

METHODOLOGY





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Number of the project: 2022-1-ES01-KA 220-VET-000086688

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Design:

EURAKOM

Caceres Chamber of Commerce, 2024

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FOREWORD





FOREWORD

The FOODZONE project aims to drive innovation and sustainability in the food and tourism sectors by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in adopting regenerative business practices. Regenerative food tourism is at the heart of this initiative, emphasizing not only sustainability but also the active restoration of ecosystems, cultural heritage, and local economies. FOODZONE seeks to create an enabling environment for food businesses to integrate these principles into their operations, ensuring long-term positive impact for both businesses and communities.

Regenerative food tourism goes beyond reducing negative impacts—it actively contributes to revitalizing local economies, protecting biodiversity, and fostering community well-being. The project recognizes that food SMEs and microbusinesses often lack access to the necessary knowledge, networks, and financial resources to transition towards regenerative practices. To bridge this gap, FOODZONE introduces a blended incubator model, facilitating collaboration between SMEs, tourism professionals, and educational institutions.

This document offers a methodology to support the development of regenerative food tourism experiences by providing structured guidance, co-design methodologies, and business planning tools. It offers guidelines for analysing stakeholder engagement strategies, sustainability planning, and funding opportunities.

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1. SWOT Analysis





SWOT analysis is an important tool for developing an understanding of an organisation, particularly at times of decision for a business, an organisation or an individual. The conclusions drawn from the SWOT analysis provide a framework to help review the strategy, position and direction of a company, product or project. SWOT analysis is an auxiliary tool:

- in the traditional strategic planning process
- in the debate about which direction to take
- in assessing the opportunities available to the organisation.

During the process of carrying out this analysis, the team must determine and evaluate the organisation's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, ordering them in a matrix (InnoSupport, 2005).

The role of SWOT Analysis is to collect information from the company's environment, analyse it and separate it into internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats).

Once this research is complete, the SWOT analysis will help you decide whether each factor found is important in helping to achieve the company's objectives (being a strength or opportunity) or whether it is an obstacle to achieving these objectives and should be eliminated or minimized so that these objectives can be achieved (weaknesses or threats).

SWOT analysis can be a powerful tool for a tourism company that wants to transition to regenerative tourism. Each component of the analysis can bring significant inputs to support this process. Here are some examples:



SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Natural and cultural resources: Identify areas where the company already has valuable resources that can be protected or regenerated.
- Expertise and knowledge: Assess internal skills that can support the transition, such as knowledge about sustainability and green practices and the social impact of tourism activities.

Weaknesses:

- Reliance on unsustainable practices: Recognise current practices that may be harmful to the environment and need to be changed.
- Costs: initial costs and investments required to implement regenerative practices and experiences.

Opportunities:

- Market trends: Explore growing trends in demand for sustainable and regenerative tourism.
- Government incentives: Take advantage of subsidies, financing or tax incentives offered by governments for sustainable practices.

Threats:

- Competition: Identify competitors that are already adopting regenerative practices and how this affects the company.
- Climate change: Consider how climate change may impact the area of operation and what measures can be taken to mitigate these effects.

By carrying out this analysis, a tourism firm can develop a more robust and focused strategic plan, identifying where it can improve, what needs to change, how to take advantage of opportunities to grow in a regenerative way and how it can develop regenerative experiences to offer to visitors.

1.1. How to conduct a SWOT Analysis



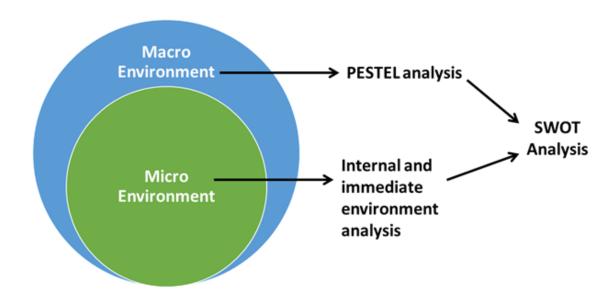
How to conduct a SWOT Analysis

The role of SWOT Analysis is to collect information from the company's environment, analyse it and separate it into internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats).

