

2011

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT
FOR VISITSWEDEN

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| CEO: “Sweden and VisitSweden take responsibility for sustainable development” | 3 |
| Sustainability for VisitSweden | 4 |
| Risks and opportunities | 7 |
| Dialogue with stakeholders | 9 |
| Environmental responsibility | 12 |
| Employees | 16 |
| About VisitSweden | 18 |
| About VisitSweden’s sustainability report | 21 |
| External assurance | 22 |
| FN Global Compact: Communication on Progress, report 2011 | 23 |
| GRI content index | 25 |
| Appendix 1. Conditions for climate neutrality in Respect’s programme | 29 |
| Appendix 2. Background: Global Compact | 30 |

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“Sweden and VisitSweden take responsibility for sustainable development”

Sweden's profile is solidly positioned in the realm of nature, and people see us as a country with a profound love of the natural world and a strong environmental commitment. VisitSweden aims to inspire travellers and the Swedish tourism industry to think and communicate sustainability. We Swedes live in unique proximity to our abundant nature, it's a part of us, and we have a strong tradition of appreciating and conserving it. Our capital city was selected as the very first European environmental capital and Sweden has ambitious environmental targets. Many people, both in Sweden and abroad, expect Sweden to excel in sustainability.

The tourism industry has enjoyed eight consecutive years of growth, and is now considered one of Sweden's primary industries. Visitor statistics for 2011 show an increase, albeit small, of overnights from abroad, making 2011 the best year so far for the Swedish tourism industry. Overnights from Norway, Germany, China and the United States have increased the most, while overnights from Denmark have dropped.

The National Strategy for Swedish tourism 2020 is important to VisitSweden's operations. The target is clear: the Swedish tourism industry is to double sales by 2020. Achieving the ambitious targets will require hard work and a broad-based effort, and the strategy highlights sustainability as a cornerstone. VisitSweden is part of the network economy that aims to grow the tourism industry together with public and private parties. Today tourism is hugely important to Sweden.

Increased travel means greater demands

Increasingly, travel is a normal part of people's lives. For many of us it's natural that a holiday or business trip will provide an opportunity to relax, learn, or further oneself in some way. Escalating globalisation and Sweden's export-intensive industry will also result in continued business travel.

This growth in globalisation places huge demands on the tourism industry to do its part and offer travellers more sustainable products. Experiences, accommodation, meeting facilities and transports with the least possible environmental impacts should be standard offerings, not exclusive options. There are already indications that sustainability is now a natural expectation among more and more travellers¹. Many travellers associate Sweden with environmental care, a result of our strong natural profile. We interpret this to mean that they expect Sweden, with its abundant natural resources, to automatically care for its environment.



VisitSweden does its bit

VisitSweden has an overarching strategy, a clear vision and a joint communication strategy for sustainable tourism. We work to ensure that more visitors will choose sustainable experiences. We aim to inspire the tourism industry to develop more sustainable products, to be even better at acting sustainably ourselves, and to make sustainability a natural part of Sweden's offer to our target groups.

VisitSweden takes the environment into consideration on a daily basis: at our offices, regarding staff travel, and by holding climate-neutral, climate-offset events. We demand that our suppliers are climate smart and we are knowledgeable when it comes to dealing with these issues. VisitSweden's own environmental impacts from business travel, electricity and heating, per employee, are dropping. We carbon-offset our impacts and our aim is to continue to reduce our total impacts.

VisitSweden has ratified the UN's Global Compact, an international initiative featuring ten principles for achieving a sustainable, inclusive global economy. It's about letting responsible companies be a part of the solution to the challenges of globalisation.

Communicating sustainability

Sweden can seize the position as the most sustainable destination in Europe. We will offer our target groups sustainable experiences. VisitSweden and Swedish destinations will more clearly communicate sustainable experiences, accommodation and transport. The sustainable destination of Sweden should be an enjoyable, fun, inspirational and educational place to visit.

I am proud to work in a climate-neutral company. I'm happy to represent a country that embodies good sustainable values in the eyes of travellers. Sweden's environmental work is at the absolute forefront. From this foundation we can take the step forward to the position of European leader in sustainability.

Thomas Brühl, CEO VisitSweden

¹. Convention 2020 - Exhibition, Meetings and Events, Phase 1 Survey Findings, March 2010, pp. 46-47.
IMEX Meetings Outlook Report, April 2011, pp. 1-2.

Sustainability and global responsibility

Tourism is a fast-growing international phenomenon, and by 2012 the number of tourists worldwide is expected to reach one billion². VisitSweden has an international mandate: to increase the number of visitors to Sweden on behalf of the Swedish state and the Swedish tourism industry. In the national strategy that the tourism industry has jointly endorsed, the vision is to double Sweden's tourism sales to 500 billion Swedish crowns (SEK) by 2020. Sustainability is an important part of this.

VisitSweden has a mandate from the Swedish state and the Swedish tourism industry to market Sweden and Swedish destinations and experiences, with the purpose of increasing revenue from foreign travellers. We have expressed our mandate in a clear vision: VisitSweden increases foreigners' desire for Sweden.

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries, forming an important part of the economic growth of many countries. At the same time, just five per cent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions comes from tourism³, and prompt action is required to relieve the environmental effects of the increase in travel. Even though travel to Sweden has not reached the volumes of destinations like France or the United States, the significance of Swedish tourism is growing. By way of active national and international efforts for sustainable tourism, the Swedish tourism industry can take a more active role in reaching the ambitious targets set for Sweden.

Tourism is about curiosity, desire, feelings and a passion for learning. But most of all it's about development – for the travellers as well as for the companies and organisations that make it possible, together with other people, communities and contexts around us. For this reason it is sensitive to influences from many different sources.

The environmental, social and financial aspects must have the same opportunity to develop.

For VisitSweden, this is the essence of sustainable development. The environment, the people and the economy are interconnected and must be in balance if tourism to Sweden is to develop as per the vision for 2020. We use a definition of sustainable tourism as stated in the UNWTO's and the Brundtland Commission's description of sustainable tourism and sustainable development.

Sustainable tourism is closely related to sustainable development⁴ and always has three perspectives: economic, ecological and social sustainability⁵. A sustainable destination must integrate these three areas to achieve long-term sustainable growth.

With this perspective for Sweden as a destination and for our own company, VisitSweden can identify risks and opportunities that are important for the development of Sweden as a destination for foreign visitors. The most immediate challenge for VisitSweden is to work on green issues, as we are based in a country with a long history of social and economic development and security.

The Way Out West music festival in the event city of Gothenburg is hugely successful – and has a clear environmental profile.
Photo: Rodrigo Rivas Ruiz/www.imagebank.sweden.se



2. UNWTO, World Tourism Barometer, Advance Release, January 2012, www.e-unwto.org/content/h4p6986745j48010/fulltext.pdf?page=1.

3. UNWTO/UNEP, Climate Change and Tourism – Responding to Global Challenges, July 2008, p. 132.

4. Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.", UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 1992. UNECE, www.uncece.org/oes/nutshell/2004-2005/focus_sustainable_development.html, March 2012.

5. UNWTO, Conceptual Definition of Sustainable Development of Tourism, www.sdt.unwto.org/en/content/about-us-5, March 2012.

VisitSweden's vision for sustainability



In LEVA Kungslador on the island of Gotland, there is a café, restaurant, bakery, bar, shop and a pre-fab house producer (!), all focussed on things organic, locally produced and ethical. Photo: Tuukka Ervasti/imagebank.sweden.se

By 2020 VisitSweden will have successfully positioned Sweden as the sustainable destination in Europe for VisitSweden's prioritised target groups, the Global Traveller and the Global Company – a destination that is fun, inspirational and educational to visit. To achieve this, all of our communication and actions will naturally emphasise financial benefits, social engagement and environmental leadership⁶.

Overarching strategy for sustainable tourism

VisitSweden will:

- encourage and facilitate sustainable travel, and show people how to visit Sweden responsibly
- feature good examples of sustainable practice, in order to stimulate the tourism industry to develop more sustainable products and experiences
- promote and engage in sustainability issues at company, national and international levels.

VisitSweden's sustainability targets for 2020

Inspire visitors (the Global Traveller and the Global Company).

By 2020 the target group will see Sweden as a sustainable destination.

Mobilise the tourism industry.

The Swedish tourism industry will believe that VisitSweden as a communications company demonstrates active leadership in sustainability.

Promote sustainability issues.

VisitSweden will promote and influence others with regard to sustainability in prioritised areas/projects/assignments, both nationally and internationally. Internally, VisitSweden will try to reduce its own environmental impacts.

We at VisitSweden can help our country reach the demanding climate targets by inspiring travellers and the tourism industry in Sweden. Interest in sustainable travel is growing, although slowly, as we can see from articles in international media. Despite this growth, few travellers are choosing environmentally certified accommodation for environmental reasons⁷.

As the driving force in the marketing of Destination Sweden, VisitSweden builds networks in Swedish tourism. This gives us a huge opportunity to advance sustainable development together with tourism

industry organisations and companies, for instance by spreading knowledge of the target groups' travel habits and in the selection of joint messages and marketing activities. By highlighting sustainable experiences in our marketing aimed at the travellers, VisitSweden wants to inspire Swedish companies to offer more sustainable experiences to potential travellers. This is done through direct communication with foreign travellers as well as through tour operators and foreign journalists.

There are three reasons why we want to be involved: first and foremost, for the benefit of Sweden's environment and people, but also to identify new business opportunities for the Swedish tourism industry. But perhaps most important of all: without the sustainable development of Sweden as a destination, it may be difficult to maintain the country's attraction in the long term. VisitSweden's mission to increase inbound travel, which boosts export revenue and employment, also includes a challenge to strive for long-term environmental sustainability.

Inspiring our visitors

VisitSweden can encourage and inspire visitors from other countries to travel responsibly to and within Sweden, by presenting the options for sustainable experiences offered here. When VisitSweden communicates with foreign travellers, it does this mainly via digital channels. However, considering the media behaviour of the target group, we may choose other channels, such as printed matter, TV or outdoor advertising, or indirectly through PR and tour operators and agents in the meeting industry.

As an aid in our efforts to inspire our visitors, VisitSweden has developed a communication strategy for messages that strengthen the image of Sweden from a sustainability perspective. The communication strategy is also a tool for the Swedish tourism industry, and was presented to VisitSweden's tourism industry partners in October 2010. The communication strategy is currently being implemented.

Generally, for the Global Traveller who has already visited Sweden⁸, the main motivators for a trip are to relax and avoid the daily routines, followed by having fun and experiencing new things, and being curious about new places and cities, i.e. they want new impressions in their lives. After that comes enjoying good food and drink, experiencing nature and sun, heat and good weather, as shown in the figure below.



Source: VisitSweden/GfK 2011. Base: The Global Traveller who travels to Sweden (597)
Question: How important is each of the following things to your holiday travel?

6. Financial benefits – showing that environmental care brings financial benefits, short term but especially long term.

Social engagement – helping ensure that all of Sweden, both urban and rural, has sustainable growth.

Environmental leadership – working environmentally today, to maintain an attractive product in the long term.

