INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY IN MEETINGS AND EVENT MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Events and other meetings are an important component of the tourism industry. The activities around events and other meetings bring people together and offer communities an opportunity to celebrate and showcase their traditions, culture and way of life. As the major stakeholders in such activities realise the significant economic benefits of holding events and meetings, governments and operators are making significant capital investment in developing the necessary facilities and infrastructure to accommodate this sector of the tourism industry.

Whilst the flury of activities has a number of positive economic impacts, such as job creation and increased revenue there are also potential negative consequences. The quality of the economic, social and natural environments in which such activity takes place is at risk. As a result there has been a realisation, particularly by educators and researchers that there is a need to incorporate sustainability into meeting and event management. The Best Education Network (BEST) has addressed this gap by holding workshops for the purpose of identifying objectives that can be used in the development of a short teaching module for sustainable meeting and event management. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the need to incorporate sustainability into meeting and event management; to describe the process used by BEST to identify sustainable meeting and event objectives; and to present the learning objectives that were identified, as a result of this process.

KEYWORDS

Sustainability, meetings, events

INTRODUCTION

BEST since 1998 has been working on innovative sustainable travel industry practices that advance the interests of business, travellers and communities. A major focus of BEST has been the development of sustainable tourism curriculum targeted at undergraduates and to be distributed to universities engaged in the education of tourism and hospitality around the world.

The concept of Think Tanks came about as a method of achieving these aims. These Think Tanks would draw together educators, researchers, consultants and practitioners from the tourism industry to input their knowledge and experience into BEST practice for sustainable tourism. The

Think Tanks have been held on the strong belief that sustainable principles should be practised in all aspects of tourism operations. A modular approach was adopted, because of the flexibility it accords educators to the inclusion in their existing units.

The 2003 Think Tank in Costa Rica was devoted to the development of short teaching modules on Strategic Management and Event and Meeting Management, the second of these is the subject of this paper. The rationale being, that students undertaking units in events and meeting management need to be introduced to the principles of sustainability.

This paper is presented in the following sections. It provides a background to meetings and events including their contribution to communities, their role in sustainability and an overview of current pedagogy in the teaching of meetings and events. The paper goes on to describe the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) a tool that was used to identify objectives for sustainable meeting and event management. Finally the objectives that were identified using NGT are presented and a discussion of the limitations in using this technique.

Events and Meetings

Events and meetings around the globe are recognised as being lucrative and fast growing areas of the tourism industry. Whilst it is difficult to determine the exact number of events and meetings that take place each year, it is recognised that events and meetings make a major economic contribution to a destinations employment and income (Dwyer 2002). As a result this sector of the tourism industry has received much attention in the last ten years from the private sector and governments.

For the purposes of this paper an Event is defined as a "celebration or display of some theme to which the public is invited for a limited time only, annually or less frequently" (Getz 1997:28). Dim mock & Trice (2001) defined community events as "themed public occasions designed to…..celebrate valued aspects of a community's way of life" (cited in Douglas et al. 2000:358). There are many types of Events including cultural celebrations, arts and entertainment; business and trade, sport competitions, educational and scientific seminars, and political events. It is widely recognised that there is a growing interest in events that give a cultural experience and that events do motivate people to travel, and most importantly they facilitate community pride and development (Derrett 2002). As such, events are important contributors to a destination's economic, social and cultural fabric.

Whilst events contribute and showcase a destinations social and cultural fabric, meetings enable business and individuals to receive benefits in the field of sales, marketing, education, communication, motivation and evaluation

(Commonwealth Dept of Tourism, cited in McCabe et al 2000;3).

Furthermore meetings are regarded as one of the most buoyant sectors of the tourism industry (Spiller cited in Weber & Chon 2004) and as Overman (1996) suggests are least responsive to price, and assist in the peaks and troughs of tourist seasons. A meeting is defined as "an off-site gathering, including conventions, congress, conferences, seminars, workshops and symposiums, which bring together people for a common purpose – the sharing of information" (Allen et al 1999:14). Meetings are considered to be part of the wider Meetings Incentives Conventions and Exhibitions industry (MICE).

A common thread of meetings and events is that they are both gatherings of people for some common purpose for either leisure or business. Such activities require a concentrated and coordinated effort in their formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Whilst their organizational structures may be different, depending on size, purpose and resources, their responsibilities to the community and other stakeholders is to effectively manage these activities in a sustainable way.

