

## North Carolina Center for Sustainable Tourism

Division of Research and Graduate Studies

East Carolina University

[www.sustainabletourism.org](http://www.sustainabletourism.org)

[www.renewabletourism.org](http://www.renewabletourism.org)

The North Carolina Center for Sustainable Tourism (NCCST) emphasizes analyses of tourism's net impact on economic, natural, and social systems. Research at the NCCST utilizes the concepts of financial, environmental, and social accounting to quantify the impacts, ascertain potential tradeoffs, and identify synergy among these dimensions of sustainable tourism. While many opportunities exist to promote economic, environmental, and social objectives simultaneously, it is often necessary to make choices between them, especially in the short term. As planning horizons lengthen, protecting and enhancing environmental and socio-cultural objectives become more important in sustaining economic growth. Over time these three dimensions of sustainability, often referred to as the "Triple Bottom Line", reinforce each other by creating long-term approaches that simultaneously promote better jobs, higher profits, better natural environments, and stronger social/cultural dimensions.

**Program Criteria:** All projects and programs should satisfy four inter-related criteria in order to increase the relevance of the Center's research, teaching, and outreach efforts. First, they should contribute to developing, testing, and refining of analytical models and research tools to better explain the benefits and costs of travel and tourism in terms of net impacts on financial, environmental, and social/cultural formation. Second, they should add to a collection of local, national and international tourism data sources, case studies, best practices, and other information to ensure that academic and business research is based on solid and up-to-date information. Third, they should encourage collaboration within and outside the university to develop innovative means (electronic newsletters, on-line forums, simulation, and visualization technologies, etc.) to help students, businesses, decision-makers, and the general public to better understand tourism's sustainability issues. And fourth, they should create interesting and meaningful learning opportunities for students.

**Mission and Definition:** The mission of the NCCST is to (1) advance academic research and analyses that advocate sustainable practices in the travel and tourism industry; (2) communicate these results to businesses, government planners, destinations, and communities throughout North Carolina, the nation, and globally to influence public policy decision; and, (3) assist university students to understand the broader sustainability issues challenging the travel and tourism industry, train them for careers in sustainable tourism business management, and help them secure internships and jobs in the industry. Sustainable tourism should contribute to a balanced and healthy economy by generating tourism-related jobs, revenues, and taxes while protecting and enhancing a destination's socio-cultural, natural, and built resources for the enjoyment and well-being of residents and visitors alike.

Some of the activities of the Center include a Renewable Energy in Tourism Initiative, a Climate and Tourism Initiative, a Community Sense of Place research effort, a Sustainable Tourism Lecture Series, a Sustainable Practices in Tourism Inventory, and a Master of Science in Sustainable Tourism (Fall 2009).