programs would be coordinated and reference both mandatory and voluntary leadership requirements.

Professional accreditations or certifications attached with successful completion of training programs are a really good way to connect incentives for improved performance. For example, if there were a Sustainable Tour Guide accreditation offered at the national or regional level, a national government could restrict access to certain sensitive marine areas only to those tour guides or tour companies that have achieved this level of certification. Different levels of accreditation could be demonstrated through the award of labels that signify differing levels of achievement. The challenge of such labels will be how to bridge the traditional concepts of hierarchy of visitors (e.g. Gold, Platinum, etc.) with one that evokes the region, perhaps some variation on the 'star' designation could be implemented.

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Typically, with such certifications, an on-going training and maintenance program is required, coupled with periodic retesting and recertification. This on-going skill and knowledge maintenance program means that the value of the certification continues to increase, which gives the industry the credibility it needs and it gives tourists comfort that they are in professional hands.

#### **Regional Training**

Regional training for both mandatory minimum and voluntary best practice standards achievement is necessary. This training would occur in tourism infrastructure facilities (e.g. hotels) tourism services (tour programs, restaurants, etc.) and in tourism information (museums, information centres, etc.) Sustainable Tourism training would be a good area for SPTO—in coordination with SPREP—to develop a core curriculum that could then be adapted to the requirements and specification of individual countries. In each of the Country Reports, we will note existing programs and institutions that can be utilized in a regional Sustainable Tourism Training Network.

#### **Case Study: Hospitality Training Center-Lycée Hotelier de Tahiti**

The hotel school located in Faa'a on French Polynesia's main island is one of the largest hospitality training programs in the region. Industry training is provided to students of high school to college age who are indigenous Tahitians. At present, sustainability is not part of the basic curriculum, though the school's administrators are very open to the idea.

Perhaps the largest barrier to expanding the curriculum and the program is lack of budget. Another challenge, however, is the perception that the region does not provide many opportunities for professional advancement. Elsewhere in our report, Cameron-Cole recommends partnerships between regional & national training centers with other hospitality training sites and international hotel chain training programs. These partnerships would involve exchange of instructors and could use and improve existing facilities to support local training. A modest hotel tariff could be evaluated as a means to fund a regional program.

Clearly, training is needed for tour guides and activity guides whether for outdoor or adventure activities or for cultural visits. Basic training programs for basic licensure and accreditation could be given as a prerequisite to participating in the industry in any aspect at all. More advanced training could be given to individuals and or companies seeking to have access to the more sensitive or valuable protected areas ("beyond minimum" training). There are many minimum and best practice guides established for a range of activities, including interactions with sensitive marine life, such as rays and sharks, and marine mammals. Training and education should also be given to guides of land-based and culturally based activities.

#### **Translator Note: This section is copied verbatim from Deliverable 2.**

The region should support a network of regional and national hospitality training centers. These centers could develop faculty exchange programs with other training centers around the world. This would bring world-class trainers to the region that could train existing professionals in existing facilities, as well as secondary and university-level students seeking employment in the sector. Local faculty could bring their experience to other international hospitality training

### **Deliverable 3: Key Actions to Support Development of an Ecotourism Sector**

programs, both to learn about the latest techniques and to promote the region as a career and tourism destination. Governments should consider partnering with international chains, which often have the highest quality and most comprehensive training programs to open up their training programs to local professionals as part of their local franchise agreements.

National governments should also conduct national awareness building campaigns and promotion of tourism careers, which are often seen as low-status and low-opportunity jobs.

The tourist experience would definitely be enhanced by consistent training in the infrastructure and support aspects of the industry, in particular, hotels and restaurants, and also cultural sites such as museums, etc.

#### **Supporting Element: Procurement**

Procurement programs are an excellent way of priming the market for broader adoption of improved goods and services. Procurement is an exercise of market power and it can demonstrate preference for certain levels of performance at a corporate and government level.

For example, when posting an international meeting, the government can give preference to properties and environmental and cultural tours that have green certification, which signals to the market that these services are valued and valuable. This, in turn, will incentivize product and service providers to invest in compliance with more advanced standards.

Government and market leaders can also demonstrate through procurement programs more advanced analytical techniques such as lifecycle cost assessment, instead of a simple first cost assessment. In addition, such procurement rules can begin demonstrating things such as the value of environmental and ecosystem services when assessing programs or purchases.

