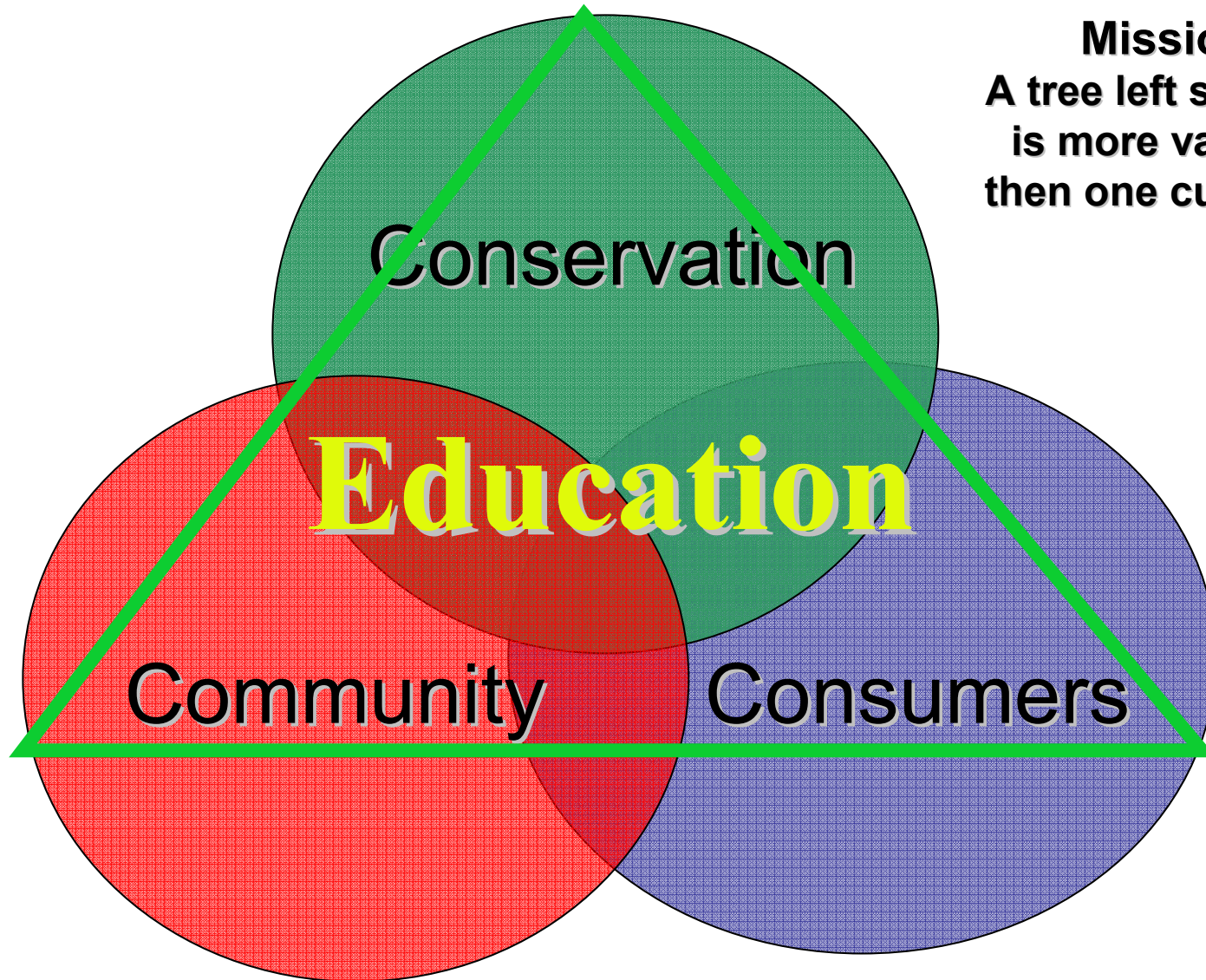


The Nature Conservancy  
CEDARENA



# What is Lapa Rios?



**Mission:**  
A tree left standing  
is more valuable  
than one cut down.

# Global Ecotourism Conference



Certification: a Tool to Improve the  
