



# DESTINATION NORD

## SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Tourism is a vast and influential sector that affects local cultures and communities as well as the environment. As a tourism management organization, we commit to complying with sustainable practices throughout our internal and external operations. The purpose of Destination Nord's sustainability policy is to rightfully meet the needs of present circumstances in tourism without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by preserving and protecting the area's ecosystems and natural resources, as well as the local community and culture. The policy sets the principles for how Destination Nord ensures long-term sustainability of its operations and by doing so strengthens the long-term relationship with partners, stakeholders, tourists and contributes to the greater good of our organization.

### Strategic outlook

The following are Destination Nord's three strategic outlooks, aimed to be the catalyst for practicing and promoting sustainable tourism.

- 1. To be a sustainable DMO by complying with social, economic and environmental sustainability, and to fulfil all criteria that our "Green Tourism Organization" certification involves.*
- 2. Supporting the municipalities of Aalborg, Frederikshavn, Læsø and Brønderslev in the sustainable transition, by promoting responsible tourism hereunder facilitating partnerships and collaborations to fulfil sustainability demands and ensure sustainable tourism development.*
- 3. Aspire to become a sustainable destination by working strategically with sustainability, with the goal of improving our overall performance in the Global Destination Sustainability Index.*

### Sustainability approach

We want to be transparent about our sustainability efforts, thus underlining that we are not without shortcomings when it comes to sustainability at this present day. Nevertheless, we have the ambition to improve our sustainability efforts through goals, research, cooperation and new prospects. We will moreover monitor and assess our efforts and goals through key performance indicators (KPI's) in respects to socio-cultural, environmental and economic sustainability. Business and procurements with partners, stakeholders and suppliers is handled in regards to our sustainable policy principles as well as our responsible procurement policy. Destination Nord's sustainability efforts require engagement and involvement of staff in order to successfully implement new initiatives and procedures. Practically this entails internal communication on the sustainable development, staff meetings with a sustainable agenda, and cooperation across the organization. As a way to initiate conversation and trains of thought regarding sustainability and sustainable tourism development, Destination Nord encourage all employees to take part by contributing with ideas, as well as to be a representative for sustainable conduct and an ambassador for a sustainable destination. All new staff will moreover be introduced and trained to comply



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with our sustainable practices. In support of UN's Sustainable Development Goals 2030, we strive to aid the progress in Destination Nord by underpinning the sustainable development in the tourism industry with stakeholder engagement and support. From this, we also hope to raise awareness and increase sustainable demand.

### Organizational Code of Conduct

There are three main pillars in our efforts with sustainability that we want to address and comply with. These are; socio-cultural sustainability, environmental sustainability and economic sustainability. All three pillars should be a natural part of the ongoing business planning within each of Destination Nord's business areas. We also intend to support a number UN's Sustainable Development Goals, based on which areas we, as a destination management organization, can be most influential.

#### **Socio-cultural sustainability**

Without socio-cultural sustainability in tourism development, there are bound to be some negative social and cultural impacts of tourism, on the host community. It is our obligation to help build and maintain the best premises for the local community in Aalborg, making sure that tourism benefit the livelihood of locals and local businesses, which vice versa helps tourism to thrive.

We respect culture and local life, as well as preserving the DNA of Aalborg and its built cultural heritage. We regard social-cultural objectives in tourism development through its opportunities and challenges at all times, hereby making sure that the tourism sector is carefully managed to avoid negative impacts.

Our core task is to attract tourists worldwide and brand Destination Nord regionally, nationally and internationally, which we do by authentically presenting all of what our destination has to offer. In provision of that, locals should feel proud to be influential ambassadors of the city and empowered to share their stories through organic content distributing and word of mouth.

#WeShare is a statement made to express how communal contribution to our destination make up what the places stands for, moreover conveying principles of hospitality and inclusiveness.

Social responsibility is likewise a fundamental principle of our organization. Destination Nord supports a healthy working culture and environment by ensuring that employees have a sound work-life balance as well as upholding collegial unity and welfare. We are furthermore committed to human rights, labor rights, equal opportunity and diversity.

#### **Environmental sustainability**

We strive to be conscious of how our daily operations and the overall tourism development in Destination Nord affects the environment and natural resources. By monitoring progress and reviewing our environmental performance with environmental KPI's, practices will continuously be revised to uncover possibilities of how we can decrease our environmental footprint. Currently, this involves:

- proper waste sorting and responsible waste management, hereunder recycling
- indorsing sustainable products from suppliers and stakeholders
- eliminating single-use products
- having procedures in place to eliminate food waste
- reducing high-impact transportation and promoting low-impact transportation options
- implementing ways or technologies to limit water and energy supply

Our environmental sustainability efforts should encourage tourists and hosts and clients for meetings and



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events to consume and behave with no strains to the environment. This entails presenting information about environmentally sustainable tourism products; hotels, restaurants, attractions, conventions and transportation and their respective certifications and eco-labels.

### **Economic sustainability**

Tourism can be viewed as an instrument for regional development, as it stimulates economic activities and generates employment. Economic sustainability depend on the fact that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies, thus verifying that economic sustainability must also support socio-cultural and environmental factors. In other words, fostering economic growth should not be at the expense of the environment or social-cultural welfare. Instead, all three pillars should work in symbiosis for a holistic approach to sustainable development. The ultimate way for Destination Nord to contribute to economic sustainability is through our main focus of attracting tourists. For this, we are strong advocates of utilizing and promoting dimensions of sustainability in the destination. Similarly, we believe that now is the time to commit to sustainable practices and use it as competitive advantage, both for individual businesses, but also as a destination.

It is Destination Nord's mission to make the destination visible regionally, nationally and internationally and show that we are capable of being an international destination for leisure and business tourism. We will hence secure and continue our efforts in marketing, developing and servicing the tourism industry throughout the municipality. We will gradually develop our role as a development organization, working with data based innovation, event and experience development, hosting, campaigns and projects that can strengthen the municipalities' attraction. Destination Nord is furthermore an open organization with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, and our ability to cooperate and enter into partnerships is crucial in order to create value for the municipalities. The sustainable economic growth facilitated by the tourism industry should overall create new possibilities for local businesses, partnerships, innovation, infrastructure and entrepreneurship, making the destination a great city to live in, and to visit.