	Positive	Negative W Weaknesses		
Internal	S Strengths			
External	O Opportunities	T Threats		



Once this research is complete, the SWOT analysis will help you decide whether each factor found is important in helping to achieve the company's objectives (being a strength or opportunity) or whether it is an obstacle to achieving these objectives and should be eliminated or minimized so that these objectives can be achieved (weaknesses or threats).

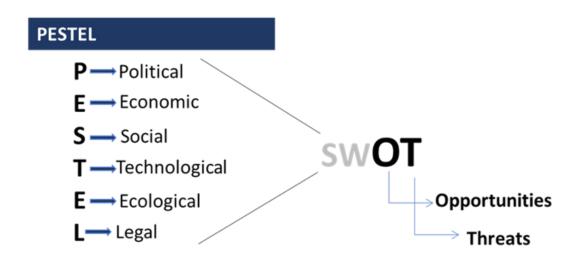


1.1.1. Analysis of the MacroenvironmentalPESTEL Analysis -Opportunties and Threats



Analysis of the Macroenvironmental PESTEL Analysis - Opportunties and Threats

The macro-environment includes external factors that influence the entire sector. These factors arise globally and are usually the result of uncontrollable events or decisions that affect the entire world or the entire sector. You can use the PESTEL analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Ecological, Legal) to analyse the macro-environment. The conclusions of the PESTEL analysis allow us to identify the opportunities and threats of the SWOT that come from the macro-environment



For a tourism business, globally, the following elements can be considered for each topic:

1)Political:

- Government policies related to tourism or that affect it.
- Travel regulations and restrictions.
- Political stability of the tourist destination.

2)Economic:

- Income level of tourists and global economic health.
- Exchange rates.
- Cost of tourism services.

3)Social:

- Changes in tourist preferences and behaviours.
- Demographic trends.
- Cultural impact of tourism on the destination.

4)Technological:

- Innovations in travel technology (online bookings, mobile apps).
- Infrastructure for transportation and communication.
- Digitalisation and use of social media for promotion.

5)Ecological:

- Environmental sustainability and eco-friendly practices.
- Climate change and its impact on tourist attractions.
- Environmental regulations.

6)Legal:

- Labour laws and regulations.
- Consumer protection.
- Intellectual property and marketing regulations.

Focusing on the transition to regenerative tourism, conducting a PESTEL analysis can help the tourism firm understand the external factors that will influence the development of regenerative food tourism experiences.

By conducting a thorough PESTEL analysis, the tourism firm can create a strategic plan that addresses the external factors impacting the development of regenerative food tourism experiences. This will help them better navigate the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities in this niche market. It will also be able to identify the opportunities and threats that it will face when developing regenerative food tourism experiences.

The analysis should include the following topics:

Political:

- **Government policies:** Identify policies and regulations supporting sustainable tourism and agriculture.
- **Funding and subsidies:** Look for grants, subsidies, or incentives available for regenerative practices in tourism and food production.
- **Trade agreements:** Consider trade agreements that affect local and organic food product import and export.

Economic:

- **Market Demand**: Analyse potential customers' demand for sustainable and regenerative tourism experiences.
- **Economic Stability**: Assess the overall economic environment and its impact on tourists' willingness to spend on eco-friendly options.
- **Cost Analysis:** Evaluate the cost of implementing regenerative practices and how it affects pricing strategies.

Social:

- **Consumer Preferences:** Understand the growing consumer preference for sustainable and authentic food experiences.
- **Cultural Significance:** Incorporate local culinary traditions and cultural heritage into the tourism offerings.
- **Community Engagement:** Engage with local communities to ensure their involvement and benefit from regenerative tourism initiatives.

Technological:

- **Innovative Farming Techniques:** Explore advancements in regenerative agriculture technology that can be showcased during tours.
- **Digital Platforms:** Use online platforms and social media to market regenerative food tourism experiences.
- **Booking Systems:** Implement user-friendly booking and reservation systems to enhance the customer experience.

Ecological:

- **Sustainability Practices**: Identify best practices in sustainable and regenerative agriculture that can be integrated into the tourism experiences.
- **Environmental Impact:** Assess the environmental impact of tourism activities and take measures to minimize it.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Highlight efforts to conserve local biodiversity and natural resources as part of the tourism experience.

