

# GSTC 2019 GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Navigating the way forward  
in sustainable tourism

4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> DEC 2019  
Terceira Island - Azores



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**The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)** establishes and manages global sustainable standards, known as the GSTC Criteria. There are two sets: Destination Criteria for public policy-makers and destination managers, and Industry Criteria for hotels and tour operators. These are the guiding principles and minimum requirements that any tourism business or destination should aspire to reach in order to protect and sustain the world's natural and cultural resources, while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for conservation and poverty alleviation.

The GSTC is an independent and neutral organization, legally registered in the USA as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that represents a diverse and global membership, including NGOs, national and provincial governments, leading travel companies, hotels, tour operators, individuals and communities – all striving to achieve best practices in sustainable tourism. It is a virtual organization without a main office, with staff and volunteers working from all six populated continents. Financial support from donations, sponsorship, and membership fees allows us to provide services at low costs and to create, revise, and make available the GSTC Criteria.

Membership is open to all interested parties and does not by itself imply endorsement by the GSTC of the policies and practices of the member organization.

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## Conference Themes

- (A) Smart & Sustainable Destination Management
- (B) Market Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Products
- (C) Is Tourism Responding to Climate Change?

## SCHEDULE

### Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch & Meeting for GSTC Destinations Members (by invitation only) <i>at Terceira Mar Hotel</i>
15:15 – 17:30	Meeting for Certification Bodies (by invitation only) <i>at Terceira Mar Hotel</i>
18:25	Transfer from the 3 hotels to Quinta da Nasce Água
18:45	Welcome dinner at Quinta da Nasce Água

## Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
8:00	Shuttles leave from the 3 hotels to Angra do Heroísmo Conference Centre
8:15 – 9:15	Registration at Angra do Heroísmo Conference Centre
9:15 – 10:00	<p><b>Opening Ceremony</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Luigi Cabrini, Chair, GSTC</li> <li>• Marta Gurreiro, Regional Secretary of Energy, Environment and Tourism</li> </ul>
10:00 - 10:45	<p><b>GSTC’s Global Mission and Current Activities</b></p> <p>Randy Durband, CEO, GSTC</p>
10:45 - 11:30	<p>Refreshment Break and Networking</p> <p>(Press conference for local media held in a different room)</p>
11:30 - 13:00	<p><b>(1) Applying the GSTC Criteria in a national scheme</b></p> <p><i>Applying sustainable standards and certification to tourism businesses and tourism destinations is conducted both by international Certification Bodies and by national schemes. In this session, we will examine why and how national and sub-national schemes are developed and implemented. A key focus will be on engagement with local private sector stakeholders on a destination level, with examples of various schemes from Europe and Asia.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Jana Apih, Managing Director of GoodPlace</p> <p>Panelists:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ingunn Sornes, Special Adviser at Innovation Norway</li> <li>• Upali Rathnayake, Director General of Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA)</li> <li>• Annika Sandström, Tourism Manager of Region Västerbotten</li> <li>• Dan Jonasson, Region Västerbotten Turism Panelists</li> </ul>
13:00 – 14:30	<p>Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13:00 Leave Conferece Center to Caracol Hotel</li> <li>• 13:10 Lunch</li> <li>• 14:10 leave Caracol Hotel to the Conference Center</li> </ul>
14:30 – 15:45 @ Room.1	<p><b>(2) Seasonality: Under- and Over-tourism</b></p> <p><i>One of many components in the arenas of Visitor Management and currently-fashionable (and over-used) term "overtourism" is the practice of dispersion of visitors more evenly throughout the seasons. All destinations experience seasonal fluctuations in the numbers of visitors, owing to climate and various social factors for both the destination and its strongest source markets. Many experience significant swings from the highest to lowest seasons. Regardless of the degree, destination managers and promoters should continue to strive for the most consistent flows as possible to allow businesses and public facilities to manage and execute more effectively. This session will explore good practices and sound management principles with proven effectiveness in leveling seasonal visitor flows.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Kelly Bricker, Vice-Chair, GSTC; Professor and Director, University of Utah in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism</p> <p>Panelists:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Mifsud, Director – Quality Assurance and Industry HR at Malta Tourism Authority</li> <li>• Glenn Mandziuk, CEO of Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)</li> <li>• Dr. Antonio Jorge Costa, President of Institute for Tourism Planning and Development (IPDT)</li> </ul>
14:30 – 15:45  @ Room.2	<p><b>(3) Marketing sustainability and influencing travelers’ preferences</b></p> <p><i>Marketing is fundamental to tourism businesses and destinations, and sustainability marketing can use marketing skills and techniques to good purpose, by understanding market needs, designing more sustainable products and identifying more persuasive methods of communication to bring behavioural change. In this session, Prof. Xavier Font will lead a discussion on the recent trends in marketing sustainability in the tourism industry with various examples of influencing travelers’ preferences.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Prof. Xavier Font, Professor of Sustainability Marketing, University of Surrey</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rika Jean-François, CSR Commissioner at ITB Berlin</li> <li>• Rob Holmes, Founder &amp; Chief Strategist at GLP Films</li> <li>• Lonneke de Kort, CEO of BookDifferent</li> <li>• Gerben Hardeman, Responsible Travel &amp; Tourism Manager at ANVR (the Dutch Travel Trade Association)</li> </ul>
15:45 – 16:30	Refreshment break and networking
16:30 – 18:00	<b>(4) Certification as a driver for destination stewardship</b>

<p>@ Room.1</p>	<p><i>Sustainable certification of destinations is still relatively new, and not common. But as awareness is rapidly growing within the public sector that tourism needs to be better managed, certification is increasingly seen as a tool for goal-setting, measurement, holistic approaches to management, and of course a reward to the stakeholders for accomplishing a level of excellence. We have brought together a truly elite group of practitioners in this space to share their perspectives on the why and how of destination certification.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Randy Durband, CEO of GSTC</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewart Moore, CEO of EarthCheck</li> <li>• Albert Salman, President of Green Destinations</li> <li>• Luigi Mazzaglia, General Manager of Vireo Srl</li> <li>• Dr. Catie Burlando, Local Development Officer at Etifor Srl</li> <li>• Guy Bigwood, Managing Director of Global Destination Sustainability (GSD) Index</li> </ul>
<p>16:30 – 18:00</p> <p>@ Room.2</p>	<p><b>(5) Stopping the Flood of Plastic (supported by WWF)</b></p> <p><i>Travelers are suddenly reducing their use of plastic straws, but how do we as an industry go bigger and deeper and more quickly in reducing all single-use plastic materials? We need to reduce plastics quickly due to the environmental impacts and the surging levels of awareness and concern by travelers. WWF has recently research on how to reduce plastics in tourism, and will present key findings from that research and draw from an expert panel to present methods for putting reduction into practice.</i></p>

