



First steps...

In order to make our action plan work, we have decided to follow this simple but working model.

**STUDY** – three members of our team had volunteered to be in charge of the implementation of the sustainability management system. We have also carefully read through the training materials provided on the quick base platform of Sustainable Travel International, as well as EOS Code (A Code of Practice on Environment Oriented Sustainability, we also participate in [www.eoscode.eu](http://www.eoscode.eu)). Mr. Andrew Grossman's thorough consultations help us improve our understanding and increase our commitment towards responsible tourism development.;

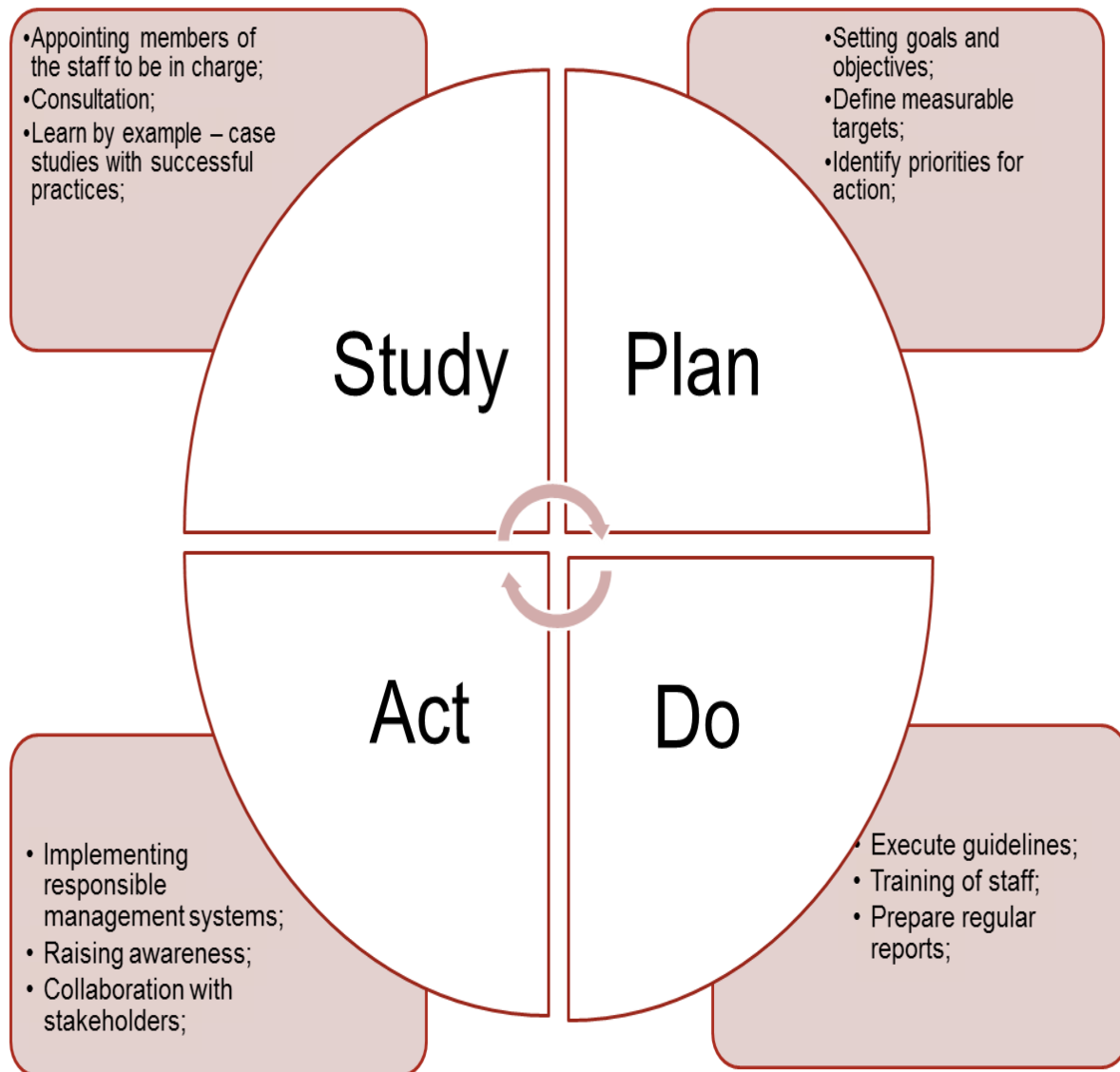
**PLAN** – defining your objectives and setting goals, makes your projects feasible. Goals should be achievable and easy to communicate to all team members and target groups. A brainstorming table and team building training sessions are just brief examples of how sustainability can become part of your everyday company activities;

**ACT** – In our opinion, the spotlight should be put on the introduction of the Sustainable Tourism Development in Bulgaria. Contributing to spreading awareness via cooperation with all tourism stakeholders seems to be the soundest way to incorporate responsible management systems in your business.

