New Report to Support Climate Action in the Tourism Sector

Madrid, Spain, 8 March 2023 – UNWTO has released a new report highlighting the progress that global tourism has made in measuring greenhouse gas emissions as well as the challenges the sector still faces.

Measurement of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is key for climate action. However, the tourism sector as the value chain is complex, diverse and overlapping, making sure measurement challenging. The new report “Climate Action in the Tourism Sector: An Overview of Methodologies and Tools to Measure Greenhouse Gas Emissions” was developed by UNWTO with support from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection of Germany (BMUV) and is released in collaboration with UN Climate Change (UNFCCC). It focuses on three areas – accommodation, tour operators and destinations – with the following findings:

• Accommodation has the largest number of methodologies and specifically-designed tools, followed by tour operators

• Destinations face the greatest challenges when it comes to engaging in measurement

• There is little consensus over the differing responsibilities and boundaries of stakeholders, or over metrics used when organisations measure emissions

Recommendations for better GHG measurements

While noting that measurement of GHG emissions in tourism is still in its early stages, the report found a new generation of tools and resources is emerging. These focus on enabling easy access and making use of commonly available data sources, showing progress towards integrated measurement and targeted guidance for more efficient reporting and more effective decarbonization efforts.

Among its key recommendations, the report calls for:

• Tailored guidance for different stakeholder groups (destinations, accommodation, tour operators) to be developed
• Achieving a balance between the need to be able to accurately measure and the priority to scale up engagement, efficiency and progress

• Promoting the benefits of measurement by showcasing evidence-based changes in practices and advancing climate risk valuations to mobilize support

Advancing tourism knowledge

The overview builds on the results of the first Global Survey on Climate Action in Tourism, which led to the identification of more than 50 methodologies and tools, with their subsequent assessment against a set of criteria and in-depth interviews and working group sessions with experts from across the sector. With this new report, UNWTO aims to provide guidance regarding the measurement of GHG emissions, accelerate climate action and to support the implementation of the commitments launched in November 2021 through the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism.

For more information and to access the report, please visit: Climate Action in Tourism Sector: An overview of methodologies and tools to measure greenhouse gas emissions (unwto.org)