	<p>Keynote: Martina von Münchhausen, Programme Manager Sustainable Tourism at WWF</p> <p>Moderator: Nicola Koschel, GSTC Trainer and WWF Representative at GSTC</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rachel McCaffery, Director of Travel Without Plastic</li> <li>• Christian Schröder, Quality and Sustainability Manager at Wikinger Reisen</li> <li>• Nguyen Dieu Thuy, Programme Coordinator – Oceans at WWF Vietnam</li> <li>• Peimin Lin, Supervisor at Taiwan Coral Island Association</li> </ul>
18:30	Leave from the Conferece Center to Praia da Vitória
19:00	Dinner at Terceira Island's Youth and Arts Academy (Praia da Vitória)
21:00	Transfer back to hotels

## Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
8:50	Shuttles leave from the 3 hotels to the Conference Centre
9:00 – 9:30	Registration
9:30 – 10:45	<p><b>(6) Sustainable and Responsible Procurement</b></p> <p><i>Supply chain development is a form of procurement and a form of verification of the sustainability of the products and services under offer of a tourism business. If a seller or operator of travel services wishes to claim that their supply chain is sustainable, how do they go about it? Do they conduct their own analysis of each supplier's performance? That would be time-consuming and costly. A better approach is to trust the work of the experts that conduct neutral, independent, 3rd-party certification of businesses. If a business is certified by a Certification Body that is accredited to the GSTC Criteria*, there is no higher level of verification of independent and competent analysis available in the world today, because to get accredited, the CB has gone through a very rigorous process to verify their quality and impartiality. In that way, by selecting hotels or tour operators that are certified, the buyer can trust that those businesses take sustainability very seriously. This session will consider how to phase in preferential contracting of sustainable certified businesses into the supply chain of other businesses.</i></p> <p><i>* Note: the phrase "accredited to the GSTC Criteria" is short-hand for a CB being accredited for the certification scheme using either the GSTC Criteria directly or their own GSTC-Recognized standard. GSTC Recognized standards comply with the GSTC Criteria, therefore this short-hand phrase includes the use of either of those standards.</i></p>

	<p>Moderator: Randy Durband, CEO, GSTC</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jane Ashton, Director of Sustainability at TUI Group</li> <li>• Luis Alberto Blanco Umaña, Human Talent Director and Quality and Sustainability Manager at Travel Excellence Costa Rica</li> <li>• Alexandra Pastollnigg, Founder of Fair Voyage</li> </ul>
<p>10:45 – 11:15</p>	<p>Refreshment break and networking</p>
<p>11:15 – 12:30</p> <p>@ Room.1</p>	<p><b>(7) Destinations adaptation to and mitigation of climate change</b></p> <p><i>Climate change is the single most important global environmental and development issue facing the world today. Tourism is considered to be a vulnerable and highly climate-sensitive economic sector. Climate defines the length and quality of tourism seasons and plays a major role in destination choice and tourist spending. Climate affects a wide range of environmental resources that are critical attractions for tourism, such as snow conditions, wildlife productivity and biodiversity, water levels and quality. Climate also has an important influence on environmental conditions that can deter tourists, including infectious disease, wildfires, insect or water-borne pests, and extreme events such as tropical cyclones. At the same time, tourism is a contributor to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, including emissions from transport, accommodation and activities. In this session we will explore the implications of climate change and climate policy for tourism sectors and destinations around the world, adaptation and mitigation responses by all major tourism stakeholders, and the integral links between climate change and sustainable tourism.</i></p>

	<p>Moderator: Luigi Cabrini, GSTC Chair</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gerben Hardeman, Responsible Travel &amp; Tourism Manager at ANVR (the Dutch Travel Trade Association)</li> <li>• Prof. David Simmons, Chair of EarthCheck Research Institute</li> <li>• Olaf Schlieper, Innovation Manager at German National Tourist Board</li> <li>• Jerry Spooner, Director of Vanuatu Department of Tourism</li> </ul>
<p>11:15 – 12:30</p> <p>@ Room.2</p>	<p><b>(8) Energy, water, and waste in travel and accommodations</b></p> <p><i>All forms of travel and tourism must become more sustainable. Most travel includes overnight stays, making the topic of sustainable accommodations essential. In this session we will hear about energy, water, and waste from people on the front lines of making operations more sustainably, considering various elements of sustainable and responsible policy formulation.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Ioannis Pappas, Found &amp; CEO of Green Evolution; GSTC Regional Director – Mediterranean</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paulo Duarte, Director of Operations at Memmo Unforgettable Hotels</li> <li>• Duarte Conde Silva, Plant Manager at Gracióllica Lda</li> <li>• Motti Essakow, Co Founder &amp; Chief Imagineer of Rythms by Design and Rythms House</li> </ul>
<p>12:30 14:00</p>	<p>Lunch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12:30 Leave the Conferece Center to Terceira Mar Hotel</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12:40 Lunch</li> <li>• 13:50 leave Terceira Mar Hotel to the Conference Center</li> </ul>
<p>14:00 – 15:15</p> <p>@ Room.1</p>	<p><b>(9) The Invisible Burden: Integrating Tourism Impacts into Civic Planning &amp; Management</b></p> <p><i>The Travel Foundation has recently published a report "The Invisible Burden: Integrating Tourism Impacts into Civic Planning &amp; Management" which they will share in this session, together with a number of destinations. The report describes how destinations must uncover and account for tourism's hidden costs, referred to as the "invisible burden", to protect and manage vital destination assets worldwide. Failing to do so puts ecosystems, cultural wonders, and community life at increasing risk, and places the tourism industry on a weak foundation that could crack under its own weight. It concludes that destination managers will need to sit at the new nexus between data on tourism demand the supply of resources to support the tourism economy. The report suggests that the risks tourism destinations and businesses face must be openly and transparently reviewed with more science-based, data-driven analysis.</i></p> <p>Host: Graeme Jackson, Head of Partnerships at Travel Foundation</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Griet Geudens, Quality &amp; Sustainability Consultant at Visit Flanders</li> <li>• Dr. Mihee Kang, GSTC Director – Asia Pacific</li> </ul>
<p>14:00 – 15:15</p> <p>@ Room.2</p>	<p><b>(10) Island &amp; Marine Tourism</b></p> <p><i>All types of destinations share many traits and management challenges, but there are of course differences among them as well. Drawing from the</i></p>

	<p><i>experiences of our hosts in the Azores Islands and other expert GSTC members, this session will focus on issues facing island and marine destinations. Climate-change induced rising ocean waters is of course one of the major issues, but there are many more including waste management in these fragile environments which remain ever popular with visitors in great numbers seeking sun and sand. They arrive by land, air, and by sea, meaning the supply chain for transport is quite varied. In short, management is complex in these popular but sensitive destinations.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Roi Ariel, General Manager of GSTC</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marlene Damião, Azores Regional Director of Tourism</li> <li>• Jerry Spooner, Director of Vanuatu Department of Tourism</li> <li>• Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism of Cayman Islands</li> <li>• Daren Moodely, Project Coordinator – Sustainable Island, Mauritius Tourism Authority</li> </ul>
15:15 - 15:45	Refreshment break and networking
15:45 – 17:00	<p><b>(11) Slow travel and changing consumers demand</b></p> <p><i>Recent developments in Sweden has encouraged Europeans to reduce their travel by air to lower carbon emissions, and opt to travel by train and stay longer in the destination they visit. This change in behaviour may have unintended consequences for destinations that are reachable by air transport only and for emerging destinations in the developing world. In this session will discuss the recent changes of European preferences and</i></p>

