

GTZ - FODESTUR Project

- Summit of Central American Presidents in 1996, laying the foundation for an integration process in Central American tourism with the idea of fostering international competitiveness and strengthening structures within the region
- FODESTUR = Promotion of Sustainable Development through Tourism en Central America (03/1999 – 12/2005)
- FODESTUR is conceived as an integral concept for sustainable tourism development that is implemented jointly with partners of both the private and the public sector
- Role of a moderator and facilitator, providing technical assistance, following up on operational plans, realizing market studies
- Corporate identity "Centroamérica, tan pequeña, tan grande" creates the framework for all activities
- Follow up presidential summit '02: Strategic Plan with specific goals

FODESTUR - Objectives

- To implement a regional strategy for sustainable tourism, involving the relevant actors of the public and private tourism sector in Central America
- Improve and create employment opportunities
- Use natural and cultural resources in the region in a sustainable manner
- Create a corporate identity for a concerted marketing strategy in international markets
- Strengthening of the private sector (second phase)

Stakeholders

- SICA - Central American Integration System
- SITCA - Secretary of Tourism of Central America
- National Tourism Administrations of the seven countries Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama
- CCT - Central American Tourism Council
- COMECATUR - Marketing Committee of Central America
- FEDECATUR - Federation of Tourism Chambers of Central America
- Other organizations and representatives of the public and private sector

- **Implementation: workshops and operational plans**

Challenges

- Constant fluctuation of staff (tourism ministers, mid-level management)
- Differences in tourism development in the region
- Private sector not adequately involved in a representative way
- Regional integration efforts are costly
- Complicated migration procedures in some cases
- Negative perception of region due to political problems, insecurity, natural disasters

Indicators

- 119 entrepreneurial alliances have been established (65% increase compared to the year 2002), distributing the flow of tourists more evenly throughout the region
- Majority of tourism entrepreneurs that offer a regional product register a positive tendency in their business / employment
- Because of the now existing entrepreneurial alliances, international tour operators are taking a closer look at Central America and have an increasing interest in extending their product to less positioned neighboring countries
- Intraregional tourism has increased significantly (42%)
- A promotion agency CATA-Central American Tourism Agency has been established in Madrid and is being supported by the public and private sector (example GRUPO TACA)
- Increase of scheduled flights to the region

Achievements



- FODESTUR has created a framework of conditions that is favorable for the integration and tourism development of the region
- FODESTUR has paved the way for the implementation of the Certificate of Sustainable Tourism (CST) on a regional level and supports the networking of ecolodges in Central America (Iniciativa Centroamérica Verde)
- Broad participative approach involving many actors from the private and public sector, including on the highest political level
- High degree of partner involvement, transparency and coherence
- Creation of corporate identity in the region that enjoys a high acceptance broad implementation (Brand appears on all aircraft of GRUPO TACA fleet)
- Increasingly strong international presence (award for Central American stand in Tourism Fair Fitur 2004)

Conclusion



- A common brand or corporate identity is an instrument that can foster integration processes and strengthen structures within the destination
- A consolidated organizational structure contributes to better planning and systematic implementation of sustainable tourism policies
- An integrated tourism strategy on a regional level must involve stakeholders from both the public and private sector
- Facilitation and moderation in transparent and effective ways are essential, as well as excellent communication structures and thorough documentation