

SUN Program

**Building Climate Resilience & Sustainability
through Green Growth & Travelism**

www.greenearth.travel

OVERVIEW

In recent years, Green Growth has emerged as a coherent, multi-decade strategy to address some of the biggest economic, developmental and environmental challenges of today, and has become a strategic response to climate change and increasing populations demanding more and more basic resources. It is a *new type of economic approach* where environmental balance is fully integrated into growth policy and operational frameworks, where sustainable consumption of natural capital is a basic principle and climate resilience is the major underpinning.

The travel and tourism sector – ‘Travelism’ – has been identified as a key element in this Green Growth strategy and a sustainable future¹. It is a major contributor to GDP, jobs, consumption, investment and trade. It is also a catalyst for infrastructure, environmental conservation, skills training, local livelihoods, and basic social interaction. BUT the impacts of the industry in terms of carbon (particularly from transport), resource utilisation (water and food) and intensive people movement/consumption have never been effectively measured nor coherently managed.

Concrete action is urgently needed to transform Travelism into a driver of sustainable development and green growth. It’s not enough however for the sector’s social and environmental impacts to be measured and managed alongside its contribution to GDP and job creation: this must coincide with the development of effective climate resilience strategies. During this process, sub-sectoral and local initiatives must be fully taken into account, as well as broader transformations external to the sector.

The SUN program aims to establish a community focused, renewable energy-powered, interactive, international green growth network which will significantly increase the capacity of travelism to be a leader for climate resilience/sustainable development.

The network will provide a “living” system to coherently identify economic, social and environmental impacts of climate resilience trends, innovations & processes at local, national & international level. Information will be fed into a global, publicly accessible web-based platform, and used to implement/support community led climate resilience programmes.

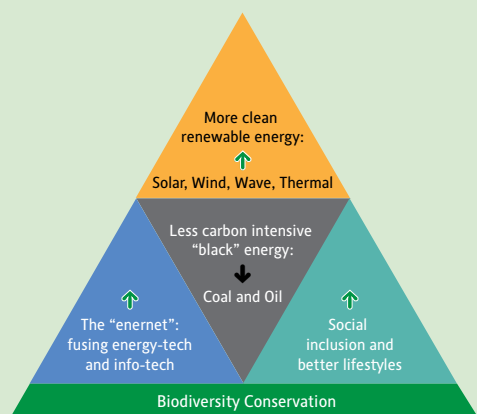
It will link technological innovation such as renewable energy, cloud communications & big data econometrics with community action, education and nature based solutions. The project seeks to work with public & private partners to initiate an industry-wide transformation, where “green” is fundamental to “growth” through meaningful policies, measurements, education and action.

Effective green growth transformation is driven by three key factors:

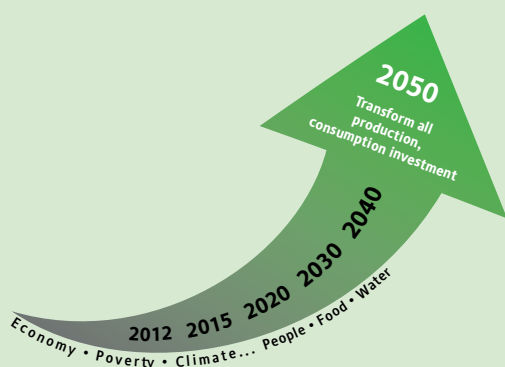
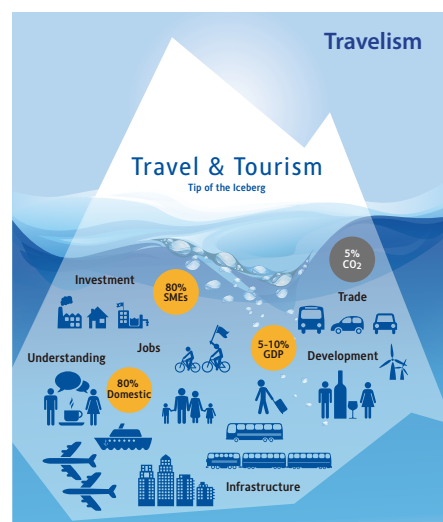
- Availability of expert practitioners ...
- With instant access to global information resources ...
- Located on the ground at the heart of the relevant travelism hub and engaging directly with local communities

The SUN Program is designed around these factors and comprises three main components which can be delivered rapidly to address the needs of any particular situation anywhere in the world.

¹ See Green Growth and Travelism: Letters from Leaders (Lipman et al) Goodfellow 2012; Green Growth and Travelism: Concept, Policy and Practice for Sustainable Tourism (DeLacy et al) Routledge 2014



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PROJECT COMPONENTS

SUN-ARK Centres:

- SUNARK constructions – affordable, free-standing, solar powered buildings;
- To serve as monitoring hubs, educational/capacity building bases and demonstration sites for local-level climate resilience & adaptation initiatives;
- Each Centre is supported by a dedicated three person Team from the Strong University Network, linked to local academics, schools and museums;
- A pilot SUNARK Community centre will be established in Mauritius in 2015.