	<p><i>the promotion of slow travel and longer stay in one destination.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Anna Pollock, Founder of Conscious Travel</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Dirk Schmücker, Head of Research at Institute for Tourism Research in Northern Europe (NIT)</li> <li>• Jeppe Klockareson, Founder of Fair Travel; GSTC Representative Sweden</li> <li>• Sara Mair Bellshaw, Project Manager – Slow Adventure at Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research</li> </ul>
15:45 – 17:00	<p><b>Workshop for CBs and SOs: Market Opportunities for Certification</b></p> <p><i>(by invitation only)</i></p>
by invitation only	
17:00 – 17:15	<p><b>GSTC2020 formal invitation</b></p> <p>(revealing location and dates)</p>
17:30	Transfer from the Conference Center to the 3 hotels
18:45	Departure from the 3 hotels to Clube de Golfe da Ilha Terceira
19:00	Closing dinner at Clube de Golfe da Ilha Terceira
22:00	Transfer back to the 3 hotels

## Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>: Post-conference tour

*(only for those that registered on time)*

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
8:00 – 8:20	Check-out for those joining the tour and taking flight TP 1828 at 19:40
8:30	Depart from the hotels (Hotel do Caracol, Terceira Mar Hotel, Azoris Angra Garden Hotel)
8:30 - 18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visit Monte Brasil and the historical center of Angra do Heroísmo World Heritage City</li><li>• Stroll around Biscoitos</li><li>• Lunch</li><li>• View from Serra do Cume Belvedere</li><li>• Visit Algar do Carvão, famous ancient lava tube</li><li>• Visit the City of Praia da Vitória</li></ul>
18:00	Head back to the hotels  OR transfer to the airport for those taking flight TP 1828 at 19:40
Evening	At leisure (dinner not included)

# SPEAKERS (A-Z)

Albert Salman

Alexandra Pastollnigg

Anna Pollock

Annika Sandström

Dr. Catie Burlando

Christian Schröder

Dan Jonasson

Daren Moodely

David Misfud

Prof. David Simmons

Dr. Dirk Schmücker

Duarte Conde Silva

Gerben Hardeman

Glenn Mandziuk

Graeme Jackson

Griet Geudens

Guy Bigwood

Ingunn Sørnes

Dr. Ioannis Pappas

Jana Apih

Jane Ashton

Jeppe Klockareson

Jerry Spooner

Dr. Jorge Costa

Dr. Kelly Bricker

Lonnerke De Kort

Luigi Cabrini

Luigi Mazzaglia

Luis Alberto Blanco

Marlene Damião

Marta Guerreiro

Martina Von Münchhause

Dr. Mihee Kang

Motti Essakow

Nicola Koschel

Olaf Schlieper

Paulo Duarte

Peimin Lin

Rachel McCaffery

Randy Durband

Rika Jean-François

Rob Holmes

Roi Ariel

Rosa Harris

Sara Bellshaw

Stewart Moore

Thuy Nguyen

Upali Rathnayake

Dr. Xavier Font



## **Albert Salman** **President, Green Destinations**

Drs. Albert Salman is a global sustainable tourism expert from the Netherlands, with an academic background in coastal ecology and environment.

After leading the Dutch Society for Dune Conservation, he became founding director of the European Coastal Union (EUCC, 1989) where he established the QualityCoast Awards program (2007) and Green Destinations (2014), a non-profit organisation with expert partners in 30 countries.

Together with Green Destinations partners he created the first Sustainable Destinations Global Top 100 competition (2014), the Green Destinations Standard, and the online Green Destinations platform for sustainability and quality assessment, monitoring, reporting and GSTC-Accredited certification.

The Top 100 Awards series is now the world's largest programme recognising and promoting destination sustainability, and the largest Awards programme of ITB Berlin, the world's leading travel trade show.



## Alexandra Pastollnigg Founder & CEO, Fair Voyage

Alexandra Pastollnigg is the founder of Fair Voyage, an online sustainable travel agency. The Zurich-based startup aims to make sustainable travel easy for global consumers by connecting them with verified responsible suppliers and experiences. Initially focused on ethical Kilimanjaro climbs.

Alexandra also served on the Board of the International Mountain Explorers Connection, a non-profit organization committed to promote ethical work conditions for the porters on Mount Kilimanjaro, and advises its local initiative, the Kilimanjaro Porters Assistance Project. She is also a judge in the Responsible Tourism Tanzania Awards.

Prior to venturing into tourism and social entrepreneurship, Alexandra gained over 12 years of experience in the banking industry, mostly recently as Director in Mergers & Acquisitions.

In between, she authored the book Kilimanjaro Uncovered and cycled from Cairo to Cape Town, all the way through Africa. Alexandra has lived in 9 countries and speaks 5 languages.



## **Anna Pollock** **Founder, Conscious Travel**

Anna Pollock, Founder of Conscious Travel, has 45 years' experience in tourism as an independent consultant, strategist, international speaker, and change agent having worked with the Canadian Tourism Commission, PATA, European Travel Commission, European Cities, and Tourism New Zealand. Recipient of *The Visionary of the Year Award* from the Canadian tourism industry, Anna also serves as Visiting Fellow at Oxford Brookes University (UK) and as an advisor to the Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI).

Anna has undertaken seminal work in many aspects of tourism and is currently addressing ways of mitigating the negative impacts associated with "overtourism."



**Annika Sandström**  
**Regional Tourism Manager,**  
**Region Västerbotten**

Annika Sandström started her career in tourism in a hotel in housekeeping, in the restaurant, in the reception and as a conference hostess.

She has a Bachelor of Arts in tourism development and business studies from Dalarna, Sweden and also a Master's Degree in Sustainable Tourism management from Edinburgh, Scotland. She also worked for a year in a fine dining restaurant at Intercontinental Hotel in Edinburgh.

Twenty years ago, she moved to Umeå, Sweden, and worked for a year in Scandic Hotels as a regional sales manager and then for ten years as a project leader for various tourism development projects, one of them with the focus of starting the DMO Visit Umeå.

The last ten years she has been working at Region Västerbotten, and the last five as a regional tourism manager.

For over 25 years, Catherine has gained international experience, particularly in developing and emerging countries, in various sectors such as tourism, hospitality, leisure, environmental utilities, either as Consultant or Director/ Manager in global companies or institutions. Catherine holds a Masters' degree in Management and

Business Administration (1992) and a post degree in Sustainable Tourism (2004).



**Dr. Catie Burlando**  
**Local Development Project Manager,**  
**Etifor Srl**

Catie Burlando has a doctorate in Natural Resources and Environmental Management from the University of Manitoba, where she specialized in participatory methodologies and community-based land use planning.

Since 2017, she has worked as Project Manager in the Local Development Unit at Etifor, a Spinoff of the University of Padova. Catie coordinates and manages projects in the areas of destination governance, social innovation and entrepreneurship, and facilitates participatory processes aimed at the organization and management of tourism destinations in northern Italy (Belluno-Dolomites, riviera del Brenta-Venezia, Abano Terme).

