

**Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children
from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism**



The Code Quarterly,

Newsletter No.14, October – December 2007

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2008 World Congress against CSEC

Happy holidays and best wishes for a peaceful new year!

Calendar of events October - December 2007

Date	Place	Main organizer	Event, Participation
Oct 18-19	New York, USA	ExCom	Informal meeting of Code ExCom members & Secretariat
Oct 26	Quebec, Canada	Beyond the Borders	Signing of the Code by Incursions Voyages
Nov. 12	London, UK	UNWTO	UNWTO Task Force
Nov. 19	St. Petersburg, Russia	Accor Hotels and Stellit	Signing of the Code by Accor Hotels in Russia
Nov. 19	Tirana, Albania	OSCE	Signing of the Code by 22 Albanian companies
Nov. 21	Cozumel, Mexico	ECPAT USA	Signing of the Code by companies in Cozumel, Mexico
Dec. 8	Malindi, Kenya	Respect Austria, Solwodi	Signing of the Code by companies in Kenya
Dec. 11	Guatemala City, Guatemala	ECPAT Guatemala UNICEF, INGUAT	Signing of the Code by INGUAT, Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo
Dec. 13	Paris, France	Code ExCom	Code ExCom meeting
Dec. 13	Paris, France	Accor Hotels	Signing of the Code for Accor Hotels, Sub-saharan Africa
Saturday, March 8, 2008	ITB, Berlin 9.00-12.30	TheCode	AGM 2008 (DRV venue – to be confirmed)

INPUTS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER ARE WELCOME BEFORE

March 21, 2008



Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, an ECPAT initiative, co-funded by UNICEF and supported by the World Tourism Organization

www.thecode.org

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1. Stellit Russia

Olga Kolpakova, October 1, 2007

Signature of the Code of Conduct in Russia



On 19th November at the Novotel St. Petersburg Centre the meeting on signature of the Code of Conduct was conducted. The Code of Conduct was signed by Director of Operations Accor Russia – CIS Mr. Alexis Delaroff, Chairperson of Executive Committee of Code of Conduct Mr. Kaspar Hess and Development director of Regional NGO “Stellit” Ms. Olga Levina.

According to the Code of Conduct Russian Management Tourist Company declaring its commitment to implementation of the Code of Conduct through all hotels that are managed under one of Accor Brands operating in Russia. Nowadays there are two hotels in Moscow and one hotel in St. Petersburg. In the next few years several more hotels in different Russian cities are going to be opened.



The meeting was started by Mr. Edgard Pauly, General Manager of Novotel St. Petersburg Center. Mr. Pauly told about the importance of signing of the Code of Conduct.

The Sustainable Development Director of Accor Mrs. Helene Roques told about fight against child sex tourism as about one of the priorities of the Accor Earth Guest Program and stressed the importance of cooperation between ECPAT and Accor in implementation of the Code of conduct.



Signing ceremony of the Code by Accor in Russia, St. Petersburg, Nov.19.

The Director of operations of Accor in Russia and CIS Mr. Alexis Delaroff presented the content of the Code of Conduct and also described another Earth Guest initiatives in Russia.

Development director of Regional NGO “Stellit” Ms. Olga Levina

presented the activity of NGO “Stellit” and Russian Alliance against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Russia, briefly described the situation with child sex tourism and told about the pioneering role of Accor in Russia in sphere of fighting against commercial sexual exploitation of children. Mr. Edgrad Pauly described the story of cooperation between NGO “Stellit” and Novotel St. Petersburg Centre in sphere of counteraction against commercial sexual exploitation of children (printing out postcard, trainings for the staff, providing conference rooms and coffee-breaks for the events against CSEC on the reduced price, providing means of hygiene to the shelter where there are children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation etc.). Then there was a section with questions and answers and the Code of Conduct was signed.

Because of lots of other events representatives of the Code of Conduct didn’t have an opportunity to take part in the meeting but all the procedure and the document was discussed with them and the electronic signature of Mr. Kaspar Hess was put in the Code of Conduct.

Several journalists took part in the meeting. Among them there were those who write information for informational web portal from which other newspapers take the information for their articles (www.regnum.ru), representative of one of the St. Petersburg business newspaper and representative of the Journal Interbusiness. After the signature of the Code of Conduct the work against counteraction of child sex tourism in Russia will be developed.