Community and Guest Experience

**Oslo, Norway**  
**14 May 2007**



# What does the CST provide?

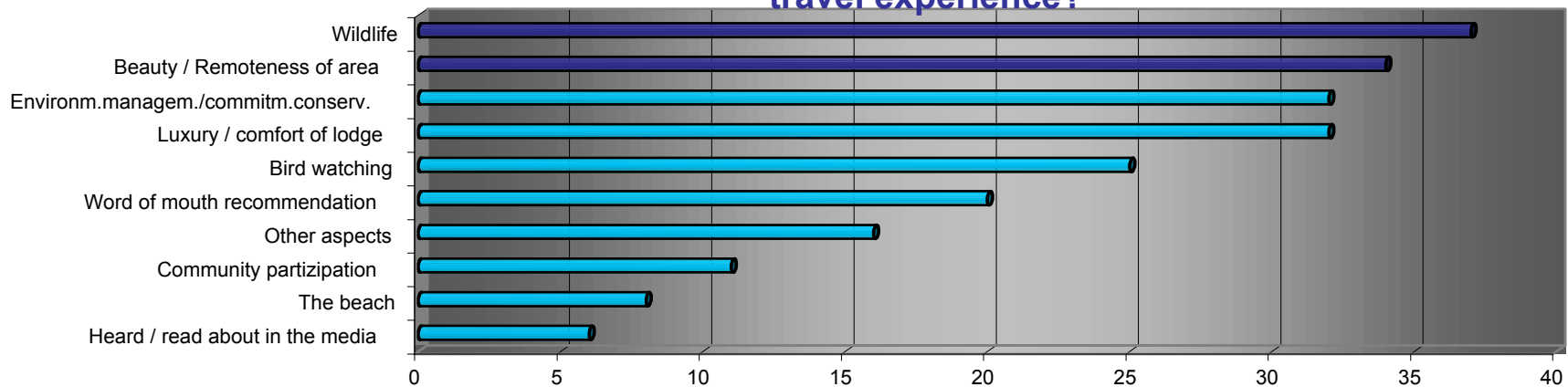
*Certification is a **validation tool**, distinguishes 'I say I do this' from 'Come grade what I do'*

