



F R O M   S H I P   T O   S H O R E

Sustainable Stewardship in Cruise Destinations



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# Acknowledgments


This publication was developed by The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB) at Conservation International, as part of the work of the Ocean Conservation and Tourism Alliance (OCTA) and with the core support of the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL). At CELB, Jamie Sweeting, Lisa Bailey and Seleni Matus guided the research, writing and production processes, and Sarah Raposa and David Krantz contributed to the gathering of examples and information. Scott Wayne, of S.W. Associates, L.L.C., provided important input, comments and advice. We are grateful to Michael Crye, Angela Plott, Lyndsay Rossman and Christine Fischer, of the International Council of Cruise Lines, for helping us gather information, examples and photos from the cruise industry. We would also like to thank our editor, Amy Sweeting, and our designer, Miya Su Rowe/Rowe Design House.

In addition, the following individuals provided input for the wide range of examples of sustainable stewardship found throughout this document: Rose Abello and Erik Elvejord at Holland America Line; Valdemar Andrade and Marnix Perez of PACT Belize; Lori Arguelles of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation; Todd Barber of the Reef Ball Foundation; Julie Benson of Cunard Line and Princess Cruises; Irene Bowie and Anne Rillero of the Pacific Whale Foundation; Andy Caballero of the St. Maarten Nature Foundation; Adam Ceserano and Michele Paige of the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association; Andres Ferrer Benzo, Paul Chakroff, Kasia Grasela, and Aleksandra Stankovic of The Nature Conservancy; Tony Charters of Tony Charters and Associates; Natalia Collier of Environmental Protection in the Caribbean; Ana Lilia Córdova Lira of Grupo Xcaret; Peter Cox and Bruce Good of Seabourn Cruise Line; S. Kirby Day, III of Juneau Tourism Best Management Practices; Jane E. Disney of the Mount Desert Island Water Quality Coalition; Tom Dow of Carnival Corporation; Melissa Edwards and Leslie Katz of the Royal Caribbean Ocean Fund; Emilio R. Freeman, Captain Ola S. Harsheim and Nikki F. Upshaw of ResidenSea; Doug Fry of Atlantis Adventures; Tim Gallagher and Jennifer de la Cruz at Carnival Cruise Lines; John Hansen and Donna Spalding of the North West CruiseShip Association; Brad Hardaway of Windstar Cruises; Craig Harris of McKay Shipping Ltd. (Auckland, NZ); Valerie Humphrey of FAI; Denise Landau of the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators; Rena Langley of Disney Cruise Line; Lee Lennon, Brad Ball and Colleen Scott of Silversea Cruises; Lawrence Locklin and Thelonious Trimmell of ACDI/VOCA; Lynn Martenstein and Michael Sheehan of Royal Caribbean International and Celebrity Cruises; Rod McDowall of the Cayman Islands Tourism Association; Nigel Mitchell of the St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme; Lisha Mulqueeny and Lorelle Schluter of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority; Karen Platt of the Alaska Natural History Association; Andrew Poulton at Regent Seven Seas Cruises; Susan Robison at Norwegian Cruise Line; Kim Sams of the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund; Sarah Scoltock at Windstar Cruises; Mick Shultz of the Port of Seattle; Ken Swinney of Environment Southland; Catalina Torres of Las Esquinas Rainforest Lodge; Mimi Weisband at Crystal Cruises; Hannah Wright of Chukka Caribbean Adventures; and Jessie Young of the Community Baboon Sanctuary.

Finally, we would like to thank The Summit Foundation for their generous support of this project.

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# F O R E W O R D



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In its most ideal form, tourism provides an incentive for governments, businesses and local communities to protect natural and cultural assets, as a way to raise revenue and improve standards of living by attracting tourists to a destination. One of the most rapidly growing segments of the tourism sector is the cruise industry. Although cruise tourism has the potential to overwhelm fragile destinations if not managed effectively, the industry is also a great potential ally for conservation, because many cruise passengers are attracted by the opportunity to experience new places and cultures.

At Conservation International, this is a very important issue for us, because two-thirds of cruise destinations are located within the biodiversity hotspots, the areas that are the most highly threatened and most biologically unique places on Earth.

This publication examines the complexities of the shared responsibilities among cruise lines, governments, civil society groups and shore operators to manage the growth and expansion of the cruise industry. Within these pages, we profile leading examples of how these stakeholders can all play a part in both ensuring a sustainable future for cruise tourism and maintaining the natural and cultural integrity of cruise destinations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Russell A. Mittermeier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Russell A. Mittermeier  
President, Conservation International

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Rapid growth of the cruise industry over the last two decades has resulted in increasing stress on environmental and cultural resources in cruise ship ports of call. Many of the world's top cruise destinations are located in unique and threatened ecosystems, such as the Caribbean Basin and the Mediterranean. Destinations within these areas are often unprepared to effectively manage sudden increases in visitation in order to maximize local benefits and minimize negative impacts, while cruise lines have not traditionally prioritized sustainability issues as part of their decision-making at the destination level.

To address these challenges, major stakeholder groups need to work together to maintain, protect and preserve the quality of natural and cultural resources in cruise destinations. From cruise lines and governments to civil society organizations and shore operators, all of these groups have a stake in ensuring a healthy future for each destination and for cruise tourism around the world:

**Cruise lines.** For the cruise industry, supporting a sustainable future for destinations is part of maintaining the resource base on which its business is built. Providing the best possible experience for passengers includes ensuring their health, safety and enjoyment at all times, including while they are on shore. Cruise lines can work closely with other stakeholders to minimize the negative impacts and maximize the benefits of their presence in a port. This includes



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working with local governments, communities and service providers to develop management plans for sustainable growth, as well as creating standards and systems of quality assurance for their local vendors or shore excursion providers. On board, cruise lines can raise awareness among passengers and crew about environmental and cultural issues and ways to support conservation through their actions and behavior. The companies can also contribute directly to sustainability in a destination by investing in local conservation and community development projects, or organizing onboard fundraising activities.

**Governments.** For governments, maintaining the health and attractiveness of their ports as cruise destinations and providing high-quality and sustainable attractions and services can raise revenues and improve the quality of life for their people. Governments are responsible for enacting policies that protect natural and cultural resources and providing a supportive enabling environment, for example, by offering financial or business incentives to cruise lines and local businesses for responsible management and operational practices. National parks and other protected areas are key elements in sustainable development and tourism strategies, and governments can work closely with park managers to effectively manage increased tourism from cruise ships and ensure that it contributes to the environmental and financial sustainability of protected areas. Governments can also contribute to the preservation of a destination



through the provision of sustainable infrastructure resources—such as port facilities, roads, visitor centers, waste and water management and energy services—and by offering training and capacity building to ensure that services such as transportation, dining, recreation and shopping are provided in a sustainable manner.

**Civil Society.** For civil society, which includes non-governmental organizations, local communities and indigenous groups, sustainable cruise tourism can mean benefits for their members and support for the preservation of their cultures and local environment. These groups often have unique skills and expertise and can be an important resource for other stakeholders in reaching the goals of sustainability, facilitating wider collaboration among different parties, raising awareness on environmental or cultural issues, or helping to organize local communities to fully reap the benefits of increased cruise tourism. Civil society organizations can also provide training and capacity-building support to other stakeholders on good practices, biodiversity conservation, cultural preservation and locally appropriate behavior.

**Shore Operators.** Shore operators rely directly on the natural and cultural resources of a destination for their livelihoods. They are also directly responsible for the time when cruise passengers are on shore and thus play a critical role in influencing the actions of visitors and



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educating them on appropriate behavior. Shore operators can join together in associations to increase the sustainability of their activities, or partner with cruise lines and local communities to develop products that benefit the environment and local populations and minimize negative impacts on sensitive or threatened areas. In all product offerings, including both new and existing tours, shore operators can adopt and implement responsible managerial and operational practices to help ensure the protection and maintenance of the destination. They can also contribute directly to sustainability by donating time, resources or equipment to local conservation or community development efforts and by offering their clients opportunities to contribute directly to these efforts during their tours.

# INTRODUCTION



The cruise industry has grown rapidly in recent years, with average annual increases in passenger numbers of 8.2 percent over the last two decades. More than 11 million passengers sailed on cruise ships in 2005. Between 2000 and 2004, 62 new ships were introduced to the North American market alone, and another 21 are expected to come into service by 2009.

Of the top 30 cruise destinations in the world, 20 are located in the Caribbean and Mediterranean, two important biodiversity hotspots. Among these, the 10 most popular ports are all found in the Caribbean basin, which includes South Florida, the Caribbean islands, Mexico and Central America, areas that are home to unique and threatened species and habitats. As cruise tourism grows, there is rising concern about potential negative impacts on natural resources from uncontrolled or excessive visitation to sites such as coral reefs and rainforests. In addition, inadequate planning and infrastructure development in newly popular ports of call have meant that many destinations are unable to handle the sudden influx of cruise passengers in a sustainable manner.

Historically, local stakeholders at each port of call are often ill-prepared to deal with the rapid increase of cruise tourism in a destination. They frequently fail to sufficiently and sustainably manage that tourism to maximize local benefits and minimize negative impacts. Furthermore, in the past, cruise lines have not focused adequately on integrating long-term sustainability issues into their decision-making





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frameworks at the destination level and have not worked closely with other destination stakeholders to proactively address the special needs of cruise tourism before a destination becomes popular.

However, this traditional approach is changing, as all stakeholders recognize their specific interest in, and responsibility for, protecting and preserving the quality of cruise destinations. For the cruise industry, it makes good business sense to help protect the resource base upon which its business is built. Governments want to raise revenue, maintain the quality of tourism in their countries and maximize benefits for their people. Civil society, including non-governmental organizations, local communities and indigenous groups, want to ensure benefits for their members and protect their cultures and the local environment. Shore operators want to be competitive and preserve the natural and cultural resources they rely on for their livelihoods.

This document is divided into four sections, each representing a stakeholder group that can influence the impacts of cruise tourism in a destination: cruise lines, governments, civil society and shore operators. The guide offers suggestions for how these groups can play a proactive role in managing cruise passenger visitation to a destination, in order to maximize environmental, cultural and societal benefits and minimize negative impacts. Each section includes a series of examples of practices and projects that are contributing to the sustainability of cruise destinations around the world.



# C R U I S E L I N E S

Cruise lines are responsible for promoting the health, safety and entertainment of their passengers throughout the cruise experience. While much of this is related to ensuring the environmental sustainability of all direct operations onboard their ships,<sup>1</sup> it also extends to the passengers' experiences at ports of call, either as independent travelers or, especially, as part of a packaged shore excursion sold by the cruise line. Contributing to the sustainability of a destination will help to ensure not only that passengers have a safe, enjoyable experience, but also that the destination remains healthy and attractive to future passengers.

The cruise lines also have a responsibility to work with other stakeholders in a destination to ensure that the presence of their passengers is minimally disruptive and as beneficial as possible to the local population. Cruise lines are very adept at effectively managing large flows of passengers in an efficient manner, and they can impart that knowledge and experience to other stakeholders and shore operators in their destinations to help promote the sustainable management and growth of tourism.

