

**PRESENTATION TO IIPT FIRST EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
LEEWARDEN, THE NETHERLANDS - STENDEN UNIVERSITY
OCTOBER 21, 2008**

KATHRYN W. SUDEIKIS. CTC

THANK YOU DR. BROWN.

**I APPRECIATE THE INVITATION FROM IIPT FOUNDER AND
PRESIDENT – LOUIS D'AMORE TO ATTEND THIS
PRESITGIOUS CONFERENCE.**

**I AM HONORED TO BE IN THE COMPANY OF SUCH
DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS AS MRS. PATRICIA SAMUELS OF
JAMAICA ,THE HONORABLE GIL DA COSTA ELVES, AND THE
HONORABLE NETUMBO NANDI – NDAITWAH.**

**AND IT IS INDEED A REAL PLEASURE TO SHARE WITH YOU
ASTA'S PERSPECTIVE ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AND THE UN MILLENNIUM GOALS.**

**THE AMERICAN HUMORIST – MARK TWAIN -ONCE SAID -
“TRAVEL IS FATAL TO PREJUDICE – BIGOTRY AND NARROW
MINDEDNESS “. AND NO ONE KNOWS THAT MORE THAN
THOSE OF US IN THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY.**

**IT IS THAT STATEMENT AND THE GOALS OF IIPT THAT HAVE
DRAWN OUR OUR ASSOCIATION – ASTA – THE AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF TRAVEL AGENTS TO SHARE A COMMON
RELATIONSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE
OF OUR INDUSTRY.**

**THERE ARE SEVERAL TRENDS IN THE US MARKET THAT
GROWING QUITE RAPIDLY. THEY INCLUDE ADDITIONAL
INTEREST IN ECOTOURISM, AND VOLUNTEER**

VACATIONS. FOR MORE THAN 15 YEARS – ASTA HAS SALUTED COMPANIES, INDIVIDUALS AND COUNTRIES FOR ACHEIVEMENTS IN CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION OF OUR PLANET WITH AN ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD. RECENT WINNERS INCLUDE THE GAMBOA RAINFOREST RESORT IN PANAMA AND WILDERNESS SAFARI'S IN SOUTH AFRICA.

ASTA ALSO PROMOTES THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF RESPONSIBLE TOURISM ON IT'S WEBSITE WWW.ASTA.ORG.

IT IS OUR ROLE AS A LEADER IN THE NORTH AMERICAN TOURISM INDUSTRY THAT HAS LED TO OUR INVOLVEMENT IN A NEWLY ANNOUNCED PARTNERSHIP IN CONNECTION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION FOUNDER AND ITS'S CHAIRMAN , TED TURNER.

ON OCTOBER 6 - MR . TURNER ANNOUNCED THE FIRST – EVER GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CRITERIA WHILE HE ATTENDED THE WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS IN BARCELONA , SPAIN.

THIS CRITERIA WAS DEVELOPED BY A NEW COALITION OF 27 ORGANIZATIONS THAT INCLUDES TOURISM LEADERS FROM THE PRIVATE, PUBLIC AND NOT-FOR- PROFIT SECTORS OF OUR INDUSTRY.

IT WAS DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST 15 MONTHS ,AFTER CONSULATION WITH BOTH TOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTS WHO REVIEWED MORE THAN 60 EXISTING

**CERTIFICATION AND VOLUNTARY SETS OF CRITERIA
ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED AROUND THE GLOBE.**

**IN ALL, MORE THAN 4,500 CRITERIA HAVE BEEN ANALYZED
AND MORE THAN 80,000 PEOPLE, INCLUDING
CONSERVATIONISTS, INDUSTRY LEADERS, GOVERNMENTAL
AUTHORITIES, AND UN BODIES HAVE BEEN INVITED TO
COMMENT ON THE RESULTING CRITERIA.**

**THE CRITERIA FOCUS ON FOUR AREAS THAT EXPERTS
RECOMMEND AS THE MOST CRITICAL ASPECTS OF
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM – MAXIMIZING TOURISM’S SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES.
REDUCING NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE.
REDUCING HARM TO LOCAL ENVIRONMENTS AND PLANNING
FOR SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE DESTINATION.**

**THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CRITERIA INITIATIVE IS
ABOUT STEERING THE INDUSTRY INTO A TRULY
SUSTAINABLE PATH .**

**ACCORDING TO ACHIM STEINER , THE UN
UNDERSECRETARY – GENERAL AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM –
“A PATH THAT ECHOES THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME –
NAMELY – THE FOSTERING AND FEDERATING OF A GLOBAL
GREEN ECONOMY THAT THRIVES ON THE INTEREST RATHER
THAN THE CAPITAL OF OUR ECONOMICALLY – IMPORTANT
NATURE BASED ASSETS “.**

**OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COALITION HAVE NOTED THAT
THIS COLLABORATIVE EFFORT HAS PROVIDED A MUCH
NEEDED COMMON FRAMEWORK AND UNDERSTANDING OF
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES, AND WILL SHAPE THE
REQUIREMENTS THAT WILL BE DEMANDED OF ALL SECTORS**

OF THE INDUSTRY TO HELP TRAVELLERS HAVE INSURANCE THAT THEY ARE HELPING , NOT HARMING, THE WORLD'S ENVIRONMENT.

MY ORGANIZATION - ASTA - FEELS IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO BE PART OF THIS GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP BECAUSE THE GROUP IS LEADING THE WAY IN DEFINING - ONCE AND FOR ALL - WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL COMPANY.

WE HAVE OUR OWN GREEN MEMBER PROGRAM SO IT IS INCUMBENT UPON US TO ENSURE THAT OUR STEPS TOWARD A TRAVEL RETAILERS' GREEN INITIATIVE ARE IN SYNCH WITH RESPONSIBLE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS.

THIS AGREED UPON CRITERIA WILL PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS AND ALL OF THOSE SELLING THE GLOBAL TRAVEL PRODUCT WITH MUCH NEEDED GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING FUTURE BUSINESS PARTNERS' COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WHILE OFFERING CONSUMERS CLEAR AND RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRAVEL CHOICES THEY MAKE.

WHEN HELPING CONSUMERS, IT IS INCUMBENT UPON US TO BE IN THE FOREFRONT OF HELPING CONSUMERS OPTIMIZE THE WORLD'S FUTURE.

FOR EXAMPLE – EVEN SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS OPTING TO BOOK WITH AN AIRLINE WITH A BETTER ON-TIME RECORD CONTRIBUTES TO THE GREENING OF THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE. UNDERSTANDING THAT THE LESS TIME A PLANE SPENDS IDLING ON A TARMAC OR CIRCLING TO LAND MEANS LESS FUEL CONSUMED BY THAT AIRLINE.

TAKING GREEN TRAVEL TO THE EXTREME, MEANS THAT SOME PEOPLE MIGHT NOT CHOOSE TO TRAVEL AT ALL – BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME EXTREMISTS WHO ARGUE THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS “GREEN” TRAVEL AND THAT EVERY FACET OF THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE NEGATIVELY IMPACTS OUR ENVIRONMENT.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT AS AN INDUSTRY WE MUST BE VIGILANT IN DEFENDING OUR BUSINESS AND BE PROACTIVE IN POINTING TO THE MANY WAYS IN WHICH WE CONTRIBUTE TO THE GREATER GOOD. WE MUST MOVE FORWARD AND MAKE NO APOLOGIES.

TOURISM AS AN INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTES TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY ON EVERY LEVEL. THEREFORE WE CANNOT CONDONE OR ALLOW A CALL FOR THE END OF TRAVEL. IT WOULD THREATEN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY MORE SEVERELY THAN THE CURRENT BANKING PROBLEMS BECAUSE IT WOULD CAUSE ADDITIONAL CATASTROPHIC LOSSES IN THE SHORT TERM FOR MAIN STREET BUSINESSES.

THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY CANNOT ALLOW IRRESPONSIBLE SOCIAL CRITICS TO NEGATIVELY PORTRAY OUR INDUSTRY AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF GLOBAL WARMING.

TO BE SURE AIRLINES EMIT CARBON DIOXIDE BUT TODAY'S JET PLANES ARE MORE EFFICIENT THAN THEIR PREDECESSORS. IN FACT, THEY USE 70 PERCENT LESS FUEL THAN THOSE OF THE 1960'S.

