

SEYCHELLES SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOUNDATION

Annual Report 2019



**Seychelles Sustainable
Tourism Foundation**



Our 2019 Team

- ❖ **Chairperson:** Daniella Payet Alis
- ❖ **Vice-Chairperson:** Diana Körner
- ❖ **Treasurer:** Lekha Nair
- ❖ **Secretary:** Ina Laporte
- ❖ **Board Member:** Daniella Larue
- ❖ **Board Member:** Mark Jeyhasingh
- ❖ **Project Officer:** Rossetta Alcindor
- ❖ **Project Officer:** Victoria Alis
- ❖ **Representative:** Natalie Du Buisson
- ❖ **Consultant:** Sasha Lee Marivel
- ❖ **Consultant:** Karin Thomsen

A big thank you goes to all the volunteers that supported SSTF throughout 2019:

Special thanks to Heather LaFleur and Melissa Mathurin

Making Seychelles an international best practice example for sustainable tourism through an integrated collaborative approach between public, private sector, academia and NGOs.

Our Mission

The foundation acts as a clearing house that deals full-time with sustainable tourism, that connects, collects, shares, lobbies, implements and raises funds for this endeavor and is the main focal point for all sustainable tourism matters in the country.

Through its GSTC-criteria based action plan the SSTF supports a number of environmental and social-economic sustainable tourism projects in the Seychelles, connecting different stakeholders, upscaling initiatives and pushing for sustainable change.

1. PRISTINE SEYCHELLES

Designed to promote sustainable tourism and encourage locals and tourists to experience eco-tourism and cultural tourism activities, the Pristine Seychelles campaign was launched in September 2018 by the SSTF in cooperation with the Seychelles Tourism Board (STB), the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, the Seychelles Hospitality Tourism Association (SHTA), as well as the Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority (SCAA). It is the first of its kind multi stakeholder campaign for tourism in Seychelles that addresses everyone to make a positive contribution to sustainable tourism, based on the three pillars of sustainability: protecting the natural environment, safeguarding Creole culture and supporting the local economy. The project addresses the need to encourage responsible and sustainable tourism in response to the growing tourism industry in Seychelles.

Funding was received from National Grant Committee in July 2019 to develop the campaign, create new communication tools, videos, events and workshops. This included Creole Cultural events that took place at Kempinski Resort and the National Museum, allowing artisans to engage with visitors



Pristine Seychelles was additionally showcased during World Ocean Day to address the important link between tourism and the health of the ocean through educational quizzes and the showcase of sustainable, locally made and owned products. This included made of recycled paper and metal as well as organic beauty products.

Sustainability and responsible traveling can sometimes be better portrayed and explained through videos. So far, the campaign has produced 6 short videos focusing on the 3 main pillars of sustainability. The first edition produced early in 2019 was orientated around individual actions that people can take as responsible travelers, whereas as the second edition finalized early 2020 focuses more on the experiences of sustainable tourism; understanding local



and community groups through demonstrations and explanations of their artwork. Pristine Seychelles activities also took place on World Tourism Day, whereby a meet and greet event was organized by both SSTF and STB at the international airport arrival lounge. The team took the opportunity to engage with tourists as they arrived through the arrival lounge by introducing the campaign and distributing both educational bookmarks and coco de mer shaped badges.

To find out about what some of the visitors had to say about sustainable tourism in Seychelles, visit SSTF's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCM7YrIJu7gUB7ZAKy7uGnXA>



culture by partaking in Creole custom, discovering and appreciating natural biodiversity, learning how to minimize one's carbon footprint, discovering the Creole way of life by interacting with locals etc. Traveling has become a transformative experience for people, seeking meaningful experiences and making environmentally conscious decisions during the travel. These are to be aired in public outlets such as the airport, hotels and ferry ports.

