



**North Atlantic Tourism Association**  
**STRATEGY 2015 - 2025**



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## New challenges of NATA, for the coming years

The tourism industry in the West Nordic area has been going through great change in recent years. Inbound traffic has been on the rise which has increased the pressure on professionalism in tourism within the region's countries. NATA's efforts must follow this trend and the organization needs to adjust the way it operates to correspond to the change. Therefore NATA's emphasis in the coming years will be on the following:

1. Vestnorden Travel Mart (VNTM), which has been the prime tool to connect the tourism industry in the three countries, both internally and to the market. The importance of the VNTM will remain high during years to come.
2. NATA will strengthen efforts on supporting new business development in tourism.
3. Increased effort will be asserted to joint marketing and PR activities.
4. Quality and environmental issues, which will become major issues in all the countries to ensure professionalism and sustainability in tourism.
5. Knowledge sharing among stakeholders in the three countries, which will speed up development in the area.
6. Administration of grants has been one of the major issues within NATA from the beginning. A new emphasis will be placed on the distribution of grants.

### About NATA

NATA was established in 2006 and combined the previous organisations VNTB (Vest Nordic Tourist Board), SAMIK (a Greenland/Iceland tourist co-operation) and FITUR (an Iceland/Faroe Islands cooperation) with the main purpose to:

- Increase the awareness of the West Nordic Region as a destination of tourism
- Encourage coordinated marketing of the region
- Offer grants and travel support for projects that express our vision
- Improve the quality of tourism services in the region
- Build partnerships between the participating countries
- Support collaboration and development of business within the three countries

The Vestnorden Travel Mart (VNTM) celebrated its 30 years anniversary in 2015.

## VISION 2025

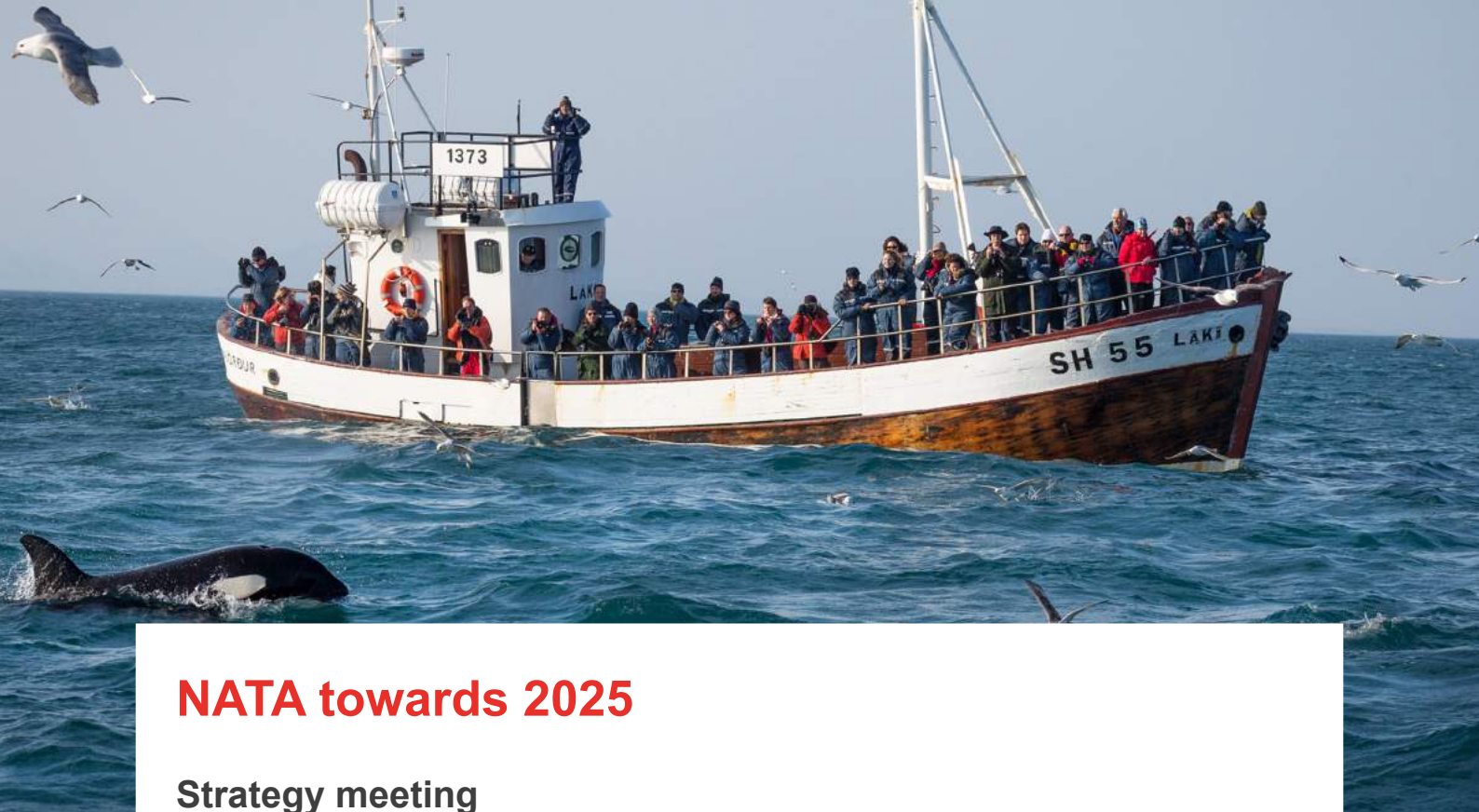
### Future vision of NATA 2025:

