



Nature guides – luxury or necessity?

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- **Definition of a nature guide**
- **What characteristics must a guide have?**
- **Roles of guides**
- **Issues encountered by nature guides**
- **Specific responsibilities of adventure guides**
- **What challenges do guides face?**
- **How to improve guide performance**
- **Guiding in nature and its economic impact**
- **Guiding certificates and courses**
- **Guide training courses**



‘Guides transform a tour into an experience’ (App and Wong 2001)

Guides are translators of culture and in some cases promote peace.(Gelbman and Maoz 2012)

‘Sensitively guided tourists may be convinced that the experiences from their visit are a rewarding way of cultural contact’ (Dahles 2002)

‘ A guide builds bridges between people through the deployment of money, services, access and information’ (Dahles 2002)

Guides should encourage tourists to see, feel, hear and smell the local culture.
(Dahles 2002)

But first a test – how good is your knowledge / or how good is your guide?

People recall 20 percent of what they hear, 30 percent of what they see, 50 percent of what they hear and see, and 80 percent of what they hear, see, and do.



Definition of an Ecotour /Nature Guide:

‘someone employed on a paid or voluntary basis who conducts paying or non-paying tourists around an area or site of natural and/or cultural importance utilising ecotourism and interpretation principles.’

‘s/he communicates and interprets the significance of the environment, promotes minimal impact practices, ensures the sustainability of the natural and cultural environment and motivates those tourists to consider their own lives in relation to larger ecological or cultural concerns.’

(Black et al. 2001)



What characteristics must a guide have? (Pond 1992)

- Leadership
- Educator
- Ambassador
- Host
- Facilitator

In addition (App and Wong 2001):

- Environmental knowledge
- Enthusiasm
- Be inspiring and entertaining manner
- Language skills



Roles of a Guide (Cohen 1985)

- Instrumental Role
- Interactional Role
- Social Role
- Communicative role
- Resource Management
 - Motivator
 - Environmental Interpreter

A Guide is a **Pathfinder**
and **Mentor**



A guide from the client's viewpoint (Randall and Rollins, 2009)

- Ensures customer satisfaction
- Mediates authentic experiences
- Has high knowledge level
- May influence clients
- Performance and Service are important
- Delivers correct message to tourists

Issues encountered by nature guides

Encounter same stresses as tourists (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2013)

- Culture
- Language
- Food, hygiene
- Living quarters
- Amenities
- Transportation options

And face differences in aspects of daily life (Berno and Ward, 2005)

- Humour
- Intimacy
- Privacy
- Etiquette
- Formality

Guides need to be trained not only in the skills they need to provide a good tourism experience, but also in skills needed to ensure their mental and physical wellbeing is OK.

‘stresses such as emotional challenges related to client interactions and high reported levels of work-related anxiety contribute to burn out and turnover’
(Marchland, Russell and Cross, 2009)



Adventure Guides have even more responsibilities

Require

- Technical skills and qualifications
- Personal responsibility for client safety, planning of trips, logistics
- Lengthy exposure to clients and other guides
- Versatility
- Multi tasking
- Always on call

‘Specialist guiding such as natural history or mountaineering, require years of experience and built up knowledge for good guiding practice...Practical skills can be passed on, e.g. how to coil a rope or walking to reduce stress, but guiding is more than that.’ (Beedie 2003)

Bad guiding and overstressed guides can result in

- Customer dissatisfaction
- Unsafe practice
- Business failure

‘Understanding the risks will improve the guiding experience’ (Mackenzie and Kerr, 2013)

Challenges faced by all guides (Nyahunzvi and Njerekai 2013)

- Lack of professionalism of their peers
- Lack training, but good training is expensive and can be difficult to find
- Need for certification or licensing or registration
- Complaints
- Unhealthy industry practices (e.g. forced to take clients shopping)
- Low pay
- Overworked / multi-tasker
- Low status
- Lack of job security
- Seasonal work
- Often free lance
- Lack of language skills
- Male dominated in many areas (often younger man 19 – 40)



How to improve guide performance (Black and Weiler, 2005)

- Training
- Certification and professional licensing
- Codes of conduct
- Professional associations
- Awards of excellence

To ensure quality of guided experience

- Landowners need to improve screening processes before allowing tours on their land
- Operators should be accredited
- Compulsory training courses for guides
- Establish environmental monitoring programmes that focus the attention of guides and clients on environmental issues
- Establish guidelines for best practice environmental management and ensure guides are aware of these
- Provide criteria for clients to judge whether guides meet industry standard' (Buckley 2000)

Economic Value of Wildlife Tourism to Scotland

	Economics	Employment	Source
Nature Based Tourism	£ 1.4 billion (Visitor Spend) £ 0.8 billion (Income from employment) (£ 4.5 billion for all tourism)	39,000 FTE	Bryden <i>et al.</i> (2010)
Agriculture	£2.7 billion (Output net of subsidies) £ 0.6 billion (Total Income from farming – TIFF *)	54,000 FT + 13,600 PT and Seasonal	Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture 2012