During her studies, Catie worked in the rural areas of Panama, South Africa and Canada. Between 2011 and 2016, she was a member of the Steering Committee of the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy.

In 2019, Catie was part of the team supporting the GSTC certification of the destination APT Valsugana and Lagorai, in northern Italy.



## **Christian Schröder** **Quality and CSR Management,** **Wikingen Reisen**

Born in 1961, Christian Schröder studied philosophy and German philology in Bonn, Germany.

After his studies he worked for the European Community in the USA, Canada and Australia.

Infected by the virus of travelling he became a tour guide with worldwide assignments.

Today he is working for Wikingen Reisen, Germany's premier touroperator for hiking tourism, as head of the tour guide department and as quality- and sustainability manager. Besides he is a consultant and trainer for the German travel industry.



**Dan Jonasson**  
**Sustainability expert,**  
**Region Västerbotten**

Dan Jonasson has worked for sustainability in different ways for more than 40 years if also social sustainability is considered. In 2000 he became more involved with the sustainability aspects of tourism.

Today he is primarily a senior advisor and trainer helping organizations and individuals make sustainability work in practice. Dan teaches how to investigate and create plans for businesses and destinations using GSTC criteria. As important, or sometimes more important, to me than criteria is that assessors of sustainability know how to advice companies and destinations to become more sustainable in coordination with their economy and available time.



**Daren Moodely,  
Project Coordinator – Sustainable  
Island, Mauritius Tourism Authority**

Daren Moodely is currently the Project Coordinator of the Sus-Island Mauritius Project under the aegis of the Mauritius Tourism Authority.

He is a talented professional who has worked in the Hotel and Leisure sector before specialising in the Corporate Management world. He has reached Senior Managerial level as General Manager of Tourist Villages Ltd. and Deputy General Manager of a five-star hotel. He has also been the Research Executive of A.H.R.I.M. (Main Association of Hotels and Restaurants in Mauritius) for several years, where he was involved in several major breakthroughs in policy making and process build-up.

His expertise has brought him to work as Consultant with many private and public organisations in fields like Event management strategy; Operational process build up; Lobbying and networking, among others. His current attributions empowers him to lead a major paradigm shift in the way of doing business from the private and public sectors' operators.



**David Misfud**  
**Director - QA and Ind HR,**  
**Malta Tourism Authority**

David Misfud holds an MBA from the University of Malta.

Prior to joining the tourism sector David served for twenty-five years in the Armed Forces of Malta.

He served within the Office of the President as Personal Secretary to the President to three successive Presidents. As a senior officer he was appointed as Colonel Logistics and Procurement responsible for all logistics and main programs of procurement including major infrastructure and acquisition projects. The most notable one being, as Project Leader, the acquisition of new helicopters. Concurrently, he was also appointed as Chairman of the Procurement Committee of Malta Enterprise and Malta Industrial Parks overseeing the processing of tender evaluations of major projects in the commercial field.

In February 2013, he retired from the Armed Forces and joined the Malta Tourism Authority as a Director. In 2018, he was appointed Director Quality Assurance. A directorate that is committed to provide a platform of standards and quality which is backed by numerous training and development initiatives to assist tourism stakeholders to reach higher levels of service and product delivery including initiatives to strengthen sustainability measures. He also

served as a member of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee at the Institute for Tourism Studies.



**Prof. David Simmons**  
**Chairman,**  
**EarthCheck Research Institute**

Professor David Simmons is the leader of Lincoln University's tourism programme and a founding staff member of the Social Science, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Group. He has been at Lincoln University since 1978 and a faculty member since 1980 and is Professor of Tourism and Chair of the University's Research Committee.

Most recently he has been engaged as a member of the writing team for the New Zealand National Tourism Framework (Tourism2025), annual state of sector reports (2011 – 2015), and South Island Destination Management Plan (2019). From 2008 – 2010 Professor Simmons was Director of Research for the Australian Federal Government's Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre. He has contributed to formal tourism planning exercises in Cambodia (WWF), Mauritius (UNDP), Niue, Vanuatu (UNWTO/UNDP), Nepal (ITTO, MFAT and WWF), India (WWF), Sarawak (E. Malaysia), and DPR (North) Korea (UNWTO).

In 2015 Professor Simmons was elected as a fellow to the International Academy for the Study of Tourism and chairs the EarthCheck Global Research Institute that provides science and benchmarking for evidencing pathways to sustainable tourism.





**Dr. Dirk Schmücker**  
**Professor Int. Tourism Management,**  
**FH Westküste, University of Applied**  
**Sciences**

Dirk Schmücker is Professor for Tourism at the Institute for Management and Tourism at Westcoast University of Applied Sciences in Heide (Germany) and Head of Research at NIT in Kiel (Germany).

His field of work is consumer research in tourism with a focus on information and decision behavior.

He received his PhD for his research on tourism information processes. Recent studies cover experiments on the findability of sustainability information, the impact of digitization on sustainable tourism development, and the implementation of demand-side indicators for the choice of sustainable holiday trips, on behalf of the Federal Ministry for the Environment. NIT is a tourism research institute and organizes the long-standing annual holiday survey *Reiseanalyse*.



**Duarte Conde Silva**  
**Plant Manager, Graciolica LDA**

Duarte Conde Silva is currently the plant Manager for Gracióllica Hybrid Power Plant project located on Graciosa island in the Azores.

Duarte has been part of this groundbreaking project since end of 2015 and has been involved with different roles on its technical development, site deployment and commissioning testing phase which has been taking place over last few years.

Duarte has a bachelor's degree in Energy Engineering from the University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro and a master's degree in Power Electrical Systems from the Institute of Engineering of Porto.



## **Gerben Hardeman** **Travel Tomorrow, ANVR**

Gerben Hardeman (MSc Responsible Tourism) works for the ANVR - the Dutch Travel Trade Association and has more than 14 years of experience in the travel and tourism industry (b2b and b2c).

He is responsible for ANVR's Travel Tomorrow initiative: a collaboration and networking platform to make the travel sector more futureproof. Responsible tourism is an integral part of that. He has considerable working experience in setting up multi-stakeholders collaborations with the private and public sector, NGO's etc.

He works collectively with travel companies and other stakeholders to embed sustainability into the tourism supply chain. He has developed the Better holidays program (trainings & toolkits) for Dutch outbound tour operators to accelerate responsible tourism in the supply chain.

One the tools is the UNWTO and WTTC Innovation Award winning CARMACAL, the carbon calculator for travel packages.

He was also a co-writer on the Tourism Management article on the power of persuasive communication to influence sustainable holiday choices (2017). Gerben has been part of a Dutch tv-documentary on over tourism (2018) and a tv programme on the environmental footprint of tourism (2019).



**Glenn Mandziuk  
President & CEO,  
Thompson Okanagan Tourism  
Association (TOTA)**

Glenn Mandziuk is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Region.

Glenn has over 20 years' experience in tourism marketing and community development, and has successfully administered and/or coordinated several community and product development projects, business retention programs, local, regional, and provincial partnership development, and marketing initiatives to the South Okanagan region.

