

# QualityCoast Award 2014 Jury Report

NOORDWIJK, The Netherlands



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Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)  
**Leiden – Barcelona – Klaipeda**



QualityCoast is a programme of the Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC)  
and partly funded by the European Commission

Date of Application: November, 2013

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# What is QualityCoast?

QualityCoast is a sustainability award for coastal communities, towns and islands. It is the only sustainable tourism destination award developed by local authorities themselves. It is the result of the European Union INTERREG project "Coastal Practice Network" (CoPraNet 2002-2005), led by the EUCC. The QualityCoast criteria have been developed to measure the success of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) at local level, in connection to the EU Recommendation for ICZM.

People are increasingly interested in sustainability issues, also when selecting their holiday destination. Tourism eco-labels have become common features in travel brochures and websites. Whilst the Blue Flag specifically applies to individual beaches and marinas and Travelife and the Green Key to accommodations, QualityCoast is considering efforts for sustainable tourism in the whole territory of the coastal destination: towns, small regions and islands.

With the QualityCoast programme ([www.qualitycoast.info](http://www.qualitycoast.info)), the Coastal & Marine Union - EUCC aims to establish an international network of coastal communities that share similar values on sustainable and socially responsible tourism, at the same time maintaining high standards in the quality of their tourism offer.

With the QualityCoast Award programme, EUCC aims to encourage tourism destinations for:

- a. their attractiveness for visitors interested in natural and cultural heritage, a clean environment, local identity, or business involvement in sustainable tourism;
- b. their policies re: sustainable tourism and any of the aspects mentioned under point a;
- c. a combination of a and b.

With the inclusion of all Destinations Criteria of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) in the QualityCoast Award 2013 Application Form, QualityCoast is now open for applications from all continents.

"QualityCoast" has been registered by EUCC as a European Union trademark; the use of the name is restricted under European law.

## QualityCoast meets European and global standards

The GSTC Destination Criteria (GSTC-D version 1.0), published 1 November 2013, have already been fully incorporated into the QualityCoast – QualityDestination 2014 Application Form.

In February 2013, the European Commission launched the European Tourism Indicators (ETIS) aiming to measure and enhance the sustainability of destinations across Europe. All ETIS-indicators have also been included into our Award Application Form, mostly for optional use.

## QualityCoast certifies tourism sustainability policy

We offer reliable and transparent international Award programmes and a certification option for destinations with serious ambitions for a good sustainable tourism policy. The Awards and certifications are issued for periods of two years.

The programme also offers an assessment of the visible sustainability (performance, or sustainability status) in a broad range of categories and criteria, since tourists are not only interested in policies, strategies, ambitions and plans, but especially on how they experience a destination. The years of experience in this field allow the programme to inform the tourism sector and the public in a transparent way on policies and performance of ca. 1000 destinations, through the national and international ranking lists of the Global Sustainable Tourism Review (<http://www.qualitycoast.info/alldestinations.htm>). Ranking lists are topped by the QualityCoast Policy Award winners, that have been certified on both policy and status. Next are the destinations that received the QualityCoast BasiQ Award – they are mainly selected on the basis of their status and performance in environmental management, natural and cultural heritage, and local business involvement in sustainability.

## **The importance of QualityCoast for tourism sustainability**

Participation of destination management organisations in the Award programme improves their awareness performance and achievements in an international context. The comparison with other awarded destinations provides the community with a good picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The international assessment and recommendations by our international Jury provide the local authority with a guidance to be considered in an agenda for improvement.

Communities join a network of like-minded communities and share their experiences and best practices in order to improve sustainability and social responsibility in tourism. Their performance in these fields is connected to international tourism marketing through certification under the supervision of an independent international Jury issuing the Awards.

## **Promotional benefits of participation in QualityCoast**

EUCC carries out a marketing campaign together with the Awarded destinations to promote them as the most attractive destinations for visitors interested in nature and landscape, environment, and cultural identity and to highlight their performance in tourism quality and sustainability. The marketing campaign includes promotion at holiday fairs, media publicity, wide dissemination of brochures, promotion via our various web sites and social media. Awarded destinations are also recommended by a number of tour operators of TUI-The Netherlands, in their travel brochures.

The community's own international tourism marketing can profit from the status of QualityCoast destination. Experience in several countries learns that this will continue to generate media publicity nationally and internationally. Sustainability based marketing efforts will increase the "green profile" of the destination both externally and internally and this will help mainstreaming sustainability on local policy and decision making.