**DO** – To deliver a good guideline it is very important that your staff is well trained, you have already identified your priorities and goals and there comes the last step – monitoring. Guidelines help you better understand others' perception of your activities and how well you have communicated your sustainability strategy. Monitoring is vital for measuring progress and defining possible strengths, trends, opportunities and obstacles.



# Renaissance Tours BULGARIA





## **MISSION STATEMENT**

"Renaissance Tours will stage your journey with sophistication.

Our favorite word is care.

Care for our staff, for our customers, for our partners, for the environment.

Allow us to elevate your experience from flat to meaningful and memorable."

Our mission today as one of the first Bulgarian companies to involve in sustainability in the tourism sector is to bring awareness and understanding to the concept of responsible tourism development. Our main goal is to reduce the pressure of tourism activities by mutual tolerance and cooperation among tourism stakeholders, visitors and local population. In order to minimize adverse impact on environment and natural surroundings in the host region our team promotes the particularly beneficial forms of tourism, such as eco-, cultural and historical tours. Further to our aim, we have encouraged the association of local population with all tourism activities. What we consider crucial for the continuous and sustainable tourism development in Bulgaria is to avoid overexploitation on carrying capacity of the sites as well as to overcome obstacles such as job insecurity related to seasonality. We do plan tourism activities so that they do not conflict with conservation efforts. All members of our staff are locally employed as part of our long-term management strategy.

Thus, it is possible for our team to implement values and ethics of responsible and sustainable tourism based on our in-depth local knowledge and experience.

We do believe that destinations can actually shape their future, of course, by setting realistic but challenging goals and promoting international understanding, peace and prosperity.

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# Renaissance TOURS BULGARIA

Our main goals; changes start within an organization and if spread wisely reach wider audience.

- 1 • Looking after workforce
- 2 • Giving something back to communities
- 3 • Preserving the environment

Our way

- Getting the word out! • Spreading awareness
- Just do it! • Putting the plan into action
- Are we there, yet???
- Monitor and report on progress



# Renaissance TOURS BULGARIA

All tourism stakeholders were identified and taken into consideration during the execution of our action plan.





# Renaissance TOURS BULGARIA

Just a brief example for our cooperation with local authorities in order to promote beneficial forms of tourism such as eco, cultural, rural, etc.

## The Treasures of Rogozen and Valchitran



...  
*The Thracian Treasures will be exhibited in the Sea Casino, Maritime Park in Burgas.*



## TREASURES of the THRACIANS



Burgas Municipality

*The Treasure of Rogozen is the biggest silver treasure ever discovered on the territory of Bulgaria. The highlights of the exposition will be neatly laid down for visitors' admiration.*

*Another 12.5 kg of pure gold will gently reflect the dimmed light of the Gallery. The 13 golden objects impress with fine craftsmanship and raise various questions related to ancient religion and lifestyle.*

31.05.2012 – 31.08.2012

### Highlights:

- Golden mugs of Rogozen
- Triple – form vessel of Valchitran



Aiming to mainstream  
Sustainability

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SUPPLIERS AND THIRD-PARTY AGENTS**

- ⌘ Reduce leakage through local purchasing and employment.
- ⌘ Buy locally produced products, train and hire local people for your staff;
- ⌘ Choose biodegradable or recyclable products with minimal packaging;
- ⌘ Use locally-owned businesses as subcontractors and incorporate sustainability clauses into contracts with third-party agents;
- ⌘ Do your best to reduce consumption of water and limit energy use;
- ⌘ Aim at providing reliable and consistent services;
- ⌘ Hold regular meetings with your staff in order to clarify and monitor implemented sustainability principles.
- ⌘ Communicate the results of the actions taken back to your staff;
- ⌘ Awareness-raising materials should be made available to both staff and visitors;
- ⌘ It is recommendable to offer on-line and on-site assistance for those suppliers interested in improving their performance regarding responsible attitude towards smart environmental management;
- ⌘ You should recognize that collaboration with local trade associations and non-governmental organizations;

Please note that we do additionally promote those third-party agents that have good sustainability performance.



## CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

The purpose of this feedback form is to help us evaluate and improve the commitment of our staff and partners towards more sustainable approach to tourism activities. Post –trip evaluation is important for us to make sure that our tours are environmentally sound.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to fill in the Visitor Feedback Form. Your kind consideration is most appreciated.

✎ Country of origin?

