



# 2023 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

**Title: Urubici on the way to sustainability**

**Destination, Country** :Urubici – Santa Catarina - Brazil

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**In the category** :  Destination management     Environment and Climate     Thriving communities  
 Nature and Scenery     Culture and Tradition     Business & Marketing

**The story in a picture** :



**Abstract** :

Urubici is a municipality in Serra Catarinense that stands out for the advance of tourism in recent years. The city has approximately 5000 beds, in more than 1000 accommodation facilities, of which 40 are family-run accommodation. Surrounded by fascinating nature, 90% of the local attractions are aimed at experiencing nature, through contemplative, scenographic, ecotourism and adventure tourism. Tourism arrives with strength not only as a provider of demand for these attractions and means of accommodation, but also as a promoter of development for the city. With the advent of the pandemic, nature tourism in the Serra region emerged very quickly and this demand, although positive, caused the movement of tourists and development to be disorderly and required the creation of new guidelines for the development of tourist activity in a sustainable way. organized, from compliance with legislation, adoption of sustainable practices, new formats for attracting events, companies to the circulation of people, who come to visit, who live with quality and contribute to a developed and sustainable city.



## History of Good Practices:

### Destination description

*Brief history of the destination.*

Located in Serra Catarinense, in the Vale do Rio Canoas, Urubici in its territory is home to the largest source of the Guarani aquifer, dozens of waterfalls, caves and different natural attractions such as Cascata do Avenal, rock inscriptions, Cascata do Véu da Noiva, in several parks . Pedra Furada is a natural sculpture in the shape of a window, located on Morro da Igreja at 1822 meters above sea level. The low temperatures recorded during the winter are an attraction and it is extremely cold, having already reached the mark of almost minus 20 degrees. The destination also has the second largest part of its territory within the São Joaquim National Park. Also noteworthy is the Serra do Corvo Branco, where at the beginning of the descent is the largest rock cut in Brazil, 90 meters high.

### Issues faced

*Issues/problems solved with the Good Practice Story.*

Urubici has a vocation for ecological and adventure tourism, so its exuberant nature, with an emphasis on fauna and flora, rivers, canyons, waterfalls, cascades strengthen the destination as a driver of local and regional development. Its economy, still based on agriculture, has been integrating tourism as a differential for creating a new source of income and promoting development. The low offer of structured attractions at the beginning of the development of tourism in the Serra region made entrepreneurs and landowners observe the opportunities for integrating these two activities, even taking advantage of places where they were not conducive to agricultural practices for the development of tourist activities. The stay of tourists in the city also started to be driven by the specialization of tourist activity, with the expansion of the offer of attractions and services, in particular with the variety of accommodation on offer, and these are presented as one of the main pillars for the growth of the local tourism. With the pandemic, the destination became even more sought after due to changes in the habits of the population. This movement caused a real estate “boom” and a relative growth in the volume of tourists, making it necessary to accelerate the readjustment process of the local infrastructure and also a broad discussion about the tourism model that would be offered by the destination. The expansion of this demand, as well as the increase in attractions, required greater specialization from the local population, an increase in the quality of education and the search for new skills, and the offer of local jobs was also expanded, attracting new families and people to live and work in Urubici. The direction of tourist activity began to be driven by actions of the public power and by local entities, formed by volunteer entrepreneurs who realized the need to discuss the future of Urubici, the tourist offer and seek adaptation to legislation, whether municipal, state or federal. , as well as the Norms that regularize activities. By strengthening the collective spaces for discussion, including the Municipal Tourism Council, guidelines were structured aimed at the needs of local infrastructure such as housing, roads, signaling, sewage treatment networks, expansion of water networks, implementation and improvements in selective collection and others. The regularization of undertakings and adaptation for tourist activity has been fostered through projects and even with the direction for trade companies to be registered in the national registration system of tourist activities.

## Methods, steps and tools applied

The structuring of the Pouserra and Aciur associations through Nuclei, the strengthening of the Municipal Tourism Council and the integration of these actors with the municipal public power and their regional, state and national representations led to a search for investments by governments in infrastructure for the city. Thus, collectively, the entities and the public power expand the dialogue and efforts to meet the local demands that have been driven in recent years by the tourist activity. In 2023, an integrated plan was prepared between the city hall and local entities, to offer training, trade integration, to monitor the infrastructure actions that are taking place and also to attract new investments and projects. Destination communication has also been boosted by these partnerships, with participation in fairs, meetings with state secretaries and other promotion spaces. Several trainings and events have already been carried out this year to qualify and structure the means of accommodation, commerce, restaurants with regard mainly to legislation based on CADASTUR. The purpose of these spaces is to attract entrepreneurs to improve their activities, legalize them and even adopt more sustainable and balanced practices. Being: Service and sales training for commerce in a tourist city, 43 people. First CDL/ACIUR Business Round - 49 people and First Hotel Operation Workshop, 120 people. A special training for SETUR attendants carried out by the Tourist Guides. The next step is centered on promoting awareness for adherence to actions and the development of these good practices, thus improving not only the tourist offer, but the collective organization of the sector and its positioning for the care of nature that is among the pillars of development and maintenance of the destination. In this first cycle, the Municipal Tourism Council - COMTUR was mobilized to engage society in projects that are auxiliary to this planning, the Gente Catarina Program with the methodology of the Local Economic Development Program - DEL , through a partnership with government of the state of SC with the Federation of Business Associations of Santa Catarina, - FACISC, which, in a collaborative way with local entities and actors, is structuring the strategic planning of the municipality with a view to the next 20 years in a sustainable way. This planning tool and the integration of actors is one of the pillars for promoting the city's development collectively, focusing on the quality of life of its residents and the promotion and strengthening of the economy. The next stage concerns communication and marketing actions to engage everyone to prepare a bill that organizes the holding of events and the legal aspects of the hosting activity. Several local enterprises have recently joined the Serra Sustentável program, which rewards good practices in tourist enterprises focused on sustainability. The municipal administration created the Secretariat for the Environment and it will be responsible for organizing tourist activities, as sustainability is an essential factor for the city where nature is present in a structural way, both in agriculture and in commercial and tourist activities

## Key success factors

The events and training were initiatives that brought entrepreneurs to an understanding of what was to come and the acceptance was excellent.

