Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: Environmental Flows

Report of the Research Group

Prof. Calvin Jones
Cardiff Business School & UN WTO

EXPERT GROUP ON MEASURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM

MARBELLA, SEPTEMBER 2023
Membership of Research Group (RG)

- Hilda Arinaitwe, Uganda Bureau of Statistics
- Giovanni Finocchiaro, ISPRA, Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research
- Kathrine Lindskov Johansen Jonathan Hussein Lindahl, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark
- Lucia Maier Marcus Malzahn, Federal Statistical Office of Germany (Destatis)
- Silvia Zannoni Giusy Vetrella, ISTAT, Italian National Institute of Statistics
Approach & Objectives

Rapid response online quantitative/qualitative intelligence gathering April-May 2023

To uncover key questions & issues relating to the conceptual issues around tourism-related environmental flows

Dedicated to informing relevant Chapter of the SF-MST
Results:

MST Scope

- RG almost unanimous that UNWTO has a role in guiding the development of the MST process, and indicating to countries which indicators are the ‘first’ to seek to integrate within MST-SEEA.
- These centre on Greenhouse Gas emissions; related energy and renewables use; waste; water.
- The bulk of the respondents believed the main focus of MST should be on accounting approaches, but that indicators sets should also be incorporated.
- RG recognised MST must also include ecological functioning and natural capital.
- Strong view that the UNWTO should offer (gentle) guidance, not only on what to measure in initial MST-SEEA, but also how to measure.
- The country was identified as the most appropriate spatial level for ‘phase 1’ of MST – with data availability and statistical-systems issues likely to hinder subnational development (however welcome)
Results:

Technical & Compilation Issues

• Preponderance of views that consumption, rather than production measures should be at the heart of MST-SEEA, although more disagreement on how this should (or could) be achieved.

• The lack of maturity of SEEA in key measurement areas – e.g. waste and water

• Less agreement in RG on how to allocate (spatially) some elements of tourism-related spending, especially that which is outside the reference economy (e.g., intermediation; international travel).

• Critical issues on coherence between residence & reference economy in TSA/SEEA/Footprinting approaches, e.g., with respect to international transport (NB - ref draft SF-MST Ch 4)

• Emerging issue around use of Multi-Regional Input-Output (MRIO) structures to enable holistic analysis - but lack of appropriate ‘official’ structures & methods

• MST should build on existing structures and debates – in the areas of SEEA (or SNA) rather than inventing new approaches or requiring parallel reporting.

• We should not lose the focus on the integration of social, economic and environmental accounting (or impacts): all are important.
Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism: Environmental Flows

Report of the Research Group

Prof. Calvin Jones

Cardiff Business School & UN WTO

EXPERT GROUP ON MEASURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM

MARBELLA, SEPTEMBER 2023