#### **Supporting Element: Incentives**

##### **Incentivizing Sustainable Infrastructure**

To make the interplay between mandatory and voluntary standards effective, there need to be incentives that encourage both early adoption of mandatory and voluntary standards, as well as incentives to encourage going beyond minimum standards to adopt voluntary standards. This interplay is demonstrated in Figure 10 (see Step 7: Continuous Improvement)

The interplay between beyond-minimum incentives and early-adopter incentives will depend upon the standard adoption timeframe. If we use a three-year standard development and implementation cycle as an example, generally, the first two years would be dedicated to beyond-minimum standard incentives and the final year focused on early-adopter incentives. Generally, the beyond minimum standard incentives would be slightly higher than the early adopter incentives. As the name implies, “beyond minimum” incentives are designed to help grow industry practice and material/equipment availability beyond the minimum. By contrast, “early adopter” incentives are geared exactly to the next set of standards, whether voluntary or mandatory.

Incentives can be non-monetary or they can be monetary. Non-monetary incentives can provide accelerated administrative processes for sustainable tourism or ecotourist activities and facilities. Cameron-Cole has noted in this report that access to sensitive sites could be restricted to sustainable or eco-certified tour guides or development in new tourism areas could be

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restricted to green certified developments or green developments could receive quicker approval than conventional projects.

For capital investment projects, the monetary form of the Beyond Minimum incentive can cover a portion of the incremental cost of new equipment that exceeds mandatory minimum standards. Once a new set of codes or standards has been adopted, Early Adopter incentives can be paid to make up all or a portion of the additional costs of meeting the new standard. This “primes the pump” and allows market to build up the necessary production or distribution infrastructure.

When mature, Early Adopter standards could be cost shared 80/20, while Beyond Market standards could be cost shared 70/30 between the government and the user. Initially, though, it may be necessary to set incentives that pay the full marginal cost—including design and engineering—of meeting the higher bar of performance.

#### **Incentivizing Sustainable Activities**

Sustainable tourism does not need to be a “one-way street” where tourists come to a Pacific island nation and partake of its natural beauty—albeit in a more conscious and sustainable way leaving behind only money. Indeed, many people today are looking to leave more of a legacy in countries that they visit than simply their money. Volunteer tourism is a growing area of tourism, especially among younger generations.

For example, it would be relatively straightforward to incentivize more visitors to engage in environmental restoration projects through food, lodging and venue discounts or special access to restricted protected areas.

As noted earlier, we do not know nearly enough about the environmental conditions of many sensitive sites, in terms of their current usage patterns or the impact of visitation on ecosystem viability. Volunteers could be used to undertake impact studies, make species counts, engage in invasive species eradication programs<sup>13</sup> and erosion prevention and restoration programs,<sup>14</sup> etc. It would be relatively easy to offer discounted or special access packages to tourist volunteers during lower visitation periods.

In terms of funding, there are many potential sources where funds to support these kinds of restoration activities could be secured. For example, nations could arrange with air carriers to set aside a certain number of seats each flight that to be discounted for people who make travel arrangements through a Responsible/Conscious Tourism section on the national travel agency website that Cameron-Cole recommended in our industry analysis report. Volunteer impact tourists and firms and organizations that coordinate such activities would be able to access countries at a discount and certain hotels could be worked with to provide discounted lodging – again for people who come through an impact tourist program. Given that most of the capacity of airline and hotels are not full, it should not really cost hotel or air companies any money to support such a program. Similarly, cruise ships also could set aside a limited number of berths for impact tourists who could engage in local restoration projects in exchange for access to restricted areas, etc.

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<sup>13</sup> Using small-scale biofuel conversion technology, the biomass of the invasive species could be turned into biofuels to displace imported fossil fuels, along with restaurant grease and discarded food waste.

<sup>14</sup> A successful example of such an erosion control program was conducted on Aneityum island in Vanuatu, which unfortunately, was canceled due to lack of funding.

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There would need to be a training and oversight and coordination function fulfilled either at the national level or at the regional level. Perhaps SPREP could fund a regional site restoration expert who would travel to different countries and provide training for local site restoration and ecological restoration activities. Most countries already have some expertise and venues for such training through existing NGOs or institutions such as museums and aquaria.

Coloured wristbands—worn by volunteering tourists—could be a way to provide identification and access to people participating in sustainable tourism activities. These wristbands could also perhaps be used to secure discounts for admission to cultural activities, secure discounts at restaurants and other tourism activities.

The number of slots allowed for impact tourists could vary by time of year. During high tourism season, these discounted slots could be at a minimum, ramping up during the off-season. Another possible incentive for people to participate in this activity might include exclusive access to cultural activities such as indigenous shows or visits with local tribes, etc.

#### **Supporting Element: Industry Development**

Expertise is needed to develop and implement market transformation programs for tourism. One of the best ways to secure and implement this expertise is through the use of industry associations. As we will discuss in other parts of our assessment, we believe that elements of the tourism industry can also be harnessed to provide an oversight and even an enforcement role in supporting mandatory requirements, as well as voluntary performance standards.

