



AGORA

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Module 7

Communication and Promotion of Regenerative Tourism Experiences

Developed by GreenEscape Oy



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEARNING OUTCOMES	3
MODULE IN A NUTSHELL	5
Unit_7.1 Theoretical concept of Communication & Promotion of regenerative tourism:	7
Unit_7.2 Resources and Tools for Communication and Promotion:	12
Unit_7.3 Case studies and Best Practices from across the globe of the practical application of Regenerative tourism	21
GLOSSARY	23
FOOD FOR THOUGHT	26
WORKSHEETS	28
EXTRA RESOURCES	30
REFERENCES	31





LEARNING OUTCOMES

After you have completed the module, you will,

Knowledge

- Understand and apply a comprehensive participatory strategy that integrates communication and promotion of regenerative tourism experiences, to achieve social and commercial goals.
- Assess and select appropriate tools for communicating and promoting regenerative tourism experiences to diverse audiences.

Skills

- Articulate the importance of communication and promotion in fostering regenerative tourism practices.
- Identify different communication channels best suited for engaging different target audience segments.
- Learn about different tools available for developing compelling narratives around regenerative tourism experiences.
- Recognise partnerships as examples of successful collaborative efforts in regenerative tourism.
- Identify the optimal promotion and distribution channels to attract and engage potential visitors.

Competences

- Demonstrate the ability to implement best practices in communication and promotion to enhance the impact of regenerative tourism.



- Utilise storytelling techniques to convey the unique features and benefits of regenerative tourism experiences.

Duration: This module requires a commitment of approximately 20 hours of preparatory, implementation and follow-up work, including instructional time, hands-on activities, and project work.



MODULE IN A NUTSHELL

The rapid growth of global tourism has highlighted the pressing need for updated practices, emphasising the necessity for a more innovative, holistic, and participatory approach. In response, regenerative tourism emerges as an evolving paradigm, transcending the principles of sustainable tourism. It represents a fundamental shift in the industry, moving beyond mere sustainability to actively improve and revitalise destinations.

At the core of regenerative tourism lies effective communication and promotion. These elements are fundamental in shaping public perception, influencing behaviours, and fostering engagement among stakeholders. By aligning the interests of tourists, local communities, and stakeholders, effective communication and promotion contribute significantly to the success of regenerative tourism. Overall, regenerative tourism is an emerging concept that seeks to restore and enhance the social, environmental, and economic systems of destinations. Through comprehensive communication and promotion strategies, it strives to achieve commercial and social objectives while representing a paradigm shift in the tourism industry.

This module at the outset, provides an in-depth look at the communication and promotion strategies; two different yet interconnected aspects, essential for advancing regenerative tourism.



- **Communication:** The process of sharing information, ideas, and messages among tourism stakeholders to build relationships and partnerships, promoting mutual understanding, transparency, and trust.
- **Promotion:** A set of specific means and actions designed to highlight the most attractive and innovative attributes of a tourism product, service, or concept thereby increasing awareness, interest, visibility, and engagement from potential visitors.

Additionally, the module includes theoretical concepts, case studies, best practices, and practical resources to help learners understand and apply effective communication and promotion techniques in the context of regenerative tourism, presented as distinct units:

- **Theoretical Concept of Communication & Promotion of Regenerative Tourism:**

Learners will understand the theoretical framework of communication and promotion in regenerative tourism, analyse their role in achieving objectives, develop comprehensive plans, and assess ethical implications.

- **Resources and Tools for Communication and Promotion:** Learners will familiarise themselves with a variety of tools and engaging media for effective communication and promotion, aiming to reach and engage a broad and diverse audience.
Case studies and Best Practices from across the globe
Learners will explore the educational content, which includes case



studies and success stories showcasing real-world best practices and initiatives in regenerative tourism.