Legal:

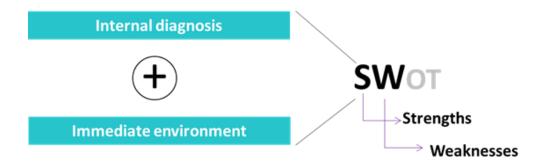
- **Regulations and Compliance:** Ensure compliance with local, national, and international regulations related to food production and tourism.
- **Health and Safety Standards:** Adhere to health and safety standards for food production, preparation, and serving.
- **Intellectual Property:** Protect any unique ideas, branding, or processes developed for regenerative food tourism.

1.2. Analysis of the Microenvironment



Analysis of the Microenvironment

The microenvironment focuses on internal factors and the immediate environment of the company.



From the internal factors, we can identify the strengths and weaknesses that will be included in the SWOT, that affect the business and thus should be addressed by the firm. These factors or their impacts can be controlled/managed by the firm. Common elements analysed include:

1)Customers:

- Preferences and expectations of tourists.
- Market segmentation and buying behaviour.
- Customer feedback and satisfaction.



2)Competitors:

- Identification of main competitors in the market.
- Analysis of competitors' strategies and positioning.
- Benchmarking of performance and practices.

3) Suppliers:

- ·Relationships with service providers (hospitality, transportation, food).
- ·Negotiation of contracts and pricing.
- ·Quality and reliability of suppliers.

4)Intermediaries:

- Partnerships with travel agencies and tour operators.
- Online booking platforms and distribution systems.
- Collaboration with influencers and media.

5)Stakeholders:

- Relationships with local governments and NGOs.
- Engagement of local communities in tourism.
- Investors and their expectations.

6)Internal diagnosis:

- Business evolution.
- Human resources.
- Marketing and sales.
- Financial situation of the firm.

By conducting these analyses, the company can gain a comprehensive understanding of its operational environment, identify opportunities and threats, and formulate more effective strategies to adapt and thrive in the tourism sector.

For a tourism firm looking to develop regenerative food tourism experiences, the

following topics should be included in the analysis:

1)Customers:

- Preferences and expectations: Identify and analyse the preferences, expectations, and behaviours of tourists interested in sustainable and regenerative food experiences.
- Market segmentation: Segment the market based on demographics, psychographics, and behavioural patterns to target the most relevant audience.
- Feedback and satisfaction: Collect and analyse feedback from tourists to understand their level of satisfaction and areas for improvement.

2)Competitors:

- Identification of competitors: Identify both direct and indirect competitors offering similar regenerative food tourism experiences.
- Competitor strategies: Analyses the strategies, strengths, and weaknesses of competitors to understand what works and what doesn't.
- Benchmarking: Compare the firm's performance with that of competitors to identify best practices and areas where the firm can gain a competitive advantage.

3)Suppliers:

- Supplier relationships: Establish and maintain strong relationships with suppliers of local, organic, and regenerative food products.
- Quality and reliability: Assess the quality and reliability of suppliers to ensure a consistent and high-quality experience for tourists.
- Negotiation: Negotiate favourable terms and pricing with suppliers to maintain profitability while supporting sustainable practices.



4)Intermediaries:

- Partnerships: Develop partnerships with travel agencies, tour operators, and other intermediaries to promote and sell regenerative food tourism experiences.
- Distribution channels: Utilize online platforms, social media, and other distribution channels to reach a broader audience.
- Collaboration: Collaborate with influencers, bloggers, and media to create awareness and attract tourists interested in sustainable tourism.

5)Stakeholders:

- Community engagement: Engage with local communities to ensure their involvement and benefit from regenerative tourism initiatives.
- Government and NGOs: Build relationships with government agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that support sustainable tourism and regenerative agriculture.
- Investors: Communicate with investors about regenerative food tourism's potential benefits and impact to secure funding and support.

6)Internal Capabilities:

- Employee training: Train employees on the principles of regenerative tourism and sustainable food practices to ensure they can deliver high-quality experiences.
- Resources and infrastructure: Assess the firm's resources and infrastructure to determine if they are sufficient to support regenerative tourism activities.
- Innovation and adaptation: Foster a culture of innovation and adaptability to improve and refine regenerative food tourism offerings continuously.



By conducting this microenvironmental analysis, the tourism firm can better understand its internal and immediate external environment, enabling it to develop effective strategies for successful regenerative food tourism experiences.