✎ Briefly describe your trip:

Culinary

Cultural

Home Visit

Sightseeing

Wine Appreciation

Historical

Museum

Nature

Religious

Walking



## Sustainability Policy and Action Plan

- ✎ How often did you interact with people not involved with the shore excursion?
- ✎ Did the guide provide you with sufficient information on how to act respectfully in terms of local culture and environmental preservation?
- ✎ From your observations, how would you rate the overall effect of your excursion on the local community (on a scale from 1/negative/ to 5 /positive/)?
- ✎ Can you expand your reasons for the assessment provided:
- ✎ Were there any locally made handicrafts or souvenirs on offer?
- ✎ Did you feel that a number of the services provided by your Bulgarian tour operator were local (transportation, entertainment, food produce, etc.)
- ✎ How would you rate your driver, guide and local tour operator responsibility and attitude towards smart environmental management (on a scale from 1/lack of involvement/ to 5/significant efforts/)?

Sustainability Policy and Action Plan

**LIST OF ACTIONS FOR LOCAL ACCESS**

- ✎ Tourists are informed and educated how to avoid environmental degradation and offensive behavior towards local population.
- ✎ By local population involved in the preparation of our excursions, we decrease the financial leakage in the region.
- ✎ We do coordinate visits with local communities and authorities.
- ✎ Educate staff (staff meetings, training) to avoid negative environmental and cultural impacts.
- ✎ Research positive examples of community involvement in tourism and analyze sustainable tourism Development in neighboring countries, for instance.
- ✎ Providing accurate preliminary information on prices and costs in the area visited in order to minimize the chances for speculation, leading to increased costs of living for the locals.
- ✎ Always take into consideration public and local holidays and plan our tours accordingly.
- ✎ Special arrangements devoted to avoiding congestion through traffic free zones and timing adjustments (avoiding rush hours, etc.)

Sustainability Policy and Action Plan

## GIVING BACK TO THE PLACES YOU VISIT

### TOUR BRIEFING FOR VISITORS

- ⌘ Encourage communication efforts of locals. – Здравей, Благодаря, etc.
- ⌘ Inquire before photographing people, respect their privacy;
- ⌘ Do not buy products made from endangered plants or species for example.
- ⌘ Please consider the environment and always use the recycle bins.
- ⌘ Stimulate local craftsmanship and purchase local souvenirs such as woodcarvings, embroidery, pottery, knitwear, wine, souvenir dolls, icons, etc.
- ⌘ Please feel free to donate using the boxes in the sites visited, thus encouraging the efforts for cultural conservation;
- ⌘ Please take only photographs and do not take away the so-called "souvenirs" from natural and historical landmarks.
- ⌘ Appreciate the differences rather than the similarities, stimulate dialogue between cultures;
- ⌘ Act as an example for other travelers that are less informed than you are;
- ⌘ Responsible and sustainable tourism attitude should not end upon conclusion of this tour.

Thank you for your attention!

Sustainability Policy and Action Plan

**INDIGENIOUS POPULATION AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

- ⌘ Do you think that tourism development in this region inevitably leads to infrastructural improvements?
- ⌘ Do you think that tourism stakeholders involved in destination planning are doing their best, are you well informed about ongoing projects related to tourism and sustainability, in particular?
- ⌘ How would you classify the encounters with foreign travelers:  
Annoying  
Enriching  
I am just indifferent
  - ⌘ Can those interactions with foreign visitors be defined as culture exchange?
  - ⌘ Do you or any family members work in the tourism sector?
  - ⌘ In your opinion, what percentage of the local population use tourism as a major income provider?
  - ⌘ Can you point out any negative consequences related to the intensive tourism activities in the region?
  - ⌘ Have you heard of Renaissance Tours?
  - ⌘ Do you associate their name with sustainability related projects? If yes, would you like to participate in their initiatives?

## Sustainability Policy and Action Plan

### Monitoring

We have decided to base the process of monitoring on WTO (world tourism organization - [www.unwto.org](http://www.unwto.org)) indicators for sustainable tourism.

Site protection: monitoring executed by municipalities, data analyzed.

Stress: monitoring executed by municipalities, data analyzed;

Use Intensity: monitoring executed by municipalities, data analyzed;

Social Impact: monitoring executed by National Institute of Analysis and Evaluation of Tourism, data analyzed, questionnaire based;

Developing Control: monitoring executed by Regional Tourism Departments as well as Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism in Bulgaria, data analyzed;

Waste Management: monitoring executed by municipalities, data analyzed; regarding our company, excel files were executed and we do control our waste disposal;

Planning Process: monitoring executed by Regional Tourism Departments as well as Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism in Bulgaria, data analyzed;

Critical Ecosystem: monitoring executed by Ministry of Environment and Water, data analyzed;

Consumer Satisfaction: questionnaire based;

Local Satisfaction: questionnaire based;

Tourism Contribution to Local Economy: monitoring executed by municipalities, data analyzed;