To view some of these videos, open the following link to SSTF's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLeqnHCzOfU>

Seychellois have the opportunity to study sustainable tourism and tour guiding at the Seychelles Tourism Academy. In the aim to help enrich students on the subject of sustainable tourism, a group of STA students were brought to the Four Seasons Resort, in partnership with the NGO WiseOceans, to expose them to eco-tourism initiatives that emerge from hotel-NGO partnerships. This allowed them to get a first-hand eco-tourism experience and learn more about the existing efforts in Seychelles to encourage more educational and conservation-based tourism activities for tourists.

- ➔ SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth
- ➔ SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
- ➔ SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals

- ➔ GSTC: A4 Enterprise engagement and sustainability standards
- ➔ GSTC: A6 Visitor engagement and feedback
- ➔ GSTC: A7 Promotion and information
- ➔ GSTC: B2 Decent work and career opportunities
- ➔ GSTC: B3 Supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade



2. FOOD WASTE REDUCTION PROGRAMME

Did you know?

Seychelles receives about 360,000 tourists per year. Through the food waste audits of services at restaurants in 5 hotels we established that visitors contribute to an average **0.3kg of food waste** per meal, equivalent to 0.9KG a day that includes food waste produced at storage, preparation, plate leftover, and buffet leftover. As a result, **3000 tonnes** is the estimated amount of food waste produced by hotels in Seychelles each year, a small percentage is used for composting at the establishment, some are used as animal feed by farmers while the majority is deposited into the landfill. This equates to the size of **66 Asian elephants** of food waste being dumped into our landfill every month. Today, **48% of the landfill's** content is made up of green waste and kitchen waste, knowing that its almost reaching full capacity, it is about time action is taken to divert organic waste from the landfill.



FOOD DONATION FAIR

According to FAO, roughly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year — approximately 1.3 billion tones — gets lost or wasted. With nearly half of the Providence landfill covered with organic waste, Seychelles is of no exception to this reality.

The second edition of the Food Donation Fair as part of the Food Waste Reduction Programme took place in May 2019. Around 200 kg of food was distributed to around 35 families in the Seychelles' eastern Mahe district of Roche Caiman. The donations were made by SPAR supermarket and a number of accommodation members of the Seychelles Hospitality and Tourism Association such as Alphonse Island Lodge, Constance Ephelia, Bravo Restaurant, H Resort and Kempinski Seychelles Resort.

➔ **SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities**

➔ **SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production**

➔ **GSTC: D9 Solid waste**



3. PHEMKE COLLECTION: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL ARTISANS

As part of developing sustainable tourism in Seychelles, SSTF aims to support and promote local artisans and the cultural significance of their work. In May 2019, SSTF was introduced to Phemke Collection, a fashion brand aiming to make people aware of the beauty of cultures around the world and appreciate craftsmanship with respect for people and environment. This organization scopes the world in regards to different cultural destinations whereby artisans are given a platform and guidance to make full use of their unique clothing traditions and techniques and allow for others to embrace their work.

In June 2019, SSTF partnered with Phemke Collection to put together a 4-day workshop for local artisans in Seychelles to learn how to make use of raw materials and special techniques to produce high end resort wear. Straw hats, beachwear and jewelry are some of the items artisans learned to make. Around 10 local artisans learned production techniques such as sewing, tailoring, and dyeing cloth to make finished products in the craft segment of the workshop organised with the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the international brand Phemke.

➔ **SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth**

➔ **SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production**

➔ **GSTC: B2 Decent work and career opportunities**

➔ **GSTC: B3 Supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade**

➔ **GSTC: B4 Support for community**

➔ **GSTC: C1 Protection of cultural assets**



4. BEYOND THE CLOCKTOWER - HIDDEN HISTORY OF VICTORIA

Launched in 2018, the Hidden History of Victoria initiative was designed to improve and diversify the tourist experience and enhance the cultural offer of Seychelles by providing a free self-guided map to locals, tourists and visitors.