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<sup>1</sup> Onboard operations are not discussed in this publication. For more information on cruise industry responses to key environmental challenges in the operation of their ships, please see: Sweeting, J.E.N. and S.L. Wayne. 2003. *A Shifting Tide: Environmental Challenges and Cruise Industry Responses*, Washington: The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business.



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## Cooperation and Partnerships with Local Stakeholders

To maintain and improve the quality of a destination, cruise lines need to work closely with local stakeholders and businesses. Through close cooperation with government agencies and ministries, cruise lines can positively influence the development and governance of an area. It is important to be transparent and open in negotiations with governments or other partners, to ensure trust and maintain the integrity of relationships. Cruise lines should also remain aware of long-term sustainability issues during negotiations; while it may be tempting to sign an agreement that offers significant benefits in the short-term, if it is unacceptable or unsatisfactory for other stakeholders in the long-run, the overall success and sustainability of the destination will suffer.

Cruise lines can also cooperate with other local providers to develop a management plan for a destination. Such a plan can promote effective and sustainable management of tourism growth. When working with local suppliers and vendors, cruise lines can develop a system of quality assurance and raise awareness about sustainability issues among their local partners. Finally, in determining their program of offered shore excursions for a particular location, cruise lines can contribute significantly to local sustainability by actively seeking, choosing and promoting environmentally and culturally responsible shore operators and recreation providers.

**Carnival and the SeaKeepers Society.** Carnival Cruise Lines has established an alliance with the International SeaKeepers Society to install scientific data-gathering devices on the *Carnival Triumph* and *Carnival Spirit* to monitor ocean water quality. Developed under the direction of scientists at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, the devices gather a wide range of data to aid in assessing ocean pollution and researching global climate change and cyclic weather patterns. The data is transmitted via satellite to the University of Miami and then on to various environmental groups, governmental agencies and universities.

**Cunard's Village Excursion in Panama.** In the Panamanian port of Puerto Amador, Cunard offers a special shore excursion in partnership with the Embera Indian village that is designed to help community members maintain their unique heritage and give them an opportunity to share it with visitors. From the start of the excursion, cruise passengers experience the local culture as they travel by traditional canoe to the village, where they meet members of the Embera community who share information about their culture, crafts and lifestyle. The partnership not only educates visitors but has also encouraged some members of the younger Embera generation to maintain stronger connections with traditional aspects of their culture.



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### Disney Cruise Line’s “Environmentalism”

**Challenge.** Disney Cruise Line works with the Grand Cayman Department of Tourism each year to encourage children to learn more about the environment and to take action to help protect their resources. Nearly 1,500 students from three grade levels are invited to participate in the Jiminy Cricket’s Environmentalism Challenge, by taking an Environmentalism Pledge and working on a class project that is geared toward raising awareness of environmental issues or taking action to help the environment. The program is designed to encourage children to think and act in a manner that benefits the environment and to teach them to care about the Earth and their community.



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The grand prize for each grade level includes a luncheon aboard the *Disney Magic*. Disney originally started this program in California and has since expanded it to Central Florida and Hong Kong. Disney Cruise Line began Jiminy Cricket’s Environmentalism Challenge in Grand Cayman in 2003.

**Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association training programs.** The Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) represents 13 cruise lines operating more than 100 vessels in Florida, Caribbean and Mexican waters. The association provides two Destination Customer Service Workshops intended to enhance local stakeholders’ cruise products, improve levels of customer service, increase stakeholders’ insight into cruise passenger spending and the cruise industry as a whole, highlight other destinations’ successes and improve the overall marketability of a destination. FCCA offers these programs, upon request and free of charge, to tourism departments and port authorities in every cruise destination in Mexico, the Caribbean and South America.

The *Caribbean Taxi Pride Program*, which focuses on courtesy and professionalism, history and geography, and rules and safety, is geared toward taxi drivers, but it is also relevant to tour operators and vendors providing ground transportation to cruise passengers. The program uses videos and workbooks to show, in a hands-on, entertaining and informative way, how to increase income from transportation.

The *Service Excellence Workshop/Cruise Passengers Equal Profits*, which is designed for all companies and individuals involved in customer service, highlights the cruise industry’s economic impact and the important role that excellent customer service plays in the success of a destination. The workshop explains customer needs and demonstrates appropriate attitudes to enhance tourist satisfaction, generate greater profits and increase the likelihood that cruise passengers will return and stay over in a destination.



**Holland America's whale protection program.** Holland America Line (HAL), in partnership with the U.S. National Park Service and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, has developed a Whale Strike Avoidance Training program for the maritime industry. This computer-based training program educates mariners on how to recognize and avoid whales. HAL offers the program as part of its regular employee environmental awareness training, and it has been formatted on CD-ROM and made available free of charge to anyone in the marine industry.

**North West CruiseShip Association's educational programs in Alaska.** The North West CruiseShip Association (NWCA) is a non-profit association representing the eight major cruise lines that operate in the Pacific North West, Canada, Alaska and Hawaii. In Juneau, Alaska, the NWCA is helping to engage and educate the community about the cruise industry with an environmental education program for students from local schools. The program includes tours of ships docked in port, where students learn about the ships' recycling, emissions and wastewater programs. Princess Cruises takes students to their lower deck recycling center, to see boxes broken down, glass crushed and garbage incinerated. Celebrity Cruises includes the engine room on its tours, to show students where emissions are monitored on video cameras and teach them about gas turbines. Holland America Line has provided oceanography classes to local high school students, including environmental tours of their ships' wastewater systems. A similar program was piloted in 2005 for students in grades 5 and 11 in Anchorage schools, and another program is in development for students in Hawaii.

**Norwegian Cruise Line's partnerships in Bermuda.** Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) has partnered with several local stakeholders in Bermuda to give its passengers a taste of the island's cuisine and culture. When the *Norwegian Crown* and *Norwegian Majesty* dock in Bermuda, the company offers its passengers an extended Freestyle Dining program, allowing them to choose from not only any of the 10 restaurants onboard the ships, but also a selection of 30 to 50 of Bermuda's top restaurants. NCL provides passengers with one US\$25 lunch voucher to use at popular shore side restaurants. A US\$5 per person charge is added to each guest's onboard account for the lunch voucher, and, for just US\$5 more, they can upgrade to a US\$50 dinner voucher. The restaurants then redeem those vouchers for payment from NCL.

Also in Bermuda, NCL offers a shore excursion program that includes a number of events at local historical sites, including the Commissioner's House at West End Dockyard and Fort St. Catherine in the UNESCO World Heritage Site town of St. George's. These exclusive events, which were developed in association with the Government of Bermuda, feature local cuisine and entertainment.

**Royal Caribbean International and the Rosenstiel Labs.** Royal Caribbean International installed sophisticated instruments and high-tech atmospheric and oceanographic laboratories on *Explorer of the Seas*, to help scientists answer significant ocean and climate research questions. The labs are the result of a public-private partnership involving Royal Caribbean, the University of Miami Rosenstiel



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School for Marine and Atmospheric Science, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, the Office of Naval Research, the Southeast Atlantic Coastal Ocean Observing System and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Scientists from research institutions around the world can continuously collect measurements along the ship's repetitive cruise tracks, to develop long-running, detailed atmospheric and oceanographic data series. Scientists are measuring the flow of ocean currents to understand the balance and distribution of heat on Earth, studying the dynamic air-sea interface, collecting data to use in ocean and hurricane models, and monitoring important, but hard-to-measure, populations of organisms living in the sea. Data collected is also used for weather forecasts throughout the Caribbean, and includes storm and hurricane forecasts. Visiting scientists also provide guest lectures on board the ship.

## Education and Awareness Among Passengers and Crew

The impacts of cruise tourism on land in a destination principally result from the actions and behavior of the people that ships bring to a port. Thus, cruise lines can contribute a great deal to sustainability in a destination by increasing the understanding and awareness of their passengers and educating them on how to act responsibly. This education can take many forms, from onboard lectures and activities to children's programs, and can focus on topics such as local regulations, local resources and protected areas, appropriate behavior, or species-specific guidelines and information.

Ensuring that tourists are aware of and comply with appropriate behaviors and guidelines can greatly limit the potential negative impacts of visitors to a site. Two dozen tourists who are well-informed and behave responsibly can have less negative impact than just two or three visitors who are unaware of sustainability guidelines and the possible effects of their activities. Although any destination will reach a saturation point at some time, this point can be much higher if those visitors behave appropriately.

In addition to focusing on passenger education and awareness, cruise lines should also remember that up to a third of the people whom they bring to a destination are crew. The cruise lines can train and educate staff members on the actions that they can take, both to limit their own negative impacts and to promote responsible behavior among the passengers with whom they interact.

**Crystal Cruises' Creative Learning Institute.** Crystal Cruises offers passengers an educational program of speakers, special-interest lecturers and celebrity appearances through its Creative Learning Institute (CLI). The program, which is offered fleetwide on all of Crystal's ships, offers programs in arts and entertainment, business and technology, lifestyle, wellness, and wine and food. The company has invited noted environmental scientists to speak to passengers, as part of a guest lecture series through



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CLI. For example, in 2006 on a cruise to South America, Dr. Mary Hagedorn, a research physiologist from the Smithsonian Institution's National Zoological Park in Washington, DC, will share with guests her experiences studying endangered marine species. Guests can also study the languages of their destinations with native-fluent instructors from Berlitz, including learning Italian while traveling along the Amalfi coast, Portuguese during a South American cruise or French along the Riviera.

**Holland America's passenger enrichment programs.** Holland America Line (HAL) has a variety of programs to enhance environmental understanding among its guests and employees. On all of its Alaska cruises, the company employs naturalists who give lectures and host environmental discussion groups and bird- and whale-watching sessions. A native artisan affiliated with the Alaska Native Heritage Center is also onboard to demonstrate traditional crafts, while a National Park Service Ranger discusses the ecology, history and cultural heritage of the area. HAL is also the only line to bring a Huna Totem tribe member on board, to offer interpretation complementary to its other programs.

Outside of Alaska, HAL has developed an Explorations Speaker Series on all cruises of 10 days or more throughout the world. These speakers focus on the regional ecology of each voyage, as well as local history and culture. On all cruises, the ship's environmental officer gives a presentation, open to all guests, on the company's environmental stewardship efforts. These presentations include a video of shipboard environmental aspects and controls, a discussion of actions that both crew members and guests can take to minimize their environmental impact, and a question-and-answer period.

**Norwegian Cruise Line and NCL America's water pollution education programs.** NCL Corporation (NCL) has undertaken environmental training for all crew and has placed environmental officers onboard every ship. These officers support education programs such as the Officer Snook Water Pollution Program. The program, which was started by a Florida high school student in 1993, aims to educate young people about the importance of clean water, how to prevent marine pollution, and the impacts of pollution on the ocean environment. The initiative is a partnership between NCL and Youth Environmental Programs, Inc., which sponsors Officer Snook programs in schools around the country. Elements of the program have been incorporated into NCL Kids Crew activities for children of all ages, from storytelling, coloring books and games for ages two to five, to crafts, simulated

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beach clean ups and poster contests for pre-teens. The company has also added a teen component that will allow high school students to earn between one and five hours of community service credit for school.