## **What is the QualityCoast Award?**

The QualityCoast Award is an independent international certification programme for sustainable tourism of coastal and island destinations that:

- ❖ Has a good overall policy performance in sustainable tourism, mainly according to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council Destination Criteria, according to our Standard (<http://qualitycoast.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/qualitycoast-standard-2013.pdf>);
- ❖ Offers a sufficient touristic quality to visitors (mainly measured through the BasiQ indicator set);
- ❖ Provides transparent information to residents and visitors (partly through our communication campaigns);
- ❖ Planning for improvement (according to the Recommendations of the International Award Jury).

The Award Standard is publicly available in [www.qualitycoast.info](http://www.qualitycoast.info).

The Award programme is considering policy and performance criteria representing five different categories:

- ❖ Nature
- ❖ Environment
- ❖ Local Identity & Cultural Heritage
- ❖ Host Community & Safety
- ❖ Tourism & Business.

Each criterium is measured through a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, on which the applicant must provide information regarding its entire territory.

## What are the QualityCoast criteria?

See the titles of the 2014 Policy Award criteria on the page 8.

**Definitions of the criteria and a complete list of indicators can be found in the QualityCoast Application Form 2013-'14.**

The criteria and indicators will remain subject to annual revision, based upon European and global standards.

## How is the QualityCoast Award attributed?

The QualityCoast Award is attributed on the basis of information to be provided by the applicant(s) through an Application Form. For many of the policy related indicators the applicant is invited to make a self-assessment by giving the destination a rate from 1 to 5 ("1" meaning absence of any relevant policy for the indicator, and "5" meaning full availability of policy concerned); and in the case of a rate of 4 or 5 to clarify the rate or give examples. For the GSTC-D indicators even in the case of self-assessment 1, 2 or 3, a clarification of the main obstacles for improvements is requested (not mandatory). It is useful to provide such clarification for the assessment team, but it is also useful for the annual improvement of the criteria.

The Application Form lists 88 Core indicators, and 127 optional ("Your Choice") indicators.

**Core indicators:** in principle all Core indicators need to be taken into consideration. However, destinations can ignore up to 25% of the GSTC-D indicators per criterium, if these are less relevant to them, indicating why they are less relevant. However, destinations are advised only to ignore GSTC-D indicators in case of low performance.

**Your Choice indicators:** applicants can choose on which of the Your Choice indicators they will provide information, with a minimum of one per criterium. This means that applicants will provide information on an additional 20 indicators only.

All information provided through the Application Form (including the self-assessment rates) is evaluated and assessed by the QC Secretariat. The Secretariat involves (or hires the services of) a local expert, as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party auditor. The assessment reports produced by Secretariat and local expert are then reviewed by a number of members of the International Award Jury. For each application, a Jury is designated composed of at least three members including: an independent local expert (who is aware of the applicant community); a national expert; and an international EUCC-expert. In order to ensure its independence, the Jury will work anonymously until the moment it is concluding its assessment.

The Secretariat and the Jury assign scores to all indicators, ranging from 1 to 5; "1" meaning absence of any quality (or no information provided for an indicator); and "5" indicating excellence for an indicator.

The score per criterium is based on the scores and weight factors of its indicators.

The average scores of all 20 criteria will then be calculated. This will be the final score. Applicants scoring '1' in two or more of the 20 criteria will not be eligible for the QualityCoast or QualityDestination Award, regardless the scores in the other criteria.

First time applicants with an average score no less than 5.7 (score threshold ) will be granted an Award. Destinations applying for the 2nd time need score 5.8, for the 3rd time 5.9 and for the 4th time 6.0 (minimum).

The Jury will issue a report with a complete list of criteria scores and with suggestions for further improvement.

Some of the indicators measure the quality of policies; others measure the performance (policy implementation) or the visible sustainability status. This is why the QC team is able to produce indexes for sustainability policy and for sustainability status.

For successful applicants the Jury report as well as the above-mentioned indexes will be published.

No public reference will be made about unsuccessful applications.

### **QualityCoast Award levels**

If the Award score threshold is met, the Jury will also check whether the average scores of the individual categories (Nature, Environment, Identity, Tourism & Business and Host Community & Safety) reach a minimum of 8.0 ("excellence").

The following Award levels will be considered:

- Bronze, in case of excellence in one of the five categories;
- Silver, in case of excellence in two of the five categories;
- Gold, in case of excellence in three [but then no other category should be below 5.0] or four categories;
- Platinum, in case of excellence in all five categories.

### **Successful applicants become QualityCoast Destinations**

Applicants who meet the score threshold are invited to the next tourism fair (ITB Berlin, Vakantiebeurs Utrecht, WTM London etc) or a National or Local Award Ceremony, where they will receive the Award Certificate, and an Award Flag. They can then participate in the joint marketing programme. Awarded Destinations can order extra flags and banners, which can be displayed throughout the destination's territory during 24 months.