In 2025 the West Nordic region is recognised as a responsible, authentic destination incorporating adventurous activities and a vibrant culture.

Tourism has developed in harmony with people and communities and its economic impact benefits all the society.

NATA is the locomotive for the collaboration of the three countries within tourism - promoting, supporting and nurturing its development to this effect.





## NATA towards 2025

### Strategy meeting

This document lays down the strategy of NATA. The strategy is a result of a workshop meeting of the board of NATA which was held on 9th and 10th of June 2015 in Copenhagen and 21st of September 2015 in the Faroe Islands.

### Participants from the board of NATA:

Guðrið Højgaard – Faroe Islands, chairman of NATA

Allan Skaalum – Faroe Islands

Ólöf Ýrr Atladóttir – Iceland

Inga Hlín Pálsdóttir – Iceland

Anders Stenbakken – Greenland

Christian Keldsen – Greenland

### Other participants:

Birita Johansen, Coordinator of NATA

Sævar Kristinsson from KPMG in Iceland conducted the meetings and the strategy process.



## Current situation

The following is a short situation analysis of the main points affecting the work of NATA. NATA has been the main host of VNTM (Vestnorden Travel Mart), the annual trade show for the tourism industry in the West Nordic countries. VNTM has been running since 1986. The responsibility for holding the event rotates between the three countries.

Despite many years of hosting VNTM, there is lack of common knowledge regarding the work of NATA by its stakeholders in tourism.

- The primary focus in the past years has been on marketing
- Considering the changes in the tourism environment, more effort is needed in developing the tourism sector in the three countries
- There have not been many collaborative projects between the three countries
- Collaborative NATA projects need to have fixed procedures
- Annual written reports have not been published concerning projects supported by NATA

### Performance indicators

There has not been a formal methodology to evaluate the results of projects supported by NATA. The performance indicators that have been used by the NATA board are:

- Number of applications
- Quality of applications
- VNTM (Vestnorden Travel Mart)
- Number of guests
- Satisfaction survey

### Grants

NATA has been fulfilling its objectives mainly by offering grants in two main areas;

- Tourism development and marketing
- Travel support for school groups, sports organizations and cultural exchanges
- Sometimes there have been too few acceptable (quality) grant applications

### The main roles regarding grants have been the following:

Projects for tourism development and marketing must involve collaboration between at least two of the three West Nordic countries.