SUN-CONNECT Knowledge Platform:

- A cloud-based, data-driven framework for international, national & regional information, studies and analytics related to economic, social, environmental and climatic trends;
- Global data flows made accessible and inter-operative alongside local region-specific information, community-led eco-tourism projects, funding opportunities and innovative projects related to climate mitigation/adaptation;
- Integrating Travelism and community sustainable management.



SUN-COMMUNITY Local Delivery:

- Delivery of socio-economic benefits locally through community centric, bottom-up, multi-stakeholder engagement;
- Emphasis on resilience roadmaps, innovation, certification, capacity building and financing;
- Implementation of locally relevant and inclusionary green growth strategies to improve resource efficiency and conserve biodiversity.

For any particular green growth project these three components are combined into a working hub which can be set up easily and rapidly to provide world class expertise and delivery capability tailored to the needs of the local community. Over time, a worldwide network of interconnecting SUN hubs will work together to exchange best practice and support to deliver increasingly innovative and effective solutions to the issues facing the Travelism industry and the communities in which it operates.



GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERS

The project is being developed and initially managed by the Green Growth & Travelism Institute (GGTI), a Brussels based foundation, under the direction of Professor Geoffrey Lipman at Greenearth.travel and a Board drawn from committed partners. Current Board Members are: Tom Goldberg, Chair SunArk UK; Ignace Schops, Director National Park Belgium; Marcel Henry, Director Travel & Tourism at Civic Resources Group International USA; and Terry DeLacy, Victoria University, Australia. It is anticipated that the framework will include partners from different countries, sectors and disciplines, as well as major sponsors.

SUN-ARK Community Centres will be provided by the SUNARK Foundation which will work closely with GGTI in the development and delivery of these specialized products. The pilot community centre in Mauritius will demonstrate the opportunities for green growth in a small island state context. Another pilot is planned for Limburg, Belgium which will serve as a global demonstration site in close vicinity to the capital of Europe. The SUNARK centres will be supported by the "Strong University Network" (SUN) currently made up of 11 partner universities from around the world, which has the backing of Maurice Strong (Secretary General of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit) and has been established to advance his green growth and sustainable development vision for the sector. The goal is for 20 Universities by 2016 and 150 by 2020.

SUN-CONNECT Knowledge Platform will be developed by Civic Resources Group International (CRGI) – a leading player in the e-government and civic technology sectors, delivering cutting edge products, applications and platforms for mobile, web, cloud, data and other digital solutions across the broad public sector. They will engage closely with Microsoft and other major technology providers to ensure that the platform is state of the art, robust, scalable and secure.

SUN-COMMUNITY Outreach will be led by Greenerth/GGTI. We have been working with Victoria University in Australia to create a Green Growth econometric model & resilience road mapping programme for destinations, which we believe has significant promise as a framework approach to transformation. Our university & business partners are adding new e-government/big data analysis/management dimensions and we are linking these approaches to global/national climate and disaster resilience planning.

We have launched a grass roots organization – ICTP (International Coalition of Tourism Partners) – for destinations and their stakeholders seeking to advance Green Growth and Quality. We are also curating related programmes for companies – including on site and online education and training. This will be delivered through collaboration with GreenGrowth2050.travel, a nextgen certification programme and CRGI who are integrating advanced cloud and mobile technology for business and consumer engagement.

Finally we will provide a powerful new finance attraction platform for green growth transformation – linking innovative projects, banking, investment, certification and social entrepreneurship. This will target new government financing for climate resilience, export promotion and disaster response. This will be developed using links to Gate Global Impact for technology and UN Global Compact Action Hubs and Microsoft 4 Afrika for content.

FINANCE

The project cost is estimated as €45 million which will be spread evenly from 2016 through 2020. Annual cost will be €9 million, broken down as:

- €3.3 million for 30 SunArk Centres at €110,000 per unit.
- €2.1 million for 30 site & installation at €70,000 per site
- €2.4 million for 30 Strong University research teams at €80,000 per team
- €0.5 million for Knowledge Platform
- €0.5 million for Community Networks
- €0.2 million for Administration

These funds will be secured from both public and private sector sources.

Until 3rd party funding is secured the project will be underwritten by its partners.

2015 will be a setup year when the project will be further developed, refined and finalised. Initial partners will engage and project structures/protocols/controls will be put in place. Initial public exposure will be in the 1st Quarter.

These ideas will help define future proposals for the Horizon 2020 framework of DG Research and Innovation.

SUN is an open public/private partnership system looking for supporters, sponsors and partners.

Please contact Geoffrey Lipman, Director of Greenerth.travel for more information: glipman@greenerth.travel