18 Months after their application the Awarded destination will be encouraged to submit a renewed Application. The assessment of the new application will take into consideration the coherence between the improvements indicated in the previous one and the integration of the suggestions and the recommendations made by the Jury.

### **Renewal of the QualityCoast Award: important note**

The QualityCoast Policy Award assessment will take into consideration that earlier scores related to sustainability performance reflect the state of knowledge and experience of previous periods. If no progress is demonstrated in certain indicators, this could result in lower scores. E.g. ambitions and implementation levels in renewable energy use are increasing with time, therefore a clear progress on this item should be shown within a period of four years; another example is the assessment of satisfaction of the destination, which should be carried out in periods no longer than two or three years.

It is also important for applicants to realise that the QualityCoast Team is annually improving the indicator set in order to better cover up-to-date considerations about sustainability and relevant criteria, and to increase harmonisation with the global GSTC-Dcriteria and European ETIS indicators. This is why the score for particular criteria can change compared to two years ago even when the situation hasn't changed.

## GENERAL ASSESSMENT & COMMENTS

### **Comparability with the result from two years ago** (for 2nd or 3rd time applicants)

The scores of this year's assessment is not fully comparable with the score of two years ago, because the QualityCoast programme had to adopt the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria for Destinations (GSTC-D) as well as indicators of the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS). This was necessary to maintain the support and recognition by large tour operators and the European Commission.

### **Conclusion**

The QualityCoast Jury confirms that there is sufficient evidence to approve the QualityCoast Award 2014, and congratulates the applicant with the result.

This QualityCoast Award is a recognition for the high level of tourism quality and sustainability, in particular in terms of nature and landscape, environment, local identity and cultural heritage, social and business participation.

### **QualityCoast Award: validity and promotion**

The validity of this QualityCoast Award is two years (24 months). You are entitled to display the QualityCoast flags, banners and flyers during this period, throughout your territory. The value of the QualityCoast Award for you as a sustainable tourism destination will highly increase if you are able to help make the QualityCoast Award better known among your inhabitants and visitors, through the flags, banners and flyers, and in your own publications, and website and social media.

**SCORE CARD**

	<b>Overall (max. 10)</b>	<b>Visible Sustainability (max. 10)</b>	<b>Sustainability Policy (max. 10)</b>
<b>NATURE</b>	<b>8,3</b>	<b>8,4</b>	<b>8,3</b>
1. NATURE & CONSERVATION	8,0	8,0	8,2
2. ACCESS, INFORMATION & EDUCATION	8,0	7,8	8,5
3. GREEN POLICIES	8,3	9,0	8,1
4. OPEN LANDSCAPES	8,5	8,7	8,0
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>8,5</b>	<b>8,6</b>	<b>8,5</b>
5. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	8,6	9,5	8,1
6. BLUE FLAGS & BEACHES	9,2	8,7	9,7
7. WATER MANAGEMENT	8,1	7,9	8,2
8. SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY	8,1	8,0	8,3
9. WASTE & RECYCLING	7,4	7,0	8,0
10. ENERGY & CLIMATE MITIGATION	8,6	10,0	8,3
11. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION	8,7	8,8	8,7
<b>IDENTITY &amp; CULTURE</b>	<b>7,7</b>	<b>7,4</b>	<b>8,1</b>
12. CULTURAL HERITAGE	7,8	7,5	8,7
13. TERRITORY & TRADITION	7,7	7,2	8,3
14. LOCAL IDENTITY	7,4	7,4	7,0
<b>TOURISM &amp; BUSINESS</b>	<b>8,0</b>	<b>8,2</b>	<b>7,7</b>
15. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT	7,9	8,0	7,8
16. BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT	8,5	8,8	7,7
17. HOSPITALITY & SATISFACTION	7,5	7,7	7,2
<b>HOST COMMUNITY &amp; SAFETY</b>	<b>8,8</b>	<b>9,2</b>	<b>8,7</b>
18. FREEDOM & JUSTICE	9,5	10,0	9,3
19. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	7,8	8,3	7,8
20. HEALTH & SAFETY	9,0	9,3	8,9
<b>FINAL POINTS &amp; SCORE 2014</b>	<b>8,3</b>	<b>8,4</b>	<b>8,3</b>
Number of categories score 8 or more	4		
QualityCoast Award type	<b>GOLD</b>		



## DETAILED COMMENTS & OPINIONS

### NATURE

#### Considerations of weak and strong points

- Strong points:
  - The hiking path through the dunes of the South Holland landscape is a positive change.
  - Restoring the old dune brooks in the northern dunes.
  - Protection of grasslands by square allotment along the Polderweg is highly appreciated by the Jury.
  
