

# Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism

Third Meeting of the Editorial Board  
5 May 2023 - Online



# Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Mandate of the MST Editorial Board
3. Summary of comments received from the consultation
4. Revised outline for Chapter 1 and a new Chapter 2
5. Briefing of the New MST Research Groups
6. Next Steps



# Mandate of the SF-MST Editorial Board

## ROLE & MAIN ACTIVITIES



1. Guidance on the SF-MST<sup>1</sup> drafting and consultation process
  - ✓ Consider feedback from consultation on SF-MST
  - ✓ Recommend technical treatments for finalizing SF-MST in light of consultation and ongoing research
2. Advice on the research agenda and tasks
3. Support and advocate for the SF-MST

<sup>1</sup> SF-MST: Statistical Framework – Measuring Sustainable Tourism

# Mandate of the SF-MST Editorial Board

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E-mail exchanges

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Virtual meetings as required

- May 31, 2023, to review version 4.0 of the SF-MST

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Participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Expert Group on MST

- September 19-20, 2023 (location TBD)
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WORKING  
ARRANGEMENTS





# Summary of comments from the Expert Group (EG) on MST

# Introduction



- SF-MST version 3.0 circulated to the Expert Group in December 2022
- Written consultation following EG Meeting concluded at end Jan 2023
- 43 sets of comments – many covering topics in all 5 chapters
- General feedback
  - Reinforced message of EGM that the aim is to be pragmatic in initial SF-MST
  - Highlighted the importance of implementation and supporting material
  - Noted the potential of global datasets to support implementation
  - Requested the inclusion of examples
- Comments grouped into 5 key topics and wrt each chapter

# Comments on Key topics (1)



## Structure of the SF-MST

- Proposals considered in following agenda item

## Local tourism destinations

- Key points of feedback
  - Relevance of SF-MST to destination managers
  - Give higher prominence of destination level measurement
  - Recognise conceptual challenges in defining destinations
  - Highlight need to consider impacts on host communities
- Proposed response
  - Retain national level as primary focus of SF-MST while recognizing importance of subnational and providing some conceptual guidance on indicators for comparability purposes
  - Bring discussion of sub-national measurement forward to new Chapter 2
  - Integrate sub-national measurement into each chapter (as for Social chapter)
  - Seek technical input from research group to clarify concepts and methods

# Comments on Key topics (2)



## **Systems based framing**

- Key points of feedback
  - Interest in highlighting systemic effects, dependencies and risks (e.g. natural disasters, connections across tourism system)
  - Request for increased discussion of resilience, risk, vulnerability, carrying capacity, thresholds
- Proposed response
  - Agree that since a systems-based approach is conceptually at the heart of SF-MST incorporating additional text is appropriate. This would introduce issues of resilience, risk, etc and their links to tourism activity
  - Focus on extending text in current section 1.5.1 on the design of the SF-MST and ensuring discussion in introduction of each chapter (economic, environmental and social) has a richer description of systemic links.



# Comments on Key topics (3)



## **Sustainability of individual tourism businesses**

- Key points of feedback
  - Many highlighted the lack of discussion on the sustainability of individual businesses (e.g. green businesses, certification, connections to ESG measurement, digitalization)
- Proposed response
  - Introduce new section to the Economic chapter to cover these measurement topics

## **Indicators**

- Key points of feedback
  - Strong support for developing a core set of sustainable tourism indicators; range of issues to be considered
- Proposed response
  - Take the selection of core set of indicators forward as a separate, complementary stream
  - Incorporate potential indicators for all sections/topics
  - Research group to investigate options around the use of tourism ratios and other definitional/derivation issues in relation to environmental stocks and flows and production and consumption perspectives.