**Norwegian Cruise Line and the Pacific Whale Foundation.** On board each of their Hawaiian cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line and NCL America host a naturalist from the Pacific Whale Foundation, a non-profit group that provides education, research and outreach on marine conservation issues in Hawaii and the Pacific. The naturalists offer daily presentations about the marine environment and distribute educational material about Hawaii's natural resources, including guides on toothed whales and dolphins, humpback whales, coral reefs and Maui's unique ocean environment. Naturalist-led activities also include shipboard whale watching accompanied by a lecture on whales in Hawaiian habitats. Having a naturalist on board allows passengers to learn more about the species and ecosystems they may encounter in port and appropriate ways in which to interact—or not interact—with them.

**Princess Kids “Edutainment” programs.** Princess Cruises offers a variety of environmental education, or “edutainment,” programs to passengers between the ages of three and 17 on its ships. Trained staff in the Youth and Teen Centers on all Princess ships use the National Wildlife Federation's NatureLink activities to teach kids about wildlife and their habitats. Children receive activity books and other learning materials to take home with them. On many ships, children have the opportunity to participate in programs offered by the California Science Center, which has trained Princess staff to provide interactive science activities, including whale watching, coral reef studies, building and racing sailboats, marine biology studies and squid dissection. Princess has also teamed up with the Save Our Seas program, created by the California Coastal Commission and the Center for Marine Conservation, to offer environmental activities and events that teach children about the waters around them on select seasonal sailings. On its Alaska trips, the cruise line offers Junior Ranger/Teen Explorer programs, produced with the National Park Service, to bring Glacier Bay and the Alaska wilderness to life for thousands of children each summer. These programs include interactive games, activity books and presentations by rangers.

**Regent's Ambassadors of the Environment program.** In partnership with Jean-Michel Cousteau and the Ocean Futures Society, Regent Seven Seas Cruises developed the Ambassadors



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of the Environment program, to help children on their ship in Tahiti connect with nature and learn about the critical importance of sustainable lifestyles and conservation. The partnership, which was launched in 2004 with a program for children ages nine through 15 sailing on the *Paul Gauguin*, focuses on coral reefs, sustainable lifestyles and traditional Polynesian culture. Children go on guided hikes, explore ancient temples, snorkel with rays, visit coral reefs, go whale and dolphin watching, explore pearl and vanilla farms,

and enjoy multimedia presentations designed for them by Ocean Futures Society experts. The children are encouraged to share their new skills and knowledge when they return home. In 2005, the program was enhanced to include a fleet-wide lecture series, original in-suite TV programming and live TV uplinks from dives by Cousteau and his team on select cruises. Highlights of this expanded program include appearances by Cousteau himself as a celebrity guest lecturer aboard Regent ships on select departures throughout the year.

## Contributions to Conservation and Community Development

To contribute to sustainability in a destination, cruise lines can make investments in local conservation and community development projects. For example, they can support local infrastructure development beyond the basic pier facilities, such as visitor centers or road development. To increase visitation to protected areas, cruise lines can offer and actively market shore excursions to these sites, recognizing that when passengers visit these protected areas, they support conservation efforts through entrance fees, purchase of products and souvenirs and direct donations to conservation programs. Another way to support local efforts is to develop volunteer projects or opportunities with local NGOs or community groups and encourage crew members and even passengers to volunteer some time while in port.

Cruise lines can also allow onboard fundraising activities or host dedicated fundraising events linked to particular initiatives or organizations that directly impact the sustainability of the destination. For instance, allowing a national park service or conservation and community development organizations to come on board and provide information and souvenirs to passengers can raise important revenues for these groups, while at the same time increasing awareness of sustainability issues among passengers.



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**Carnival Cruise Lines' Adopt-an-Orphanage program.** Shipboard employees on Carnival Cruise Lines ships regularly “adopt” orphanages in impoverished areas of the countries that their cruises visit, including Jamaica, Belize, Mexico and other destinations. The employees host onboard fundraisers to raise money for clothes, food, toys, mattresses, school supplies and toiletries for the children, and crew members often visit the orphanages to spend time with the children. For example, crew from the *Carnival Inspiration* held an auction to raise money for the children’s unit of the public hospital in Cozumel, Mexico, and the *Carnival Spirit* crew raised funds for an orphanage in Manzanillo, Mexico, through change collection boxes for guests and crew and other fundraising activities. Children from the orphanages also have the opportunity to tour Carnival vessels while they are in port and enjoy lunch and playtime in the children’s areas aboard the ships. In December 2005, crew of the *Carnival Glory* hosted a ship visitation, lunch and Christmas party for about 30 children from a local orphanage in Belize, and raised thousands of dollars for the orphanage through a raffle of items donated by the crew.

**Celebrity Cruises' support for conservation in the Galapagos Islands.** Celebrity Cruises promotes responsible environmental tourism in the Galapagos Islands and supports conservation and community efforts there. Celebrity’s *Xpedition*, which sails in these islands, seeks to minimize any environmental impact in this unique part of the world.

To help the Galapagos National Park more effectively manage the area, Celebrity has provided a high-speed Zodiac to patrol the waters. The company also assists the local Fundación Galapagos in recycling plastics and returning them to the mainland and hires local fisherman to do shore clean-ups

on the islands. Celebrity also sponsors an agricultural engineer to assist local farmers in their efforts to grow local produce. The company invites local school children to sail on *Xpedition* with local teachers to learn more about their own islands. Celebrity is currently working with the San Francisco University of the Galapagos to develop hotel and hospitality classes that are designed to increase local capacity to manage their tourism-based economy.

Celebrity has implemented a range of conservation measures to reduce the impact of *Xpedition*, including purchasing goods with a high recycled content, using a special generator that minimizes air emissions and installing an advanced wastewater purification system, which is scheduled to go on line in 2006. Celebrity also partners with



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The blue-footed booby’s amazing diving feats and intricate courtship dances make it one of the most popular wildlife attractions in the Galapagos Islands.



The Charles Darwin Foundation in a fundraising program that both assists the Foundation in its work and educates *Xpedition* guests about the varied landscape, pristine waters and abundant wildlife found in the islands.

**Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund.** The Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund (DWCF) awards grants to non-profit organizations for conservation projects around the world. The fund is supported by corporate donations, and Disney Cruise Line guests can also make a contribution to the fund on their gratuity forms at the end of their voyages. Thousands of cruise passengers have contributed to the fund since it was established with the cruise line three years ago. In addition, a portion of the proceeds from the new Disney Cruise Line Castaway Ray's Stingray Adventure, offered to passengers on Disney's private island *Castaway Cay*, goes directly to DWCF. In addition to directly making corporate contributions, Disney pays all overhead and administrative costs for the program so that 100 percent of the contributions from guests are distributed to non-profit conservation and wildlife organizations. Since 1998, the fund has contributed over US\$8.5 million to more than 450 projects around the world.

DWCF focuses on supporting programs that not only gather scientific information, but also engage the community in studying and protecting wildlife and habitats in both marine and terrestrial ecosystems. For example, the fund is supporting the Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research in developing a sea turtle conservation strategy for the Bahamas; BirdLife International, in its efforts to conserve the Bahamas Parrot on New Providence Island; and the Jamaican Iguana Recovery Program, a collaborative effort involving several Jamaican academic, governmental and non-governmental organizations and international conservation organizations.

Other programs in cruise destinations supported by DWCF in partnership with local and international NGOs have included the Caribbean Conservation Corporation's hawksbill and leatherback sea turtle recovery programs at Chiriqui Beach, Panama; coral reef preservation, restoration and awareness-raising activities by Reef Relief and the Perry Institute for Marine Science in the Bahamas; and the establishment of the Maya Biosphere Reserve's Environmental Education and Interpretation Center (CEIA) on the grounds of the ARCAS Rescue Center in the Petén region of Guatemala.

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The DWCF also offers support to communities in times of crises, through its Rapid Response Fund, which has helped in hurricane recovery efforts for both the Jamaican and Grand Cayman iguana research facilities, paid for tsunami debris removal from the coral reefs and nesting beaches of Southeast Asia (thus employing local people as well) and reconstructed volunteer educator dormitories at Centro Ecológico Akumal sea turtle research facilities in Mexico.

**Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association's Foundation for the Caribbean.** Through its Foundation for the Caribbean, the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) provides opportunities for its 13 member cruise lines to help fund humanitarian causes and improve the lives of people in the Caribbean. Each year, the Foundation offers multiple grants to non-tourism-related charities in various destinations. Past grants have supported hurricane relief in Cozumel, food programs for impoverished citizens of the Dominican Republic, Red Cross chapters in Aruba and St. Maarten, and Earthcare, an environmental education organization in the Bahamas. The Foundation also organizes an annual Holiday Gift Project, during which Santa arrives by cruise ship and brings presents to children from orphanages, homeless shelters, foster homes and schools for children with special needs. In 2004, the project delivered gifts to more than 5,000 children in 26 cruise destinations in the Caribbean, Mexico and Central America.

**Glacier Bay National Park and the Alaska Natural History Association.** All cruise lines that sail through Glacier Bay, Alaska, bring Glacier Bay National Park rangers and staff from the Alaska Natural History Association (ANHA) on board to help educate passengers on the area's natural history. ANHA also sells various educational materials and books, ranging from field guides to children's books, raising funds to connect people to Alaska's natural and cultural heritage. Because most visitors to Glacier Bay come to the national park by cruise ship, ANHA's onboard sales comprise the majority of the organization's fundraising efforts.

On every cruise, the Glacier Bay rangers and ANHA staff bring a 70-pound trunk of educational materials on board, via tender as the ship sails into the bay. Princess Cruises allows for an additional 70-pound trunk to be loaded onto each of their ships while in port in Juneau, prior to their arrival in Glacier Bay. By taking this simple extra step, Princess allows ANHA to double its fundraising sales on each Princess cruise, as the books almost always sell out to passengers as they cruise through Glacier Bay.

**Holland America's Half Moon Cay.** On Half Moon Cay, Holland America Line's private island in the Bahamas, great care was taken to ensure that the natural ecology of the island was conserved. Only 2 percent of the 2,400-acre island was developed to accommodate the company's shoreside facilities, and those facilities are designed to minimize environmental impacts on the island, which is also an international bird sanctuary. The Bahamian National Trust designates and retains part of the island as a wild bird reserve, which serves as nesting grounds for waterfowl, including 10,000 sooty terns, noddy terns, 200 pairs of roseate terns, shearwaters and Bahamian pintails.



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The island has been recognized by the Government of the Bahamas as a model visitor destination that provides an enhanced Bahamian experience while maintaining a positive balance with the natural environment.

