

FIELD NOTES – guide to contributors

At present, there is an information gap between what successful ecotourism operators around the world do, how they acquire and apply knowledge, how they interact with the natural world, their methods for passing along information to ecotourists, and their unique challenges. In an attempt to access this untapped pool of knowledge, the *Journal of Ecotourism* invites contributions from ecotourism operators, guides, managers, brokers, decision makers, and ecotourists themselves, for the purpose of advancing the practice of ecotourism (e.g., best practices, quadruple bottom line, and so on).

Authors are encouraged to write on innovative techniques; the evolution of ecotourism in their realm; challenges, successes and opportunities within the industry; as well as innovative techniques and other processes they are employing that have made a difference. This forum will seek to present a profound picture of the world of ecotourism through the efforts of the operator, and this should not be inhibited by scale or cultural context.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that field notes will play an active role in linking practice with theory. In this capacity, the field notes section will act as a forum to bring new knowledge to assist in academic analysis and hence strategic insights and recommendations. Parallel to this, operators will be advantaged through the opportunity to access current theoretical knowledge on the field. This may have the added benefit of stimulating more applied research through a closer connection between theorists with practitioners.

Submission Guidelines:

1. Authors are invited to submit a 250-500-word proposal to the Field Note Editor (Microsoft Word).
2. Selected field note authors will then be asked to produce a full field note based on their abstract.
3. Articles should be 2,000 to 3,000 words in length.
4. All submissions will be reviewed by the Field Note Editor.

Additional information

Field Notes - JOE's voice for ecotourism field operations

There is an information gap between what successful ecotourism operators across the world do, what they think and why; and the formal study of ecotourism. There are a large number of relevant ecotour operations that could shed light on this. This is an opportunity to advance the discipline and practice of ecotourism by including field focused case studies into JOE.

Called 'Field Notes', these 2,000 to 3,000 word case studies will report on what is happening in best-practice ecotourism field operations across the globe. With one or two Field Notes in every JOE edition, Field Notes' focus is how the field operator (e.g. tour operator, NGO, community group, individual, policy maker, decision maker) sees their world. Field Notes will seek to report local/personal philosophies, feelings, perceptions, perspectives and

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challenges. They will present a profound picture of the world of ecotourism field operators across the globe, cultures, values, and motivations in regard to best-practice ecotourism

Using a structured approach, Field Notes will be comparable with other Field Notes and across cultures. They will link the values and activity of field operators with key ecotourism research gaps and conceptual models. They will bring fresh data to assist academic analysis and hence strategic insights and recommendations. They will allow field operators (and other lay readers) to learn from each other's experiences; and implement best-practice ecotourism in their respective regions. The ultimate aim of this is to continuously improve the ecotourism industry around the world. JOE Field Notes would act to interest more ecotour operators and policy makers more in the journal, and motivate them to subscribe.

JOE Field Notes are distinct from JOE Research Notes as they will be written in the field operator's own 'voice'. To achieve this, a JOE Field Note Editor role will work closely with the field operator. To ensure journal integrity, this Editor role will have a PhD credential. However, to ensure the field operator's view is effectively communicated they will also need a close practical connection with the practice of ecotourism.

Significantly, Field Notes will encourage non-dominant viewpoint (e.g. Western beliefs possibly) interpretations about what is happening in the field. This will act to encourage more academics from different backgrounds to publish more of their research in JOE and broaden the ecotourism literature base.

On an annual basis, JOE Board Members would discuss and nominate pressing gaps, issues, etc. to guide the choice of field operations for review. Research gaps can be sustainability and/or conceptual orientated. Most Field Notes will focus on quadruple bottom line (i.e. economic, cultural, environment, and social) sustainability. However, conceptual studies will be also encouraged especially as Field Notes become more abundant, comparable, and generalisable across other Field Notes and other research studies.

Importantly, Field Notes will not be a public relations exercise for field operators. This will be managed by a data collection structure (e.g. see Field Note Structure below) that minimises opportunities for undue public spruiking. In addition, many best practice ecotourism operators are in fact environmental/community campaigners in their own right and will want to contribute to improved ecotourism. So, they will welcome the opportunity to share best-practice lessons from their operations via JOE. Also, smaller operations with less developed marketing systems are less likely to leverage the public relations opportunity.

As already stated, the selection of potential Field Notes will be guided by research gaps that JOE Board Members set annually. Selected Field operators will also demonstrate best-practice or challenges in accordance with quadruple bottom line sustainability aims and/or and achievements. As long as the field operator is a key feature, topics such as park management, policy development, and marketing can also be a key feature. From time to time, not 'fully successful' operations (e.g. difficulties with a commercial environment or community engagement) will also be published. Those case studies with their 'real world' issues will be equally as informative to JOE readers as 'successful' case studies.

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Received Field Notes will be reviewed, edited and finalised by the JOE Field Notes Editor. This is in partnership with JOE Editors, JOE Board Members, and field related advisors. Field related advisors may be necessary to reaffirm the field operator's best practice ecotourism aims and achievements, and provide useful context for the case study. In agreement with the operator and other key stakeholders, potentially sensitive (e.g. commercially confidential) cannot be published. Copyright of a Field Note will reside with JOE; however it will be available for the Author(s) use.

Guiding template for a JOE Field Note (less than 3000 words)

1. Regional (e.g. cultural, political, economic, environmental, community) context - (this can be finalised towards the final writing stages of the Field Note)
2. Conceptual (e.g. relevant tourism models) context - (this can be done towards the final writing stages of the Field Note)
3. Description of tour operator - personal history/philosophy, organisational info (e.g. how long operating and how many people), and operations (e.g. when and where) – start here
4. Values, vision, motivations, activity, and challenges for tour operator
5. Description of stakeholders (e.g. parks managers, local residents, conservation lobby, any developer)
6. Key business related achievements as seen by the operator
7. Key ecotourism achievements in terms of quadruple bottom line sustainability (i.e. cultural, economic, environment, and social)
8. Opportunities for improvement in ecotourism
9. The future of the operation
10. The future (e.g. desired future, constraints, trends, issues, and uncertainties) of ecotourism in their region
11. The operator's last word about ecotourism!