Further, Glenn has acted as a consultant on Community Recreation Master Planning, Economic Development Planning, and Strategic facilitation projects across British Columbia and Alberta and has ten (10) years' experience in the Hospitality Industry in a family owned and operated hotels and resorts.

He holds a Master of Environmental Design Degree majoring in Community Planning and Development and a Bachelor of Arts Degree majoring in Leisure and Tourism Management



**Graeme Jackson**  
**Head of Partnerships,**  
**The Travel Foundation**

Graeme is responsible for developing and managing partnerships for sustainable tourism charity, the Travel Foundation.

The Foundation works in close collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders to understand the opportunities and challenges that tourism presents, and support the implementation of more sustainable policies and practices.

A trained journalist, Graeme joined the Travel Foundation in 2011 following a decade in the fields of Public Relations and marketing where he consulted in fields as diverse as business finance, wines & spirits, sustainability and energy.



## **Griet Geudens**

### **Tourist consultant, Visit Flanders**

Griet Geudens works at Visit Flanders as a tourism consultant. Her work there mainly focuses on sustainability and quality in tourism. Her passion for people and travel are at the root of her interest in tourism and more specifically in how tourism affects local communities.

After 'African Studies' she continued doing a Master in Tourism with an explicit emphasis on sustainable development in tourism. After these studies she worked for private companies (tour operators), NGOs as well as governmental tourism organizations. Throughout her career in the tourism sector she has specialized in sustainable tourism.



**Guy Bigwood**  
**Managing Director, Global Destination**  
**Sustainability (GSD) Index**

For the last 15 years, Guy has been delivering award-winning consulting services focused on helping cities, governments, associations and the hospitality industry step up, scale up and speed up their sustainability programmes and operational practices.

He is the Managing Director of the Global Destinations Sustainability Index; a multi-stakeholder partnership to accelerate the development and performance of sustainable destinations.

Guy was previously the President of the Green Meeting Industry Council, and was the Sustainability Director of MCI, the world's largest association management, communications and events agency.



## **Ingunn Sørnes** **Special Advisor, Innovation Norway**

Ingunn Sørnes has for the last years held a position as a special advisor in sustainable tourism in Innovation Norway. Innovation Norway is the main Governmental organization assisting innovation and economic development in different sectors in Norway, among them tourism.

Ingunn is responsible for the strategy and operational work on sustainable tourism in Innovation Norway, and over the past 10 years she has developed strategies, tools and instruments for assisting destinations and tourism businesses in their development towards sustainability in tourism.

Under this work Innovation Norway launched a national standard "Sustainable Destinations" in 2013, providing DMOs with management tools, funding and monitoring capability, embedded in a management system for destinations moving towards a more sustainable future. Up to date 17 destinations are involved in the program.

Ingunn has a MSc from the University of Oslo and Oslo Business School. She also has experience from working on business and rural development in the Ministry of Agriculture, State Bank of Agriculture and Governments Regional Development Fund.



## **Dr. Ioannis Pappas** **Director Mediterranean, GSTC**

Dr. Ioannis Pappas sits on the GSTC Board of Directors and acts as the Treasurer of GSTC.

He is the GSTC Representative in the Mediterranean Region, and a GSTC authorized Trainer. Dr. Pappas is the CEO of Green Evolution SA, an experienced professional engineer, with over 25 years of work in several fields of science, focusing on sustainability and tourism, energy and environmental efficiency in infrastructure and buildings. He is also auditing and advising on standardization of companies and technological implementation of climate adaptation and mitigation methodologies.

Dr. Pappas is Co-founder and a Board Member in a number of organizations (Sustainable Building Council of Greece, Hellenic Passive House Institute, Hellenic Start Up Association) as well as Co-founder of the Hellenic Ecotourism Society.

He worked with the Joint Research Center-IE of European Commission and was a Greek representative as the expert for ITL at UNFCCC.



**Jana Apih**  
**Director, Institute Factory of**  
**Sustainable Tourism, GoodPlace**

Jana Apih has experiences in marketing, strategic planning and implementation from project management for Slovenian tourist board to management of marketing agency Marethica.

She has runned a marketing department for the second biggest travel agency Globtour to brand development and strategic marketing for travel industry within Toleranca marketing agency.

At the moment, she is managing institute Factory of sustainable tourism GoodPlace responsible for development of the national certificate programme Slovenia Green.

In year 2016, she established in partnership a travel agency GoodPlace focusing on green and active travel.  
[www.goodplace.si](http://www.goodplace.si)

Experienced Entrepreneur with a demonstrated history of working in the renewables and environment industry. Skilled in Digital Strategy, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Negotiation, Marketing Management, and Strategic Negotiations.



**Jane Ashton**  
**Director of Sustainability, TUI Group**

Jane Ashton is Director of Sustainability at TUI Group PLC. Jane leads the team that has accelerated the world's leading tourism group forward on sustainability with its pivotal 'Better Holidays, Better World' Sustainability Strategy 2015-2020.

Under her stewardship sustainable tourism has become integral to TUI Group's strategy, product characteristics and risk management.

Jane influences business activity on the wide range of sustainability issues present throughout the operations of a large international travel business which comprises hotels, cruise ships, airlines, tour operators, destination management, tours and excursions. She has supported the business with the development of performance targets that are both ambitious from a sustainability perspective and commercially strategic.

Jane chairs the Advisory Committee of the TUI Care Foundation, with its ambitious programme of projects which seek to harness the positive impacts of tourism and make a difference for people and biodiversity in destinations



## **Jeppe Klockareson** **Owner and founder, Fair Travel**

Jeppe Klockareson has worked with sustainable tourism development for almost 15 years and has a background as CEO at Basecamp Explorer Sweden and as Product Manager at STA Travel Nordic. Since 2010, he runs Fair Travel full-time, offering expertise in sustainable tourism development to customers worldwide, through advisory, audits, consulting, lectures, training, project work and sales and marketing support.

Jeppe has been a member of the board of the Swedish Nature and Ecotourism Association since 2014 and acts as the Swedish representative for The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).

Fair Travel is also GSTC's official training partner in the Nordic region.



## **Jerry Spooner**

### **Director of Tourism, Vanuatu**

Jerry Spooner's professional and academic qualifications reflect his mix of financial and tourism interests, and include certificates in customer service and management learning, a diploma and bachelor degree in commerce, and a partially completed Master's degree in Sustainable Tourism.

Jerry was recently appointed as the Director of Tourism with the government of Vanuatu. Under his leadership, the Department has embarked on an ambitious program of building government tourism policy around the principles of economic viability, social acceptability and environmental responsibility.

In development of these policies, Jerry has had to negotiate the challenge of working with organisations that range from provincial government offices and small indigenous businesses with limited understanding of business practice and international tourism, to globally based NGOs and multi-national corporations with substantial experience and influence. While he admits to being a work in progress, his commitment to forging a home grown model of tourism planning and development that is customised to the needs of Vanuatu culture and kastom, and that balances the needs of divergent stakeholders, remains a driving force behind his thinking.



