

THEMATIC DISCUSSION

Protect our heritage: Social, cultural and environmental sustainability

Recommendations

Place sustainability at the heart of tourism development

1. Governments should place sustainability – social, cultural and environmental – high on the tourism agenda and position tourism as a strategic sector in contributing to sustainable development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through adequate policies and implementation mechanisms, namely those related to governance, financing and monitoring.
2. National, regional and local tourism administrations and the private sector should fully align their policies and business strategies with the SDGs and take an active role in the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.
3. National, regional and local governments should apply whole--government approaches to enhance policy and institutional coherence and foster collaboration and participatory processes at all levels – national, local and regional, the private sector and local communities – to ensure sustainable and inclusive development of tourism.
4. Governments should mainstream biodiversity conservation in the tourism sector and in climate change plans and strategies, intertwining economic, social and cultural elements with climate change adaptation approaches and the preservation of ecosystem.
5. Governments should promote and encourage alternative models, particularly circular business models based on renewable resources, longer and diverse product life cycles, shared consumption and interconnected value chains, in order to ensure sustainability not only in the tourism sector, but for the overall sustainable development of destinations.
6. Member States, the tourism sector and relevant organizations are encouraged to join the Sustainable Tourism Programme of the One Planet network, so as to accelerate the shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns in the tourism sector, and as an implementation mechanism for Sustainable Development Goal 12, with potential to advance work on the other Goals;

Better measurement for better management

7. National, local and regional tourism administrations should set monitoring and measurement systems to ensure evidence-based planning and management of tourism and responsible destination management in terms of resources and the impacts of growing tourism demand on environmental and sociocultural in the local carrying capacity.
8. Local destinations should advance the measurement and monitoring of tourism in order to ensure sustainable development of destinations in a relevant and timely manner. In this regard, they are encouraged to join the UNWTO Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories providing a framework for the systematic, timely and regular monitoring of resource-use and a better understanding of the impact of tourism in nine areas – seasonality; employment; economic

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benefits; governance; local satisfaction; energy management; water management; waste water (sewage) management; and solid waste management.

9. Governments are encouraged to engage in the United Nations supported Initiative 'Measuring Sustainable Tourism' set to develop an international statistical framework for measuring tourism's role in sustainable development, including economic, environmental and social dimensions.

Advancing social inclusion and cultural preservation

10. National, regional and local tourism administrations should place gender equality, social inclusion and accessibility as key pillars of their sustainable tourism policies.
11. National, regional and local tourism administrations and the private sector should promote policies and business strategies that foster decent jobs, education, training and entrepreneurship for women and disadvantaged groups.
12. Countries should apply measures and support initiatives aimed at promoting the employment in tourism of disadvantaged groups, including the poor, women, young people, indigenous peoples, older employees and persons with disabilities.
13. National, regional and local tourism administrations and the private sector should promote policies and business strategies that advance accessibility for all in tourist facilities, products, and services.
14. The UNWTO Secretariat should consider the creation of a Working Group to promote specific the exchange of experiences and develop specific initiatives in the area of accessibility.
15. Destinations should enhance the full integration of local communities in the tourism planning and management, promote the inclusion of local communities in the tourism value chain ensuring that tourism benefits translate into community-based wealth creation, decent jobs and social inclusion particularly for women, youth, persons with disability and less favoured groups.
16. National, regional and local governments should promote a closer cooperation between tourism and culture and ensure tourism contributes to the promotion and protection of tangible and intangible heritage.

Foster innovation and digital transformation to advance sustainability

17. Governments should provide support to tourism stakeholders at all levels in their efforts to adapt and maximize the digital transformation of their businesses and destinations and to support efforts to enhance available data with georeferenced, spatial components (location intelligence) for more precise and timely information generation in tourism.
18. Destinations should maximize the use of big data and technology to better plan, measure and manage tourism and promote evidence-based decision making on key issues such as carrying capacity, mobility, management of natural and cultural resources and community engagement.
19. Destinations should develop innovative tourism products and experiences and the use of technology to diversify tourism flows in time and space, promote longer stays and attract visitor segments that better contribute to sustainable tourism.
20. Governments should promote and incentivize innovation and the digital transformation in the development of solutions to promote sustainable destination management, namely the impacts of tourism on natural and cultural resources as well as social cohesion, and promote social inclusion.