**International Council of Cruise Lines' Cruise Industry Charitable Foundation.** The International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) established the Cruise Industry Charitable Foundation (CICF) in 1998, to improve the quality of life in communities where the cruise industry operates, generates significant employment or purchases goods and services. The Foundation's areas of focus include civic and commu-

nity development, educational assistance and training, public health and environmental preservation. Organizations and programs supported by CICF over the last several years include the Alaska Sealife Center, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, Shelburne Farm Youth Leadership Institute, Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute, The Island Alliance, the University of Tampa Marine Science Center, the Brandywine Conservancy's Environmental Management Foundation, the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine Atmospheric Science Foundation and the Galapagos Conservancy Foundation.

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**Royal Caribbean's Ocean Fund.** Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. established the Ocean Fund in 1996 to help restore and maintain healthy marine environments, minimize negative human impact on the oceans, and promote awareness about oceans, coastal ecosystems and marine life. The Fund offers grants to marine conservation institutions and non-profit organizations to support research, education and the development of innovative technologies. More than US\$7 million has been awarded to 50 different organizations since the Fund was created.

In 2005, the Fund granted US\$613,000 to 11 different organizations, including Shake-a-Leg Miami, which received US\$150,000 to help transform two Biscayne Bay, Florida, islands into recreational and educational sites for disabled and disadvantaged children, transform a 37-foot trimaran into a fully accessible science and vocational training vessel and develop a marine-science curriculum for schools throughout Miami-Dade County, Florida. Other grants included US\$150,000 to The Conservation Fund in Arlington, Virginia, to purchase tracts of coastal land in Alaska for habitat conservation; US\$40,000 to the American Association for American Geographers in Washington, DC, to conduct a coastal and marine clean-up project in four districts of Colon, Panama; US\$48,000 to the Cape Cod Stranding Network in



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Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts, to develop outreach materials and a public awareness campaign on preventing seal entanglements and training materials on the evaluation of injured marine animals; US\$40,000 over two years to the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro, California, to continue its Sea Rangers youth conservation program, which trains students as naturalists who conduct tours of the Cabrillo Bay coastal habitat; and US\$20,000 to the Pacific Marine Mammal Center in Laguna Beach, California, to help construct four marine mammal rehabilitation pools.



The Villa Della Porta Bozzolo, an FAI property outside of Varese, near Milan, Italy.

**Silversea's fundraising events for FAI—*Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano*.**

Silversea Cruises works closely with *Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano* (FAI, the National Trust for Italy), a private, non-profit foundation that works to preserve, protect and promote Italian artistic and environmental heritage. Through the partnership, Silversea, an Italian company, is giving back to its Italian heritage. In June 2005, Silversea hosted a fundraising luncheon aboard the *Silver Whisper* in Portofino, to benefit the FAI property Villa dei Vescovi, a rare pre-Palladian estate outside of Padova, near Venice. Silversea

covered all costs for the event, so that all proceeds could directly benefit FAI. Luncheon attendees, who included members of the Balbienello Circle, a U.S.-based benefactor group of FAI, heard presentations by FAI Cultural Director Marco Magnifico and Silversea owner Manfredi Lefebvre on why and how Silversea supports FAI. The event raised a total of US\$450,000. Silversea is organizing a further series of onboard fundraisers for FAI in 2006, with events such as wine tastings and auctions.

**Windstar's support for local institutions.** Windstar Cruises supports charities and other organizations along its ships' sailing routes. As part of an upgrade of amenities on the *msy Wind Star*, the company is donating mattresses and linens to two orphanages and one senior center in Puntarenas, Costa Rica. The recipient organizations include the Hogar de Ancianos Miguel Moreno, which provides a home to 25 seniors; Hogar Cristiano, which houses 60 girls between two and 17 years old; and Hogar Montserrat, which is home to 31 boys between the ages of three and 13. The donations will help the institutions expand their operations and provide safe havens for more children in need. Windstar is also working with Barbados Tourism and the Barbados Welfare Department to coordinate a similar donation program for materials from the *msy Wind Surf*.





# G O V E R N M E N T S

Governments have a responsibility to ensure the sustainable evolution of tourism in their countries and to see that the benefits to society from cruise tourism are maximized. To do so, they need to make the destination attractive to both cruise lines and passengers by providing high-quality infrastructure and services that ensure that health, safety and security policies are up to international standards and expectations. Government agencies can work closely with various stakeholder groups to ensure that benefits are distributed equitably among all concerned parties. In many cases, governments in cruise destinations may not have the budgets or professional expertise to fully and sustainably manage the rapid growth of cruise tourism in an area. In these cases, governments have a responsibility to seek support from other stakeholders, in order to facilitate a fair and effective destination management process.



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## Supportive Policy and an Enabling Environment

Government policies and development strategies that protect the natural resources and cultural integrity of a destination over the long term can help responsibly control and manage the rapid growth of cruise tourism in a particular area. Policy instruments that support community development and conservation might include creative financing tools such as trust funds, or concession agreements that provide revenue and establish better management practices. Another effective way to promote responsible tourism development is to provide incentives to cruise lines and local businesses to meet good management practice standards. Incentives such as tax breaks or longer permit times can be easier to implement and manage than regulations and penalties, which are often difficult to enforce because of limited resources.

In addition to ensuring that national and local policies and strategies support sustainable tourism, governments can work closely with local stakeholders to ensure an overall enabling environment for sustainable tourism. Governments can collaborate with cruise lines to ensure that the desired image of a destination and its environmental and cultural product offerings are accurately reflected in the cruise

industry's marketing materials. Tourism boards and ministries can make marketing materials and communications messages available to the cruise lines and be proactively involved in marketing, planning and providing incentives for local environmentally and socially responsible businesses to maintain the desired image. Governments can also join with other stakeholder groups to create forums for collaboration on sustainable tourism goals, at the local, national, regional and international levels.



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**Belize's Protected Areas Conservation Trust.** About 52 percent of the land area in Belize has been set aside under some form of protection. To help generate sustainable financing to support the management of these protected areas, the Government of Belize established the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) in 1996. Through its Grants



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Award Programme, PACT offers small grants to NGOs and government agencies that are involved in the conservation and management of protected areas. PACT is capitalized by a conservation tax of US\$3.75 paid by all visitors to Belize upon departure, a US\$1.40 commission per passenger from cruise ships, and concessions and recreation-related license fees. Although PACT was not set up to generate revenues exclusively from the cruise industry, a 500 percent increase in cruise visitors to Belize between 2001 and 2002 has resulted in a significant increase in PACT's annual revenues from cruise ship commissions. While cruise ship passengers provided only about 6 percent of revenues in PACT's early years of operation, they currently account for 41 percent of revenues.



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An aerial view of the Great Barrier Reef.

### Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Australia.

The Australian Government, through the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), offers various incentives to tour operators and cruise lines that operate within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The primary incentive is the opportunity to be designated a “high-standard operation” and receive an extended operating permit within the protected area. Once an operator has met the GBRMPA's permit requirements, it is granted a typical six-year permit.

The operator may then choose to apply for the extended, 15-year permit, which is granted if the operator meets strict standards laid out in an independent, and GBRMPA-recognized, accreditation program, such as Ecotourism Australia's Advanced and Eco Certification scheme. These standards cover business management and operational planning, business ethics, responsible marketing, customer satisfaction, environmental sustainability, interpretation and education, contribution to conservation, working with local communities, and cultural respect and sensitivity. Additional incentives for high-standard operations include special brand recognition on the GBRMPA Web site, at trade events and in various publications. In addition, cruise lines have an incentive to choose extended permit holders as their tour operators of choice for shore excursions, knowing that they will likely still be in business months or years in the future.

The GBRMPA has also taken steps to increase mutual understanding and cooperation between its staff and the cruise lines, making the agency more approachable and allowing for a partnership relationship with the cruise lines. In early 2005, the agency began an informal program of on-ship meetings while cruise ships are in port, to learn more about how ships operate in the Marine Park and to increase the cruise lines' understanding of the park management processes. These meetings allow permit and shipping staff from the GBRMPA to meet with captains and environmental management staff to discuss permit conditions, waste management processes and general operations in the Marine Park. The GBRMPA

has also begun to more proactively educate its staff, especially environmental assessment staff, about the cruise industry. Since early 2005, staff members have received training on topics such as changes in shipboard technologies and onboard environmental management systems. The GBRMPA has also provided detailed input to Tourism Queensland, the tourism marketing and development authority for the Australian state of Queensland, to ensure that the Marine Park is marketed accurately to cruise line itinerary planners, cruise agents, ground handlers, port authorities and others.

**New Zealand Deed of Agreement.** The New Zealand cruise industry has signed a Deed of Agreement with Environment Southland (ES), a New Zealand regional government agency that is responsible for managing the natural resources of the country's Southland region, an increasingly popular destination for international cruise lines. The Deed, which was set in place in 2001, seeks to preserve the natural marine and adjoining terrestrial environments of the region, promote sustainable management and protect local communities from the growing costs of managing such an area, while continuing to promote and increase cruise tourism in Southland. The agreement sets out environmental best practices and sustainable management objectives for the cruise industry, on topics including emissions, discharges to water, cleaning of hulls, navigational and safety issues, ship speed, wildlife protection, getting ashore, shipboard and underwater noise, litter, helicopters, use of ancillary vessels such as zodiacs or kayaks, and anchorages and moorings. About 25 cruise companies have signed the agreement to date, including 10 of the major international lines that visit the area.

Two of the Deed's most significant features are a Marine Fee and a cruise ship monitoring program. For each visit, cruise lines pay ES a Marine Fee, based on the ship's gross registered tonnage, to support marine and coastal conservation projects around the coastline. Cruise visits are also monitored on a log sheet that shows the dates, times, routes taken, stops made, duration of stops, activities undertaken at stops and any moorings or anchorages used on each trip. That information is used to track visitation trends and evaluate the success of the Deed.

The Deed also controls where cruise ships can sail in the Southland region, which includes Rakiura National Park at Stewart Island and Fjordland National Park and World Heritage Site, where one of New Zealand's most visited sites, Milford Sound, is located. Coastal areas are demarcated red and green on area

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maps, and cruise lines signed to the agreement can operate in green areas provided they comply with the Deed's provisions. The red areas are no-go areas for any cruise ship, whether or not they are signed to the Deed, unless specific resource consent has been obtained. All scheduling of cruise ships in and through the region's internal waters is coordinated by the cruise industry and ES, to ensure that no more than two cruise ships enter any waterway, passage, fjord, bay or inlet in any one day.

## Protected Areas and Park Management

National parks and other protected areas are key elements in both conservation and tourism strategies for destinations. Governments and park managers can work together to ensure that visitors to the parks are well-managed and behave appropriately, and that visitation to a park contributes to its continued environmental and financial sustainability. One way to do so is to charge entrance fees to protected areas and ensure that the revenues from those fees go back into management of the specific site, so that the cruise lines and passengers see the direct results of their



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contributions. Fees can also be used to develop opportunities for surrounding communities to participate and benefit from cruise tourism. Governments can also work with managers of protected areas to develop plans to manage visitation by cruise passengers and provide a high level of service, in order to ensure that the sites remain attractive to both cruise lines and their passengers and competitive with other destinations.