Simple rules for a successful SWOT

Be realistic about the organization's strengths and weaknesses.

- The analysis must perfectly distinguish the company's current situation and where we want it to be in the future.
- Be specific. Avoid "grey areas". Avoid unnecessary complexity and too much detail in the analysis.
- Always analyse the organization in relation to the competition, for example, whether it is better or worse than its competitors.
- Keeping SWOT simple and concise as much as the situation under analysis requires is a matter of "custom-made complexity".

2. Benchmarking Analysis





Benchmarking Analysis

Benchmarking is one of the most useful management tools for improving company performance and achieving superiority over the competition by adopting validated best practices.

It is based on learning from similar companies' best experiences and helps explain the entire process involved in excellent business performance. The essence of this instrument is based on the principle that no company is the best at everything, which implies recognizing that there are those in the market who do it better than us. When the learning resulting from a benchmarking process is applied correctly, it facilitates the improvement of performance in critical situations within a company.

Conducting a benchmarking analysis is a solid way to identify best practices and set performance standards for tourism firms as they transition to regenerative tourism.



STEPS TO CONDUCT A BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS:

- 1. **Identify key performance indicators (KPIs)**: Determine the metrics that will help you measure success in regenerative tourism, such as visitor satisfaction, environmental impact, community engagement, and economic benefits.
- 2. **Select benchmarking cases**: Choose organizations or destinations that are recognized for their successful regenerative tourism practices. Look for those that align with your firm's goals and values.
- 3. **Collect data:** Gather information on the selected benchmarking partners' practices, strategies, and outcomes. This can include reports, case studies, and direct communication with the organizations.
- 4. **Analyze data:** Compare your firm's current practices and performance with those of the benchmarking cases. Identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- 5. **Develop action plans:** Based on the analysis, create action plans to implement best practices and improve performance in key areas.
- 6. **Monitor progress:** Continuously track your firm's progress against the benchmarks and adjust strategies as needed.



HOW TO IDENTIFY THE BEST CASES TO STUDY:

- Research industry reports: Look for industry reports and publications that highlight successful regenerative tourism initiatives.
- Attend conferences and workshops: Participate in tourism and sustainability conferences to learn from experts and network with other professionals.
- Consult with experts: Seek advice from consultants or organizations specializing in regenerative tourism.
- Explore online resources: Use online platforms and databases that provide case studies and best practices in regenerative tourism.



FACTORS TO INCLUDE IN THE ANALYSIS:

- 1. **Environmental impact:** Assess the environmental benefits of regenerative practices, such as reduced carbon footprint, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem restoration.
- 2.**Community engagement:** Evaluate how well the tourism firm engages with local communities and supports their well-being.
- 3.**Economic benefits**: Measure the economic impact of regenerative tourism on local economies, including job creation and income generation.
- 4. **Visitor satisfaction:** Analyse visitor feedback and satisfaction levels to ensure the experiences meet or exceed expectations.
- 5. **Sustainability practices:** Examine the sustainability practices implemented, such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, and water conservation.
- 6.**Cultural preservation:** Consider how the tourism experiences preserve and promote local cultural heritage and traditions.
- 7. **Innovation and adaptability:** Look at the firm's ability to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions and sustainability trends.
- 8. **Creation of networks of stakeholders:** Identify collaborative partnerships among local communities, businesses, government agencies, and environmental organizations in the context of regenerative tourism development.
- 9. **Property and workforce:** analyse the local/regional embeddedness by identifying if owners and staff are local.

By following these steps and considering these factors, tourism firms can effectively benchmark their performance and successfully develop strategies to transition to regenerative tourism.

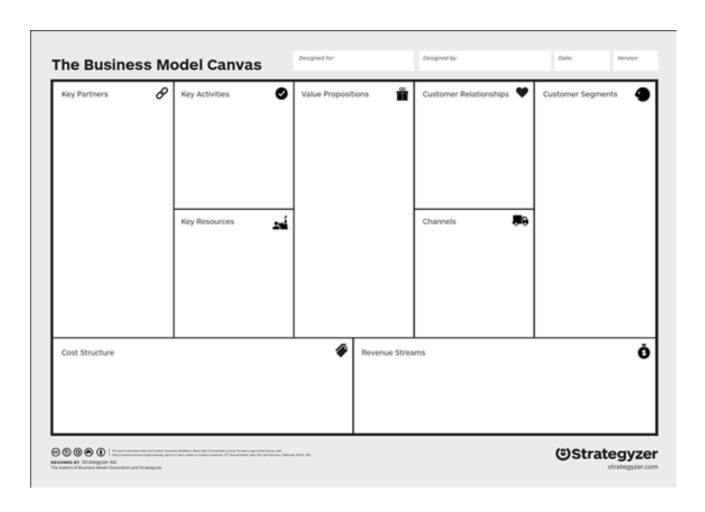
3. Business Model Canvas (BMC)