7.1 Theoretical Concept of Communication & Promotion of Regenerative Tourism

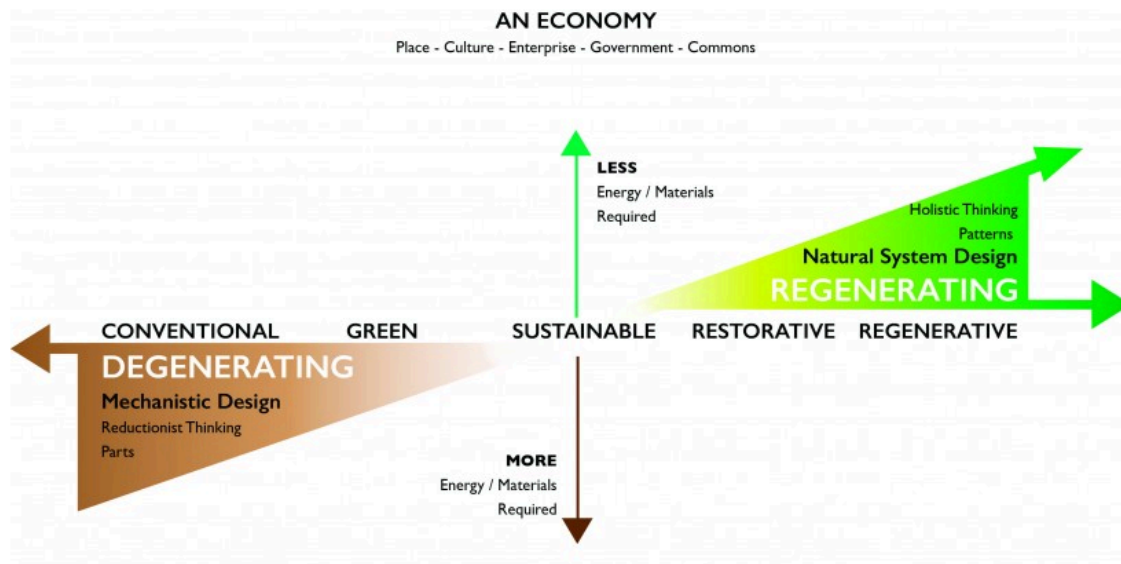
Regenerative tourism is defined as, “a transformational approach that aims to fulfil the potential of tourism places to flourish and create net positive effects through increasing the regenerative capacity of human societies and ecosystems” (Bellato, Frantzeskaki, & Nygaard, 2022. p. 9).

Sustainable tourism vs Regenerative tourism

Emerging uniquely from an ecological perspective and regenerative paradigm, regenerative tourism stands apart from sustainable tourism in its approach. While sustainable tourism often treats tourism as an industry and implements standardised interventions to manage social and economic impacts, regenerative tourism operates at the grassroots level. It focuses on nurturing entire systems for renewal rather than merely managing their impacts. Engaging within local contexts, regenerative tourism practices reflection and immersive co-creation with the environment, prioritising inclusive collaboration and synergy with economic development. In contrast to sustainable tourism's goal of minimising social-ecological harm, regenerative tourism aims to actively foster positive impacts on social-ecological systems (Bellato et al., 2022). To sum up, while



sustainability has become a standard practice in the tourism industry, focusing on maintaining economic, environmental, and social aspects without damaging them, regenerative tourism takes it a step further by striving to enhance destinations beyond their original state.



Kosmos Journal

In communication, both sustainable and regenerative tourism strategies require collaboration. Sustainable tourism actively seeks stakeholder feedback to improve initiatives. Regenerative tourism takes a step further by fostering a decentralised, interconnected communication approach, giving all stakeholders a continuous voice. It emphasises co-designing with DMOs, local communities, regional environmental stewards, and distribution channels to ensure tourism initiatives are sustainable, culturally respectful, and economically beneficial.



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In the following section, we will explore the role and importance of communication and promotion in the context of Regenerative Tourism and their theoretical underpinnings.

The Role of Communication and Promotion in Regenerative Tourism

Regenerative tourism is still emerging and requires additional outreach to gain momentum. Therefore, effective communication strategies are crucial for fostering engagement and promoting positive impacts on environments, cultures, and communities. Effective communication in regenerative tourism involves various strategies to facilitate behavioural, organisational, political, or social changes aligned with mitigation and adaptation goals. Moser (2006) defines effective communication as any public engagement that achieves these changes.