2. Code Secretariat

Camelia Tepelus, December 7, 2007



Code Secretariat activities over the period October through December 2007 were funded under a budget extension of the UNICEF funding, applied for the same period. The following activities took place between Oct –Dec. 2007:

- **Participating to the Code ExCom meeting in NYC on Oct. 19, 2007**, which aimed to clarify several internal organizational aspects of the Code ExCom and Secretariat work, and welcomed new ECPAT International representative Giorgio Berardi in the Code ExCom. A meeting of ExCom members Kaspar Hess and Andreas Müseler took place with UNICEF representatives on Oct. 18.
- **Providing technical assistance and support for the Code partners** in following the Code standard procedure (application & action plan) with interested tourism companies:
 - **Canada** - the Code Secretariat supported Beyond Borders (ECPAT affiliate in Canada) to achieve the first signing of the Code by Incursion Voyages on Oct. 26. Other Canadian companies, notably the Canadian Association of travel Agencies (ACTA) are also in the process to become signatories. A training in French is in course of preparation with the input of Luc Ferran, former ECPAT International Child Sex Tourism officer.

- **Kenya** (respect Austria), towards the Code signing on December 8, 2007, attended by Code Chair Kaspar Hess (see information in the Respect Austria input)
- **Russia** – partner Stellit succeeded to sign the Code with Accor properties (3 hotels) in St.Petersburg, on Nov. 19, 2007. Stellit representatives Olga Kolpakova and Olga Levina visited the Code Secretariat office at ECPAT USA on Nov. 30, 2007.
- **Albania** – OSCE presence in Albania succeeded in organizing the signing of 22 Albanian hotels and tour operators in Tirana, on Nov. 19 (see additional information).
- **Guatemala** –the Code Secretariat assisted ECPAT Guatemala in preparing the first signature of the Code in Guatemala by INGUAT (governmental agency, in collaboration with UNICEF Guatemala).
- **Mexico** – ECPAT USA expanded the Code implementation project in Playa del Carmen and Cozumel (see input of ECPAT USA).
- **Sub-Saharan Africa** – Accor Hotels will expand the implementation of the Code in 17 countries in French –speaking Africa:

All the new signatory companies that have signed the Code in these countries specified above have followed the **Code Standardized Procedure** that was established in 2006.

- Before the end of 2007, the Code Secretariat will submit to UNICEF a report for the activity 2006-2007, together with an analytical overview of the activity over the entire period 2004-2007 when the Code Secretariat was funded through the contribution of Code StCom member Japan Committee for UNICEF, processed through UNICEF Innocenti Research Center, and based on a MoU between UNICEF Child Protection Hqs in New York and ECPAT USA housing the Secretariat office.
- The Code Secretariat will also proceed to submit a proposal for UNICEF funding extension for the period January – December 2008.
- **A Code Steering Committee meeting will take place on December 13 in Paris**, hosted by UNEP. The main purpose of the meeting is to hold a brainstorming regarding the Code fundraising strategy.
- **A training for the monitoring of the Code implementation in Belize (Feb 2008)** will be commissioned by ECPAT USA and carried out by the Code Secretariat within the framework of the ECPAT USA project “Protect Children in Tourism”. The training will be carried out for the NGO NOPCAN (www.nopcan.org) which is the official partner of ECPAT USA in Belize. Meetings will also be carried out with the ECPAT USA PCT Project Director Amaya Renobales, BTIA (Belize Tourism Industry Association) and UNICEF Belize.

The Code ExCom established the date for the **2008 Annual General Meeting** to take place on **Saturday, March 8, 2008**, 9.00 – 12.30 in Berlin in connection with the ITB, at the venue of DRV (to be confirmed).

- **Code development in Albania (see also information from OSCE)**

Retrieved from: <http://www.crin.org/enoc/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=15670>

[TIRANA, 19 November 2007] - Twenty two tour and hotel operators in Albania have signed the Code of Conduct for Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation. The signing ceremony was organized as a joint event with the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Interior and tour operators in the country.



The ceremony took place at Tirana Hotel International, a signatory party itself, and was attended by governmental officials, civil society organizations and tour operators. The signing of the Code of the Conduct was welcomed by the OSCE vice-Ambassador in Tirana, vice-minister of Tourism, the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Representative of OSCE/OCEEA office in Vienna, Representative of WTO Code Secretariat and UNICEF representatives in Albania.

This is the first time ever in Albania that tour operators have signed such a code. The signing was accompanied by a national awareness campaign, and the preparation of a Training Manual for the Code and awareness materials. In the next few days OSCE will organize training courses for hotel and tour operators that have signed the Code in order to improve implementation.

3. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Helen Santiago Fink, Dec. 7, 2007



On 19 November, 22 Albanian members of the tourism industry officially signed the Code of Conduct in Tirana, raising the importance of child protection and sustainable tourism higher on the national agenda. The signing was

immediately followed-up by training for the staff of the signatory hotels, tours operators and agencies.



The OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) project that promoted the Code of Conduct in Albania received the valuable support of the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Interior/National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and the OSCE Presence in Albania, through an Memorandum of Understanding, to ensure political commitment throughout the process and allowed the Code to be referenced in newly developed tourism legislation. The project, implemented in parallel in Montenegro, was funded predominately by GTZ and led to the production of various informational materials, including a factsheet on Code implementation,

<http://www.gtzt.de/de/dokumente/en-lessons-learned-tourism-osce-2007.pdf>, and posters distributed throughout Albania and its border crossings.

4. ECPAT USA

Amaya Renobales, November 28, 2007

ECPAT USA organizes the signing of the Code in Riviera Maya and Cozumel, and makes several trainings in the region.

Playa del Carmen, Mexico, Sept. 7th, Municipality. 15 tourism associations sign the Code of Conduct and start implementation. The Code was signed in the presence of the President of DIF Quintana Roo and Governor's wife, Mrs. Narcedalia Martín de González, President of DIF Solidaridad and President of the Municipality's wife, Mrs. Gabriela Rejón de Joaquín, the Executive Director of ECPAT USA, Mrs. Carol Smolenski and other authorities and representatives of the private sector.



Signing ceremony of the Code in Playa del Carmen, on Sept. 7, 2007.

All the representative associations of the tourism sector signed: The Riviera Maya Enterprises Association (Consejo Coordinador Empresarial), The Hotel Association (with 126 members), the Small Hotels Association, the Travel Agency Association, the Tulum Hotel Association, the Taxis Unions of Playa del Carmen and Tulum, the Public Transportation Unions of Playa del Carmen and Tulum, the second biggest workers union in the Country (CROC, with more than 20,000 members in the State), the Riviera Maya Women Workers Association, the public Media enterprise (Sistema Quintanarroense de Comunicación Social), the 5ta. Avenida magazine and the Aquatic Services Providers Association (APSA). The social welfare department (DIF) and the tourism department of the Municipality also signed.

Up to now, ECPAT USA has done 4 trainings to these associations, in which 60 people have participated. The purpose of the trainings is to train future trainers of each association who will give the information to all enterprises and their employees on how to prevent children sexual exploitation by the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

Cozumel, Mexico, November 21st, Municipality. 10 tourism associations and enterprises sign the Code of Conduct and start implementation. The Code was signed in the presence of the President of the Municipality, Mr. Gustavo Ortega Joaquin, his wife and President of DIF Cozumel, Mrs. Dalila Negrón de Ortega, the Quintana Roo State DIF Director, Mrs. Lizbeth Loy Gamboa Song, the Cozumel DIF Director, Mrs. Bertha Rosado Rodriguez, the Project Director of ECPAT USA, Mrs. Amaya Renobales, and other authorities and representatives of the private sector.



Code signing ceremony in Cozumel, on Nov. 21, 2007.

As well as in Playa del Carmen, all the most representative association of the tourism sector signed in this little and beautiful island: The Hotel Association (22 members), the Taxis Union, the 3 biggest enterprises associations (Consejo Coordinador Empresarial, CANACO, CANACINTRA and COPARMEX), the Cozumel Women Workers Association, Atlantis Submarine, Ernesto's Restaurant and Uch Mezo y Asociados. The President of the Municipality and DIF also signed.

Two trainings have been done in Cozumel by ECPAT USA, in which 50 people have been trained to be future trainers of the associations mentioned. The local Police, Civil Protection authorities and the Judiciary Power have also been trained in these.

Following initial funding from the Body Shop Foundation for these activities, from November 2007, ECPAT USA started a 2 year project to expand the "Protect Children in Tourism"(PCT) project in Mexico Riviera Maya, Cancun and Cozumel with US State Department funding. This is an extension of the first phase of the PCT project that introduced the Code in Cancun (2004-2006).

ECPAT USA notifies of a temporary change of domain name and email addresses. Please note the new information is: website www.ecpat.us.org; emails: Amaya Renobales (arenobales@ecpat.us.org), Carol Smolenski (csmolenski@ecpat.us.org).