Business Model Canvas (BMC)

The Business Model Canvas is a strategic management tool that allows one to visualize and describe the key components of a business. It's especially useful for startups, entrepreneurs or established firms that intend to develop new business models or to analyse and refine existing ones. New regenerative tourism projects may use the BMC to define the structure of the business and what needs to be implemented. Established firms may use it to create and develop a new regenerative tourism product, service, or experience.

The Business Model Canvas is composed of nine blocks:



1. **Customer segments:** Defines the different groups of people or organisations that your business aims to reach. It allows for determining who the target customers are and understanding their needs, preferences, and behaviours.

In the context of regenerative food tourism experiences, the customer segments may be eco-conscious travellers and tourists, food enthusiasts and culinary tourists, families and educational groups, residents and communities, international tourists seeking unique experiences, and health and wellness tourists.

2. **Value propositions:** Describes the bundle of products and services that create value for a specific customer segment. Clearly state what makes the product or service unique and why customers would choose it over competitors. It should always be defined from the consumer's point of view, that is, which value the product or service may bring if acquired and consumed.

Developing regenerative food tourism experiences may offer value such as unique farm-to-table dining experiences, educational tours on regenerative agriculture, hands-on workshops and activities for guests, contribution to local community and environmental sustainability and regeneration, and high-quality, locally sourced food offerings.

3. **Channels:** Explains how a company communicates with and reaches its Customer Segments to deliver a Value Proposition. It is about deciding how firms will deliver the product or service to the customers. This includes sales channels (online, in-store, direct sales) and communication channels (social media, advertising, email).

Regenerative businesses may define the following channels: hotel website and booking platforms, social media and digital marketing, partnerships with travel agencies and tour operators, word of mouth and customer referrals, events and exhibitions.



4. **Customer relationships:** Describes the types of relationships a company establishes with specific Customer Segments. Planning the interaction with the customers at different stages of their journey. This can range from personal assistance to automated services.

Within regenerative tourism experiences, relationships with customers may be achieved through personalized guest services and experiences, community engagement and collaboration, educational and interactive experiences, loyalty programs and repeat visitor incentives, active social media and online presence, always highlighting the regenerative characteristics of the firm or experience.

5. **Revenue streams:** Represents the cash a company generates from each Customer Segment. It can result from direct sales, subscription fees, licensing, advertising, or other revenue models.

Regenerative food tourism experiences may result from room bookings and restaurant sales, revenue from tours and workshops, premium pricing for unique regenerative experiences, merchandise and local product sales, and grants and subsidies for sustainable practices.

6. **Key Resources:** Describes the most important assets required to make a business model work. Identify the assets needed to deliver the value proposition. This includes physical resources, intellectual property, human resources, and financial resources.

Developing regenerative tourism may involve hotel and restaurant facilities, knowledge of regenerative agriculture and sustainability, trained staff and guides, digital platforms for marketing and booking, and financial resources.

7. **Key activities:** Describes the most important actions a company must take to operate successfully. This could include product development, marketing campaigns, and supply chain management.

In regenerative food tourism experiences, key activities may range from sourcing local, organic, and regenerative food products, hosting farm-to-table dining experiences, organising regenerative agriculture tours and workshops, implementing sustainable practices in hotel operations, to marketing and promoting regenerative tourism experiences.

8. **Key partnerships**: Describes the network of suppliers and partners that make the business model work. Determine which external organizations will help achieve the business goals. This could be suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, or strategic allies.

Key partners are fundamental for regenerative tourism, as part of its characteristics is working in cooperation. Important partners are local organic and regenerative farmers, environmental NGOs and sustainability experts, travel agencies and tour operators, government bodies and tourism boards, community organisations and local artisans, and local producers.