Among the array of communication models, this module adopts Van der Linden's (2014) communication styles which are based on psychological and social science theories that aim to understand how individuals perceive and respond to information, particularly in the context of climate change and sustainability. His typology includes the Cognitive-Analytical Type, the Affective-Experiential Type, and the Social-Normative Type. The ensuing section looks at how communication styles can be adapted to Regenerative tourism.

- 1. The Cognitive-Analytical Type:** This communication type relies on the traditional *knowledge-attitude-behaviour* model, which



suggests providing detailed information can encourage people to adopt best practices.

In regenerative tourism, the cognitive-analytical approach can be instrumental in educating tourists and stakeholders about the principles of regeneration, the importance of ecological balance, and the benefits of sustainable practices. By presenting factual data and logical arguments, this method can raise awareness and foster a deeper understanding of the need for regenerative actions. However, while it is effective for building a foundational knowledge base, it may be insufficient in driving emotional engagement and immediate behaviour change, which are often required in dynamic tourism contexts.

2. The Affective-Experiential Type: This approach leverages emotional appeals and experiential learning to influence behaviour.

In the context of regenerative tourism, affective-experiential communication can create strong emotional connections between tourists and the destinations they visit. By highlighting the beauty and fragility of ecosystems, and using compelling stories or experiences that evoke empathy, this type can motivate tourists to participate in regenerative activities. Fear and guilt can be powerful motivators, but positive emotions such as hope and pride in contributing to environmental restoration have proven to be more effective. This method encourages tourists to develop a personal connection with the places they visit, promoting a sense of responsibility and motivation to



take initiative.

3. The Social-Normative Type: This communication type relies on social norms and peer influence, to shape behaviour.

In regenerative tourism, social-normative strategies can be used to create a culture of regeneration among tourists and local communities. By showcasing examples of regenerative practices and highlighting the positive behaviour of others, this approach can encourage individuals to conform to these norms. Peer assessment and social approval play significant roles in this type, making it effective in fostering community-wide participation in regenerative efforts. Public recognition of regenerative actions and the use of trendsetting forums can further reinforce these behaviours, creating a ripple effect that spreads through social networks.

In conclusion, each communication type has a distinct role in promoting regenerative tourism. The cognitive-analytical type builds a solid knowledge base, the affective-experiential type drives emotional engagement and personal investment, and the social-normative type leverages social influences to establish and reinforce regenerative practices.

Van der Linden's (2014) communication styles are particularly relevant in regenerative tourism because they align with the essence and principles of regenerative practices:

- **Holistic Approach:** Regenerative tourism aims to go beyond traditional sustainability by actively improving and restoring environments, cultures, and communities. Van der Linden's typology supports this by addressing cognitive (knowledge and



understanding), affective (emotional connection), and social (community norms and collective action) aspects of behaviour change, which are essential for fostering a holistic approach in regenerative tourism.

- **Engagement and Participation:** Regenerative tourism emphasises inclusive and participatory approaches where stakeholders, including tourists, local communities, and businesses, are actively involved in decision-making and implementation. Van der Linden's affective-experiential and social-normative styles encourage engagement by fostering emotional connections and leveraging social dynamics, thereby enhancing participation in regenerative initiatives.
- **Behavioural Change:** Effective communication according to Van der Linden's styles is instrumental in promoting behavioural change towards more sustainable practices. In regenerative tourism, this translates into encouraging tourists to contribute positively to local environments and cultures, fostering a sense of responsibility and stewardship.

Overall, Van der Linden's communication styles provide a structured framework for understanding and implementing communication strategies that are not only effective in promoting sustainable behaviours but also align with the transformative goals of regenerative tourism. They help in fostering a deeper connection between individuals, communities, and their environments, thereby supporting sustainable development and regeneration.



7.2 Resources and Tools for Communication and Promotion

Effective communication and promotion are vital in the field of regenerative tourism for several key reasons:

1. Raising Awareness:

Effective communication helps raise awareness about the principles and benefits of regenerative tourism. It educates tourists, local communities, and stakeholders on the importance of preserving and enhancing the natural, cultural, and social environments they interact with. By disseminating information on regenerative practices, potential participants can understand the positive impacts their involvement can have.

