

PRESS RELEASE

New sustainability tools for tour operators launched at ITB

SUSTOUR will present new sustainability tools specifically developed for tour operators and showcase best practices of Travelife awarded tour operators at ITB

Brussels, 27 February 2023. The EU-COSME funded SUSTOUR project is gearing up for the world's leading travel trade fair ITB Berlin to present the project objectives and achievements so far, bring together participating tour operators and travel agents from across Europe and to showcase the tools developed in the frame of SUSTOUR.

More and more travellers show concern about the economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism. It's essential that tour operators are able to address and cater to these growing expectations. The SUSTOUR project (2020 – 2023) is there to help small and medium-sized travel agents and tour operators get a foothold in the world of sustainability and offers valuable tools and coaching to improve their sustainability performance.

Three new tools have been developed in the frame of the project and will be presented at ITB in Berlin at the SUSTOUR stand 216 in hall 4.1b:

- Plastic Reduction Toolkit: The plastic management tools give tour operators and their suppliers (hotels) practical, hands-on and easy to understand guidance for switching to more sustainable alternatives to single-use plastic. The toolkit includes, among other, 11 decision trees for the reduction of plastic in the context of different businesses, rating charts for the impact of different plastic alternatives, standard operating procedures to implement more sustainable alternatives to plastic step by step, and starters manuals for a "plastic pollution free holiday".
- Calculator for carbon footprint calculator of trips: CARMACAL is an existing tool which allows tour operators to measure the complete and detailed carbon footprint of their tour packages. This includes not only transport to/from the destination, but also accommodation, local transport and activities. CARMACAL has been upgraded to make it more intuitive and user-friendly for tour operators.
- Activity Codes of Best Practice: This is a compilation of sustainability standards for various tourism activities that tour operators can share with their suppliers of activities. There are 36 different activity codes in attractive PDF format.

Said Frank Oostdam, President of ECTAA: "Sustainability can be overwhelming for many small travel companies. We are confident that the new tools will enable tour operators to better integrate sustainability in their businesses and help empower consumers to make better choices."

A stage event at ITB on 7 March at 16h30 will give an overview of the SUSTOUR project, examine the relevance of sustainability certification for tourism businesses and showcase the developed toolkits. Furthermore, this is also the opportunity to celebrate the tour operators and travel agents that achieved a Travelife Partner and Travelife Certified award for their commitment and excellence in sustainability. It is followed by a networking reception. The programme of the stage event is available [here](#).

[SUSTOUR](#) is an EU-funded [COSME](#) project to further develop and implement tools and standards to help tour operators and travel agents improve their sustainability performance. It also provides an SME support budget of 600.000€ to roll out an extensive training and certification support scheme for tour operators and travel agents. The project is managed by a [consortium](#) of 7 organisations, including ECTAA and [supported](#) by 24 travel trade association.

[Travelife for Tour Operators](#) is an internationally recognized training, management and certification scheme for sustainability in tourism. It aims to provide companies with realistic sustainability goals, tools and solutions to implement positive change within their businesses and supply chains.

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