7. CMI Green Traveler Study Report 2010-11: "62% of respondents said that they did not pay extra to stay at a "greener hotel" in the last 12 months.", "Green is still not something customers will actually pay extra for today; they won't pay a "green tax." www.communitymarketinginc.com/cmigreen/docs/cmigreen2010_11.pdf

8. VisitSweden's target group analyses, 2011, VisitSweden/GfK.

Travel patterns to Sweden

There are a number of factors that influence the decision to travel to a particular destination. Among visitors to Sweden in 2010 the two most common factors were visits to family and friends, and family holiday. Nature-related experiences during the snow-free season and city breaks were the next two most important reasons for visiting Sweden.

It is the globally aware, well-travelled people looking for new, exciting destinations who represent the greatest potential for increased travel to Sweden. Through ongoing analyses of the target groups we also get good information on their attitude to sustainability. This enables us and our partners in the Swedish tourism industry to adapt our offer to the wishes of the potential travellers.

Mobilise the tourism industry

In its role as a link between foreign visitors and all the various experiences available in Sweden, VisitSweden sees huge potential in presenting good examples of sustainable travel to tourism companies, regions and organisations.

To a greater or lesser degree, every Swedish region works with sustainable development. They are eager for VisitSweden to help to advance this trend, provided the target groups express a desire for sustainable experiences.

Our dialogue with the regional tourism organisations and the rest of the Swedish tourism industry, as well as with the owners, has greatly influenced the development of our sustainability work. And our hope is that through this dialogue, VisitSweden will influence owners and the tourism industry in a positive direction. An important point of departure in all of VisitSweden's communication is an understanding of the target groups' knowledge of and attitude to sustainable travel. For this reason we measure this in annual target group analyses and spread the information to our partners as well.

Promote sustainability issues

VisitSweden faces the same sort of challenges regarding sustainable development as many other industry organisations and national tourism boards worldwide. This is why it is important to push this issue together, to make use of know-how, to build consensus and to boost effectiveness. In forums like the European Travel Commission (ETC), where VisitSweden is an active member, VisitSweden and other national tourism organisations have created a platform for dialogue and development. For instance the organisations have together identified the key future challenges for the European tourism boards⁹. One point they mention is the importance of following the UN and EU national policies on climate change and sustainable development, of spreading knowledge and developing quality assurance systems.

The knowledge exchange within the ETC also concerns development issues such as market analysis, statistics, travel trends and business intelligence – issues that are closely linked with the financial development of tourism. VisitSweden also participates actively in the national discussion on sustainability and tourism, e.g. as a speaker at seminars. Common and recurrent themes of the communication with owners, partners, media and other actors in Sweden include tourism's role as a new primary industry in Sweden; foreign visitors' demand for exotic, unusual and educational experiences and how Sweden can respond to this; and how environmental care can strengthen the image of Sweden.

VisitSweden wants to act sustainably, and since 2008 has carbon-offset for emissions from electricity, heating and business travel. VisitSweden's employees are passionate about sustainability issues and by taking its environmental impacts seriously, the company hopes to engage even more employees. Initiatives to implement eco-friendly procedures often come from VisitSweden's own staff.

VisitSweden will inspire visitors to choose sustainable options when travelling to Sweden, from city breaks to family trips in the mountains.
Photo: Nicho Södling/imagebank.sweden.se



9. What role should European NTOs play on climate issues? Questionnaire among European ETC members, July 2008.

Risks and opportunities

VisitSweden believes in Sweden's potential to seize an even stronger position as a sustainable destination. We see an opportunity to influence foreign visitors and the Swedish tourism industry in a positive direction. In analyses of VisitSweden's selected target groups, we can monitor interest in the environment among potential visitors in our prioritised markets.

VisitSweden's influence on sustainable development

Long-term sustainability work eventually shows results in the demand from foreign travellers and the supply of travel experiences, transport and accommodation in Sweden. A diverse selection of sustainable goods and services in Sweden can meet a growing demand for sustainable solutions. VisitSweden's own organisation has limited environmental impact, but can directly and indirectly influence potential visitors, as well as companies and organisations in the Swedish tourism industry and other industries to make more sustainable decisions.

The majority of overnights from abroad are from neighbouring markets: Norway, Finland and Denmark, and from European markets like Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. There is much potential to further increase travel from these markets. It is in these markets that VisitSweden currently invests the most marketing resources. Of VisitSweden's twelve prioritised markets, ten are in Europe. In terms of environmental benefits, travel from neighbouring and European markets is preferable to travel from distant markets. VisitSweden monitors the development of the impacts of different transport modes, but at the moment does not include such impacts as a criterion when selecting partners in marketing collaborations.

Of the people in VisitSweden's target groups who say they consider the environment in conjunction with holiday travel, 45 per cent feel it is not easy to find green alternatives when planning their trip¹⁰. A challenge for VisitSweden is to make sustainable travel more accessible for potential visitors, by way of efficient communication.

VisitSweden's own environmental impacts come primarily from business travel and from the electricity and heating used in the offices. These impacts are measured and carbon-offset. VisitSweden has also made the decision to identify the environmental impacts from the largest events, and to carbon-offset these as well.

The surroundings influence VisitSweden

That climate change is real and is affecting our environment and our world is not a new discovery; scientists have been telling us this for more than half a century. People's awareness of environmental issues and climate change is becoming more evident, even if the focus on such matters can decrease in a weaker financial climate¹¹. Increasingly, these issues are likely to determine future means of travel. Reports¹² show that consumers are becoming more aware, but that they feel that it is the responsibility of the suppliers and product owners to provide greener alternatives.

Sweden has unique advantages as a destination, with lots of beautiful and diverse countryside and an abundance of natural experiences, alongside vibrant cities with harmonious lifestyles. But Sweden faces strong competition from other countries. Many potential visitors associate Sweden with sustainability, but few allow sustainability-related factors influence their choice of destination¹³. In the marketing of Brand Sweden and Swedish destinations and experiences, VisitSweden adjusts its messages and communication in accordance with factors such as these, by starting out with the values of the selected target group.

With Sweden's geographical location, good access by air is crucial for the development of foreign tourism in Sweden. Additional direct flights at competitive prices are essential for Sweden to be able to compete with other destinations. VisitSweden is pleased to see that additional transport modes are developing or have already introduced more climate-friendly fuels or other measures. For instance Sweden is one of the few countries to have introduced emission-related charges at the state-owned airports¹⁴. Research is underway to develop more eco-friendly aviation fuels, such as biofuels and hydrogen gas¹⁵. For VisitSweden it is important to monitor developments, both in terms of general travel trends relating to traveller requirements and economy, as well as the environmental impacts of the transport options.



In Stockholm, Sweden's most visited destination, you're never far from great outdoor experiences. The combination of pulse and a harmonious lifestyle in tune with nature is uniquely Swedish. Photo: Ola Ericson/imagebank.sweden.se

10. VisitSweden/Kairos Future, VisitSweden's target group analyses, 2011, VisitSweden/GfK. Base: All respondents (13,309). Question: When choosing a holiday destination, do you take into consideration the environment, e.g. choosing eco-friendly destinations (i.e. destinations that are eco-labelled or that have minimal tourism impact on the surroundings)? Of all respondents, 19.5 per cent responded "Yes, environmental consideration already have, and will continue to have, an influence on my choice of holiday destination." However 45.5 per cent of these stated that it was not easy to find green alternatives when planning their trip. Question: Do you think it is easy to find environmental alternatives when you plan a holiday trip?

11. Special EU-barometer, 313/Wave 71.1-TNS, July 2009.

12. Special Barometer 365/wave EB75.2 – TNS Opinion & Social, August 2011: Attitudes of European Citizens towards the Environment. Interviews of 26,825 respondents (approx. 1,000 per EU country). According to selected results:

- 95 per cent feel that it is important to protect the environment

- 87 per cent see themselves as individuals who can play a part in protecting the environment in their countries

- 72 per cent are prepared to buy environmentally friendly products, even if they cost a little more. However only 17 per cent actually buy such products.

13. VisitSweden's target group analyses, 2011, VisitSweden/GfK

14. Swedish Transport Agency, Flygets miljöpåverkan [Environmental impacts of aviation], www.transportstyrelsen.se/sv/Luftfart/Miljo/Flygets-miljopaverkan, March 2012.

15. Ibid.

Sustainability, especially in forms other than environmental, can be difficult to communicate to potential travellers in a simple fashion. For instance most certification systems (in Sweden's case Krav, Swan and Nature's Best) are on the national level, making comparison with other systems difficult. And many travellers lack the requisite knowledge to make rational choices when booking a trip or a meeting. Regulations or other national standards can prevent the development of accessibility or other factors of benefit to environmental travel. These can include different railway track widths or regulations for high-speed trains, access to alternative fuels or rule changes for tourist visas.

VisitSweden wants to influence others, and be a driving force in the Swedish tourism industry, for instance by spreading knowledge about travel trends. By staying informed about what our competitors do and about new travel patterns in VisitSweden's prioritised markets, VisitSweden and the travel industry can more easily react to trends and other countries' campaigns. To maintain a focus on the issue, VisitSweden also wants to participate in various national and international networks, the most recent being the foundation of the Swedish division of the Green Meeting Industry Council.

VisitSweden communicates globally and acts locally

The foundation of VisitSweden's marketing to potential visitors is a focus on selected target groups of leisure and business travellers.

It is informed by several years' continual analysis of the target groups' travel behaviour, preferences and knowledge of Sweden. One of the benefits of VisitSweden having offices in all the prioritised countries is the local knowledge of trends and cultural differences between Sweden and the country in question, as well as insight and sensitivity that can influence decisions regarding marketing campaigns.

Knowledge of the target group and a local presence are crucial to the success of the 250 marketing campaigns and projects conducted by VisitSweden annually. With hundreds of other countries and destinations trying to attract travellers, it is a challenge to cut through the noise of travel-related messages.

A destination that is in balance economically, socially and environmentally is better positioned to maintain its attractiveness in the long term. At a sustainable destination, the visitor feels that he or she is taking part in the society, not profiting from it. Sustainability is necessary if Sweden is to maintain its standing as an attractive destination, at the same time as VisitSweden has a mandate to increase travel to Sweden. For this reason, VisitSweden should make it easier for travellers to Sweden to find sustainable options. VisitSweden should also communicate an overall image of Sweden as a destination that takes sustainability seriously. VisitSweden's strategy for sustainable tourism should inspire travellers to travel to Sweden responsibly, instead of to other destinations.

Dogsled tours are one of the most popular ecotourism activities in Sweden. Jokkmokkguiderna are tour operators accredited by Nature's Best.
Photo: Staffan Widstrand/imagebank.sweden.se



Dialogue with stakeholders

For VisitSweden to succeed in its mission, we must have an active and continual dialogue with our surroundings. Our role as a network builder means we have to match the right type of experiences in Sweden with the expectations of the international travellers we are focussed on. This means our stakeholders are particularly important, if we are to successfully identify the experiences that arouse interest amidst tough international competition.

In our communication with potential visitors, VisitSweden's starting point is the brand platform for Sweden which we developed together with the other promotional bodies – the Swedish Trade Council, Invest Sweden, the Swedish Institute and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Dialogue with stakeholders relates to everything from concrete marketing collaborations to strategic discussions and knowledge transfer.