2. Encouraging Participation:

Promoting regenerative tourism initiatives encourages broader participation from tourists and local communities. Clear and compelling communication can motivate individuals to engage in activities that contribute to the health and well-being of the destinations they visit. Communication strategies can drive active engagement by highlighting opportunities for involvement, such as volunteer programs or eco-friendly tours.

3. Building Trust and Transparency:



Transparent communication builds trust among stakeholders. When tourism operators and local communities clearly communicate their goals, methods, and the impacts of their regenerative efforts, it fosters a sense of accountability and reliability. This trust is crucial for gaining the support and cooperation of tourists, local residents, and other stakeholders.

4. Fostering Community Engagement:

Effective communication facilitates collaboration between tourism operators, local communities, and tourists. By promoting inclusive dialogue and feedback mechanisms, stakeholders can work together to identify and address the unique needs and challenges of their specific contexts. This collaborative approach ensures that regenerative tourism initiatives are tailored to local conditions and are more likely to succeed.

5. Highlighting Success Stories:

Promotion helps showcase successful examples of regenerative tourism. By sharing case studies, testimonials, and stories of positive change, communication can inspire others to adopt similar practices. These success stories serve as powerful motivators, demonstrating the tangible benefits of regenerative tourism and encouraging wider adoption.

6. Influencing Behaviour:

Communication strategies can influence the behaviour of tourists and stakeholders. Regenerative tourism can address different aspects of



human psychology and decision-making by using various communication types—cognitive-analytical, affective-experiential, and social-normative. For example, providing factual information, creating emotional connections, and leveraging social norms can collectively drive more sustainable and regenerative behaviours.

7. Driving Market Demand:

The promotion of regenerative tourism can create market demand for more sustainable and regenerative travel options. As awareness grows, more tourists seek experiences that align with their values, leading to an increase in demand for eco-friendly and community-focused tourism. This shift in consumer preferences can encourage more tourism operators to adopt regenerative practices.

8. Supporting Policy and Advocacy:

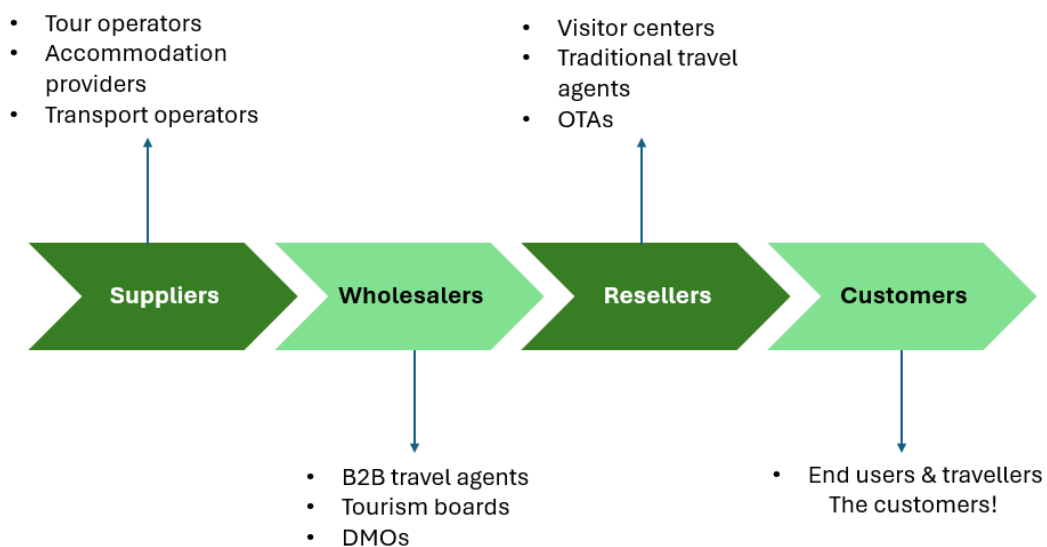
Effective communication and promotion can support policy advocacy and the development of supportive regulatory frameworks. By communicating the benefits and successes of regenerative tourism to policymakers and stakeholders, advocates can help shape policies that encourage and facilitate regenerative practices within the tourism industry.