Contribution of Events and Meetings to Tourism

Events and meetings are recognised as making a significant contribution to tourism and in particular to host destinations. This is due to the potential that events and meetings have for economic resurgence, community and cultural development and building, strengthening and maintaining a destinations unique brand (Aitken, 2002). In many cases events and meetings extend the length of stay by visitors to a destination. As Derrett (2002) purports they can lengthen tourist seasons, extend peak seasons, or introduce a new season. Furthermore they play a part in creating, a favourable image of the destination as additional attractions, and image- makers (Getz 1997). The events and meetings attended by visitors also encourage a positive impact through cultural exchange and the building of friendships and

business contacts (McCabe, 2000).

However, many risks are associated with Events and Meetings and this may result in negative economic, environmental social and cultural impacts (Dwyer et al., 2000; McCann and Thompson, 1992; Tyrrell and Johnston, 2001). For example, a poorly managed event will result in insufficient marketing or an inappropriate marketing focus that can lead to economic losses, arising from low patronage. Events and meetings will often exploit the environment through the misuse of resources, such as energy and waste, which in many cases leads to a delineation of a destination's image. The need to make money and make something popular often leads to a loss of authenticity, as cultural expression is adapted to tourists' tastes and expectations. The very nature of an event may create negative social and cultural impacts, through crowding, crime, traffic congestion, community displacement and commodification of culture; resulting in visitor, sponsor and community dissatisfaction. Finally, these impacts can disrupt the lives of locals for the duration of the festival or event (Small and Edwards 2003) and threaten the sustainability of such meetings and events.

Sustainable Events and Meetings

Various international agencies (WTO, UNEP) have called upon the tourism industry to develop environmentally, socially and culturally compatible forms of tourism and to continue the development and implementation of voluntary initiatives in support of sustainable tourism development, bearing in mind that such forms of tourism and initiatives should meet, or preferably exceed, relevant local, national, regional or international standards.

The aim is to help business understand that sustainability is not anti-business, in terms of priorities to increase bottom line profits and shareholder values (Willard 2004) but seeks to shape business direction, so that both communities

and business profit from the experience (Pearce et al 1998).

Sustainable development for business means "adopting business strategies and activities that meet the needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders today while protecting, sustaining, and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed in the future" (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 1994: 4). Thus, sustainable development for business leads to the management of resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (World Tourism Organization, 1995).

Therefore, as with other tourism and hospitality activities, events and meetings should also comply by the guiding principles of sustainable tourism operations. The management of meetings and events should have "interdependent economic, environmental and social objectives and integrate these objectives in decision making" (IISD 1994:4). To this end meeting and event managers need to:

- Ensure consistent monitoring and review of activities to detect problems at an early stage and to enable action to prevent more serious damage.

- Minimise resource use and the generation of wastes by using environmentally-sound technologies (ESTs).

- Ensure compliance with operational development plans, planning conditions, standards and targets for sustainable tourism by providing incentives, monitoring compliance, and enforcement activities where necessary.

- Involve all primary stakeholders, including local community, the tourism industry and government, in the development and implementation of tourism plans so as to increase the long-term success of meetings and events.

- Raise awareness of the principles of best practice in sustainable tourism by promoting the exchange of information between meeting and event stakeholders. Establish networks for dialogue on implementation of these principles. Promote broad understanding and awareness to help strengthen attitudes, values and actions that are compatible with sustainable tourism operations (Adapted from UNEP 2002).

If adopted successfully the application of sustainable practices can result in a number of significant benefits for stakeholders of meetings and events. The first, and often considered the most important, is saving money by cutting running costs through careful planning of energy consumption and waste reduction.

This positive environmental behaviour bestows its own benefits through positive local publicity that in turn may heighten the image of the event or meeting giving it a competitive market position. Secondly, the adoption of environmental practices appeals to a new and growing visitor market - visitors who are becoming more environmentally aware and can be influenced to attend events and meetings through positive environmental messages. Thirdly, regardless of the cost saving and increase in revenue, the more long term positive effect is on the conservation of the immediate environment making it more attractive and in turn encouraging visitors to return. Finally, for event and meeting organisers this kind of commitment to the environment confirms a respect of the local community as a valued partner.

Incorporating sustainability into meeting and event management practices requires organisers to employ a combination of sustainable approaches including environmental stewardship, economic efficiency, and social and cultural responsibility. The first step in this endeavour is to educate future professionals of meetings and events to incorporate sustainability into the management of these activities. This means that "the benefits of implementing social and environmental initiatives

must be quantified and expressed in business line language" (Willard 2004:1) so that there exists a belief in restorative strategies for a healthy planet (Willard 2004).