In the table below we identify¹⁶ our most important stakeholders. This identification is based on our day-to-day work, and the intensity of the dialogue varies over time and is influenced by VisitSweden's strategic directions. For instance, VisitSweden has initiated an in-depth dialogue with companies in the creative sectors, such as film and literature, with regard to overarching marketing of Sweden.

| Stakeholders | Channels for dialogue | Frequency | Expectations for VisitSweden's sustainability work | Action from VisitSweden |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Visitors | Target group analyses in 12 prioritised markets ¹⁷ | Every second year | Expect to experience a nature-rich country that respects the environment and a lifestyle that respects the surroundings and environment. | Prioritise the marketing based on analysis results. Present sustainable options for travel in Sweden, e.g. using Nature's Best environmental accreditation. |
| Owners | Board meetings Reports Ongoing dialogue when required | Continual and at some 6 meetings per year | Clear idea of VisitSweden's aims with sustainability and a possibility to influence it. | Sustainability is one of the defined focus areas in VisitSweden's 2012 business plan. |
| Employees | Employee surveys, employee development reviews, ongoing dialogue on sustainability issues. | Continual | Clear view into and a possibility to influence VisitSweden's aims and vision for sustainability, incl. social aspects. | Evaluation of employee development reviews, encouraging sustainable actions, Talent Management as an overarching strategy in VisitSweden's business plan, sustainability as a focus area in internal processes. |
| Partners: Regional tourism organisations and destinations | Dialogue on joint campaigns and projects for the marketing of Sweden abroad, and evaluations of these. Dialogue on strategic challenges and opportunities for further development of the tourism industry. | Continually recurrent | Knowledge of foreign target groups' expectations of Sweden. Clear idea of VisitSweden's sustainability work and strategies for sustainable communication. Leadership regarding development of sustainable tourism. | Knowledge transfer in marketing collaborations on target group expectations. Information on VisitSweden's sustainability strategy and communication strategy, VisitSweden's sustainability reports and information on the Svante climate tool, and more, at: www.visitsweden.com/partner . Evaluation of views on VisitSweden's sustainability report. Inspire by featuring companies that offer sustainable options. |

Forts. >

¹⁶ VisitSweden's stakeholders were identified for VisitSweden's 2006 information plan, at an internal workshop based on accepted research into organisational and communication theory, including Bruzelius/Skärvad (Integrerad organisationslära [Integrated organisational theory], 1995).

¹⁷ VisitSweden's target group analyses, 2011, VisitSweden/GfK

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|---|---|-----------------------|---|---|
| Partners: Companies in the Swedish tourism industry | Dialogue on joint campaigns and projects for the marketing of Sweden abroad, and evaluation of these. | Continually recurrent | Knowledge of foreign target groups' expectations of Sweden. Clear idea of VisitSweden's sustainability work and strategies for sustainable communication. Leadership in development of sustainable tourism. | Knowledge transfer in marketing collaborations regarding target group expectations. Information on VisitSweden's sustainability strategy and communication strategy, VisitSweden's sustainability reports and information on the Svante climate tool, e.g. at www.visitsweden.com/partner . Evaluation of views on VisitSweden's sustainability report. Inspire by featuring companies that offer sustainable options. |
| Partners: Companies outside the Swedish tourism industry | Dialogue before, during and after joint projects. | Continual | Knowledge of VisitSweden's foreign target groups, what motivates them and their familiarity with Sweden. Clear idea of VisitSweden's aims regarding sustainability. | Publish VisitSweden's sustainability strategy and sustainability reports at www.visitsweden.com/partner . Inspire by featuring companies that offer sustainable options. |
| Tour operators / travel agents | Dialogue on operators' requirements, knowledge of Sweden's offerings and of the target groups' preferences and requirements when they contact retailers for inspiration and bookings. Evaluation of events and campaigns. | Continual | Clear idea of sustainable options in Sweden. | Maintain dialogue with selected tour operators, e.g. on sustainable options. Publish an English-language version of VisitSweden's sustainability strategy on the website. Encourage partners to communicate sustainability prior to events and mention carbon offsetting of events. |
| Industry organisations, government agencies and other organisations in Sweden | Dialogue to create collaboration on the further development of Swedish tourism, e.g. in terms of sustainability. | Continual | Clear idea of VisitSweden's aims regarding sustainability. | Publish VisitSweden's sustainability strategy, sustainability reports and information on the Svante climate tool on the website. |
| Council for the Promotion of Sweden | Dialogue on the development of the image of Sweden, strategic collaborations and joint tools, e.g. the official Swedish site www.sweden.se and Image Bank Sweden. | Continual | Clear idea of VisitSweden's mandate, target group focus and aims regarding sustainability. | Knowledge transfer on target groups' familiarity with Sweden and what motivates them. Publish VisitSweden's sustainability strategy, sustainability reports and information on the Svante climate tool on the website. |
| Swedish media | Proactive and reactive dialogue on VisitSweden's work and tourism's significance for Swedish economy, including sustainability issues. | Continual | Clear idea of foreign tourism in Sweden and how travel affects sustainable development and vice versa. Clear idea of VisitSweden's aims regarding sustainability. | Supply information on VisitSweden's work and actions for sustainable development. Publish VisitSweden's sustainability strategy and sustainability reports at www.visitsweden.com/partner . |
| Foreign media | Proactive and reactive dialogue on Sweden, including as a sustainable, nature-rich destination. Dialogue by way of personal contacts, newsletters and press trips. | Continual | Inspiration on Sweden as a nature-rich destination with sustainable lifestyle. | Offer information and inspiration on Sweden from a sustainability perspective. |
| Suppliers | Dialogue on procurement and purchasing. | When required | Clear idea of VisitSweden's aims regarding sustainability. | Publish VisitSweden's sustainability strategy, sustainability reports and information on the Svante climate tool on the website. |
| Society | Dialogue through seminars, meetings and media. | Continual | Idea of sustainability aspects in relation to foreign tourism in Sweden. | Knowledge transfer on foreign target groups' travel and familiarity with Sweden. Publish VisitSweden's sustainability strategy, sustainability reports and information on the Svante climate tool on the website. |

The presentation of stakeholders above shows that the dialogue with these is important for VisitSweden's strategic work abroad, but also in Sweden. At the national level, VisitSweden is a member of the Swedish Ecotourism Society, is on the accreditation committee of Nature's Best, and in the steering group for Sustainable tourism industry, a pilot project run by the West Sweden Tourist Board and the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, aimed at establishing a quality and sustainability system that supports the tourism industry throughout Sweden. VisitSweden is on the board of the Swedish section of the Green Meetings Industry Council, which we co-founded in 2011. At the international level, since 2009 VisitSweden has been a member of Global Compact (see Appendix 2) and the UN climate programme Caring for Climate.

Almost all of VisitSweden's foreign offices are members of national and international strategic organisations. VisitSweden's foreign offices collaborate with various organisations related to the tourism industry. For instance the Finnish office has an external initiative with SKÅL International Finland and the Danish office with the Association of Danish Travel Agents and Tour Operators. VisitSweden also works closely with the Swedish Embassy and the Swedish Trade Council in the Council for the Promotion of Sweden at several of our foreign offices. Additionally, external initiatives are underway both in Sweden and abroad, aimed at strengthening Sweden's attraction as a destination and country, e.g. with Mid Sweden University and Suomen Markkinointiliitto in Finland.



Photo: Maria Emitslöf (deer and wind turbine in Skåne), Tuukka Ervasti (Camilla Norrback) and Martin Jakobsson (diving tower in Gothenburg Archipelago)/imagebank.sweden.se

Environmental responsibility

Important progress during the year

VisitSweden has no mandate to make decisions on the development of sustainable tourism in the Swedish tourism industry. But we see an opportunity to influence, and consequently it is natural that VisitSweden reduces its own impacts. In 2011 we have continued to take several important steps to minimise how we affect the environment.

Climate-neutral events

VisitSweden organises several events aimed directly or indirectly at foreign visitors. VisitSweden began to carbon-offset major events in 2010, and now follows the guidelines and targets it established in 2010 for the carbon offsetting of events in Sweden and in the overseas markets. The aim is to offset at least two events per foreign market, starting 2011, in accordance with requirements for “climate-neutral events” (large events) or by way of standardised calculations (smaller events). Another part of these aims is that VisitSweden has started to place demands on suppliers to prioritise sustainable solutions at every level, and in future wants to do this in a more structured manner. For instance, in our day-to-day contact with office supplies businesses, advertising agencies, media agencies, analysis companies, event agencies and transporters we want to work with clarity and forward planning. The aim of the guidelines and the offsetting itself is to encourage international visitors, the Swedish tourism industry and other partners along the road to a more long-term sustainability. VisitSweden exceeded the 2011 target for climate-neutral events by offsetting more than two events per foreign market.

International PR

In 2011 VisitSweden's efforts to inspire foreign journalists resulted in more than 4,800 articles in newspapers and magazines, in eleven markets. The connection between Swedish lifestyle and nature is a key component in the journalists' description of Sweden. A specific interest in ecotourism and a general green attitude is increasingly evident. Of the sponsored trips that VisitSweden conducted in 2011 together with regional tourism councils and tourism companies in Sweden, many resulted in articles about sustainable experiences in Sweden. During 2011 more than 310 articles covered topics directly related to sustainability. Two eco-themed trips to Stockholm were arranged for Finnish journalists together with Viking Line and Stockholm Visitors Board¹⁸.

Digital marketing and campaigns

As the target group grows increasingly internet-savvy, VisitSweden's 250 campaigns and projects are increasingly concentrated on the internet and on various social forums, rather than more traditional, environmentally resource-hungry marketing channels such as printed matter and trade fairs. The visitsweden.com website is the base for the fundamental information on Sweden. For various campaigns for selected target groups VisitSweden often creates special campaign websites, Facebook pages, and works increasingly with other social media. Visitors to visitsweden.com can leaf through digital versions

of all the main brochures, which reduces the need to print and distribute large editions. Examples of digital campaigns are Faces of Scandinavia (USA), and the Malmö Shopping Campaign (Denmark). 2011 saw the launch of Curators of Sweden, an initiative to strengthen the image of Sweden by engaging ordinary Swedes as guest contributors at the official Twitter account @sweden. Ekohåpping, which also uses some outdoor advertising, aimed at Finnish travellers, promoted Stockholm's eco-friendly attractions. At the English, Russian and Italian language versions of visitsweden.com, VisitSweden plans to present tips and inspiration on how to experience Sweden in a sustainable fashion.

Sustainability and environmental policy

VisitSweden's ambition is to encourage international visitors, the Swedish tourism industry and other partners to contribute to a more long-term sustainable development of Destination Sweden, while we also endeavour to reduce our own climate impacts. The key words in VisitSweden's sustainability efforts are business benefits, social engagement and environmental leadership. The sustainability efforts will be characterised by openness and caring with regard to employees, visitors, partners, society and media. VisitSweden will maintain an active dialogue with and place demands on partners and suppliers, and encourage potential visitors to make sustainable choices.

We will do this by, for example:

- increasing knowledge and awareness of green issues among all employees
- influencing, making demands and collaborating with other companies, suppliers, agencies and organisations in sustainability issues
- ensuring that our leadership promotes greater awareness of sustainability issues

Focus areas to reduce our own environmental impact

VisitSweden has identified electricity use and heating of our offices, as well as our own business travel, as the main factors affecting the environment. Consequently the most current challenge for VisitSweden is to focus on the environment, as we operate in a country that has been devoted to social and economic security for many years. But with a view to increasing and streamlining our internal sustainability work to include social and economic sustainability, in 2011 VisitSweden introduced several carbon-offset events, and projects that VisitSweden offsets for. VisitSweden raises awareness and places demands on suppliers, which has increased focus on our sustainability work.