9. Enhancing Visitor Experience :



Communication enhances the overall visitor experience by providing meaningful and educational content. Tourists who are well-informed about the regenerative aspects of their travel can gain a deeper appreciation and connection to the places they visit, making their experience more rewarding.

Distribution channels also play a vital role in enhancing customer experience through the seamless working of all the stakeholders integrating various touchpoints and ensuring consistency, efficiency, and personalised engagement throughout the customer journey.



The Chain of Distribution. Adapted from [How do travel and tourism distribution channels work?](#)

To achieve effective outreach, regenerative tourism can adapt and utilise tools that also adopt the *cognitive-analytical*, *affective-experiential*, and *social-normative* communication types, including innovative platforms like the metaverse, in the following ways.





1. Multi-channel Digital Platforms

Interactive Websites and Apps: Developing dedicated online platforms, websites, and travel blogs offering comprehensive resources to educate users on participating in and supporting regenerative tourism initiatives.

Social Media Platforms: Utilising platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube to share engaging content, success stories, and educational material about regenerative tourism practices.

Content Marketing: Creating blogs, videos, and articles that tell compelling stories about regenerative tourism initiatives.

Email Marketing: Using newsletters to keep your audience informed and engaged.

Metaverse: Establishing a presence in the metaverse by creating virtual experiences and destinations that showcase regenerative tourism projects. Virtual tours, interactive exhibitions, and immersive storytelling in the metaverse can engage a global audience and inspire support for regenerative initiatives.

2. Affective-Experiential Type: Emotional Engagement and Immersive Experiences

Storytelling and Personal Narratives: Using powerful stories and personal accounts to create an emotional connection. These narratives can be shared through blogs, social media, and documentaries.



Immersive Experiences and Volunteer Programs: Offering hands-on opportunities for tourists to participate in regenerative activities, fostering a deeper emotional connection.

Visual and Artistic Media: Utilising photographs, videos, and art installations to showcase the beauty and vulnerability of the environments and communities involved.

Events and Festivals: Hosting events that celebrate local culture and biodiversity, incorporating interactive elements to engage participants with regenerative practices directly.

Metaverse: Leveraging the metaverse to create immersive and emotionally engaging virtual experiences. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) can create a feeling of being present and actively involved in regenerative tourism activities that strengthen emotional connections and support.

3. Cognitive-Analytical Type: Educational Campaigns and Informative Content

Educational Workshops and Seminars: Organising sessions providing detailed information about regenerative tourism for tourists, local communities, and tour operators.

Detailed Reports and Case Studies: Publishing and distributing materials explaining the benefits of regenerative tourism, backed by data and success stories.

Certifications and Accreditation: Creating certification programs for



tourism operators that meet regenerative criteria, demonstrating their commitment to tourists.

Metaverse: Using the metaverse as an educational tool by creating virtual classrooms and learning modules that offer interactive and engaging content about regenerative tourism principles and practices.

4. Social-Normative Type: Leveraging Social Influence and Community Engagement

Word of Mouth: Encouraging satisfied travellers to share their experiences with friends and family, generating organic promotion through personal recommendations.

Community-Led Initiatives: Encouraging local communities to lead regenerative tourism projects, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.

Familiarization Tours: Often referred to as "FAM tour" or "FAM trip," these educational trips are designed to help travel agents, tour operators, media representatives, and other stakeholders gain firsthand experience of sustainable and restorative practices. These tours educate participants on the benefits of regenerative tourism, enabling them to better promote and sell these destinations to their clients.

Peer Influence and Social Proof: Using endorsements from influential figures, brand ambassadors, and testimonials to promote regenerative practices. Sharing positive behaviours and success stories can encourage others to follow suit.

Collaborative Platforms and Networks: Creating platforms where



stakeholders can share ideas, resources, and feedback, spreading best practices and innovative solutions.

Recognition and Awards: Implementing recognition programs that reward contributions to regenerative tourism, motivating others to participate and excel.

