



Sonja Gottlebe

German Citizen | Native German/French Speaker

WhatsApp: +33 6 76 78 50 20 | **Email:** sonjagottlebe@gmail.com

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sonja-gottlebe-a5421628/>

Professional Summary

Highly experienced and passionate tourism professional with over 33 years of expertise in sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and hospitality management. Proven track record in developing and managing tourism businesses, fostering community-based tourism, and implementing sustainable practices. Seeking a new challenge where I can leverage my deep understanding of the tourism industry to drive impactful and sustainable growth.

Core Competencies

- Sustainable Tourism Development
 - Project and Team Management
 - Community-Based Tourism
 - Marketing and Product Development
 - Strategic Planning and Governance
 - Ecotourism and Conservation Initiatives
 - Multilingual Communication (German, French, English, Spanish)
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Professional Experience

Boogie Pilgrim

General Manager / Owner

Madagascar | 1989 – 2020

- Managed a team of 65 staff across three lodges, developing a renowned tourism company in Madagascar.

- Led product development and marketing, showcasing the company at international trade fairs.
- Implemented sustainable tourism practices and contributed to local economic development.
- 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

Bushhouse, Tsara Camp, Mananara Lodge

Manager / Owner

Madagascar | 1987 – 2024

- Built and operated three ecolodges in remote areas, providing training to local staff and developing community-based tourism activities.
- Achieved Fair Trade in Tourism certification for all lodges.
- Established the first tented camp in a remote, untapped region, setting tourism norms and training local communities.
- Collaborated with National Parks to develop sustainable tourism infrastructure.
- Created and managed a conservation area in partnership with an NGO, leading biodiversity initiatives and training local guides.
- Awarded for sustainable tourism efforts by the German Travel Association DRV

Boogie Events & Racing Madagascar

Manager

Madagascar | 2014 – 2020

- Founded the first online platform for outdoor adventure activities in Madagascar, organizing an annual outdoor adventure show.
- Launched a multi-stage ultra-trail event, integrating international standards and promoting local athletic talent.

Bird Sanctuary Ramsar site, Parc de Tsarasaotra

Executive Secretary

Madagascar | 2005 – 2012

- Led the creation of a private bird sanctuary in Antananarivo.
- Partnered with WWF, Peregrine's Fund, and BirdLife International.
- Achieved RAMSAR site status for the sanctuary.
- Developed educational materials and managed birdwatcher visits.

Non-Profit Boogie's Solidarity

Founder & Executive Secretary

Madagascar | 2018 – 2020

- Established a non-profit for sustainable development in Brickaville.
- Focused on improving social, health, and environmental conditions.
- Implemented community welfare projects near our lodges.

Consulting & Advisory Roles

Various Locations | 2005 – Present

- Provide consultancy on sustainable tourism and development projects, including feasibility studies and certification processes for the National Parks of Madagascar, Iles Vanille Regional Organization, Fair Trade Tourism and Green Globe standards.
 - Acting as a coach, trainer, and auditor for various international sustainable tourism initiatives.
 - As Chairman of Market Development, I helped establish the first sustainable tourism certification network for 16 African countries (SADC). I represented Madagascar, focusing on harmonizing sustainable tourism standards and gaining recognition from global bodies like the GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council).
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Education & Certifications

- **Travelife Coach and Trainer Certification** (2024)
 - **GSTC Sustainable Tourism Trainer Certification** (2024)
 - **Certificate of Training for Adult Educator** (2023)
 - **Master in Site and Territory Planning and Management**, Bordeaux Montaigne University (2022)
 - **Green Globe Auditor and Consultant Accreditation** (2021)
 - **Certificate in Community-based Tourism Training of Trainers**, International Trade Centre (2021)
 - **Professional Certificate in Sustainable Tourism**, GSTC (2021)
 - **Travelife Sustainability Manager Certification**, ECEAT (2015)
 - **Baccalauréat**, Lycée Français de Tananarive (1985)
 - **Licenses:** Car and Motorbike Driver, European Boat License, Open Water PADI Dive
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Languages

- **German:** Native
 - **French:** Native
 - **English:** Fluent
 - **Spanish:** Intermediate
 - **Malagasy:** Basic
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Awards & Distinctions

- **"Knight of the National Order of Merit of Madagascar"** (2009)
- **"Pioneer of Tourism in Madagascar"**, Tourism Minister (2009)
- **First Prize in Sustainable Tourism**, German Travel Association, DRV (2005)
- **Highly Commended Responsible Tourism Award**, Virgin Holidays (2008)

Professional Affiliations

- **Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA)** *member*
- **Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)** *member and Trainer*
- **Travelife** *coach and auditor for Evaneos*
- **Green Globe** *coach and auditor*
- **Import Promotion Desk of Germany** *External Consultant*

References

- **Lisa Scriven** | General Manager, Fair Trade in Tourism | lisa@utopia-africa.com
- **Nora Eichkorn** | Project Manager, IPD Germany | eichkorn@importpromotiondesk.de
- **Chris Doyle** | Founder, Adventure Travel Trade Association | chris@cmdinspired.com
- **Eric Beantanana** | Consultant World Bank Group | ics070530@gmail.com