Carbon dioxide emissions from electricity, heating and business travel make up the largest part of VisitSweden's environmental footprint. This is why in 2011 VisitSweden intensified the work commenced in 2008, for instance measuring impacts and identifying measures to reduce direct and indirect carbon dioxide emissions resulting from its own business. Consequently we continued to measure the total effect of these factors in 2011, measured in tonnes of

¹⁸ Sweden as a destination in foreign media in 2011. Report categorising the results of VisitSweden's international PR work in various themes.

carbon dioxide emissions. By identifying the extent of our impacts, VisitSweden can identify ways to control and reduce emissions. In 2011 we offset the emissions generated by all foreign offices, except for China, where measurement has not yet commenced. In 2011 VisitSweden left a mark on the environment corresponding to emissions of roughly 654 tonnes of CO₂, of which 599 tonnes came from business travel. In 2011 we increased our impacts by over 11 per cent¹⁹, compared to 2010. This increase is mainly a result of business travel. Moreover, VisitSweden has employed new staff and opened offices abroad during the year, which has had an impact in terms of business travel. But in terms of our impact per employee, VisitSweden's carbon dioxide emissions have fallen somewhat compared to 2010, as the table below shows.

Our impacts from purchased electricity and heating, have also dropped by 26 per cent compared to 2010.

It is still clear that air travel represents a substantial part of VisitSweden's environmental impacts, and this is also where the greatest increase (14.7%) has occurred. Train travel has increased by 14.5%, but from a considerably lower level. VisitSweden's electricity consumption totalled 1,475.6 MWh, of which more than 53.8 MWh was renewable (where 10 MWh was wind power purchased for VisitSweden's German office and 43.8 MWh for VisitSweden's head office in Stockholm). Consumption of heating totalled just over 186.9 MWh. This corresponds to a total climate impact (for electricity and heating) of 55.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide. Carbon offsets were purchased totalling SEK 117,900, corresponding to VisitSweden's total emissions of nearly 654 tonnes of CO₂. The total cost and investment for environmental protection refers only to costs for offsetting. There are also costs for purchase of goods for the office, such as organic food and eco-friendly office supplies, but these are difficult to account for separately.

Climate measurement with the Svante tool

In our sustainability work we use the climate tool "Svante" to facilitate calculation and reporting of our internal climate impacts.

| VisitSweden's CO ₂ emissions (tonnes) | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Change 2010-2011 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Climate impact from company-owned sources* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Climate impact from purchased electricity and heating | 59.61 | 45.18 | 69.64 | 55.25 | -26.04% |
| Of which electricity | 43.39 | 26.53 | 73.92 | 30.11 | -24.14% |
| Of which green electricity | 0.0049 | 0.0015 | 0.0025 | 0.003 | 7.41% |
| Of which district heating | 16.22 | 18.64 | 16.53 | 15.15 | -9.11% |
| Gas | – | – | 15.74 | 9.99 | -57.56% |
| Indirect environmental impact, business travel** | 639.81 | 426.39 | 513.16 | 599.12 | 14.35% |
| Of which air travel | 618.48 | 403.99 | 490.04 | 574.12 | 14.65% |
| – Trips <450 km | 56.08 | 41.85 | 51.41 | 86.33 | 40.45% |
| – Trips 450-1600 km | 281.24 | 201.90 | 256.97 | 309.89 | 17.08% |
| – Trips >1600 km | 281.16 | 160.27 | 180.53 | 177.90 | -1.48% |
| Of which train travel | 3.79 | 3.12 | 2.63 | 3.08 | 14.50% |
| Of which bus travel | 0.019 | 0.26 | 0.48 | 0.50 | 5.38% |
| Of which rental car, taxi and private vehicle | 16.77 | 17.28 | 17.04 | 18.80 | 9.36% |
| Of which sea travel | 0.76 | 1.63 | 2.95 | 2.62 | -12.44% |
| TOTAL | 699.42 | 471.57 | 582.80 | 654.38 | 10.94% |
| Total average impact per employee (FTE) | 11.66 | 7.15 | 8.20 | 8.08 | -1.46% |

Source: VisitSweden's 2011 climate report and Climate programme Svante/Respect.

* Direct energy consumption is nonexistent, as VisitSweden does not own any machinery, vehicles or the like.

**Estimate of significant environmental impacts of transport is limited to the employees' business travel.

¹⁹ During the year VisitSweden has employed new staff and opened offices abroad, which has direct effects, since many trips are a result of induction programmes and a generally higher activity level within the company.

Climate neutrality²⁰ and carbon offsetting

Carbon dioxide emissions from electricity, heating and business travel make up the largest part of VisitSweden's environmental footprint. Based on calculations of our impacts, and climate offsetting, the entire company has been climate neutral since 2009 (see Appendix 1 for conditions for becoming a climate-neutral company). VisitSweden will carbon-offset by way of a CDM (Clean Development Mechanism) project in the regions around Accra and Kumasi in Ghana. The project, Gyapa Cook Stoves, can save a total of approx. 800,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide over seven years (165,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually), thanks to the distribution of new, more efficient wood-burning stoves. Most of all, the stoves deliver more efficient use of fuel and reduced deforestation. In addition to the environmental benefits, the project creates employment and increases technological know-how locally. Other benefits are increased standard of living as a result of reduced fuel costs, and that time is freed up for other activities, as well as reduced clear-cutting, bringing greater biodiversity²¹.

What has VisitSweden done?

Examples of activities carried out in 2011:

In addition to carbon-offset events and a focus on digital marketing, other initiatives from the company and employees have been implemented, leading to numerous improvements of varying sizes at the head office as well as offices abroad, in order to reduce VisitSweden's own environmental impacts.

- Transport

The biggest environmental impact comes from business travel. The employees at VisitSweden are encouraged to use green transport modes when possible, e.g. train rather than plane, as well as a public transport and green taxi. Staff at VisitSweden's foreign offices choose eco-friendly travel options wherever possible. For instance the Italian and British offices subscribe to bike-sharing programmes, to avoid taxi trips. At other offices, such as in France and Germany, employees travel to and from work, and to meetings, using public transport, bicycles or by foot, when possible.

- Consumables, paper

Newspaper and cardboard recycling has been implemented at several foreign offices and at the head office, and employees try to reduce the number of printouts, print on both sides of the paper, and re-use paper. Several offices recycle printer cartridges. The Danish office uses an eco-friendly copier and recycled copier paper. When purchasing office supplies and consumables, several offices choose green options wherever possible. A digital invoice management system, introduced in 2009, has replaced some 3,000 paper invoices, with ongoing positive effects.

- Printed matter

Most of VisitSweden's printed marketing materials (2011 Annual Report: 1,000 copies, 2011 "Sweden" magazine, 710,000 copies (nine languages) "Sweden" magazine for Denmark 1.6 million copies, "Sweden" magazine for Norway 400,000 copies) were printed on eco-friendly paper from environmentally certified printers. At a 2011 workshop the Russian office used internet links as information materials, instead of printing meeting plans and brochures.

- "Sweden" magazine

VisitSweden's magazine "Sweden" is printed in 710,000 copies in nine languages using eco-certified printing technology on chlorine-free paper from FSC pulp. The magazine is distributed to the potential travellers who are judged to be interested in travel to Sweden. This prevents the printing of excess copies. All nine editions include a spread with tips for eco-tourism experiences from eight Nature's Best certified companies. For the Danish market,



VisitSweden produces another version, which comes out four times per year and is carbon-offset (via the Graphic Association of Denmark). With a circulation of 1.6 million copies it is the largest travel magazine in Denmark. In Norway a similar magazine – also carbon-offset – was distributed in 400,000 copies.

- Electricity consumption

The UK, Finnish and German offices, and the Stockholm head office, now routinely turn off computers, displays and lights. In Stockholm, manual light switches have been replaced by sensors and a gradual switch to low-energy light bulbs and energy-efficient computers is underway. The German office continues to buy green electricity, which it started in 2010. The Finnish office also sends electronic hard waste to special collection once a year. The building where the US office is located has been awarded for its energy efficiency.

- Carbon offsetting of events

In Sweden, VisitSweden's Inspiration Day for the Swedish tourism industry, with some 200 participants, and VisitSweden's internal conference, were carbon-offset. As were the TUR travel and tourism trade fair and IMEX (via their respective trade fair venues). In our overseas markets, VisitSweden's participation at the World Travel Market in London and the Swedish Workshop, for Swedish and foreign tour operators in several locations, were all carbon-offset. In all, 14 events were offset in our foreign markets in 2011, by way of Respect's carbon-offsetting programme. Additionally, the Italian office offset two events in 2011.

- Workplace training

VisitSweden has started a collaboration with MISA, a company that arranges work-oriented daily activities for people with disabilities, as a form of rehabilitation or work experience. Each participant is accompanied by a supervisor, while carrying out their daily duties regarding the office's common areas.

- Svante – Climate measurement tool

VisitSweden offers all its partners free use of the tool Svante, to

20. The concept of climate neutrality means that the company offsets the environmental impacts that remain, before it further reduces its greenhouse gas emissions. It purchases emission credits corresponding to the actual volume of greenhouse gases. The emission credits are created via projects that reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases, often in developing countries. Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Klimatneutrala företag [Climate-neutral companies], p. 7, 2006, www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/upload/rapport_klimat_klimatneutralaforetag.pdf, March 2012.

21. Ghana has some of the most rapid deforestation in Africa, and indoor air pollution is a common cause of premature death. Both of these factors are a direct result of inefficient stoves. Third party validation of Gyapa was carried out by TUV Rheinland. Respect, 2011.

calculate their travel-related environmental impacts. The reason for this is to encourage measurement and offsetting of impacts. A handful of companies and organisations in the Swedish tourism industry have expressed interest in Svante.

- Pilot project Sustainable tourism industry

The West Sweden Tourist Board and the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth are running a pilot project within the project "Sustainable tourism industry", which is a national campaign to establish a quality and sustainability system that supports the tourism industry throughout Sweden. VisitSweden is part of the steering group. The regions of Småland, Södermanland, Västmanland, Jämtland and Härjedalen, and the National Property Board Sweden are also participating in the pilot project. VisitScotland is an international partner.

- Green Meeting Industry Council

VisitSweden joined as one of the founding members of the Swedish section of the Green Meeting Industry Council, a global organisation focussing on environmental and sustainability issues in the meeting industry.

- The Nature's Best Certification Committee

VisitSweden has been a member of the Nature's Best certification committee since the start. Getting involved so early adds an international perspective already at the certification stage, which improves the chances of the company succeeding in an internationally competitive market.

- Sponsorship

VisitSweden is a bronze sponsor for the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SEK 8,000).

- Other initiatives

Wherever possible, the Danish and Stockholm offices, among others, purchase eco-friendly, organic or locally produced food (e.g. fruit, milk and coffee). In waste management, the company continues to implement separation at source of paper, plastics, cardboard, glass and metal. Moreover, the Italian office uses only china, and never disposable mugs or spoons. In 2011, telephone and Skype meetings between employees continued to replace some internal face-to-face meetings, which otherwise would have generated travel and used more time.