Influencer Partnerships: Working with influencers who share your values to amplify your message. Influencer marketing can significantly enhance the reach and impact of regenerative tourism messages.

5. Integrated Approach: Combining Communication Types for Maximum Impact

Holistic Campaigns: Developing integrated communication campaigns incorporating elements from all three types. For example, it starts with educational content (cognitive-analytical), followed by emotional stories and immersive experiences (affective-experiential), and reinforced with community endorsements and recognition programs (social-normative).

Adaptive Strategies: Continuously evaluating the efficacy of communication strategies and adjusting them in response to feedback and evolving circumstances. A flexible approach ensures messaging remains relevant and impactful.

By strategically combining these communication types, including





the innovative use of the metaverse, regenerative tourism can effectively reach diverse audiences, fostering a deeper understanding, emotional connection, and active participation in regenerative efforts. This comprehensive approach ensures the principles of regenerative tourism are communicated and embraced effectively.

7.3 Case studies and Best Practices from Across the Globe of the Practical Application of Regenerative Tourism

Regenerative tourism has seen successful communication and promotional strategies in various contexts, leveraging innovative tools to enhance its impact.

In this section, we will explore diverse examples of sustainable and regenerative tourism experiences showcased by the AGORA project's [Interactive Map](#), from diverse destinations around Europe and beyond.

The Case of 'Satoa Goes Wild' Slow Food Festival in Kuopio

When the Lakeland region of North Savo in Finland was on the path of developing its gastronomic tourism potential and expanding the gastro tourism experiences, the Taste Savo project was launched under the umbrella banner of the Kuopio European Region of



Gastronomy Capital. The idea of a Wild Food-themed Slow Food Harvest Festival, which targets domestic and international tourists alike was conceived and implemented to challenge the local chefs and food tourism entrepreneurs to develop an innovative story-telling walking menu with local wild food ingredients as the star players with multiple courses of the menu served in different restaurants. The Festival drew huge crowds from across the country and was a very innovative communication and promotional strategy showcasing the local food tourism entrepreneurs and their operations as well as urging them to work together instead of competing with each other.

The Case of VR Dinner in Lakeland

Another interesting example of using technology as a story-telling medium, combining food, sound, and visual effects is the VR Dinner in Kuopio. Each course was served as part of the narrative, with visuals and sounds that complement the flavours and textures and connected the audience with the local producers, collectors and fishers who procured the raw materials.

Another successful example is MonMon Travel, a regenerative tour company in Baltic Scandinavia. This company partners exclusively with small, locally owned suppliers to ensure economic benefits for the local communities. Their communication strategy focuses on creating enriching, authentic travel experiences rather than merely competitive pricing, which helps promote sustainable tourism practices. They also use detailed research to ensure sustainability and ethical treatment of animals, enhancing their credibility and appeal to responsible travellers.



Advanced technologies such as immersive journalism and promotional content in the metaverse have shown effectiveness in regenerative tourism. Studies suggest these tools notably improve tourists' eco-literacy and encourage pro-environmental behaviours. By creating engaging, immersive experiences, these technologies help educate tourists about regenerative practices, thereby fostering a deeper connection with the destinations they visit. This approach not only promotes sustainable behaviours but also boosts tourists' intention to adopt regenerative practices during their travels.

GLOSSARY

Regenerative Tourism

Improving destinations beyond their original state by nurturing ecosystems and enhancing social impacts.

Communication

Sharing information among stakeholders to build relationships, promote understanding, and foster engagement.

Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)

Organisation that promotes a location as an attractive travel destination.

Online Travel Agencies (OTAs)

Online travel agents that sell tourism-related products such as airline





tickets, hotel bookings, tours, activities etc.

Promotion

Actions aimed at highlighting the attractive attributes of a place, service, or product.

Metaverse

Virtual environments accessed digitally for immersive experiences and education.

Multi-Channel Engagement

Using various platforms like social media, influencers, content marketing, and the metaverse for communication.

Community-Led Initiatives

Projects initiated and driven by local communities.

Holistic Campaigns

Integrated strategies combining cognitive, emotional, and social approaches for maximum impact.

