



Sustainable Travel Ireland

Rural Femmes

Introduction

- Imke Range
- Born and raised in Berlin, Germany
- Lived and worked in 9 countries across the globe
- MSc with distinction in Responsible Tourism Management (Leeds Beckett, UK)
- Lead Sustainability Trainer @ Sustainable Travel Ireland



Content

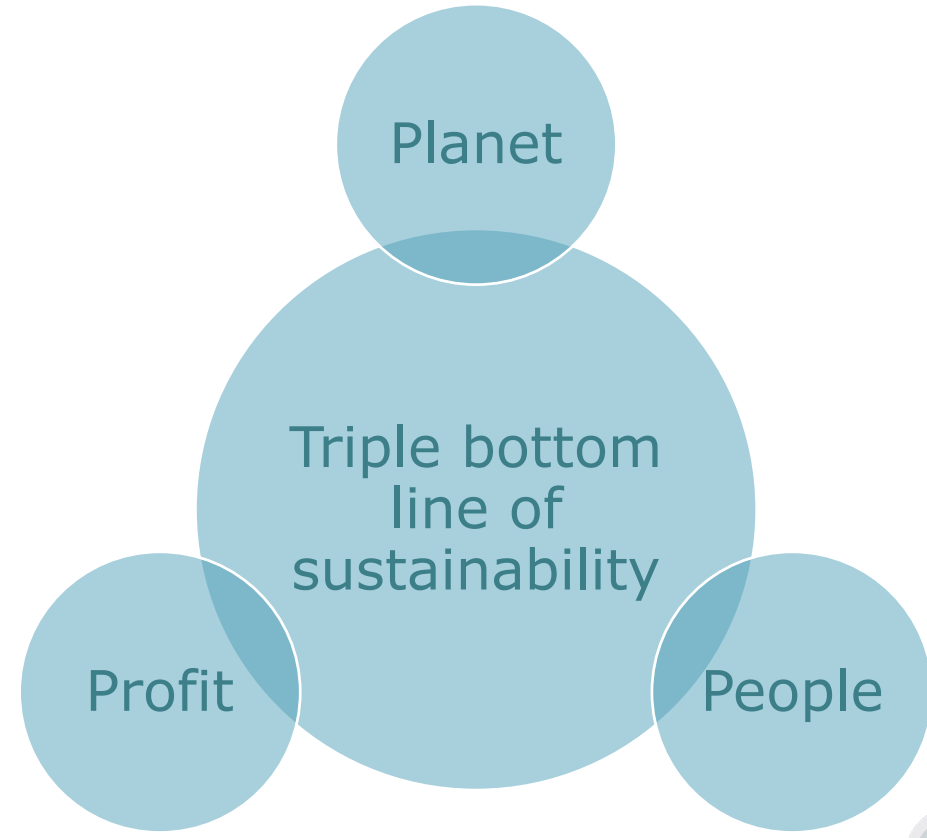
What is sustainable tourism?

Examples of sustainable rural tourism businesses

Sustainable Travel Ireland



What is sustainable tourism?



Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future **economic, social, and environmental** impacts while addressing the needs of **visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities.**

(UNWTO, n.d.)



Responsible Tourism



- Responsible Tourism is about making **better places for people to live in** and **better places for people to visit**
- Responsible Tourism requires that operators, hoteliers, governments, local people and tourists take responsibility, take action to make tourism more sustainable (Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2020)

- Image source: color whistle, 2021



Ecotourism



- Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (TIES, 2015). Education is meant to be inclusive of both staff and guests (International Ecotourism Society, n.d.)

▪ Image source:Medium, 2018



Rural Sustainable Tourism Businesses



Black Stairs Eco Trails

- 4 Shepherds huts + Barn
- Celtic Tree Trail
- Fungi Workshop
- Stargazing
- 'Foraging Hen' – Hen party with style
- Wedding Venue



Blackstairs Eco Trails Experiences



Gold Certified

Committed to having minimal impact on the environment.

Reduce impacts by minimizing energy and water use & waste production

Adopt 7 principles of Leave No Trace Ireland

Renewable energy provider, geothermal heating, tree planting, wood stove using 'home grown' kindling, educate guests

Recycling, educate guests, grow own produce

Own well, rainwater collection, grey water recycling, education



Slieve Aughty Centre

- Multiple accommodations
- Organic restaurant
- Organic garden
- Horse Riding Activities
- Donkey excursions
- Fat bicycle for hire
- Weddings



Slieve Augthy Centre Offerings



Miguel Castro



Gold Certified – Some highlights:

'Minimal carbon footprint and maximum immersion in the community and outdoors'

Appliances turned off when not used. Washing is air dried

Low flow shower heads, sink taps and toilets installed. Hot discharge water from the dishwasher used to clean floors

Over 1 acre of food sourced on the property + Special Protection Area

Recycled construction materials

Guests who choose non-air travel receive 5% discount

Created Walkers Group to organise community concerns and interests in the forest – including yearly clean up

Written materials for guests about the history of this area



Crystal Creek Meadows

- Award winning 4 star eco-lodge
- Kangaroo Valley, NSW, Australia
- 8 acre property
- Fully operating on rain-water
- Solar panels, guest education
- Local produce