Taking the train between Stockholm and Arlanda helps the airport reach its strict environmental targets. Photo: Melker Dahlstrand/imagebank.sweden.se

What can VisitSweden improve?

Sustainability is an integral part of VisitSweden's business plan, which was launched in March 2012. It identifies three overarching strategies:

1. Dynamic knowledge-based organisation,
2. Innovative business dealings and alliances and
3. Compelling, engaging communication.

Considering the strong focus on employee contributions to the development of VisitSweden, a knowledge-based company, it must have a strategy for attracting and retaining the appropriate talents. One of the focus areas of the business plan, which has been broken down into targets up to 2015, is to "apply the sustainability strategy within the company".

For 2010 the focus was the strategy for sustainable tourism, which will result in VisitSweden being better at promoting sustainable growth in the Swedish tourism industry. For 2011 and forward, the challenge for VisitSweden is obviously to continue to act responsibly, but also to intensify efforts to implement the strategy for sustainable tourism. We will do this by highlighting and communicating sustainable experiences in Sweden (to attract visitors), encouraging the industry to choose sustainable solutions and getting involved in the international debate.

As the driving force in the marketing of Destination Sweden, VisitSweden can increase consumer awareness of climate and sustainability. On the English, Russian and Italian versions of visitsweden.com, we plan to present tips and inspiration on how to experience Sweden sustainably. VisitSweden's employees can also try to further reduce the impact of their business travel, and as a company VisitSweden can increase efficiency in its offices.



At several of VisitSweden's offices they recycle paper and newspapers. Photo: Fredrik Nyman/imagebank.sweden.se

Employees

VisitSweden's mandate is to increase people's desire for Sweden. To achieve this, VisitSweden must create an attractive image. VisitSweden as a workplace must be seen as a desirable destination. VisitSweden is a knowledge-based organisation, and this places extra demands on challenging and motivating the employees.

Through our two owners, the Swedish state and the Swedish tourism industry, a special dynamic is created, which is directly reflected in our work. Thanks to our local presence in the foreign markets we are specialists at cultural differences and we can interpret and transform them into knowledge, which we then use to attract visitors. To succeed in this we need employees who believe in the company and who are firmly engaged in our mandate.

It is important to feel pride and engagement in the company. The skills and knowledge of our employees is vital for us to continue to develop as a company, but also to reinforce the positive trend that exists in the Swedish tourism industry.

We have analysts, strategists, marketers, project and process managers, specialists in PR, events and many other skill groups. With such superbly competent employees, we have both the strategic and the tactical resources required to strengthen the Swedish tourism industry.

Against this background, VisitSweden's aim is to:

"be an attractive employer that offers professional and personal development. The company will attract, recruit, develop and retain skilled employees, who contribute to the company's target achievement and operational quality."

In a market characterised by constant change and tough competition for travellers and employees, it is vital to maintain an active, forward-looking staff policy. We have identified a few success factors:

- that the company has skilled and engaged managers and leaders – clear division of responsibility and efficient decision-making
- that there is a talent management process – performance, skills and target achievement are rewarded
- that there are shared key values – that the idea of a "dynamic knowledge-based organisation" is fully implemented

Shared key values important for VisitSweden

Extensive work aimed at creating a set of key values for VisitSweden began as early as 2008. In 2009 and 2010 this was followed by a number of small workshops in different groups throughout the company. The aim was to establish support for the key values and to start out from each employee's personal values, rather than using a top-down approach.

There are numerous reasons why so much work was done, but one of the most important is that all research shows that value-driven companies are more successful – in purely financial terms but also that their employees are more involved in their work and want to develop together in the organisation.

The core values on which we base our shared key values are Caring, Businesslike, Professional, Innovative and Playful. These should permeate the employees' behaviour both internally and externally. In 2012 VisitSweden will complete its work on an ethics policy – a guide for action in accordance with the principles of the key values.

Continual learning

In the constantly changing knowledge society, all organisations are reliant on their employees' ability and desire to constantly change and learn. VisitSweden aims to continually become better at integrated communication. We will fine-tune our marketing tools and channel strategies, update our knowledge of the target groups and be skillful purchasers of specialist know-how.

To achieve this we must pull together and create learning from our experiences. In 2011 and 2012 workshops were held, aimed at learning from each other and sharing experiences. The day-to-day work is where most learning occurs. Continual learning requires that everyone takes responsibility for their own learning, but also that they pass this knowledge on, and want to continue to learn and develop.

In their annual performance and career development reviews, all employees evaluate their individual performance in relation to targets and assignments, and draw up a plan for their ongoing development, relative to the company's targets for the coming year. This plan can contain more broad-based or more specialised duties, shorter or longer courses, work experience at an internal or external placement, holding workshops, readings etc. The immediate superior reserves funds to cover the costs involved in these investments. All documentation is collected at the HR department, whose role is to follow up that the plans are realised.

Employees who have retired have often supported the organisation with their knowledge and experience.

The idea of constant change is normally not problematic for VisitSweden's employees; it is an accepted part of the job. They discover problems at an early stage, identify errors quickly and rectify them. VisitSweden wants to create an atmosphere where people are encouraged to test new ideas, even if they don't always lead to new solutions.

VisitSweden is a small company with 94 employees (81 FTEs), but with the structure of a large multinational, with offices in 12 countries. It is a challenge to coordinate the company's operations effectively, without constructing excessively large structures in terms of hierarchies, administration or IT systems.

We also want to create a learning, creative work environment, in order to ensure the continued skills development of all our employees, and the continued development of our working methods. This is done continually in inter-office groups in the areas of PR and social media, internet, campaigns and B2B communication. We also hold Inspiration Days for the tourism industry and annual in-house conferences for employees, as well as management days and introduction days.

VisitSweden, a matrix organisation

VisitSweden has chosen to organise the company in a matrix structure, with all the foreign offices in one dimension and the functions in the other. The structure places tough demands on clarity in communication, joint problem-solving and shared responsibility for results. The advantages are that it facilitates the coordination and quality control of the company, and ensures that the brand platform for Sweden permeates everything we do.

The various work processes in a matrix organisation support the employees to develop further, since new knowledge is added and disseminated, because during problem-solving one must consider more factors than one normally does in each specialist function.

In 2009 work commenced with leadership development, and this is continuing with two management days annually, where the focus is on leadership skills. See the organisational structure on page 19.

Key figures - employees

VisitSweden has the equivalent of 81 FTE employees (from 94 individuals), of which 49 work at our marketing offices abroad and 32 work at the head office in Stockholm. Based on FTE figures, 66 per cent of the employees are women. In 2011 the management group consisted of nine people: five women and four men. In management the marketing offices are represented by four regional directors, who represent all the European offices and the US office.

The board of directors consists of eight members and two deputy members. The owners – the state and the tourism industry equally – are each represented by four members. In the 2011 board, 63 per cent of the members consisted of women, including the chairperson.



VisitSweden is represented in 12 countries, including France.
Photo: Matton

| Age distribution at VisitSweden | Company | Management | Board |
|---------------------------------|---------|------------|-------|
| < 30 | 11% | 0% | 0% |
| 30-50 | 81% | 78% | 37% |
| > 50 | 8% | 22% | 63% |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The most common form of employment at VisitSweden is permanent employment (85 per cent), while 15 per cent are in temporary employment. 85 per cent of VisitSweden's employees work full-time.

For the employees in Sweden, the rate of absenteeism due to illness was 1.1 per cent (compared to 0.9 per cent in 2010). Of this, 0 per cent was long-term. As we know that everyone is happier if they are healthy, VisitSweden encourages all staff to make use of a keep-fit allowance.

Staff turnover for 2011 was about 10 per cent, calculated on the number of people who finished compared to the number of staff at the end of the period. Of those who left, 70 per cent were women.

VisitSweden benefits from their knowledge of the local market as well as Swedish culture and ways of life. This means that our employees have a diverse background with many different connections to Sweden.

At VisitSweden's offices abroad the majority of employees come from that particular country. Each foreign office observes cultural and local customs and holidays, while also preserving the Swedish cultural heritage.

In all recruitment, positions are advertised internally and externally via our website, as well as in local media and often in Sweden too.



At VisitSweden's annual in-house conference, the employees learn and laugh together. Photo: Jonas Overödder

About VisitSweden

VisitSweden has been assigned by the Swedish state and the Swedish tourism industry to market Sweden abroad, as a destination and a brand. With marketing that is compelling and engaging, we will reach even more international leisure and business travellers, in tough competition from many other countries and destinations.

VisitSweden is owned equally by the Swedish Government (via the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications) and the Swedish tourism industry (via Svensk Turism AB). Svensk Turism AB is owned by 160 companies and organisations, which in turn represent more than 10,000 companies in the Swedish tourism industry. The owners each appoint four board members.

VisitSweden prioritised marketing to 12 countries around the world in 2011 (see the organisational structure). With foreign offices from Beijing to New York, VisitSweden ensures it has the market presence and the knowledge of the country's lifestyle and trends that are required to produce efficient marketing. The target group's knowledge of Sweden and its travel preferences all determine the marketing approach.

The marketing is aimed at a selected group of experienced leisure and business travellers seeking exciting new destinations. It's those in the target groups "Global Traveller" and "Global Company" who have the greatest potential to increase travel to Sweden. They travel frequently for business or leisure purposes, and place high demands on the destination. They are globally aware, socially engaged and supporters of sustainable development, while also valuing health,

honesty and reliability. They have a high disposable income, are well educated and internet-savvy.

VisitSweden's firm focus on the target group is the foundation of all marketing activities. Thanks to frequent analyses and (via our foreign offices) by being in the same place as the people in the target groups, VisitSweden can learn about the potential visitors, their motivations and wishes. We also know which combination of marketing channels is best for reaching them. In 2011 VisitSweden ran some 250 marketing campaigns and projects, which led to 1,500 different types of marketing activities, such as visits to agents who put together proposals for meeting destinations for companies, or a Twitter flow to support a campaign message. VisitSweden chooses carefully what we communicate, whom we communicate with, how we design the message and where we can be most visible, in the media noise.

Financing

The company's operations are financed through revenue from partners, from collaborative projects and from state funding, SEK 140 million in 2011. VisitSweden charges the tourism industry for the services it provides, i.e. revenue from marketing activities and joint marketing campaigns. This revenue from the tourism industry totalled SEK 131.9 million in 2011, which is an increase in sales of 23 per cent compared to 2010. In 2011 VisitSweden spent SEK 94.6 million on base expenses, i.e. staff, office space and equipment, and SEK 195.3 million on marketing activities.

| Key financial figures for VisitSweden | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total turnover | 281 900 000 | 264 100 000 | 196 700 000 |
| - of which revenue from state | 140 000 000 | 150 000 000 | 110 100 000 |
| - of which revenue from industry | 131 900 000 | 107 200 000 | 84 700 000 |
| Number of employees at VisitSweden, male/female (FTEs) | 27/54 | 24/47 | 20/46 |

Source: VisitSweden's Annual Reports 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Since 2009 VisitSweden has also received special funding for Sweden – the New Food Country, which has not been reported here.