Pedagogy in Event and Meeting Management

A significant number of Tourism and Hospitality courses at undergraduate level incorporate event and meeting management subjects. These subjects employ a range of event and meeting management texts. A summary of these texts are presented in Table 1. Their content focuses on seven main themes: history; planning; organisational structure; potential impacts; current issues; implementation; monitoring and evaluation.

Table 1 shows that the current format and content of these texts have a significantly high focus on practical issues, with an emphasis on equipping students with the practical skills to plan, organise and implement meetings, and events from a business studies perspective. With the exception of a reasonable discussion on impacts none of the texts incorporate the theory, or principles and practices of sustainability. However, if meetings and events are going to contribute to the sustainability of the destinations in which they are held then sustainability will need to be incorporated into course materials. The challenge for educators is to get meeting and event students involved in thinking and practicing sustainability. The achievement of such a strategy is dependant upon the application of broad spectrum principles of sustainability into the core functions of meeting and event management. BEST has begun the process of bridging this gap.

Think-Tank III Participants and the Nominal Group Technique
BEST Think Tank III for the development of Sustainable Tourism was held in Costa Rica in July 2003. There were approximately 70 international participants, including educators, researches, consultants and practitioners.

Of those, 17 participated (five educators, four students, and eight practitioners) in the creation of course objectives and content for Sustainable Meetings and Events (see Appendix 2). The workshop was facilitated by two participants (the authors of this paper) using the NGT. The NGT is a popular method that is often used in an educational setting (Jones 2004) and was chosen by BEST to realise their goal for developing objectives to be incorporated in the teaching of sustainable meeting and event management. NGT is a structured group process that is designed to facilitate collaborative and democratic decision making (Delbecq et al 1975).

There are a number of advantages in using NGT for curriculum development. There is a greater possibility for generating multiple ideas, because each person has time to have an in-depth consideration of the issues and thus can be creative in their thinking (Jones 2004). As everyone is given a structured opportunity to participate there is less likelihood that important issues, new approaches and fresh perspectives are missed. These inevitably help to overcome common problems, such as the dominance of the process by more confident or outspoken individuals (Vela et al 2000). The other major benefit of this technique is that it produces results with relatively few resources, participants easily learn the process, and decisions can be made at the close of sessions, which makes it relatively efficient (Nelson 2002).

The Think-Tank Process

Throughout the Think Tank the following procedures were employed. Firstly, the problem was introduced to the participants. The guiding question was *"What do we include in an undergraduate educational module to ensure that tomorrow's tourism professionals are better equipped to manage and lead in applying sustainability to events and meetings?"* Some time was given to the problem formulation, in order to ensure understanding by all. Secondly, the problem statement was restated by each of the participants, in their own words, to ensure a common understanding. Thirdly, participants were asked to

respond individually and in writing to the NGT question. During this period of the process there was no discussion among participants in order to enhance individual input. Once all participants had finished writing down their ideas the workshop moved into the fourth stage - idea collection. In round-robin fashion, each participant presented one idea at a time from his/her list until the point of saturation, whilst at the same time one facilitator recorded the ideas on a flip chart. No evaluation of items was allowed as items were recorded. The round-robin encouraged the contribution of ideas by even quiet participants. The fifth stage focused on open discussion in order to clarify ideas and suggestions and eliminate those ideas that were the same or merged them with other ideas. This stage ran for approximately a day and half and was very intense and thought provoking as ideas were clarified, argued for and against, and grouped into common themes.

Finally on the last day of the Think Tank the selection and ranking of the six most important ideas was conducted. More than 40 ideas were generated and it was necessary to cull them to a set of viable curriculum objectives. This was achieved by giving six ticks to each participant who was then asked to allocate their ticks to the ideas that they considered to be most important. They could assign their ticks in any way, ranging from giving individual ticks to six different ideas or allocating all their ticks to one idea. Consequently both consensus and a prioritising of ideas were realised, and resulted in the identification of six sustainable learning objectives for meeting and event management, which are as follows:

1. Understand and apply the principles of sustainable development in different contexts to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of meetings and events.

A number of Principles underpin sustainable meeting, and event management. These may include: Responsibility, Commitment and Leadership, Cooperation, Education, Social Creativity and Freedom (Dwyer and Edwards, 2004).The central focus being to build relationships and alliances.