**Dr. Jorge Costa**  
**Founder and president, IPDT**

Jorge graduated in Management and Public Administration (from Technical University, Lisbon), and received a PhD in Strategic Planning in Hospitality and Tourism (from Surrey University).

He is the Founder and President of IPDT - Institute for Tourism Planning and Development an UNWTO affiliate member, Global Trends Editor of Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes Journal (Emerald Publishing), and member of the Advisory Board of Porto Airport.

His past appointments include: Tourism Strategy Development Specialist, World Bank Group; Pro-Vice Chancellor and Management Sciences Doctoral Programme Director at Fernando Pessoa University (Porto); Visiting research and teaching appointments at Bournemouth and Surrey universities (UK); and consulting appointments with UNWTO, UNDP, UNCTAD, and the governments of Angola, Cabo Verde, São Tomé e Príncipe, Azores, and Madeira.

During his academic career, Jorge received the GSE and the "Multi-Year Ambassadorial Scholarship" from the International Rotary Foundation.



**Kelly Bricker**  
**Associate Professor and Director,**  
**University of Utah - in Parks,**  
**Recreation, and Tourism**

She completed her Ph.D. research with the Pennsylvania State University, where she specialized in sustainable tourism and protected area management. She has special research and teaching interest in ecotourism, natural resource management, and the environmental and social impacts of tourism.

Kelly has conducted research and presented on issues in ecotourism, visitor management, impacts of tourism, and natural resource management for nature-based tourism. She has published protected areas, ecotourism certification and policy, and health and sustainable tourism relative to impacts on communities.

With Rosemary Black and Stuart Cottrell, she authored and edited a book titled Sustainable Tourism & the Millennium Development Goals: Effecting Positive Change. Most recently, she co-edited a new textbook with Dr. Rosemary Black, titled Adventure Programming and Travel for the 21st Century. With partners in OARS and her husband, she developed an ecotourism operation called Rivers Fiji. She currently serves as the Vice Chair and Treasurer for the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, and serves as an Advisory Board member to GPRED.



## **Lonneke de Kort** **CEO, Bookdifferent.com**

Since 2012 Lonneke de Kort is CEO and figurehead of hotel booking site bookdifferent.com.

bookdifferent.com is the first organization in the world that has built up a database with more than 14,000 certified hotels of more than 30 renowned eco-labels with global coverage, has mapped out how these accommodations score on the pillars of sustainability through the staygreencheck score and more than 2 million hotels have calculated CO2 emissions. The methodologies and the green indicators that bookdifferent.com uses are evidenced-based and verified by the advisory board of bookdifferent.com.

After a long career in fashion in Senior Management positions, Lonneke followed her heart and decided to use her experience and capabilities to transform the travel industry towards a more sustainable sector. According to Lonneke integrating sustainability into day to day activities in an easy and understandable way is the only way to push this transition forward. bookdifferent.com is an important vehicle to reach this goal.



**Luigi Cabrini**  
**Chairman of the Board of Directors,**  
**(GSTC)**

Mr. Luigi Cabrini is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council. Mr. Cabrini led several initiatives on sustainable tourism at global level, focusing his activities on tourism and climate change, tourism and biodiversity, observatories for sustainable tourism, the green economy, tourism and heritage and global partnerships.

He was the Director of the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) Sustainable Tourism Programme until 2014 and previously held the positions of UNWTO Director for Europe and Secretary of the General Assembly and Executive Council. From 2014 to 2018 he was an Advisor to the Secretary-General of the UNWTO. Before joining the UNWTO he has been engaged during 20 years in United Nations programmes for development and for protection of refugees, in Guatemala, Mexico, Somalia, Pakistan, Poland and Spain. Luigi Cabrini is fluent in Italian, English, French and Spanish and has basic knowledge of Russian and Polish. He is the author of various articles, speeches and papers.



## **Luigi Mazzaglia** **Founder & General manager, Vireo**

Luigi Mazzaglia achieved a master in forestry and environmental sciences at Padova (Italy) university. As a self-employed started to work as FSC auditor and as a consultant for timber companies.

Today, with more than 15 years of experience in auditing schemes related to sustainability such as GSTC, FSC, MSC, Carbon Trust, etc, Luigi is a founder of Vireo and the company's general manager.

At Vireo, Luigi has developed several schemes last of which is GSTC. Luigi, apart from managerial activities, is an active auditor for all schemes offered by Vireo in Italy, EU countries, Russia and Cameroon.



**Luis Alberto Blanco**  
**HR & Sustainability Manager,**  
**Travel Excellence Costa Rica**

Luis Alberto Blanco, Psychologist and Chemical Engineer, was born in San Carlos, a small town next to the beautiful Arenal Volcano in Costa Rica.

He has been working in a Tour Operator since 2007, committed to different issues such as: Certification in Sustainable Tourism CST (based on GSTC criteria), Quality Management System (ISO9001), Carbon Neutrality Certification (C-Neutral by CR Environment Ministry), Gender Equality Certification (SIGIG by National Women's Institute) and member of the National Tourism Technical Committee CTN34 by Institute of Technical Standards (INTECO, member of ISO).

Travel Excellence have been pioneers in certifications on these issues not only within the tourism sector but at the country level. Luis Alberto enjoys being part of projects related with Management Systems, Social Responsibility and Human Resources.



## **Marlene Damião, Azores Regional Director of Tourism**

Marlene Damião is currently the responsible for the Regional Directorate of Tourism, the government department in charge of facilitating the sustainable development of the regional tourism, under reliance of the Regional Secretariat for Energy, Environment and Tourism.

Marlene is an expert in languages, lecturing German language courses at Bristol School Institute in Ponta Delgada, and was invited to teach in other private schools. In 2003, she took a post-graduation in Strategic Management and Tourism Development. Between March 2003 and May 2019 she was the Academic Director of the Azorean Tourism and Hospitality Training School.



## **Marta Isabel Vieira Guerreiro** **Azores Regional Secretary** **for Energy, Environment and Tourism**

Marta Guerreiro graduated in Economics at the Nova Business School of Universidade Nova de Lisboa (New University of Lisbon) with a specialisation in the areas of Monetary Economics, Industrial Economics and Public Economics.

She joined the Banco Comercial dos Açores in 2000, where she began working as Credit Analyst, later becoming responsible for the Credit Analysis Unit. She implemented and managed the Technical Support Unit of the Commercial Department, focusing on the promotion of Operational Marketing. Following several acquisitions and mergers, she joined the commercial area in 2013, becoming responsible for the management of the Business Centres of São Miguel and Terceira at Banif. Two years later, she headed the Regional Business Department of Banco Santander Totta.

Marta has been member of the Regional Secretariat of the Portuguese Economists' Association until 2016 and is a full member of this association. She is also a fellow of the college of Political Economy.

She took office as Regional Secretary for Energy, Environment and Tourism of the XII Regional Government of the Azores on November 4, 2016.



## **Martina von Münchhausen** **Senior Program Manager -** **Sustainable Tourism, WWF**

Martina von Münchhausen is responsible for the sustainable tourism program of WWF Germany based in the International Center for Marine Conservation in Hamburg. Her work is focusing on sustainable tourism development, business corporations and partnerships and the development of strategies to mainstream sustainability in tourism.

