Mexico’s Yucatán State Joins the UNWTO Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories

Madrid, Spain, 24 January 2023 – UNWTO has welcomed Yucatán’s Tourism Observatory into its International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO).

The Yucatán Tourism Observatory was established in 2018 to generate and manage information around tourism development. This work has identified key challenges and opportunities and so led to the design of relevant policies aimed at supporting the destination’s overall sustainable development, thereby increasing its competitiveness. Joining the INSTO Network will help Yucatán manage tourism development in a responsible and sustainable manner, taking a holistic view in developing adequate and innovative strategies for “rethinking” tourism.

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: “In this time of rethinking tourism, measurement is increasingly important as it provides a better understanding of where a destination stands and where it wants to go. The INSTO network provides an opportunity to work together to ensure that tourism is a tool that contributes to sustainable development. We are very pleased to welcome Yucatán as a new member.”

Green and sustainable future plans for Yucatán’s tourism

Yucatán is home to the Maya, has an extensive coastline, is mostly covered by forests, jungles and has numerous cenotes, sinkholes created by collapsed limestone rocks that expose groundwater. This and other tourism resources attracted 2.1 million overnight tourists in 2019, two-thirds of them domestic tourists. Tourism GDP accounts for 11.1% of Yucatán’s overall GDP. According to the vision of the Secretariat of Tourism of the State of Yucatán (SEFOTUR) “In 2030 tourism is widely recognized as a key sector that benefits Yucatán society, and to conduct tourism development in consensus with industry actors and with a full insertion of society in the benefits of tourism”. Among the environmental priorities climate action, ecosystem restoration and conservation, water quality preservation, and sustainable energy supply are cited, as well as the need to create a culture of sustainability within Yucatán society.

Yucatan's Secretary of Tourism, Michelle Fridman Hirsch, noted: “We are very pleased to have been enrolled in the UNWTO’s INSTO network, as we become the second Observatory in Mexico to be part of this network, which will allow us to better evaluate the impact of tourism in Yucatan and contribute with better data to global sustainable tourism”.

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Yucatán’s Tourism Observatory will monitor the 11 mandatory INSTO key areas for tourism sustainability: tourism seasonality, employment, economic benefits of the destination, energy management, water management, wastewater management, solid waste management, climate action, accessibility, local satisfaction and governance.

**About INSTO**

The UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) was created in 2004 with the main objectives to support the continuous improvement of sustainability and resilience in the tourism sector through systematic, timely and regular monitoring of tourism performance and to connect dedicated destinations, helping them to exchange and improve knowledge and understanding about destination-wide resource use and the responsible management of tourism.

**Related Links**

UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories

INSTO Yucatan Website

Yucatan Sustainable Tourism Observatory (YSTO)

Secretariat of Tourism of Yucatan (SEFOTUR)

Yucatan Tourism Promotion Website