# Questions and discussion

# Comments on Introduction



## Key points of feedback

- Highlight further the policy relevance of sustainable tourism
- Recognize SF-MST as *one part of the information system*
- Describe further the value-added of SF-MST
- Better balance the text to cater for statistical and policy audiences

## Proposed response

- All comments reasonable for inclusion noting:
  - Primary audience remains statistical
  - Note that not every piece of information on the sustainability of tourism will be within the SF-MST
  - Other documents and briefing notes are likely to be needed to communicate all messages effectively



# Comments on Economic chapter



## Key points of feedback

- Improve coherence with discussion in other dimensions
- Incorporate additional material on a range of topics especially government revenues and expenditures; and tourism GFCF
- Incorporate text on the sustainability of tourism businesses
- Review discussion and use of tourism ratios

## Proposed response

- A small amount of additional text on many topics can be incorporated to ensure topics are noted, e.g. major events, labour productivity.
- Certainly add sections on government revenues and expenditures; and tourism GFCF
- Limited discussion on indirect and induced effects and related analysis but some relevant text will be included in new Chapter 2, noting also that the measurement of direct effects is the primary focus of SF-MST

# Comments on Environmental chapter



## Key points of feedback

- Include discussion of links to current policy themes (eg climate change, circular economy)
- Improve discussion of links to biodiversity and ecosystems
- Additional text on allocation of environmental stocks and flows, especially GHG emissions
- Consider further measurement expectations at national and sub-national level
- Improve discussion on links to green jobs

## Proposed response

- A small amount of additional text on many topics can be incorporated to ensure topics are noted, e.g. material flows, emissions to water and air, tourism incentives for conservation.
- Certainly add sections on allocation of stocks and flows (NB: Research group formed); biodiversity and ecosystems; green jobs

# Comments on Social chapter



## Key points of feedback

- Accepted that this chapter is the least statistically developed
- Need to have stronger indication of what needs to be measured and collected and which indicators are relevant – i.e. moving beyond measurement themes
- Better highlight relevance of host communities
- Note the challenges of comparing across countries with different cultural contexts
- Build further the discussion of governance and its relevance

## Proposed response

- Agree on the need to strengthen discussion on what needs to be measured (NB: Research group formed)
- Other key areas for improvement will concern host communities; culture tourism; governance; and decent work.



# Comments on Spatial chapter



## Key points of feedback

- More work needed on definitions of and methods for delineating sub-national areas
- Clarify differences between measurement at sub-national and national scales and expectations on measurement
- Work to incorporate range of existing measurement materials such as work by OECD, INRouTe, UNSD
- Provide stronger links to chapters on each of the dimensions

## Proposed response

- Agree on the need to strengthen relevant definitions and methods (NB: Research group formed)
- Incorporate discussion of principles of sub-national measurement in new Chapter 2
- Include discussion of sub-national measures in each chapter (economic, environmental, social).



# Questions and discussion



# Chapter structure of the SF-MST



# Overview of proposed changes



- Shorten current Chapter 1: Introduction with greater focus on the sustainability of tourism and its measurement, this chapter will be pitched to both statisticians and policy audiences
- Introduce new Chapter 2: Overview of the SF-MST using text from current section 1.5 and 1.6, including material from Chapter 5 on sub-national measurement and including new material on core statistical concepts and treatments
- Retain chapters on economic (Ch 3), environmental (Ch 4) and social (Ch 5) dimensions with inclusion of sections on sub-national measurement (Ch 3 and 4) and other smaller additions
- Drop Chapter 5: Sub-national measurement as content is covered in other chapters.

# Proposed Chapter 1



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. What is the Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism? (noting distinction from compilation guidance)
- 1.2. Defining sustainable tourism (current 1.4.1)
- 1.3. Approaches to measuring the sustainability of tourism (noting difference from aiming to measure sustainable tourism)
  - 1.3.1 Alternative approaches to measuring sustainability (current 1.3)
  - 1.3.2 Measuring the sustainability of tourism (current 1.4.2)
- 1.4 SF-MST and other statistical frameworks (expand to cover links to both tourism frameworks and other statistical frameworks, e.g. SNA, SEEA, etc) (current 1.2 + current 1.5.3)
- 1.5. Structure of the SF-MST document (current 1.7)