To continue the momentum, “Redekouver Nou Zouli Lavi!” (Rediscover Our Beautiful Town) was launched on the 15th June to invite the public to visit temporary street exhibitions around town showcasing 28 monuments and partake in multi historical site clean-up activities. Key historical and cultural monuments stand in the town of Victoria, holding the history that has helped build Seychelles’ own creole identity. The social, cultural and historical importance of Victoria has also allowed this central point to become a travel experience for tourists.

The volunteer clean-up activities aimed to provide the public with a stronger motive to stop littering by developing a sense of community ownership for the sites. The launch was built to create an ongoing momentum to continue similar activities in town to raise awareness on the existence and importance of the historical heritage sites in Victoria, both for visitor and locals alike.



- ➔ **SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities**
- ➔ **GSTC criteria C1: Protection of cultural assets**
- ➔ **GSTC criteria C4: Traditional access**
- ➔ **GSTC criteria C6: Visitor management at cultural sites**
- ➔ **GSTC criteria D11: Low-impact transportation**

5. WILLINGNESS TO PAY STUDY

Many tourism dependent island states experience high pressure on the natural environment, which is often the very core of their tourism product. Therefore sustainable management and protection mechanisms are of use, which limit and prevent negative effects of tourism on the natural environment and ensure that the destination’s core assets remain competitive and protected for generations to come. To help do so, many SIDS apply a green fee as part of their arrival or departure tax for tourists.

In May 2019, SeyCCAT selected a consortium consisting of the Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Foundation (SSTF), Valsen Consulting and UniSeey to conduct a Willingness to Pay (WTP) survey to determine the feasibility of adding an environmental levy to Seychelles’ existing departure fee. A survey questionnaire, based on a methodology developed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and applied successfully in other SIDS, was developed to establish the visitor’s willingness to pay an



additional fee to invest in the natural heritage of Seychelles as well as to compile information on the visitor's travel experience, vacation expenditures and socioeconomic and demographic characteristics.

Of the 1,101 respondents interviewed between the 15th August and 7th September, with Germany representing the highest share of interviewees (23%), followed by Italy (18%) and France (17%), 80% said they would be willing to pay an environmental fee. The remaining percentage were unwilling to pay because Seychelles is already expensive as it is and they felt that the fee would make it more so. The majority (72%) of the respondents said that they are willing to pay up to \$40 only, with an average of \$39. The study also explored visitor's opinions on the management of the environmental fee. Of the 881 survey respondents who indicated a willingness to pay the extra fee, just above half said that they would prefer that the funds generated be managed by an independent trust fund.



- ➔ **SDG 14 Life below Water**
- ➔ **SDG 15 Life of Land**

- ➔ **GSTC: A6 Visitor engagement and feedback**
- ➔ **GSTC: B1 Measuring the economic contribution of tourism**
- ➔ **GSTC: D1 Protection of sensitive environments**

6. SEYSOCIAL : CONTINUED COLLABORATION WITH SEYVILLAS

Two whole years have passed since SeyVillas, a specialised German tour operator for the Seychelles, approached SSTF in 2017 to help them find a way to give back to the local community.

Through the coordination of SSTF, SeyVillas has previously been supporting sustainable tourism projects by providing donations to three local NGOs, namely Cerf Island Conservation Programme (CICP), WiseOceans and PetHaven Society. In addition to monthly donations to support community and conservation projects, SeyVillas and SSTF are working together to post monthly informational short articles on sustainable tourism initiatives and practices in Seychelles within SeyVillas networks. This allows to mainstream information to the wider public on a monthly basis.

In 2019, an exciting partnership was formed after SSTF introduced SeyVillas with the The Terrestrial Restoration Action Society Seychelles (TRASS), a local NGO founded in 2009 on Praslin after continuous erosion and forest fires had already had a large impact on the nature. Visitors are now offered the chance to book an activity with TRASS through SeyVillas' online platform to take part in forest and mangrove restoration activities and get an insight into the flora of the Seychelles, as well as the dangers that exist to the environment and the meaning behind these nature protection activities.



