Title of the Story: Pafos’ electric city bus integration with ‘Explore Pafos’ mobile application

Destination Name: PAFOS REGION

Country: Cyprus

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Nomination Category: (Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)

☐ Localizing the destination supply chain
☐ Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
☐ Culture & Communities
☒ Environment & Climate
☐ Nature & Ecotourism
☐ Tourism Reset & Recovery
☐ Other

Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices in the Top 100 training module “Good Practice Story”.

Should you have any questions on your submission please refer to our FAQ page or contact top100@greendestinations.org
DESCRIPT YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced

What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice? Click to add your text

Sustainable Mobility and Accessibility with low-carbon transport in a tourist destination with high tourist flows at peak seasons like Pafos, was an issue that until last year was not addressed seriously. This is mainly a case since diesel buses carried out circular routes in Pafos town, connecting the main historical monuments and points of interest in the Old Town of Pafos with the accommodation units of the coastal area of Kato Pafos. Those high emission diesel buses were driven through the narrow streets of the old town causing air and noise pollution.

Pafos municipality took the initiative with support of Pafos Tourism Board to develop an integrated green mobility management system, as its effort to solve the problem and reduce CO2 emissions and other gaseous emissions, both for human health and the natural environment, and to promote actions that help reduce the environmental risks.

Individual objectives of the management system are to create incentives for the use of environmentally friendly urban means of transport, to enhance access to more user-friendly information services in order to increase the accessibility and attractiveness of the areas and to create the right conditions for the adoption of electric mobility in the Pafos Town.

Within those views, Pafos Municipality introduced the first electric bus in Cyprus and installed solar charging stations. The first electric bus has a capacity of 22 seats and provides accessibility for passengers with disabilities. Special green routes of 4 & 5 kilometres respectively have been designed specifically for the promotion of cultural and historical places of interest with in the Pafos Town. All passengers can enjoy these green circular routes free of charge from 08:00 -19:00 every day. New bus-stop signs incorporating ‘Quick Response’ (QR) codes have been installed along electric bus routes in Paphos according to the municipality.

As of 2021, special information signs with a QR Code have been placed at the stops of the two ‘green routes’ of the electric bus. Along with a mobile application (integrated in the existing digital tourism and culture platform of ‘Explore Pafos’) passengers can scan the QR code and obtain real-time information about the route of the bus, stops, and the arrival and departure times, and also for the historical or tourist points of interest of the wider area.

The Explore Pafos platform is powered by innovative augmented reality technology, and is Pafos’ digital tour guide featuring multimedia Information (text, photos, videos, 360) of the district’s major landmarks sorted by category: culture, environment, tourism and services.
It also has an interactive map with points of interest, an event calendar and multilingual content in Greek, English, Russian, Hebrew and German. The platform has been developed within the Smart Cities project (Interreg V-A Greece – Cyprus 2014-2020).

The timetable of routes in Paphos old town starts at 9am and ends at 1pm daily from Monday to Friday. Each journey takes approximately 30 minutes with a waiting time of three minutes at each stop.

This is the first electric bus in Cyprus has a total capacity of 20 people with provisions for people with disabilities.

The supply of the bus and the development and construction of the supporting infrastructure was done after relevant tenders in the framework of the implementation of the ECORouTs project of the Interreg V-A Cooperation Programme, “Greece – Cyprus 2014-2020”.

**Methods, steps and tools applied**
- Manage to coordinate all involved parties
- Achieve high level decision from Pafos Municipality and the Ministry of Transport
- Finding resources and funding for the implementation of the action
- Train bus operators
- Involve local Residents and small business of the old town of Pafos
- Inform Tourism Providers about the new Electric Bus Eco routes
- Create awareness to stakeholders, public, visitors and local residents

**Key success factors**
- The aim/objective was initially well established from the beginning of this action
- Great coordination between, Pafos Municipality, the Ministry of Transportation, local residents, stakeholders, Pafos Regional Board of Tourism and others
- Intensive work, for a very demanding time schedule
- Pafos Municipality secured the funding of the project through an EU program in a relevant short time

**Lessons learned**
The challenges except the planning and implementing of the action were to ensure that these important and improved eco city routes will be marketed effectively in order to improve visitor’s awareness and also serve efficiently both visitors and local population. Due to the pandemic service was terminated from March 2020 to June 2020. However, prospects are very encouraging and a significant number of visitors and locals have already started using the electric bus. We estimate to transport during the season, more than 10,000 people.
Results, achievements and recognitions

The main results of Pafos Electric Bus operation was the achievement of low carbon outputs and of course, reducing noise pollution. In addition, we had the opportunity to replace the out-dated static bus signs with smart hi-tech boards. The project delivering low-carbon travel and a shift away from the car and also offering alternative low carbon modes more attractive to residents and visitors. In addition, we achieved to:

- Improved bus punctuality and reliability in Pafos old Town
- Increased active travel
- Enhanced street scenes creating a more attractive, safe and welcoming local environment
- Contribute to the sustainability of Pafos Old Town and the destination in general
- Create awareness about Low Carbon & Alternative transport
- Create more awareness about protecting the environment

Additional references

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/12GnKwlYDrwnS-oYCjMJc00gQwRStNyuf