ECPAT USA invites holiday shopping of merchandise made by survivors of human trafficking. By using the code "ECPAT USA" a 25% discount will be applied to items purchased at www.madebysurvivors.com.

5. Beyond Borders, Canada

Rosalind Prober, Suzanne Chicoine, October 2, 2007

Media representatives attended the first Canadian signature of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Commercial Exploitation in Travel and Tourism by the travel agency Incursion Voyages from Quebec City. The event took place during the 19th edition of Montreal's International Tourism and Travel Show, held in Montreal on October 26, 2007.



Suzanne Chicoine (Beyond Borders), Jean-Pierre Caron (Incursion Voyages), Rosalind Prober (ECPAT)



M. Jean-Pierre Caron, president of Incursion Voyages, and Rosalind Prober, president of Beyond Borders and board member of ECPAT International, signed this agreement before representatives of the Canadian Association of Travel Agencies (ACTA), the Association of National Tourist Office Representatives (ANTOR), as well as Mr. Jean Provencher, CEO of the International Tourism and Travel Show (ITTS).

Incursion Voyages recently named "Travel agency of the year in Canada 2007" by ACTA, was the first Canadian company to adopt it. Canada is Directly involved in this problem, as shown by the recent arrest of the presumed pedophile Christopher Neil in Thailand.

6. ECPAT International

Giorgio Berardi, Patchareeboon Sakulpitakphon (Mam), October 3, 2007

Press release:

Kuoni Group Committed to Protecting Children



Bangkok, Thailand; November 5 – 6, 2007 –

“We do not do business at the cost of the weakest!” said Mrs. Fausta Borsani, Head of Corporate Responsibility for Kuoni Group. She has come to Thailand to be a special guest speaker at the **Greater Mekong Sub-regional Seminar on Protecting Children from Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in Tourism (Nov, 5-6, 2007)**. Speaking to an audience composed of delegates from the six governments: Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam in addition to representatives from local and international NGOs, UN agencies and the private sector, Mrs. Borsani received significant applause from the audience. Kuoni Group, one of the world’s largest tour operators, was one of the representatives of the tourism private sector at the event.

Mrs. Borsani works to promote corporate responsibility, sustainable tourism, and to encourage cooperation between government, NGOs, and the private sector. When asked why Kuoni Group is involved on this issue, she replied that, “As a member of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, Kuoni is committed to take action to inform and train its stakeholders in order to prevent this crime. It is a part of our corporate responsibility.”

Working with ECPAT International and Kuoni’s subsidiary company, Asian Trails, training workshops have been conducted in Pattaya, Samui, Phuket and Bangkok within Thailand. Similar workshops have been conducted in Kenya and Dominican Republic to sensitize the hotels that work with Kuoni Group. Mrs. Borsani says of the trainings, “In these workshops, we discuss the measures the hotel has to take in order to prevent child abuse in its premises. We also state clearly that we will break any contract with a hotel if we have evidence to show that they tolerate child sex tourism.” Clearly committed, Kuoni Group is in the forefront among tourism companies in fighting child sex tourism.

For more information, you may contact:

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Training of staff of Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa (Thailand)

ECPAT International Patchareeboon Sakulpitakphon (Mam), Programme Associate, Combating Child Sex Tourism & Trafficking for Sexual Purposes conducted a Code & Child Sex Tourism Training for Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa on November 12 – 13, 2007 in Phuket, Thailand. The training addressed upper management (2 hours) and then a separate training of trainers (6 hours) for the hotel. The training focused on the Code of Conduct, how to implement it, the issue of child sex tourism, how to report cases and making the procedure fit into Evason's daily operation to protect children of sexual exploitation in tourism.



ECPAT International Patchareeboon Sakulpitakphon with staff of Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa.

In the upcoming months, this training will be given to the approximately 600 staff members of the resort. The hotel is very committed to implementing the Code and protecting children.

Information from the UN WTO Task Force meetings in London, Nov 11-12

Giorgio Berardi, the ECPAT International Programme Officer for Combating Child Sex Tourism, took part in the meetings of the Executive Committee of the UN WTO Task Force for the Protection of Children in Tourism and the Task Force itself in London on 11th and 12th November 2007 respectively. The focus of both meetings was the drafting and provisional approval of the text of a new mission document for the Task Force expanding its mandate to the protection of children from abuse in general in travel and tourism, and not only from sexual exploitation. The approved draft of the document is to be made available for further comments on the UN WTO web site in view of the March 2008 meeting in Berlin.