Photo: Henrik Trygg/imagebank.sweden.se

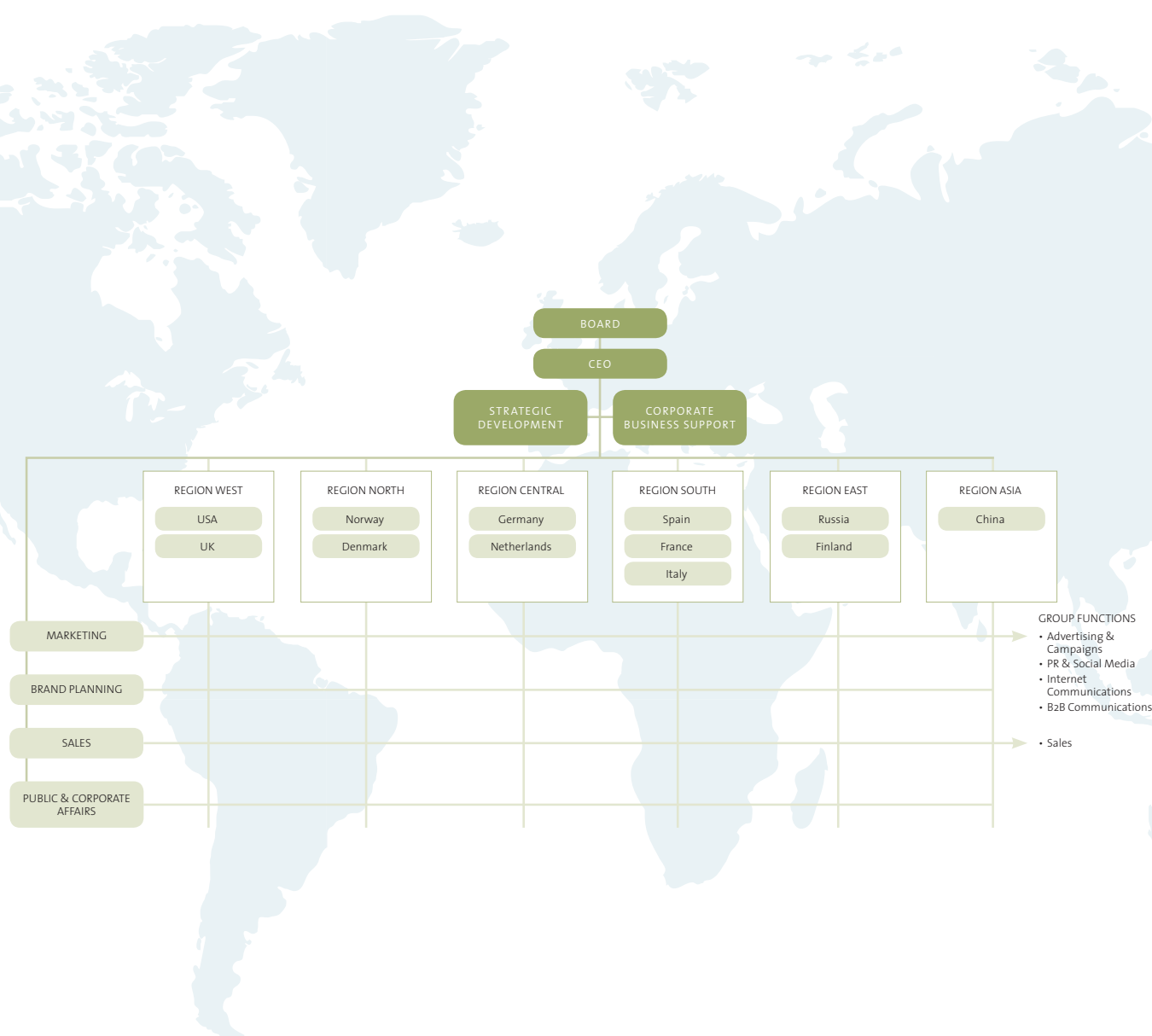
VisitSweden focusses all marketing of Destination Sweden to four target group segments: Active Family, Double Income, No Kids (DINKs), Wealthy Healthy Older People (WHOPs) and The Global Company.

Photo: Erik Lindvall/imagebank.sweden.se

VisitSweden's organisation

VisitSweden's marketing overseas is organised through our own foreign offices or representation in 12 countries. In 2011 VisitSweden left the Scandinavian Tourist Board, STB, thus ending its focus on the

Japanese market. Instead VisitSweden opened its own representation in Beijing. VisitSweden's head office is located in Stockholm.



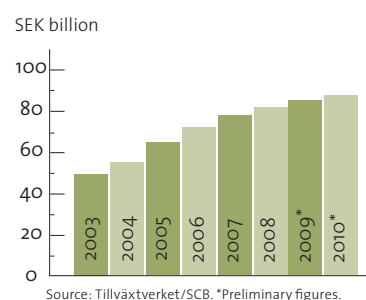
Sweden as a destination 2011

The tourism industry has had eight consecutive years of growth²², and is now seen as one of Sweden's primary industries. Visitor statistics for 2011 show an increase, although small, which means that 2011 was the best year ever for Swedish tourism, counted in number of overnights. Visitors from Norway, Germany, China and the United States increased most, while Denmark decreased considerably. From VisitSweden's prioritised markets, Scandinavia and Europe make up 94.5 per cent. VisitSweden's prioritised markets make up 80.4 per cent of the total number of overnights from abroad, which was 12.9 million.

Travel from VisitSweden's 12 prioritised markets, in terms of overnights in commercial accommodation, makes up almost 81 per cent of the total travel from abroad. For the eighth year in a row, the number of overnights from abroad in Sweden at hotels, cabin villages and hostels increased. The one per cent increase represents 94.000 more foreign overnights than the previous year, and a total of 12.896.000²³. In the same period, tourism in Europe continued its strong growth, increasing by six per cent (and worldwide 4.4 per cent) over the year. However viewed over the past three years, travel to Sweden has increased by 3.2 per cent, more than the European average of 2.9 per cent²⁴.

Tourism in Sweden is growing and the export value²⁵, i.e. foreign leisure and business travellers' consumption in Sweden, is increasing more rapidly than other export industry, on average. Foreign visitors spent SEK 87.1 billion in 2010 (see graph below), which was more than the total export value for iron and steel (SEK 57.1 billion) and more than twice the net export value of the Swedish car industry (SEK 38.4 billion). Between 2000 and 2010 the tourism export has increased by almost 115 per cent, while for the same period, Sweden's total export of goods and service grew by 56 per cent in current prices.

Tourism industry export value, 2003-2010



| Key financial figures – tourism industry | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 |
|--|--------------|------------|------------|
| Number of foreign overnights (hotels, cabins, hostels, campgrounds, private cabins and apartments) | 12 896 000** | 12 802 000 | 12 330 000 |
| Total turnover in tourism industry (SEK) | n/a* | 254.4 bn** | 246.4 bn** |
| - of which export value (foreign visitors' consumption in Sweden, SEK) | n/a* | 87.1 bn** | 85.6 bn** |
| Share of BNP | n/a* | 2.9%** | 3.0%** |
| Number of employees in tourism industry (FTE) | n/a* | 162 100 | 159 900 |

Source: Tillväxtverket/SCB.

* Presented in June 2012

** preliminary figures



Retail, restaurants and experience companies make up a large portion of tourism industry sales. Photo: Nicho Södling/imagebank.sweden.se, Miriam Preis/imagebank.sweden.se and Fredrik Broman



22. Refers to overnights at hotels, cabin villages and hostels. A comparable time series for campgrounds and private cabins and apartments is only available for 2008 and forward.

23. All the above figures on visitor statistics: Tillväxtverket/SCB, preliminary overnight statistics for 2011, www.tillvaxtverket.se/huvudmeny/faktaochstatistik/faktaomturm/ekonomiochsysselsattning.4.21099e4211fdb8c87b800017287.html, March 2012.

24. UN World Tourism Organization, World Tourism Barometer, January 2011 and January 2008. Travel to Sweden (and some other countries) is calculated in number of overnights, while travel to other European countries is calculated in international arrivals.

25. Export value corresponds to foreign visitors' consumption in Sweden. Tillväxtverket, Facts about Swedish tourism 2010, www.tillvaxtverket.se/huvudmeny/faktaochstatistik/faktaomturm/ekonomiochsysselsattning.4.21099e4211fdb8c87b800017287.html, March 2012.

About VisitSweden's sustainability report

This report describes VisitSweden's sustainability work for the year 2011. It is updated annually, normally at the end of the first quarter, and refers to the previous calendar year.

Reporting principles

This report is VisitSweden's fourth. The disposition and contents are based on the Global Reporting Initiative's "Sustainability Reporting Guidelines 3.1" at level C+ 26, and they incorporate the main principles of the UN's Global Compact. This provides a structured way of describing the report's contents as well as ensuring quality.

The report also contains VisitSweden's second Global Compact Report. VisitSweden's previous sustainability report was published on 31 May 2011.

In 2009 Sweden, as the first country in the world to do so, requested its more than 50 wholly or partly-owned state companies to complete a sustainability report in accordance with Global Reporting Initiative standards. As such, Sweden also became the first country in the world to present a sustainability report in accordance with GRI. By regularly measuring environmental indicators, in VisitSweden's case the environmental impact of business travel, electricity consumption and heating of our offices, we get a current picture of the company's impacts on the environment, its economy and its employees. Taking this information, and adding the knowledge we acquire continually, we can more easily identify aspects to promote and areas to improve.

Report focus

The main emphasis of the report is to describe how VisitSweden sees its role in the development of sustainable tourism, for potential visitors and for the Swedish tourism industry and other actors in Sweden. The report also shows how VisitSweden incorporates sustainability into the ongoing dialogue with identified stakeholders, with the aim of positioning Sweden as a sustainable destination. The company's own environmental impacts are presented as well. Since 2008 VisitSweden has measured its impacts using Respect's programme for climate-neutral companies.

Who are we writing the report for?

We hope that the Sustainability Report will be read by everyone who wants to learn more about how VisitSweden conducts its sustainability work, especially our partners in the tourism industry and our owners. It is also important for VisitSweden employees, as it explains in a structured way how the internal measures help us to realise our sustainability strategy. Additionally, the report shows how we plan to enhance and develop sustainability in the future.

Limitations

In VisitSweden's 2011 Sustainability Report we have limited the assessment of our environmental impacts, so that it applies firstly to our energy consumption in terms of electricity and heating of office space, and secondly to the environmental impact of our business travel. This is because we have identified these as measurable and easiest to carry out. VisitSweden neither owns nor produces any products that substantially affect the environment, or any buildings or cars, so any other direct impact will be limited. Heating of offices has not been separated into renewable and non-renewable energy sources, because this is currently not practicable. Additionally, the report is limited to VisitSweden's ability to influence Sweden's shift to becoming a more sustainable destination, and it excludes the aspect of Destination Sweden's capabilities.

A further limitation in the report is that our sustainability work and carbon offsetting excludes our operations in China. This is because up to 2011, marketing was done in a separate company that was only one-third owned by VisitSweden. Also, we have limited some of the data presented relating to absenteeism, instead presenting data only from head office. Indicator 1.2, "Description of key impacts, risks, and opportunities", is limited to a qualitative description.