This means actively decreasing the existing use of scarce resources, reducing current outputs of waste and pollution, promoting awareness of the environmental qualities and destinations and influencing ways in which customers understand and respond to the quality of their environment away from home (Middleton 1998).

2. Identify and assess positive and negative impacts of meetings and events on environmental, socio-cultural, economic and political sustainability in order to promote and enhance the quality of life and social well being for local and regional development.

The principle aim is to host sustainable meetings and events in a manner that allows visitors, participants and delegates to enjoy the activities while having minimal impacts on the host environment, culture, and social fabric of the community within which it is being held. This means that meetings and events can occur successfully bringing with them economic gain, whilst at the same time preserving the quality of environment and community life.

3. Identify and understand stakeholders and develop processes that promote their active participation in all decision making.

Events and meetings will be judged by their success in balancing the competing needs, expectations and interests of a diverse range of stakeholders. Utilising a community approach to event and meeting management can provide a framework for building strong partnerships. A community approach can lead to greater community involvement and increased business linkages between events and meetings activity and other, formal and informal, activity in the community. A community approach to event and meeting management will not in itself ensure an equitable or 'fair' distribution of the costs and benefits of the event or meeting, or the engagement of visitors. However, it can provide a monitoring system of the numerous interrelationships and identify any concerns about a particular type of activity early in the event and meeting planning process. In this way the various stakeholder interests and needs are at least considered.

4. Re-imagine meeting and events as an opportunity to connect visitors to a destination's ´place´ and strengthen their relationships with the community.

Considering meetings and events in relation to the social and cultural contexts in which they are staged enables managers to stage meetings and events that play a positive role as an identifier of place and people in visitors' minds. As a vehicle for communities to host visitors meetings and events can provide opportunities for positive socio-cultural exchange. They can animate a sense of place through organizing inclusive activities for visitors at every stage of their trip, which may lead to innovative ideas for marketing and public relations and enable visitors to truly experience a community's, values, interests and aspirations.

5. Understand the cultural and social significance of meetings and events to local communities.

Events and meetings are often a representation of a community's culture and way of life. However, host communities bear the burden of events and meetings. They are required to accept its' activities, open their doors to welcome the intrusion and gaze of the visitor, and to pay for the costs of the additional infrastructure and pressure on essential resources that may be required to host them. Thus events and meetings can greatly affect the quality of life of local residents. The preservation, of cultural heritage, is as important as the conservation of other resources (Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond and McMahaon-Beattie, 2004). A sustainable managed event and meeting can encourage greater participation in local culture and heritage of both hosts and visitors.

This combined with participants being exposed to new cultural forms can stimulate an increase in community involvement, volunteering and intercultural interaction and cooperation (Yeoman et.al, 2004).

6. Design and implement a flexible meetings and events process, which offers products and services that incorporate principles and practices of sustainability.

Events and meetings are based upon activities of different kinds, different sizes, and duration, requiring sophisticated planning, and administration to ensure their success. Event and meeting organization is high pressure and needs to be managed with high precision. In broad terms the process involves four main stages, pre-planning and research; organizing; operation; and evaluation. A key strategy in this process must be to protect resources and ensure sustainability.

Successful sustainable tourism requires the active and concerted efforts of all stakeholders to maximize the economic contribution of meetings, and events, whilst at the same time abiding by the principles of sustainability. To this end educators need to equip students with the necessary knowledge to plan, organize, and implement sustainable meetings, and events. A summary of the learning objectives can be found in Appendix 1.

Limitations of the NGT

The very nature of the technique is such that it does have some limitations. Firstly, a very able and objective facilitator is needed, that is, one who enforces the rules. As the two facilitators of this process discovered this is not the easiest of things to do with a group of highly motivated, educated professionals, who all had ideas of how one should progress. It did at times lead to frustration and changing of the rules to suit the situation. Secondly, not all participants were current educators researchers or practitioners of events and meetings, and as such may not have the professional experience needed to work through this issue, however all participants at some time have been involved or have participated in an event or meeting. Thirdly, there was a divide in the group, of those whose origins were either northern or southern hemisphere and it was recognised that different problems, issues, and practices of meetings and events were attributed to each of those groups. At times this caused much frustration, as some participants felt the group was not meeting the basic challenges of the developing world in terms of events and meetings.