Once passengers arrive at the protected areas, parks can provide a park registry for visitors to give personal information in order to receive future updates about the park and its conservation successes. Such a registry will also help to track visitor numbers, raise funds and improve the management of the park. Governments can work with protected area managers to provide educational materials on the natural resources and conservation efforts of the parks and actively market the park products to shore excursion providers. Information can also be provided to past visitors who have expressed interest in the park through cruise lines' loyalty programs. Finally, once the cruise passengers have arrived at a site and been exposed to its natural resources and conservation activities, managers of protected areas have an opportunity to leverage their interest into additional revenue generation, through product sales or requests for direct donations to conservation efforts.



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**Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Australia.** Australia's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) has taken several steps to ensure that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park remains attractive as a cruise destination and that cruise tourism benefits conservation efforts in the area. Since 1993, tour operators have been required to collect an Environmental Management Charge, which is now AU\$4.50 (about US\$3.40) per day from each visitor to the Marine Park. Each quarter, tour operators remit the funds to the GBRMPA, which pays the funds into consolidated revenue in the Australian government. The government then pays an equivalent amount back to the GBRMPA as a special appropriation each year. This special appropriation, which averages about AU\$7.5 million (about US\$5.65 million) per year, is channeled directly back into the Marine Park for research, visitor education and park management.

In an effort to make the Great Barrier Reef a more cruise ship-friendly destination and to limit damage caused by anchoring, GBRMPA has designated 27 cruise ship anchorages across the Marine Park, allowing ships access to a wide variety of safe and scenic sites. The designation of anchorages allows for quicker permit processing times (as each designated anchorage has already been environmentally, culturally and socially assessed for use by a wide range of cruise ships), reduces the cost of permitting and provides for readily accessible, safe anchorages that can be booked in advance, to ensure itineraries are delivered as planned.

**U.S. Virgin Islands National Park.** The U.S. Virgin Islands National Park has experienced an average 9 percent growth rate in visitor numbers over the last several years. To ensure that the increasing popularity of the park results in better management and continued sustainability of the area, a Commercial Services Use Plan was drafted in 2001, as part of the General Management Plan development process. The plan requires a US\$4 daily user fee from tour operators that serve cruise passengers visiting Trunk Bay, and the park retains 80 percent of this fee for its operations. The plan also requires that any new commercial activities be evaluated based on their compatibility with the park mission, visitor use and experience, land use, education and potential impacts on cultural, natural and aesthetic resources. All activity providers are required to train their staff, to ensure quality educational services. The park is also home to two concessions: a campground and a snack bar. Each concession agreement is negotiated individually with the National Park Service, which requires that the concessionaire pay a franchise management fee, 80 percent of which remains in the park.



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## Infrastructure Support— Human and Physical Capital

Governments are ultimately responsible for providing the basic infrastructure, including both physical and human capital, to support visitation by cruise passengers in a destination. Without adequate and high-quality infrastructure and services, it will be difficult to ensure that cruise passengers have a relatively minimal negative impact during their visits, and the destination will rapidly lose its attractiveness to both cruise lines and passengers. When developing physical infrastructure, such as roads, waste and water management facilities, energy sources, anchorages, port facilities, visitor centers and other structures, it is important to carefully consider where these facilities will be sited and how they will be built. Broad land-use planning exercises that integrate tourism, environmental and socio-economic priorities and the use of local, sustainable building materials and techniques can ensure that infrastructure development is appropriate and sustainable in the long term.

In addition to ensuring that facilities and infrastructure are high-quality and sustainable, governments have a responsibility to support the sustainable growth and development of tourism-related

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A view of Roseau, the capital of Dominica. The Caribbean island nation is an increasingly popular cruise destination.

services for cruise passengers, including transportation, food service, recreation and shopping. Governments can offer training, education and capacity-building opportunities to local people, including shore operators, taxi drivers, artisans, restaurant owners and others. Government representatives can also help raise awareness among local communities and business associations about the cruise industry and tourism in general.

**Port of Seattle Shore Power Plan.** Seattle, Washington, is the second cruise destination in the United States with the infrastructure to provide power to docking cruise ships (Juneau, Alaska, was the first such destination.) This capacity was achieved with a US\$50,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a close partnership with Seattle City Light and a US\$1.8 million investment by Princess Cruises in refitting two of its ships. In 2005, the *Diamond Princess* and *Sapphire Princess*, two of the nine cruise ships that dock in the Port of Seattle, were able to turn off their engines and plug into shore power sources, reducing the destination's cruise ship air emissions by 30 percent.

**St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme.** The St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme (SLHTP), a community-based initiative of the St. Lucia Ministry of Tourism, provides support to community activities that promote heritage tourism products and services. In the first phase of the program, from 1998 to 2003, the Ministry provided loans and grant funding, while subsequent interventions have focused on conceptualization, capacity development, creation of an enabling environment, policy advocacy and enhanced linkages to cultural and agricultural industries. Support from the SLHTP has enhanced the sustainability of St. Lucia's tourism industry and is helping to ensure that benefits from tourism activities on the island are more equitably distributed among the St. Lucian people, particularly in rural communities.

In 1999, SLHTP assisted in the establishment of the Heritage Tourism Association of St. Lucia (HERITAS), a non-profit trade association that promotes the interests of its members, and Heritage Tours, the marketing arm and tour agency for tours to heritage sites and attractions. About 95 percent of visitors to HERITAS sites are cruise passengers, and the average passenger spends about US\$60. Among the



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projects supported by the SLHTP are community-managed tours, Friday Nite food fetes in economically depressed areas, and branding and marketing of local handicrafts and indigenous cuisine. The program has also assisted in organizing the Des Barras Turtle Watch, which includes overnight tours for visitors to a remote area during sea turtle nesting season to work with a local youth group that assists the Department of Fisheries in data collection and tagging of turtles.



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# CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society, which includes non-profit organizations, local communities and indigenous groups, tends to focus mostly on areas of concern about cruise industry impacts and has not typically sought proactive engagement with the industry on how to improve destination management. However, because of their unique skills and expertise on conservation and community development issues, civil society organizations have an opportunity to work with other stakeholders, including the cruise lines, to develop and implement solutions for addressing their key concerns and increasing the sustainability of cruise tourism in areas of high biodiversity. While there is still an important role for civil society in monitoring the performance and commitment of other stakeholders to sustainability, these groups should also increase their experience and comfort level in collaborating more closely with business and government on macro-development issues and sustainable destination management.



© MDI WATER QUALITY COALITION

## Resource for Information and Expertise

Civil society groups can serve as an important resource for other stakeholders in determining how to meet the challenges of sustainable cruise tourism development in a destination. These groups can provide knowledge and information on conservation and community development issues, advise other stakeholders on different options for solutions to sustainability issues, and provide support and capacity to government agencies that may not have the budgets or in-house expertise. Civil society can also be an important advocate for local community participation, help facilitate that participation and catalyze wider collaboration among a broad range of stakeholders to raise awareness and develop cooperative programs, tours and initiatives. NGOs and community groups can also seek direct engagement with the cruise lines to act as a resource for establishing monitoring systems to track the environmental and social impacts of cruise tourism and to jointly seek solutions to any negative impacts.

**Coral reef conservation with Reef Check.** Reef Check, a volunteer ocean conservation organization that is dedicated to monitoring, managing and protecting coral reefs around the world, has partnered with Carnival Cruise Lines to help educate cruise passengers about coral reefs. One of Reef Check's key missions is to raise awareness about the global coral reef crisis. Toward this goal, the organization developed a video, which runs on the in-cabin TV system on each Carnival ship, about the important role of coral reefs in marine ecosystems. The video also provides guidelines for how guests should conduct themselves when swimming, snorkeling or diving on a coral reef, in order to prevent negative impacts.



© MDI WATER QUALITY COALITION

A student intern with the MDI Water Quality Coalition collects water samples to determine dissolved oxygen levels and biological oxygen demand.

### The Mount Desert Island Water Quality

**Coalition.** In Bar Harbor, Maine, the Mount Desert Island Water Quality Coalition (MDIWQC) initiated a citizen-based cruise ship monitoring project after community members expressed concern about cruise industry compliance with new state legislation on water quality. The MDIWQC is a local non-profit organization dedicated to engaging citizens of all ages in preserving and improving the water quality of Mount Desert Island through environmental research and community education. The Bar Harbor harbormaster's boat was used to transport volunteer monitors alongside ships in order to sample water for a variety of water quality indicators. Samples were analyzed at the Community Environmental Health Laboratory, a



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collaborative outreach program of the MDIWQC and the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory. The volunteer monitors detected no significant long-term effects on the water quality in Bar Harbor. As a result of this project, the MDIWQC has made recommendations to the cruise industry, the town of Bar Harbor, the Maine State Department of Environmental Protection and community members about increasing awareness of state and local regulations, supporting and funding local citizen groups to ensure monitoring during future cruise seasons, clearly stating local harbor regulations, clearly interpreting and stringently enforcing state legislation, and increasing community involvement.

**The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.** Bridging the gap between public and private efforts, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF), a private, non-profit organization, assists the federally managed National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSF) in conducting research, education and outreach programs designed to conserve and raise awareness about marine sanctuaries in the United States. NMSF and NMSF are currently collaborating on the Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center, which is slated to open in the summer of 2006. The Center, which will be part of a three-building environmental complex near the cruise ship pier in Key West, Florida, will feature interactive exhibits on human interaction with the environment, managing marine protected areas and the maritime culture and history of the Florida Keys. The exhibits will include a multipurpose 75-seat theater that will offer a video presentation about



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The Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center in Key West will help educate cruise visitors, other tourists and locals about the biodiversity of the myriad ecosystems of the region.



© REEF BALL FOUNDATION

the unique tropical hardwood forests, mangroves, coral reefs, shipwrecks and open ocean that make up the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. There will also be live-feed broadcasts from the marine sanctuary in the theater.



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Measuring coral growth on a reef ball in Curacao.

**The Reef Ball Foundation.** The Reef Ball Foundation, Inc. is an environmental NGO that helps to protect and restore natural reef systems through awareness-raising activities and the development of artificial reefs. The Foundation's patented Reef Balls are made of a special marine-friendly concrete that is designed to restore ailing coral reefs and create new habitat for marine and freshwater species, as well as new fishing and diving spots. In the last decade, the Foundation has conducted more than 3,500 reef restoration projects in 50 countries.

The Reef Ball Foundation has worked with Holland America Line, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. and Disney Cruise Line to create

artificial reefs for cruise passengers to enjoy on snorkeling and diving excursions, while at the same time preserving and attracting marine species and educating visitors on the reef ecosystems, through signage and other interpretive content. Using reef ball technology, cruise passengers and staff can actively participate in the creation of these artificial reefs. For example, Royal Caribbean crew members and guests took part in one reef ball project off the coast of Coco Cay in the Bahamas, helping to pour concrete for reef structures and propagate marine life and corals, and then transplanting the newly created marine life in and around the reefs.