Key figures – climate impacts

VisitSweden is able to present the following key figures regarding its climate impacts for 2011:

- VisitSweden's total CO₂ emissions (tonnes)
- Purchased electricity and heating (for our offices)
- Environmental impact of transport (staff business travel by train, car and plane)

Measurement methods for climate impacts

VisitSweden observes Respect's programme for climate-neutral companies. This programme is based on the international calculation standard, the GHG (Greenhouse Gas) protocol, which is supported by the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The calculation standard takes into account the direct as well as the indirect emissions of the operations. Since 2009 VisitSweden uses the more precise calculation methods, as supplied by Respect. This means that for the 2010 and 2011 reports, the employees have aimed to provide exact travel distances and actual electricity and heating consumption. The calculations have been scrutinised by Respect. No particular changes in measurement methods have occurred between 2010 and 2011.

This Sustainability Report is intended to meet the reporting requirements at level C.

26. The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) was developed as a UN initiative and is now the official template for sustainability reports. VisitSweden was the first national tourist board in the world to report its impacts on social, economic and environmental sustainability in accordance with GRI standards. Other tourist boards that follow this standard include those in South Korea, Norway and Portugal.

Statement from Swedish independent review

This is a statement from an independent review undertaken by Respect Sustainable Business AB (Respect) for V.S. VisitSweden AB (VisitSweden) regarding the 2011 Sustainability Report for the period 1 January – 31 December 2011. The statement is primarily intended for the readers of the sustainability report and VisitSweden's management and board.

Conclusions

Based on the limitations of the review and the methods used, we have reached the following conclusions:

VisitSweden has implemented processes and procedures in accordance with the principles presented in GRI G3 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and AA1000 Accountability Principles standard 2008 (AA1000APS); and

Based on the completed review, no circumstances have come to light that give us reason to believe that VisitSweden's sustainability report does not meet the applicable criteria.

Criteria

GRI G3 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines and principles for AA1000 Assurance Standard 2008 (AA1000AS) were used as criteria for the review of VisitSweden's sustainability report. The review was carried out in accordance with AA1000 AS (2008). Respect's assignment was to conduct a general review (Type 1), which includes an evaluation of how well the operations follow the principles of completeness, relevance and sensitivity as expressed in AA1000APS, as well as a general review of the GRI result indicators, based on random checks.

Review method

Respect conducted the review in accordance with the following methodology in February-March 2012:

Check that VisitSweden follows GRI's guidelines at level C.

Check of VisitSweden's work process, to identify and decide on important questions for inclusion in the sustainability report.

Evaluation of VisitSweden's process for identification of and engagement with stakeholders.

Interview with the person in charge of VisitSweden's sustainability report, to learn about how the report was put together.

Analysis and checks of the processes for processing data for selected result indicators, on a random basis.

Verification of the presented data.

Check of the sustainability report's statements on the year's results and performance.

Observance of the principles in AA1000APS (2008)

Based on the scope and methods of the review we can conclude that VisitSweden has implemented processes in accordance with the principles in AA1000APS (2008).

Relevance

That during the year, VisitSweden has carried out activities to ensure that the sustainability report covers the most important issues for the stakeholders.

Completeness

VisitSweden has established internal processes and methodologies to hold dialogues with stakeholders, and has held structured dialogues with its stakeholders during the year.

Sensitivity

That the focus of the sustainability report, and the work reflected there, is in agreement with the stakeholders' expectations, shows that VisitSweden has been responsive to its stakeholders.

Observations and recommendations

VisitSweden has continued to demonstrate good progress, both in terms of sustainability work and the sustainability report.

Role, responsibility and competence

VisitSweden is responsible for the compilation of the sustainability report and for the information and the statements found therein. In conjunction with the review, Respect is only responsible toward VisitSweden's management. Respect has not been involved in the processing of the information presented in the report; but has simply reviewed the sustainability report. This ensures our independent role in relation to the sustainability report. Our review team has sufficient knowledge and extensive experience of sustainability work and reporting, as well as good knowledge of the relevant standards such as GRI, AA1000APS and AA1000AS. For further information, please visit our website: www.respect.se

Respect Sustainable Business AB
Stockholm, 30 March 2012



Helen Maalinn

FN Global Compact: Communication on Progress, report 2011

Published: 30 March 2012

Reporting organisation: V. S. VisitSweden AB

Report period: 1 January – 31 December 2011

Single report/section of the annual sustainability report, 2011.

1. CEO's statement on continued support of Global Compact's principles

I am proud to confirm that VisitSweden continues to support the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact concerning human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-corruption.

VisitSweden is strongly committed to following the ten principles on human rights, labour rights, environment and anti-corruption. This is reflected in the company's core values – caring, professional, business-like, playful and innovative. VisitSweden values the human perspective as highly as the business perspective, and this pervades the entire organisation. The Sweden brand is based on and developed according to similar core values. VisitSweden's aim is to market sustainable travel experiences to our international visitors. The results of this aim are evaluated in VisitSweden's sustainability reports. Much of the marketing communication on Sweden is, when relevant, based on Swedish core values such as gender equality, respect for nature and children's rights, with the aim of inspiring international visitors to travel to Sweden. VisitSweden continually integrates the UN Global Compact principles in the company's policies and strategies, and spreads knowledge of the compact. In this Communication on progress report we describe how we integrate the Global Compact's ten principles into our organisation and business dealings, and the result of this work.



Thomas Brühl
vd VisitSweden

2. Human rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

Principle 2: Businesses should make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

VisitSweden supports and upholds all applicable legislation, regulations and guidelines concerning the UN's declaration of human rights. No one at VisitSweden may cause or contribute to violations or circumvention of human rights.

(Implementation)

VisitSweden has developed an equality policy, a key value policy, which includes respect for human rights. We consider human rights during procurements and when selecting suppliers. When we market Sweden we place a firm focus on ethical values such as equality, sustainable development and human rights.

According to law, VisitSweden has a duty to continually monitor and disclose the organisation's adherence to the UN's principles for human rights. No violations against these laws and regulations have been reported in 2011.

3. Labour

The essence of VisitSweden's core values explicitly supports the principles of freedom of association, collective bargaining and the abolition of compulsory and child labour, and VisitSweden works actively to increase awareness of these issues among employees and consultants.

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

VisitSweden supports and follows all applicable laws and guidelines concerning freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. This includes the Swedish Employment Protection Act, Employment (Co-Determination in the Workplace) Act, Working Hours Act and Annual Leave Act. No violations against these laws and regulations have been reported in 2011. VisitSweden supports the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. No employee of VisitSweden shall in any way cause or contribute to the violation or circumvention of human rights. Great emphasis is placed on securing the human rights of the employees as described in the ILO Core Conventions.

Principle 4: Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

VisitSweden supports and follows all applicable laws and regulations concerning forced and compulsory labour, based on Swedish law and ILO conventions. VisitSweden follows regulations on forced labour as stated in the ILO conventions nos. 29 and 105. Additional laws in Sweden are the Employment Protection Act, which protects employees in the event of layoffs or dismissals, the Employment Act, regarding co-determination in the workplace and the Act on labour market programmes (2000:625), which contains comprehensive provisions on the employment programmes. Other applicable legislation includes law 2007:395 and regulation 2000:634 on labour market programmes, regulation 1997:1275 on employment support, ordinance 2000:630 concerning specific measures for people with disabilities reducing capacity work, ordinance 2007:414 on job and development guarantee, ordinance 1996:1100 on activity support for taking part in labour market programmes and regulation 2007:418. No violations against these laws and regulations have been reported in 2011.

Principle 5: Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.

VisitSweden supports and follows Swedish laws and guidelines that prevent child labour as regulated in the Swedish Work Environment Act, chapter 5 and in the Swedish Work Environment Authority's provisions about under-aged workers. The provisions regulate work assignments, working hours and work without instructor, and apply to all work carried out by under-aged workers. VisitSweden also follows the provisions on under-aged workers as stated in EU directives and the ILO conventions nos. 138 and 182. It is VisitSweden's duty as employer to provide good working conditions for under-aged workers. No violations against these laws and regulations have been reported in 2011.

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

At VisitSweden no form of offensive special treatment or other forms of harassment is accepted. VisitSweden supports and follows Swedish laws and regulations against discrimination based on ethnicity, religion or other belief, functional limitation or sexuality. This includes the Swedish Equality Act, which concerns women's and men's equal rights in terms of work, employment and other employment opportunities at work, and the Discrimination Act, which counteracts discrimination and supports equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. All employees are responsible for following VisitSweden's discrimination policy and by doing so help to eliminate discrimination within the company. No violations against these laws and regulations have been reported in 2011.

4. Environment

The essence of VisitSweden's core values explicitly supports the principles of environmental challenges, responsibility and environmentally friendly technologies.

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

VisitSweden's strategy for sustainable tourism is a guiding principle for the company – at company, national and international levels. The overarching strategy for sustainable tourism covers three areas:

- encourage and facilitate sustainable travel, and show people how to visit Sweden responsibly
- feature good examples of sustainable practice, in order to stimulate the tourism industry to develop more sustainable products and experiences
- promote and engage in sustainability issues at company, national and international levels.

A review of VisitSweden's communication messages to foreign visitors has started. Its purpose is to improve the information aimed at helping visitors find sustainable alternatives. For example in VisitSweden's PR work and on the company's websites. Since 2008 VisitSweden has identified electricity and heating of the head and foreign offices, plus the staff's own business travel, as the main environmental impacts, measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. By measuring its emissions, VisitSweden can control and reduce them, on a per-employee basis. In 2011 greenhouse gas emissions increased by 10 per cent compared to the previous year, but they fell somewhat on a per-employee basis.

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Within the European Travel Commission agenda, VisitSweden has taken an active role to develop and increase knowledge about sustainability issues among the national tourist boards in Europe, for example by discussing mutual strategies for sustainability and development. VisitSweden also works to inspire the tourism industry in Sweden to act more responsible, for instance by highlighting good examples of communication aimed at potential visitors and within the Swedish tourism industry itself.

Principle 9: Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

When possible, VisitSweden prioritises sustainable travel modes for staff, e.g. using train instead of air transport. The "Green Flights" concept – a world first – was introduced in Sweden and VisitSweden is increasing awareness of this among international media by way of its strategic PR work. VisitSweden is a climate-neutral company and it compensates its remaining environmental impacts by funding a CDM-certified project in Ghana (see page 19 of sustainability report). These projects focus on, for example, replacing electricity sourced from fossil fuels.

5. Anti-Corruption

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

VisitSweden supports and follows all applicable laws and guidelines for the prevention of corruption. We have a zero-tolerance policy against corruption. This will be explained further in the ethics policy we are developing in 2012. No violations against these laws and regulations have been reported in 2011.

GRI content index

Below is an index of all the parameters included in the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines for sustainability reports. In the index we have specified which parameters are met by VisitSweden's sustainability report, and to what degree (fully or partially).