TIME, LIKE PROGRESS, WILL NOT STAND STILL AND WE CAN RIGHTFULLY LOOK AHEAD TO EVEN GREATER INNOVATIONS IN TRANSPORTATION.

EVEN TODAY, THE WORST SCENARIO ESTIMATES THAT AIRLINES CONTRIBUTE TO 5 PERCENT OF TOTAL CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS. WHILE THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY CLAIMS IT CONTRIBUTES ONLY 2 PERCENT.

REGARDLESS OF THE TRUE PERCENTAGE - TRAVEL AND TOURISM IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF WORLD COMMERCE. THE U.S TRAVEL ALONE CONTRIBUTED \$645 BILLION DOLLARS TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. BUT --PUTTING ASIDE THE FINANCIAL STAKES FOR A MOMENT -- IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US HERE AT THIS CONFERENCE WHO BELIEVE IN TOURISM FOR MANY OTHER REASONS

IT IS CLEAR THAT IT TRAVEL BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS - LEADS TO GREATER UNDERSTANDING AMONG CULTURES - PROVIDES JOBS TO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND OPENS PEOPLE'S EYES TO THE MANY WONDERS OF THIS WORLD. WONDERS THAT MUST BE PRESERVED.

THE CHOICE IS NOT TO ELIMINATE TRAVEL BUT TO MAXIMIZE GREEN CHOICES AVAILABLE AND TO LESSEN TRAVEL'S IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT !

TRAVEL AGENTS HAVE TRADITIONALLY ASSUMED THE ROLE OF "HONEST BROKER" IN OUR INDUSTRY. WE RELAY INFORMATION TO OUR CLIENTS AND AS THE NEED FOR GREEN OPTIONS INCREASES, TRAVEL AGENTS WILL NEED TO ASSESS THE "HONEST CHOICES" WE CAN OFFER OUR CLIENTS.

FOR OUR SUPPLIERS TO BE “TRULY GREEN” THEY WILL NEED A MULTI – DISCIPLINARY APPROACH WHOSE LYNCH-PIN IS A STRONG COMMITMENT TO GREEN INITIATIVES.

THIS ENCOMPASSES A TOURISM PROGRAM THAT CARES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO BECOME INVOLVED IN AND PROFIT FROM THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND OFFERS EDUCATION TO ITS VISITORS AND TRAINING TO AREA COMPANIES IN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE GREEN.

DESTINATIONS WHO DO NOT COMMIT ON A DEEPER LEVEL TO GREEN PROGRAMS WILL BE LABELED AS ‘FAUX ‘ GREEN AND WILL SUFFER AS TODAY’S GLOBALLY CONSCIOUS TRAVELERS CHOSE TO GO ELSEWHERE.

**FOR THIS REASON A RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL PROVIDER MUST ALSO INVESTIGATE WHAT GREEN OPTIONS ARE AVAILBLE AT A GIVEN DESTINATION.
WE MUST FAMILIARZE OURSELVES WITH THE GREEN POLICIES OF THE SUPPLIERS WE SELL.**

A COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MUST BEGIN IN THE CORORATE BOARD ROOM. ALL EMPLOYEES, VENDORS, STOCKHOLDERS AND CUSTOMERS MUST KNOW THAT GREEN IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS AND BELIEVE IN IT.

HOTELS KNOW THAT GIVING TRAVELERS A CHOICE MINIMIZES THEIR GLOBAL FOOTPRINT AND REDUCES COSTS . PROVIDING GREEN OPTIONS DOES NOT HAVE TO EQUATE WITH AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE BOTTOM LINE.

OTHER SUPPLIERS, SUCH AS AIRLINES WILL HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE TO CONSUMERS THAT THEY HAVE A GREEN AGENDA THAT FITS IN WITH TRAVELERS WANTS AND NEEDS.

OUR PREDICTION IS THAT IN 5 YEARS – CAR COMPANIES, STEAM SHIPS, FERRIES, CRUISES AND ATTRACTIONS – ALL WILL NEED A PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN ORDER TO STAY AMONG THOSE FAVORED BY OTHER SUPPLIERS AND BY THE CONSUMER.

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS YOU TODAY AND SHARE ASTA'S PERSPECTIVE ON THESE ISSUES.

GOOD DAY.