Furthering Sustainable Consumption & Production of Tourism in Latin America:

Lessons learned, challenges and opportunities in the framework of South-South Cooperation

Ronald Sanabria, Brasilia, April 2017
The Context – our mission

The Rainforest Alliance works to...

By transforming...

Conserve Biodiversity
Ensure Sustainable Livelihoods
Land Use Practices
Business Practices
Consumer Behaviour
Sustainable Production & Consumption in entire value chains

**PRODUCTION**
- **Forestry**
  - Landowner / leaseholder
  - Timber co. / government with cutting rights
- **Agriculture**
  - Farmers
- **Tourism**
  - Hotels / Excursions / Activities / Transportation

**TRANSFORMATION/SOURCING**
- Plywood, paper, timber, veneer, wood fuel, and other log-related industries
- Secondary work: furniture, construction, etc.
- Distributors

**CONSUMPTION**
- **Out-bound tour operators**
- **In-bound tour operators**
- **Retailers**
- **Contractors**
- **Purchasers of end products**
- **Restaurants / end consumer**
- **Purchasers of end products**
- **Travelers / companies**
Sustainable Tourism
Creating tools to bridge theory and practice

35 published manuals and dozens of complementary materials
Bringing those tools to the field in Latin America

1.1M ha.
owned by participating tourism businesses

+ supporting 2.2M ha.
of protected land

12
countries

+11,000
practitioners
trained onsite

+600
tourism businesses
diagnosed or assisted

+10,900
practitioners
trained online in 2
pilot countries

78
tourism businesses
certified
Honoring commitments with +50 donors
Global Trends: Opportunities

• A 21st century's green revolution that aims to protect the environment, provide sustainable livelihoods, and minimize contributions to climate change.

• A focus on origin—understanding where products and services come from and how they are produced and delivered.

• New connections between producers/service providers, buyers and consumers (supply chain management, direct consumer engagement).

• New technology that supports all of the above.
Challenges in project design and execution

- **Trying to fit** sustainable tourism projects into specific agendas and timeframes of financial institutions without factoring in the specific characteristics of this industry (seasonality, long-term view).

- **Duplication of efforts**, sometimes due to poor initial scoping or inflexibility in donor requirements.

- **Unwillingness to leave individual agendas** aside for the common good. Need bolder, joint commitments to reach critical mass.

- **Unwillingness to share** not only the good but also the not so good...
Challenges in Tourism

• Changing governments with little institutionalization of sustainability decisions.
• A mistaken perception that there are never-ending options for sustainable destinations and attractions.
• Not everything that shines is green.
Lessons learned in regional projects

- Sustainability efforts are becoming part of standard business practice.

- The involvement of tour operators and other key intermediaries in the value chain, maximizes the potential of impacting existing channels without having to create new and unproven market structures.

- In Latin America & the Caribbean, we already have the necessary tools to implement sustainability practices.

- These tools should become more accessible and sustainable businesses should become better connected to international efforts and opportunities.

- In order to position our countries as sustainable destinations, we need to start working together.

- It is time to go beyond the speech and start doing and measuring...now!
Recommendations for South-South Exchanges on Sustainable Tourism Development

- Formulate and implement national and local policy planning guidelines and evaluation frameworks for sustainable tourism development.

- Help governments and NGOs develop shared sustainability standards and improve infrastructure and public services.

- Ensure that investments in the tourism sector contribute towards conserving biodiversity and community development.

- Help businesses implement sustainable practices. Make technical and financial assistance accessible to businesses of all sizes.
Recommendations for South-South Exchanges on Sustainable Tourism Development

• Support sustainable tourism **public-private partnerships**.

• Support voluntary, accountability mechanisms such as third-party, independent sustainability **certification** and others.

• Increase **consumers’ access to information** to help them make responsible decisions. Good marketing!
¡Juntos por el Cambio!
Together for Change!

A flagship project of the Global Action for Sustainable Consumption and Production
Sustainable Tourism Programme
Committed to drive the change
¡Juntos por el Cambio!  
Together for Change!

Mainstreaming Sustainable Consumption and Production in Tourism in:

- Improve sustainable tourism policies and governance through cross-sectoral efforts.
- Increase sustainable production at the destination level through improved implementation of sustainable business practices.
- Increase demand of sustainable tourism value chains and products.

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International Partners
A vehicle to support national commitments
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