A major feature of the Task Force meeting was a special session on “Successful strategies and good practices against sexual exploitation of children in tourism”, with presentations by Ms Ruth Allen (CEOP, UK), Ms Anita Dodds (ChildWise, Australia) and Mr Hamish McCulloch (ICPO-INTERPOL) in the field of law enforcement. Ms Katarzyna Gontarczyk (Starwood Hotels, Poland) presented a case from the perspective of the hospitality sector, while Ms Cheryl Perera (OneChild, Canada) gave her contribution as an NGO representative. Reports on actions and measures taken to protect children from exploitation and abuse in tourism were presented by Rev. Fr. Jeremy Fairhead (Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Holy See); Ms Susan Bissell (UNICEF IRC, Italy); Ms Renate Penitz (Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, Austria) and Giorgio Berardi (ECPAT International, Thailand, and – also – on behalf of the Code Organisation).

7. ECPAT Netherlands

Theo Noten, December 10, 2007

Research on motives of the Dutch travel industry for not signing the Code of Conduct

Internationally many tour operators have already signed and applied the ECPAT Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. However, in the Netherlands only two tour operators have committed themselves to the Code of Conduct. Because of this difference with other countries ECPAT the Netherlands asked a student of the Academy of Tourism Management of NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences to conduct research to get insight in the motives of Dutch tour operators for not participating in the Code of Conduct.

The research was done between January and June 2007 among a selected group of tour operators, with an offer of organised tours to at least five different known risk destinations.

The research showed that some of the Dutch tour operators had never heard of the Code of Conduct, other tour operators feared that **clients will be scared away** when they give attention to this problem and other organizations claimed the Code of Conduct does not apply to them because they only offer organised group tours and expeditions. Furthermore, it appeared that **organizations were not familiar enough with the Code of Conduct** to be able to assess the strong points of it. Besides, the majority of the organizations said to have **doubts about the responsibility of the travel industry** in the matter of child sex tourism because it's the **individual tourists' behaviour**.

Nevertheless most of the tour operators were convinced of the value and usefulness of the Code of Conduct. Finally, the overall impression regarding the willingness of tour operators to become involved was positive and almost everybody indicated to be open for negotiations to assess the potential for adopting the Code of Conduct. Since then ECPAT the Netherlands has started negotiating with some of these tour operators.

8. ECPAT Guatemala

Maria Eugenia Villareal, December 11, 2007



With great satisfaction ECPAT Guatemala is sharing the news that today Dec. 11, at 6 pm, the Code of Conduct will be signed in Guatemala by INGUAT (Guatemala Institute of Tourism). Daniel Mooney, Director of INGUAT, Manuel Manrique (UNICEF) and ECPAT Guatemala will present to the audience the importance of this event for the protection of Guatemalan children from Commercial Sexual Exploitation, before signing the document.

We are very happy that after 4 years of experiences, we have finally succeeded to get the acknowledgement of the Guatemalan state. A more detailed report will follow in the next issue of this newsletter.

9. RESPECT Austria

Katarina Westman, Dec 10 2007

2nd signing of the Code in Kenya

December 8, 2007 at Coral Key Beach resort, Malindi: "More Kenyan Hotels to



becoming active in preventing child sex tourism – 17 additional hotels sign the international Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism "

The second signing of the Code took place on the 8th December 2007, 15.00-17.00h at the Coral Key Beach resort Malindi under the auspices of the Hon. Morris Dzoro, Minister of Tourism and Wildlife (the minister was not able to attend in person, due to campaigning commitments), and representatives from the Department of Children's services, Ministry for Home Affairs, The Code Executive Committee, UNICEF, Austrian Embassy and Save the Children Sweden.

In February 2006 the first signing of the Code of Conduct in Kenya took place, at that time 20 hotels, and KAHK, KATO, MCTA, HRA and Ministry of Tourism and

Wildlife signed. The signatories have to fulfil the six criteria's of the Code (see below). The Implementing partner SOLWODI, has during 2007 carried out 21 trainings in Ukunda, Kilifi, Mombasa and Malindi Districts and 4 awareness raising events in Ukunda, Mombasa , Mtwapa and at the Mombasa public beach.