- The maximum grant is limited to 100.000 DKK which must not exceed 50% of the project's entire funding
- The grant is not intended for wages or other operational costs

NATA promotes travel and cultural exchange among the three countries. These might include the following:

- School groups
- Sports groups
- Musical tours and events
- Other types of cultural exchange
- Maximum travel grant is 1,000 DKK per person for travel between Iceland and the Faroe Islands/Greenland (round trip) and 2,000 DKK per person for travel between the Faroe Islands and Greenland (round trip)
- The travel grant is only intended for travel costs – not accommodation or daily expenses
- Travel grants have been around 25% of NATA budget



## **Vestnorden Travel Mart (VNTM)**


VNTM is the annual trade show for tourism in the West Nordic countries (Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands). Established in 1986, VNTM has been the main platform for promoting the region as a tourist destination.

NATA is responsible for holding VNTM, while the hosting and management of the event rotates annually between the three countries (with Iceland hosting every second year).

There is increasing competition between travel trade fairs in Europe and to hold its status, VNTM needs to focus on the need for new and “different quality” buyers. Therefore it is urgent that VNTM will develop to be able to fulfil its purpose.

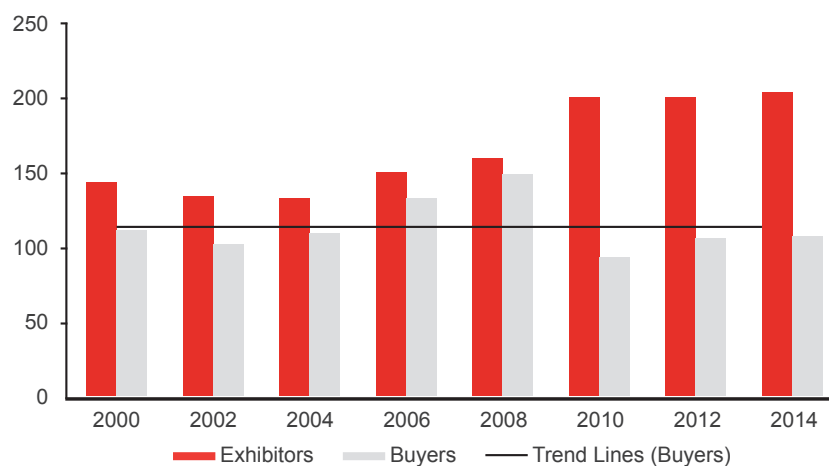
NATA has not enjoyed a high profile nor visibility during VNTM.

The following graphs on *page 7* show the number of exhibitors and buyers in each country in the years 2000 - 2015 and trend lines for the numbers of buyers.