- Issues for improvement:
  - Availability of information and interpretation of the natural surroundings in languages pertinent to visitors.
  - Availability of information on proper visitor behavior at sensitive natural sites to stimulate visitors to learn more and gain more appreciation.
  - Especially from a landscape point of view, the plan to raise Hoogwaak from 7 to 9 floors is not welcomed by the Jury.

### RECOMMENDATION OF THE JURY

- To publish and provide guidelines for proper visitor behavior at sensitive natural sites in order to minimize adverse impacts and strengthen positive visitor behaviors. Such guidelines stimulate visitors to learn more and gain more appreciation. (GSTC-D)
  
- To provide accurate interpretive information at natural and cultural sites, e.g. in the form of leaflets, apps, books, maps, signs. The information should be culturally appropriate, developed with community collaboration and communicated in languages pertinent to visitors. (GSTC-D)
  
- To monitor the environmental impact of tourism, conserve habitats, species, and ecosystems, and prevent the introduction of invasive species. (GSTC-D)

## ENVIRONMENT

### Considerations of weak and strong points

- Strong points:
  - The project "Every day is a SUNday", whereby 3 000 solar panels are placed, is a very good improvement regarding the reduction of fossil fuels use.
  - The Jury is still satisfied with the way the flood defense (dam in dune) has worked out (this is a result from a previous period).
- Issues for improvement:
  - Lack of system to protect sensitive environment and local resources from the impact of tourism. (GSTC-D)
  - An overall climate change local strategy and awareness associated with climate change is lacking. (GSTC-D)
  - Light and noise pollution from some beach pavilions. Strong spotlights directed into the sea in the evenings have negative effect on natural behavior of many animal species.
  - The Noordwijk Golf Club still uses the groundwater for irrigation. This was mentioned earlier in the Jury report 2012. Concerning this, the Jury is not aware of any improvement.
  - The percentage of waste separation in Noordwijk is still lower than the national average.

### **RECOMMENDATION OF THE JURY**

- To monitor water resources and ensure that use by tourism related enterprises is compatible with the water requirements of the destination community. (GSTC-D)
- The Municipality is advised to encourage tourism-related enterprises to measure, monitor, reduce, publicly report energy consumption and reduce reliance on fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions from all aspects of their operation (including emissions from service providers). (GSTC-D)
- Identify and monitor the key environmental issues connected with the peak tourism season, to minimize negative effects of tourism on the local community on the touristic attractiveness (water, sanitation, waste, litter, pollution, energy, etc.), and improve the system to address them. (GSTC-D)
- The Jury would like to have more information about the overview and system that is present for the mapping of risks related to the climate change.
- More efforts of the Municipality to increase waste separation including both, residents and tourism related enterprises.
- Two years ago, the Jury recommended stricter guidelines regarding the light and noise restrictions on the beach. Since nothing has changed, the Jury recommends this again.
- More sustainable policy regarding the golf course irrigation (e.g. rainwater, recycled water).
- Beach access of hobby fishermen vehicles (SUVs) should be restricted. Especially the use of cars in pulling shrimp nets from the sea should be forbidden as soon as possible.

## **IDENTITY & CULTURE**

### Considerations of weak and strong points

- Strong points:
  - The Jury is content with the policy for Noordwijk Binnen concerning the preservation of the historic center and its identity. With the events, the annual farmer's market in April and the flower parade, the identity of Noordwijk is more prominent.
- Issues for improvement:
  - Lack of an overall plan for local products typical for Noordwijk.

### **RECOMMENDATION OF THE JURY**

- To develop the system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve natural and cultural sites, including built heritage and rural and urban scenic views (historic, archaeological, religious, spiritual, wild landscapes). (GSTC-D)
- To publish and provide guidelines for proper visitor behavior at sensitive cultural sites. Such guidelines are designed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and strengthen positive visitor behaviors. (GSTC-D)

Local identity remains one of the weaker points in Noordwijk. We would like to give the following two suggestions to improve local identity:

- Strengthening the identity of Noordwijk through the marketing of local products (dairy products, bulb-culture, herbs, local fish and meat). The products of Noordwijk have great potential to improve the offer of the retail and catering industry. Many of these products have a long history. The emphatic presentation of these products and the story behind them (shops, restaurants and markets) can improve the experience significantly. Furthermore, it can strengthen the identity and provide economic benefits to the farmers and entrepreneurs.
- Enhance tourism experiences regarding the identity of Noordwijk, e.g. walking through the bulb area would give an added value to the experience of nature and local culture; the possibility of acquaintance with the production process of local specialties.