- fully reported
- ◐ partially reported

AR = reference to VisitSweden's 2009 Annual Report

SR = reference to page in this Sustainability Report

Profile

| 1 | Strategy and analysis | Page reference | Reported |
|------|---|----------------|----------|
| 1.1 | Statement from the most senior decision-maker of the organisation (e.g. CEO, chair, or equivalent senior position) about the relevance of sustainability to the organisation and its strategy | p. 3 | ● |
| 1.2 | Description of key impacts, risks, and opportunities | p. 7-8 | ● |
| 2 | Organisation profile | | |
| 2.1 | Name of the organisation | p. 2 | ● |
| 2.2 | Primary brands, products, and/or services | p. 18 | ● |
| 2.3 | Operational structure of the organisation, including main divisions, operating companies, subsidiaries, and joint ventures | p. 18-19 | ● |
| 2.4 | Location of organisation's headquarters | p. 2 | ● |
| 2.5 | Number of countries where the organisation operates, and names of countries with either major operations or that are specifically relevant to the sustainability issues covered in the report | p. 18-19 | ● |
| 2.6 | Nature of ownership and legal form | p. 18-19 | ● |
| 2.7 | Markets served (including geographic breakdown, sectors served, and types of customers/beneficiaries) | p. 18-19 | ● |
| 2.8 | Scale of the reporting organisation, including: number of employees, net sales or net revenues (for public sector organisations); total capitalisation broken down in terms of debt and equity (for private sector organisations); and quantity of products or services provided. | p. 17-19 | ● |
| 2.9 | Significant changes during the reporting period regarding size, structure, or ownership | p. 18-19 | ● |
| 2.10 | Awards received in the reporting period | inga | ● |
| 3 | Report Parameters | | |
| | Report profile | | |
| 3.1 | Reporting period (e.g., fiscal/calendar year) for information provided | p. 21 | ● |
| 3.2 | Date of most recent previous report (if any) | p. 21 | ● |
| 3.3 | Reporting cycle (annual, biennial, etc.) | p. 21 | ● |
| 3.4 | Contact point for questions regarding the report or its contents | p. 2 | ● |
| | Report Scope and Boundary | | |
| 3.5 | Process for defining report content | p. 21 | ● |
| 3.6 | Boundary of the report | p. 21 | ● |

| | | | |
|------|--|---|---|
| 3.7 | State any specific limitations on the scope or boundary of the report | none | ● |
| 3.8 | Basis for reporting on joint ventures, subsidiaries, leased facilities, outsourced operations, and other entities that can significantly affect comparability from period to period and/or between organisations | p. 21 | ● |
| 3.9 | Data measurement techniques and the bases of calculations, including assumptions and techniques underlying estimations applied to the compilation of the Indicators and other information in the report | p. 21 | ● |
| 3.10 | Explanation of the effect of any re-statements of information provided in earlier reports, and the reasons for such re-statement | none | ● |
| 3.11 | Significant changes from previous reporting periods in the scope, boundary, or measurement methods applied in the report | none | ● |
| | GRI Content Index | | |
| 3.12 | Table identifying the location of the Standard Disclosures in the report | p. 25-28 | ● |
| | Assurance | | |
| 3.13 | Policy and current practice with regard to seeking external assurance for the report | p. 22 | ● |
| 4 | Governance, Commitments & Engagement | | |
| | Governance | | |
| 4.1 | Governance structure of the organisation, including committees under the highest governance body responsible for specific tasks, such as setting strategy or organisational oversight | VisitSweden's 2011 Annual Report, p. 32 | ● |
| 4.2 | Indicate whether the Chair of the highest governance body is also an executive officer | VisitSweden's 2011 Annual Report, p. 32 | ● |
| 4.3 | Number of members of the highest governance body that are independent and/or non-executive members | VisitSweden's 2011 Annual Report, p. 28, 32 | ● |
| 4.4 | Mechanisms for shareholders and employees to provide recommendations or direction to the highest governance body | p. 9 | ● |
| | Commitments to External Initiatives | | |
| 4.12 | Externally developed economic, environmental, and social charters, principles, or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes or endorses | p. 3-4, 11 | ● |
| 4.13 | Memberships in associations (such as industry associations) and/or national/international advocacy organisations | p. 9-11 | ● |
| | Stakeholder Engagement | | |
| 4.14 | List of stakeholder groups engaged by the organisation | p. 9-11 | ● |
| 4.15 | Basis for identification and selection of stakeholders with whom to engage | p. 9 | ● |
| 4.16 | Approaches to stakeholder engagement, including frequency of engagement by type and by stakeholder group | p. 9-11 | ● |
| 4.17 | Key topics and concerns that have been raised through stakeholder engagement, and how the organisation has responded to those key topics and concerns, including through its reporting | p. 11 | ● |

Economic indicators

| Economic performance | | Page reference | Reported |
|----------------------|---|----------------|----------|
| EC1 | Direct economic value generated and distributed, including revenues, operating costs, employee compensation, donations and other community investments, retained earnings, and payments to capital providers and governments. | p. 18 | ● |
| EC4 | Significant financial assistance. | p. 18 | ● |
| Market presence | | | |
| EC7 | Procedures for local hiring and proportion of senior management hired from the local community at significant locations of operation. | p. 17 | ● |

Environmental indicators

| Energy | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------|---|
| EN3 | | p. 13 | ● |
| EN4 | Indirect energy consumption by primary source. | p. 13 | ● |
| EN6 | Initiatives to provide energy-efficient or renewable energy-based products and services, and reductions in energy requirements as a result of these initiatives. | p. 12-15 | ○ |
| EN7 | Initiatives to reduce indirect energy consumption and reductions achieved. | p. 14-15 | ○ |
| Emissions, Effluents, and Waste | | | |
| EN16 | Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight. | p. 13 | ● |
| EN17 | Other relevant indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight. | p. 13 | ● |
| EN18 | Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reductions achieved. | p. 14-15 | ○ |
| Products and services | | | |
| EN26 | Initiatives to mitigate environmental impacts of products and services, and extent of impact mitigation. | p. 12, 14-15 | ○ |
| Overall | | | |
| EN30 | Total environmental protection expenditures and investments by type. | p. 13 | ● |

Labour Practices & Decent Work

| Employment | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|----------|---|
| LA1 | Total workforce by employment type, employment contract, and region. | p. 17 | ● |
| LA2 | Total number and rate of employee turnover by age group, gender, and region. | p. 17-19 | ○ |
| Occupational Health and Safety | | | |
| LA7 | Rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days, and absenteeism, and total number of work-related fatalities by region. | p. 17 | ● |
| Training and Education | | | |
| LA11 | Programs for skills management and lifelong learning that support the continued employability of employees and assist them in managing career endings. | p. 16-17 | ○ |
| LA12 | Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews. | p. 16 | ● |

Diversity and Equal Opportunity

| | | | |
|------|--|-------|---|
| LA13 | Composition of governance bodies and breakdown of employees per category according to gender, age group, minority group membership, and other indicators of diversity. | p. 17 | ● |
|------|--|-------|---|

Society Performance Indicators

Aspect: Community

| | | | |
|-----|---|------|---|
| SO1 | Nature, scope, and effectiveness of any programs and practices that assess and manage the impacts of operations on communities, including entering, operating, and exiting. | p. 5 | ● |
|-----|---|------|---|

Product Responsibility

Product and Service Labelling

| | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|---|
| PR3 | Type of product and service information required by procedures, and percentage of significant products and services subject to such information requirements. | p. 12, 14 | ● |
|-----|---|-----------|---|

Tour Operators' Sector Supplement

Internal management

Labour practices

| | | | |
|-----|---|-------|---|
| IM1 | Evidence of recruiting local residents (including destination nationals) for destination posts including management positions | p. 17 | ● |
|-----|---|-------|---|

Health and safety

| | | | |
|-----|---|-------|---|
| IM2 | Policies and programmes to address the physical and mental well-being of staff at headquarters and destinations | p. 17 | ● |
|-----|---|-------|---|

Training and education

| | | | |
|-----|--|-------|---|
| IM4 | Policies and actions in place to accommodate cultural customs, traditions and practices of staff throughout the organisation | p. 17 | ● |
|-----|--|-------|---|

Materials

| | | | |
|-----|---|----------|---|
| IM7 | Percentage of promotional materials and customer documentation that are produced in accordance with an environmental standard | p. 14-15 | ● |
|-----|---|----------|---|

Customer relations

| | | | |
|-----|---|---------|---|
| CR4 | Means to invite customers' feedback on sustainability issues related to the holiday product and actions taken to respond to feedback. | p. 9-11 | ● |
|-----|---|---------|---|

Cooperation with destinations

Partnerships

| | | | |
|----|--|---------|---|
| D1 | Engagement with destination stakeholders to address issues, including those identified in PMD3 | p. 9-11 | ● |
|----|--|---------|---|

Community development

| | | | |
|----|--|--|---|
| D2 | Identification and offer of commercial opportunities and assistance to non-contracted suppliers that support community development | VisitSweden's 2011 Annual Report, p. 11-12 | ○ |
|----|--|--|---|

Appendix 1

Conditions for climate neutrality in Respect's climate programme.

For a business to achieve climate neutrality its emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide must be calculated. Measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions must be taken. Reporting takes place as per an established template.

In short:

- Calculation of organisation's own, direct climate-impacting emissions.
- Calculation of climate impacts from purchased electricity and district heating.
- For climate impacts from indirect sources, business travel is always counted.
- For other indirect emissions, the organisation is recommended to, if possible, also report emissions from suppliers, goods transport and staff travel to and from work.
- The organisation must report measures taken in transport and energy, otherwise a comment must be provided.
- The organisation must report measures taken with regard to the main source of carbon dioxide emissions, otherwise a comment must be provided.
- Remaining emissions (as in at least items 1 and 2, and business travel) that have not been reduced by way of the organisation's own measures must be offset.

Offsetting through CDM projects

Emissions that remain despite programmes of measures are offset through support to CDM (Clean Development Mechanism) projects, which leads to measurable emission reductions. The projects build up green technology in developing countries while at the same time bringing positive social outcomes. The projects follow the intentions of the Kyoto Protocol and are certified by the UN.

See also www.klimatneutral.se

Appendix 2

Background: Global Compact

The Global Compact was launched by Kofi Annan to promote social and environmental responsibility among international businesses. It was in a speech to the World Economic Forum that he urged business leaders to join an international initiative – the Global Compact – which would bring together businesses with UN agencies, trade unions and civil society in support of ten principles regarding human rights, labour standards, the environment and against corruption.

The Global Compact's operations commenced in the UN Headquarters in New York City on 26 July 2000. Harnessing the power of collaborative efforts, the Global Compact aims to bring together responsible businesses, making them a part of the solution to the challenges of globalisation. Business – in partnership with other agents in society – will thus help the Secretary-General realise his vision: a more sustainable economy that does not marginalise certain social groups. Today hundreds of businesses from all over the world, as well as international trade unions and voluntary organisations, are involved in the Global Compact. A voluntary association of businesses, the Global Compact has two objectives:

- To mainstream the ten principles in business activities around the world.
- To catalyse actions in support of broader UN goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

To realise these objectives, the Global Compact provides various mechanisms for promoting engagement: policy dialogues, learning, local structures and projects. The Global Compact is not a regulatory agency; it neither monitors, drives nor measures the behaviour or actions of a business. Rather, it puts its trust in the businesses – their responsibility and openness to the public – as well as trade unions and voluntary organisations to initiate and collaborate in an effort to implement the principles on which the Global Compact is based.

The principles:

Human Rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour Standards

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally-friendly technologies.

Anti-Corruption

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Source: UNHCR