

Kullaberg Nature Reserve a Sustainable Tourism Destination

The Kullaberg Nature Reserve and County Administrative Board of Skåne have applied to become certified as a sustainable tourism destination by Europarc Federation. In the certification process, it is important to formulate and implement a 5-year strategy with an action plan. Kullaberg cooperates with authorities in the protected area, local authorities, local businesses and individuals. The action plan includes economic, social and cultural aspects. The results of the project will contribute to sustainable growth and improve health and quality of life through long-term plans for sustainable development for present and future generations.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the EUROPARC Federation?

EUROPARC Federation is a non-governmental organization with 450 members who work together to protect Europe's "green jewels", land, sea, mountains, forests, rivers and heritage. Members of the Europarc include protected areas, government institutions, NGOs and companies in 39 countries.

2. What is the "Charter for Sustainable Tourism"?

"Charter for Sustainable Tourism" is a certification of natural areas that are promoted and developed by the Europarc Federation and ensures commitment and cooperation with the authorities, local businesses and representatives from the tourism industry to promote environmental protection and sustainable tourism. Europarc has certified 146 protected areas in 16 countries across Europe. Kullaberg, however, will be the first protected area in Sweden to receive the certification.

3. Why becoming a Sustainable Destination?

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is awarded by the EUROPARC Federation through an independent verification process. The award recognises not just a commitment to sustainable tourism but also the implementation of practical sustainable actions by public and private partners. Such actions;

- Bring measurable economic, social and environmental benefits from well-managed sustainable tourism,
- Strengthen relations with local tourism stakeholders and the wider tourism industry,
- Provide access and membership of an extensive and dynamic European network.

The Charter provides a model of governance that delivers Protected Areas as sustainable tourism destinations. Further, all actors through the application of sustainable tourism practice in their region ensure the natural habitat and landscapes upon which they all depend are conserved for future generations.

The process of pursuing and achieving the award enables all involved to receive expert advice, maintain motivation and incentive, and obtain international recognition. Engaging in the Charter process is highly successful as a guide and a stimulant for more sustainable tourism in protected areas. It has provided an incentive and a framework for protected area authorities to work with tourism businesses and other stakeholders to agree on future plans and support a whole range of creative actions.

4. Why should Kullaberg be certified as a sustainable tourism destination by EUROPARC Federation?

Approximately 500,000 visitors come to the Kullaberg nature reserve annually. According to the traffic counter, Western Kullaberg had 125,000 cars driving into the reserve in 2015. According to statistics from the same year, 116,479 people in the Visitor Centre. It is therefore important to develop a sustainable tourism strategy that generates long-term benefits for people, the environment, business and economy in the area.

5. What is the purpose of the certification process?

Kullaberg Nature Reserve aims to:

- Promote the conservation and protection of natural resources in Kullaberg Nature Reserve.
- Protect and develop cultural heritage in Kullabygden.
- Increase public awareness and provide knowledge about nature and cultural values.
- Implement measures to reduce the negative impact on the environment, the landscape and heritage of the area.
- Develop and improve outdoor recreation and tourism experiences.
- Contribute to improving public health; ensure that tourism does not reduce the quality of human life.
- Develop and strengthen cooperation between the Kullaberg Nature Reserve and local stakeholders in the tourism and business.

6. Which are the target group in the certification process?

At present there is extensive collaboration within and between local stakeholders, authorities and organizations involved in the certification process.

The target groups of the certification process are:

- Kullaberg's visitors.
- Kullabygden's inhabitants.
- Organizations and associations that develop their work to protect nature and the environment.
- Local players in the hospitality industry.
- Entrepreneurs who offer tourism experiences to its customers.

7. How will Kullaberg Nature Reserve implement the process?

The process involves the following steps:

- Study on the tourism situation 2015.
- An agreement to start the process (Granted March 9, 2016)
- Establishment of an Executive Committee, three discussion groups and a municipal forum named Kullabergs forum.
- Formulation of a 5-year strategy and action plan.

8. What happens now?

- Kullaberg will deliver documentations to Europarc before December 15, 2016
- Europac will perform an evaluation visit to Kullaberg in June 2017
- Europarc evaluation committee will decide in June 2017
- Europarc will grant certification as a sustainable tourism destination in September 2017

9. Who is involved in the process?

- County Administrative Board of Skåne.
- Region Skåne
- Höganäs Municipality.
- Organizations and associations that develop their work to protect nature and the environment.
- Local stakeholders in tourism and business.
- Entrepreneurs who offer tourism experiences to its customers.

Business Certification

9. Is it mandatory to be certified as a sustainable tourism business if I work in Kullabygden?

It is not mandatory. Business owners decide to be certified or not.

10 What are the benefits of certification for me as a business owner?

- To work for the long-term sustainability of the resources used by the company
- To see the benefits of creating new offers and activities during the off-season.
- To improve the quality of customer experience and satisfaction
- To introduce a price premium of 5-15% of certified tours and excursions destinations (A Study of Luleå University showed this result)
- To ensure added value to the local development of tourism by attracting ecotourism and promote environmental education.

11. How much does the certification as a sustainable tourism cost?

The certification process has no fees for entrepreneurs. Kullaberg will provide technical and logistical support to entrepreneurs to help them to integrate all the criteria required for certification.

12. What are the Stage II certification requirements?

- Have all licenses and permits in order to develop the business.
- No open disputes with environmental administrations.
- No criminal record.

Certified businesses will be subjected to the Kullaberg Nature Reserve certification. Kullaberg may decide to add other requirements.

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