

9

Zakynthos: Supply Chain Management and Customers' Involvement in Tourism Sustainability

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Synopsis and Learning Outcomes

This case study examines the collaborative sustainable practices adopted by three vertically integrated and sister organisations namely: Ionian Eco Villagers, Nature World Travel and Earth, Sea & Sky. The organisations are located in Zakynthos and aim to promote tourism development, while simultaneously protecting the marine life of the island. The analysis and examples of the case study explain how organisations can design, control, promote and provide a holistic sustainable tourism experience that creates shared value for all stakeholders involved by exploiting two issues: a) the vertical integration of the organisations through the tourism supply chain; and b) the creation of a stakeholders' network (including tourists, partners, suppliers, locals, volunteers, NGOs etc.) for developing collaborative sustainable practices. In analysing these approaches, the case study builds on theories related to: sustainable management based on a supply chain approach; shared (social, economic and environmental) value creation; and managing customer/people's behaviour and contributions towards sustainability. Finally, the case study discusses the affordances of social media to further enrich and expand the sustainable practices of the organisations at a global and wholly collaborative scale.

After completing this case study learners should be able to demonstrate:

- 1 The importance of managing sustainability from a tourism supply chain perspective.

- 2 The need to develop and nurture a stakeholder network for developing and implementing collaborative sustainable practices that create shared economic, social and environmental value to all stakeholders.
- 3 The importance of tourist roles and behaviour in achieving and supporting tourism sustainability.
- 4 The affordances of social media to enrich, expand and nurture the sustainable collaborative practices of organisations as well as to further empower customers to get actively involved in sustainability.

■ Background

Yannis Vardakastanis is the founder, owner and manager of three sister organisations; namely Ionian Eco Villages, Nature World Travel and Earth, Sea and Sky (<http://www.relaxing-holidays.com/>), which are based in Gerakas peninsula on the island of Zakynthos, Greece (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). These three vertically integrated organisations work together in order to create and provide unique, authentic and green holiday experiences in Zankynthos by supporting conservation, eco-friendly activities, education and immersion in local culture. In this vein, the promotion, protection and preservation of the rich natural flora and fauna of Zakynthos and the Ionian Islands are at the heart of the mission statement and strategy of the organisations.



Figure 9.1: Location of the eco-lodges operated by the Ionian Eco Villagers at Gerakas Peninsula

Source: <http://www.relaxing-holidays.com>

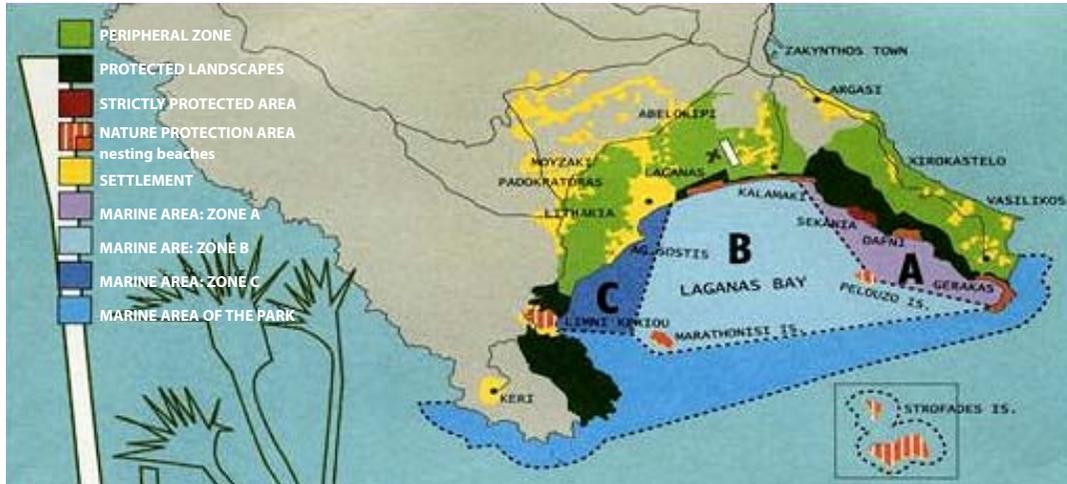


Figure 9.2: The National Marine Park of Zakynthos: Laganas Bay and Gerakas Peninsula

Source: http://www.natureworldtravel.com/marine_park.htm

Zakynthos is a vital but fragile ecosystem, as 80% of the population of the endangered species *Caretta Caretta* (the Loggerhead Sea Turtle) living in the Mediterranean nests on the beaches of Laganas Bay. Because of that, and after long-term intense lobbying from several concerned conservation groups, such as Medasset, Archelon STPS, and the WWF, a Presidential Decree was passed by the Greek Government in 1999 to establish the National Marine Park of Zakynthos (NMPZ) (<http://www.nmp-zak.org/>) in order to protect the sea turtles. The NMPZ includes (Figure 9.2): three marine zones A, B and C in the Bay of Laganas; strictly protected nesting areas; and protected terrestrial zones and peripheral areas. Several activities, such as fishing and building, are restricted in the NMPZ for the protection of the ecosystem (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1: Restriction of activities in the National Marine Park of Zakynthos (NMPZ)

Area	Restriction
Zone A	No-go area for boats; no fishing
Zone B	Boat speed up to 6 knots; no anchoring; no fishing
Zone C	Boat speed up to 6 knots; anchoring permitted; no fishing
Nesting beaches	Limits on the number of sun beds and umbrellas Sun beds and umbrellas must be stacked each night to give turtles access to the soft sand at the back of the beaches No access to the public between 7pm and 7am to stop the turtles being disturbed Wardens patrol the beaches 24h a day to inform tourists and also to stop people using the beaches after dark Existence of information boards and vehicle access barriers on each nesting beach No building on or behind nesting beaches of the NMPZ; this limits light pollution from buildings seeping on to the beaches which disturbs nesting turtles and disorients hatchlings