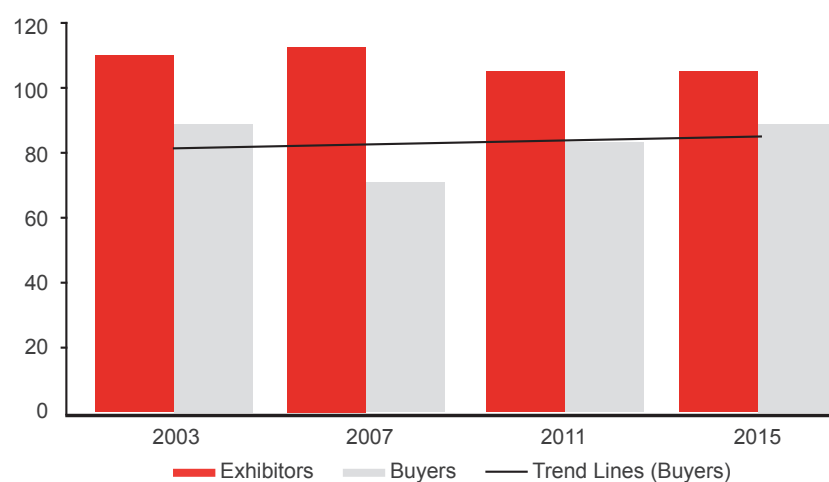


## Number of exhibitors and buyers in each country and trend lines for the numbers of buyers

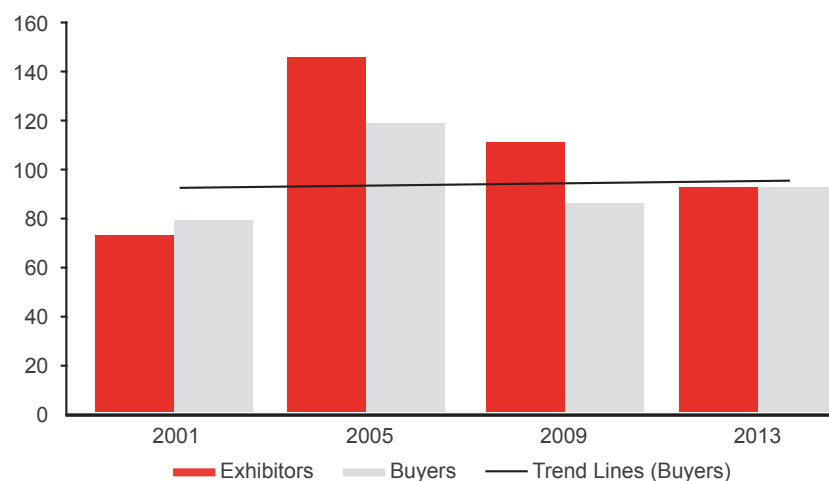
### Iceland 2000-2015



### Faroe Islands 2000-2015



### Greenland 2000-2015



# Different situation between countries

The status of the tourism industry is different between the three countries.  
The following highlights the different situations in each country.

## Faroe Islands

### Pros

- Improving capacity: Iceland - Faroe Islands
- Increased interest for undiscovered destinations
- The internal interest for tourism is booming
- Shoulder season gradually increasing
- VFI new strategy, budget, people and brand
- New statistics

### Cons

- Potential connection with Iceland not utilized
- No quality system in place
- Seasonality
- Education (human resource)

## Greenland

### Pros

- Political focus/strategy
- UNESCO Heritage/"environmental issues"
- Increased focus on established system to collect statistics
- Increased cooperation with Icelandic Tourism Operators

### Cons

- Lack of critical mass
- Greenland perceived as expensive
- Lack of "Reasons to travel"
- Seasonality
- No quality system in place
- Lack of infrastructure investments
- Education (human resource)

## Iceland

### Pros

- Tourist growth - increased number of guests
- Tourists are starting to spread across the country in all seasons
- Quality system in place
- Economically the most important sector for the nation
- A vibrant, creative and innovative driven industry

### Cons

- Environmental load on natural tourism attractions is increasing
- Regional and legal framework and controls lagging behind growth of companies
- Investment in innovation needed
- Education (human resources)



# Strategy and action plans

The following are the main strategy issues that NATA will focus on in the years 2015-2025, for each topic there are an indicated mission and initial action points.





## VESTNORDEN TRAVEL MART

### Strategy

*NATA will use the VNTM event to increase the awareness of the West Nordic region and build business relations regionally and internationally in tourism.*

#### MISSION 1.

The VNTM uniqueness will give it competitive advantage and a strong marketing position.

##### ACTION

- a) VNTM must always differentiate itself from other trade shows. The West Nordic region must also focus on what the countries have in common and what differentiates them.
- b) NATA must ensure that VNTM will always be the best B2B event in the area, - a “Must go to” event for all tourism operators, buying in Northern part of Europe.
- c) Specialised working group will be established to secure continuity of the VNTM work.
- d) NATA must use the opportunity to be more visible at VNTM in a relevant fashion at the trade show and also during the presentations in the future.
- e) As a tool for constant marketing evaluation, master students will be encouraged to write their thesis on marketing and positioning the VNTM.

#### MISSION 2.

VNTM as a platform for B2B communication will be a source of inspiration for tourism in the region, focusing on current trends and best practise knowledge.