* TIFF (Total Income From Farming) = business profits plus income to farmers, partners, directors and others with an entrepreneurial interest in the farm business



And if we consider just one component of nature tourism

Adventure tourism

- Increased by **17%** world wide between 2009 and 2010
- 1 in 4 trips now includes an adventure component
- if growth continues could be **50%** of all travel by 2050
- 'Many countries prioritising this segment, developing environmental policies which will provide a foundation for adventure travel' (ATTA, 2011)

According to a report commissioned by Scottish Enterprise in 2009 into the Economic Value of **Mountain Biking** to the Scottish economy, the sector was then worth around **£119m**



But when the UK is ranked against 'Developed' countries ... (ATTA 2011)

Rank	2011	2010	2009	2008
1	Switzerland	Switzerland	Iceland	Switzerland
2	New Zealand	Iceland	Switzerland	Sweden
3	Canada	New Zealand	New Zealand	New Zealand
4	Germany	Canada	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
5	Iceland	Germany	Austria	Spain
6	Norway	Sweden	Luxemburg	United States
7	Finland	Ireland	Denmark	Norway
8	Austria	Norway	Ireland	Germany
9	Sweden	Finland	Germany	Iceland
10	Japan	Austria	Spain	France

(Score based on sustainable development policy, safety, health, natural resources, adventure resources, entrepreneurship, humanitarian, cultural resources, infrastructure and image)



And when compared with 'High' ranking countries ... (ATTA 2011)

Developed Countries	Developing Countries	
Switzerland	Chile	Lithuania
New Zealand	Czech Republic	Botswana
Canada	Slovak Republic	Turkey
Germany	Israel	Jordan
Iceland	Estonia	Bhutan
	Bulgaria	Latvia
	Slovenia	Kyrgyz Republic
	Poland	Uruguay
	Korea, Rep.	Singapore
	Hungary	Peru
	Costa Rica	Barbados
	Romania	





Overview of guiding courses on offer in Europe and Australia

LOCATION	NAME OF BODY	COURSES OFFERED
Germany	German Alpine Organisation (DAV) (no license required, just guiding experience and a good knowledge of the area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training: winter mountaineering - ski mountaineering, high altitude ski touring, Ice climbing and ski/snowboard instructor; special qualifications freeride and snowshoe climbing) • Training: summer mountaineering - mountain climbing, high altitude climbing, alpine climbing, plaisir climbing, fixed rope route, mountain biking, trekking and family groups) • Training: rock climbing ,sport climbing, competition climbing and for setting up ropes
	Deutscher Berg-und Skiführer e.V. (Organisation of German Mountain and skil guides)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses as certified Mountain and Ski Guide • Duration 3-5 years including: rock climbing, mountain rescue, Ice climbing, alpine ski touring, equipment studies, weather studies, snow and avalanche studies, orientation, ecological studies, technical terms in French and English; plus internships
Austria	“Bundessportakademie” (National Sport Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes: Skiing, Rock climbing and Ice climbing as well as canyoning guide • No certification required for trekking and bike guides , can do a certified training with the Verband Alpiner Vereine Österreichs (Association of Alpine Organisations Austria)(10 day course)
Switzerland	Schweizer Bergführer Verband (Association of Mountain Guides Switzerland) (take 3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulated by law – activities requiring a licence include: rafting, canyoning, rock climbing and mountaineering from a certain level onwards (high altitude mountaineering, glacier hiking e.g.). • If tour is called ‘ hiking or nature walk’ no special education is required.

European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (FEG) – European Tourist Guides Associations : Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Turkey, UK

Australia

LOCATION	NAME OF BODY	COURSES OFFERED
Australia	Australian Guiding Certification SIT40107 Certificate IV in Tourism (Guiding) Certificate from college with apprenticeship	• 11 core units plus optional 7 electives (including language)
	EcoGuide Australia	• Requires 12 month guiding experience • Must hold accreditation Cert 111 or IV plus 3 months experience • Fees: one off \$130 with annual ongoing of \$99 • Application process based on assessment with onsite verification

Courtesy of Paige Myers



Overview of guiding courses on offer in Canada and the USA

LOCATION	NAME OF BODY	COURSES OFFERED
CANADA		
Canada	Interpretive Guides Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentice Interpreter certification • Professional Interpreter certification • Master Interpreter Certification • Apprentice Hiking Guide • Professional Interpretive Hiking Guide • Basic Knowledge Course
Kamloops, BC	Thompson Rivers University	Adventure guide diploma
Montreal	Institut de Tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Quebec	Montréal Tourist Guide (Bi-lingual)
Toronto	Canadian tour guide association of Toronto	Offer membership
Toronto	George Brown College, Toronto	Tour Operations Management Certificate
Niagara Falls	Niagara Parks Licensing Office	License to operate in the park legal requirement- license obtained by taking a test
Vancouver and Surrey Campuses	CANADIAN TOURISM COLLEGE	Adventure Tourism Diploma