**WWF and Costa Cruises.** WWF and Costa Cruises are partnering to help protect three of the world's most endangered marine ecoregions: the Mediterranean Sea, the Greater Antilles and Northeastern Brazil. The first phase of the partnership, which involves WWF Italy, will focus on defending the Mediterranean from pollution, harmful fishing methods and irresponsible tourism practices. With the help of WWF, Costa will place educational pamphlets in passenger cabins, allow passengers to charge donations to their shipboard accounts, develop environmental programs to incorporate into their children's program activities, and raise awareness among staff and crew. WWF Italy will also continue its targeted activities in the Mediterranean, with the financial support of Costa and its passengers. One proposed project is the creation of six sanctuaries in the Mediterranean, to complement the Cetacean Sanctuary in the Ligurian Sea.



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## Capacity Building

Civil society organizations can contribute to sustainability through training and capacity building for other stakeholders on issues such as good practice, biodiversity conservation, cultural preservation and locally appropriate behavior. These groups can also help to organize local communities to be able to capture revenue from increased tourism, through local handicrafts, community-owned businesses, excursions and other ventures.

When it comes to ensuring the sustainability of a destination, smaller, local organizations and communities have just as important a role to play as that of larger NGOs or any other stakeholder group. However, they may be at a disadvantage because of a lack of resources, knowledge or experience. In such cases, these organizations should educate themselves on issues relating to cruise tourism and sustainability and, when necessary, seek assistance from larger organizations or government agencies, in order to enable themselves to play a more proactive and equal role in any land-use or destination development activities.

**ACDI/VOCA's support to indigenous communities in Panama.** ACDI/VOCA is a private, non-profit organization that promotes broad-based economic growth and the development of civil society in emerging democracies and developing countries around the world. In the Darien region of southern Panama, a culturally diverse and environmentally rich region that faces serious threats from poorly managed forestry and agricultural activities, ACDI/VOCA's DECO-Darien program has developed an eco/agro-tourism route, in conjunction with the Panamanian Tourism Institute.

Four of the indigenous communities on or near the tourist route, which is known as *El Sendero del Paraiso*, have experimented with receiving cruise ship visitors via shuttle boat excursions during the October through April cruise season. ACDI/VOCA has assisted two of these communities, La Chunga and Boca Lara, with infrastructure to support the increased volume of tourists, including cultural and artisan community centers, public markets, improvements to water systems and interpretive trails. In addition, ACDI/VOCA has helped artisans along the route diversify and adapt their handicraft designs to appeal to foreign tourists.



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**The Nature Conservancy's Tropical Discovery Hike at Magens Bay.** The Nature Conservancy (TNC) created a Tropical Discovery Hike at Magens Bay Preserve, a protected area on St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, that is jointly managed by TNC, the Virgin Islands government and the Magens Bay Authority. The tour was developed in cooperation with a local tour operator and Royal Caribbean International to allow participants to study birds, lizards, plants and marine animals, and learn about old sugar plantations during a 90-minute guided hike ending at Magens Bay Beach. A portion of the fee paid by each hiker was set aside for conservation and stewardship at Magens Bay. The tour is not currently offered as a shore excursion to cruise passengers, because, as structured, it was very expensive for passengers and did not provide the anticipated conservation funds to the preserve. The hiking trail still exists, however, and is open to local visitors and independent tourists. TNC is very interested in offering the tour again in the future with an excursion design that best serves both cruise passengers and conservation.

**Pacific Whale Foundation's Eco-Adventures.** Since 1996, the non-profit Pacific Whale Foundation (PWF) has offered its Eco-Adventures to passengers who are traveling aboard Hawaiian island cruises, including Holland America, Royal Caribbean, Norwegian, NCL America and Celebrity ships. PWF promotes appreciation, understanding and conservation of marine species and ecosystems through public education, marine research and outreach on conservation issues in Hawaii and the Pacific. The organization's Eco-Adventures include whale-watching and dolphin-watching tours and coral reef snorkeling trips that are specifically designed to educate passengers on Hawaii's environment and conservation issues in the state. The tours also seek to model environmentally responsible behavior, such as not feeding fish on the dolphin tours and operating vessels in a way that has minimal impact on whales, dolphins and other marine life. Some of PWF's eco-tour boats use a fuel blend that includes Maui Biodiesel, an alternative fuel made from recycled vegetable cooking oils. In addition to following all state and federal laws regarding interaction with wildlife, all boats abide by PWF's own Best Practices Guidelines for Boaters, which recommend operating

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practices specific to Hawaii, such as appropriate speeds and methods when approaching or departing from pods of whales. All profits from PWF's tours directly support research, conservation and education programs by the organization.

### **The St. Maarten Bird Blinds and Interpretive Trail.**

Two non-profit groups, Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) and the Nature Foundation Sint Maarten (EPIC's local partner), partnered with Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. to create the St. Maarten Bird Blinds in 2004. The two 10-foot-square bird-watching blinds were constructed in a tropical mangrove area on the island of St. Maarten, using funds from the Royal Caribbean ship, *Adventure of the Seas*, which had won a US\$25,000 environmental grant for being named Royal Caribbean's 2003 Environmental

Ship of the Year. The grant is also supporting the development of an interpretive trail, still in the planning stages, and signs at each blind that describe the importance of wetlands and identify common birds. EPIC provided interpretive content for the signs while the Nature Foundation Sint Maarten supervised construction. Entrance to the blinds is free, but local tour operators are planning to charge tourists for their tours to the site once the full development is complete.

The bird blinds provide easy, free, clean and comfortable access to natural attractions and unique wildlife just outside of an urban area. Interest in the blinds and increased appreciation of the area's resources has helped to support the efforts of local stakeholders, including the Nature Foundation Sint Maarten, to prevent future development of the area and designate it as an official protected area. The site has also helped increase revenues for local tour operators who run tours to the area. Although Royal Caribbean does not currently offer shore excursions to the bird blinds, the Nature Foundation Sint Maarten and *Adventure of the Seas* are working together to develop possible future excursions.

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Crewmembers from *Adventure of the Seas* assist in a clean-up of St. Maarten's Little Bay, in the area around the Bird Blinds and Interpretive Trail.



# SHORE OPERATORS

Shore operators depend directly on the natural and cultural resources of a specific destination; they earn their livelihoods and benefit by packaging these resources into a tour or shore excursion to sell to cruise lines and their passengers. Shore operators play a unique role in the business supply chain, as the stakeholder that is directly responsible for the impact (positive or negative) on the local culture and environment by cruise passengers. Thus, not only do shore operators have the most to lose if uncontrolled cruise tourism degrades a destination, they also have the most direct influence over the actions and impacts of cruise passengers while on shore and the opportunity to educate those guests on sustainability issues.

Shore operators have a responsibility to work closely with other stakeholders to develop sustainability mechanisms and systems to ensure that increased visitation by cruise passengers over time does not erode the very product that they're offering and threaten their future profitability. While many actions that improve the sustainability of their products and the overall destination can be achieved with little or no additional cost, sometimes these changes may require additional investments to ensure long-term sustainability and better services.



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## Partnerships

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FROM SHIP TO SHORE

Shore operators can form partnerships and collaborate with other local stakeholders to increase the environmental, economic and cultural sustainability—and thus long-term viability—of their operations. Groups of shore operators may form local associations to strengthen communication and collaboration amongst themselves, share and promote voluntary good practices, and develop protocols for peer enforcement of local guidelines and regulations.

Operators can also form partnerships with local communities and indigenous people, in order to include cultural elements in their shore excursions. In cases where indigenous groups are involved, shore operators should be especially sensitive to their traditions and needs and remain aware of the particular vulnerability of these cultures to outside influences.

**Cayman Islands Tourism Association.** The Cayman Islands Tourism Association (CITA) was formed in the 1980s by private water sports companies in the Cayman Islands that sought to prevent water sports recreation from interfering with marine life and ultimately spoiling the areas upon which their businesses depend. The association began marking dive sites with buoys and creating boat moorings at these sites, so that anchors would not be used in delicate coral areas. The initiative was so successful that it was later adopted by the Cayman Islands Department of Environment, and legislation and penalties for disobeying the guidelines on anchor use were incorporated into the country's Marine Park Program. Today, CITA has more than 230 members, representing each sector in the tourism industry, including land-based attractions, condominiums, hotels, restaurants and transport operations, in addition to water sports operations. Through advocacy, marketing, events, industry development and membership services, the association works toward ensuring and enhancing the sustainability and profitability of the tourism industry as a vitally important economic force in the Cayman Islands.

**Community Baboon Sanctuary in Belize.** The Community Baboon Sanctuary (CBS) was established in 1985 in Belize to protect one of the few remaining viable black howler monkey populations in Central America. The 18-square-mile sanctuary on the Belize River is a completely volunteer, grassroots conservation program managed by more than 100 private landowners within eight villages.



© CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Belize's Community Baboon Sanctuary protects the black howler monkey and its habitat.



© HOLLAND AMERICA LINE

Visitors are given information on the local creole lifestyle, both past and present. Interpretive trails that wind through the sanctuary's forests and agricultural areas provide a first-hand view of both wildlife and human habitats.

The baboon sanctuary is one of the more popular sites sold by shore excursion operators in Belize and has benefited tremendously from the growth in cruise ship tourism to the country. In 2002, the sanctuary received about 4,000 visitors, mainly stay-over visitors and students. In 2004, there were about 16,800 visitors, more than 10,000 of whom were cruise passengers. Visitors pay an entrance fee of US\$5, most of which is invested in a wide range of programs, including educational scholarships, community projects and environmental education summer programs for teenagers. In 2004, the sanctuary invested about US\$9,500 in community programs. The sanctuary promotes equitable distribution of revenues by training and employing tour guides and support service staff from surrounding communities.

**Las Esquinas Rainforest Lodge's La Gamba Community Tour.** The Las Esquinas Rainforest Lodge and La Gamba Community Tour is offered to Windjammer passengers from the port of Golfito, Costa Rica. Staff at Las Esquinas Lodge developed the tour based on the realization that many tourists who visit Costa Rica never have the opportunity to meet local people, aside from hotel staff and tour guides. The tour allows passengers to visit a more rural area of Costa Rica, the nearby village of La Gamba. The tour begins with a visit to the community school, during which visitors, school children and educators all have an opportunity to meet and interact. Additional stops along the tour include a laboratory where La Gamba women produce shampoo and soap from organically grown plants, and where guests have an opportunity to learn the process and buy the products. Guests also visit the community hall, where local artisans display their handmade crafts; and an *Agouti paca* breeding project, where guests learn about this endangered rodent species. The guide for this tour is a native La Gamba community member and a former hunter of the *Agouti paca*. Las Esquinas charges US\$5 per person for the La Gamba Community Tour, US\$3 of which is donated to the community school, with the remainder distributed among smaller groups that provide other services during the tour. In 2006, the fee will increase to US\$10 per person, in order to distribute more money to the community artisans.

