

# *Training 3:*

## *Eco-Friendly Tourism Products : Awareness and Development*

# LOGBOOK

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- Introduction (5 mints)
- Understanding Eco-Friendly Tourism concept (20 mints)
- Identifying Eco-Friendly Tourism Products (20 mints)
- Role of Eco-Friendly Products in Sustainable Rural Tourism (20 mints)
- Case Studies of Successful Eco - Friendly Tourism Products in Rural Areas (20 mints)
- Final Quiz ( 20 mints)

# SAILMAP

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# OBJECTIVES

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This module aims to raise awareness on eco-friendly tourism products .

- Learning objectives:

- *comprehend the concept of eco - friendly tourism and its key aspects ;*
- *learn to identify various eco - friendly tourism products and understand the benefits of choosing sustainable options ;*
- *understand the role of eco - friendly tourism in providing economic benefits and alternative employment opportunities for local communities;*
- *encourage cultural exchange and understanding by experiencing and respecting the local and traditions .*



# INTRODUCTION

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- ❑ In the current context of climate change and environmental degradation, the development of sustainable tourism has become a global priority . Tourism is one of the most dynamic economic sectors, contributing significantly to economic growth and job creation . However, its negative impact on the environment cannot be ignored . In this context, eco - friendly tourism products play an essential role in minimizing the ecological footprint of tourism activities and in promoting a responsible and sustainable tourism model .
- ❑ Eco- friendly tourism products are defined as goods and services that are created, distributed, and consumed in ways that minimize negative environmental impacts and promote the conservation of natural resources . These include a wide range of products, from sustainable accommodation and transport to organic food and souvenirs made of natural and recyclable materials .
- ❑ The importance of these products lies not only in their direct benefits for the environment, but also in their ability to educate and raise awareness among tourists about the need to protect the ecosystems .
- ❑ Raising awareness among the public and operators in the tourism industry about the importance and benefits of eco - friendly tourism products is essential for their development and implementation on a large scale . Education and information play a vital role in changing the attitudes and the behaviours of tourists, thus facilitating the transition to a greener tourism .



# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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- Eco-friendly (or ecological) tourism is a form of responsible tourism, which aims to minimize the negative impact on the environment, and that supports the conservation of natural and cultural resources.
- According to OECD, ecological tourism is the generic notion for the natural exploitation (commercialization) of resources as tourism products, in a sustainable manner.
- **Objective** : minimizing negative impacts on the environment and the local communities, while promoting sustainability and environmental awareness.



# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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- This type of tourism is based on principles such as reducing carbon emissions, preserving biodiversity, using resources efficiently, and involving local communities in decision-making processes .
- Essentially, eco-friendly tourism aims to create a balance between the needs of tourists, economic requirements, and the need for protecting the environment .
- The concept of an eco-friendly tourism can be understood in terms of several dimensions . These include the sustainable management of tourist destinations, the promotion of green transport, the development of an environmentally friendly tourism infrastructure, and educating tourists to adopt responsible behaviours .
- Also, eco-friendly tourism focuses on supporting local economies, by encouraging the consumption of local products and services, which have a low impact on the environment .

# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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*The Basic Principles of Eco-friendly Tourism* are: respect for the environment, supporting the community, conservation, and sustainability. These include the following:

- **Environmental conservation** : protecting and restoring natural ecosystems and biodiversity.
- **Social responsibility** : respecting and supporting local cultures and communities.
- **Resource efficiency** : rational and sustainable use of natural resources and energy.
- **Environmental education** : informing and creating awareness among tourists regarding the impact of their activities and the importance of protecting the environment.
- **Strengthening local economies** : supporting local communities and economies, often neglected in the context of traditional tourism.



# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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Eco-friendly tourism can bring environmental, economic, and social *benefits*, such as:

## 1. The main Environmental Benefits are :

- ✓ ***Biodiversity conservation*** : eco-friendly tourism supports efforts to conserve species and natural habitats, by funding conservation projects and educating tourists;
- ✓ ***Encouraging a responsible behaviour*** : reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing water consumption and minimising waste generation. For instance, promoting sustainable transport (bicycles, electric public transport) means and eco-friendly accommodation units reduces greenhouse gas emissions;
- ✓ ***Reducing the negative impact*** of traditional tourism ;

*By implementing these practices, the hospitality industry can contribute to the global effort to mitigate the effects of climate change and help to conserve natural resources .*

# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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## 2. Economic Benefits of Eco-Friendly Tourism

Sustainable practices in the tourism industry can help the economy of a local area by:

- ✓ ***Developing local economies*** : by buying local products and services, tourists support small businesses and local agriculture, thus contributing to the sustainable development of rural communities;
- ✓ ***Creating green jobs*** : implementing sustainable practices in tourism creates new job opportunities in areas such as: organic farming, green building, and natural resource management;
- ✓ ***Boosting investment in infrastructure***, which is beneficial to both tourists and hosting communities;
- ✓ ***Increasing the competitiveness of destinations*** in regional markets.