Overview of guiding courses on offer in Canada and the USA (Cont'd)

Location	Name of Body	Courses Offered
USA		
Boulder, Colorado	America's Mountain Guide Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climbing Wall Instructor Course• Single Pitch Instructor Course• Alpine Guides Course• Rock Instructor Course• Ski Guides Course
Colorado	IGA – International Guide Academy	Tour Director Course Tour Guide Course
San Fransisco	The International Tour Management Institute	Tour Directors Course
Online	TravelCampus	Local Tour Guide Small Group Tour Leadership

Courtesy of Karen Dowling



Wildlife Life Guide Training Programme

Course Structure

www.wild-scotland.org.uk



1. Core Modules (6 days)

Cultural History & Interpretation (1 day)
Environmental Advocacy (1 day)
Leave No Trace Awareness (certificated) (1 day)
Nature Conservation (1 day)
Creating Great Customer Experiences (2 days)

2. Habitat & Geology Modules (4 days)

Coastal, Upland, Riparian and Woodland
Natural History, Ecology & Ethnobotany (3 days)
Scottish Geology (1 day)

3. Options Modules (2 days)

Choose two from the following:
Astronomy
Environmental Storytelling
Wilderness Cookery
Gaelic in the Landscape

The modules are delivered in three residential blocks across the year (usually spring, summer and autumn). It is possible to take the blocks across two seasons.

Full rate: £1200 for full 12 day programme (2014)

Supported rate: £900 (*for 2014 all applicants as eligible for this rate*)

Wild Scotland member rate: £800 (2014)

Examples of Training Units: to support the EETLS (European Ecotourism Labelling Standard) for SMEs who wish improve their sustainability

Course: Ecotourism Training for Businesses - Windows Internet Explorer

http://eetls.eu/v1/course/view.php?id=4

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Favorites: OANDA - Forex Trading a..., Suggested Sites, Web Slice Gallery, Free Hotmail

leonardo da vinci - Google..., Ecotourism Training for B..., Course: Ecotourism Tra...

Topic outline

Education and Culture DG Lifelong Learning Programme

European Ecotourism Network

Introduction to Training Packages (for business)

The following training packages include a series of topics linked to three main areas

1. Establishing and Managing Your Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Is Ecotourism the way forward1.2 How to write a business plan1.3 The Law and your Business1.4 Documenting your business1.5 Ethics and your business1.6 Managing Staff1.7 Health and Safety at Work - (no further information other than stating a Certificate is required)1.8 Marketing your Business1.9 The role of Certificate and awards to your business1.10 Involving Local Communities and People1.11 Community Payback - getting involved with your local community1.12 Supporting Biodiversity	2. Service and Your Clients <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Meeting Customer demands2.2 Guiding and Interpreting2.3 The role of customer feedback2.4 Visitor payback schemes2.5 Health and Safety and Risk Assessments2.6 Providing Food and Drink 3. Sustainable Business practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.1 Managing sustainable business3.2 Environmental Legislation and Codes of Practice3.3 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Socio Economic Impact Assessment (SIA)3.4 Sustainable building design and construction3.5 Servicing your business3.6 Environmentally Sensitive Business Operation (and Accommodation)
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Unit 1.1 Establishing and Managing your Business – is Ecotourism the way forward



1.1 ESTABLISHING AND MANAGING YOUR BUSINESS - IS ECOTOURISM THE WAY FORWARD?		
In this unit ecotourism is defined. It includes what you should consider before deciding ecotourism is the way forward for your business as well as offering ideas about creating a Unique Selling Point (USP).		
Introduction Ecotourism as defined by IIES, the International Ecotourism Society as: 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people'. It is based on the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Minimize impact • Build an environmental and cultural awareness and respect • Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts • Provide direct benefits for conservation • Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people • Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate" 	Contents 1. Introduction 2. Is Ecotourism the Way Forward? 3. Why tourism? 4. What can I offer? 5. When can I offer it? 6. To Whom and by Whom? 7. Where? 8. How? 9. Factors that aid in a successful ecotourism business	Links Further reading EXERCISES EXERCISE 1: Is Ecotourism for you? EXERCISE 2: We have a waterfall...
Case Studies All EETLS Case studies	Individual Learning Portfolio	Criteria and Sub-Criteria

Guide roles have shifted from being largely instrumental (e.g. managing tour logistics) to playing multiple roles relating to destinations, sustainability, mediation and experience.

But communication and interpretation are still the centre of good guiding practice. (Weiler and Walker 2014)

‘Adventure tourists pay for risk recreation activities...but adventure tour operators aim to minimise the risks.’

‘Operators sell their clients the semblance of risk so as to confer social capital...whilst protecting them from real risk so as to avoid illness and injury, medical and legal costs and poor publicity.’ (Buckley 2012)



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