## **TOURISM & BUSINESS**

### Considerations of weak and strong points

- Strong points:
  - Noordwijk is a seaside town with strong seasonality. Although, visitors are attracted to come out of season (MICE market, events).
  - The Jury appreciates that the QualityCoast committee is brought together. Nevertheless, there is information missing on what this committee has already done to strengthen Noordwijk as a sustainable tourism destination. And the Jury did not see any comments from the QualityCoast committee on the latest Award application.
  
- Issues for improvement:
  - An overall sustainable tourism strategy / action plan with clear objectives, mission and vision on sustainable tourism is lacking.
  - Local Business sector involvement in sustainability issues is very limited.
  - Despite the Noordwijkse Ondernemers Vereniging (Noordwijk Entrepreneurs Association) has enormous potential to stimulate sustainable enterprise, effective measures by entrepreneurs are not evident yet.
  - The jury is not aware of the research and results concerning the satisfaction of visitors.
  - The municipality lacks a strong cooperation between the touristic - economic and environmental parties.

## RECOMMENDATION OF THE JURY

- To create an up-to-date, publicly available inventory of its key tourism assets and attractions including natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites. (GSTC-D)
- To prepare a multi-year strategy for sustainable tourism that is publicly available, is suited to its scale, that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural heritage, quality, health, and safety issues, and aesthetic issues and was developed with public participation. (GSTC-D)
- To create an effective organization, department, group, or committee responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism with involvement by the private sector and public sector. This group has defined responsibilities for the management of environmental, economic, social, and cultural heritage issues. (GSTC-D)
- The municipality is advised to enter into discussion with the local business sector, and especially hotels, campings and others in the tourism sector, to see what common actions can be taken involving the public and private sector, possibly involving the public at large, in the field of:
  - Green energy: e.g. switch to green energy; or generate electricity through solar panels or collectors;
  - Low energy schemes and equipment;
  - Water saving schemes and equipment; an example is designing a towel washing policy in hotels – and make sure it's implemented;
  - Waste reduction;
  - Waste separation to enable better recycling;
  - Equal opportunities for men vs. women;
  - Accessibility for guests with disabilities;
  - Buy or use (source) local/regional, sustainable, and/or fair trade goods and services.

Especially for the first two, green energy and energy conservation, it is recommended to prepare a common action involving the municipality, business sector and residents, which has advantages in cost efficiency, effectiveness and publicity.

- The municipality is advised to monitor how many (%) tourism enterprises are involved in the above actions, apart from those having a broadly recognized eco-label (Travelife, Green Key).
- Consider potential opportunities to make Noordwijk attractive off-season, e.g. for hikers (throughout the year) and kite surfers (September-December).

## HOST COMMUNITY & SAFETY

### Considerations of weak and strong points

- Strong points:
  - Noordwijk is a safe place for its inhabitants and visitors.
- Issues for improvement:
  - Although various programs are in place to monitor satisfaction, safety etc of visitors and locals, it would still be good to monitor to what extent visitors are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination as a whole, and to what extent they are aware of sustainability efforts in the destination.

## RECOMMENDATION OF THE JURY

- To regularly monitor to what extent visitors are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination as a whole, and to what extent they are aware of sustainability efforts in the destination. This could perhaps be done together with or through tourist accommodations.
- To monitor residents' aspirations, concerns, and satisfaction with tourism, to be regularly recorded and publicly reported. (GSTC-D)

### *General note:*

*The Jury congratulates Noordwijk with this very positive assessment. Compared to two years ago, Noordwijk has made positive changes concerning some criteria. Nevertheless, not all recommendations from 2012 have resulted in action. Further improvements are needed in order to achieve a platinum award in an international context. The QualityCoast Jury hopes that the applicant will give attention to the recommendations and expects measures to be taken for the next assessment in late 2015.*

*The two main recommendations from the Jury, "the keys to platinum", are:*

- 1. That the appointed QualityCoast committee plays an active and leading role in delivering Noordwijk as a sustainable tourist destination. This committee requires representation and/or cooperation with all parties involved in Noordwijk (Municipality (environment and finance), citizens, businesses, foundations and maybe visitors).*
- 2. The active implementation of the suggestions given to strengthen local identity.*

