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CONTOUR Projects Ltd

THE PRO'S AND CONS OF CERTIFICATION IN TOURISM

BACKGROUND

- Management of tourism ecolabel “Green Key”
- Environmental audits, 300+ (hotels, campsites, lodges, restaurants, youth hostels, conference centers)
- Eco-certification projects Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao
- Secretary of VISIT, European association for tourism ecolabels
- Tourism projects with Fairtrade certified P.O.’s
- Founder of PASEO, brand for fair tourism initiatives

PRO'S OF TOURISM CERTIFICATION

- Standardized tool for improving tourism practices
- Easy comparison between business performances
- Improvement of the tourism supply chain
- License to operate
- Reduction of expenditures / costs (f.e. water, energy, waste)
- Promotional value

CONTRA'S OF TOURISM CERTIFICATION

(1)

- Simplicity → ignoring local, regional and national differences → reducing destinations to a common level
- Different types of tourists and tourism → impossible to cover the complexity of tourism
- Administrative burden for tourism businesses
- Label becomes an aim rather than a tool
- Audits only cover a particular moment

CONTRA'S OF TOURISM CERTIFICATION (2)

- Few promotional value
- Cost reductions will be common after 3 years
- Lack of experienced environmental auditors
- Corruption and ignorance
- Tourists don't think about their role, impact, behavior

CONFUSIONS

- Reward for implementing law & legislation?
- Reward for being less bad than your neighbor?
- Who will bear the costs of certification?
- Why certifying good business practices?
- Do we allow an irresponsible tourism market?
- How many niche-markets do we need? (sustainable, responsible, community based, eco, pro-poor, fair)
- “Green washing”
- What is the limit?

