WORKING GROUP
on
MEASURING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

TERMS OF REFERENCE
(as of 26/07/2016)

Background
As the UN specialized agency for tourism, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability. The Organization has the mandate "to standardize and improve the statistics of tourism, and to promote the integration of these statistics within the sphere of the UN system".

UNWTO has launched, with the support of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the **Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST)** initiative. The aim is to develop an international statistical framework for measuring key aspects of tourism's role in sustainable development, including economic, environmental and social dimensions. The starting foundation involves bridging two UN standards: the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) and the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA).

By integrating tourism more fully within economic, social and environmental measurement standards, the framework aims to provide a common language and organizing structure for exploiting the richness of data already available and for more effective data production, management and integration. Such a standards-based framework can further support the credibility, comparability and outreach of various measurement and monitoring programmes pertaining to sustainable tourism, including the derivation of SDG indicators.

In advancing the MST statistical framework UNWTO is working together with UNSD and leading country experts. and under the auspices of the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA) and the UNWTO Committees on Statistics and Tourism Satellite Accounts and on Tourism and Sustainability.

A Working Group to lead the development of MST
Measuring sustainable tourism naturally cuts across a range of disciplines and agencies. An open Working Group of experts on Measuring Sustainable Tourism has been established to lead the technical development and support engagement among these key stakeholders.

At national level, there are important roles for national tourism administrations and national statistical offices in particular, but also, potentially, for central and territorial planning agencies, development agencies and banks, environment departments and natural resource managers (e.g. for water), and transport agencies. These are primary users of data on sustainable tourism and hence should be involved to ensure the relevance of the statistical framework.

From the side of data producers, the Working Group covers expertise in: tourism statistics; environment statistics; national accounts, employment, trade; environmental-economic accounting; tourism satellite accounts; transport and mobility; and geo-spatial and regional statistics. In addition, the Working Group also counts on the involvement of relevant international organizations.

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) - A Specialized Agency of the United Nations

Capitán Haya 42, 28020 Madrid, Spain. Tel: (34) 91 567 81 00 / Fax: (34) 91 571 37 33 – omt@unwto.org / unwto.org

Objective

The ambition of the MST initiative is to develop a statistical framework for measuring sustainable tourism to provide a

1. <u>Standard framework</u> for collecting, organizing and disseminating relevant information
2. <u>Means to integrate</u> tourism statistics with other economic, social and environmental information
3. <u>Coherent information base for deriving indicators</u> that are relevant for the monitoring and analysis of sustainable tourism

To achieve this, the framework will have as a central feature the bridging of two UN standards for organizing economic information on tourism and on the environment: the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) with the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA).

Activities

To achieve the MST objective, the Working Group will be engaged in the following steps:

(i) Frame sustainable tourism for measurement purposes:
This involves further refinement of the scope of sustainable tourism for measurement purposes.

(ii) Assess relevant statistical guidance and frameworks:
This will consider how existing statistical guidance and frameworks might be best utilized and integrated in the formation of a statistical framework for sustainable tourism.

(iii) Assess country experiences:
This will take advantage of experience to date at country level in measurement related to sustainable tourism,.

(iv) Describe key measurement challenges:
Involves identifying and developing an understanding of conceptual and practical challenges .

(v) Engage with users and clarifying requirements:
To ensure that the of statistical framework adequately responds to the needs of users, including both government and private sectors.

(vi) Develop country pilot studies:
Relevance and feasibility of the statistical framework will be examined through country pilot studies.

(vii) Propose a statistical framework for sustainable tourism:
Based on the information obtained from the previous six steps, it will be possible to propose a statistical framework for sustainable tourism.

The Working Group will contribute to all the identified steps mentioned above by:

- Giving advice and ideas on the design and the development of the project;
- Submitting relevant experiences on ongoing or previous country work on linking Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) with Environmental-Economic Accounts (SEEA), and on deriving indicators from such an approach;
- Preparing short issue papers on the main topics as deemed appropriate to advance the initiative;
- Proposing and collaborating in the creation of pilot case studies;
- Reviewing the documents involved in the project;
- Performing other activities deemed appropriate by the Group or the Secretariat.

Working Methods and Meetings

UNWTO is the secretariat of the Working Group. The Working Group will be supported by an Editorial Board and by an expert Editor to draft the various portions of the methodological documents.

Physical meetings will be organized will organized at least once a year and additional meetings or alternative arrangements will be made if deemed appropriate by the Group and the Secretariat. In between meetings, the group will interact electronically and through tele/video conference.