In collaboration with the WWF international marine tourism network, the position includes coordination of work focused on community-based tourism, conservation of the marine and coastal ecosystems and key species and the adoption of better practices for coastal development.

In addition, the development of measures and guidance to reduce negative environmental impacts of tourism like the tourism climate, water, waste and plastic footprint and mobilizing consumer action for sustainable tourism and certification.

On behalf of WWF, she was supporting the development of the GSTC since 2008 and is part of the Certification Council of TourCert.



## **Dr. Mihee Kang**

### **Regional Director - Asia Pacific, GSTC**

Dr. Mihee Kang is the President of PlayForest, a cooperative of sustainable travel businesses designed to benefit local communities and local activists dedicated to the conservation of their forests and to provide genuine community-based natural tourism experiences to the visitors. She was a research professor at Seoul National University, researching topics related to protected areas management and sustainable tourism. She received her Ph.D. degree at Seoul National University in 1999.

She serves a number of key positions in both domestic and international organizations such as Korean UNESCO MAB Committee, Korean Geopark Committee, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, and Asian Ecotourism Network. She has actively participated in numerous ecotourism projects in Korea and abroad such as Australia, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Paraguay, etc. She has also published many articles and books including the recent book about ecotourism in ASEAN Countries.



## **Motti Essakow**

### **Co-founder, Rhythms by Design**

An acknowledged early pioneer and disrupter in the global travel and tourism industry with more than 20 years of Thought and Mindful Leadership experience across a wide spectrum of the Sustainable/Eco/Geo/Organic/Agri/Wellness/Spa Travel & Tourism sectors.

A cultivator of influencing and instigating positive change through thought provoking positive ideas – then turning ideas into successful practice by highlighting the symbiosis between People Capital, Natural Capital, Wellbeing Capital & Economic Capital in ways where each is equally valued, measured and benefit.

Motti is co-founder of Rythms House – Turn Key Responsible Luxury, Conscious Business and Design for Wellbeing project management specialists targeting the hospitality, spa, wellness, & healthcare sectors.

Motti is also co-founder and Chief Imagineer of “Rythms by Design” – a pioneering and still only-of-its-kind in the UK and Europe Responsible Sourcing and Procurement Management enterprise targeting the luxury hospitality, yacht, spa and WELL sectors.



## **Nicola Koschel**

### **Independent Tourism Consultant**

Nicola Koschel is an independent tourism consultant based in Germany with a fundamental focus on the sustainable development and environmental management of tourism. After graduating from a BBA in Tourism Management and Consultancy (NHTV-NL) she obtained a Master in Sustainable Tourism Management (HNEE-DE). Since 2007 Nicola has worked with and for NGOs, DMOs, federal ministries, the German Development Cooperation, the European Commission as well as by order of renowned consultancy firms.

Her work portfolio involves product and destination planning and development, evaluation and monitoring, feasibility studies, market research, certification, marketing strategies and the organization of study trips, tourism awards and conferences.

Nicola is a GSTC trainer, serves on GSTC's Accreditation Panel on behalf of WWF, and is also a member of GSTC's International Standards Working Group and Destination Stewardship Working Group.



**Olaf Schlieper**  
**Innovations Manager,**  
**German National Tourist Board**

With a degree in Economic Geography (majoring in tourism) at Ruhr-University of Bochum, Germany, Olaf has 20 years of experience in marketing tourism.

He joined the German National Tourist Board as an Online Marketing Manager, and in 2006 became its Director of Media Management.

Since 2013, Olaf has been the Innovations Manager at the German National Tourist Board, Responsible for sustainability strategy and the creation of sustainable and barrier-free products and services together with German travel experts.

His focus is also on the international promotion of Germany as a sustainable destination. He is responsible for the organization of the “Barrier-free Tourism Day” at ITB, and acts as a jury member in several national and regional competitions, as well as a speaker and moderator to promote Germany as a travel destination.



**Paulo Duarte**  
**COO, Memmo Unforgettable Hotels**

Paulo has a Degree in business administration. Specialization in corporate finance.

He has been the GM of Hotel Al Foz. Responsible for the hotel management of Sporting Lisbon's Football Professional Training Centre, including the organization of the Portuguese national team during Euro 2004. Has participated in the opening of several restaurants. Director of Operations at Memmo Baleeira Hotel. He has also been the GM of Memmo Alfama Hotel, and currently the Chief Operating Officer and member of the Executive Committee of Memmo Unforgettable Hotels.



**Peimin Lin**  
**Supervisor, Taiwan Coral Island**  
**Association**

Peimin has 16 years of professional graphic arts, interior design and marketing expertise in the travel and leisure industry.

And the artistic expression is injected into the activities related to the eco-tourism, sea conservation, historical and cultural assets inheritance of Xiaoliuqiu Island.

Actively promote the action of sustainable eco-tourism, and involve leisure industry such as hotels, catering operators, diving companies and other leisure industries to jointly launch and implement the goal of achieving a balance between ecological resources sustainability and tourism revenue.

Since 2012, she has been being a volunteer of green-turtle observation and research. From 2016, she has continued to promote Beach Currency, Rental Cup, Clean Beach activities, and has built environmental awareness to local primary schools and community education. Teach residents and tourists who come here can also take care of creatures and protect the natural environment.



**Rachel Mc Caffery**  
**Director, Travel Without Plastic**

Rachel Mc Caffery is an experienced travel industry professional with over 15 years spent working in sustainable tourism. She holds a Masters degree in International Tourism Policy and has extensive commercial experience with Panorama Travel, Virgin Holidays, Virgin Atlantic Airlines, Martinhal Resorts and STA Travel. Rachel has also input into the creation of various internationally adopted sustainable tourism tools such as the European Tourism Indicator System, The ABTA Global Guidelines on Animal Welfare in Tourism and the Travelife sustainability certification.

Rachel currently wears several hats, working part-time as Senior Advisor on Responsible Travel for adventure specialist, G Adventures, occasionally consulting on sustainable tourism for various organisations and developing her passion to help clear the world's oceans by removing the deluge of unnecessary single-use plastic from hotels, as a Director of Travel Without Plastic.



## **Randy Durband** **Chief Executive Officer, GSTC**

Randy Durband has had two careers in travel and tourism – twenty-plus years in senior leadership positions at some of the finest U.S. tour operators, having served as President for Travcoa, INTRAV, and Clipper Cruise Lines, (brands within TUI Travel plc), plus Executive Vice President of Tauck World Discovery.

Following that, in his second travel and tourism career, Randy advanced the work of Sustainable Tourism as an advisor, consultant, and speaker. He brings his knowledge of the business of travel, his global network of travel professionals, and a passion for sustainability to support the GSTC and the general sustainable tourism movement.

He has held several board positions and committee memberships in travel and tourism organizations, and is a frequent speaker on sustainable tourism issues.



## **Rika Jean-François** **CSR Commissioner, ITB Messe Berlin**

Rika Jean-François holds a Master Degree in Social Anthropology and Iranian Studies with an expertise on ethnic identities, sustainable development and diversity issues from the Free University of Berlin, Germany.