*By implementing sustainable practices, businesses can reduce their operating costs in the long term, leading to an increased profitability. Additionally, green initiatives can create marketing and branding opportunities, attracting guests who prioritize sustainability.*

# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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## 3. Social and Cultural Benefits of Eco-Friendly Tourism

Eco-friendly tourism also supports social and cultural development in local communities, by:

- ***Improving the quality of life in local communities*** : by reducing pollution and promoting a cleaner environment, eco-friendly tourism contributes to the health and well-being of local communities ;
- ***Supporting local artisans and preserving the cultural heritage*** : the promotion of local crafts and traditions helps to preserve the cultural identity and pass it on to future generations ;
- ***Facilitating authentic cultural exchanges***, thus enriching the tourists' experiences.

*Sustainable practices can create a healthier environment by reducing exposure to pollutants and harmful chemicals . Additionally, implementing these practices can improve the industry's reputation by attracting environmentally conscious guests and employees .*



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# UNDERSTANDING ECO- FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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## *Challenges in Eco - Friendly Tourism*

- ✓ As eco - friendly tourism gains in popularity, there is a risk of "greenwashing," a situation when businesses falsely claim to be eco - friendly to attract tourists. This highlights the need for *transparent certification schemes* and *responsible tourism associations* to help travellers make informed choices.
- ✓ Another challenge is finding the right balance between attracting tourists for the economic benefits this entails and protecting the natural environment . Sustainable destination management, limiting the number of visitors, and strict regulations are vital to prevent overtourism and the environmental degradation that results from it.



# UNDERSTANDING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM CONCEPT

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Solutions to these challenges :

- **Certification programs** : supporting certification programs ('EU Ecolabel') can help travellers identify responsible businesses and accommodations .
- **Visitor education** : educating travellers about responsible tourism practices and the importance of sustainable choices is essential . Education can boost the demand for a responsible travel .
- **Regulation and enforcement** : Governments and local authorities should adopt and enforce regulations that promote a responsible tourism . These may include limiting the number of visitors, creating waste management guidelines, and passing wildlife protection laws .
- **Community involvement** : the involvement of local communities in the planning and management of eco-tourism initiatives ensures their long-term success . When communities benefit from tourism, they become administrators of the environment .
- **Innovative technologies** : the tourism industry can benefit from the touch of technology to reduce its carbon footprint . Electric vehicles, energy-efficient accommodations, and digital guidebooks are some examples of technological advancements that can turn tourism into a greener and more sustainable one .

# IDENTIFYING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS

- ✓ In the context of increasing awareness of the impact of human activities on the environment, eco-friendly products, practices, and activities in tourism have become increasingly popular.
- ✓ They are designed to minimise environmental impact while tourists are travelling and to promote a sustainable tourism.
- ✓ Many eco-friendly products, practices, and activities used in tourism have *certifications* and *labels* that indicate compliance with certain sustainability standards. These labels help consumers identify products that are indeed environmentally friendly.



Photo source:  
<https://howtoconserve.org/2016/08/14/10-eco-friendly-activities/>

# IDENTIFYING ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS

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Eco-friendly or ecological tourism involves a range of products, practices, and activities that are essential for promoting sustainability and for reducing the negative environmental impact. They can be classified into the following main categories:

- **Sustainable accommodation** . Accommodation units that apply energy and water-saving practices, manage waste efficiently, and use eco-friendly materials. Examples: eco-friendly hotels, sustainable campsites, eco-lodges, guest housing farms and guesthouses that use renewable energy sources and support local communities.
- **Ecological transport** . The use of low-carbon emissions generating modes of transport, such as bicycles, public transport modes, or electric cars. Examples: bike rentals, electric vehicle tours.
- **Responsible and nature -based activities** . Participation in activities that do not harm the environment, such as hiking on marked trails, visiting natural parks, bird watching or going on guided tours. These activities promote environmental conservation and raise awareness on the local ecosystems.
- **Wildlife conservation** . Respecting and protecting the flora and fauna of the visited destinations is an essential component of eco-friendly tourism. Examples: conservation projects, participating in activities such as planting trees or restoring habitats.