However the facilitators were conscious of the fact that this module development was for undergraduate tourism and hospitality courses, and first steps needed to be made. Fourthly, not all participants were from English speaking countries, which at times made understanding the intent of their contribution more difficult. Finally it must be recognised that six sessions of two hours over four days may not have been enough time to cover all the necessary issues and complexities of incorporating sustainability into meeting and event management. The authors of this paper recognise that the results are a start and by no means a comprehensive and completed list of objectives and content. Finally it was not the purpose of this paper to compare event and meeting management courses, but simply to add to a discussion of what could and should be included in texts and course material pertaining to the management of sustainable events and meetings.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Events and meetings are forecast to continue to grow in the future, and this growth will bring continued pressure on destinations physical, social, cultural and natural environments. In view of the relative importance of this sector to both business and tourism, it is interesting to note that information on the sector is not readily available, and that there is little published research on the incorporation of sustainability into meetings and event texts, and teaching materials. The challenge for educators is to translate sustainable tourism rhetoric into educational material that will prepare future practitioners to steer business, communities, and customers to a more sustainable way of planning, organising and implementing meetings and events.

This paper has presented an argument for the inclusion of sustainability into meetings and events. It has also presented the objectives that were identified at BEST Think Tank III, using the Nominal Group Technique, and have subsequently been incorporated into the development of a teaching module for sustainable meeting and event management.

This is only the first step in the development of sustainable practices for meeting and events management. A substantial amount of research is required to further this field. Suggested foci for further research would include the collection of data from event and meeting organisers to assess how effectively they adopt the principles of sustainability, an identification of the current skills of event and meeting managers and whether these skills enable them to manage sustainably and identifying innovative industry practices. Academia can contribute by comprehensively incorporating sustainability practices into all aspects of meeting and events management.

TABLE 1 – OVERVIEW OF CONTENT IN CURRENT EVENT AND MEETING MANAGEMENT TEXT

AUTHORS	CHAPTERS	CONTENTS	GAPS
McCabe et al; Allen et al; Astroff & Abbey; Getz; Rogers	History/Origin and global perspective	Introduction of the event and meeting industry and its origins, generally with a timeline of development, leading to the globalisation of the industry. Some discussion of the special nature of meetings and events and how they integrate with the tourism business. Usually accompanied by an explanation of different types of events and meetings and how they can be distinguished.	Principles of sustainability Approaches to sustainability Importance of sustainability Benefits of sustainability
McCabe et al; Allen et al; Astroff & Abbey; Friedmann; Getz; Rogers	Organisational Structure	Typically a discussion on the various industry stakeholders, government organisations, and industry associations. Moving on to a description of the various positions/job descriptions involved in managing events and meetings, often with a discussion on career prospects for professionals in this area.	Importance of educating all stakeholders in the understanding of environmental, social and cultural significance of meetings and events to local communities.
McCabe et al; Allen et al; Getz;	Impacts	Presentation of a range of impacts, both positive and negative and including: social, cultural, physical and environmental, political, and economic.	Challenges to the standard methodologies and the development of innovative measurement solutions to impacts.

Allen et al; Getz;	Current Issues and Trends	Divided into a number of key issues facing the industry, such as changing nature of business; social and political pressures; issues concerned with marketing and sales; human resources; and the professionalism of the industry.	Growing environmental and social equity problems. Calls for change to a more sustainable management of resources; Progress toward sustainability, as well as the long-term benefits globally.
McCabe et al; Allen et al; Astroff & Abbey; Friedmann Allen, J; Getz; Rogers	Planning	Often beginning with a general discussion of the different types of planning – strategic, organisational and business. Moving on to a more specific discussion of the what, who, where and how	Principles of sustainability and how to incorporate them into the overall planning process.
McCabe et al; Allen et al; Astroff & Abbey; Friedmann; Allen, J; Getz; Rogers	Implementation	Generally specific to the management of the resources needed. The management of site/venue; The management of marketing and promotion; The management of logistics, and Usually a discussion of risk management.	Opportunities and practical application of connecting visitors to a destination 'place'. Strengthening relationships with the community
McCabe et al; Allen et al; Astroff & Abbey; Getz;	Monitoring and Evaluating	Typically some discussion of: service quality, budgeting and finance, as well as legal aspects of putting on an event or meeting. Finally a statement on the importance of evaluation, in terms of what has been achieved, lessons learnt, and the importance of recording information for future event and meeting management.	Case Studies and field experiences User-friendly techniques that can be used by stake holders to monitor and evaluate the sustainability of any festival meeting or event.

