
AlmaTourism

Journal of Tourism, Culture and Territorial Development

Practices for a Sustainable Supply Chains: A Tourism Perspective

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Tourism is one of the industries that have evolved and modernized considerably in the past two decades. Tourism is world's fastest growing indicators as well as the major source of foreign exchange earnings and employment for many countries. TSCM is defined as a set of methods utilized to effectively manage the operations of the Tourism Supply Chain (TSC) within a specific tourism destination. This will help to meet the needs of customers from the targeted source market and accomplish the business objectives of the focal organizations. Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) integrates the sustainability into the Supply Chain Management (SCM) to facilitate sustainable development and to create competitive advantage. One way of reporting sustainability is the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). The demand for sustainable tourism has made the firms to look into the sustainability practices and new methods to incorporate them into their products. Sustainability can be defined as a wise balance among economic development, environmental stewardship and social equity (Sikdar, 2003). Many studies have discussed the role of tour operators in promoting sustainability in tourism (Budeanu, 2005; Tapper and Font, 2005, but not much studies exist as to how one can apply SCM for integrating social, economic and environmental practices in supply chain (Zhang et al., 2009). The highly competitive nature of tourism sector and its closeness towards sustainability requirements forced the organizations in this area to look for ways to enhance their supply chain skills and become more competitive. Information technology and commercial formats like eTourism are steps towards that direction. Organizations are now more concerned about the

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environmental and social performance of their associates, the reason being the high demands on strong economic performance. Through this paper, we put forward few research questions and developed few hypotheses to be addressed in future and a conceptual model is developed from the literature survey. The present study tries to look at specific sustainability practices with respect to the, supplier, buyer and the focal organization leading to sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) in tourism sector from an environmental and economical perspective. Accordingly the present study was undertaken to fulfil the following objectives: 1) To identify the critical sustainable practices with respect to the supplier and buyer 2) To identify the critical sustainability practices with in the focal organization 3) To develop a conceptual model compressed of environmental, economical factors and information and communication practices which can improve the linkage between tourism supply chain entities. The study has helped to identify various tourism entities and the need of collaborative initiatives and monitoring practices required to achieve sustainability. Such efforts may result in the overall improvement of the sustainability performance of whole tourism supply chain. In cooperating sustainability practices to different stages of the supply chain may result in overall improvement of performance of supply chain.