The organization of associations creates a healthy environment for dialogue that permeates public administrations. The integration between the business community makes local actions faster and decisions are more engaged. COMTUR's participation has been essential for engaging mainly representative entities and winning the Municipal Development Council. Adherence to the Gente Catarina program in the DEL methodology phase will present collective guidelines for the promotion of development with a view to the long term. The pillar of sustainability has become a differentiator for improving local practices, attracting investments and identifying and expanding the profile of tourists with a view to caring for the place, people and preservation of culture. The creation of

legislation aimed at the legalization of enterprises and activities has provided opportunities for better organization of activities and the tourist offer.

### Lessons learned

The practice of dialogue and the insertion of collective spaces for decision-making has led to community engagement in new projects. Different channels of communication and dialogue need to be made available so that leaders and the community understand what needs to be done. Isolated initiatives are important, but need to be incorporated into the whole so that there is collective engagement. There is no tourism, mainly sustainable and nature, if there is no basic structure in the city and organization of tourism as a generator of spaces, attractions, commerce and jobs. A city that grows disorderly, without parameters defined in its Master Plan or Development Plan, at some point will have to bear the burden of redoing or building the structure (water, electricity, sewage, road) to sustain itself as a city and position itself as a destination.

### Achievements and Results

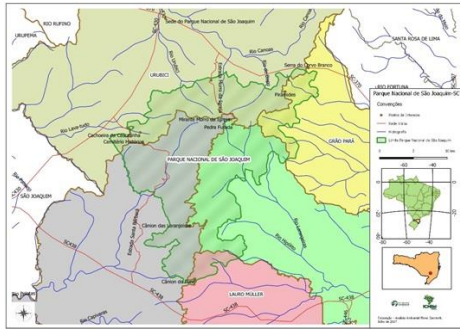
Among the achievements are the maintenance of local associations focused on tourism and their growth and strengthening. ACIUR is one of the Trade Associations that has a core dedicated specifically to means of accommodation. The qualification of the public power to meet demands aimed at promoting and organizing tourism, mainly in receiving technical information from the sector. Fundraising for the sewage treatment work, paving of Serra do Corvo Branco, delivery of the work on Rua Coberta, completion of the work on the new Tourist Service Center, among others. Adhesion of the administration and appreciation of people with the acceptance of the community and the leaders to the Gente Catarina Program through the articulation of COMTUR. Today, all municipal government initiatives are based on the data demanded by tourist activity. On a daily basis, Setur transfers data on the movement of cars, tourists and occupancy in accommodation facilities. These data generate subsidies for obtaining resources for Health (recently the City Hospital requested funds in a meeting with the Secretary of State for Tourism, and the City Hall requested an ambulance from the Ministry of Health, taking into account the growth of tourism in the city and the demand for services). To facilitate citizen traffic as well as tourist access, the data is passed on to the State Secretariat and the Ministry of Infrastructure as a way of sustaining the need for works and reinforcing their urgency and necessity. The increase in the number of lodging facilities registered in CADASTUR in the last semester from 25 registered facilities to 55, thus reaching a total of 117 tourist enterprises in various areas registered, is one of the great achievements, since being in CADASTUR is an essential part to be part of an incentive program as well as to be on the TOURISM MAP. All city guides are also registered and the attractions begin to understand the importance of being in the Cadastur. Of the 84 companies certified in the Serra Sustentável Program, 10% are in Urubici, and in all segments of tourism. Recently, the municipality regulated the activity of Tourist Guides, in an unprecedented initiative that meets the ordering of tourist activity in the city.

### Tips for other destinations

Engagement will exist if everything is explained where we started and where we want to go

### Additional acknowledgements and references

Recognitions and awards received for Good Practices and evidence.



[Territory of the São Joaquim National Park within the municipality of Urubici.](#)



[Serra Catarinense Sustainable Seal Award](#)



[MTur Tourism Map Certification](#)

[Law that regulates the activity of Urubici Tourism Guide](#)

[Tip for other destinations](#)

[Meeting with the Secretary of Tourism of the State to present data](#)

[Speaks of the Municipality of Urubici with SETUR SC](#)

[Presentation of the Gente Catarina Diagnosis /SLI](#)

[Best Destinations Award 2022](#)

[1st Hotel Operation Workshop](#)



[Meeting with the attractions of the city](#)

[Training: Excellence in service and sales for trade in tourist cities, in partnership with CDL Urubici and ACIUR.](#)

[Activities with tour guides](#)

[Weekly report to engage population](#)

[Participation in Mercosur event](#)

[Training for Trainee Attendants](#)

[City is chosen by the State Government to host the launch of Operation Winter](#)

[Expansion of presence in social networks](#)

[1st Business Round CDL/ACIUR Urubici](#)