## Good Practices

Shore operators are responsible for adopting and implementing responsible practices in the activities that they offer to cruise passengers, and for educating themselves on environmentally and culturally sound methods. These include managerial as well as operational practices.<sup>2</sup> For example, good managerial

<sup>2</sup> For more information on responsible practice for marine recreation providers, please see *A Practical Guide to Good Practice: Managing Environmental Impacts in the Marine Recreation Sector*, 2004. Washington: The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business, The Coral Reef Alliance and the Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development.



practices can include hiring local people, paying competitive wages, ensuring that language barriers are overcome in day-to-day business activities, integrating environmental and social criteria into supplier contracting processes, and training guides and staff in sustainability issues as well as customer relations and educational interpretation. Sound operational practices can include providing information, signage, interpretation services and awareness building materials in natural areas; implementing standard operating procedures to ensure minimal negative impact on the local environment and cultures; and educating tourists about specific local regulations, laws, customs and needs.

**Chukka Caribbean Adventures.** Chukka Caribbean Adventures, which offers several environmentally responsible shore excursions to cruise passengers in Jamaica, the Bahamas and Belize, follows a number of good practices to benefit its staff, local communities and the natural areas in which it operates. At least 70 percent of the company's staff come from the local communities in and around its tour areas, and an in-house trainer is available to train new staff on all company policies, including environmental and conservation training that meets the standards of Green Globe 21, an international tourism benchmarking and certification program. Chukka also acts as an unofficial warden in protected areas where its tours operate, watching for park violations and reporting them to park rangers.

Chukka has also been recognized for cleaning up trash along the coastlines, rivers and trails where its tours operate, setting a standard for the local communities in which it works. In some poor communities that do not have the resources to collect their own solid waste, Chukka has taken the initiative to do so for them. In Black Hill, Jamaica, where the residents do not have access to garbage disposal services, Chukka has put trash receptacles in place in the community and regularly collects the garbage for proper disposal.



© CHUKKA CARIBBEAN ADVENTURES

Canopy tours offer tourists an entertaining, educational and low-impact way of experiencing the rainforest ecosystem from a new perspective.

**Grupo Xcaret's human resources policies.** Grupo Xcaret, a private company that operates natural and cultural "theme parks" along the Caribbean coast of Mexico, emphasizes the hiring of Mexican nationals at its sites. The company pays competitive wages to retain its employees, and recently increased salaries for non-tip earning employees at the lowest levels, to reduce employee turnover; in 2005, 17 percent of the company's more than 2,500 employees received salary increases of between 10 and 30 percent. The company also emphasizes the hiring and training of women, who make up about a third of their employees. A study conducted by the Mexican National Institute of Women found that there was no disparity in income or access to training or promotions between men and women in the company.



© NCL CORPORATION

Grupo Xcaret also provides extensive training programs for employees at different levels, from basic schooling to executive training, motivational seminars, and workshops on service quality, security in the workplace, culture and other topics. The company offers free adult education to its staff, providing classrooms, books and tutors to allow employees to finish their primary and secondary educations. English lessons are offered free to every employee, and other language classes, including German and French, are provided in special cases. The company also brings in speakers to discuss health issues, such as diet, exercise and alcoholism, with Xcaret employees.

**The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.** Recognizing the potential negative environmental impacts that growing numbers of tourists to Antarctica could cause, seven private tour operators conducting excursions to the continent joined together in 1991 to practice and promote the highest possible standards of travel in this remote, wild and delicate region of the world. Today, the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) counts 75 internationally based Antarctica-bound travel companies among its members, including major international cruise lines. In the 2004-2005 season, almost 28,000 tourists visited Antarctica, nearly 23,000 of whom went ashore.

IAATO member companies voluntarily abide by extensive procedures and guidelines that ensure appropriate, safe and environmentally sound private-sector travel to the Antarctic. These guidelines include regulations and restrictions on numbers of people ashore, the number of ships in an area at a given time, locations and conditions where ships may land tourists, staff-to-passenger ratios, wildlife watching procedures, pre- and post-visit activity reporting, passenger and crew briefings, previous Antarctic experience for tour staff, and contingency and emergency medical evacuation plans.

In addition to these standard operating procedures, IAATO members must also agree to follow site-specific guidelines at 32 of Antarctica's most popular sites. Each site is given an environmental sensitivity rating of low, medium or high, based upon its species diversity, potential impact of tourism on flora and fauna, and the amount of space available for visitors to walk around. Only specific kinds of ships are allowed to visit each type of site, based on the number of passengers each ship carries. These site-specific guidelines also include site-specific environmental sensitivities and visitor recommendations.



© PRINCESS CRUISES

A glacier hike is one of many ways cruise tourists can experience the unique landscape and natural beauty of Alaska.



© PRINCESS CRUISES

**The Juneau Tourism Best Management Practices program.** The Juneau Tourism Best Management Practices (TBMP) program, a cooperative effort of Juneau tour operators, cruise lines, transportation providers and the City and Borough of Juneau, Alaska, was established in 1997 as a forum to create voluntary guidelines to minimize the negative impacts of tourism “in a manner which addresses both resident and industry concerns.” The program members include 90 percent of the tour operators who work in the area and who, through volume, have the ability to impact the community. An integral part of the TBMP program has been the implementation of an internal observation mechanism that has created an environment of accountability and transparency among members. Operators that observe TBMP guidelines not being followed are encouraged to fill out a standardized form that is then sent, through the TBMP, to the company in question and distributed at TBMP meetings at the end of the season. The TBMP members meet about 10 times throughout the year to address resident concerns and revise or amend their operating guidelines, according to stakeholder feedback. All regular meetings are open to the public, and two separate public forums are also convened to solicit feedback from residents each year.

The TBMP also runs a telephone hotline, which offers a forum for residents and visitors to voice concerns and allows operators to respond and make adjustments in their operating procedures. Over the last five years, the hotline has fielded an average of about 166 calls annually during the 150-day cruising season, not including calls about cruise ship emissions, which are forwarded to the Alaska Department of Environment and Conservation. In 2004, the program made a concerted effort to more widely publicize the hotline and encourage participation, resulting in 82 more calls that year than in 2003.

## Product Design

When designing the tours and products that they offer, shore operators should recognize, and meet, the growing demand for environmentally and culturally sensitive shore excursions among cruise passengers. These tours should be developed responsibly, involving any other stakeholders that might be affected, and include environmental and cultural education elements. Conservation organizations and other NGOs can offer valuable assistance in developing new and environmentally responsible shore excursions.

One way to limit the overall negative impact of shore excursions is to design new alternative tours that move passengers away from the most sensitive and threatened areas. When this is not possible, shore operators can work together to implement management practices that minimize negative impacts, such as staggering visitation to popular sites, limiting visitor numbers or coordinating schedules so that the tourists don't all arrive at a site at once. These good practices can be applied not only to new tours, but also to existing ones. Shore operators can assess their current product offerings to ensure that they are performing as responsibly as they can and to determine how existing tours might be redesigned to take into account environmental and cultural sustainability issues.





© SEABOURN CRUISE LINE

**Atlantis Adventures.** Atlantis Adventures operates electric submarine tours in 13 destinations, including cruise destinations throughout the Caribbean and Hawaii. The company's submarines are fully submersible, and their tours focus on coral reefs and marine life, conservation, ecology, submarine operations and safety awareness. The submarines are electric and do not pollute the water; the subs also never touch down on the ocean floor, except in specially designated landing zones, and the oils used in operations are water-soluble. Because divers enjoy watching the subs while they're diving, dive operators like to work around them. Recognizing that the quality of their product is dependent upon the purity of the marine environments in which they operate, Atlantis has set up moorings for a number of smaller dive operators so that they don't drop their anchors on the reefs.

**Seabourn shore excursions.**<sup>3</sup> Many of the shore excursions offered on Seabourn Cruise Line's winter cruises to Panama, Belize and Costa Rica aboard the *Seabourn Legend* highlight the value and importance of the region's natural environment, while providing guests with fun and exciting adventures. The tours have been planned in cooperation with local operators to meet standards for sustainability and educational content and to help provide incentives for local communities to create tourism-related businesses that profit from their natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Among the shore excursions offered to cruise passengers is a tour led by naturalist guides that explores various ecosystems around Belize City, including a collapsed *cenote*, a lagoon where manatees routinely gather; a tidal mangrove forest and brackish-water marsh; and the offshore barrier reefs. An additional tour in Belize visits Francis Ford Coppola's Blancaneaux Lodge, a luxury eco-resort that uses river-generated electricity and has an organic garden. From Fuerte Amador, Panama, guests may visit

Soberanía National Park and learn about the indigenous Emberá culture and the natural environment that has supported them. On the Pacific side of Costa Rica, the company offers outrigger canoe tours of the shoreline around Puerto Quepos, including snorkeling with a naturalist guide and a naturalist-led walk in the transitional-zone forest that emphasizes education about the natural area. Guests may also take a riverboat excursion in the mangrove forests in the area, to learn about the importance of mangroves to the marine and dry-land ecosystems.



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© GRUPO XCARET

## Contributions to Conservation and Community Development

In addition to ensuring that their own operations are sustainable, shore operators can contribute to local sustainability efforts in a destination in a variety of ways. For example, they can proactively contribute time, resources or equipment to local conservation or community development efforts. Shore operators can also offer passengers the opportunity to directly contribute to local conservation or community efforts during their tours or even create private protected areas to more effectively conserve local resources.

### **FAI—National Trust for Italy partnership with Silversea Cruises.**<sup>3</sup> FAI—*Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano* (the National Trust for Italy)

has partnered with Silversea Cruises to support its mission of protecting, preserving and promoting Italian artistic and environmental heritage. FAI is a private, non-profit foundation that restores sites of historic, artistic and natural value and opens them to the public. In all cabins aboard Silversea ships, whether or not they are visiting Italy, FAI places complimentary booklets about its relationship with Silversea and information about how passengers can contribute to FAI's mission. In addition, *Il Libro del FAI*, a coffee table book describing the work of the organization, is placed in each passenger cabin and is available for purchase for EU€5 (approximately US\$45). Silversea fully sponsored production and printing of the book. On Silversea's Mediterranean/Italian voyages, passengers can select from a series of tours to FAI properties, the proceeds of which benefit FAI's conservation/preservation goals.

© FONDO PER L'AMBIENTE ITALIANO



Villa Della Porta Bozzolo, representing five centuries of Italian heritage, is one of the FAI properties that Silversea guests have an option to visit in Italy.

**Grupo Xcaret.** Grupo Xcaret is a private company that has purchased and leased lands from the Mexican government to develop natural and cultural theme parks along the Caribbean coast of Mexico. All three of the company's parks, Parque Xcaret, which is a private property, and Xel-Há and Garrafón, which are in state natural protected areas and are leased from the government, are accessible to cruise passengers as full-day excursions from Playa del Carmen, Cancun or Cozumel. About 70,000 cruise passengers visited Grupo Xcaret's parks in 2004.



