



Sonja Gottlebe

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Summary

For more than 33 years, I've been learning the ins and outs of Tourism – what it is, how to be better at it than the rest, and how to help others with it.

It's for these reasons that I spent 33 years with Boogie Pilgrim as its GM. While there, I focused my efforts on product development, marketing, and management, which ultimately resulted in a great Malagasy Tourism Company employing over 65 people.

Now, I'm looking for my next adventure.

Sustainable Tourism is my DNA!

Key Skills and Competencies

- Exceptional long-term experience in the field on many levels of the supply chain
- The practice of the professions of guide, driver, lodge manager, boat transportation, event and course director for international sport-outdoor-adventure events, filming assistant for international documentaries
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team or independently
- Strong capabilities in organizational strategy, development and governance
- Research of new source markets, product development, marketing skills and knowledge of tourism markets based on long time participation in world-renowned tourism fairs.
- Firmly committed to social, economic and environmental justice with over twenty years of associative commitment in several professional associations and public institutions.
- Achievements in the field of ecotourism, conservation and recognized commitment to responsible tourism at the internal level.
- A lifelong passion for sustainable development!

EDUCATION

- **May 2022:** [Master 2 in site and territory planning and management](#) at Bordeaux Montaigne University. As an external adult student, I accomplished this diploma in 10 months through a “VAE” (valuation of acquired knowledge)
- **July 2021:** completed [GREEN GLOBE](#) Auditor and Consultant accreditation course. I have been accredited to audit businesses & organizations in compliance with the Green Globe Standard for sustainable tourism for the region Indian Ocean/Madagascar
- **June 2021:** Certificate of achievement in Community-based Tourism Training of Trainers by International Trade Centre ([ITC](#))
- **April 2021:** Professional Certificate in Sustainable Tourism Training Program by Global Sustainable Tourism ([GSTC](#))
- **2015:** [TRAVELIFE](#) Sustainability Manager certified by ECEAT- projects (European Centre for ecological and agricultural tourism) based in the Netherlands.
- Driving license for cars and motorbikes, European Boat license, Open Water PADI Dive
- **1985 :** Baccalauréat at Lycée Français de Tananarive

Summary of Work Experience with details

Period	Name of the Employer / position / activity	Country	Summary of activities carried out
from 1989 to now	<u>Company name:</u> Boogie Pilgrim <u>Main business:</u> Incoming Tour Operator <u>Job Title:</u> manager-owner <u>activity:</u> Incoming Tour Operator	Madagascar	General manager in charge of 65 staff, built, managed and promoted 3 lodges in 3 remoted regions of Madagascar. As Tour Operator, I created new products after field search, promoted them on several international trade shows, organized roadshows and sales training in Germany, UK, France, Netherlands, US, South Africa, Brazil mainly.

from 1987 to now	<p><u>Company name:</u> BUSHHOUSE</p> <p><u>Main business:</u> Accommodation, excursions</p> <p><u>Job Title:</u> manager-owner</p> <p><u>activity:</u> Ecolodge, Responsible Tourism activities</p>	Akanin ny Nofy – Pangalanen TOAMASINA	I lived 5 years in the bush to train local staff and build a Lodge, I operated myself all transfers by boat, 4WD and hiking excursions in the forest. local Betsimisaraka village visits and community-based activities for visitors are in place for several years. This Lodge got Fair Trade in Tourism certified in 2014 by FTT.
from 1998 to now	<p><u>Company name:</u> TSARA CAMP</p> <p><u>Main business:</u> accomodation, hiking trips</p> <p><u>Job Title:</u> manager-owner</p> <p><u>activity:</u> Tented Camp Lodge</p>	Tsaranoro Valley – Ambalavao region- Fianarantsoa	I created from scratch the first tented camp southafrican style in Madagascar. Set the norms for the Tourism Code and trained local communities in a very wild area untouched by tourism. New trails have been built and we learnt to collaborate with a National Park (Andringitra). This Lodge got Fair Trade in Tourism certified in 2014 by FTT.
from 2001 to 2014	<p><u>Company name:</u> Mananara Lodge</p> <p><u>Main business:</u> accomodation, private conservation area</p> <p><u>Job Title:</u> General manager</p> <p><u>activity:</u> Tented Camp Lodge</p>	Anjozorobe-Domaine Croix Vallon, Analamanga	I was fully implicated into the creation of a new conservation area under NGO and private protection. It was the first kind of this status in Madagascar. In partnership with l'ONG Fanamby I was involved in the management of 3000ha including biodiversity inventory, trail system implementation, zoning for touristic activities, training of local guides. This lodge won the first prize of Sustainable Tourism by the German Travel Association DRV in 2008.
from 2014 to 2020	<p><u>Company name:</u> BOOGIE EVENTS</p> <p><u>Main business:</u> Outdoor adventure platform online</p> <p><u>Job Title:</u> manager</p> <p><u>activity:</u> ecommerce</p>	Madagascar	Concept and creation of the first online portal to Outdoor Activities in Madagascar. We selected reliable suppliers in all kind of adventure activities through professional screening. This platform was B2C based with online payment possibility. We organized a unique Outdoor Adventure Show in Antananarivo with many suppliers from the island.