# Proposed Chapter 2 (new)



## 2. Overview of the SF-MST

2.1. Systems based design of the SF-MST (expand current 1.5.1 to pick up systems issues e.g. resilience, capacity, etc)

2.2. Conceptual coverage of SF-MST (current 1.5.2)

2.3. Core Statistical Concepts and treatments

**Sub-sections:** Visitor flows and visitor expenditure / Tourism characteristic activities (definitions, classifications, establishments and enterprises) / Core types of accounts (SUT, asset accounts) / Reporting rules and measurement boundaries (geography, time of reporting, units of measurement, valuation and volume measures)

2.4. Measuring the sustainability of tourism at sub-national levels

**Sub-sections:** Introduction (current 5.1) / Defining scales of measurement (current 5.2) / Delineating local tourism destinations (current 5.4.2) / Links to other spatial measures (e.g. ecosystems) (current 5.4.5) / Compilation approaches and considerations (current 5.4.4)

2.4 SF-MST indicators and statistical outputs (expand current 1.6)





# Questions and discussion

# Research team 1: Allocation of environmental flows and indicators

## FOCUS

The different perspectives on attribution to tourism (e.g. production, consumption, visitor, trip) and issues of residence and territory

Proposals for relevant indicators taking into consideration the appropriate denominator (e.g. per visitor, per visitor overnight, etc) and questions of scope (e.g. accommodation sector only)

Recommendations on how to derive tourism ratios for environmental flows

Description of additional measurement considerations that apply at sub-national level for these environmental flows



## MEMBERS

DENMARK

GERMANY

ITALY

UGANDA

CARDIFF BUSINESS SCHOOL

# Research team 2: Measurement of social dimension of tourism's sustainability

## FOCUS

Identification of important themes to be measured

Proposals for specific indicators to measure the themes

Description of additional measurement considerations for the subnational measurement of the social dimension

Can all indicators for the social dimension be applied in all countries and cultural contexts? If not, what considerations should be included in SF-MST?



MEMBERS

MALAYSIA

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

GOVERNMENT OF ANDALUSIA (SPANISH REGION)

IN2DESTINATION

FORMER OFFICIAL OF THE NETHERLANDS STATISTICS OFFICE

# Research team 3: Delineation of sub-national spatial areas

## FOCUS

Whether regional, municipal and local levels are appropriate Identification of additional levels or types of sub-national area that should be considered.  
Classifications of sub-national areas that can be applied (e.g. NUTS in Europe)

Criteria for local tourism destination

Methods, assumptions and criteria to delineate each levels and what guidance can be included that can be applied in many different contexts/across countries

Commonly, approaches to defining sub-national areas for tourism activity are determined using economic (supply/demand) criteria. What role can/should be played by social and environmental criteria



MEMBERS

INDONESIA

PHILIPPINES

UNIVERSITY LA LAGUNA, CANARY ISLANDS

EBERSWALDE UNIVERSITY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



# Research team 4: Tourism occupations

## FOCUS

Identification of conceptual approaches to developing a set of tourism characteristic occupations

Proposals for relevant indicators

Data to be collected and/or what estimation techniques can be used to derive these indicators



MEMBERS

CANADA

ILO

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# Next Steps



End May	Editorial Board to review new version (4.0) SF-MST
31 May	Online meeting of the Editorial Board
Beginning June	UNCEEA Technical Committees to review Environmental Chapter
Mid-June	SF-MST version 4.1
28 June	Online meeting of the Editorial Board (or if needed to the wider Expert Group on MST)
6 July – 7 September	Global consultation
Mid September	Editorial Board to review comments from the global consultation
19-20 September	4 <sup>th</sup> meeting of MST Expert Group (venue tbc)
16 October	Meeting of the UNWTO Committee on Statistics (Uzbekistan)
End of October	SF-MST version 5.0
Mid November	Submit Environmental chapter to UNCEEA for approval
End November	Submission of UNWTO report for UN Statistical Commission
Mid-January 2024	Submission to UN Statistical Commission Secretariat of the background document containing SF-MST