##### ACTION

- a) VNTM needs to create a dialogue with the participating companies about their expectations.
  - Local operators – by using focus groups in each country
  - Foreign operators
- b) VNTM will have to focus on latest trends that concern the region as source of inspiration.
  - Use the stage for common themes
  - Use more time for themes and workshops
- c) NATA will be more visible at future VNTMs in a relevant fashion to draw more focus on the possibilities offered by NATA.
  - NATA will do so both at the trade show and at presentations during VNTM



# JOINT MARKETING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Strategy

*NATA will aim to increase the awareness of the three countries as destinations and offer new cooperation & business platforms.*

### MISSION 1.

NATA will support joint international marketing and PR activities of the three countries to increase the awareness of the destinations.

#### ACTION

- a) Support joint marketing projects covering the three countries in selected countries.
- b) Support effective B2B events e.g. workshops, roadshow and trade shows that promote the countries and their offerings.
- c) Joint PR activities and efforts e.g. journalist trips and network, presentations, press releases etc.
- d) Use marketing segments to sharpen the focus of the region.

### MISSION 2.

Develop platforms for closer relations, cooperation and product offerings for tourism companies in the three countries.

#### ACTION

- a) To encourage companies to provide products and services from the three countries and thereby offer a broader solution in tourism e.g. through B2B events in the regions. Form a working group within NATA (board and participants from the tourism industry) to develop further. As an example: create effective themed B2B events and cooperation for the companies in the region e.g. MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions), Adventure, Quality and Seasonal development.
- b) Invest in new and interesting cross country market projects such as Adventure tourism.



## QUALITY & ENVIRONMENT

### Strategy

*NATA will work towards sustainability, safety and quality consistency in the destination.*

### MISSION

Quality and environmental issues will be an integrated part of tourism in all the countries in the future

### ACTION

- a) Hosting B2B events and development themes e.g. quality and environment market intelligence.
- b) Assess possibilities for collaborating with “Vakinn” and/or other certification systems.
- c) NATA will formalise a cooperative effort to further the development of quality, environmental and safety measures within the three countries. A working group will be formed to focus on that.
- d) NATA will encourage all the member countries and tourist operators to work on quality and environmental issues and support collaborative efforts on behalf of the tourist boards to work on these important issues.





## SHARED KNOWLEDGE

### Strategy

*Sharing knowledge in tourism will be one of the major issues for building successful tourism in the area.*

### MISSION

NATA will have three main focus points in sharing knowledge:

- a) Marketing
- b) Research
- c) Benchmarking

### ACTION

- a) NATA in cooperation with the tourist boards and local officials will:
  - present the countries market strategies for next years
  - define opportunities to work together – built on those strategies
  - define KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)
- b) Common projects in tourism research will be supported by NATA with the aim to power growth in tourism.
- c) Benchmarking will focus on knowledge sharing on certain issues, e.g. statistics, between the countries.





## GRANTS

### Strategy

*The NATA grants and applications must be in line with changing and different needs of the market.*

#### MISSION 1.

The application process of NATA will be evaluated in line with other Nordic / EU institutions.

##### ACTION

- a) NATA grants will be able to support more items in the future, such as wages.
- b) Open the possibility that higher % of cost can be supported instead of the 50% maximum.

#### MISSION 2.

The procedures of common projects of the tourism boards will be sharpened.

##### ACTION

- a) The tourist boards can define and implement NATA support for purposes that can be tied to the primary objective of the NATA agreement.
- b) The official tourist boards and other officials can be part of the application – no other partners.
- c) When only two NATA countries are part of the application and project, it can only be supported with 50%.
- d) When all 3 countries are part of the application as well as the project it can be categorized as a NATA project and can be supported with 100%.

# Strategy evaluation



This strategy is focusing on a 10 years period. During this time many things will change in the environment and for sure many of the action points mentioned in this strategy will be succeeded.

Therefor will the strategy be evaluated and updated on a regular basis during this time, at least every third year.