## QualityCoast Jury Rapport 2014 Noordwijk – Aanbevelingen

Nederlandse, niet geautoriseerde vertaling

### NATUUR

- Sterke punten:
  - Het wandelpad door de duinen van het Zuid-Hollandse landschap is een positieve verandering.
  - Het herstellen van de oude duinrellen in de noordelijke duinen.
  - Bescherming van de graslanden door middel van blokverkaveling aan de Polderweg wordt door de jury zeer gewaardeerd.
- Thema's voor verbetering:
  - Beschikbaarheid van informatie en uitleg over de natuurlijke omgeving in talen die relevant zijn voor bezoekers.
  - De beschikbaarheid van informatie over het juiste gedrag van bezoekers in gevoelige natuurgebieden om bezoekers te stimuleren om meer te leren en meer waardering te krijgen.
  - Vooral vanuit een landschappelijk oogpunt, is de jury niet blij met de plannen om Groot Hoogwaak van 7 naar 9 verdiepingen te verhogen.

### AANBEVELINGEN VAN DE JURY

- Richtlijnen voor correct gedrag van bezoekers op hangen in gevoelige natuurgebieden om nadelige effecten te minimaliseren en goed gedrag van bezoekers aan te moedigen. Dergelijke richtlijnen stimuleren bezoekers om meer te leren en meer waardering te krijgen. ( GSTC-D )
- Voorzien van correcte informatie met uitleg bij natuurlijke en culturele bezienswaardigheden, bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van folders, apps, boeken, kaarten, informatieborden. De informatie moet cultureel toepasselijk zijn, ontwikkeld zijn met de medewerking van de plaatselijke gemeenschap en gecommuniceerd worden in voor bezoekers relevante talen. (GSTC-D)
- De gevolgen voor het milieu door het toerisme te volgen, habitats, soorten en ecosystemen te beschermen en het voorkomen van de introductie van invasieve soorten. (GSTC-D)

## MILIEU

- Sterke punten:
  - Het project "Elke dag is een ZONdag ", waarbij 3000 zonnepanelen worden geplaatst, is een stap in de goede richting wat betreft het reduceren van het gebruik van fossiele brandstoffen.
  - De jury is nog steeds tevreden met de manier waarop de waterkering (dijk in duin) heeft uitgewerkt (dit is een resultaat van een vorige periode).
- Thema's voor verbetering:
  - Gebrek aan een systeem om de gevoelige omgeving en lokale hulpbronnen te beschermen tegen de gevolgen van het toerisme. (GSTC-D)
  - Een algemene lokale strategie m.b.t. klimaatsverandering en het bewustzijn ervan ontbreekt. (GSTC- D)
  - Licht- en geluidsoverlast van een aantal strandpaviljoenen. Sterke spotlichten die 's-avonds richting zee schijnen hebben negatieve gevolgen op het natuurlijke gedrag van vele diersoorten .
  - De Noordwijk Golf Club gebruikt nog steeds rondwater ter irrigatie. Dit werd eerder al vermeld in de jury beoordeling van 2012. Hierdoor is de jury zich niet bewust van enige verbetering.
  - Het percentage afval dat gescheiden wordt in Noordwijk ligt nog steeds lager dan het landelijk gemiddelde.



## AANBEVELINGEN VAN DE JURY

- De waterbronnen monitoren en er voor zorgen dat het gebruik van water door aan toerisme verwante ondernemingen in overeenstemming is met de met de waterbehoefte van de gemeenschap van de bestemming. (GSTC-D)
- De gemeente wordt geadviseerd om toerisme gerelateerde ondernemingen te stimuleren om het energieverbruik te meten, te volgen, te verminderen en openbaar verslag te maken en minder afhankelijk te zijn van fossiele brandstoffen en de uitstoot van broeikasgassen te beperken in alle aspecten van hun werkzaamheden (inclusief de uitstoot door leveranciers). (GSTC-D)
- Identificeren en controleren van de belangrijkste milieukwesties die verband houden met het toeristisch hoogseizoen, door de negatieve effecten van toerisme op de lokale gemeenschap en de toeristische aantrekkelijkheid ervan (water, riolering, afval, zwerfvuil, vervuiling, energie, enz.) zoveel mogelijk te beperken, en het systeem te verbeteren om deze aan te pakken. (GSTC - D)
- De jury wil graag meer informatie hebben over het overzicht en het systeem dat aanwezig is voor het in kaart brengen van de risico's m.b.t. de klimaatverandering.
- Meer inspanningen van de gemeente om afvalscheiding te verbeteren, zowel door bewoners als door aan toerisme gerelateerde bedrijven.
- Twee jaar geleden, heeft de Jury aanbevolen om strengere richtlijnen te creëren met betrekking tot het beperken van licht en geluid op het strand. Aangezien er niets is veranderd, raadt de jury dit weer aan.
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- Duurzamer beleid ten aanzien van de besproeiing van de golfbaan (bijv. regenwater, gebruik van gerecycleerd water).
- Toegang tot het strand van hobbyvissers met motorvoertuigen (SUV's ) moet worden beperkt. Vooral het gebruik van auto's bij het uit de zee trekken van garnaalnetten moet zo snel mogelijk worden verboden.