# IDENTIFYING ECO- FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS

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- **Waste reduction** . Avoiding single -use products and recycling waste whenever possible . Essential practices include recycling, composting, and minimizing single -use plastics .
- **Cultural and Immersion Experiences** . Offering cultural experiences that preserve and celebrate local traditions, crafts, and knowledge . Examples : interactive workshops, guided tours, cooking classes, traditional music performances .
- **Community -based tourism** . Engagement with local communities is essential . Tourists can interact with the residents in an area, learn about their way of life, and contribute to the development of the community . Examples : accommodating tourists in the homes of the tourists, guided tours led by locals .
- **Sustainable food experiences** . Focus on farm meals, using locally sourced ingredients . These experiences support smallholder farmers and reduce the carbon footprint associated with the transport of food . Examples : providing local and organic food to tourists .
- **Educational tours** . Guided tours that focus on environmental education, wildlife conservation, and sustainable practices . Examples : visits to national parks, nature reserves, and protected areas .

This classification highlights the diversity and importance of eco -friendly practices and products in rural tourism, emphasizing the need to integrate sustainability into all aspects of the tourism experience .





# ROLE OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS IN SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM

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Eco-friendly tourism products in rural areas focus on sustainability and promoting local development. The following key points and practices are often highlighted in sustainable rural tourism :

- **Multifunctionality and diversification** : rural areas are increasingly seen as spaces of naturalization, residence, landscape and environment, as well as forming a historical and cultural memory. The concept of multifunctionality in agriculture refers to the different functions performed by the agricultural sector, such as ensuring the environmental stewardship and improving the quality of life.
- **Sustainable and experiential tourism** : local actors aim to provide sustainable tourism experiences that allow visitors to actively engage with the local environment and culture, rather than be mere spectators.
- **Implementation of sustainable practices** : The use of "best practices" in sustainable rural tourism can lead to a diversified tourism offer. For example, the Braşov region of Romania has created tourism products that are in balance with nature through downshifting and permaculture practices.

# ROLE OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS IN SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM

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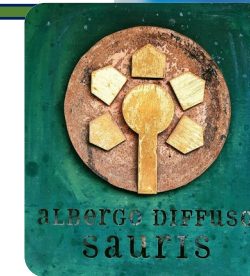
- **Recreational agriculture and rural tourism** : this involves the use of eco-environmental resources to provide benefits such as the rational use of recreational agricultural resources and the sustainable development of recreational agriculture.
- **Eco-friendly travel products** : travellers can use eco-friendly products, such as filter-equipped bottles, UV light devices, and water purification tablets, to minimize their impact on the environment.
- **Responsible travel companies** : choosing travel companies that prioritize eco-friendly practices is crucial. These companies often organize tours in rural areas and that are carefully planned to reduce the environmental impact and to support the local communities, thus promoting the local culture and the conservation of nature.

# CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS IN RURAL AREAS

The „Scattered” Hotel in Sauris : An Innovative Model of Local Tourism ;

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

- The concept of a "scattered hotel" or a "diffuse hotel" in Sauris is based on the transformation of local homes into accommodation units for tourists, offering them an authentic experience of living in the midst of the local community . This tourism model goes beyond a simple rural accommodation as it draws from a common commercial strategy and an online booking platform, thus creating a unique offer that promotes the charm of local places and traditions .
- **The importance of the online platform** . The online platform plays an essential role in promoting farms, local artisanal products, restaurants, and other tourist activities, thanks to the fact that it presents the local stories, people, and traditions . This approach combines community engagement with the advantages of online technologies, contributing to a new image of rural hospitality, based on the potential of the local uniqueness of the accommodation units and of the products .
- **The benefits for the community and the circular economy** . The "diffuso hotel" model in Sauris is an example of how the characteristics of a smart village can generate diverse benefits for homeowners and local entrepreneurs . This system improves local services for the entire community, capitalizes on the local potential, and offers innovative solutions to encourage local tourism . In addition, it promotes a circular and a local economy, while strengthening the economic and social relations in the community .



# CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS IN RURAL AREAS

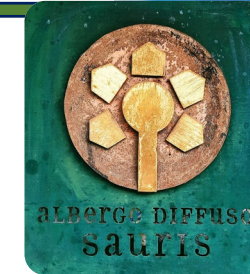
The „Scattered” Hotel in Sauris : An Innovative Model of Local Tourism ;

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

Key aspects :

- **Capitalizing on the local potential** : the "diffuso hotel" model exploits the local accommodation resources and products, while promoting the authenticity and traditions of the community .
- **Innovative solutions for the local tourism** : the implementation of a common strategy and an online booking platform creates an integrated and attractive tourism offer .
- **Circular and local economy** : Promoting local products and services contributes to the sustainable development and strengthening the community's economy .
- **Valorisation of the community** : The holistic approach of the "diffuso hotel" model brings multiple benefits for the local owners and entrepreneurs in the tourism sector, while improving local services for all the community members .

The "scattered" hotel in Sauris stands out thanks to its ability to combine local traditions with technological innovations, thus offering a sustainable and authentic tourist experience, which contributes to the socio-economic development of the local community .



# CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS IN RURAL AREAS

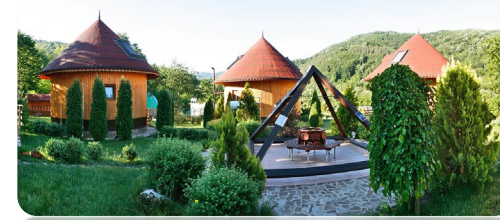
Azareiya : An Ecological Village in Bulgaria ; [www.azareiya.com/en/azareiya.html](http://www.azareiya.com/en/azareiya.html)



- Azareiya , an eco -friendly village located in the heart of Bulgaria's Stara Planina mountain range, offers tourists six wooden houses, available all year round . The village is strategically located near several historical and cultural landmarks, including monasteries and traditional villages, and benefits from natural hot springs .
- **Ecological buildings and constructions** . The houses in Azareiya are built using modern technologies and are made from natural materials, having a pyramidal shape that has been chosen thanks to its beneficial effects on health . Studies indicate that staying in these homes normalizes energy flow, stimulates the immune system, lowers the blood pressure and the blood sugar levels, and improves the nervous system function, while reducing migraines and stress, and increasing energy levels .
- **Reassessing one's way of life and re-connecting with nature** . The experience of living in Azareiya invites tourists to reassess their way of life and emphasizes the importance of reconnecting with nature . The design of the village, in the shape of a mandala, includes a central pyramid used for treatments and meditation, which symbolizes balance and harmony .
- **Ecological management of resources** . Azareiya uses eco -friendly systems for resource management . The village has composters for turning food leftovers and vegetable waste into fertilizers, a solar -powered hot water system and a wastewater treatment plant, the purified water being used to irrigate the organic vegetable garden . Permaculture is applied in the organic garden to ensure the sustainability of the food production .
- **Facilities and Activities for Visitors** . Throughout the year, Azareiya hosts seminars that promote a healthy lifestyle and personal development . It also offers various sports facilities, including table tennis, badminton, martial arts, football, swimming, cycling, hiking, and horseback riding, aimed at improving the visitors' physical and mental health .

# CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM PRODUCTS IN RURAL AREAS

Azareiya Eco-Village ; [www.azareiya.com/en/azareiya.html](http://www.azareiya.com/en/azareiya.html)



## Key aspects :

- **Capitalizing on its unique location and eco-friendly solutions** : Azareiya combines the advantages of a natural location with the most modern eco-friendly solutions .
- **Multifunctional tourism** : it integrates rural, religious, ecological, and health tourism .
- **An environmentally friendly and healthy construction** : the use of modern technologies and environmentally friendly materials .
- **Organic garden and resource management** : permaculture and the use of domestic resources for food production .
- **Ecological resource management systems** : the use of solar energy, and the ecological treatment of waste and wastewater .
- **Benefits for the local community** : boosting tourism and the local economy .

Azareiya stands out thanks to its integrated approach to providing a sustainable and health-beneficial tourism experience while contributing to the sustainable development of the local community .

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Q. 

A. 

Is everything understood?  
Proceed to take the Final Quiz!



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# FINAL QUIZ

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- 1. What is eco-friendly tourism?
- 2. What are the basic principles of eco-friendly tourism?
- 3. What are the social and cultural benefits of eco-friendly tourism?
- 4. Give a few examples of eco-friendly products used in your business.



Thank you for participation!