Image source: google, 2021

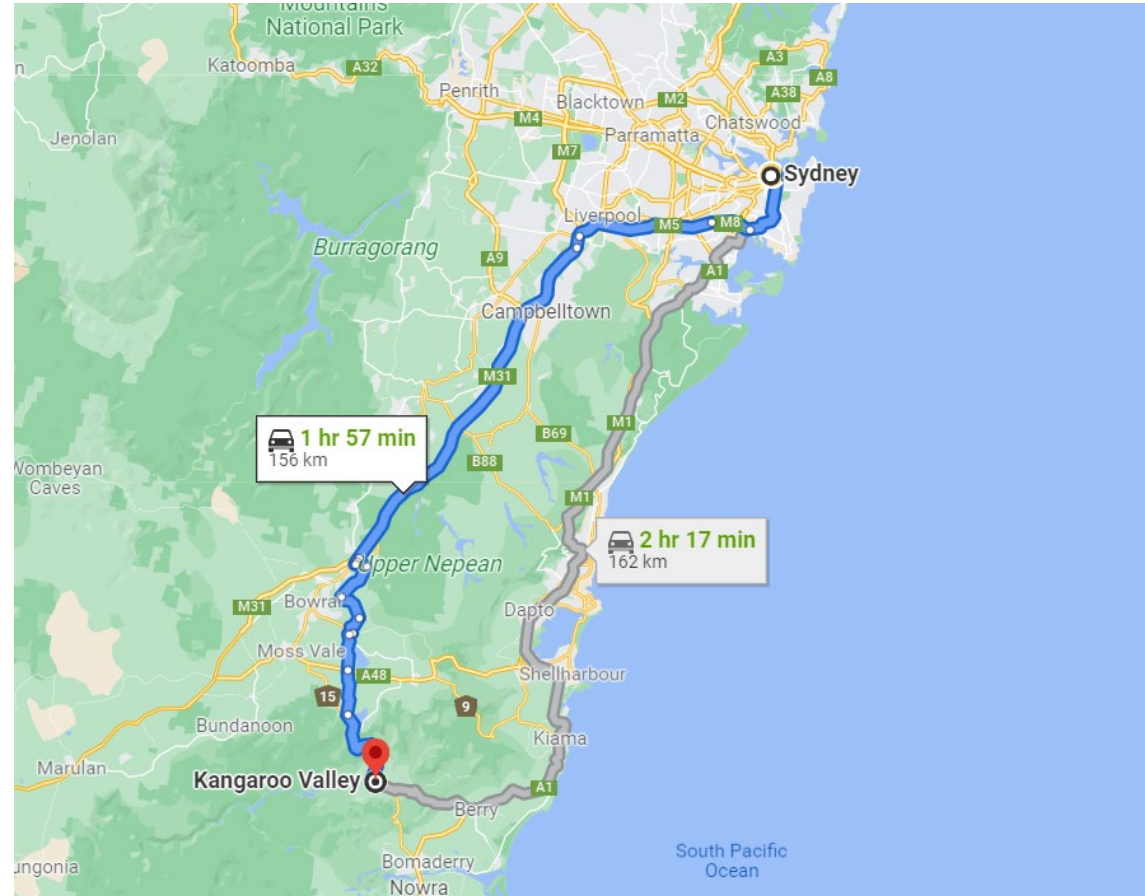




Image source: crystal creek meadows

Doing the right thing can be hard

- Businesses are time poor
 - Businesses don't have the knowledge
 - Can be financially demanding – long term investment
 - Demand growing for (independent) certification
-
- **Sustainable Travel Ireland can support you here**



Sustainable Travel Ireland

Training & Certification body - criteria recognised by the GSTC (Only one in Ireland)

Certify: Ecotourism business, Accommodation & Tour Operators

About 100 members + partnerships



TOAST

Training and Online Auditing System

Sustainability management system

Reporting tool

20+ courses



GSTC - Global Sustainable Tourism Council

- Manages the GSTC Criteria - the global baseline standards for sustainable travel and tourism
- Acts as an international body providing assurance for sustainable tourism certification in three key subsectors of tourism: hotels/accommodations, tour operators/agencies, and destinations (GSTC, 2021)



For Hotels & Accommodations



For Tour Operators



For Destinations & Governments



For Corporate & Business Travel



For Certification Bodies



For Travelers



Purpose

We want to transform the Irish tourism industry into one that respects and protects the environment, but also supports local communities and makes better places for people to live and work in.

Profit-for-purpose company - We pledge that 75% of our profits will go back into our company to help more tourism companies become sustainable and contribute to our mission.



History

2006 – 2009 project in the north-west of Ireland called Greenbox initiated by Mary Mulvey

2009 Greenbox led to development Ecotourism Ireland

2019 Rob Rankin (Vagabond Tours) became owner of Ecotourism Ireland

Rebranding: Sustainable Travel Ireland – to reflect the organisation, its mission and its relevance to Ireland's tourism industry.

Its Ireland's longest-running body for the promotion of sustainable and responsible tourism (Sustainable Travel Ireland, 2021) .



Services we offer

Membership, training and certification
to tourism businesses on the island of Ireland

Cater to entire Irish tourism industry.
Micro business to cooperate
hotel, attraction, activity centre, tour operator or restaurant

Offer consulting services
to destinations, government bodies, and NGOs



Certification

- Intermediate Membership
- Bronze, Silver, Gold
- Independent audit
- 8 Areas
- 45 topics
- 201 Criteria



Some Tips

- Integrate sustainability from the start
- It's a journey and you don't have to be perfect from the start – but should be open to learn and adjust
- Learn from others – don't need to reinvent the wheel
- Be daring

- You can reach out to us: imke@sustainabletravel.ie



Questions?





Thank you

www.sustainabletravelireland.ie



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Ireland



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References:

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- Clifden Eco Beach (2021) <https://clifdenecocamping.ie/>
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- Medium (2018) <https://medium.com/environmental-intelligence/is-ecotourism-a-magic-bullet-for-sustainable-development-an-anthropological-essay-c60c1062aaff>
- International Ecotourism Society (n.d.) <https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/>