Back in Germany she became counselor at the University's International Academic Exchange Office and travelled as a researcher to Iran, Malawi and Haiti.

Ms. Jean-François obtained an additional qualification in Quality Management, working on the evaluation of development aid workers' education for the German Development Service. Since 2004 she has been with Messe Berlin and vitally developed ITB's Corporate Social Responsibility. As ITB's head of CSR she is a passionate speaker at sustainable tourism events internationally.

Putting an emphasis on human rights and diversity, she has spearheaded ITB's implementation of the LGBT travel segment and was member of the board of directors of the IGLTA (International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association) for 5 consecutive years –currently she serves on the board of the IGLTA Foundation.

She is also a board member of PATA (Pacific Asian Travel Association) and The Code International, supports many international sustainability committees and is a jury member at several global responsible tourism contests.



## **Rob Holmes**

### **Founder & Chief Strategist, GLP Films**

Rob Holmes is the Founder & Chief Strategist of GLP Films (GLP), the leading content marketing agency dedicated to authentic storytelling and digital content strategy within the travel industry. Rob has a diverse background in multimedia production, storytelling, sustainable tourism, conservation, marketing, and entrepreneurship.

In his work with GLP Films, Rob has spearheaded partnerships with global travel brands, including National Geographic, UNWTO, Columbia Sportswear, leading NGO's, international tourism boards, and numerous media networks. Prior to GLP, Rob built, managed, and sold trails.com, the leading adventure travel and outdoor company.

An award-winning travel photographer, Rob has travelled across 100+ countries. In-line with his passion for sustainable tourism, Rob is a proponent for wildlife conservation, with a BA in Wildlife Management and Conservation Biology from Hobart College. Rob also holds an MBA from University of Washington in International Business, Marketing and Environmental Management.



## **Roi Ariel**

### **General Manager, GSTC**

Roi Ariel has been focusing on responsible travel and sustainable tourism over the past decade. As the General Manager of GSTC, Roi manages the organization's memberships, communications, events, and administration, among other topics.

He previously worked with UN-ESCAP researching sustainable development and green growth, and on sustainability issues with the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA).

Prior to his move to Asia, Roi worked with Friends of the Middle East in Israel as the Green Economy Initiative Advisor, among other sustainable tourism projects.

Roi holds a master degree in Applied Economic and Social Development from National Chengchi University in Taipei with a focus on sustainability, and a bachelor degree in International Relations and Comparative Religion from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel.



**Rosa Harris**  
**Director, Cayman Islands Department**  
**of Tourism**

Mrs. Rosa Harris is the Director of the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism with over 20 years' experience in the Tourism/Hospitality sector in the Cayman Islands, she is a Senior Level Executive with extensive hands-on experience in management, business leadership, and working with Government Officials, Board of Directors, Advertising Executives and Tourism Partners.

To help manage and shape the Cayman Islands' tourism industry, Mrs. Harris serves on multiple boards and committees. She is the Chairman of the Public Transportation Board, the Hotel Licensing Board, and the Cayman Islands Hospitality School Council. Mrs. Harris also serves a member on the Boards for the National Flag Carrier Cayman Airways Ltd, the Cayman Islands Film Commission, the Tourism Attractions Board, and the Cayman Islands Marketing Professionals Association.

In June 2019 Rosa Harris was the recipient of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation - Jerry Award. She was recognised for her leadership and passion in promoting travel and tourism for the Caribbean region.



**Sara Bellshaw**  
**Project Manager, University of the Highlands and Islands' Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research in Scotland**

Sara Mair Bellshaw is a project manager at the University of the Highlands and Islands' Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research in Scotland and focuses mainly on applied practical research projects that involve tourism product development and tourism marketing.

Sara coordinated Slow Adventure in Northern Territories (SAINT), a project co-financed by the Northern Periphery and Arctic Program, which drew together a range of partners in Ireland, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Northern Ireland and Sweden.

Sara has focused on turning the slow adventure concept into a marketable product by working with businesses to cluster, collaborate, create and promote new Slow Adventure® experiences, and is working with the industry, including the European Travel Commission and its NTO members, to develop the movement further.

Sara has a background in economic development, destination and tourism marketing, sustainable communities and project management, and continues to advocate for slow, strategic and responsible tourism throughout her work.



## **Stewart Moore** **Founder & CEO, EarthCheck**

Stewart Moore is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of EarthCheck and the Executive Director of the APEC International Centre for Sustainable Tourism. He is Vice Chairman of the PATA Foundation, a member of the advisory Board for the Griffith University Institute for Tourism and Chairman of the National Centre for Studies in Travel and Tourism.

Stewart has over 30 years of experience globally in a wide range of disciplines from business and strategic planning, tourism destination management and marketing, sustainability, risk and crisis management and corporate and social responsibility.

EarthCheck is the world's leading business advisory group specialising in sustainability and destination management for the travel and tourism industry.

Through its Total Tourism Management™ platform, EarthCheck works in partnership with clients to plan for the future and help guide the design, construction and operation of smart buildings and the responsible management of tourism destinations.



**Thuy Nguyen**  
**Program Coordinator - Oceans, WWF-  
Vietnam**

Thuy leads the Marine program of WWF-Vietnam, in which plastic is a major area.

In more than 20 years working in the marine conservation and sustainable development area, she has long experience of working with multi-stakeholders including government, businesses, communities, NGO..., coordinating and facilitating many processes of engaging different parties into one strategy/action plan aiming at sustainable development goals.

In the last 2 years, she has been working closely with tourism businesses in Phu Quoc island to engage them into the joint effort of combating marine plastic on the whole island via reducing plastic in hotel operations, dialogue with the local government to support the best practices in waste management.



**Upali Ratnayake**  
**Director General, Sri Lanka Tourism**  
**Development Authority**

Upali Ratnayake is the Director General of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), the apex body of the Sri Lanka tourism sector.

Ratnayake has worked at the state tours entity for over 23 years and for over a decade he has served at the organisation's top tier of decision making as the Director Planning and Domestic Tourism and as the Director Quality and Assurance.

Having graduated from the University of Colombo, Ratnayake completed his MBA in Thailand on Tourism and Hospitality. He completed his Post Graduate Diploma in Belgium and also underwent a special training on Green-Eco tourism in Japan and Australia.

He is vastly experienced in areas such as national tourism planning, development of investment projects, domestic tourism and resort management, tourism standards and quality assurance, research, tourism training and special projects engagements.



**Dr. Xavier Font**  
**Professor of Sustainability Marketing,**  
**University of Surrey**

Dr Xavier Font is professor of Sustainability Marketing at the University of Surrey. He researches and develops methods of sustainable tourism production and consumption.

He has published widely about sustainable tourism certification, and has consulted on sustainable product development, marketing and communication for several United Nations agencies, the International Finance Corporation, VisitEngland, Fáilte Ireland, VisitWales, VisitScotland and WWF amongst others.

Since September 2019, he is the Principal Investigator for the University of Surrey in a €23.5m Interreg funded project to reduce winter seasonality in the UK and France by supporting the development of experiential, sustainable tourism offer that improves the economy, contributes to healthy communities and preserves the environment.

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