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As a private operator, the company has a strong financial incentive to preserve and protect its natural assets. Before Grupo Xcaret leased Xel-Há from the municipal government, it was poorly run and environmentally deteriorating, due to lack of resources for maintenance. Since the company began paying monthly rent to operate its park on the land and have access to the neighboring reef, however, it has cleaned up and maintained the area and significantly increased visitation and financial contributions to the local economy. A portion of the reef near Garrafón is protected and diving is prohibited, although visitors may snorkel around the line that protects the reef. In addition, large portions of Grupo Xcaret's land are set aside as conservation areas, including 57 of Xcaret's 95 hectares, 77 of Xel-Há's 83 hectares, and 3.15 of Garrafón's 4.5 hectares.

To further promote the conservation of Mexico's natural and cultural heritage, Grupo Xcaret founded and financially supports Flora, Fauna y Cultura de Mexico, A.C., a non-profit NGO. The company donates 1 Mexican peso (about US\$0.09) from every park visitor's entrance fee and a small percentage of certain gift shop sales to the organization. In 2004, the company gave nearly US\$350,000 of unrestricted funds to Flora, Fauna y Cultura, totaling about 74 percent of the organization's budget. The NGO has three main projects: protecting the pink snail (*Strombus gigas*), creating turtle camps to protect baby turtles, and supporting the creation of green spaces in the urban centers of northern and central Quintana Roo through the "Parks Make Parks" program.

**Swiss Travel Service and sustainable tourism in Costa Rica.** Swiss Travel Service, which operates tours for Windstar Cruises in Costa Rica, supports the sustainable development of Costa Rica's national parks system through donations to the Neotropica Foundation. The company's contributions support scientific and community-based projects near Parque Nacional Rio Piedras, a conservation initiative in the Osa Peninsula, reforestation in the Tortuguero region, and efforts to establish a biological corridor between Corcovado National Park and Piedras Blancas National Park. In 2005, Swiss Travel Service received The Platinum Category award from the Foundation for its support. The company also contributes to the Organization for Tropical Studies, to support environmental research by local and foreign scientists.

**Trees for tourists in Turkey.**<sup>3</sup> Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. is working with its local agent in Turkey, Tura Turizm, to implement a tree planting program near the port of Kusadasi, Turkey, during the 2006 cruise season. For each Royal Caribbean and Celebrity passenger who participates in a tour in Kusadasi, a tree seedling will be planted on a one-hectare (2.5-acre) tract of land in the mountain area surrounding the House of Virgin Mary and the ruins of the ancient city of Ephesus. The local agent has reserved the land from the Turkish Ministry of Forestry and expects to plant about 30,000 trees in 2006. The forest will

<sup>3</sup> While these three examples show how the industry has partnered with local organizations, they are technically not examples of shore operator activities. However, we have included them for illustrative purposes, to show how local stakeholders can contribute to the sustainability of destinations.



# C O N C L U S I O N

As cruise tourism continues to grow and expand to some of the most unique and fragile areas on Earth, cooperation among all stakeholders is increasingly vital to minimize negative environmental and social impacts and maximize local benefits in cruise destinations. From cruise lines and governments to civil society and shore operators, each stakeholder group has an important role to play in ensuring the long-term health of natural ecosystems, increasing the quality of tourism products offered and improving the standard of living of local populations wherever cruise ships dock. By working together more effectively to promote sustainable destination management policies and practices, these stakeholder groups can increase the opportunities for positive impacts from cruise tourism and help ensure the long-term maintenance, protection and preservation of the natural and cultural resources of cruise destinations.

# Resources for Further Information

## Cruise Lines

### Carnival Cruise Lines

[www.carnival.com](http://www.carnival.com)

### Celebrity Cruises

[www.celebrity.com](http://www.celebrity.com)

### Costa Cruises

[www.costacruises.com](http://www.costacruises.com)

### Crystal Cruises

[www.crystalcruises.com](http://www.crystalcruises.com)

### Cunard Line

[www.cunard.com](http://www.cunard.com)

### Disney Cruise Line

[www.disnycruise.disney.go.com](http://www.disnycruise.disney.go.com)

### Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund

[www.disney.go.com/disneyhand/environmentality/dwcf](http://www.disney.go.com/disneyhand/environmentality/dwcf)

### Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA)

[www.f-cca.com](http://www.f-cca.com)

### Holland America Line

[www.hollandamerica.com](http://www.hollandamerica.com)

### International Council of Cruise Lines

[www.iccl.org](http://www.iccl.org)

### North West CruiseShip Association (NWCA)

[www.nwcruiseship.org](http://www.nwcruiseship.org)

### Norwegian Cruise Line

[www.ncl.com](http://www.ncl.com)

### NCL America

[www.ncl.com/ncla](http://www.ncl.com/ncla)

### Princess Cruises

[www.princess.com](http://www.princess.com)

### Princess Kids' Edutainment Programs

[www.princess.com/onboard/activities/youthandteens/edutainment.html](http://www.princess.com/onboard/activities/youthandteens/edutainment.html)

### Regent Seven Seas Cruises

[www.theregentexperience.com](http://www.theregentexperience.com)

### Regent's Ambassadors of the Environment Program

[www.theregentexperience.com](http://www.theregentexperience.com)

### Royal Caribbean International

[www.royalcaribbean.com](http://www.royalcaribbean.com)

### Royal Caribbean Ocean Fund

[www.royalcaribbean.com/ourCompany/environment/oceanFund.do](http://www.royalcaribbean.com/ourCompany/environment/oceanFund.do)

### Silversea Cruises

[www.silversea.com](http://www.silversea.com)

### Seabourn Cruise Line

[www.seabourn.com](http://www.seabourn.com)

### Windstar Cruises

[www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com)

## Governments

### Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)

[www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)

### New Zealand Deed of Agreement

[www.es.govt.nz/Departments/ Maritime%20Activities/index.aspx?sm=k\\_a](http://www.es.govt.nz/Departments/ Maritime%20Activities/index.aspx?sm=k_a)

### PACT Belize

[www.pactbelize.org](http://www.pactbelize.org)

### Port of Seattle Shore Power Plan

[www.portseattle.org/news/press/2005/07\\_23\\_2005\\_63.shtml](http://www.portseattle.org/news/press/2005/07_23_2005_63.shtml)

### St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme

[www.stluciaheritage.com](http://www.stluciaheritage.com)

### U.S. Virgin Islands National Park

[www.nps.gov/viis/](http://www.nps.gov/viis/)

## Civil Society

### ACDI/VOCA

[www.acdivoca.org](http://www.acdivoca.org)

### Alaska Natural History Association

[www.alaskanha.org/](http://www.alaskanha.org/)

### Conservation International

[www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org)

### The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business at Conservation International

[www.celb.org](http://www.celb.org)

### Ecotourism Australia (Eco Certification Program)

[www.ecotourism.org.au](http://www.ecotourism.org.au)

### Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (St. Maarten Bird Blinds)

[www.epicislands.org](http://www.epicislands.org)

### Magens Bay Tropical Discovery Hike

<http://www.nature.org/wherework/caribbean/easterncaribbean/>

### Mount Desert Island Water Quality Coalition

[www.mdiwqc.org](http://www.mdiwqc.org)

### National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

[www.NMSFocean.org](http://www.NMSFocean.org)

### Nature Foundation Sint Maarten (St. Maarten Bird Blinds)

[www.naturefoundationsxm.org](http://www.naturefoundationsxm.org)

### Pacific Whale Foundation (PWF)

[www.pacificwhale.org](http://www.pacificwhale.org)

### Reef Ball Foundation

[www.reefball.com](http://www.reefball.com)

### Reef Check

[www.reefcheck.org](http://www.reefcheck.org)

### The Nature Conservancy

[www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)

### WWF International

[www.wwf.org](http://www.wwf.org)

## Shore Operators

### Atlantis Adventures

[www.atlantissubmarines.com](http://www.atlantissubmarines.com)

### Cayman Islands Tourism Association (CITA)

[www.cita.ky](http://www.cita.ky)

### Chukka Caribbean Adventures

[www.chukkacaribbean.com](http://www.chukkacaribbean.com)

### Community Baboon Sanctuary

[www.howlermonkeys.org](http://www.howlermonkeys.org)

### Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano (FAI)

<http://www.fondoambiente.it/english/Privacy-po/>

### Grupo Xcaret

[www.grupoxcaret.com](http://www.grupoxcaret.com)

### International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO)

[www.iaato.org](http://www.iaato.org)

### Juneau Tourism Best Management Practices (TBMP)

[www.juneau.org/tourism2/bmp.php](http://www.juneau.org/tourism2/bmp.php)

### Las Esquinas Rainforest Lodge/ La Gamba Community Tour

<http://www.esquinaslodge.com/home.html>

### Swiss Travel Service

[www.swisstravelcr.com](http://www.swisstravelcr.com)

For more information on sustainable cruise ship operation and good practice in the marine recreation sector, please see the following publications of The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business ([www.celb.org/xp/CELB/programs/travel-leisure](http://www.celb.org/xp/CELB/programs/travel-leisure))

*A Shifting Tide—Environmental Challenges & Cruise Industry Responses:*  
[www.celb.org/xp/CELB/downloads/Cruise\\_Interim\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.celb.org/xp/CELB/downloads/Cruise_Interim_Summary.pdf)

*A Practical Guide to Good Practice: Managing Environmental Impacts in the Marine Recreation Sector:*  
[www.celb.org/xp/CELB/downloads/Marine\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.celb.org/xp/CELB/downloads/Marine_Guide.pdf)

Conservation International greatly appreciates the support of ICCL member companies in the development of this publication.

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# About The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business

The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business provides a forum for collaboration between the private sector and the environmental community. Created in a partnership between Conservation International (CI) and Ford Motor Company, the Center operates as a division of CI and is governed by a distinct executive board of leaders from the business and environmental communities. The Center engages the private sector worldwide in creating solutions to critical global environmental problems in which industry plays a defining role. The Center's Travel & Leisure program works with leading tourism companies to integrate conservation principles into their day-to-day operations and to influence the planning and management of key tourist destinations.



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# About the Ocean Conservation and Tourism Alliance

In December 2003, The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB) and the International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL) joined together to launch the **Ocean Conservation and Tourism Alliance (OCTA)**. The alliance is dedicated to protecting biodiversity in top cruise destinations and promoting industry practices that minimize the cruise industry's negative environmental impact and maximize the opportunities for benefits to conservation and community development from cruise tourism.

OCTA concentrates its efforts on four priority areas:

- **Establishing Destination Partnerships.** Working with local governments and communities to maintain high-quality travel experiences by protecting the natural and cultural assets of cruise destinations;
- **Promoting Environmental Education.** Raising guest and crew awareness of and support for critical conservation issues;
- **Promoting Vendor Environmental Education.** Lessening the environmental impacts of suppliers; and
- **Best Practices for Wastewater Management.** Improved management systems and technologies for minimizing the environmental impacts of cruise ship wastewater discharges.