From 2016 to 2018	<u>Company name:</u> RACING MADAGASCAR <u>Main business:</u> Ultra Trail <u>Job Title:</u> Course Director <u>activity:</u> Multi stage Trail running Event	Antsiranana	<p>We launched the brand RACING MADAGASCAR after several international experiences. This Ultra Trail is a running event of 155km in 6 days. We integrated the ITRA, International Trail Association, to make Madagascar better known in the world of Marathons & Trails in partnership with the Malagasy athletic league. This event also supports and sponsored Malagasy athletes and the Paralympic movement.</p>
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SUMMARY OF CONSULTING & ADVISORY EXPERIENCES

from november 2020 to may 2021	<u>Project name:</u> Feasibility study for Cap Business Ocean Indien <u>Main Business:</u> Chamber of Commerce representation <u>Job Title:</u> consultant for Cabinet ACK <u>activity:</u> Sustainable development	Vanilla Islands Indian Ocean	<p>In a team of 8 consultants, I have been in charge of the evaluation of Tourism achievements by Vanilla Islands, managed by Cap Business Océan Indien, for the past five years. In a post-Covid context, I propose a new framework for regional tourism in Mauritius, Réunion, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros. Sustainable Tourism is vital to Vanilla Island's vision.</p>
from 2012 to 2016	<u>Project Name:</u> Fair Trade in Tourism <u>Job Title:</u> Project Manager	South Africa & Madagascar	<p>Responsible for identifying, funding, facilitating and coordinating a pilot project between FTT and Go To Madagascar. The label « FAIR TRADE TOURISM » got its criteria translated into french, adapted to the Malagasy country context, a local auditor was trained to certify on the island. Finally, 6 Lodges members of Go To Madagascar were audited and approved in 2014. Switzerland SECCO funded this pilot project</p>

<p>from 2007 to 2014</p>	<p><u>Project Name:</u> Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa <u>Job Title:</u> Chairman of Market Development <u>activity:</u> International network</p>	<p>SADC</p>	<p>I am part of the foundation of the first International sustainable tourism certification network based on 16 African countries members of SADC (Southern African Development Community). For 5 years, I am elected Chairman of Market Development and represented Madagascar in all international meetings. As a capacity building and shared advocacy platform, our aim is to harmonize Sustainable Tourism Labels from different countries and to gain recognition among world known “players” like Rainforest Alliance, GSTC.</p>
<p>from april to august 2014</p>	<p><u>ProjectName:</u> Pricewaterhouse <u>Job Title:</u> consultant <u>activity:</u> Concession policy for National Parks</p>	<p>Madagascar</p>	<p>I evaluated concession possibilities for the Task Force of MNP (Madagascar National Parks). I worked on zoning for ecotouristic activities, elaborated guidelines and recommended regulations until final report.</p>
<p>from 2008 to 2010</p>	<p><u>Project Name:</u> Educational films <u>Main business:</u> Private Tourism Association in Madagascar <u>Job Title:</u> technical advisor and Chairman <u>activity:</u> Filming</p>	<p>South Africa & Madagascar</p>	<p>2008-2010 Technical Advisor to GO TO MADAGASCAR supporting the development of a ten-episodes educational film on sustainable tourism (in French and English). Contributed to scripting, editing and presentation of final material for dissemination on Malagasy television and via DVD. The film was funded by the German Government</p>

from 2005 to 2012	<u>Association name:</u> Parc de Tsarasaotra <u>Main business:</u> RAMSAR SITE <u>Job Title:</u> executive secretary <u>activity:</u> Private Bird Sanctuary	Alarobia Antananarivo	I was involved from scratch into the creation of a private bird reserve in the capital Antananarivo. I managed partnerships with international associations like WWF, Peregrine's Fund and Birdlife International, in order to achieve the official status of RAMSAR site. I followed up bird check lists, printed brochures, built interpretation panels around the discovery trail. Around 800 birdwatchers come a year and many schools.
from 2018 to now	<u>Association name:</u> BOOGIE'S SOLIDARITY <u>Main business :</u> Non profit association <u>Job Title:</u> founder & executive secretary <u>activity:</u> Sustainable development	Brickaville Madagascar	The association's aim is to improve social, health and environmental precarious situations of the communities, primarily in the neighborhood of our lodges.