**APPENDIX 1: LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY
INTO EVENT AND MEETING MANAGEMENT**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	CONTENT

1. Understand and apply the principles of sustainable development in different contexts to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of meetings and events.	• What is and what is not SD.
	
	Criteria to determine levels of suitability SD at different levels
	  • Enterprise
	  • Project
	  • Community
	  • Region area
	  • National
	  • Regional inter-country
	  • Global
	• Approaches to sustainability (basics) – what could sustainability mean in all of the different contexts.
	
	Classification of sustainability programs by impact area, geographic scale, level of control, voluntary contracted or regulated, sources of financing (private- suppliers operators consumers, public- tax appropriations, grants and special assessments)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	CONTENT
2. Identify and assess positive and negative impacts of meetings and events on environmental, sociocultural, economic and political sustainability in order to promote and enhance the quality of life and social well being for local and regional development.	• Assessing positive-negative impacts Case studies and examples Field experience (within your own context, checklist, project, etc.) • Understanding of the principle of life cycle costing (look at cost of overall system – eco costs, financial costs, etc to consider long term cost and short term cost) • Monitoring and evaluation: emphasis on user-friendly techniques that can be used by stakeholders • Standard methodologies Standard practices: finance: securing funding from non traditional sponsors that are related to sustainability Orgs.; advocating a realization that long term success doesn't mean short term profit Marketing: responsible marketing that looks at impacts, avoiding funnel marketing (quantity versus quality) Management: org. behaviour – horizontal structures versus vertical to bring in more stakeholders
3. Identify and understand stakeholders and develop processes that promote their active participation in all decision making.	• Methods for identification of stakeholders and their interactions. • Stakeholder leadership and empowerment • Stakeholder education • Benefit distribution to stakeholders • Stakeholders: Identity of local communities Religion and sacred places Social patterns of local communities Political forces within communities Ethics and values related to local communities

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	CONTENT
4. Re-imagine meeting and events as an opportunity to connect visitors to a destination's ´place´ and strengthen their relationships with the community.	• Creating educational and engagement for visitors at every stage of the trip. Enumerating strategies that can be utilized at every stage of the trip to accomplish desired learning outcomes. Pre-trip: provision of a reading list, language classes, orientations before trip, interacts with past visitors, advertising. Booking: info on programs that allow you to connect with residents of community before, home stay opportunities, volunteer opportunities. Transportation to destination: on-board education videos, activities, puzzles, colouring books relevant to destination, sampling of destination cuisine and cultures, reading materials, fact sheets, (bring knowledge home to visitor), choice of sustainable modes of transportation (hybrid cars, carbon-offset) Arrival at lodging: personal greeting from staff, avoid "aloha-light", hotel as a cultural opportunity transmitted through facilities and staff, information packet available at the destination and in the lodge, info on introducing guests to destination, neighbourhood, etc. Stay in destination: opening ceremony, others way to introduce community as part of meeting, etc. introduction of volunteer projects, local opportunities to provide patronage of local establishments, local crafts Departure: departure orientation of what you can do when you return to increase knowledge of destination Returning home. Post-return engagement. • Re-image objective – illustrate how communities are often linked to their geo location with examples in culture, food, music, religion, festivals, and products and demonstrate to visitor how connection to place can be continued through support and educational outreach of the experience. (Example: village of Roquefort, France).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	CONTENT
5. Understand the cultural and social significance of meetings and events to local communities.	• Methods for identification of stakeholders and their interactions. • Stakeholder leadership and empowerment. • Stakeholder education. • Benefit distribution to stakeholders. • Idea of environmental, social cultural, economic, political sustainability, sustainable MICE management about implementing and controlling evaluation regarding these factors. Related to that: identification of impacts and monitoring, both to be able to min. neg. impacts and max. Positive impacts in all 4 areas. Risk management and cont. planning, safety Group psychology and group management • Communication: describe all the players in MICE field and introduce techniques to find out what their wishes are so as to better communicate with them using tools, etc, argument to persuade them to do it sustainably. • Identify needs of different stakeholders and show interdependence between stakeholders.
6. Design and implement a flexible meetings and events process, which offers products and services that incorporate principles and practices of sustainability.	• Organisational process – Pre planning; Organising; Operations Management; and Evaluation • Steps involved in incorporating sustainability in the organisational process.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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