Goeree-Overflakkee – The Netherlands

Goeree-Overflakkee is known for its solid sustainability ambition to be completely energy-neutral in 2020 by way of energy saving and sustainable power generation. As a living lab for innovations in sustainability, Goeree-Overflakkee wants to share her knowledge with the world. Initiatives like The Energetic region (Energieke regio) and Beach Comb Bins (Doe mee verlos de zee) started here and are spread nationwide.

Many more initiatives were started to provide for a more sustainable environment in its widest form. A clear example of this is the way nature was put central in the tourism policy and at the same time committed numerous groups of stakeholders to it. In 2016 the municipality had no clear policy addressing tourism, there was limited relation between different groups of stakeholders and the fear that tourism will be consuming nature grew.

As a municipality we wanted to involve entrepreneurs, inhabitants and other relevant parties in the process of making the tourism policy for the island. To do this we asked the association of tourism entrepreneurs to co-write it with us. In the combined process we discovered that nature was the central element that made tourism possible and therefore should be focused on. While putting nature central other parties like village councils, nature protection groups and other NGO’s joined the process of embracing nature and tourism at the same time. This resulted in tourism policy that puts nature forward as the central strength of the island and a community that learned to cooperate with each other despite the seemed differences.

The policy was supported by the entrepreneurs, and nature protection organisations and got a unanimous positive vote in the municipality council at the end of 2017. This policy formed the foundation to involve nature and sustainability in every touristic development. It also was the basis for further cooperation between touristic entrepreneurs, nature protection organisations and local inhabitants. The policy has been developed further and made more concrete over the last year, and these parties were involved in all the different steps to make it integral and supported.

For further information about the tourism policy (Toerisch-recreatieve visie GoereeOverflakkee 2025) please consult the municipality website.

As the Dutch QualitCoast Delta we apply for the Best of Nature 2019, the story to support this is added as a word File

Contact: Joël Eichler | Gemeente Goeree-Overflakkee | vvvgoeree-overflakkee.nl