9. **Cost structure:** Describes all costs incurred to operate a business model. Understand the costs involved in running the business. This includes fixed and variable costs, such as salaries, rent, marketing expenses, and production costs.

Transitioning to regenerative tourism or developing regenerative tourism experiences may involve additional costs. It is important to consider the stream of costs, which may include procurement of local and organic food products, marketing and promotional activities, staff training and development, maintenance and sustainability initiatives, partnerships and collaborations.

3.1. The Regenerative Business Model Canvas





The Regenerative Business Model Canvas (RBMC) is a framework designed to help businesses transition from merely reducing harm to actively contributing to positive environmental and social outcomes. It's an adaptation of the traditional Business Model Canvas but with a focus on regeneration and sustainability (Retrace Hospitality, 2024).

The RBMC encourages businesses to consider how they can replenish natural resources, enhance social and economic capital, and create value across entire value chains. It's particularly useful for companies in sectors like agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, energy, and construction, where supply chain practices play a significant role in environmental impact (SRL Consulting, 2024).

When applied to tourism, the Regenerative Business Model Canvas (RBMC) encourages tourism businesses to focus on creating positive impacts on the environment, local communities, and economies. This approach goes beyond sustainability by aiming to rejuvenate and regenerate the destinations and communities they operate in (Inversini et al., 2024).

The Regenerative Business Model Canvas

	Purpose	COMMUNITY ECOSYSTEM REGENERATION					
ty:		Customer Segments Who are the main customers? What do they need?			Beneficiary Segments Who are the direct or indirect beneficiaries of the business' actions?		erative and sustainable
		Customer Relationships How do you maintain lasting relationships with customers?	Channels How does the business reach its customers?	te income?	Beneficiary Relationships How do you engage and connect with project beneficiaries?	Deployment How do you expand or ensure business continuity and regenerative benefits?	Mission achievement/Impact Factors What indicators show that you are achieving a regenerative and sustainable impact?
Community:		Business Value Proposition What unique or regenerative value does this business bring?		Revenue Streams How does it generate income?	Community Value Proposition What benefits does it bring directly to local communities?		
		Key Activities What specific actions are you taking to deliver your value proposition?	Key Resources What resources (human, material, financial) are essential for the operation of the business?	ısiness?	Community Activities What specific activities does the business undertake to directly benefit the community?	Community Resources What community resources does the business use or strengthen (e.g. local talent, cultural heritage)?	Mission Cost What resources are specifically earmarked for the fulfilment of the regenerative mission?
Brand:		Business Partners Who does this business collaborate with?		Cost Structure What are the main costs of the business?	Community Partners Who does this business collaborate with from the community?		Mission Cost What resources are specifically earmission?

Source: Sarkar, Foglia & Kotler (2023). REGENERATION: The Future of Community in a Permacrisis World. IDEA BITE PRESS.

Moltivolti: The Business Model

Moltivolti is a hybrid business model: it functions as a for-profit and a non-profit at the same time. Its purpose is to create a **community-based dining experience**, a hub for social integration and employment which serves the needs of the community beyond food and nourishment. It does this through its community partners – who are an integral part of the "space" Moltivolti has created; a "space" for the many voices and lives it touches daily.

REGENERATIVE BUSINESS MODEL



Developed by: Christian Sarkar, Enrico Foglia, and Philip Kotler 2021

adaptation of Alex Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas (Strategyzer)

4. CONCLUSION





Conclusion

Iln conclusion, the FOODZONE incubator methodology offers a comprehensive framework designed to empower small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food and tourism sectors to embrace regenerative practices.

By facilitating collaboration between businesses, tourism professionals, and educational institutions, this approach bridges the knowledge and resource gaps that often hinder SMEs' ability to transition toward sustainability. The methodology emphasizes the co-design of regenerative food tourism experiences, fostering a participatory process that includes stakeholders from local communities. With structured business planning tools, sustainability strategies, and funding guidance.

FOODZONE creates an enabling environment where SMEs can develop practices that not only reduce negative environmental impacts but also contribute to the restoration of ecosystems, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the growth of local economies. This holistic approach ensures that the benefits of regenerative tourism are realized in a way that promotes long-term positive impacts for both businesses and their surrounding communities.

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Partners



Smart Tourism Marketing & Branding















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