Adaptive Strategies

Flexible approaches adjusting tactics based on feedback and changing conditions for relevance and effectiveness.



Immersion and Experiential Learning

Hands-on opportunities fostering personal connections and commitment to sustainability.

Visual and Artistic Media

Use of photos, videos, and art to depict the beauty and vulnerability of subjects.

Policy and Advocacy

Communication to influence policymakers and stakeholders in supporting regulatory frameworks.

Feedback Mechanisms

Systems for collecting input to improve strategies and engagement.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

As we contemplate the future of travel, it's important to keep in mind that regenerative tourism goes beyond being a passing trend; it represents a transformative approach that integrates the health of our ecosystems with the economic prosperity of the communities we travel to. It beckons us to not only take memories but also leave legacies—legacies of conservation, cultural respect, and sustainable development. By fostering this mindset, we can ensure that our wanderlust contributes to a world where tourism is a force for good, nurturing the planet and its people.

For future considerations in this field, we invite you to:

- 1. Reflect on the nuances between communicating and promoting tourism experiences.** Understanding how each approach influences the traveller's perception and decision-making process, is essential.
- 2. Investigate the financial aspect of sustainability from the consumer's viewpoint.** Determine the cost they are willing to pay for regenerative experiences and explore tailored communication-promotion strategies that leverage this willingness to enhance regenerative tourism's growth.
- 3. Explore how cultural differences** influence the acceptance and appreciation of regenerative tourism. Recognising these differences is vital for the effective promotion and execution of such experiences.



4. Contemplate what incentives governments could offer to encourage the adoption and promotion of regenerative tourism practices, ensuring a supportive environment for sustainable growth in the industry.

In wrapping up, the journey towards regenerative tourism is not just about the destinations we visit but also about the positive footprints we leave behind. By understanding and bridging the gap between mere communication and effective promotion, assessing the economic feasibility from a traveller's lens, embracing cultural diversity, and fostering government support, we can pave the way for a more sustainable and enriching travel industry.

This module has emphatically stressed that effective communication and promotion are essential for the success of regenerative tourism. They help raise awareness, shape attitudes, and encourage participation. By understanding consumer attitudes and the impacts of events like COVID-19, DMOs can develop and implement strategies that support and enhance regenerative tourism practices.



WORKSHEETS

Scenario 1.

Articulate your understanding of the differences between various communication and promotion tools and explain how each tool is uniquely applied.

Scenario 2.

Design a marketing campaign for a new regenerative tourism product, detailing each step involved in its communication and promotion.

Feel free to refer to the following listed sequence and make changes wherever required.

Step 1: Market Research and Analysis (target audience, consumer insights, etc)

Step 2: Define Campaign Objectives (brand awareness)

Step 3: Develop the Brand Message (Unique Selling Points and benefits)

Step 4: Choose Communication Channels (Digital, Interpersonal, Traditional)

Step 5: Create Marketing Materials (visual and creative content)

Step 6: Launch the Campaign (FAM tours, social media, Sales workshops, etc)





Step 6: Monitoring, Feedback and Optimization (Key Performance Indicators, Customer feedback or Testimonials)

Step 7: Long-term engagement (vertical integration with local suppliers, tourism leaderships, etc)

Scenario 3.

List the parameters that you want to include to measure customer experience and engagement which would effectively help in optimising the experience.





EXTRA RESOURCES

- Courses on Regenerative tourism communication and promotion at The Tourism CoLab available at <https://www.thetourismcolab.com.au/>
- Examples of Regenerative tourism in Finland around Nuuksio National Park available at <https://www.hawkhill.fi/en/examples-of-regenerative-travel/>
- Saimaa Region of Gastronomy, which showcases examples of vertical integration of local tourism partners available at <https://www.tastesaimaa.fi/saimaa-european-region-of-gastronomy>
- UNWTO Tourism for SDGs available at <https://tourism4sdgs.org/initiatives/sustainable-travel-finland/>
- Visit Finland tourism strategy 2022-2015 available at <https://www.businessfinland.fi/490207/globalassets/finnish-customers/02-build-your-network/visit-finland/julkaisut/visit-finland-strategy-2021-2025-english.pdf>





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