The following additional 20 hotels signed the Code

1. Eden Roc Hotel – Malindi	10. Diani Sea Resort - Kwale
2. Severin Sea Lodge – Mombasa	11. Pine wood Village – Kwale
3. Kahama Hotels – Mombasa	12. Tiwi beach hotel – Kwale
4. Travelers Beach Hotel – Mombasa	13. Kahama Hotel – Mombasa
5. Excellent hotels – Mombasa	14. Blue Edge Lodge – Mombasa
6. Mnarani Club – Kilifi	15. Scorpio Villas – Malindi
7. Ocean Sport Club – Malindi	16. Stephanie Beach House – Malindi
8. Kilili Baharini Cottages – Malindi	17. Plan Hotel Kenya LTD – Malindi
9. Woburn Club – Malindi	18. Exellent Hotel – Mombasa
	19. Utange Hotels – Mombasa

The implementation of the Code of Conduct in Kenya since 2004 is supported by: The Austrian Development Cooperation (ADA), UNICEF Kenya Country office and Save the Children, Sweden, Hotelplan Switzerland and the City Council of Vienna/Department for Cooperation and Development. Partners in Kenya are the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, KAHK, KATO, KTB, MCTA and others. Implementing partner with responsibility to raise awareness and share information about the code. Including conducting trainings, sharing information material, monitoring and continuous lobbying for new signings of the CC to take place is Solidarity with women in distress (SOLWODI).

Solwodi, Solidarity with women in distress, P.O.Box 17038-80100, Mombasa, Kenya. Physical address: Solwodi house, Arch Bishop Makarios Road - Ganjoni Tel. +254-041-2222327, Email: Solwodi@wananchi.com
<http://www.solwodi.or.ke/code/index.htm>

Media reports:

http://www.nationmedia.com/dailynation/nmgcontententry.asp?category_id=3&newsid=112319
<http://www.eastandard.net/news/?id=1143978708&cid=14>
<http://www.etn.travel/editions/10DEC2007TVLW.html>

10. Fundacion Paniamor, Costa Rica

Maria Eugenia Villareal, Dec 11, 2007



‘State of the nation’ report in sustainable human development includes comments on the Code of Conduct

Since its creation in 1994, the ‘state of the nation’ program in sustainable human development created by CONARE (Consejo Nacional de Rectores), supported important efforts to deepen the study and discussion of sustainable development in Costa Rica. The annual preparation of the ‘state of the nation’ report was the basis for this effort. This year, the report includes a “Special input: diversity of destinations and challenges of tourism in Costa Rica: the cases of Tamarindo and La Fortuna”, in which there is information on the Code of Conduct.

Section 3.30

Code of conduct for the protection of children and teenagers against commercial sexual exploitation in travel and tourism

The “Code of conduct for the protection of children and teenagers against CSEC in travel and tourism” is a project promoted in Costa Rica since 2003, with the objective to prevent CSEC of minors, in the context of tourism activities in the country. The initiative is supported technically by the Fundación Paniamor, as well as ECPAT International and WTO, which consider it a good tourism practice.

The project did not attract massive incorporation of tourism companies, but those which, through the incorporation of specific criteria and obligations included in the Code, are companies interested in positioning themselves in a

national and international context – as responsible and sustainable tourism companies. Since its introduction, the Code managed to attract 100% of tourism chambers operating in Costa Rica, as well as the affiliation of 127 hotels, 3 being



in Tamarindo and 11 in the tourism region of Llanuras del Norte. In these localities where it was observed a higher incidence of the issue of CSEC of minors, other types of actions were preferred, going beyond preventive actions such as the Code and more along the lines of corrective and prosecution activities together with the law enforcement authorities, which is why the training of civil servants in charge of these was needed.

Since its beginning the Code was interpreted as a private initiative, which generated interest from the tourism businesses (tour operators, hotels, rent a car agencies and taxi drivers, and consolidated the commitment of the industry. This practice is inspired in the CSR policies and horizontal social control which these companies are interested in, which leads to the exclusion of those service providers which are acting in a manner that is not according to the spirit of the Code. As part of the monitoring and control activities, the companies commit to present an annual report of the actions carried out in the framework of this initiative. Among the tourism professionals, the adoption of the Code was considered a status indicator, as well as an element of convenience. Recently, the implementation was associated to the obtaining of the Certificate of Tourism Sustainability (CST), which is why the interest of the concerned companies was improved.

Furthermore, the sector recognized in this initiative an opportunity to strengthen the positioning of Costa Rica in an international context. Among the expectations for the future is the institutionalization of the Code, which is why it is hoped that in Dec. 2008 Fundación Paniamor can release itself from the role of promoting the process and technical assistance, in such a way that the relevant state authorities take this responsibility, without missing the participation of the private sector.

THANK YOU
INPUTS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER ARE WELCOME BY
March 21, 2008