

Duavata Sustainable Tourism Collective

Rivers Fiji

Talanoa Treks

Namosi Eco Lodge

Takalana Bay Resort

Uprising Beach Resort

Leleuvia Island Resort

Drua Experience

Barefoot Manta

Duavata Sustainable Tourism Collective



We define sustainable tourism as the interconnection between experiences, communities, environment and culture

Our eight members promote low-impact tourism working in partnership with communities and resource stewards

Our values

We promote the leadership and traditional practices of resource owners in managing their vanua

We offer experiences that are founded on and interconnected with the environment and its conservation

We strive to integrate and promote cultural heritage and cultural industries as part of our experiences

We see travel as a learning experience and a respectful exchange of ideas

We expect our guests to give back more than they take



What we do as Duavata



- We are the collective voice of like-minded tourism operators who believe that tourism has a responsibility to enhance the environment and cultural heritage.
- We seek to provide constructive input into national policies and provide a link between policy and implementation on the ground.
- We provide peer support to each other to continuously improve our own and collective practices.
- We support peer to peer learning and training between operators and their community partners on specific sustainability measures (leave no trace policies, nursery development, waste management, marine conservation, sustainable sourcing etc).
- We provide mentoring support to others within the industry and seek to encourage more participation in sustainable tourism.

Alignment to the principles of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council

We are aligned to the principles of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council as below:

- Demonstrating effective sustainable management
- Maximizing social and economic benefits to the local community and minimizing negative impacts
- Maximizing benefits to cultural heritage and minimizing negative impacts
- Maximizing benefits to the environment and minimizing negative impacts
- We contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals 1 and the implementation of Tourism 2021.

Legal barriers to low-impact, environmentally conscious, community-based tourism



Business legislation and processes are not SME / community friendly

Hotel Licensing Act developed for larger hotels – inhibits small, community based operators from starting

Unclear legislation and land use arrangements for low-impact tourism activities (e.g. hiking, agritourism - if a farmer wants to open their farm to tourism, typically has to convert lease to tourism often making it unviable despite demand for these activities)

Legal barriers to low-impact, environmentally conscious community-based tourism

- One-size fits all for certain tourism-related legislation (e.g. motorised boats and traditional sustainable sailing vessels)
- Poor enforcement of existing legislation relating to burning, gravel extraction
- Limited legislative incentives for improving environmental practices



Example: Rivers Fiji

- Created the first lease for conservation (2000) and Fiji's first Ramsar site (2006) – 615 ha
- 9 landowning units living in 5 villages
- Developed strict management guidelines for all trip environments
- Led the introduction of a River Management Plan
- Provide extensive local guide training
- Support children from the area to experience their environment



Legal issues

- Illegal logging and miscommunication about the conservation lease to prospective loggers
- Pigeon hunters trespassing in the leased area
- Motorized boats visiting the area are disturbing the wildlife and fishes and impacting the vulnerable sensitive ecosystem of the conservation area
- Helicopters should be able to land only as a last resort to an emergency evacuation. Low flying disturbs existing birds and wildlife which are vulnerable to noise and strong winds.
- Gravel extraction on the lower Navua has increased the flow on the river therefore rapids on the upper Navua are getting shallow. Gravel extraction increases silt flow in the river, causes embankment erosion, kills and disturbs the marine life in that area, noise pollution, etc.

Example: Leleuvia Island Resort

- Focused on Marine Conservation through the establishment of a Marine Protected area
- Involving guests in our conservation efforts including coral planting and vegetable gardening
- Promoting traditional building practices
- Banned single use plastics and chemical sunscreen
- Use only biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products



Legal issues

- Ministry of Fisheries support enforcement of the tabu area and rely on our boats, drivers and fuel
- We are only able to warn poachers off the reserve but legally we are unable to prosecute or enforce our Tabu area. Fish Wardens have very little authority so a legal framework needed to give them more power.



Legal issues

- To protect our oceans we need to address issues of raw sewerage and waste flowing into our oceans from our Rivers



- Develop and enforce legislation for tourism operators relating to sewerage and waste management, particularly on outer islands. Previous operators on Leleuvia resorted to burying their refuse including glass bottles. It has taken us over 8 years to slowly remove all this refuse from the island. Every time we dig up land to plant vegetables or fruits we find more buried waste.

ECAL: Finance for conservation

Our members are low-impact operators and include carbon-neutral operators but those above the turnover threshold are taxed environmental levies at the same rate as large energy and water-intensive operations



Opportunities

- Demand for experiential travel growing rapidly
- Travelers are demanding more authentic, lower-impact, culturally and environmentally respectful experiences
- Tourism has shown that it can support conservation objectives – a study conducted by WCS in 2018 documented 56 examples of marine conservation agreements between operators and communities
- We can support the implementation of our development and environmental goals by promoting low-impact, community-based tourism
- Opportunities exist to better engage resource owners in tourism development
- Opportunity for closer public-private collaboration to address some of the current barriers

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