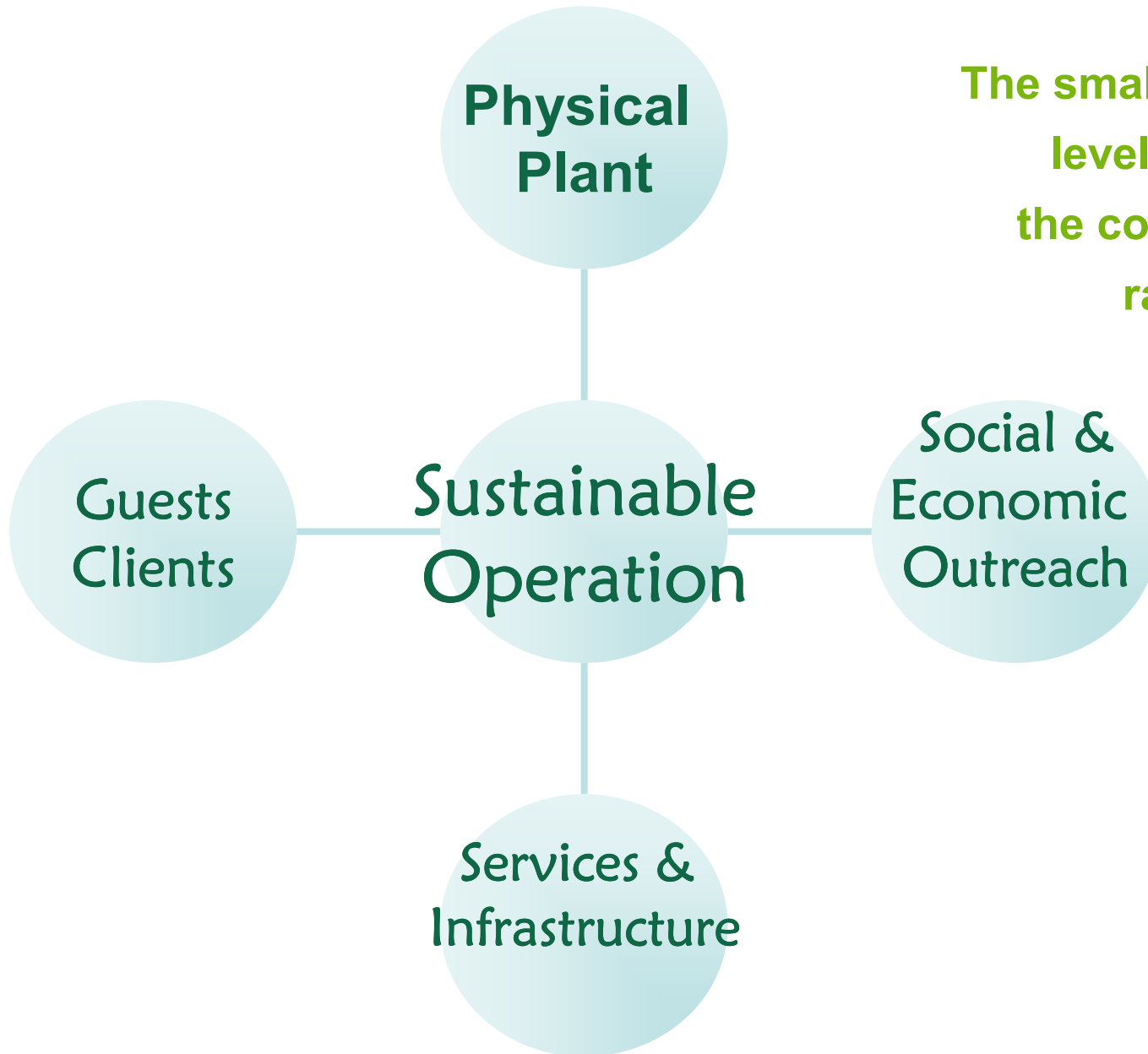
1. Differentiates national tourism products
2. Authenticates tourism providers
3. Spearheads changes in supply sector



# Certification maintains vision, establishes authenticity

7a) Why did you choose Lapa Rios & Costa Rica for your travel experience?

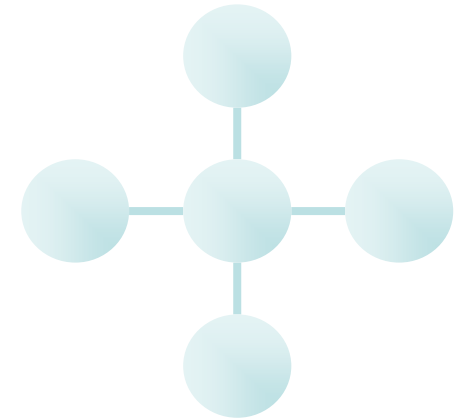




**The smallest compliance level determines the company's final ranking...**



# A. Physical-Biological Parameters



**Evaluates a company's care and stewardship of the surrounding natural resources, its impact footprint and preservation of indigenous flora and fauna.**