##### **Case Study: Industry Development ‘Eua Ecotourism Association, Tonga**

The ‘Eua Ecotourism Association (EEA) is a small local organization located on ‘Eua Island, which is considered Tonga’s ‘ecotourism destination’. ‘Eua Island wants to protect its current way of life, while bringing in some additional revenues, so ecotourism is a perfect fit.

EEA was formed after not being able to work with the island’s Tourism association, which was populated with many firms that had little to no relationship with tourism and the sustainability agenda was difficult to promote within the group.

Although ‘Eua is promoted as the country’s ecotourism destination, there is currently very little support from the national Tourism Ministry, largely because ecotourism is such a small portion of the industry compared with the whale watching industry. In addition, there have been recent problems with high-speed whale watching boats operated by international companies coming in from Tongatapu, which not only spooks the whales, but also violates the franchise terms of the whale watching businesses on the island.

Although it is the closest main island to Tongatapu, access to ‘Eua is very limited—10 airplane seats and a 3-hour 1-2x per day ferry, which constrains the number of visitors to the island. If a catamaran ferry were available from Nuku‘alofa, cruise ship passengers could access the island for day trips and could provide an important revenue source for the island, as well as an attractive option for visiting cruise tourists.

In most Pacific countries, the necessary professional and industry associations already exist. SPTO could play an important role by providing frameworks and training to these associations to give them the business development and market tools needed to have the structure

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necessary to administer the transformation of the tourism sector toward sustainability. These business tools would be complemented and supported by the environmental and marine conservation resources developed by SPREP to marry the tourism business elements with the necessary conservation underpinning required to make sustainable tourism and ecotourism viable.

#### **Supporting Element: Public Education**

Public education is the final pillar of the supporting elements of the market transformation protocol. Building awareness and understanding of the requirements of the sustainable tourism sector and the benefits and impacts of the transformation will be important to accelerate sustainability and protect vulnerable marine resources.

Working with national governments and the air and sea carriers serving Pacific countries, SPREP can develop a series of "public service announcements" (PSA) to educate visitors and citizens about the importance of the marine environment and how tourism visitation can be done in a sensitive way to protect globally important natural resources. At a minimum, these PSA's should be done in English and Chinese. Depending upon the existence of supporting enabling legislation or contract terms with in docking and or landing agreements, playing these PSA's could be a mandatory requirement, not unlike the announcements around bio security.

#### **Case Study: Public Education from Te Mana o te Moana**

Te Mana o te Moana (TMOM) is a non-governmental organization located on the island of Moorea in French Polynesia. The group has a very successful public education facility that teaches visitors and students about marine conservation and proper interaction with marine animals. In addition, educators from TMOM have developed and disseminated an extensive body of education materials and programs in French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Vanuatu. TMOM averages around 2 full-day events and conferences around marine conservation that they organize and participate in.

Since 2004, TMOM has educated approximately 65,000 people, including more than 50 000 children. They have developed 4 comprehensive educational programs and 3 full educational kits, as well as 11 ocean conservation games, more than 33 sets of curricula, 8 educational booklets and nearly 50 promotional and informational posters focusing on marine conservation. Te Mana o te Moana engages youth more deeply by having them develop and sign Charters for the protection of marine animals.



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#### **Appendix 1: United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)/World Trade Organization (WTO) 12 Goals of Sustainable Tourism**

The twelve aims for making tourism sustainable were described in “Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers” (United Nations Environment Programme – World Tourist Organization, 2005) as:

1. Economic Viability: To ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to continue to prosper and deliver benefits in the long term.
2. Local Prosperity: To maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally.
3. Employment Quality: To strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
4. Social Equity: To seek a widespread and fair distribution of economic and social benefits from tourism throughout the recipient community, including improving opportunities, income and services available to the poor.
5. Visitor Fulfilment: To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability, or in other ways.
6. Local Control: To engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making about the management and future development of tourism in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders.
7. Community Wellbeing: To maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.
8. Cultural Richness: To respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions, and distinctiveness of host communities.
9. Physical Integrity: To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes, both urban and rural, and avoid the physical and visual degradation of the environment.
10. Biological Diversity: To support the conservation of natural areas, habitats, and wildlife, and minimize damage to them.
11. Resource Efficiency: To minimize the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.
12. Environmental Purity: To minimize the pollution of air, water, and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors.

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Tonga rat eradication article: <https://www.sprep.org/biodiversity-ecosystems-management/rat-eradication-a-success-in-tonga>