PUBLICATIONS

- As Chairman of the Go To Madagascar association, I have been Editor in Chief for their magazine for six years. I wrote travelling stories and the editorial every three months. The magazine was on board Air Madagascar flights and distributed at trade shows.
- 2008-2010 Technical Advisor to **GO TO MADAGASCAR** supporting the development of a ten-episodes educational film on sustainable tourism (in French and English). Contributed to scripting, editing, and presenting final material for dissemination on Malagasy television and via DVD. The German Government funded the film.
- The Sustainability Leaders Project celebrates world's sustainable tourism champions and changemakers. It offers a collection of interviews with the world's leading tourism and sustainability professionals who share their stories, insights and learnings. SLP was founded in 2014 by Florian Kaefer to encourage tourism professionals to embrace sustainability and recognize its potential for making tourism more resilient and better for communities and the natural environment. An independent initiative run by a small team of mindful, passionate travellers. I wrote an interview about Sustainable Tourism Development in Madagascar and the Long-Term Impacts of COVID-19 Travel Disruptions in august 2020.

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE:

Past Vice-Chairman and Chairman of TOP (**Tour Opérateurs de Madagascar**) 5 years

Past Founder, Vice Chairman and Chairman of **GO TO Madagascar** (Groupement des Opérateurs du Tourisme) 10 years

Past Administrator of INTH (**Institut National Tourisme et Hotellerie**) National Hospitality Institute 2 years

Past Administrator of [l'EDBM \(Economic Development Board of Madagascar\)](#) 3 years

Past Administrator of [Air Madagascar](#) National Airline, four months

Founder and past administrator of [l'Office National du Tourisme de Madagascar](#) Madagascar National Tourism Board 10 years

Past administrator and founder of [SOLIDIS](#) (Financial institution for sustainable development in Madagascar) 10 years

Past Founder & Chairman for Market Development of **Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa**, seven years

Founder and member of, 4 years

Ambassador of (ATTA) [Adventure Travel Trade Association](#) 1 year

Masterclass Teacher in Sustainable Tourism at [ATLAS Ecole Supérieure du Tourisme Durable et d'Aventure](#) Lyon, from may 2021 to october 2021.

Tourism Academy Teacher in Sustainable Tourism for GIZ project Western Africa November 2021.

[Mentor for TUI Tourism Recovery Initiative](#), November 2020 to now for South Africa, Mexico and Tunisia

DISTINCTION AND AWARDS

With Sonja Gottlebe as General Manager, Boogie Pilgrim won the following awards and accolades:

- First Price of Sustainable Tourism in Germany from DRV, German Travel Association (Deutscher Reisebüro Verband) in 2005
- Highly Commended Responsible Tourism Award by Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Award in London 2008
- Nominated « Pionnier du Tourisme de Madagascar » in 2009 by Tourism Minister
- Chevalier de l'ordre du mérite national de Madagascar in 2009 (military distinction of the malagasy government)

ACTUAL MEMBERSHIP & NETWORK

- [Adventure Travel Trade Association](#) for more than ten years, I have been a member of the Adventure Travel Trade Association based in the United States, a private group of nearly 1000 members which brings together tourist operators, consultants, media, travel writers, leading outdoor brands ... from almost 50 countries. I actively participate in each annual world summit to follow the latest trends in social media, learn about market developments, progress in the field of Adventure Tourism and Sustainable Tourism. All in English. I will be appointed ATTA Ambassador in 2020 to promote adventure tourism in my region.

- [Future of Tourism](#) since February 2021, member of the new Future of Tourism coalition, which brings together the Center for Responsible Tourism Travel (CREST), the Destination Stewardship Center, Green Destinations, Sustainable Travel International, Tourism Cares and the Travel Foundation, under the leadership of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). These main stakeholders share the same principles and vision for the new future of tourism and are doing their part to create a better future.
- [GSTC](#) Global Sustainable Tourism Council establishes and manages global standards for sustainable travel and tourism, known as the GSTC Criteria. They result from a worldwide effort to develop a common language about sustainability in tourism. They are arranged in four pillars: (A) Sustainable management; (B) Socioeconomic impacts; (C) Cultural impacts; and (D) Environmental impacts. Since tourism destinations each have their own culture, environment, customs, and laws, the Criteria are designed to be adapted to local conditions and supplemented by additional criteria for specific locations and activities. I'm a member of the working group for education.
- [GREEN GLOBE](#) I took the full training course to be an auditor of the GREEN GLOBE Label, the world's first certification dedicated to the sustainable development of tourism. It is a tool specially designed for hotels, tourism and leisure: to structure and facilitate your approach to environmental and social responsibility. I am officially accredited to audit in Madagascar and the Indian Ocean.

LANGUAGES

Language	Spoken	Read	Written
German	Mother tongue	Mother tongue	Mother tongue
French	Mother tongue	Mother tongue	Mother tongue
English	Fluent	Fluent	Fluent
Spanish	intermediate	intermediate	intermediate
Malagasy	basic	basic	basic

REFERENCES

Chris Doyle
 Destination Designer, ATTA Founder (Adventure Travel Trade Association)
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