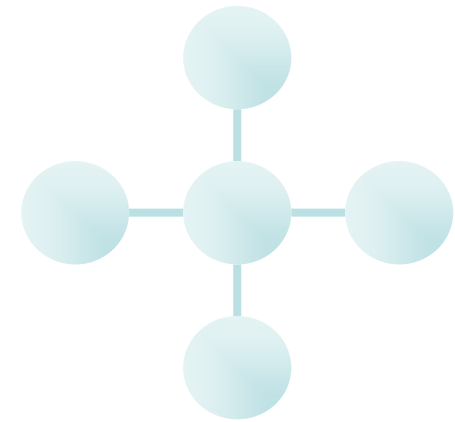
- Protection programs, flora and fauna
- Involvement in and conservation of local natural resources
- Sharing habitat with scientific research



- Improves record keeping: consumption and control programs of water, electricity, wastes, etc.
- Monitoring water sheds and potability
- Local environmental programs: No More Garbage in Osa, WOO, Corcovado Campaign
- Sustainable responses: re-usable water bottles, kineticflashlights, etc.



# Infrastructure & Services



**Evaluation of a company's operation systems, its response in infrastructure design, maintenance policies, record keeping, innovations, etc.**



- Certified grown/harvested indigenous roof palm
- On site *suiita* palm plantation; on site teaching tool for neighbors
- Reused wood for paths, decks and steps



Certified hotels link information:

***Finca Rosa Blanca***

- Pool cleaning with salt or ionization systems;
- Biodegradable cleaning products, personal care products; and
- Grease traps and filtration systems



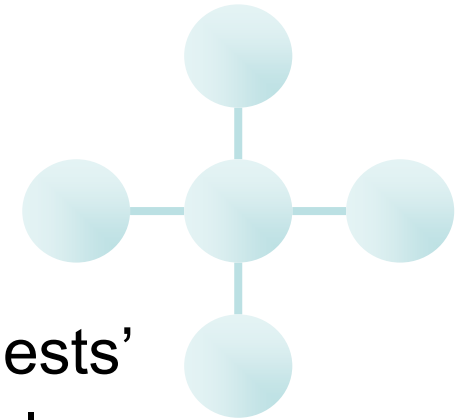
- Produce methane gas from table scraps
- Use peelings and worms for compost production
- Separate waste. Idea: 'no non-recyclables'



- Maximize natural light, eliminate A/C need with open window walls
- Design and build service items locally, from renewable materials
- Substitute refrigerated trucks with ice block chests



# Clients and Guests



Examines operations program, for guests' involvement in the local habitat, with employees, other guests and community outreach



- Are foods local sourced, offered in all menus?
- Do you educate guests to local ingredients and preparations?
- Offer locally-led cooking classes for guests (ie. *tortillas*)



- Guests interact with area tour providers rather than lodge's all-inclusive concessions
- Include local activities as part of guest experience

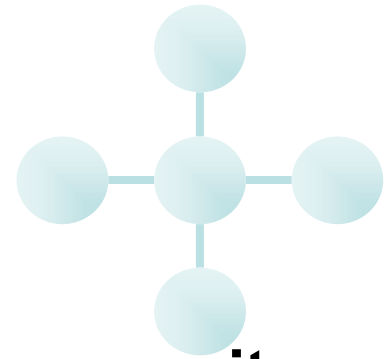


Involve guests in:

- “Show and Tell” lodge’s sustainable efforts, trash separation, alternative energy
- Local beach clean up; Plant a Tree programs; re-thatching roofs and *suiita* plantation
- Reward bi-lingual interaction



# Social-Economic Outreach



**Examines company's interaction with local community,  
analyzes locally-derived economic benefits and  
measures contributions to local culture and welfare**



- Build, maintain and support regional public schools
- Hire and train *only* local employees
- Support area artists & cooks
- Ongoing staff skills training
- Focus community, staff and guest environmental education



# Certification process improves

- dedication to 'Be Sustainable'
- land conservation commitment
- service level and operations
- community relationships
- physical infrastructure
- marketability



## Ecotourism *Enlightenment Dilemma*

If ecotourism and environmental education empowers the community, transforms and expands concept of *place* and view the *future*...

*...how can tourism financially assist motivated locals willing to donate their biodiverse land buffering national parks and reserves?*



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