- ➔ **GSTC: A7 Promotion and information**
- ➔ **GSTC: D1 Protection of sensitive environments**

7. SUSTAINABLE ISLANDS TOURISM CONFERENCE

SSTF was a partner of the 3-day Sustainable Islands Destination Conference which took place between 27th and 29th November at Theas (Champagne Beach) on the island of Santo, Vanuatu. The conference, in collaboration with GSTC, was attended by tourism stakeholders from public and private sector, NGOs and academia from Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia such as Palau, Fiji, Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Hawaii and others.

Represented by Daniella Payet Alis and Diana Korner, SSTF showcased the results of past and existing projects and initiatives, including the results from the recent willingness to pay survey, and moderated the signing of a dedicated partnership declaration between the island nations of Vanuatu, Palau and Cook Islands. Throughout the presentations, discussion sessions and field visits, the need to strengthen a South-South cooperation became clearer than ever before in order to make sure that the voices of island nation communities are heard and that natural and cultural resources continue to be preserved.



SSTF in 2020

1. TOURISM CARRYING CAPACITY STUDY

International tourist arrivals to Seychelles have more than doubled over the last 20 years, with a record of 361,844 tourists in 2018. The recent increased volume of visitors is putting significant pressure on capacity in terms of accommodation and key locations such as Anse Source D'Argent on La Digue. The 2018 Seychelles Tourism Master Plan calls for regular tourism capacity studies in order to regularly review the implications of growing tourism numbers and to measure and evaluate their possible impact.



The Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine commissioned the international NGO Sustainable Travel International (STI), in partnership with the Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Foundation as local counterpart, to conduct a Carrying Capacity Study on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue. The aim of the study is to review the implications of growing tourism numbers and evaluate potential changes in planning and management to achieve desired conditions within the tourism industry. The specific outputs include the desired tourism model that maximizes economic benefits from the industry while defining a visitor flow

management model and carrying capacity framework designed to help reduce negative impacts and take proactive, corrective actions. The resulting outputs from this study will provide the Seychelles with practical tools to complement its ongoing efforts to mainstream sustainability in its tourism industry. The study will also specifically look at visitor's perception and use of priority sites on all three main islands through the use of surveys and voluntary GPS tracking.

2. PRISTINE SEYCHELLES 2020



Pristine Seychelles campaign will continue to move forward in 2020 with the support of the National Grants Committee, sponsors and members of the Tourism Festival Committee. A number of workshops will be taking place to build capacity among the handicraft community, expose communal groups to eco-tourism and cultural initiatives and organize public events to expose the work going towards a more culturally and environmentally responsible tourism industry.

The Pristine Seychelles [social media platform](#) will also continue to grow and expand in order to reach out to a wider audience and continue raising awareness on responsible traveling and encourage holidaymakers and the local community to take positive socio-cultural and environmental action as key tourism stakeholders.

3. SEYSOCIAL

SeyVillas has been a key partner since the inception of SSTF and will continue to work together in the coming year. Monthly short informative articles will continue to be provided to the SeyVillas team every month and SSTF hopes to see more projects come to life through this fruitful partnership.

Memorandum of Understanding 2019



On the 28th October, SSTF and the Department of Tourism signed a MoU in efforts to establish Seychelles as an international best practice example for sustainable tourism through an integrated collaborative approach between public, the private sectors, academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

The events and initiatives coordinated and implemented by SSTF were made possible thanks to our partners and sponsors:



GET INVOLVED

Join us on our journey towards a more sustainable tourism in Seychelles. If you wish to volunteer, or support us in any other way, please contact us at **office.sstf@gmail.com** or **+2482727131**

You can also keep updated by:

Visiting our site **<http://seychellessustainable.org>**

Or

Following us on FB **@seychellessustainable**