## **IDENTITEIT EN CULTUUR**

- Sterke punten :
  - De jury is tevreden met het beleid voor Noordwijk Binnen met betrekking tot het behoud van het historisch centrum en haar identiteit. Door middel van evenementen, zoals de jaarlijkse boerenmarkt in April en het bloemencorso, komt de Noordwijkse identiteit goed naar voren.
- Thema's voor verbetering:
  - Gebrek aan een algemeen plan voor de kenmerkende lokale producten van Noordwijk.

## **AANBEVELINGEN VAN DE JURY**

- Het ontwikkelen van het systeem om natuurlijke en culturele bezienswaardigheden te evalueren, te conserveren en te behouden, waaronder gebouwd erfgoed en landelijke en stedelijke uitzichten (historische, archeologische, religieuze, spirituele, wilde landschappen) (GSTC-D)
- Richtlijnen voor een correct gedrag van bezoekers publiceren en tonen bij gevoelige culturele bezienswaardigheden. Dergelijke richtlijnen zijn bedoeld om negatieve effecten op gevoelige locaties te minimaliseren en het juiste bezoekersgedrag te versterken. (GSTC- D)

Lokale identiteit blijft een van de zwakkere punten in Noordwijk. We willen de volgende twee suggesties geven om de lokale identiteit te verbeteren:

- Versterking van de identiteit van Noordwijk door de verkoop van lokale producten (zuivelproducten, bloembollen, kruiden, lokale vis en vlees). De producten van Noordwijk hebben een groot potentieel om het aanbod van de detailhandel en de horeca te verbeteren. Veel van deze producten hebben een lange geschiedenis. De nadrukkelijke presentatie van deze producten en het verhaal erachter (winkels , restaurants en markten) kan de beleving aanzienlijk verbeteren. Bovendien kan het versterken van de identiteit economische voordelen hebben voor de boeren en de ondernemers.
- Verbeteren van de toeristische ervaringen met betrekking tot de identiteit van Noordwijk, bijv. het wandelen door de bollenstreek zou een toegevoegde waarde kunnen geven aan de beleving van de natuur en de lokale cultuur; de mogelijkheid tot kennismaking met het productieproces van lokale specialiteiten.

## TOERISME & BEDRIJFSLEVEN

- Sterke punten :
  - Noordwijk is een badplaats met een sterke seizoengebondenheid. Bezoekers worden echter ook aangetrokken om buiten het hoogseizoen te komen (MICE markt, evenementen).
  - De jury waardeert dat de QualityCoast commissie werd opgericht. Toch ontbreekt er informatie m.b.t. wat deze commissie al heeft gedaan om Noordwijk te versterken als duurzame toeristische bestemming. Ook heeft de jury geen opmerkingen van de QualityCoast commissie gezien bij de nieuwste Award aanvraag.
  
- Thema's voor verbetering:
  - Een algemene duurzame toeristische strategie / actieplan met heldere doelstellingen, missie en visie m.b.t. duurzaam toerisme ontbreekt.
  - Betrokkenheid van lokale ondernemers m.b.t. duurzaamheid is zeer beperkt .
  - Desondanks, de Noordwijkse Ondernemers Vereniging heeft enorm potentieel om duurzaam ondernemen te stimuleren, maar de effectieve maatregelen door ondernemers zijn nog niet duidelijk.
  - De jury is niet op de hoogte van onderzoek en resultaten over tevredenheid van de bezoekers.
  - De gemeente mist een sterke samenwerking tussen de toeristische, economische en ecologische partijen

## AANBEVELINGEN VAN DE JURY

- Het maken van een recente, openbaar beschikbare lijst van de belangrijkste toeristische bezittingen en attracties, waaronder natuurlijke, historische, archeologische, religieuze, spirituele en culturele locaties. (GSTC-D)
- Voorbereiden van een meerjarige strategie voor duurzaam toerisme dat openbaar beschikbaar is, en tevens geschikt is voor de omvang, en dat rekening houdt met het milieu; economisch, sociaal, en cultureel erfgoed; kwaliteits-, gezondheids- en veiligheidsonderwerpen; en esthetische kwesties en ontwikkeld wordt met deelneming door het publiek. (GSTC - D)
- Het oprichten van een effectieve organisatie, afdeling, groep of commissie die verantwoordelijk is voor een gecoördineerde aanpak van duurzaam toerisme met betrokkenheid van de particuliere en de publieke sector. Deze groep heeft vastgelegde verantwoordelijkheden voor het beheer van milieu-, economische, sociale en culturele erfgoed kwesties. (GSTC - D)
- De gemeente wordt geadviseerd in gesprek te treden met het lokale bedrijfsleven, en vooral met hotels, campings en andere belanghebbenden in de toeristische sector, om te bekijken welke gemeenschappelijke acties kunnen worden ondernomen m.b.t. de publieke en particuliere sector, eventueel met het grote publiek, in de volgende onderwerpen:
  - Groene energie: bijv. overschakelen op groene energie, of het genereren van elektriciteit door middel van zonnepanelen of -collectoren;
  - Energiezuinige systemen en apparatuur;
  - Waterbesparingsystemen en -apparatuur, een voorbeeld is het ontwikkelen van een beleid in hotels m.b.t. het wassen van handdoeken - en er voor te zorgen dat het uitgevoerd wordt;
  - Verminderen van de hoeveelheid afval;
  - Afvalscheiding om betere recycling mogelijk te maken;
  - Gelijke kansen voor mannen en vrouwen;
  - Toegankelijkheid voor gasten met een handicap;
  - Het kopen of gebruiken van lokale/regionale, duurzame en / of fair trade goederen en diensten.Vooral voor de eerste twee (groene energie en energiebesparing) is het raadzaam om een gemeenschappelijke actie voor te bereiden waarbij de gemeente, het bedrijfsleven en de bewoners betrokken zijn, wat een meerwaarde geeft in kostenefficiëntie, effectiviteit en bekendheid.
- De gemeente wordt geadviseerd om te controleren hoeveel (%) toeristische ondernemingen betrokken zijn bij de bovengenoemde maatregelen, naast die met een algemeen erkend milieukeurmerk (Travelife , Green Key).
- Overweeg mogelijkheden om Noordwijk aantrekkelijk te maken buiten het seizoen, bijvoorbeeld voor wandelaars (het hele jaar) en kite surfers (september - december).

## **GEMEENTE EN VEILIGHEID**

- Sterke punten:
  - Noordwijk is een veilige plaats voor de inwoners en bezoekers
- Thema's voor verbetering:
  - Hoewel er diverse programma's zijn om de tevredenheid, veiligheid etc. van de bezoekers en de lokale bevolking te volgen, zou het nog steeds goed zijn om na te gaan in hoeverre de bezoekers tevreden zijn met hun algemene ervaringen in de bestemming in zijn geheel, en in hoeverre ze zich bewust zijn van maatregelen voor het verbeteren van de duurzaamheid van de bestemming.

## **AANBEVELINGEN VAN DE JURY**

- Regelmatig controleren in hoeverre bezoekers tevreden zijn met hun algehele ervaring in de bestemming als geheel, en in hoeverre ze zich bewust zijn van de verbetering van de duurzaamheid van de bestemming. Dit kan misschien samen worden gedaan met of via toeristische accommodaties .
- Controleren van de wensen, zorgen en tevredenheid van de bevolking met het toerisme te volgen, om die regelmatig vast te leggen en openbaar bekend te maken. (GSTC-D).

### *Algemene opmerking*

*De jury feliciteert Noordwijk met deze zeer positieve beoordeling als duurzame gemeente. Ten opzichte van twee jaar geleden heeft Noordwijk op enkele criteria positieve veranderingen doorgevoerd. Desalniettemin is er niet op alle aanbevelingen van 2012 actie ondernomen. Er is verdere verbetering nodig om uit te kunnen blinken met een platina beoordeling in internationale context. De QualityCoast Jury hoopt dat de aanvrager aandacht zal geven aan de aanbevelingen en verwacht dat maatregelen genomen worden voor de volgende beoordeling die eind 2015 zal plaatsvinden.*

*De twee belangrijkste aanbevelingen van de jury wil meegeven, "de sleutels tot platina", zijn:*

*1 . Dat de aangewezen QualityCoast commissie een actieve en leidende rol speelt om Noordwijk een duurzame toeristische bestemming te maken. Deze commissie heeft vertegenwoordiging en/of samenwerking met alle betrokken partijen in Noordwijk (gemeente (milieu en financiën), burgers, bedrijven, stichtingen en misschien bezoekers) nodig.*

*2 . De actieve uitvoering van de Jury aanbevelingen om de lokale identiteit te versterken .*

QualityCoast Secretariaat  
Leiden, februari 2014